

# **The Quadrennial Defense Review**

**United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Armed Services**

**Testimony of**

**Lawrence J. Korb**

**Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress**

**Senior Advisor, Center for Defense Information**

**February 16, 2006**

Chairman Hunter and members of the House Armed Services Committee, it is my pleasure to appear before you this morning to discuss the Department of Defense's Quadrennial Defense Review.

Since 1996, the U.S. Congress has required quite appropriately that every four years the Department of Defense conduct a major defense policy review, called the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), to examine U.S. defense strategy and submit a report on its findings. The Pentagon released their QDR on February 3, 2006.

To say that their 2006 edition of the QDR is a disappointment would be an understatement. Given the fact that this is the first QDR produced since 9-11, and the first produced since the release of the Bush Administration's National Security strategy, and that Donald Rumsfeld is the first secretary of defense to get a chance to produce a second QDR, the men and women of the armed forces and the American people had a right to expect more.

While the QDR is full of nice sounding rhetoric, it does not deal with the real problems confronting the armed forces. Four years after 9-11 and five years into the Bush Administration, our overstretched ground forces are reaching the breaking point, the Pentagon's weapons systems are not tailored to existing threats, the armed forces have more weapons on the drawing board than they can afford given the administration record setting deficits, our nuclear posture is outdated, and the Administration has not yet defined an appropriate role for the military in homeland defense.

But rather than increasing the size of the Army to relieve the strain on the soldiers, the Administration actually proposes reducing the end strength of the active Army by 20,000, returning these troops to their pre 9-11 force levels. Given the fact that what the Bush administration calls the long war on terrorism is being waged primarily by the ground forces, this is a step in the wrong direction and will only increase the changes that the all volunteer Army will break.

The QDR does not recommend canceling a single major weapons program despite the fact that some programs like the \$300 million F/A-22 deal with threats from a bygone era and others like the \$100 million V-22 Osprey has severe technical problems and others like the \$7 billion DD(X) destroyer are experiencing tremendous cost growth. Nor does it halt deployment of the national missile defense system even though it has not been successfully tested in three years. If the Pentagon gets all the money it requests, an unlikely prospect given the burgeoning federal deficit and the escalating costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it simply cannot afford all the weapons systems on the drawing board. It will be impossible to pay for them even if there is no further cost growth in the weapon systems, which is unlikely given the fact that in the past four years the top five weapons systems under development have increased in cost by 85 percent.

The QDR calls for making only token reductions in the 7,000 strategic and tactical nuclear weapons in the American arsenal, including several hundred in Europe. Given the fact this is far more weapons than the United States needs for the deterrence or war

fighting and that the cost of maintaining such a large arsenal is nearly \$20 billion, this is not money well spent.

Finally the QDR provides only small increases in funding for homeland defense and does not increase the size of the Army National Guard, the service which has primary responsibility for providing that defense. Since defending the homeland is the military's primary responsibility, this is an unforgivable oversight.

A meaningful and realistic QDR would have added 86,000 troops to the Army, and double spending on homeland defense from \$10 to \$20 billion. It would have paid for these additions by canceling production of outdated and poorly performing weapons programs, slashing nuclear weapons to 1000, keeping national missile defense in a research mode, and stopping the weaponization of space.

Secretary Rumsfeld and the Bush Administration have squandered the opportunity to fix the Pentagon's problems. If the Congress does not set things straight these problems will only get worse and our security will be jeopardized. We cannot afford to wait until the next QDR in 2010.

To help the Congress in this process, my colleagues and I at the Center for American Progress have put together what we believe is an appropriate QDR for meeting the unprecedented challenges faced by the nation. In order to meet these challenges, the Department of Defense (DoD) must begin a fundamental shift in military doctrine and priorities over the next four years so that this country is better positioned to respond to the threats of a post-Cold War and post-9/11 world and to project power whenever and wherever necessary.

Our Quadrennial Defense Review outlines a strategy that gives top priority to protecting the homeland, investing in military personnel, and preventing conflicts. It gives the military the manpower and technology it needs to best combat asymmetric threats from non-state actors such as terrorist groups, to deter and contain traditional enemies, and to fulfill its responsibilities in post-conflict situations. It aims to produce a more powerful, flexible, and agile military force that can best protect the American people and advance U.S. national interests. Implemented over time, it will rebalance forces and weaponry in order to allow the United States to protect the homeland, fight one major regional conflict, engage simultaneously in two substantial post-conflict missions, and contain conflict in three regions.

Our strategy is based on the twin principles of realism and integration:

- *Realism* to best respond to the threats the United States faces; to allocate limited financial resources available for defense in a cost-effective manner; and to redefine the military's capabilities and responsibilities after the fighting ends; and
- *Integration* to best unite the efforts of the U.S. armed services and non-military government agencies; to get the most from alliances around the globe; and to rebalance spending to allow the United States to go beyond the military and exercise all the instruments of power.

## **Threats**

The U.S. military must have the capacity to confront a diverse array of threats. In the short term, these include dealing with violent extremists and terrorists with a global reach, weak and failing states, and extreme regimes. In the long term, the United States will have to deal with the rise of China, new challenges from Russia and across the so-called “arc of crisis” in Central Asia, combustible regions around the globe, competition for scarce resources, the proliferation of nuclear and biological weapons, and the declining reputation of the United States in the world.

As threats evolve, U.S. forces must be able to adapt in order to confront conventional and non-conventional threats alike. The United States’ unmatched military technological superiority is no longer enough to guarantee that Americans will be safe and that U.S. forces will prevail in battle and in securing the peace. Nation-states no longer possess a monopoly on the ability to develop and deploy nuclear and biological weapons. In Iraq, suicide bombings and crude explosive devices are claiming more lives of U.S. troops than tanks or enemy troops. New capabilities are required.

In addition, the years since the Cold War and 9/11 have shown the need to better define, and develop capacity to support, the military’s role in counterinsurgency, peacekeeping, disaster relief, humanitarian interventions, and stabilization operations. Budgetary and personnel constraints demand that the United States support the growth of regional forces and help allies’ militaries share in the burdens of international security. The U.S. military must always retain the capacity to address threats alone, but the recent historical record demonstrates the need to cooperate with others, particularly in addressing transnational threats such as terrorism, organized crime, proliferation of nuclear and biological weapons, and infectious diseases.

## **Goals**

The strategy presented in our QDR recognizes that the Department of Defense must consistently pursue core missions, despite a fluid security environment. Acting in concert with other agencies and military forces, the Pentagon’s primary goals include the responsibilities to:

- Protect the American people from harm by safeguarding the homeland and projecting power around the globe.
- Deter and defeat aggression against the United States, its people, and its interests.
- Prevent conflict around the world, especially in weak and failing states, which have the potential to become terrorist havens and sources of regional insecurity.
- Forge strategic and tactical alliances with other U.S. agencies, foreign states, and international organizations to build capacity in these other entities to leverage their strengths and enable them to shoulder greater responsibilities.
- Assure allies of the U.S. commitment to their security.
- Shape the strategic goals and calculations of current and potential adversaries.

- Project power to ensure access to energy supplies and protect the flow of trade and communications.

## **Strategy**

There are nine core elements to the strategy presented in our QDR.

First, this strategy will counter the threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by promoting a process of developing forces and equipment that will enable the military to defend the homeland; fight one major regional conflict; engage concurrently in two substantial post-conflict peacekeeping and stabilization missions, including counterinsurgency campaigns; and deter or contain conflicts in three countries or regions. This doctrine is referred to as “1-1-2-3.”

Second, the United States must commit the necessary personnel, both military and civilian, to ensure quick and decisive military victories and a stable peace that enables U.S. military forces to be redeployed to other key areas. The United States should remain committed to the Powell Doctrine, making sure that – regardless of whether it acts unilaterally or with its allies – it employs overwhelming force to win on the battlefield. The United States must also clearly define its military and political objectives and have a concrete post-conflict strategy so that Congress and the American people are aware of the potential costs before risking lives and treasure. Our country’s experiences in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan dictate that we should hope for the best but plan for the worst and take steps to maintain domestic support from the moment American troops are dispatched to the day they come home.

Third, this strategy recognizes that unilateral military action is sometimes necessary to deal with imminent threats. Protecting the American people requires that the United States strike to stop imminent threats. Any country that has credible intelligence that it is about to be attacked has the right under the international legal doctrine of anticipatory self-defense to strike first.

Fourth, the recruitment, training, development, and retention of quality military personnel must be the Pentagon’s top priority. The war in Iraq has placed excessive burdens on U.S. forces, and the all-volunteer military is seriously strained. In particular, ground forces must be increased by at least 86,000 active-duty troops and receive greater attention in the allocation of limited defense funds. The military must also devote more resources to, and redefine the role of, the National Guard and Reserve, increasing their responsibilities in homeland defense and avoiding situations like Iraq that have kept them on active duty far longer than the norm.

Fifth, the Department of Defense must direct its resources to areas likely to reap the largest security gains. The administration’s current so-called “capabilities approach,” which “focuses more on how an adversary might fight than who the adversary might be and where a war might occur,” fails to assign levels of risk and importance to the various threats this nation faces. The Pentagon must reintroduce elements of a “threat-based”

model that guided its thinking in the immediate post-Cold War period. Weapons procurement policies must also change dramatically so that they are attuned to actual needs rather than political interests. The administration and Congress should eliminate outdated weapons, cut systems that do not work but are kept alive because of political interests, and increase funding for systems that reflect changing threats to U.S. national security. Only through the assignment of risks and priorities can the Pentagon produce programs and budgets that are affordable and cost-effective.

Sixth, the administration must structure U.S. nuclear forces to deter and defeat catastrophic attacks on the United States and its allies, assure allies of the U.S. commitment to their security, and actively shape the strategic goals and calculations of current and potential adversaries. Our nuclear strategy is based on two fundamental principles: only military targets are legitimate targets, and the collateral damage associated with a nuclear strike must not exceed the military value of a nuclear strike. Applying these principles to the current and foreseeable security environment, a nuclear force posture of 600 deployed warheads and 400 warheads in “reserve” offers a more than credible deterrent against catastrophic threats. Our strategy advocates the development of technology capable of generating new strategic capabilities in response to new threats. It places a greater reliance on conventional weapons and places a much stronger emphasis on nonproliferation.

Seventh, the Department of Defense must balance the necessity of maintaining the readiness and capabilities of the existing force with the need to modernize and transform, as it did during the 1990s. The administration’s excessive focus on the so-called “revolution in military affairs” to transform the armed forces rapidly has threatened the readiness and capabilities of U.S. ground forces. Funds for equipping ground troops have instead been diverted to bring these new transforming technologies into the force much more rapidly than prudent or necessary.

Eighth, while the military’s most important mission is to protect the homeland, this administration has never given homeland defense the priority it deserves in doctrine or resources. As the Gulf Coast hurricanes demonstrated, national emergencies at times demand significant involvement by the U.S. military. The administration must establish clear guidelines for the U.S. military in homeland security, including chains of command, roles and responsibilities and timelines for engagement, and ensure that the Department of Defense gives adequate attention and resources to this area.

Finally, the military must work to maintain stability and prevent serious international crises before they erupt into armed conflict. This requires renewed and stronger ties with U.S. allies, including increased funding to help train and equip allied armed forces, as well as with international and civilian agencies, including the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). On the regional level, the United States must increasingly rely on and support peacekeeping units like those of the African Union in resolving regional conflicts, thus reducing the need to deploy U.S. forces.

## **Increased Integration**

Our QDR requires the Department of Defense to adopt new commitments to responsible, realistic policies and pursue greater integration both within the Pentagon and with other government agencies. The strategy will require the Pentagon and Congress to adopt institutional changes that will allow the government to achieve its missions in a more cost-effective manner.

First, our strategy promotes a unified national security budget, in which the budgets of DoD, State, USAID, and other agencies with responsibility for national security and international policy are consolidated and rebalanced. The current budgeting system gives overwhelming power to the Pentagon in determining both the direction and tactics of U.S. foreign policy.

Second, the DoD must increasingly coordinate the activities of its component intelligence agencies with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). The DNI should have actual authority to determine the allocation of the Pentagon's intelligence budget, which accounts for approximately 80 percent of the country's overall intelligence spending.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Military Personnel and Readiness**

In order to support, strengthen, and protect U.S. armed forces, the following steps must be undertaken:

- *Increase the size of the total Army by at least 86,000 active-duty troops.* The Pentagon should add two division-sized peacekeeping or stabilization units, double the size of the active-duty Special Forces, and add 10,000 military police, civil affairs experts, engineers, and medical personnel to the active-duty force.
- *Maintain the end strength of the Marine Corps at 185,000 active troops and 40,000 selected reserve troops.*
- *Reduce the number of carrier battle groups in the U.S. Navy from 11 to 10 and the number of Air Force tactical fighter wings from 19 to 18.*
- *Amend the "back door draft" policies.* The DoD should reduce the duration of the military service obligation, change stop-loss policy implementation, and issue a new executive order on selected reserve recall.
- *Improve quality of life for military personnel.* The DoD should maintain troop pay and benefits, compensate federal civilian employees in the National Guard and Reserve for lost pay when their units are summoned to active duty, and

enable selected reservists and their families to enroll in TRICARE, the military's healthcare system. This will improve personnel readiness and have a positive impact on retention and reenlistment rates.

- *Repeal the “don't ask, don't tell” policy.* This will widen the pool from which the military can recruit and retain people with critical skills that are already in short supply.
- *Drop the ban on women in combat.* The armed services should establish standards for every military occupational specialty and allow those who meet the standards to serve, regardless of gender.
- *Continue to invest substantial resources to reset, recapitalize, and modernize the force.* Congress and the DoD must ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to reset the force even after U.S. forces are withdrawn from Iraq and Afghanistan. They must increase the Army's share of the baseline budget from 24 to 28 percent in order to pay for the additional troops, as well as resetting the force.

## **Conventional Weapons Systems**

The Department of Defense should seek funding for flexible, efficient weapons systems that help combat 21<sup>st</sup> century threats, while stopping development and production of weapons systems that unwisely use scarce resources and/or do not meet performance standards. The DoD should:

- *Maintain funding for the following weapons systems:*

F-35 Joint Strike Fighter to provide cost-effective next-generation air technology to the three branches of the armed services and to U.S. allies.

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to carry out strike missions and provide real-time battlefield imagery and other functions without risking personnel or incurring the costs of manned aircraft.

B-2 heavy bomber to increase the military's ability to deliver large payloads over long distances with minimal risk and decrease reliance on other countries to provide the United States with airbases.

Future Combat Systems (FCS) to enhance the Army's ability to deploy units and increase their firepower and effectiveness.

Stryker Interim Armored Vehicle to provide a relatively light and easily deployable combat vehicle to bridge the gap between today's heavy forces and FCS.



CVN-21 aircraft carrier to provide increased power protection while lowering operational costs.

Littoral Combat Ship to support a cost-effective, multi-use system that can protect forces on shore and launch unmanned aircraft and watercraft.

- *Stop development, and production of the following weapons systems:*

F/A-22 Raptor stealth fighter jet, which is an unnecessary and costly supplement to the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

SSN-774 Virginia class submarine, which offers few technological advantages yet substantially higher costs compared to existing submarines.

DD(X) destroyer, which suffers from innumerable technological difficulties and ballooning costs without offering any true advantage compared to the Littoral Combat Ship.

V-22 Osprey, which has caused numerous training deaths and excessive cost overruns and which suffers from unresolved development issues while offering only marginal advantages compared to existing helicopters.

C-130J transport aircraft, which provides no additional capabilities compared to existing transport aircraft and suffers from severe technological flaws.

Offensive space-based weapons, which are of no use in low-tech asymmetric conflict and are far more expensive than existing technologies without offering many additional strike capabilities.

Further deployment of the National Missile Defense System, which offers unproven technology at exceptionally high costs to defend against a highly unlikely nuclear missile strike against the United States.

## **Nuclear Forces**

In order to structure U.S. nuclear forces more effectively to deter and defeat attacks on the United States and assure allies of the U.S. commitment to their security, the United States must:

- *Field a deployed arsenal of 600 warheads on Minuteman III ICBMs, Trident SSBNs, and B-2 and B-52H strategic bombers, with 400 weapons held in reserve. A generous estimate of the number of military targets in China and Russia that*

would be essential to either country's war fighting abilities (and that only nuclear weapons could effectively hold at risk) is several hundred each. A "600 + 400" arsenal would enable the United States to hold these targets, as well as the very limited number of such targets in extreme regimes, vulnerable with a high degree of certainty.

- *Maintain nuclear forces and prepare "surge capacity."* The DoD and the Energy Department should retain the ability to sustain the technological readiness of the current force and supplement it with additional forces should there be a dramatic shift in the international security environment.
- *Pursue the utility and cost-effectiveness of a Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program.* Any RRW should lead to ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty by guaranteeing the end of U.S. nuclear testing; result in significant long-term cost savings; enable the permanent, irreversible dismantlement of several existing warheads for every new RRW; and should not create new missions for nuclear weapons.
- *Revitalize arms control with Russia.* The United States should negotiate a follow-on agreement to the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) with Russia that codifies further reductions, mandates the permanent dismantlement of excess warheads and creates new verification mechanisms, extends existing transparency and verification measures (which are based on START I, a 1991 U.S.-Soviet/Russian arms control agreement) beyond their 2009 expiration, and includes tactical nuclear weapons in arms reduction.
- *Cease research and development of an advanced, earth-penetrating nuclear weapon (the "Bunker Buster").* This gratuitous, destabilizing, and expensive weapons system not only lacks any practical use, but also sends precisely the wrong message about the U.S. commitment to nuclear non-proliferation.

## **Homeland Defense**

In order to enhance the Department of Defense's role in homeland defense, the following steps must be taken:

- *Integrate the DoD budget with those of other agencies involved in homeland security and defense.* This will allow the president and Congress to make cost-effective trade-offs across agency lines.
- *Increase coordination among the DoD, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and other agencies in order to better complement each other's work.* The military can help instill a joint culture within the intelligence community, drawing from its own experience under Goldwater-Nichols during the past 20 years.

- *Double the funding that the Pentagon allocates to homeland defense from \$10 to \$20 billion.* This would allow the DoD to increase its capabilities to support civil authorities in minimizing the damage and helping in the recovery from chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosive attacks on the United States.
- *Reorient the Army National Guard toward protecting the homeland against large-scale disaster.* This restructuring will require the Guard to emphasize light infantry, military police, and combat support functions in Guard units as opposed to such major combat functions as armor and artillery.
- *Strengthen the command structure of the National Guard to reflect its expanding real-time responsibilities.* At least two regional commands should be established between existing state headquarters and the National Guard Bureau to enhance homeland defense/disaster response planning and improve coordination with the U.S. Northern Command.
- *Improve the active-duty response times of U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) to catastrophic disasters.* Although the U.S. military should not routinely be given lead responsibility for disaster-response planning and execution, it should be prepared to support or relieve the Army National Guard in a national emergency.
- *Prepare at least two active-duty Army divisions and a headquarters unit to bolster the Army National Guard in responding to a catastrophic disaster.* These forces would assist the Guard only if the president declares a national emergency.
- *Add civilian first responders, such as police and firefighters, to the list of critical jobs that are prohibited from joining or remaining in the selected reserve.* The Pentagon cannot continue to allow individuals with civilian jobs that are important to homeland security to join the National Guard and Reserve.
- *Establish in each state a non-deployable homeland security corps of volunteer citizens with skills that are central to responding to catastrophic disasters.* These units would serve as a back up for National Guard units, which will continue to be deployed away from their home states.

## **Intelligence**

In order to develop more robust intelligence capabilities, the following steps must be taken:

- *Improve coordination between the Department of Defense's intelligence agencies and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI).* Better coordination

will assist in integrating the DOD's intelligence activities with those of other agencies and eliminate duplication.

- *Ensure that the DNI has final budget sign-off on national DoD intelligence programs, as provided under the Intelligence Reform and Terrorist Prevention Act of 2004.* Under this Act, it is the DNI's responsibility to determine the annual budgets for all national intelligence agencies and offices (including DoD) and to direct how these funds are spent.
- *Implement a human capital plan for DoD intelligence personnel as recommended by the DNI's National Intelligence Strategy.* The DoD must ensure that the right people are recruited and trained for their jobs.
- *Coordinate DoD human intelligence (HUMINT) operations with other Intelligence Community HUMINT operations.* DoD's intelligence operations should form a complementary rather than a competitive or duplicative structure.
- *Ensure that DoD clandestine operations (both domestic and international) comply with U.S. law and regulations.* All databases and intelligence collection activities must be conducted in accordance with U.S. law.