

## Reworking The Warfare Equation

By F. Andy Messing and Mariel Rodriguez

Between the selection of a new defense and foreign affairs team and the Democratic Party's control of Congress, future U.S. warfare strategies will be significantly impacted.

This, considered in conjunction with deteriorating economic conditions, will alter the current paradigm. President-elect Barack Obama has recognized how national security and the economic issues are interrelated and accordingly, he and his security team will have to alter America's approach quickly. The U.S. cannot afford to have an open checkbook as in Vietnam and Iraq, where mainly conventional military mass was applied. Noted futurist Alvin Toffler contended that, "As we transition from brute-force to brain-force economies, we also necessarily invent what can only be called 'brain-force war.'" "Thus, we will have to use less brute force and more brainpower in future wars.

The defense establishment will face tens of billions of dollars in cutbacks and will therefore be forced to prioritize purchases and personnel costs to a greater degree. This will cause an internecine rivalry among the services for funding that is unprecedented. The military will downsize and customize its equipment acquisition programs to reflect the amount of personnel and equipment it will have in the future.

Furthermore, current demographics may lend to second tier, lower paid, and shorter duration draft service members, with an enhanced Reserve and National Guard. This is because a large volunteer army will be so costly. We need to develop additional methods to enhance our military capability, apart from outsourcing with contractors, and forcing the need for additional troops through awkward mechanisms.

Our 1.4 million Guard and Reserve members will have to take up even more of the responsibility because the U.S. may draw down its 1.2 million active troops to under a million. Even more exacting intelligence will be critical to preserve an effective combat force. Everything will have to be tailored to each international situation. Future conflicts will increasingly rely on an ability to strike surgically, on solid actionable intelligence anywhere, anytime with the smallest force capable of implementing control over the objective. This will be ever more important in counterproliferation situations.

We cannot keep trying to convert conventional forces, like heavy brigades with tanks, to fight irregular wars when they are not designed to do so. Simply calling them "Special Operations Forces" and providing them a rehashed field manual will not magically get the mission done, or correctly done. In view of our new environment, expensive conventional forces will probably be reduced, thrusting us into different ideas for their employment.

Our redesigned military approaches will have an increased dependence on irregular warfare forces. As Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England has just stated in a recent proclamation, irregular forces must be considered on a par with conventional forces, recognizing that irregular forces are cheaper to employ in terms of manpower, overall cost and political risk. We must fight irregular wars as such, and we must fight them with irregular warriors. It is ironic that on the same day of Mr. England's proclamation, a conventional armor corps general was appointed to head the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command, which dictates Army training methods and overall philosophy.

Adding to this warfare equation is the expanding role of China as it scrambles for natural resources and engages in military interventions for strategic advantage — directly and indirectly — in places like Burma and Sudan. China's offensive space program is accelerating and will alter the worldwide balance of power. The Chinese are extending themselves far beyond their borders to regions from Africa to South America. Compounding this concern is the reemergence of Russia as an offensive threat, as it pumps more resources into its military machine and slyly reinvigorates its support for international governments opposing U.S. policies. This is evidenced in recent military pacts with Iran and Venezuela. These efforts have the potential to significantly enhance the capabilities available to stateless terrorists with anti-American sentiments, further jeopardizing our national security.

Lastly, America will have to reevaluate its bases abroad and determine their economic impact. President-elect Obama, his fellow Democrats in Congress and his Pentagon have to understand that redesigning our forces must be smarter as the dollars shrink in value or disappear. Mr. Obama's push for "change" will be realized because we will be forced into change. The change we will see, however, will not be simply because of his philosophy, but because of our security and economic climate.

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