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Mr. Chairman, Mr. Skelton, members of the Committee, it is a distinct pleasure to appear before you today. A priest once told me that, no matter how I strayed in life, the doors of the Church would always be open to me; a former staffer invited to give testimony in this sacred spot has the same premonition.

I am particularly pleased to testify on the subject of the Quadrennial Defense Review. A good deal of my work here involved the legislation enabling the QDR and the oversight of the process. Indeed, many of the issues associated with this year's review give me a strong sense of déjà vu.

This is at least the fifth formal attempt to align the U.S. military with the demands of the post-Cold-War world – from the “Base Force” plan of the first Bush Administration through the 1993 Bottom-Up Review and three QDRs, the essential questions have remained identical: how to preserve the great-power peace won through the Cold War, and how to protect the flowering of freedom and the growing prosperity that the peace occasioned. In sum, the defense of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness on a global scale. And the key to this has been – as it remains now – the international leadership of the United States.

The desire to maintain global leadership is a very tall order for the U.S. military, for a variety of reasons. One, it's been an expanding task for a force substantially smaller than it was; members will remember the committee's complaints during the 1990s about “doing more with less.” We are now doing much, much more with less and less.

Two, there aren't many allies to be found, either internationally and militarily or among the other agencies of the U.S. government. The “burdensharing” debates of the 1990s seem quaint by comparison to what we face today. The Bush Administration deserves great credit for transforming the alliance with Japan and trying to build a partnership in India, but help is not on the way any time soon.

And three, there are a lot of enemies and potential enemies. As President Clinton's former Director of Central Intelligence James Woolsey put it long ago, we slew

the Soviet dragon only to find the garden infested with snakes. Smaller, but still poisonous.

Until recently, a fourth problem has been our difficulty in admitting our own ambitions. The Pentagon has long pretended that it is plagued by “strategic uncertainty.” But in fact, the National Security Strategy, the so-called “Bush Doctrine,” gives quite clear guidance; although the White House is working on an updated strategy, the basic principles will remain the same, just as there is great continuity between Bush strategy and Clinton strategy. Last year, in anticipation of the QDR, I wrote a report on *The Military We Need: The Defense Requirements of the Bush Doctrine*. This testimony is based upon that work. I believe that copies have been made available to the committee.

### ***Three Missions, Three Measures***

Beyond the defense of the American homeland, preserving the world we’ve got imposes three security demands. The first is to preserve the great-power peace; that means integrating China, the only possible great-power competitor, into the existing order. That isn’t a prediction of a war with Beijing, just a recognition of its rapidly growing military power.

The second demand is that we win what the QDR calls “The Long War” in the greater Middle East. More about this later, but the real innovation of the Bush Doctrine is the recognition of the underlying and fundamental political problem in the Islamic world, particularly in Arabia. The failures of governance in the region have created a very violent and dangerous set of problems, not only for the peoples of the region, but for us. Returning to the pre-9/11 status quo, of relying on the region’s own autocrats, to maintain “stability” – and stable energy prices – is not a viable option.

The third demand is to figure out a better way to deal with weak states with nuclear weapons. As North Korea and Iran remind us almost daily, nuclear-armed rogues confound the usual calculus of the balance of power; Iran’s coming mixture of recycled nuclear fuel with recycled revolutionary fervor makes the North Koreans look staid. Even a nominally friendly regime like Pakistan demonstrates the strategic conundrum that flows from the toxic combination of weak government and nuclear know-how.

The QDR does address these three demands – and the missions of homeland “defense in depth.” The China question, which has been a growing concern in the department for a decade and already a shaping factor in the 2001 QDR, gets the most thorough treatment. While trying to encourage Beijing to act like a “stakeholder” in the *Pax Americana* and encouraging “China to choose a path of peaceful economic growth and political liberalization rather than military threat and intimidation,” the report acknowledges that “the pace and scope of China’s military build-up already puts regional military balances at risk.” This is the thinking that is reflected, for example, in the reposturing of U.S. forces in the Pacific.

The QDR also discusses the potential for Chinese provocations by unconventional means; these are the asymmetric capabilities that can accelerate the ways by which China can become, in the Pentagon's terminology, a "disruptive" power. The report forecasts that Beijing "is likely to continue making large investments in high-end...capabilities, emphasizing electronic and cyber-warfare; counter-space operations; ballistic and cruise missiles; advanced integrated air defense systems; next-generation torpedoes; advanced submarines; strategic nuclear strike from modern, sophisticated land- and sea-bases systems; and theater unmanned aerial vehicles for employment by the Chinese military and for global export." A great-power competitor if ever there were one; this section of the QDR gets high marks.

It also gets good marks for the section on nuclear proliferation; excuse me, "weapons of mass destruction." In addition to observing these growing dangers, complete with the latest "Israel must be wiped off the map" rhetoric from Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the QDR delicately discusses the dangers of nuclear states that suffer from "internal instability" and potential "loss of control over their weapons." This means Pakistan-type problems as well as Iranian-type problems. "The prospect that a nuclear-capable state may lose control of some of its weapons to terrorists is one of the greatest dangers the United States and its allies face."

The QDR also begins what will be a long and difficult process of developing military options for such situations. The report moves beyond the idea of an Osirak-style strike operation, calling for improved surveillance and interdiction capabilities and, importantly, the ability "to deploy, sustain, protect, support and re-deploy special operations forces in hostile environments" and anti-WMD missions.

Yet because the report is mum on the most pressing reason for solving this very challenging puzzle – the deterrent effect the nuclear rogues, particularly those in the Middle East, have on U.S. grand strategy – it leaves the reader with the impression that old-style containment remains a realistic long-term solution. In short, the problem is not simply an operational one, although the operational challenges are severe.

### ***Two Out of Three Ain't Enough***

To the singer-strategist Meatloaf, "two out of three ain't bad." But for a singer-superpower, it ain't enough. Especially when the failing third comes in the understanding of The Long War in the Middle East.

The defense review opens with the statement, "The United States is a nation engaged in what will be a long war." It continues, "The terrorist attacks on September 11 imposed a powerful sense of urgency to transforming the Department." It is as though we responded to Pearl Harbor with an accelerated program of bureaucratic reform.

That's meant not simply as a cheap shot; to read the QDR report is to begin to take the measure of the rejectionism of the key tenet of the Bush Doctrine in the Defense Department. The Pentagon insists upon understanding The Long War as a massive

counterterrorism campaign rather than a counterinsurgency war, as requiring forces that are “more agile and expeditionary,” not more durable and sustainable; marked by “technological advances, including dramatic improvements in information management and precision weaponry,” not by increased manpower; moving away from “war against nations,” even though the two main military acts since 9/11 have been invasions of nations and replacing their regimes.

The QDR’s keys to victory in this war are all tactical. The report “reflects the thinking of the senior civilian and military leaders of the Department of Defense” that the primary need is to “find, fix and finish combat operations against new and elusive foes,” not complete the more strategic post-combat operations. The second need is for better “intelligence fusion” to “produce action plans that can be executed in real time;” not boldness in the face of an irreducible fog of war. And thirdly, “everything done in this Department must contribute to joint warfighting capability,” whether or not a joint solution is the right one.

The fact is that today’s force is superbly competent in the tactical sense. Yes, until lately it has generally been focused on large-scale conventional operations. But the failures of Iraq and Afghanistan have been more strategic than tactical. Counterinsurgency tactics have been dramatically improved, and proven in the harshest environment imaginable, over the last several years. Likewise, the training of Iraqi and Afghan security forces has accelerated. But the essential problem – that is, where friendly forces are not present, unfriendly forces are free to operate, to terrorize and intimidate – remains unsolved. The Pentagon’s sense of urgency evaporates when it comes to increasing the size of the force. The force must be perfected before it can be made larger.

The Defense Department’s model and preferred scenario for The Long War is a potted recent history of Afghanistan – the QDR again treats us to pictures of special operations forces on horseback. First, there was the invasion, which “reinforced the principles of adaptability, speed of action, integrated joint operations, economy of force, and the value of working with and through indigenous forces.” Since then, as the report would have it, the reconstruction and counterinsurgency campaigns have been the mission of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force of 9,000. No mention of the long-term U.S. force presence that has averaged about 18,000 and surged, at election and other crucial times, above 20,000.

The telling of the Iraq story is likewise distorted. “The weight of effort in Iraq has shifted over time, from defeating the Iraqi military and liberating the Iraqi people, to building up Iraqi security forces and local institutions, and to transitioning responsibility for security to the Iraqis.” What about the counterinsurgency part?

Indeed, the main lesson the Pentagon seems to have to have learned from Iraq is, “Let’s *never* do this again.” I sympathize, but would hesitate to make that the basis of defense planning. Not many imagined that post-war Iraq would turn out as it has, but it should now be obvious that “regime change” in the Middle East will be a messy business.

Are we sure there will never be circumstances – think of the array of illegitimate and unstable governments throughout the region – that might force us into the same or a similar situation?

Is it reasonable to presume that our current level of effort in the region – a rotational force of about 20 brigade-sized units, counting Iraq, Afghanistan, the horn of Africa and elsewhere – is the limit to what we can anticipate in the future? Even if so, is a fully “modularized” regular Army of 42 brigades, plus a two-division-plus Marine Corps, sufficient to sustain the long-term strain? Do we expect the Army National Guard to continue to deploy at recent rates?

Again, to confuse tactical competency with strategic adequacy has been the folly of recent years. To commit this mistake once was, perhaps, understandable. To commit it again is less forgivable.

Thus, it has become my view that the QDR process has outlived its usefulness. The many defense reviews of the past decades have failed utterly to do what they were meant to do: provide a link between strategy, force planning and defense budgeting. Indeed, with every QDR, the situation has gotten worse. The basic ends-means dichotomy has grown wider.

In sum it’s time to stop thinking and start spending. The premises of the “cheap hawks” and the “transformationists” have, I think very clearly, been proven false. In the defense department more than in any other agency of government, you get what you pay for. We have reached the limits of our ability to think our way out of our strategic dilemma. Only a larger and more capable force – a more expensive force – can give us the strategic options that we need.

Indeed, and in retrospect, the notion that the United States could retain its position of international leadership while spending just 3 percent of gross domestic product on its military was optimistic, to put it kindly. The real measure of our interest in preserving the Pax Americana is what we’re willing to pay for it; people in uniform are making the ultimate sacrifice abroad, but people at home seem less willing to make a more modest financial sacrifice.

These complaints are not new to the members of this committee: the theme of every authorization bill that I worked on was one of defense “shortfalls.” Shortfalls in modernization, in readiness, in personnel – in resources of all kinds. This administration has squandered two golden opportunities to address these shortfalls, one in the earliest days of 2001 and then again in the aftermath of 9/11.

I do not think we can afford to wait another four years, for the next QDR, to address these problems.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Skelton, and the members of the Committee.

