



THE DEFENSE MONITOR

The Center for Defense Information believes that strong social, economic, political, and military components and a healthy environment contribute equally to the nation's security. CDI opposes excessive expenditures for weapons and policies that increase the danger of war.

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Defense Monitor in Brief

- **Years after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of any specific threat to the United States, we still maintain military forces costing over \$250 billion each year—only a little less in constant dollars than the Cold War average.**
- **When pressed to justify such high continuous spending, our military and foreign policy officials — led by successive US Presidents — repeat the Cold War mantra that “America must lead the free world.” But America’s Cold War friends and allies have become suspicious that the beneficent term “leadership” is being used to mask a drive to dominate events to suit America’s preferences without regard to others’ legitimate interests.**
- **When international law or the values cherished by the world’s democracies are violated, the US is right to exercise leadership to constrain the perpetrators. But experience has shown that deployments of less than three percent of America’s active duty soldiers usually suffice, unless large scale aggression and foreign occupation of a nation must be reversed.**
- **The US has many opportunities to lead peacefully in improving the world’s condition. To fully exploit them, America should stop wasting billions on unneeded military capabilities which only reinforce the habit of dominating others.**

Military Domination or Constructive Leadership ?

Presidential, Congressional, State and Defense Department policy statements are replete with admonitions that the United States must be “the leader of the free world.” In 1993 President Bush proclaimed: “It is our responsibility, it is our opportunity to lead. There is no one else.” In 1994 President Clinton declared in the preface to his National Security Strategy: “Never has American leadership been more essential.” Thus America has “empowered” itself with the privilege of intervening any place in the world where others take or threaten to take action that the US considers “wrong,” even though no significant American interest is jeopardized. The

concept of intervention to prevent “wrongs” then subtly broadens into a moral right to dictate decisions and control events wherever they run counter to the wishes of our government.

In turn, this combination of moral responsibility and moral right is used to justify the “requirement” that America indefinitely remain the world’s only military superpower.

But this alleged obligation, akin to the 19th century concept of “the white man’s burden,” is not altruistic. It is the hammer of **control** over the behavior of others, a control that at times verges on domination and the demand for special rights that other states may not enjoy.

Therein lies the paradox: virtually every US government declaration about defending

Question:

What is the largest armed expedition America has sent overseas since Desert Storm in 1991?

See Page 5

American interests includes the interests of “our friends and allies.” Yet ensuring their interests implies, indeed obligates, the US to eschew domination over them and to not claim special rights above them.

Examples of this paradox between control and obligation abound.

Cuba The US Government does not like Castro’s Cuba, although that regime is impotent to threaten any American interest. Lacking an excuse to attack Cuba and overthrow Castro, Congress has enacted legislation to punish Cuba by punishing foreign enterprises that do business in Cuba. The punishment restricts the ordinary business activities of those firms within the US. Our friends and allies have protested that such “extraterritorial” regulation is a violation of international law, but to little avail.

Iran The US Government has barred American firms from doing business with Iran because it believes Iran supports terrorism and threatens world peace. But our allies and friends (including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Turkey) neither agree with this assessment nor restrict trade with the Tehran regime. Unhappy with these developments but unable to sway our allies, Congress has enacted penalties, similar to those used against firms doing business with Cuba, to punish multinational firms doing business with Iran. The French--close friends since our Revolutionary War — have called America’s hand by recently

negotiating a \$2 billion deal with Iran to develop its natural gas resources. Now our President must decide whether to apply sanctions against France or find some way to end run the very restriction he signed into law.

China The media report instances of Chinese government violations of human rights — child labor, incarceration of democracy dissidents, and religious and ethnic repression in Tibet. Congress responds to the public’s disgust with China’s practices by passing laws that ostensibly put pressure on China to stop its repression. However much the US opposes these practices, such blatant attempts to dominate China’s politics are ineffective and simply antagonize the Chinese, thereby undercutting less visible long-term diplomatic efforts to induce change. Since 1990 the various multilateral development banks and foundations have considered over 150 loans to China for projects ranging from railroads to grain distribution. Citing civil rights abuses, the US has voted “No” on 22 of these projects involving almost \$2 billion and has abstained from voting on the rest. Other member nations have refused to follow the American lead and have approved the loans.

Mexico Even Mexico has not been exempt from US bullying. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 imposes severe penalties on a nation which the President does not certify is fully cooperating in efforts to stop the production or flow of drugs into the US. Some in Congress repeatedly attempt to deprive Mexico of this certification, thus endangering our southern neighbor’s government and economy. (Of course America’s insatiable appetite for drugs sucks the illegal substances north from their Latin-American producers, affecting the welfare of both Mexico and the US.)

The UN At the United Nations the US still refuses to pay the \$1.5 billion it owes for its share of peace-keeping costs and annual assessments that keep the UN functioning. A carefully worded compromise between the White House and Congress collapsed when the House, miffed by an Administration refusal to cave in on an issue unrelated to UN arrearage, stripped UN and International Monetary Fund money from the Foreign Operations Appropriation bill.

World Trade Organization A distressing power play followed the anti-Cuban legislation. For several years US diplomats and other negotiators had worked tirelessly to broaden the free trade provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the GATT), and to create the World Trade Organization (WTO) for settlement of commercial disputes between trading partners. In February 1997 America’s European allies lodged a complaint with the WTO over the anti-Cuba legislation. The WTO established an arbitration panel according to the protocol the US had previously sponsored. But US officials pronounced the WTO “not competent” to deal with the dispute and refused to appear before the panel. Their reason: the challenged US law is a matter of “national security” and foreign policy. Such a claim by “the only remaining superpower” will inevitably encourage other countries to make the same claim in an effort to escape WTO jurisdiction.

HYPER POWER

“I don’t want us to be strong enough to win narrowly. I want to be so strong that no one can compete with us.”

House Speaker Newt Gingrich, October 23, 1997

PRESIDENTIAL AMBITION

“Where our interests are clear and our values are at stake, where we can make a difference, we must act and we must lead.”

Bill Clinton; November 1996

NATO Expansion The US consistently dominates its NATO allies. Several members wanted the eastward expansion of the Alliance to include states besides those (Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic) proposed by the Clinton Administration. Whether or not its reasons were valid, the US refused to change its position to accommodate the wishes of its allies. Furthermore, despite the objections of other NATO members, the US is insisting that the armed forces of the new members be brought up to NATO standards, for which realistic cost estimates are between \$27 and \$35 billion over the next decade. Using the higher estimate, the US has unilaterally "allocated" these costs as follows: US no more than \$2 billion, new members \$17 billion, and current European members \$16 billion. In late November 1997 NATO published its own estimate for expanding eastward. Its total was only \$2 billion.

Land mines Under Canada's leadership, representatives of over 100 nations met in Oslo, Norway in the summer of 1997 to develop a treaty imposing a worldwide ban on antipersonnel land mines. These weapons are a terrible scourge to civilians on the many old battlefields where they have been left behind at wars' end. As many as **110 million land mines** are buried around the world and each year they kill or maim 20,000 people--mostly children. Treaty negotiations were progressing rapidly until the US demanded that American mines in Korea be excluded from the global ban for nine years. The rationale given for the delay was the need to develop and deploy equally effective devices to protect the 37,000 American troops stationed in South Korea. The US also

demanded that an exception for explosive devices, whose purpose is to prevent deactivation of anti-tank mines, be broadened to cover America's anti-tank mine design. Other nations refused to dilute the treaty provisions, and the document was then approved 89-0. The US abstained. In December 1997, in Ottawa, 123 countries signed the treaty; the US did not.

Child Soldiers As many as 250,000 children around the world are forced to serve in government and dissident armed forces. Thousands of children have been killed. But the US is contesting a UN effort to amend the Convention on the Rights of the Child to raise the minimum age for recruitment and participation in armed conflict from 15 to 18 years. The Defense Department's reason: its present recruitment practices allow 17-year-olds to enlist under certain conditions.

Perhaps the most striking claim for the imperative of American control was made by the Pentagon's draft *Defense Planning Guide for 1994-1999*:

America must prevent other states "from challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political and economic order....We must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."

Obligation

It is ironic that America's drive for security and control in itself generates the need to use military forces. With no overriding single threat on which to focus, America's policy makers seem to believe they must intervene even in situations of marginal interest to the US. By some unknown mental process, they have concluded that

America's global military reach imposes an obligation to try to "shape" the course of events everywhere.

The Persian Gulf is a prime example of this compulsion. The Administration's rationale for mobilizing US air power against Iraq was that Saddam Hussein violated UN Security Council resolutions giving UNSCOM inspectors complete access to all Iraqi facilities with a potential for making or storing chemical or biological weapons.

Such inspections are like the labors of Sisyphus--who was condemned to repeatedly push a huge boulder to the top of a mountain, only to have it roll back down every time. If inspection, bombing, or even military action on the ground were to eradicate all its chemical and biological weapons, Iraq would still be able to replenish its stocks. Equipment needed to produce these weapons is small, mobile, and easily concealed within legitimate civilian premises or "dual use" facilities. And the weapons themselves can easily be moved in very small packages. America's unilateral threat to bomb Iraq into submission (opposed by China, France, and Russia) lacked the rationale of the 1990-91 Gulf War, which was triggered by Iraq's conquest of Kuwait and its threat to control the supply of Mid-east oil.

The Pentagon still bases its strategy on the possible interruption by Iraq or Iran of the flow of oil from the Gulf. But the Department of Energy continually reminds us that any increase in the world price of oil due to curtailment of supply will adversely affect the economies of all countries *in proportion to each country's consumption, not the volume or source of its imports.*

While the US consumes about 26% of the world's total, western Europe's share is about 21% and Japan's is about 8%. Despite this, these allies are getting free protection of their supply by the US military. The cop-on-the-world-beat mentality of the Cold War still infects US leaders, who proclaim that only America is capable of carrying the burden of policing the Persian Gulf.

According to Pentagon accounting, the financial cost of the 1990-91 Gulf war to the US military was \$61 billion, for most of which the US Government was reimbursed by its allies. But these amounts were merely the "incremental costs" — those incurred only because of the massive deployment to the Gulf to roll back the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. What was not included and what the Pentagon refuses to divulge are the annual "running costs" for arming, equipping, training, and organizing the force of 544,000 soldiers so that they were able to intervene successfully and with relative safety. A reasonable estimate of these running costs is about \$85 billion

each year. This means that America's total financial cost of the Gulf intervention was in the realm of \$550 billion! (See Pg. 7.) Other costs were also high: 286 Americans died in the operation and there were 3,336 other American casualties. By 1997 the annual cost per soldier had increased somewhat, so that keeping a force of 544,000 prepared for deployment now costs about \$96 billion annually.

Threatened Interests

The **more than quarter-trillion dollar** annual US military budget is justified to the American people as necessary to protect their national interests when these are threatened anywhere in the world. This justification is a facade. In two successive four-year defense reviews (the 1993 Bottom Up Review and the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review), the Pentagon found only the same two conventional threats: in the Persian Gulf and on the Korean peninsula. In the absence of a real threat to significant American interests, the Pentagon must continue to point to these areas.

The never answered question is why the US must always lead — or even be "in charge" — against threats to world peace. Simple geography, for instance, should engage energetic European diplomatic and military support for the UN's suppression of Iraq's capability to produce chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. Paris and Berlin are three times closer to Baghdad than are Dallas and New York, and Moscow is even closer. Yet, except for the British, European support has been weak or negative, leaving the US again to lead the charge against Saddam by itself.

On the other side of the globe, the US presence in South Korea is

a 45 year relic of the Cold War. Yet South Korea is able to defend itself against the starving North Koreans and would quickly become even more capable if US troops were withdrawn. It is true that the residents and businesses of Seoul are vulnerable to North Korea's long range artillery, but their danger is not reduced by keeping 37,000 Americans in the line of fire. Ironically, South Korea does not seem overly concerned — it is preparing to **reduce** the size of its armed forces!

In the absence of a worthy threat, the Pentagon can sustain its claim on national resources only by falling back on such old saws as "secure sea lanes" and such distinctly non-military goals as economic stability, access to raw materials, and regional stability. This is obviously inconsistent with the growing economic and cultural interdependence of the world's nations.

American Values

A secondary justification for the huge military budget is to be able to intervene wherever American values are threatened. These values are shared by most of the world's developed countries and by many in the developing world. But there are situations where our cherished standards are disregarded, temporarily because of local conditions such as civil war

"HEGEMONY" ASSERTS THE DEAN OF OUR DIPLOMATS

"{T}he annual spending of hundreds of billions of dollars on "defense" has developed into a national addiction. This situation must be understood in relation to the exorbitant dreams and aspirations of world influence, if not world hegemony—the feeling that we must have the solution to everyone's problems and a finger in every pie..."

George F. Kennan "Morality and Foreign Policy" 1996

SCIENTISTS ARE HIRED TO DOMINATE

"A global U.S. naval force capability and presence will be needed to support our allies and exercise U.S. influence among other nations"

National Academy of Sciences, under Department of Navy contract, 1997

or permanently because of authoritarian government or local culture. In these situations many Americans feel the US has a moral obligation to intervene--not to protect its tangible interests but to promulgate its values.

Where And How We Are Intervening

Except for the 1990-91 Persian Gulf war, none of the post-Cold-War American interventions was prompted by one state invading another. All of the American expeditions were significantly limited in duration and scope: hostage rescue, humanitarian efforts, reprisal against terrorists or states supporting them, enforcement of sanctions or anti-narcotics policy, or impeding illegal immigration. The UN has tallied over 82 conflicts around the world since the fall of the Berlin Wall, all but one of which were civil wars. Thus, if it so chose, there would be enough opportunity for the US to be constantly involved in settling ethnic conflicts and civil wars. The American people do not want such a role for their military forces. But the Pentagon, recent administrations, and Congress continue to support a force structure that is more appropriate to policing the entire world unilaterally than it is to supporting multilateral efforts to restore and maintain peace when conflicts erupt.

The US military has deployed forces over 30 times since 1990. Most occasions involved less than 1,000 troops, and few resulted in casualties. The most significant deployment since the Gulf War has been the 1998 preparation to bomb Iraq. Next in magnitude has been our participation in NATO's attempt to bring peace to Bosnia. The Somalia intervention was less

demanding, Haiti was occupied without battle, and Rwanda required only support operations. Nonetheless, the might of the US presence in these instances has been enormous.

Iraq in 1998: The US threat to bomb Iraq was supported by about 36,000 American troops. It had no humanitarian motive (but would have caused innumerable deaths and casualties among Iraqi civilians). It was only nominally justified as enforcement of UN resolutions.

Bosnia: In July 1996 the US had 22,000 troops in the 58,000 strong NATO intervention force [IFOR] in Bosnia. A year later when the follow-on stabilization force [SFOR] began operations, the US contribution was cut to 10,500. The General Accounting Office (GAO), working with the Pentagon, estimated that the incremental cost to the US for IFOR/SFOR was well over \$3 billion dollars and would reach at least \$6.5 billion by the time the mandate for SFOR expires in June 1998. These costs are minor compared with those of the Persian Gulf War. Even adding in the costs of having the forces capable and constantly ready to intervene, the total US cost is about \$33 billion--some 12 percent of the military budget.

Somalia: This 1992-94 humanitarian operation required 28,000 US forces-- primarily ground troops. There were 35 killed and 153 wounded. DoD's incremental costs (calculated by GAO and verified by DoD) were about \$1.5 billion. With estimated capability-readiness costs

included, the total cost of the military operation was about \$34 billion.

Haiti: The US deployed 21,000 troops against no organized military opposition. Two soldiers died and three were wounded in non-combat incidents. DoD's incremental cost (again as reported by the two agencies) was \$953 million during 1992-95. With capability-readiness costs included, the total military cost was about \$25 billion.

Rwanda: The US military incurred incremental costs of \$144 million in supporting the UN's humanitarian efforts in Rwanda and eastern Zaire in 1994-95.

Summary: Clearly, for interventions motivated primarily to protect and spread democratic values, the heavy weapons and the large forces the US maintains are not appropriate. America needs a much smaller military, equipped with a more appropriate mix of weapons suitable for intervention in far less rigorous conflicts than all-out war. We also need a civilian organization specially trained and appropriately equipped to organize and administer aid programs and to enforce law and order. The force described in the October 1997 *Defense Monitor* "Getting the Military Out Of Humanitarian Relief" is one such model.

Answer:

36,000 troops, who supported the 1998 U.S. threat to bomb Iraq. America maintains armed forces that are 80 times larger than this to assure its global military dominance.

A HIGH LEVEL ADMISSION

".....our willingness to take responsibility for peace and security makes it easier for others to shirk theirs."

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, December 16, 1997

Control Leaves Others Inert

The former Yugoslavia is a third situation in which the US has marginal interests, much less than those of the powerful neighboring states. After three years during which Bosnia's neighbors did little to stop the ethnic slaughter, it was the US that "led the charge." The Europeans knew that bringing peace to the factions was not possible without strong military intervention (as the inability of lightly armed UN forces proved). But for 45 years Western Europe has lived under America's nuclear umbrella and relied on American conventional forces to such an extent that it could not act unless the US did. So long as US administrations were unwilling to send the American military to stop the fighting in Bosnia, the Europeans were unwilling to intervene in sufficient strength to stop the slaughter

TECHNOLOGY IS NOT SUFFICIENT

"Many military missions will require occupation of the ground, and intensive physical presence. For these missions the promises of technology are less certain, especially in environments such as cities and jungles."

Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs Of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, 1996

When the US policy changed and US troops were committed to enforcing the Dayton accord, the Europeans and Russia mustered the will to commit significant numbers of their forces. Even so, by Autumn 1997 it was clear there was no hope that lasting peace could be achieved by the scheduled coalition troop withdrawal date of June 1998. The Europeans declared that if the US withdrew so would they — despite the likelihood that the slaughter would resume. So President Clinton announced that American troops would remain in Bosnia indefinitely. Once again, a region's refusal to take responsibility for control of its own area illustrates the trap into which the US has fallen as a result of insisting that the whole world is our sphere of influence, our backyard, and our duty to police— a stance that others are all too willing to let us assume.

The Human Toll

In World War II and the Vietnam War, American troop losses were counted by the hundreds of thousands. Such large numbers of casualties required the drafting and training of thousands of replacements, with the result that the total manpower involved in these wars was considerably larger than the number confronting the enemy in the field at any given time. This has not been the case in the 30 plus interventions since the Persian Gulf War. Where deaths occurred, they were mercifully limited to a score or two and other casualties were correspondingly few.

Significantly, the tolerance of the American public for troop casualties seems far less now than it used to be. Television has brought the fighting into our living rooms and the public will not

tolerate casualties if it does not understand why US forces are in a battle zone. For example, in the 1992-95 Somalia intervention, the deaths of 35 American soldiers were sufficient to turn public opinion strongly against prolonging the occupation; the Pentagon was forced to withdraw American forces and abandon the effort to pacify the country. Thus the human and material resources the public is willing to risk in supporting American values overseas will not be nearly as great as the resources the military budget finances.

Benign Leadership

Whereas once military power was able to shape the world and create and sustain empires, it is highly questionable whether military power can do so today without, in the process, destroying the world. The fact that economics is the new playing field for world influence presents a host of opportunities for the US Government to exercise continuing leadership — **without always flexing its military muscle.**

- The combination of vast natural resources, an industrious and innovative workforce, free enterprise, and a representative form of government makes America a model of what is possible with democracy, a

AN ALLY BLOWSTHE WHISTLE

"How can the Americans, with around 5% of the world's population, go on accounting for a quarter of its greenhouse gases? This flagrant imbalance cannot be allowed to continue."

Klaus Kinkel, Foreign Minister of Germany, Summer 1997

- market economy, and the rule of law.
- Our diplomatic and economic preeminence can give weight to multilateral efforts to bring peace and economic progress to those less fortunate. Congress should arrange to pay the \$1.5 billion we owe to the UN, and should resolve that it will strongly support future UN peacekeeping operations with money and American personnel.
 - The US outlays for foreign aid now make up the lowest percentage of GDP of any industrialized country in the world. Congress should double these appropriations to a level approximately proportionate to Japan's outlays. At the same time it can cancel the military aspects of the present aid program, which endanger civilian control and may result in hostilities between and within third world countries.
 - There are now three world trading blocs: the European Union, NAFTA, and APEC in eastern and southeast Asia. The United States is the only nation that can weld these blocs into an integrated world trade regime. It performed this leadership role in broadening the GATT and creating the World Trade Organization. It can lead the way

again in broadening the WTO.

- Nuclear warheads are still attached to the intercontinental missiles retired by the US and Russia under the present and pending START treaties. This means that these weapons can quickly be reactivated. The US can take the lead in removing the warheads and neutralizing their explosive components. Such action would reassure Russia, which now views an expanded NATO as a threat requiring it to rely primarily on nuclear weapons for its defense.
- The plutonium in American and Russian stockpiles, and to be removed from their nuclear warheads, is attractive to thieves and terrorists. Our Energy Department is focusing on two disposition technologies, which would cost between \$1 and \$2 billion over the next 25 years, to treat the US stock. Although Russia's stock is twice as large, safe disposal there would cost only \$1 to \$2 billion. But Russia may not have the financial resources needed, and it is in the mutual interests of the two nations (and of the world generally) for the US to assist. The \$40 to \$80 million of US help now planned over the next 5 to 7 years is patently inadequate; it should be increased manifold.

- NATO and its members have repeatedly declared that no European nation will be excluded from the Alliance. Since the avowed purpose of NATO expansion is to foster and protect democracies in eastern Europe, the US could assure this goal by persuading its fellow members to admit Russia to membership on an equal footing.

Conclusion: But America is not just the US Government or its Armed Forces. It is a complex of people and institutions: universities; business enterprises and their skilled managers and workers; research organizations; authors, artists, and entertainers; financiers; judges; and others. These people and organizations are world leaders in their fields and as such expand the range of possibilities for American leadership. A few examples illustrate their accomplishments:

- Students from around the world flock to America's universities;
- Hollywood's movies are the most popular entertainment just about everywhere;
- American pharmaceuticals are closing in on cures for AIDS;
- Planned Parenthood and sister organizations are fighting overpopulation;
- Intel and Microsoft lead the world in computer processors and software;
- Ted Turner challenges the world's philanthropists with his billion dollar gift to the UN.

The benefits which the work of these organizations and individuals produce far surpass the contributions a super-powerful military can ever accomplish.

Cost of Preparing for the Persian Gulf War

Annual Cost to recruit, train, house, feed and equip each soldier		\$132,000
Average training time (active service) in years	X	7.74
Per Capita cost of preparation		\$1,021,000
Number of U.S. soldiers involved in the Persian Gulf (1990-91)	X	544,000
Cost to Prepare for the expedition		\$555,424,000,000



Two Amazing Admissions

In November 1997, William Cohen, Secretary of Defense, warned: "Indeed, a paradox of the new strategic environment is that American military superiority actually *increases* the threat of nuclear, biological, and chemical attack against us by creating incentives for adversaries to challenge us asymmetrically. These weapons may be used as tools of terrorism against the American people."

On May 22, 1998, President Clinton made a decision with frightening implications. He ordered the stockpiling of vaccines and antibiotics to treat massive numbers of civilians in case of a biological weapons attack on the American homeland. This is a recognition that the US military establishment may be incapable of protecting American citizens, in their homes and places of work, from the "asymmetric" attacks its global military power may encourage.



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