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**QDR 2001: AMERICA'S NEW**

**MILITARY ROADMAP**

*Implications for  
Asia and Australia*

*Ron Huisken*



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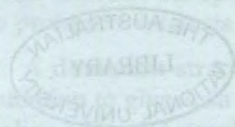
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Canberra  
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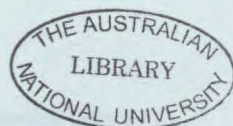
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# QDR 2001: America's New Military Roadmap

## *Implications for Asia and Australia*

*Ron Huisken*

### **Introduction**

The Pentagon probably produces more policy statements, reports, forecasts, visions, reforms, and investigations than any other agency on the planet. Generally speaking, it is sound practice to discount the import of any particular document that emerges from that institution. The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) 2001 may be an exception, despite the fact that it was released just seven days before the launch of operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and which has substantially re-written the manual for the conduct of a campaign with conventional weapons.

There are two reasons for saying this. First, this QDR was the first attempt by the national political leadership to take the revolution in military affairs (RMA) and distil its implications for defence strategy and military posture.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the implications of the RMA were assessed in the context of a security environment that was clearly distinctive (from the Cold War) and considered to be strongly indicative of the conditions that would prevail for the indefinite future.

On the other hand, perceptions of being in the post-Cold War transition period continued to be widely held and would have been a restraining influence on the advocacy of far-reaching change. 11 September changed all that. At least in the United States, the attacks on New York and Washington were seen as the arrival of the future and the definitive end of the post-Cold War era. The coincidence of these two events suggests that QDR 2001 could be an unusually revealing window on the world America expects to see in the opening decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and how it proposes to protect its interests in that world.

A dominant strand in US political rhetoric during the 1990s was the intention to give Asia a more prominent position in its foreign and security policy. Despite emphatic changes in trade and immigration patterns in favour of Asia and the early identification of China as the likeliest strategic competitor (albeit in the relatively distant future), this never really happened. A number of factors contributed to this outcome: greater familiarity with Europe and the Middle East; a relative abundance of policy tools and mechanisms to achieve outcomes (especially in Europe); and a succession of crises, particularly in the Balkans, that consumed the attention of the senior leadership.

The Pentagon's QDR 2001, released on 30 September 2001, signals a clear and pronounced shift in emphasis toward Asia. Just as clearly, this shift transcends the war against terrorism. It is to be hoped that this elevation will be matched by the White House and the State Department. There are grounds for confidence on this score. Speaking to the Japanese Diet on 18 February 2002, President Bush declared that the 'success of (Asia) is essential to the entire world, and I'm convinced the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be the Pacific century'. Whatever the outcome on this score, it is likely that the Pentagon's new roadmap will have important long-term implications for Asia, and for Australia.

### **The 1990s: Some Formative Developments**

#### *The dependability of the US security role*

One of the many distinguishing features of the security scene in Asia has been the reticence of many countries to support openly and clearly the now routine US contention that its commitment to the region, including its forward deployed forces, has been essential to peace and stability. This reticence, variously attributed to a cultural preference for ambiguity or to placating China, led senior US officials to point out quite often that what regional countries said (or did not say) publicly contrasted sharply with their private views.

American confidence in this regard is not been misplaced. Perhaps the strongest indication of this was the profound disquiet caused by US plans in 1990-92 to reduce its forward-deployed forces in Asia (and Europe), and the time it took after these plans were abandoned to restore confidence in the dependability of its commitment. The US may have been deluded by the fact that the end of the Cold War appeared on the surface to have no significant impact in Asia, in stark contrast to the sweeping transformation experienced in Europe. To the extent this was the case, it would suggest that the US was not particularly well attuned to Asian perceptions and concerns. In any event, the US either failed to anticipate or underestimated the widespread sense of uncertainty and disequilibrium that the end of the Cold War engendered in Asia, and the heightened importance most of the region attached to its military presence as a pillar of continuity and stability. This was especially true in Southeast Asia where these uncertainties were magnified by the US withdrawal in 1992 from its large air and naval bases in the Philippines.

Soon after the end of the Cold War, the US announced plans to reduce its military presence in both Europe and Asia. The plans for Asia were foreshadowed in the 1990 and 1992 editions of the periodic policy statements,

United States Security Strategies for East Asia-Pacific'. These plans were abandoned early in 1993 and the US formally committed itself to maintain roughly 100,000 military personnel forward deployed on land and at sea in Asia for the indefinite future. Restoring regional confidence in this commitment became a key policy objective but proved to be surprisingly difficult. For example, in a background briefing in December 1993, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, Winston Lord, declared that 'the Asia Pacific would assume greater importance ... than it has received in the past'. Lord went to say that US policy was 'designed to signal to our Asian friends that the US was going to stay engaged, is going to stay anchored in the region ... because there has been some concern ... that the US may not stay fully engaged'.<sup>2</sup>

Speaking to the Asia Society in New York a few months later, Secretary of State Warren Christopher was even more explicit: 'we have moved the Asia Pacific to the center of America's foreign policy agenda...The stability of the Asia Pacific region is a vital American interest. For 50 years we have understood that the emergence of a dominant hostile power in Asia would threaten important US allies and ultimately America itself.'<sup>3</sup>

Further evidence of US sensitivity in the early 1990s to diminished confidence in its commitment to regional security is provided by Winston Lord's testimony to a Congressional subcommittee in 1996. In commenting on the administration's relatively new position of strong support for multilateral security dialogues, Lord offered the following explanation for America's more cautious attitude in the past:

Previously the US had been cautious about regional security dialogues because it feared our engagement in them could be construed as a mask for our withdrawal from a leadership role in regional security.<sup>4</sup>

Asian concerns about the US commitment lingered on into 1995 and 1996. Fuelling these concerns would have been the particularly acrimonious US-Japan trade disputes of 1994-95, which, for the first time, degenerated to the point where voices on both sides were calling into question the wider political and security relationship. And just as this episode was brought back under control, an ugly rape incident on Okinawa in October 1995 revealed a depth of resentment about the US military presence that surprised both Tokyo and Washington. The two governments were obliged to make a sustained political effort to restore a measure of equilibrium culminating, most particularly, in a reaffirmation of their alliance in the Joint Security Declaration of April 1996. On the other side of the coin, China's provocative missile tests near Taiwan in March/April 1996, and the decisive American response, appear to have been a key episode in restoring

faith in the dependability of the US commitment. Even so, President Clinton used his address to the Australian parliament in November 1996 to say:

Now I know that some people on both sides of the Pacific are concerned that America's continuing involvement with Europe, and our intense renewed involvement with our neighbours in Latin America, will lead to disengagement from the Asia Pacific. They are wrong.... America not only has been, she is and will remain a Pacific power.<sup>5</sup>

Clearly, of course, confidence (or the lack of it) in the US commitment to be a central player on the security scene in East Asia is a relative rather than absolute condition. Even if the US could be said to have eventually overcome the unexpected and unintended concerns generated by its initial instincts to reap a peace dividend from the end of the Cold War, other developments in the region continued to present similar challenges.

One of these developments was the strengthening view in the 1994-95 timeframe that the DPRK was near complete economic collapse, making reunification highly probable and quite imminent. This expectation naturally generated considerable speculation about what would happen to the US forces stationed in South Korea, as well as those in Japan intended, among other missions, to provide prompt reinforcements for Korea. Most assessments, of course, concluded that, in the absence of the military confrontation on the Korean peninsula, the status quo would not be sustainable and that significant reductions in US forces in both Korea and Japan would ensue. To help contain the speculation, the US and ROK governments reached and announced a general understanding that a US military presence was likely to be desirable even after reunification.

A second issue was the quality of the US relationship with China. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the principal strategic mission that Asian states 'assigned' to the United States was to ensure that China's re-emergence as the pre-eminent power in the region was shaped to protect stability and provide strategic space for others in the region. The key client in this regard is Japan for the simple reason that the Japan-China relationship would, over time, increasingly become the co-determinant with the US-China relationship of the general strategic climate in Asia. For Japan, the challenge from China to its broad security interests is more immediate and more comprehensive than was the case with the Soviet Union. And it is likely to be more durable. It is almost axiomatic that Japan would be at least sceptical that Washington will be able and willing to manage this broader agenda of Japanese security interests vis-à-vis China over the longer term. It is certainly clear, in my view, that China's growing political reach and



influence has been more effective in pulling Japan in the direction of a 'normal' state than two decades of pushing from Washington have been.

The smaller states of East Asia, particularly the members of ASEAN, are similarly interested to see China's prospective pre-eminence tempered to preclude absolute hegemony. They are, after all, the prospective 'hegemonees'. And for the foreseeable future, the United States remains the only power capable of fulfilling this role. The primary index of success has been the outlook for a stable accommodation between the US and China that would preclude any pressures to make a fateful strategic choice in favour of one or the other.

It is almost certainly the case that most states in Asia are somewhat dismayed by the state of the US-China relationship. Far from gravitating toward a stable accommodation, the relationship over the past decade has been conspicuously unstable. Moreover, the oscillations have been on a negative trend, resulting in a relationship that is at greater risk of slipping into an adversarial groove. The events of 11 September and the ensuing 'war on terrorism' appeared to have at least arrested the markedly adverse trend since the Bush administration assumed office but it remains to be seen whether this can provide the basis for a durable recovery. Bush's visit to China in February 2002 went smoothly enough, although it was notable that neither side wanted to risk defining the nature of the relationship to which they should aspire.

#### *A military posture for the post-Cold War era*

The nature and duration of the Cold War, the fact that it was not won (or lost) on the battlefield, and the relentless march of events (above all the Gulf war) conspired to essentially deny the US the political opportunity to draw down its military forces and re-structure them for a world without the Soviet Union. In this respect, there was a seamless transition into the post-Cold War era.<sup>6</sup> The onset in 1992-93 of a prolonged expansion of the US economy also contributed through weakening political pressures to scale down the absolute size of the military effort. Pressures for change began to accumulate relatively quickly but the magnitude of the transformation and the sustained high tempo of operations combined to defer any drive toward consensus on where to go and how to get there.

A series of reports in 1996-97 began to coalesce around a number of themes that proved durable and are clearly detectable in QDR 2001. These included, in particular, Joint Vision 2010 (1996), Joint Strategy Review (February 1997), the first QDR (May 1997), all prepared by the Pentagon, and the National Defense Panel (NDP) report of December 1997.

The NDP report is of some note because it was commissioned by the Congress both to evaluate the QDR and to conduct its own review of US military requirements.<sup>7</sup> The NDP confirmed the thrust of earlier reports in identifying as critical capabilities such things as mobility, stealth, speed, increased range, precision strike and a reduced logistical footprint. Compared to the 1997 QDR, the NDP placed more emphasis on the future need to project power in the absence of forward bases (including over greater distances inland), on the ensuring the US capacity to exploit space assets and deny this to an enemy and on the growing threat to the homeland from weapons of mass destruction or attacks on the information infrastructure.

The question of regional priorities was not a direct concern in the NDP report. The report did anticipate that allies would become more important and urged that alliance relationships be invigorated and transformed but offered little in the way of elaboration. One of the members of the NDP subsequently did look in some detail into how alliances might be affected by the coming transformation in America's military posture.

#### *The role of allies*

This investigation, published in February 2000, anticipated many of the themes in QDR 2001, making its analysis and conclusions of particular interest.<sup>8</sup>

The author, Andrew Krepinevich, anticipated that US reliance on allies would grow as the world trended back to multipolarity and great power politics displaced America's 'unipolar moment'. Moreover, as regional powers were building their strength, the US would be compelled to devote more resources to homeland defence leaving relatively less for the function of shaping the security environment through forward deployed and stationed forces. While the aftermath of 11 September would probably lead many people to qualify these broad propositions, the next layer of Krepinevich's argumentation was more durable. First, Asia rather than Europe would be of dominant interest in security terms, increasing the relative value of allies and bases in Asia. Second, access to forward bases could become more problematic for the US as security interests and concerns became more regional. Third, the proliferation of missile, weapon of mass destruction and targeting technologies could render forward bases in some locations highly vulnerable. Fourth, such proliferation could be expected to create formidable capabilities to deny the US access to certain locations or theatres, even on the part of relatively small states.

The policy prescriptions that flowed from this analysis included forging a new division of labour with key allies whereby the US would de-emphasise

its land forces (with the 'slack' taken up by allies) and concentrate on long range precision strike and homeland defence. In addition, certain allies would be encouraged and assisted to acquire the ability to defeat anti-access capabilities. Australia was considered a candidate for this role. Further, while acknowledging the importance of a forward presence for deterrence and shaping purposes, the mix of forward bases and extended range forces in the US posture should change in favour of the latter. To support this new posture, the US should develop a network of peripheral bases from which to employ its extended range forces. Again, Australia (together with Russia and Turkey) emerged 'as an ally whose value might increase substantially under these conditions'.<sup>9</sup>

This eclectic summary hardly does justice to what is a rigorous and thoughtful report, albeit not one unduly complicated by political or diplomatic considerations. At one point, intellectual rigour has the author contending that:

It would be especially helpful if the allies assumed the lead in those missions for which the United States has little capability or appetite – such as those which are manpower intensive, risk substantial casualties or are protracted in nature.<sup>10</sup>

The difficulty here was echoed graphically in February 2002 by leading political figures in Europe. Reflecting on the conduct of the 'coalition' operation in Afghanistan and concerned that the US was determined to expand the campaign to Iraq they spoke of the US treating allies as 'satellite' states (Germany), 'optional extras' (UK), and of being useful to mop up in the mud after the US had removed regimes from the air (France).

The fact remains, however, that the thrust of Krepinevich's argumentation has a strong echo in QDR 2001.

### *Security communities*

Another development of interest in this context was the energetic promotion by CINCPAC Admiral Blair of the concept of 'security communities'. This concept, with intellectual roots in the writings of John Deutsch of the 1950s, simply suggested that regional groupings of states with stable relationships and broadly shared expectations of peaceful change could prepare to address common security concerns collectively but without aspiring to the formality of a defence alliance. Blair considered that the concept could be adapted to the differing conditions in each of the major nodes in the Asia Pacific – Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia – although, in practice, only Southeast Asia was deemed ready to go down this path. In 1999-2000, PACOM used the considerable leverage provided

by its defence engagement funding and military exercise program with Southeast Asia and Australia to drive these countries toward preparing to deal collectively with contingencies like disaster relief, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping. Naturally enough, PACOM endeavoured to exploit and develop the East Timor experience as a springboard.

The PACOM push to create the trappings of a security community in Southeast Asia illustrated the gap between Washington's rhetoric on the primary importance of the Asia Pacific and its actual focus elsewhere. This program had significant political and security implications. These included the challenge to ASEAN's long-standing insistence that it was not a security grouping and the inevitable sensitivities concerning China's perceptions of a US-led effort to organise collective military activities among countries on its periphery. Despite this, the program appears to have been both conceived and implemented by PACOM. Although CINCPAC briefed the Congress in broad terms, there was no indication of interest or support from the leadership in the Pentagon or the State Department. Since this led to a matching lack of interest and support at the political level among regional states, Admiral Blair found the going rather tough.

There is a further dimension of the security communities concept that is important to this discussion. Although the concept tended to focus on the main sub-regions of the Asia Pacific, some CINCPAC presentations suggested that US allies in the region could form the core of a community for some purposes.<sup>11</sup> The political and security connotations of such a construct - essentially a step in the direction of a collective security arrangement - are very different from those associated with the array of separate bilateral alliances that we have now.

So far as I am aware, CINCPAC's comments in this regard, though vague and undeveloped, represented the only official endorsement during the Clinton administration of greater collective military collaboration between US allies in Asia. On the other hand, this potential development had rather more support from the 'administration in waiting', that is, individuals associated with the Republican party and former Republican administrations. Some of these individuals are now senior officials in the Bush administration, suggesting that it may become a more prominent theme in US policy.

For example, Ambassador Robert Blackwill contended in February 2000 that the US, Japan, ROK and Australia needed to begin cooperating far more closely on security issues and even to consider joint planning for military contingencies. Blackwill's principle thesis was that Asia was a dangerous place and that, in the absence for the foreseeable future of effective multilateral

institutions and processes, the security of the region would depend heavily on the US and these three core allies.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, a RAND study on US strategy toward Asia released in May 2001 — prepared by a team headed by Zalmay Khalilzad who has since joined the National Security Council — gave some prominence to ‘multilateralising’ the existing bilateral alliances so that the allies could respond to regional crises as a coalition.<sup>13</sup>

As a final example, there is the continued strong advocacy by the United States that Japan clear the way legally and politically to play a fuller part in shaping and managing the region’s security. The highlight during the Clinton era was the negotiation of revised Defence Guidelines that specified what Japan and the JSDF could actually do in the event that US forces were involved in combat operations that required or would benefit from Japanese assistance.

In October 2000, a high-powered group of Americans prepared a report with a number of far-reaching recommendations on the role that Japan should aspire to play in the world and on how the US-Japan relationship should evolve to support and reflect this transformation.<sup>14</sup> In the security field, the report recommended that the special relationship between the US and Great Britain should be a model for the alliance with Japan, an objective that would involve revolutionary change in the character of the alliance.<sup>15</sup>

The significance of this report lies in the fact that two of the authors, Richard Armitage and Paul Wolfowitz, now hold the No.2 positions in the Departments of State and Defense respectively. Others like Jim Kelly and Torkel Patterson have taken senior positions in the Department of State and the National Security Council. The report would appear to be far too ambitious to be a guide to realistic steps in developing the US-Japan security relationship. At the same time, there is a strong likelihood that it will shape the thrust of US policy toward Japan over the next few years. This was certainly the expectation of senior officials in Tokyo.<sup>16</sup>

The most recent wrinkle along these lines occurred at the Australia-US Ministerial (AUSMIN) talks in Canberra in July 2001. It appears that in informal discussions in the margins of AUSMIN, Foreign Minister Downer proposed a four-cornered security dialogue forum involving Australia, the US, Japan and South Korea.<sup>17</sup> The proposal emerged during the concluding press conference and naturally dominated subsequent press coverage of the meeting. The idea almost certainly surfaced prematurely and the attempts at clarification, inevitably focused on what the proposal was not (not a Pacific NATO, not more than dialogue, not yet agreed with Japan or

even mentioned to South Korea, not necessarily intended to be at the Ministerial level) simply made matters worse. This was most regrettable because the political message in this proposal could add significantly to other developments pointing to an emerging divide in the region between countries clustered respectively around the United States and China.

### *US military posture in the Pacific*

The Pentagon, and more particularly Pacific Command, are key though careful players in shaping the US security posture in Asia. They have a responsibility to help ensure that there is a match between what the political leadership may have to ask of them and the military capabilities they have on hand to accomplish the job. Equally, at the PACOM level, there is a vested interest in a national posture that gives relative prominence to Asia, and supports this in terms of funding and forces. And at the service level there are vested interests in strategies and associated capability mixes that promote the stocks of the service in question. These are obvious points, but should be borne in mind in considering the discussion to follow.

Notwithstanding the consistent depiction of the Asia Pacific as at the centre of US foreign and security policy concerns, the forces assigned to PACOM remained relatively static, as did the forward-deployed elements at roughly 100,000 personnel. There appears to have been no significant or sustained agitation by successive CINCPACs to secure a larger slice of the pie. Similarly, successive CINCPACs preferred to protect what they had and routinely testified to the Congress that the forward-deployed element was adequate to the task.

By the mid-1990s, the senior military leadership had begun to focus on base vulnerability and anti-access capabilities as critical emerging challenges to the projection of US power.<sup>18</sup> These Washington-based comments were generic and tended to avoid identifying particular regions or countries.

Such public advocacy by the military as did occur for a greater focus on the Pacific, and for a re-configuration of force structure and deployment patterns within PACOM theatre, came from the service level, and particularly the Marine Corps. In 1995, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Charles Krulak, began saying publicly that the scale of US interests in Asia, and the potential challenges to those interests, supported a re-orientation of strategic focus away from the Atlantic in favour of the Pacific and Indian ocean regions.<sup>19</sup> This was a risky position to take in that, as noted above, it implicitly contradicted the rhetoric in Washington that such a re-orientation had already taken place and was being acted upon.

A further dimension of Krulak's position responded to the possibility that movement on the Korean peninsula would make basing US troops on the ground in the Western Pacific increasingly problematic. Krulak's solution was to shift towards marines based on ships.<sup>20</sup>

A little over a year later, General Krulak caused another stir, albeit inadvertently. In a Q&A session following a speech in San Diego, he was reported as saying that the US needed to diversify the basing of its forward-deployed forces and identified Darwin as a potentially attractive location.<sup>21</sup> It was the timing and specificity as much as the substance of Krulak's remarks that caused the problem. The 'places not bases' philosophy to diversify and soften PACOM's footprint in the Western Pacific was being openly heralded as increasingly successful.<sup>22</sup> To this extent, and setting aside the diplomatic nicety of forewarning the Australian government, the thrust of Krulak's comments could be regarded as consistent with but ahead of US declaratory policy.

The comments caused a disproportionate stir because Washington and Tokyo had only recently succeeded in dealing with the fallout from the rape incident on Okinawa in October 1995 and restoring a measure of certainty to the stationing of US forces there. Renewed speculation that an alternative location was being considered was the last thing either government wanted.<sup>23</sup> It is noteworthy that even in 1997 CINCPAC, then Admiral Joseph Preuher, continued to regard the issue of a prospective southward shift in the focus of US attention in East Asia as politically sensitive and restricted expression of these views to internal documents. At the mid-1997 conference for CINC's chaired by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to generate 'Issues for the President', Admiral Preuher submitted the following note:

Shifting centroid: Within Asia as a whole, the preponderance of population, economic growth and increases in defense spending are found in China, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. Coming decades will potentially bring ethnic conflicts, succession struggles, and conflicts over resources in these regions. US military presence there will be important to future stability. The US' security alliances with Japan and Korea will not diminish the importance of Northeast Asia. But, the importance of Southeast Asia/South Asia will rise and demand more of our attention in the coming years. The strategic importance of Guam, in particular, will rise over time as a result.<sup>24</sup>

The view that the US should reduce the concentration of its forward presence in North Asia remained in vogue, and some adherents are now in

positions of influence. Richard Armitage, for example, now the Assistant Secretary of State, said in September 2000 that 'over time, I would disperse US forces to a wider area of Asia.'<sup>25</sup>

### **The Bush Administration**

Though constrained by the last budget prepared by the Clinton administration, it was widely anticipated that the Bush administration would move quickly to boost funding for the Pentagon. As a candidate, Bush had signalled the need for far-reaching change in US security policies, notably with respect to ballistic missile defence and the strategic nuclear forces, but also skipping a generation of technology in the conventional sphere to position the US military 'generations' ahead of everyone else.<sup>26</sup>

These expectations were disappointed. The administration essentially proceeded with the defence budget proposed by its predecessor – some US\$324 billion – and indicated that it would defer major decisions until a comprehensive series of reviews had been undertaken. Two of these reviews were mandated by Congress – the Nuclear Posture Review and the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), to be completed in September and December respectively. Of the others, the most notable was the broad mandate given to the Pentagon's in-house think tank, the Office of Net Assessment headed since 1973 by Andrew Marshall, to conduct a comprehensive review of US military strategies and force structure.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the Secretary of Defense tasked David Gompert and the RAND Corporation to conduct a study of US conventional forces as input to the QDR.

Finally, and inevitably, there was a renewed commitment to rationalise the manner in which America armed itself, to apply the techniques of the commercial world to the business of defence and, above all, to displace the four-pronged (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps) procurement process with one driven by joint or unified objectives. To put the Services – and industry and the Congress – on notice that the envisaged transformation of the US military would challenge these entrenched practices, the President (rather than the Secretary of Defense) ordered an immediate review of Pentagon programs. One of the more conspicuous targets of this review was the combat aircraft scene, with the Air Force F-22, the Navy Super Hornet and the tri-service Joint Strike Fighter expected to soak up a large share of the funds needed for transformation.<sup>28</sup>

During the 1990s, the posture that shaped the size of US conventional forces was the ability to fight and win two major regional conflicts (MRC) more or less simultaneously. Although the subject of growing criticism (not



least from the Office of Net Assessment) as a posture that encouraged heavy and inflexible forces that were difficult to move and to support, and ill-suited to the variety of contemporary missions, the 2MRC strategy endured. It was broadly re-affirmed in the 1997 QDR, although it was officially acknowledged that the need and potential for radical change was developing rapidly. For example, the 1998 edition of the East Asia Strategy report noted that:

transformation means harnessing new technologies, operational concepts and organisational structures to give US forces greater mobility, flexibility and military capabilities so that they can dominate any future battlefield.

The improvements in hardware and support systems are not yet at the stage of fundamentally altering our strategic perceptions or force structure in the region, or elsewhere around the world.<sup>29</sup>

With the various reviews and studies barely underway, President Bush continued to make clear that he anticipated embarking on a radical transformation of the US military. In a speech on 13 February 2001, possibly directed at vested interests that would resist change, he said:

Our goal is to move beyond marginal improvements to harness new technologies that will support a new strategy.

We do not yet know the exact shape of our new military, but we know the direction we must begin to travel. On land, our heavy forces will be lighter. Our light forces will be more lethal. All will be easier to deploy and to sustain.

In the air, we will be able to strike across the world with pinpoint accuracy, using both aircraft and unmanned weapons.

On the oceans, we'll connect information and weapons in new ways, maximising our ability to project power over land.

In space, we'll protect our network of satellites...<sup>30</sup>

With respect to the Asia Pacific, official sources indicated as early as April 2001 that the draft QDR called for a re-focusing of US military posture toward Asia.<sup>31</sup> In addition to the statements of intent that prevailed during the 1990s, and the new administration's markedly less sanguine view of China, an important earlier straw in the wind was a CIA report arguing that the risk of major power war was greatest in the Asia Pacific.<sup>32</sup>

The Office of Net Assessment report, which was completed in March but which remained classified, is also likely to have argued strongly for a shift in this direction. An ONA report in 1999 argued that China was the most realistic candidate to emerge over time as a serious strategic competitor to the United States.<sup>33</sup> This report also contended that the US may not be able

to rely indefinitely on foreign bases in Asia and should, therefore, prepare to project power across the Pacific.<sup>34</sup> President Bush clearly endorsed this thinking in his February 2001 speech quoted above.

The inevitable internal controversies over the thrust of QDR 2001 began to seep into the public domain around April/May 2001. While there undoubtedly was a strong element of defending vested interests, it would be unfair to conclude that the motives behind enlisting the media were simply selfish. The substantive choices being considered were difficult, and potentially of great consequence for the national interest.

Stories began to circulate in Washington that Rumsfeld and a small cabal of senior officials were shaping the QDR to the exclusion of the services, Congress and industry. The President pointedly did not intervene, instead reminding the various groups that he had given the Secretary a broad mandate to challenge the status quo. Bush also tried to retain the political initiative through periodically reiterating the broad character of the outcomes that he anticipated. In a speech in May, for example, he again advocated 'a future force that is defined less by size and more by mobility and swiftness, one that [is] easier to deploy and sustain, one that relies more heavily on stealth, precision weaponry and information technology'.<sup>35</sup>

The key substantive issues included the balance between the present and the future, and between mainstream conventional threats and challenges that sought to by-pass American strengths. With the strong confirmation over the course of the 1990s that US conventional military superiority was pretty much absolute, more attention naturally began to be paid to whether and how potential adversaries could inflict harm without confronting the US military directly – the so-called unconventional or asymmetric threats. Secretary Rumsfeld made no secret of his view that asymmetric threats – terrorism, small numbers of ballistic missiles and cyber-attacks – were the main concern and should have a priority claim on new funding. The senior military leadership, looking to the Persian Gulf, Korea and Taiwan, naturally leaned toward protecting US conventional dominance as the first priority.

Another key issue was how, in practice, would one go about transforming the service-based structure of the military. Could it be done gradually across the military as a whole or, given the inherent risks and uncertainties, would it be wiser to create a new formation alongside the present structure and work out from there? There was also the pivotal issue of what yardstick, if any, would be used to determine the size of the US military. In other words, how would one characterise the most demanding mission, or collec-

tion of coincident missions, that the military would be expected to perform successfully? Closely entwined with this issue was the question of determining the relative priority of the various regions — Europe, Middle East, East Asia and the newly-prominent Central Asia.<sup>36</sup>

As expected, the 2MRC strategy was formally dropped around June 2001, at least by Rumsfeld and his senior aides.<sup>37</sup> Crafting alternative guidance to shape the overall size of the military was difficult and controversial. The guidance had to support a defence effort fully adequate to the anticipated strategic environment but also be achievable within politically realistic projections of defence funding. At the same time, with the influence exerted by the 2MRC strategy still a fresh experience, Rumsfeld would have wanted a formulation that could not easily be manipulated by the services and their allies in Congress and industry to press for perpetuating entrenched ways of going about the business of defence.

It appears that one pivotal concept in the new formulation was to require forward-deployed US forces (concentrated in Europe, East Asia and the Persian Gulf) to be capable of defeating any regional threat with minimal reinforcement. The services apparently responded that this would require a significantly larger military force.<sup>38</sup> The Navy, for example, reportedly projected a need for 34 aircraft carriers against the current force of 14, a proposal so preposterous as to suggest that the dialogue with the senior civilian leadership had all but broken down.<sup>39</sup>

The Gompert/RAND study commissioned by Rumsfeld and completed in June 2001 had endorsed the notion that regional forces be capable of coping with essentially all contingencies without reinforcement.<sup>40</sup> The study employed a concept of 'regional' forces that was wider than the remit of any particular theatre commander. It recommended thinking in terms of US conventional forces being divided into three packages — an Eastern and Western regional force and a central contingency force — with the latter being available to supplement either of the regional forces to ensure absolute victory in the largest regional conflict considered plausible.

It could be argued that, in essence, this study retained the 2MRC yardstick. It was, however, helpful to Rumsfeld in several interrelated ways. First, it recast the 2MRC principle to be more flexible. Second, although it embraced the notion of self-sufficiency for the regional forces, these forces were so defined as to make it harder for individual theatre commanders to press for self-sufficient capabilities. Finally, the study was predicated on the view that threats to US security would be more unpredictable and diverse with respect to both nature and location. This in turn supported a

transition to lighter, more mobile regional forces able to project power at greater ranges and implied a diminished emphasis on major conflicts in the Gulf and Korea as the core determinants of force size.

According to one report, the impasse between the Rumsfeld group and the armed forces on the size and shape of the US military led in late July 2001 to revisions of the core principles underpinning the new strategy, including *deletion* of the requirement that regional forces be capable of defeating any threat with minimal reinforcements. While certainly indicative of the intensity of the internal debate, this indication of strong equivocation on a position of great consequence lacked credibility. Just a few days earlier, Secretary Rumsfeld had testified to Congress that 'we believe there's reason to explore enhancing the capabilities of our forward-deployed forces in different regions to defeat an adversary's military effort with only minimal reinforcement'.<sup>41</sup>

During August 2001, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz foreshadowed that the QDR would require the military to be able to win decisively in one major conflict but at the same time to have sufficient capability forward-deployed elsewhere to deter would-be aggressors, and to conduct several smaller scale operations.<sup>42</sup>

### *QDR 2001*

As required, the QDR was submitted to Congress on 30 September 2001.<sup>43</sup> In the meantime, we had 11 September. In his introduction, Secretary Rumsfeld pointed out that the review had been substantially completed before 11 September and that in important ways the attacks had confirmed the strategic direction and planning principles it contained. In this regard, he highlighted the emphasis on homeland defence, the inevitability of surprises, a preparedness for asymmetric threats, the need to develop new concepts of deterrence, and a shift to a capabilities-based strategy rather than one based on specific threats in specific locations.

While this is manifestly the case, it would have been hard to resist the temptation to allow the principal features of Operation Enduring Freedom, launched on 7 October, to influence the fine-tuning of the QDR.

More broadly, QDR 2001 was the first comprehensive attempt in a national strategy document to take the seemingly distinctive security contours of the contemporary world together with the defining features of the RMA and arrive at desired organisational characteristics for the US military, and for its global posture that were markedly different from those currently in place. As a first cut at engineering a transformation of the US military, the

balance between change and continuity is struck heavily in favour of the latter. There are a number of good and obvious reasons for this. These include the reality that everything has to be endorsed and funded by Congress where the views and interests are shaped by a multitude of considerations. In addition, the US undoubtedly feels that it has little scope to allow any transformation to proceed at a pace that might risk even a temporary loss of readiness and capability. And finally, the US will have considered the demonstrated sensitivity of many allies and friends to continuity and stability in its commitment to regional security.

These considerations, of course, have been rendered somewhat prosaic by the tumultuous circumstances in which the QDR was finalised. The document is undoubtedly regarded in Washington not just as a beginning, as Rumsfeld contended in his introduction, but as draft. The campaign against terror is transforming the prevailing military paradigm far more effectively than any amount of horse-trading in Washington over concepts and words. For all this, there is much in the QDR that can reasonably be expected to become an enduring feature of US security policy and strategy. Moreover, these prospective developments are likely to have profound implications for the management of security issues, especially in Asia, and especially for allies of the United States.

### *Size*

As foreshadowed, the essence of the 2MRC strategy was retained as a broad yardstick against which to measure the most demanding scenario the US military was expected to encounter:

The United States will continue to meet its commitments around the world, including in Southwest and Northeast Asia, by maintaining the ability to defeat aggression in two critical areas in overlapping time frames (p.18);

and

For planning purposes, US forces will remain capable of swiftly defeating attacks against US allies and friends in any two theatres of operation in overlapping timeframes. (p.21)

The QDR introduced a distinction between 'defeating attacks' in two theatres simultaneously and 'decisively defeating an adversary', a capability that would be required for only one theatre (p.17). This may appear as a shortening of the 2MRC yardstick, but only until one reads that 'decisive defeat could include changing the regime of an adversary state or occupation of foreign territory until US strategic objectives are met.'(p.13) If anything, this represents a more demanding articulation of the 2MRC doctrine.

### *Forward deployed capabilities*

Whatever the veracity of the reports noted above that consideration was given to deleting the requirement that forces stationed/deployed forward be self-sufficient across the threat spectrum, this demanding requirement became a key recommendation. This was done, however, with the addition of a critical transformational element that should attenuate any pressures for a linear expansion of the current force structure. The key observation calls for:

enhancing the future capability of forward deployed and stationed forces, coupled with global intelligence, strike and information assets in order to deter aggression or coercion with only modest reinforcement from outside the theater. (p.12)

Elsewhere, the report notes that:

Capabilities and forces located in the continental United States and in space are critical elements of this new global posture. Long-range strike aircraft and special operations forces provide an immediately employable supplement to forward forces to achieve a deterrent effect in peacetime. (p.26)

Although this language refers to the state of affairs intended to result from the transformation process, it describes rather accurately how the campaign in Afghanistan was actually conducted.

### *Regional priorities*

There is no language in the QDR that explicitly identifies or alters the ranking of individual regions as areas of priority interest. This is understandable and sensible from the political or diplomatic standpoint. Just as in earlier documents of this kind, one has to assess what the pecking order is and how it has changed. That said, it is a relatively simple matter to conclude that, alongside the campaign against terror, the focus of US attention in strategic and security terms has shifted to East Asia. The report notes that:

...Asia is gradually emerging as a region susceptible to large-scale military competition.

...the region contains a volatile mix of rising and declining regional powers.

The possibility exists that a military competitor with a formidable resource base will emerge in the region. (p.4)

This new strategic focus has been reinforced through separating the Korean peninsula — the central US military preoccupation over the past 50 years — from what is now called the East Asian Littoral. The report defines

this construct as 'the region stretching from south of Japan through Australia and into the Bay of Bengal'. (p.2) While Australians may still debate whether we should regard ourselves as in, out or of Asia, the Pentagon has clearly ruled us in.

In addition, many of the decisions described as already taken to begin putting the new global posture in place concern this new region, notably:

Additional carrier battle group deployments to the western Pacific;

Exploring the scope to homeport 3-4 additional surface ships, and cruise missile-carrying submarines in the western Pacific;

Planning to provide more contingency basing for Air Force aircraft in the Pacific and Indian Ocean[s];

Looking to allies and friends in the western Pacific to allow the Marine Corps to conduct training for littoral warfare; and

Developing options for additional pre-positioning of Marine Corps equipment in the Indian Ocean/Arabian Gulf area. (p.27)

Perhaps because the new focus was so clear, CINCPAC Admiral Blair saw no point in being cute: 'Now you find that East Asia comes first, Southwest Asia second and Europe third', the reverse of the priority order in the past.<sup>44</sup>

### *Bases and places*

As we have seen, the adequacy of the network of US military bases around the world has been an issue throughout the 1990s. The concentration of bases in Europe and Northeast Asia, the vulnerability of the forces stationed at these bases to modern weaponry, the relative heaviness and immobility of these forces and the resolve of host governments to guarantee access in all circumstances have all been the subject of sustained scrutiny and criticism.

These concerns were not by any means ignored or resisted by the Pentagon. The prepositioning and the 'places not bases' programs confirm the contrary. At the same time, it is probably the case that, over the 1990s, these programs were increasingly pursued on an opportunity basis rather than as a national or even a Pentagon priority. This is set to change. The QDR foreshadows a determined effort to acquire 'additional bases and stations beyond Western Europe and Northeast Asia' (p.26), while at the same time making clear that the United States will not become dependent on such facilities:

The distances are vast in the Asian theater. The density of US basing and en route infrastructure is lower than in other critical regions. The United States also has less assurance of access to facilities in the region. This places

a premium on securing additional access and infrastructure agreements and on developing systems capable of sustained operations at great distances with minimal theater-based support. (p.4)

The report also flagged support for the idea that the major permanent bases in Europe and Northeast Asia should over time be viewed as staging bases for the projection of power further afield (p.27). This was an important recommendation in the Gompert/RAND study, together with the proposal that forces stationed at these bases should be made lighter and more mobile.<sup>45</sup> As we saw earlier, the US has been saying for a number of years that, as tensions eased on the Korean peninsula, its forces based in Korea and Japan could be re-structured and directed toward the broader regional security role. CINCPAC re-affirmed this broad intention in the context of the QDR.<sup>46</sup>

A second strand in the US strategy to protect these bases has been to be more responsive to pressures in both countries to soften the impact of its military presence, particularly in social and environmental terms. A significant re-configuration of the US presence in Okinawa has been the subject of intense joint scrutiny and negotiation since the rape incident of October 1995. In Korea, a study is underway on moving the US military out of Seoul and consolidating its other facilities on the peninsula.<sup>47</sup>

The US recently opened negotiations with Vietnam on access to Cam Ranh Bay for naval port calls.<sup>48</sup> Currently, Cam Ranh Bay is an extra-territorial Russian base under a lease negotiated with the Soviet Union in 1979. The lease expires in 2004 and Russia indicated last year that it would not seek to renew it. While this development is consistent with the QDR, the possibility has been spoken of discreetly for several years (by Americans) and it is likely that discussions with Vietnam on whether to open negotiations predate the QDR.

### **Implications for Australia**

Apart from the broader foreign and security policy challenges that QDR 2001 may pose for Australia, there are two more specific issues that are worth highlighting.

#### *Interoperability*

The aspiration to be able to operate effectively alongside US forces across the full spectrum of conventional warfare has been a hallmark of the Australia-US alliance, the only US alliance in the Asia Pacific in which full interoperability is a declared ambition. It is an aspiration that drives the high-end capabilities the ADF seeks to acquire, and it dominates the bilateral training and exercise program.



Interoperability is a condition that is costly and difficult to attain and maintain. Two large organisations undergoing essentially unsynchronised evolution in terms of culture, weapons and equipment, planning processes, doctrine and tactics quickly lose the ability to integrate seamlessly. Even if the weaponry and major supporting systems are broadly compatible, constant practice is required to detect divergent practices that could present unpleasant surprises in real operations.

Having interoperability as a declared alliance objective is important to Australia, and to the ADF in particular. Politically, this ambition signals Australia's preparedness, in principle, to join the United States in operations that have no direct association with the defence of Australia but seek to uphold shared values or principles of international conduct like those enshrined in the charter of the United Nations. This implicit commitment is important to Washington. And the fact that Australian and US forces have been together in nearly every major operation since World War 2 adds immeasurably to the quality of the relationship that prevails today.

The objective of interoperability has also provided a demanding benchmark for the ADF and a rationale for a degree of access to US weapons, technologies, doctrinal developments and so on that is second to none. This, in turn, has been indispensable to Australia's post-Vietnam aspiration to the self-reliant defence of our large continent. Although encouraged by the 1969 'Nixon Doctrine', Australia took this course for its own reasons – sovereignty and political independence.<sup>49</sup> Again, however, Washington naturally values, and is inclined to assist, allies that are genuinely determined to provide for their own defence and not depend on the US to come to their assistance. What these various considerations amount to, in essence, is that, in the absence of the alliance, Australia would have had to spend a great deal more than it has to acquire a military force as effective as the ADF.

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States has been the 'only superpower' and a state enjoying a 'unipolar moment'. These labels, however, hardly convey the extent of America's military pre-eminence. The US now accounts for some 40 per cent of global military expenditure, spending more than all the other major powers combined. Although difficult to measure, its dominance in the generation of new technology and in testing the applicability of new technology to the business of war is almost certainly more pronounced. In the Gulf in 1991, and then in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, the US has applied, developed and refined conventional capabilities that, in total, warrant the label 'revolutionary'. Moreover, these capabilities are presently beyond the reach of any other state and are likely to remain so for some time.

The erosion of interoperability even with its major NATO partners has been rapid and deep. This has been the case even though that erosion has been identified for many years as a serious problem for the alliance and one that both Washington and Brussels have expressed a determination to address (through the Europeans lifting their game and the US reaching down to help them up). If the problem is serious for the likes of the UK and France (with defence budgets 10-15 per cent of the US), we should expect it to be even more so for Australia (with a defence budget about 2 per cent of the US).

There undoubtedly are, and will be, elements of these new conventional capabilities that will be attractive to the ADF as means of enhancing its ability to perform its prescribed missions. It is equally certain that there will be much more that is simply attractive to the ADF. This is a familiar problem for our defence managers. Being so small but also so close to the US military complex, presents a continuous risk to the broader national objectives of having a balanced, sustainable force that is substantially self-reliant. With a small budget but constantly in the company of the super-rich, it is only too easy for the ADF to get in over its head or bite off more than it can chew, and end up with significant stresses and distortions in its force posture. And in managing such stresses, it will be tempting to consider solutions that directly or indirectly compromise self-reliance.

Although the problem is familiar, it seems set to become much more formidable. The rapid maturing of the RMA is transforming the conventional battlefield, at least any battlefield involving the United States. Determining how quickly, and how far, and along how many axes we afford to follow the US lead will be very difficult. There is the further consideration of the diversification of our core defence missions following the 1997 Strategic Review and the White Paper in 2000. Most particularly, there is a commitment to a significantly enhanced capacity to respond, in coalition with regional states, to contingencies in maritime Southeast Asia. Indicative funding for this capacity has been foreshadowed in the White Paper but it still has to be acquired.

It might therefore be timely to review the prevailing guideline that the ADF should be capable of contributing to US-led coalitions with force elements at the top end of the capability spectrum. ADF assets of this calibre are, and always will be, extremely modest in number, and those fully ready to deploy at short notice to high-threat environments even more so. It is most unlikely that the United States would regard a contraction in interoperability along these lines as a sign of a weaker commitment to the alliance. Interoperability, and the attendant political expectation that shared values and interests will often see our forces operating together, would remain a core feature of the alliance.

### *Forward Deployed and Stationed Forces*

The QDR signals the US intention to change, possibly significantly, its forward-deployed posture. This change is likely to have these dimensions: the size and character of the forces, and their dispersion around the western Pacific and Indian Oceans. This is not a straightforward issue. We saw how US plans in the early 1990s to draw down its forces in East Asia generated concerns about US reliability that Washington simply had not anticipated. Moreover, the indications are that such perceptions endured for some considerable time, making the damage to some extent irreparable. Restoring confidence in the US commitment took years and involved the US tying itself ever more tightly to the figure of roughly 100,000 personnel forward deployed in the Pacific.

In the late 1990s, Washington signalled cautiously that cumulative technological developments would in due course allow and/or require changes to the posture associated with 100,000 benchmark. QDR 2001 effectively commits the US to the political challenge of managing a significant re-configuration of its forward-deployed forces in Asia.

Indicative of the options that will be assessed will be to relocate the Marine Corps forces based on Okinawa that do not have an integral capability to deploy elsewhere with their equipment. This would mean retaining on Okinawa the 31<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit and its three amphibious ships, plus sufficient personnel to ensure that the core facilities on the island would be available as a staging base in a crisis. This concept would release perhaps 15,000 marines for redeployment elsewhere in the region or back to the US.<sup>50</sup>

The US can be expected to seek the advice and counsel of allies and friends in shaping its preferences. A force posture that feels right from the military point of view will not necessarily be dramatically different from one that does the right thing politically. But it would be wise to be alert to this possibility. Can there be too little or too much? Is credibility quantitative or qualitative? What weight should be given to visible forces versus over-the-horizon capabilities from the standpoint of shaping the attitudes and perceptions of regional states.

A United States that is deeply wired into the Asian security scene is among Australia's foremost interests. Any significant transformation in how the United States intends to accomplish this is of keen interest to Australia. It is very important to Australia that we can continue to be strongly supportive of the US security posture in greater Asia. The government should ensure that we are privy to US thinking in its formative stages and prepared to make the fullest use of opportunities to shape that thinking.

QDR 2001 could have more immediate consequences for Australia in the form of heightened US interest in a more permanent military presence in Australia. US interest in Australia in this regard has been modest to date. Our large landmass and relatively uncluttered electromagnetic environment has made us attractive as a ground station for intelligence and early-warning satellites. But we are too far from the areas of strategic interest to the US, and from the major air and sea routes connecting these areas and the US to be attractive as a base or transit point.

Although not a declared policy principle for either of the major political parties, both sides have in the past stressed that there are no armed foreign military personnel based in Australia. This was done mainly in the context of addressing domestic opposition to the Joint Defence Facilities at Pine Gap, Nurrungar and North West Cape and presumably reflected the judgment that the Australian public valued that indicator of independence and autonomy.

In a partial departure from this practice, the incoming Coalition government in 1996 telegraphed its interest in allowing the US to pre-position military equipment and supplies in Australia. This position reflected a misreading of US interests and the offer was declined. In its place, in-principle agreement was reached at AUSMIN in July 1996 to make available additional training areas in Northern Australia for US ground forces – particularly the Marine Corps – to conduct full-scale exercises with heavy weapons. This understanding is still in place although the Marine Corps has only conducted light training with its units deploying by sea to and from the Persian Gulf. The limiting factors appear to have been climatic and environmental constraints in Northern Australia, and the cost of transporting men and equipment to so distant a location.

QDR 2001 signals a change in the US calculus on these questions. In particular, the interest in talking to allies about areas in which the Marine Corps could conduct training for littoral warfare is likely to be focused on Australia. Similarly, the wording suggests a stronger interest in the wider dispersal of pre-positioned equipment that may discount Australia's geographic disadvantages. Similarly, the interest in having more pre-prepared contingency bases from which to operate long-range strike forces could include Northern Australia.

Geography is still likely to make Australia unattractive as a basing option for ground forces. The interest in broadening the focus of US power and influence beyond Northeast Asia and addressing domestic opposition in Japan and South Korea to bearing what is now seen as a disproportionate share of the burden of hosting US forces could, however, result in stronger US interest in such a development.<sup>51</sup>

## Conclusion

The United States now dominates the world as no great power has done in recorded history. This is true in terms of raw economic power, the creation and application of new technologies and, of course, military capabilities of unmatched mass, precision and reach. It has no peers and it could be decades before one — probably China and/or Russia — so much as appears on the horizon.

With no conventional challenge in sight but with so much to lose, the growing preoccupation in Washington in recent years has been whether informal or unconventional or asymmetric means were or could become available to those who might wish America harm. 11 September was worse than anything that had been seriously imagined: utterly devastating, yet devastatingly simple. And it shook America to the core.

Washington had already settled on the broad outlines of a new conventional force posture judged to offer the best marriage of technological opportunities and the distinctive character of potential security challenges likely to arise over the coming decades. The attacks on 11 September, and the Taliban's unwillingness or inability to separate itself from Al Qaeda allowed key dimensions of the new posture to be tested operationally as soon as they had been crafted. The transformation of an institution as large and entrenched as the US armed forces was expected to take a decade or longer in the best of circumstances. The extraordinary circumstances surrounding QDR 2001 could well generate the political and bureaucratic momentum to accelerate the transformation, even as changes and adjustments along the way result in a final product significantly different from that now envisaged.

To paraphrase President Bush, the United States will aspire to keep the peace by redefining war on its terms.<sup>52</sup> The capabilities-based approach to sizing and shaping the US military is linked to the view that the global security scene will be so turbulent and unpredictable that the United States will not be able to anticipate who will challenge their interests, or where or in what way. The intention, therefore, is to be able to bring military force to bear quickly, precisely and decisively anywhere in the world and across a broad spectrum of conflict ranging up to full-scale war in two regions in the same timeframe. Moreover, the forces deployed and stationed abroad will be made capable in themselves of addressing most contingencies. Only in the extreme case of war against a major regional power should it be necessary also to involve forces based in the continental United States.

The forward deployed and stationed forces in particular will be made lighter and more responsive (agility/mobility) but also more lethal through

cultural and organisational change to take fuller advantage of new technologies. Subject, of course, to negotiations with allies and friends, these forces will be distributed across a somewhat wider network of bases and stations. And there will be a still wider network of bases and facilities to which access has been agreed and which have been prepared for use on a contingency basis.

QDR 2001 also reflects an important qualitative shift in how the United States addresses the world. It has certainly felt the weight of responsibility and heightened exposure to risk that came with the status of sole superpower. Everyone who wanted attention went to or went after the United States. At the same time, Washington has not been immune to the temptations associated with being the sole superpower. These two aspects of unipolarity have been mutually reinforcing, and as the reality of this condition sank in over the course of the 1990s, US external policies acquired a stronger unilateral flavour. This trend became noticeably more explicit with the arrival of the Bush administration and received a further massive boost from the events of 11 September.

QDR 2001 can certainly be read as an assertive and indiscriminate declaration by the United States that it will seek to shape the global security environment far more pervasively than in the past. With regard to both tone and substance, this posture cannot at this point be separated from the events of 11 September. Some re-calibration can be expected as time and substantial success in dismembering Al Qaeda allow this event to put in greater perspective. It is also clear, however, that US thinking was very much heading in this direction prior to 11 September and that any re-calibration will be a question of degree<sup>53</sup>. Similarly, while most states are prepared for the time being to be unusually tolerant of US policies and actions in the security sphere, that can also be expected to erode over time.

Putting in place the security posture sketched out in QDR 2001, particularly with the attitudes and mindsets now prevailing in Washington, is therefore likely to become increasingly controversial over time, and to pose awkward policy choices for close allies like Australia.

## Notes

- 1 One of the best assessments of the RMA remains, Eliot A. Cohen, 'A Revolution in Warfare', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1996, pp.37-54.
- 2 Background Briefing with Senior State Department Official, Foreign Press Center, Washington, 21 December 1993.
- 3 US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, speech to the Asia Society, New York, 27 May 1994.
- 4 Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, prepared testimony before the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee, Washington, 30 May 1996.
- 5 President Bill Clinton, address to a joint sitting of the Australian Parliament, Canberra, 20 November 1996.
- 6 The literature on how the US should manage the transition from the Cold War is naturally voluminous. For a short but illuminating comment see Eliot A. Cohen, 'What To Do About National Defense', *Commentary*, November 1994, pp.21-32.
- 7 National Defense Panel, 'Transforming National Defense: National Security in the 21st Century', Washington DC, US GPO, December 1997.
- 8 Andrew Krepinevich, 'Transforming America's Alliances', Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Washington DC, February 2000.
- 9 *Op.cit.*, p.66.
- 10 *Op.cit.*, pp.80-81.
- 11 Statement by Admiral Blair before the House Armed services Committee on the Fiscal Year 2001 Posture Statement, 15 March 2000.
- 12 Robert D. Blackwill & Paul Dibb, eds, *America's Asian Alliances*, MIT Press, 2000, p.111-134. In addition to contributing a chapter to the book, Dibb included a comment contesting several of Blackwill's arguments.
- 13 Zalmay Khalilizad et al, *The United States and Asia: Toward a New US Strategy and Force Posture*, RAND Corporation, 15 May 2001.
- 14 'The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Relationship', Institute for National Security Studies, National Defense University, Washington DC, 11 October 2000.
- 15 Australia's official position on this issue remains rather more circumspect. During a visit to Tokyo in May 2001, Foreign Minister Downer reiterated Australia's long-standing support for a broader Japanese role but carefully indicated that Japan should seek initially to play a fuller part in international peacekeeping efforts. See Michael Millett, 'Downer calls for greater Japanese role in peacekeeping', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 May 2001, p.10.
- 16 See, for example, Jason Sherman, 'Japan Anticipates US Will Propose Wider Peacekeeping, Military Roles', *Defense News*, 12 March 2001; and Jason Sherman, 'Japan Lawmakers Seek Stronger US Ties', *Defense News*, 7 May, 2001. p.3.
- 17 Robert Garran, 'New Security Grouping', *The Australian*, 31 July 2001.

- 18 See for example, the comments by General Fogleman, then the Air Force Chief of Staff, cited in Bill Gertz, 'The Air Force and Missile Defense', *Air Force Magazine*, February 1996, p.72; and an article by the then Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jay Johnson, 'Anytime, Anywhere', *Proceedings*, November 1997.
- 19 Richard Halloran, 'The Krulak Doctrine', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 September 1995.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 'Krulak Urges Asia Military Coalition', *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 6 December 1996, p.4.
- 22 For example, in his testimony to Congress in May 1996 (see note 3 above), Winston Lord referred to Malaysia, Indonesia and especially Singapore in this regard.
- 23 Similar considerations led the US to resist offers from the new government in Australia to consider favourably the pre-positioning of defence materiel. See my *ANZUS: Life After 50*, SDSC Working Paper No.362, July 2001, p.10.
- 24 I am grateful to the current CINCPAC, Admiral Blair, for authorising the release of this excerpt.
- 25 Quoted in Jason Sherman, 'Two Candidates Differ on Asia, NMD Issues', *Defense News*, 20 November 2000.
- 26 Jerome Grossman, 'Pentagon Studies Offer Opportunities for Policy Overhaul', *Defense News*, 12 March 2001.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Other reviews addressed financial management, quality of life issues for military personnel, space, crisis management, and the transformation process.
- 29 *The United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region, 1998*, Washington DC 1998, p.16.
- 30 Speech in Norfolk, Virginia, 13 February, 2001.
- 31 Jason Sherman, 'Eyes Fixed on New Administration's Posture in Asia', *Defense News*, 16 April 2001.
- 32 'Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Nongovernmental Experts', *National Intelligence Council, CIA*, December 2000, p.63.
- 33 'Rumsfeld's Revolution', *The Economist*, 26 May 2001.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Remarks by the President at US Naval Academy Commencement, Annapolis, Maryland 25 May 2001. Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.
- 36 In light of the campaign in Afghanistan, it is of interest to note that even in 1997 National Security Adviser Sandy Berger spoke of the Caucasus and central Asia as becoming increasingly important for US engagement in view of its great resource potential and strategic location. See Samuel R. Berger, 'A Foreign Policy Agenda for the Second Term', speech to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington DC, 27 March 1997.
- 37 Thomas E. Ricks, 'Military Cuts are Implied in New Strategy', *Washington Post*, 25 July 2001.



- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Thomas E. Ricks, 'Review Fractures Pentagon', *Washington Post*, 14 July 2001.
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- 48 Michael Richardson, 'US Seeks More Access to Bases in Southeast Asia', *International Herald Tribune*, 8 February 2002.
- 49 In 1969, a speech by President Nixon signalled to the allies in East Asia that the US would be most reluctant to again commit forces to a ground war in Asia and that Washington expected them to provide for their own defence to a greater extent. As the speech was given in Guam, this policy statement is also known as the Guam doctrine.
- 50 See Michael O'Hanlon, 'Come Partly Home, America', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2001.
- 51 A former senior Pentagon official closely involved in managing defence relations with Australia has flagged this as a 'possibility'. See, Kurt M. Campbell, 'The Cusp of Strategic Change in Asia', *Orbis*, Summer 2001, p.382.
- 52 Remarks by the President to the Troops and Personnel, Norfolk Naval Air Station, 13 February 2001.
- 53 An American journalist recently highlighted the parallels between the 'grand strategy' emerging under President Bush in 2001/2 and work done at the direction of then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney in 1990/92 by, among others, Paul Wolfowitz. As with the QDR 2001, that work emphasised the scope for the US, as the sole superpower, to pro-actively shape the security environment, including preventing any other nation or alliance from becoming a major power. See Nicholas Lemann, 'The Next World order', *The New Yorker*, 1 April 2002, pp.42-48.

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Strategic and Defence Studies Centre  
Australian National University

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- to achieve quality in its scholarly publication programme, which will enhance the Centre's international reputation;
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