



National Security Report

Background and Perspective on Important National Security and Defense Policy Issues,

Written and Produced by

Lloyd Spence

Volume 1, Issue 4

Chairman, House National Security Committee

May 1997

From the Chairman...

The Quadrennial Defense Review increasingly looks like a modest update of the current Bottom-Up Review, which will open a wider gap between increasing strategic commitments and declining defense resources. When Secretary Cohen states that the QDR was conducted based on the premise that defense budgets can never increase, it becomes impossible not to view the QDR as a budget-first, strategy-second exercise.



Make no mistake – the current mismatches between strategy, forces and resources have had real consequences: If the QDR once again compels a smaller, under-resourced

QDR:

Budget or Strategy Driven?

force to execute an expanding strategy, then the readiness, quality of life and modernization problems we see today will quickly worsen.

The emerging QDR is likely to call for a continuation of the current two-regional war strategy, and a recognition of the current reality of numerous peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, while simultaneously calling for reducing forces and resources to meet a predetermined budget number.

The widening gap between strategy and resources must spark a much-needed public debate about the risks associated with an underfunded national military strategy. Weighing the risks of war, of casualties, of defeat, and the implications of retreat after this century's great victories over fascism and communism must play a central role in any honest evaluation of the QDR's recommendations.

A Look Ahead at the Quadrennial Defense Review

On May 15, the Defense Department is scheduled to submit to Congress the results of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the blueprint that is intended to shape American military strategy and determine the structure of U.S. forces in the future. Though the final version of the QDR has yet to be released, extensive press accounts and other sources reveal the scope of the review and the course it is taking.

From the outset, the review's one fixed variable has been the size of the defense budget. Despite vows by senior Department of Defense civilian and military officials that "everything is on the table," the underlying premise of the QDR is the assumption that the defense budget cannot be increased. For several months, Secretary of Defense William Cohen has maintained that "the QDR is not, in essence, a budget-driven exercise....What we're doing in this QDR is trying to find the right mix of strategy, programs, and resources." But Cohen also has said, "Just as we have to be realistic about the many threats that we face in the world today, we have to be realistic about the kind of environment that we're operating in as far as fiscal restraint.

So I am operating, and the entire building is operating, on the assumption that...the defense budget is likely to be no more than roughly \$250 billion in real terms for the foreseeable future." As a result, *The New York Times* reported April 29, "The budget-cutting tone [of the QDR] has angered several members of Congress...who say

they believe that an honest strategic review would result in a dramatic increase in military spending. The military budget has been cut by about a third in real terms over the last decade."

Despite the projection of a flat defense budget, which will actually reflect a decline in spending when the effects of inflation are considered, the QDR apparently will codify an expansive U.S. military strategy, an increased pace of equipment modernization, and a deepened commitment to innovation in military technology, organization and doctrine. According to press accounts, the price for trying to increase spending on long overdue equipment modernization is certain to be significant cuts in the size and structure of current U.S. military forces - forces that have already been cut by one third just since the end of the Gulf War. *The Washington Post* reported on May 7 that Secretary Cohen has approved a cut of up to 60,000 active-duty personnel, 70,000 reservists and 80,000 civilian defense workers across all the services. The strategy appears increasingly ambitious while military personnel levels, force structure, and budgets shrink.



U.S. Army forces like these in Bosnia, appear to be the likely billpayer for budgetary and force cuts contemplated under the Quadrennial Defense Review.

Issues of National Military Strategy

The current national military strategy, developed during the Administration's 1993 Bottom-Up Review (BUR), has as its force-planning guidance the military's ability to conduct two nearly simultaneous major regional wars. This two-war scenario was based upon the assumption that regional powers such as North Korea and Iraq posed the most likely threats to U.S. national security interests. Both these nations remain hostile to U.S. interests. For example, since 1993, North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs have matured and, according to former CIA director John Deutch, Saddam Hussein is in a stronger position than he was at the conclusion of the Gulf War in 1991.

However, the BUR failed to account for the frequency with which the Clinton Administration would commit U.S. forces to manpower-intensive and expensive peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations. Yet, since the BUR was conducted, U.S. troops have been deployed to Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and Bosnia. The no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq, originally conceived as temporary missions, continue today and, in fact, these missions are growing. In contrast to the BUR, which considered peacekeeping and humanitarian missions to be of secondary importance, the QDR states that these "smaller-scale contingencies" are the most likely mission for U.S. troops for the next decade and should be considered in U.S. force planning.

Three Strategic Tasks

The QDR apparently foresees a 10-to-15-year period of "strategic pause," during which there will be few large-scale threats to U.S. national security interests. During this pause, the prime goal of U.S. military strategy is to "shape the international security environment in ways favorable to U.S. interests, to respond to the full spectrum of crises when it is in our interests to do so, and to prepare now to meet the challenges of an uncertain future," according to one draft of the QDR strategy that has been widely circulated. These three broad tasks – shaping the international environment, responding to crises great and small, and preparing for an uncertain future – cumulatively amount to a more expansive

defense strategy and ambitious set of military missions than reflected in the current strategy's focus on regional threats.

The QDR strategy outlines three ways of shaping the international security environment. The first is to promote regional stability, including the need to "adopt and strengthen core alliances," such as the plan to expand NATO. A second is to employ U.S. forces to prevent threats and conflicts, such as in the enduring peacekeeping mission in Macedonia. The third is traditional deterrence, both with conventional and nuclear forces. According to one press account, the QDR concludes that "in order to shape the international environment in favorable ways, U.S. armed forces must maintain substantial levels of peacetime engagement overseas, utilizing the full range of shaping instruments at their disposal to achieve key U.S. objectives *in each region of the world.*" [emphasis added.]

The second broad task of the QDR's defense strategy is military response to the full spectrum of crises where "national interests [are] at stake, be they vital, important, or humanitarian in nature," according to one account of the QDR. The current two-war requirement appears to have been modified to reflect the fact that key and substantial forces needed for warfighting are likely to be encumbered by peacekeeping missions should a crisis occur. The draft QDR strategy now states that U.S. forces "must be able to transition from a posture of global engagement to fight and win, in concert with allies, two major theater wars in overlapping time frames. In this context, they must also be able to defeat the initial enemy advance in two distant theaters in close succession and achieve U.S. war aims even in the face of an adversary's use of chemical and biological weapons, information operations and terrorism."

The third element in the new defense strategy is to prepare now to meet the security challenges of an unpredictable future.

According to news reports, the QDR strategy calls for the United States to maintain its military superiority "in the face of evolving, as well as discontinuous, threats and challenges." To maintain this needed superiority, the QDR recommends that the Pentagon take a four-part approach to fostering innovation:

- Increase modernization to replace aging systems and incorporate "cutting-edge" technologies;
- Employ more innovative technologies, operational concepts and military organizations to improve the services' ability to perform current missions and meet future challenges;
- Exploit similar innovative business practices to improve efficiency and free up resources for other investment needs;
- Prepare to deal with significant future threats while remaining within projected defense budgets.

Budgetary and Force Structure Issues

While the QDR's strategy, which recognizes the necessity of retaining the two-regional war capability, the current pace of peacekeeping and humanitarian operations and the need also to prepare for an uncertain future, is more realistic than that of the 1993 Bottom-Up Review, it is also more ambitious. The gap between strategic requirements and actual defense resources would appear to be growing rather than diminishing. The mismatch between the current, more



American citizens walk through a heavily guarded perimeter to board a U.S. Marine Corps CH-53 inside the U.S. Embassy housing compound in Tirana, Albania, on March 15, 1997.



U.S. aircraft prepare to deliver troops, equipment and supplies for many contingency operations worldwide.

narrow, Bottom-Up Review strategy and defense resources has been estimated by the Congressional Budget Office at more than \$100 billion over the course of the five-year defense program. The nonpartisan Center for Strategic and International Studies characterized the mismatch as a “coming trainwreck.” The QDR’s more expansive strategy, to be executed by reduced forces all in the context of defense budgets unable to keep pace even with inflation, can only exacerbate the mismatch.

Since the end of the Cold War, total active-duty manpower has dropped from approximately 2.1 million to 1.4 million. The QDR is likely to continue this trend. According to *The Washington Post*, of the planned 60,000 cuts in active-duty personnel, approximately 15,000 soldiers will be cut from the Army, 2,000 from the Marine Corps, 25,000 from the Air Force, and 18,000 from the Navy. The QDR also reportedly calls for a reduction in

reserve component forces of 70,000, primarily from the Army National Guard.

These manpower cuts are intended to generate approximately \$15 - \$20 billion in savings to pay for increased spending on long

needed equipment modernization. Yet the cuts in personnel, as serious as they are, are certain to fall well short of generating the kind of savings necessary to pay for the full range of equipment modernizations now programmed by the Department of Defense.

In an effort to generate additional savings, the QDR reportedly will recommend two additional rounds of base closings. The QDR is expected to recommend the closure or realignment of dozens of military installations. Four previous rounds of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process have resulted in the closing of 97 defense installations in the United States and many more overseas. Unfortunately, the base closure process became unnecessarily political and controversial in 1995 when, in the eyes of Congress, the Administration circumvented the law to prevent the closure of installations in Texas and

California. As a result, the Clinton Administration’s credibility on the issue of base closures has been damaged severely. In addition, any savings generated from further rounds of base closures will not be realized for many years to come, as the previous rounds of base closures indicates.

Conclusion

The likelihood of worsening mismatches between military strategy and resources under the QDR has caused many, including a number of senior military officers, to conclude that the prime goal of the review has been rationalizing smaller defense budgets rather than actually tailoring U.S. military forces and budgets to the strategic needs of the post-Cold War world. The artificial constraint of limited defense budgets led one senior general to conclude that “we still have dollars driving [the QDR] instead of strategy.” Similarly, the report of the National Defense Panel, the independent board of outside experts mandated by Congress to assess the QDR, is expected to emphasize the strategy-resources mismatch in its report accompanying the QDR, which is to be submitted to the Secretary of Defense December 1, 1997. “The QDR ‘talks the talk’ when it comes to strategy,” said one panel member, “but doesn’t seem to ‘walk the walk’ when it comes to budgets.”

The requirement for the Department of Defense to undertake a Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) was established by section 923 of the FY 1997 National Defense Authorization Act, public law 104-201. First and foremost, the QDR was to provide a “comprehensive discussion of the defense strategy of the United States and the force structure best suited to implement that strategy.” The QDR is to be transmitted to the House National Security and Senate Armed Services committees by May 15, 1997.

The legislation also mandated the creation of a National Defense Panel (NDP) to provide an assessment of the QDR strategy and propose alternative force structures. The panel consists of nine members, including a chairman, appointed by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the chairmen of the House National Security and Senate Armed Services committees. It was to have been named by December 1, 1996, and is to issue its report to the Secretary of Defense by December 1, 1997, who shall submit it to the House National Security and Senate Armed Services committees not later than December 15, 1997. Defense Secretary William Cohen’s

The QDR and NDP Process

choice to chair the NDP is Philip Odeen, president of BDM International, a defense consulting and research firm. Other NDP members are: Richard Armitage, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; Richard Hearney, former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps; David Jeremiah, former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Robert M. Kimmitt, managing director of Lehman Brothers, an investment banking firm; Andrew Krepinevich, director of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments; James P. McCarthy, former deputy commander-in-chief, U.S. European Command; Janne Nolan, senior fellow, Brookings Institution Foreign Policy Studies program; and Robert R. RisCassi, former commander-in-chief, U.S. forces in Korea.

The NDP has received extensive briefings on the QDR and is expected to transmit its initial assessment of the review to Secretary Cohen in time to be included in the May 15 report to Congress. The NDP is also conducting a number of open hearings during which it is receiving testimony from outside experts on a variety of defense issues.

Update

In Bosnia...

Ten checkpoints are dismantled by SFOR soldiers in northern Bosnia, leaving only two checkpoints – at Brcko and Dobojo — remaining in the area. The checkpoints are removed to facilitate freedom of movement and to allow for more mobile patrols.

Bosnian Serbs sign a trade agreement with the Republic of Yugoslavia, paving the way for a joint customs system this summer. The agreement is a violation of the Dayton accord, which delegates to the Bosnian central government responsibility for foreign trade.

Former Bosnia peace negotiator Richard Holbrooke criticizes the U.S. military role in Bosnia, arguing that the Pentagon's "reluctance to go beyond a rather narrow definition of its role and mandate" and arrest indicted war criminals has "given strength to the [Serb] separatist cause."

Nearly 200 additional police monitors are authorized by the United Nations Security Council to be deployed in disputed area of Brcko, in northern Bosnia.

An agreement is reached among members of Bosnia rotating three-man presidency regarding a single currency for the country.

Pope John Paul II, during a visit to Bosnia, appeals for reconciliation among the various ethnic factions and an end to religious hatred.

In the United States...

The House Appropriations Committee approves \$1.3 billion in fiscal year 1997 supplemental funding to pay for ongoing U.S. peacekeeping operations in Bosnia.

The General Accounting Office (GAO), in a draft report cited in the press, concludes that most of the political and economic provisions of the Dayton peace agreement remain unfulfilled. The report cites a State Department view that a multinational military presence will be required to keep the peace in Bosnia "for many years."

House National Security Chairman Floyd Spence and Ranking Minority Member Ronald Dellums send a letter to the President regarding NATO expansion. The letter requests detailed information on the costs, rationale and implications for U.S. security of the Administration's expansion plan.

Russian Defense Minister Igor Rodionov denies reports that the command and control of Russian strategic nuclear forces is weakening. He says Russia "will do everything possible to ensure that the safety and protection of our nuclear arsenals would never decrease." Rodionov says there is "some shortages in funding" for the Russian military, but notes that "the strategic nuclear forces have the same level of funding as they used to have for many years."

In Russia...

Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordecai claims in an April 29

interview that Syria is developing VX, a chemical weapon deadlier than sarin nerve gas, with cooperation from Russia. Syria is not a signatory to the chemical weapons ban that entered into force this week. Russia has delayed ratifying the ban.

According to the Russian press, China has contracted to have its Kilo-class diesel-powered submarines repaired by Russia at Vladivostok. China purchased Kilo submarines from Russia several years ago.

On April 25, Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan signed a treaty reducing the number of troops on the sides along the former Soviet-Chinese border. A day earlier, on April 24, Moscow and Beijing had criticized NATO enlargement in a joint statement from Moscow condemning the "building up of troops and expanding of military blocks."

In the Pacific...

The head of Japan's Defense Agency says Tokyo is reviewing various domestic laws and considering revising them to deal with emergencies under new guidelines for Japan-U.S. defense cooperation.

U.S. and Japanese media report that North Korea has deployed the intermediate-range No-Dong missile. If operational, the No-dong missile imminently threatens over 77,000 U.S. forces forward-deployed in South Korea and in Japan.