

# Potholes, Pitfalls, Promises and Puzzles: The 2010 QDR

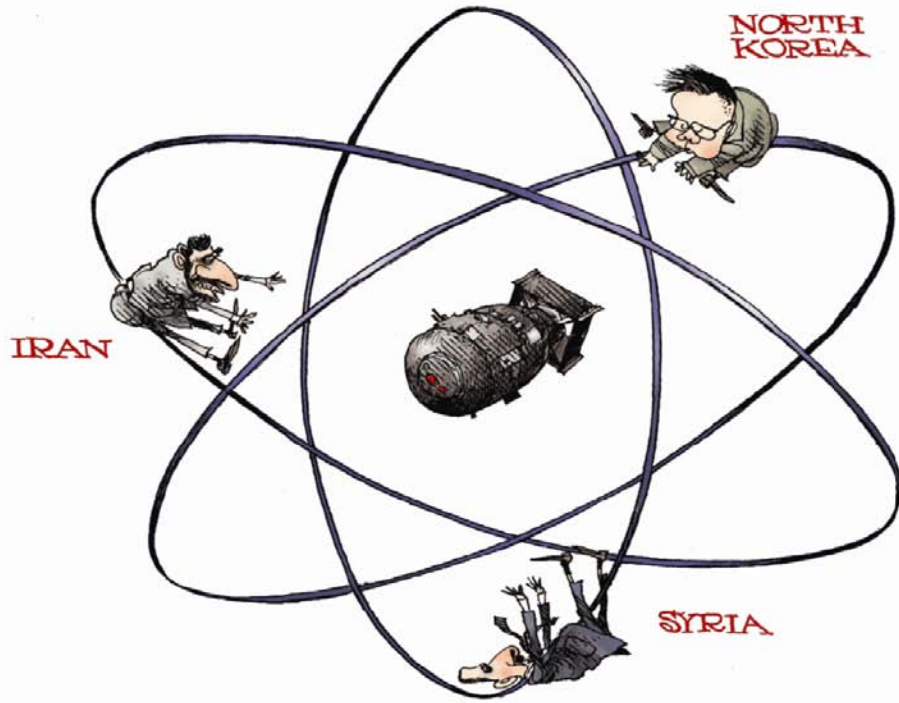
Peter Huessy, President, GeoStrategic Analysis,  
Potomac, Maryland and Senior Defense Consultant,  
National Defense University Foundation  
March 3, 2010 Precision Strike Association, Arlington,  
Virginia

...AND THIS ONE IS FOR DEFLECTING ANY SCRUTINY OF THE MILITARY BUDGET DURING A RECESSION...



THE MEDIA AWARDS SEASON MIXER





THE AXIS OF EVIL .

# The 4 “P” Brief

- Potholes: Critics on the Left
- Pitfalls: Assessments from the Right
- Promises: Welcome New Directions of the QDR
- Puzzles: What We Still May Not Have Got Right
- Conclusions and Summary

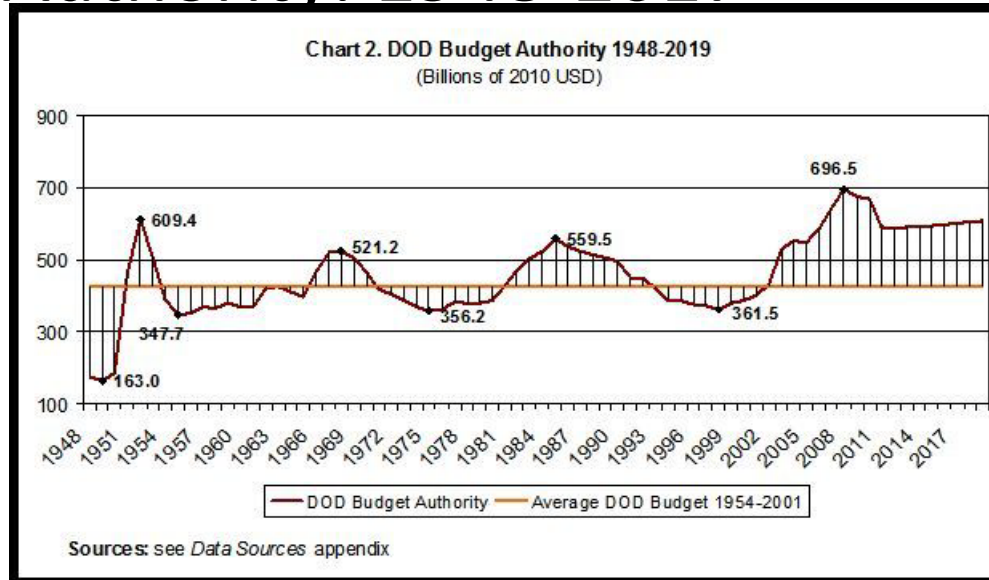
# Potholes on the Left: #1: Exceed Cold War Spending

- Mark Thompson. *Time Magazine*, 24 February 2010.

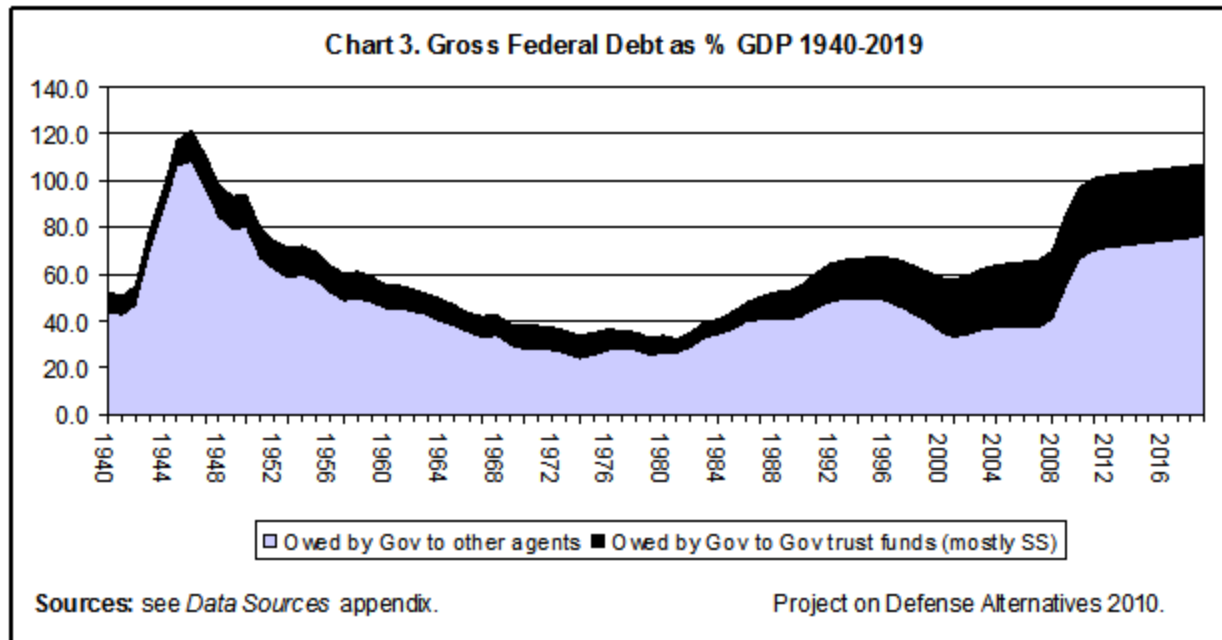
“Even without a superpower rival like the Soviet Union the U.S. is now spending more preparing for war than we did at the height of the Cold War.”

# Potholes #2: The Budget

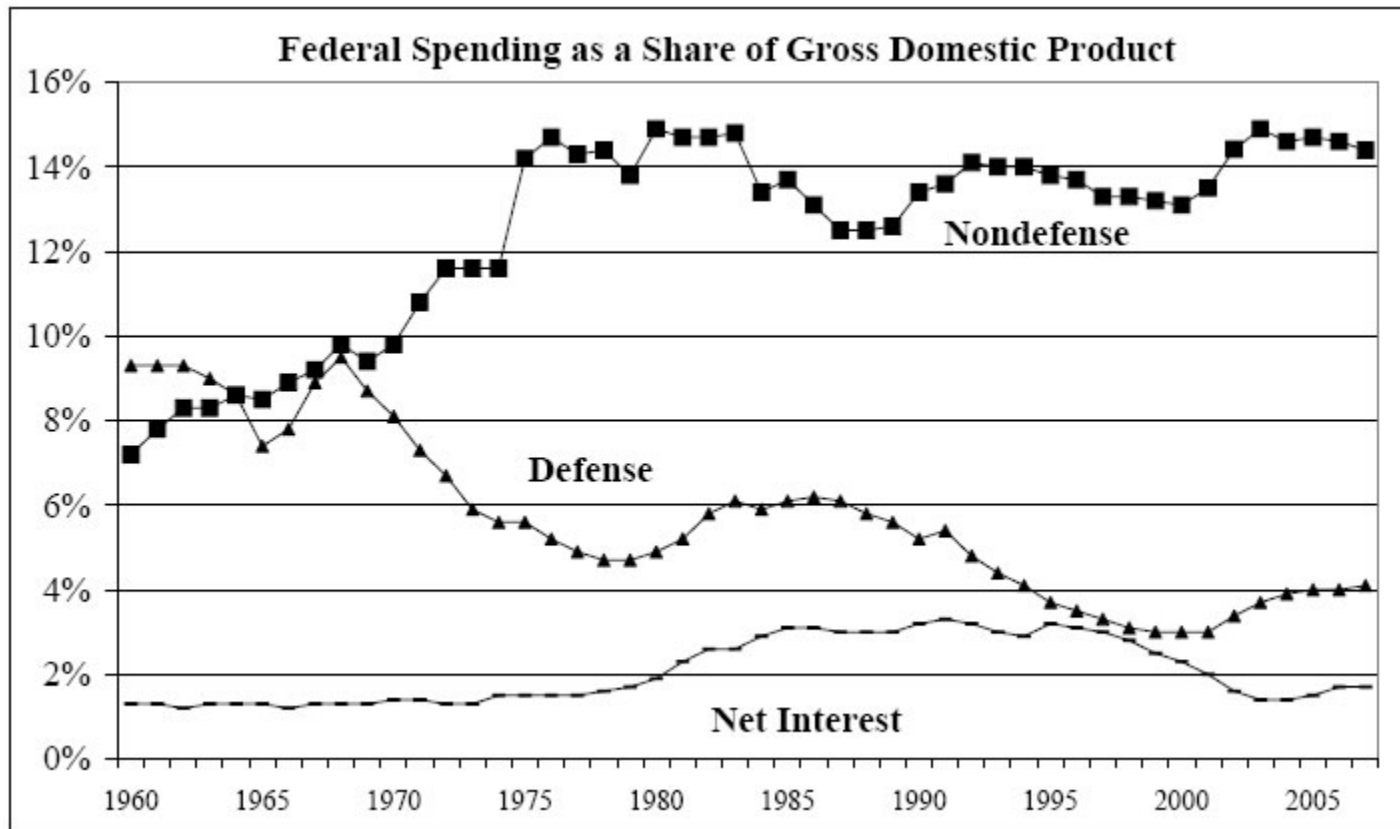
- Budget Authority: 1948-2017



# Potholes #3: Total National Debt



# Pothole #3B: From Cato/IBD





# Potholes #4:

- Rising personnel costs for the Department of Defense's military forces and civilian employees, which are being compounded by 1) increases in the end-strength size of the Army and Marine Corps; and 2) the addition of 19,200 new governmental acquisition workforce employees.
- • Growing DOD operations and maintenance (O&M) costs.
- • Higher price tags for advanced weapons systems, including the additional acquisition costs associated with design problems and schedule slippages.
- • The cost of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which 1) may not immediately decrease when troops are withdrawn if historical precedent is any guide; and 2) will require future investments to bring depleted equipment stocks back to pre-war standards.
- • Steady growth in federal spending on mandatory programs such as Social Security and Medicare, which will increasingly squeeze discretionary spending in other areas, including national defense.
- Travis Sharp, Center for New American Security and Foreign Policy, 2/23/10

# Potholes #5: Contingency vs. Capability

- [Quadrennial Defense Review Fails to Match Resources to Priorities](#)
- Lawrence J. Korb, Sean Duggan, and Laura Conley. *Center for American Progress*, 04 February 2010.  
The QDR ... does not prioritize the missions that the military must be prepared for. The document states that “successfully balancing [DOD’s priorities] requires that the Department make hard choices on the level of resources required as well as accepting and managing risk in a way that favors success in today’s wars,” yet it also notes that “U.S. forces must be prepared to conduct a wide variety of missions under a range of different circumstances.” In other words, the QDR promises to make tradeoffs but asserts that DOD must be capable of confronting every contingency.

# Potholes #6: Workforce

- [An Undisciplined Defense: Understanding the \\$2 Trillion Surge in US Defense Spending](#)
- Carl Conetta. *Project on Defense Alternatives Briefing Report 20*, 18 January 2010.  
... DoD's total workforce is probably as large today as it was in 1989 (or even larger), but less of the total is in uniform. This accords with the rise in O&M spending and also with studies... which suggest that the contractor workforce may have grown by as much as 40% since 1989. By comparison, the full-time military and DoD civilian workforces are both about 32% smaller today than in 1989.

# Pitfalls on the Right: #1: Proper Definition of Interests

- The 2010 QDR gives only cursory mention as to why the US maintains relationships with its key allies, and even less about why they came about. The listing of US vital interests across specific regions of the globe includes many, many references to “stability”, yet there is little by way of defining what those interests are for which stability is vital. Are they strategic? Military? Economic? Or do we simply identify war prevention as a pursuit of an altruistic national goal?
- Tenets of likely National Military Strategy (the NMS, with its guiding National Security Strategy, is as yet unpublished), contained under the heading of “Defense Strategy”, appear in the body of the document but are matched with no particular vision or guidance as to how those tenets will be accomplished, other than “initiatives” defined in the most general of terms. Of those initiatives, many represent significant and possibly unreachable challenges in an era of shrinking defense budgets. US Naval Institute, 2/4/10

# Pitfalls #2: Climate Change?

- **Is the 2010 QDR Too Soft?**
- **Military to take on climate change, focus on the human terrain**
- **BY [John Noonan](#), Weekly Standard**
- “DoD wonks are planning to mold an already over-tasked military to meet rising challenges associated with global warming climate change”

# Pitfalls #3

- **The Pentagon Strategy Was Issued in the Absence of White House Foreign Policy Guidance.**
- **The QDR Fails to Meet Statutory Requirements or Provide a 20-Year Defense Road Map.**
- **The QDR Claims to Be Both Strategy-Driven and Resource-Constrained.**
- **The QDR Understates Requirements and Overestimates the Capabilities of the Force Defense Officials Are Willing to Sustain.**
- **The Strategy Adequately Addresses Today's Conflicts and the Health of the Force but Does Not Address Current Risks Posed by Existing Funding and Capability Shortfalls. Eaglen, Heritage Foundation, 2/2/10**

# Pitfalls #4: QDR Grade from Professor Cordesman: A+, F, or Dead on Arrival?

- One thing is certain, however – it is not enough to say that the United States should have all capabilities yet provide no clear plan to achieve them. Every time the 2010 QDR dodges around defining force structure, procurement, and readiness choices, it will be intellectually dishonest and operationally dysfunctional: Another “F” instead of the “A+” effort the US so badly needs.

# Pitfalls #5: Long Term Air Force Plans

- Current Air Force plans, only 6 percent of its 2028 Air Force air arm will consist of long-range surveillance-strike systems. The plan presented here would see that percentage almost triple to 17% of the strike arm fielding 100 additional bombers and eighty additional long-range ISR platforms, most of them of low-observable designs. This plan provides for a much more stealthy and survivable force across its total range of capabilities. From a force that in 2009 has low-observable or stealthy platforms in only 5% of its fighter force, 20% of its bomber force and none of its ISR force, this plan results in a 2028 Air Force with low-observable platforms in 80% of its fighter force, 60% of its bomber force and over 50% of its ISR force". Air Force Strategy for the Long Haul, February 2010



# Pitfalls #6: US Air Power

- The U.S. Air Force is at the lowest ebb in its 73-year history. Although its capabilities still far surpass those of other air services around the world, it is gradually using up the arsenal it acquired during the closing days of the Cold War. Over the last five years, the Air Force has seen its next-generation F-22 air superiority fighter terminated at less than half the required number, its next-generation bomber delayed by over a decade, and its plan to replace airborne surveillance planes canceled. Planners also want to end production of the service's admired C-17 cargo jet at a mere 222 planes, even though the oldest C-17s will soon reach the end of their design lives..."Lexington Institute, March 1, 2010 Brief

# Pitfalls #7: Navy Submarine Fleet

- Ranking HASC member Rep. Howard McKeon (R-CA)
- “We’re building two *Virginia* class attack subs per year starting in Fiscal Year 2011. This is largely due to Congressional action, not the Department’s. But even building two per year, we fail to meet our minimum requirement for submarines. The requirement is 48. With the 53 we have today, we cannot meet our Combatant Commander’s critical and high priority requests. Yet the shipbuilding plan we just received has our force falling to 39 by 2030, leaving our Combatant Commanders worse off than they are now.” February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010

# Promises #1: Strengthen Defense Capabilities:

- A good example of how DoD has hit the mark in many of these areas is its identifying and addressing the need to strengthen defense capabilities in six key mission areas:
  - Defending the United States and supporting civil authorities;
  - Succeeding in counterinsurgency (COIN), stability operations (STABO), and counterterrorism (CT);
  - Building partner capacity (BPC);
  - Countering proliferation and WMD; and finally,
  - Operating effectively in cyberspace.
- 
- CSIS, Nathan Freier, February 28, 2010

# Promises #2: Connect to Homeland Defense

- In my view, the 2010 QDR decisions fall into three tiers of significance. Of most importance is the elevation of “prevail in today’s wars” and “preserve and enhance the All-Volunteer Force”.
- On the second tier of importance is the emphasis that the 2010 QDR report gives to homeland defense.
- DoD will still plan for “two capable nation-state aggressors” but now recognizes it must be “capable of conducting a wide range of operations, from homeland defense and defense support to civil authorities, to deterrence and preparedness missions, to the conflicts we are in and the wars we may someday face.”
- In the category of “stay tuned for further developments,” I would include the actions taken to “operate effectively in cyberspace” and to cope with the growing anti-access and area denial capabilities of potential adversaries.
- Clark Murdock, CSIS February 2, 2010

# Promises #3: Energy

- DoD must incorporate geostrategic and operational energy considerations into force planning, requirements development, and acquisition processes. To address these challenges, DoD will fully implement the statutory requirement for the energy efficiency Key Performance Parameter and fully burdened cost of fuel set forth in the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act.
- Solving military challenges—through such innovations as more efficient generators, better batteries, lighter materials, and tactically deployed energy sources—has the potential to yield spin-off technologies that benefit the civilian community as well. QDR 2010

# Promises #4: Not Everything is New

- What was debated in the 1990s as one aspect of the so-called revolution in military affairs has emerged as a reality some fifteen years after the Office of Net Assessment's original work. The contours of the emerging challenge are strikingly similar to those described in the 1992–1993 assessments. As described at that time, the major challenge (from a “peer” competitor) is emanating from the People's Republic of China, while the second-order challenge (from a “non-peer” competitor) is most clearly represented in the military activities of Iran. As informed speculation yields to hard military reality, it becomes possible—indeed, necessary—to take stock of the challenge in its true form in order to assess how the United States might best respond. Krepinevich, February 2010, *An Air Force Strategy for the Long Haul*

# Promises #5: Measuring Anti-Access

- *When considering the military-modernization programs of countries like China, we should be concerned less with their potential ability to challenge the U.S. symmetrically—fighter to fighter or ship to ship—and more with their ability to disrupt our freedom of movement and narrow our strategic options. Their investments in cyber and anti-satellite warfare, anti-air and anti-ship weaponry, and ballistic missiles could threaten America’s primary way to project power and help allies in the Pacific—in particular our forward air bases and carrier strike groups. This would degrade the effectiveness of short-range fighters and put more of a premium on being able to strike from over the horizon—whatever form that capability might take.*
- —Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates

# Puzzles #1: Does Our Conventional Power=Make Others Seek Nukes?

- [It's time to adapt our security strategy to leverage America's conventional strengths](#) by Bernard I. Finel. *Armed Forces Journal International*, February 2010.
- The Center for New American Security comments on the essay: This dominant conventional military power motivates other nations to seek nuclear weaponry
- In Harpers: In a review of Gary Wills, NYR of Books, “Bomb Power” US is described as a “Global Gobbler”; and Thomas Jocelyn, In The American Conservative, nuclear weapons led to an imperial President and US empire
- Thus to get others to give up their nuclear capability the US has to give up its conventional superiority—yet the reason the US can give up its nuclear capability is that our conventional capability can do all the necessary deterrent tasks that nuclear weapons can do.
- “The charming belief that the United States could reap the rewards of empire without paying the costs of empire and without admitting that it was an empire.”



# Puzzles #2

New Testament fundamentalism, overlaid by Old Testament righteousness, sustains the conviction of the United States as a new Rome, whose mission it is to punish the guilty, establish absolute security through overwhelming military dominance, and to revolutionize the domestic order of refractory states. That messianic and Manichaean perspective makes us blind to the misgivings and fears of others, incapable of understanding how our way of war generates intense resentment and hatred, and as ready to misread enemy intentions as to view contemptibly the advice of friends. Its roots are cultural or “ideological,” not economic. The American Conservative, “The New Rome”, January 27, 2003

# Puzzles #3: The “Always Blame America Syndrome” Remains Alive and Well

“States and the regimes that rule them want to survive, which means they are very sensitive to external threats to their security. The Bush Doctrine heightened Iran’s sense of vulnerability, which resulted in an acceleration of its nuclear program. In this respect, the administration’s policy—particularly President Bush’s “Axis of Evil” speech—had the effect of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy: it made U.S. relations worse than they already were and triggered a self-defensive reaction by Tehran.”  
“Christopher Layne, The American Conservative 2006

# Puzzles #4: Everything is Not New

- “...instabilities and threats to key US allies or trading partners, and the specter of international terrorism have combined to force a redressing of our National Military Strategy.” CNO Watkins 1986
- ...”Another element of instability in the world environment has been the emergence of terrorism as a means of achieving political ends... Whether seeking political anarchy, a homeland to call his own, or the overthrow of a hated regime, the international terrorist has exhibited a devotion to his cause even unto death that respects neither social mores nor rules of law... The... unpredictability of this threat makes it perhaps the most difficult and frustrating of all to counter and negate.” P.X. Kelly, 1986
- Both quotes are from an assessment by the US Naval Institute, 2/10, of the QDR

# Puzzles #5: Black Sea Flash Point

- RealClearPolitics

February 25, 2010  
Europe's New Flashpoint  
By Daniel McGroarty

The snap visit this week of veteran U.S. diplomat Richard Holbrooke to Georgia - ostensibly to discuss Georgian participation as a supply route to the Afghanistan battlefield - underscores an unsettling new development in U.S.-Russian relations. At the ragged edge of the old East-West divide, a new battle is taking shape: this one for influence over - and under - the Black Sea.

With Romania and Bulgaria's accession to NATO in 2004 alongside the Color Revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, the prospect opened in 2004-5 of a future in which all Black Sea nations save Russia would be NATO nations. Today, history may be doubling back, with the Georgia war demonstrating Russia's willingness to use force to advance its aims...Early this month the U.S. made a surprise announcement welcoming Romania's participation in the Obama administration's revamped BMD system.

The U.S.-Romania announcement was followed immediately by rumors of additional BMD components in Bulgaria and Turkey... This past summer, the USS Stout, a BMD destroyer, paid port of call visits to Constanta, Romania, Varna, Bulgaria and the Georgian ports of Batumi and Poti.

Not to be outdone, the Russian Navy has now struck a deal to buy France's Mistral amphibious landing vessel (France's NATO membership notwithstanding), which, in the words of one overly candid Russian admiral, would have enabled Russia to wrap up the Georgia war "in 45 minutes."

- The Black Sea figures in Russia's South Stream pipeline scheme to transit Russian-sourced natural gas as far west as Austria and Italy - itself a means of undercutting the much-discussed, much-delayed Nabucco pipeline billed as a western-backed way of reducing Russian resource dominance. Add to that the 2009 ruling by the International Court of Justice in the Black Sea boundary dispute recognizing Romania's sovereignty over a swath of the Black Sea bed (Ukraine, much more pliable to Russian pressure, was the loser) which puts the undersea exploitation of sizable oil and gas fields in the hands of a NATO nation. Pipelines criss-crossing the seabed, extraction platforms dotting the coastlines, U.S. missile defense cruisers and destroyers patrolling the surface and paying visits to ports of call, while the Russian Navy anchors at its Ukrainian rent-a-port at Sevastopol: 65 years ago this month, at the Black Sea resort of Yalta, the world's powers mapped the ending of one war while planting the seeds of another. Today, the Black Sea once again figures as a potential fault line for a new round of friction between East *and* West.

*Daniel McGroarty, principal of Carmot Strategic Group, an issues management firm in Washington, D.C., served in senior positions in the White House and at the Department of*

# Puzzle #6: Fiscal Realities

- Missing, however, is an acknowledgement of disconnects between program priorities and existing spending plans. A case in point is shipbuilding. There are also gaps between stated strategic priorities and actual programs, such as long-range strike. Finally, the documents are virtually silent on the dire fiscal straits the country finds itself in, huge federal deficits as far as the eye can see, and the consequences this will have on future defense budgets.
- General Larry Farrell, President, NDIA, March 2010, National Defense, "Defense Budget and QDR Sidestep Critical Issues"

# Summary and Conclusions

- Potholes from the left: Too much money, too many commitments
- Pitfalls on the right: Air power, submarine fleet, inadequate policy guidance, lack of 20 year time frame
- Promises: Anti-access; protecting the global commons; connection to homeland security
- Puzzles: Energy, Purpose of US Power, Black Sea Flash Point, Fiscal Realities

# Timeless Wisdom

- To take General Farrell's remarks further: Eisenhower often said: The most powerful weapon he had in World War II was the extraordinary US economy;
- The first thing President Reagan did was begin to rebuild the US economy; while simultaneously rebuilding the US military; when both well on their way to recovery, he set out to negotiate from a position of strength to compliment his overall design to win the Cold War. His most powerful tool: the extraordinary US economy