

“ The Long War—Strategy to Hardware”

A Presentation for the Expeditionary Warfare Conference

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Michael McDevitt
Vice President and Director
CNA Strategic Studies

What is the long war?

- A grim reality
- Prolonged, world-wide *irregular campaign*
- A long term effort against terrorist networks and other extremists
- A struggle between violent extremism and moderation
- Direct military force is required, but we cannot kill or capture our way to victory
- A patient accumulation of quiet successes over a long time

US Defense Strategy

- Defining principle of US Defense Strategy is **balance**
 - Not the same as treating all challenges equally
 - Means setting priorities
 - Cannot expect to eliminate risk by bigger budgets
- Unlikely to repeat another Iraq or Afghanistan any time soon
 - That is: forced regime change and nation building under fire
- Strategy is use indirect approach when possible
 - Capacity building

Balance What?

- Prevailing in wars we have while preparing for future contingencies
 - Next-war-itis versus today's fights
- Institutionalizing counter insurgency, stability and capacity building while maintaining our traditional edge against other militaries
 - Don't treat these capabilities as exotic distractions
- Retaining traditional service expertise while being open to change in order to accomplish today's missions
 - Like it or not the new American way of war will include irregular war

The Obligations We Have Today

- Iraq will not simply “go away” with new administration
 - Success so far remains fragile
 - Some element of U.S. military power will continue to be involved
- Success in Afghanistan will be a focus for new administration
 - Shift in focus for USMC
- Deterrence of Iran, China over Taiwan, and North Korea
- Hunting down terrorists
- Support for Israel, plus other treaty obligations
- The Caribbean basin
 - Uncertain Cuban future
 - Weak governments, failed states, drugs, illegal immigration
 - Assisting Colombia

Open Security Questions—Neither Obligations Nor Trends

- Security implications of financial crisis
 - Credibility of US leadership
 - Willingness of US act
 - Ability of US to act
- What about Russia?
- Will a major ally or friend collapse (Pakistan, Saudi Arabia)?
- Will preserving access to West African oil (Gulf of Guinea) generate a new presence requirement?

Trends--Translation of China's Economic Strength into Global Influence

- Broader trend than military modernization
 - Global economic interests = global political interests
- But military modernization creates requirement for **capability competition**
 - US credibility in East Asia at stake
 - Access versus anti-access
 - Finger still on the trigger vis-à-vis Taiwan
- Attractiveness of “China Model” to authoritarians
 - Generates political systems competition
- *Ambition to field premier military force in Asia*
 - Not trying to pick a fight with Washington, but Taiwan remains a serious issue
 - Worries our allies

Trends--Demography and Anti-Americanism in Muslim World

- Youth Bulge Phenomena
 - When 30 to 40% of a nations males are in “fighting age” cohorts
 - Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Gaza, Yemen
- Demographic “armament”
 - Second, third, or fourth sons generate huge recruitment pools
 - Asymmetric advantage
- Public Opinion (predominately Muslim countries)
 - 15% favorable
 - 75% unfavorable
- Growing pool of Jihadist recruits
 - Many nations where cells can hide and survive
 - Limits range of political options available to friendly Islamic states

Long War will Indeed be Long

Trends--Enrichment of Energy Producing States that have anti-American Grievances

- Petrodollar surge in Iran, Russia and Venezuela
- Russia a longer term concern
 - Ability to revitalize conventional forces thanks to “warm” industrial base
 - Wealth underwrites restoring national pride
- Iran’s wealth offsets its “demographic” disarmament
 - Engaging in proxy wars—Hezbollah and Hamas
 - Funding not an issue for nuclear weapons ambitions
 - Can support substantial anti-US insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Is Chavez a threat to long term stability?

Intersection between hostile states with money and terrorist organizations, a special concern

Trend--An Incomplete Proliferation Agenda

- Short of regime change “counter-proliferation” not a credible policy
 - Determined leaders will develop bombs
 - India, Pakistan, North Korea and probably Iran
 - Perception that Iraq and Afghanistan have removed regime change from “US table”
- Can deter use by regimes, but can we deter transfer?
- The most serious future problem is transfer to non-state actors

Need explicit, credible policy that deters transfer to, and use by non-state actors

Trend--Global Climate Change

- Move beyond skeptics and believers debate
- Must consider as low-probability/high consequences
- Some effects of GCC are likely to be permanent and be very bad for some regions
 - Life and death situations
 - Adapt or migrate
- Developing nations least able to cope
- Implications:
 - Next administration will inject a sense of urgency
 - Expeditionary role in HA/DR will grow
 - Arctic Northwest passage

Threat Multiplier for Some of Most Unstable Regions in the World

What Does This All Mean?

- If forcible regime change off the table; and responding to aggression is low probability, accepting risk by not growing high end forces a likelihood
 - “Holding our own” more likely
 - Afloat missile defense a probable exception
- Ability to redirect most of these trends is remote
 - Coping rather than shaping the order of the day
- Speaking softly, and carrying a big stick is an effective coping mechanism
 - Peacetime expeditionary operations will remain in demand
 - Peacetime forward presence enables “coping”
 - Presence also enables Maritime Security Operations
- High demand for U.S. engagement, capacity building, irregular forces, and deployable naval power projection for deterrence and alliance credibility