

**W**hat kind of military will the United States need in the future, and how much will it cost? In an era of apocalyptic terrorist threats and other dangers there is little doubt that the country must do what it takes to protect itself. That said, at a time of \$400 billion federal budget deficits, the country must also spend wisely.

This book argues that the Bush administration's planned defense budget increase of some \$20 billion a year into the foreseeable future is indeed necessary. Half of that increase accounts for inflation, roughly speaking, and the rest represents real growth in the defense budget. But in contrast to current plans, a central argument of this book is that the administration should temporarily increase the size of the country's ground forces by at least 40,000 active duty troops. This is necessary in order to treat soldiers and Marines more fairly by reducing at least modestly the frequency and length of deployments and to ensure that the extraordinarily high pace of overseas operations does not drive people out of the military, thereby putting the health of the all-volunteer armed forces at risk.<sup>1</sup>

Given the fiscal pressures, at the same time that it carries out this temporary increase in personnel the U.S. military must look harder than ever for ways to economize and improve efficiency in other areas of defense.

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The need is most notable in its weapons modernization programs. Fortunately, the promise of high technology, especially with regard to electronics and computers, allows the United States to continue to innovate and improve its armed forces somewhat more economically than in the past. Once the current mission in Iraq ends or declines significantly in scope, U.S. ground forces can be scaled back to their present size or perhaps even a slightly smaller number, and it may become possible to hold real defense spending steady for a number of years. But not yet. And while a drastic reduction in U.S. forces in Iraq is possible starting in 2006 or 2007, planners cannot presume that it will occur. Indeed, in January 2005, a senior Army planner publicly acknowledged that the military is making plans to sustain troop strength in Iraq at current levels through 2006.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Strategic Backdrop**

U.S. armed forces will likely remain engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan for the foreseeable future. They will also need to remain involved in deterrence missions in the Western Pacific, most notably in regard to the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. The United States will wish to remain strongly engaged in European security as well, less because of threats to the region than because most of America's main security partners are located there. The strength, capabilities, and cohesion of the members of the NATO alliance therefore have important global implications for the United States.

But the United States does not know what if any major new wars it may have to wage in the coming years. It does not know whether its relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) will continue to improve or again worsen, raising even the possibility of war over Taiwan. It does not know whether the current nuclear crisis with North Korea will be resolved peacefully. It cannot predict whether any other countries will allow their territories to be used by terrorist organizations bent on attacking the United States. It must contend with the remarkable degree of animosity toward the United States among most Muslim countries, particularly in the Arab world—which, though it predated President George W. Bush's administration, has worsened considerably in recent years. Additional military scenarios could be of immense importance as well. Nuclear-armed

Pakistan could wind up in either civil conflict or war against nuclear-armed India. Iran could threaten Persian Gulf shipping or threaten Israel with the nuclear arsenal it seems bent on acquiring. Saudi Arabia's stability could be called into question.

Given such uncertainty, defense planning must be based on assumptions. The important thing is to postulate circumstances that are realistic, not implausibly pessimistic or imprudently optimistic. With this approach, even though the world and the future remain uncertain, the range of plausible national security challenges and military responses can be delimited somewhat.

It is easy for defense planners to dwell on problems—that's part of their job. But there also is a great deal that is good in today's global security environment. The United States heads a remarkable and historic system of alliances. Never before has a great power elicited such support from the world's other powers and provoked so little direct opposition. After the Bush administration's internationally unpopular decision to go to war against Saddam Hussein in 2003, that conclusion may be in some jeopardy, but on balance it remains correct.

Even powers outside the Western alliance system—Russia, China, India, Indonesia—generally choose to cooperate with the United States and its allies on many security issues. They are likely to continue to do so, provided that American military power remains credible and the U.S.-led alliance system continues to uphold (however imperfectly) common values on which most countries agree. This conclusion can be jeopardized—by a United States that seems too unilateralist and too inclined to use force on multiple occasions, or by allies that seem to prefer hitching a free ride to doing their fair share to ensure international security. But what is most impressive about the Western alliance system is how strong and durable it has become. And what is most reassuring about the challenge faced by American defense planners is how little they need to worry about possible wars against any other major powers, with the significant exception of conflict with China in the Taiwan Strait. Some countries fear American military strength, and even many Americans think that U.S. military spending is excessive. But as Barry Posen convincingly argues, the United States is far from omnipotent. Past historical eras, such as those in which the European colonial powers could easily conquer distant lands, are gone

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forever.<sup>3</sup> In today's world, the United States can be understood, in Posen's phrase, to possess impressive command of the commons—air, oceans, and space—but it has a great deal of trouble contending with many conflicts on land, particularly against irregular resistance fighters.<sup>4</sup> The Iraq experience has reinforced this reality for those who perhaps had begun to think of the Vietnam (and Lebanon and Somalia) experiences as aberrations or as ancient history. Moreover, America's high sensitivity to casualties limits its inclination to use military force, and its highly open and democratic political system suggests that it need not be feared to the extent that many apparently do.<sup>5</sup> Even with Iraq, while the legality of the invasion was admittedly shaky, the Bush administration acted only when it could point to Iraq's violation of more than a dozen U.N. Security Council resolutions. So U.S. power is, even in these politically contentious times, generally a force for good in the world.

The United States benefits greatly from its global military capabilities, its alliance network, and stability in the world, but maintaining such advantages costs money. The United States presently accounts for almost half of all global military spending—to be specific, 41 percent in 2003, by the estimates of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. (No specific estimate, however, can be precise given uncertainty over true military spending by China and several other countries.)<sup>6</sup> But arguments for or against the current level of American military spending cannot be based on such a figure; they must consider the specific missions asked of the American armed forces.

### **U.S. Military Basics**

U.S. troops and most elements of the military force structure—the number of divisions, brigades, and so forth—have declined about one-third since the later cold war years. Active duty personnel now number 1.4 million, plus about 1 million reservists, of whom about 150,000 to 200,000 have been activated at any given time in recent years (see tables 1-1 and 1-2).<sup>7</sup> That active duty force is not particularly large—just over half the size of China's military and not much bigger than the armed forces of India, Russia, or North Korea. But the United States has a larger military presence outside its borders than does any other country—some

**Table 1-1. Major Elements of U.S. Force Structure**

<i>Service unit</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>Army</i>			
Active divisions	18	10	10
Reserve brigades	57	42	35
<i>Navy</i>			
Aircraft carriers, active (reserve)	15 (1)	11 (1)	12
Air wings, active (reserve)	13 (2)	10 (1)	10 (1)
Attack submarines	91	55	54
Surface combatants	206	116	113
<i>Air Force</i>			
Active fighter wings	24	12 +	12 +
Reserve fighter wings	12	7 +	7 +
Bombers	366	181	183
<i>Marine Corps</i>			
Marine divisions, active (reserve)	3 (1)	3 (1)	3 (1)

Source: For Army, Navy and Marine Corps numbers for 1990 and 2000, see William S. Cohen, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* ([www.defenselink.mil/execsec/adr2000/index.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/execsec/adr2000/index.html) [April 13, 2004]), p. 41. For 2003 active divisions and Marine Corps, see Donald H. Rumsfeld, *2003 Secretary of Defense Annual Report to the President and the Congress* ([www.defenselink.mil/execsec/adr2003/adr2003\\_toc.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/execsec/adr2003/adr2003_toc.html) [March 17, 2004]), p. 4. For reserve brigades, Brigadier General Rolston, Briefing at the Pentagon, February 2004. For 2003 aircraft carriers, air wings, attack submarines, and surface combatants, see "United States Navy Fact File" ([www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/factfile/ffiletop.html](http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/factfile/ffiletop.html) [April 13, 2004]). For 1990 and 2000 active and reserve fighter wings, see Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Defense Policy Choices for the Bush Administration 2002–2005* (Brookings, 2002) p. 7. For 2003 active and reserve fighter wings, see Steven M. Kosiak, "Analysis of the FY 2005 Defense Budget Request" (Washington: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2004) p. 15. For 1990 bombers, see "USAF Almanac," *Air Force Magazine*, May 1996, pp. 55. For 2000 bombers, see "USAF Almanac," *Air Force Magazine*, May 2001, pp. 55–56. For 2003 bombers, see "USAF Almanac," *Air Force Magazine*, May 2003, pp. 82–83. For 2003 Marine divisions, see Rumsfeld, *2003 Secretary of Defense Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, p. 4.

400,000 troops. It is also far more capable of projecting additional force beyond its own territory than any other country. And the quality of its armed forces is rivaled by few and equaled by none.

Republicans and Democrats generally agree about the broad contours of American military planning and sizing. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review reaffirmed the active duty troop level of about 1.4 million maintained during the Clinton administration and also retained most of the Clinton agenda for weapons modernization while adding new initiatives in areas such as missile defense,

**Table 1-2. U.S. Defense Personnel<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Component</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2004</i>
Active duty troops	2,069	1,408	1,400
Reservists	1,128	865	876
Civilian personnel	1,070	700	746

Sources: For active duty troops as of June 30, 2000, see Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Armed Forces Strength Figures for September 30, 2004* (<http://web1.whs.osd.mil/mmid/military/ms0.pdf> [September 14, 2000]). For reservists and civilian personnel as of September 30, 1999, see William S. Cohen, Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, appendix C-1 ([www.defenselink.mil/execsec/adr2000/index.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/execsec/adr2000/index.html) [March 29, 2003]). For the 2004 active duty troops, reservists, and civilian personnel, see "Prepared Testimony of U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld," Senate Armed Services Committee, February 3, 2004, p. 6 ([www.senate.gov/~armed\\_services/statemnt/2004/February/Rumsfeld.pdf](http://www.senate.gov/~armed_services/statemnt/2004/February/Rumsfeld.pdf) [March 10, 2004]). For National Guard and Reserves on active duty, see Department of Defense, "National Guard and Reserve Mobilized as of October 27, 2004" ([www.defenselink.mil/releases/2004/nr20041027-1444.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2004/nr20041027-1444.html) [October 27, 2004]).

a. Thousands of uniformed personnel. Selected reserves only are shown. As of October 27, 2004, the number of National Guard and Reserve personnel on active duty was 176,044, including both units and individual augmentees. These individuals are not counted in the active duty figures given above.

advanced satellites, and unmanned vehicles. After September 11, 2001, the Bush administration sought and received a great deal more budget authority than President Clinton's defense plan called for. But a Democratic president almost certainly would also have boosted defense spending after the tragic attacks, since the existing Pentagon defense plan was underfunded. Moreover, no major Democratic candidate for president in 2004 made a campaign issue out of the enormous size of the U.S. defense budget.

That the Bush administration retained most Clinton era ideas and programs is relatively unsurprising. Although whether to buy specific weapons can be debated, the military needs many new or refurbished planes, ships, and ground vehicles because much of the existing weaponry, bought largely during the Reagan administration's military buildup, is wearing out. Maintaining America's technological edge in combat may not require every weapon now in development or production, but the advantages to maintaining a resounding superiority in weaponry are evident in the rapid victories and relatively low casualties suffered by the United States in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and the Iraq invasion. The talk of cutting back on ground forces that was heard during Rumsfeld's early tenure has since stopped—at least for the foreseeable future—given the challenges posed by the Iraq stabilization mission.

The nation's classified intelligence budget is included within the Pentagon budget. Its reported level of about \$40 billion makes it about 10 percent of the Department of Defense (DoD) total, and that fact helps explain why many Pentagon officials recently resisted calls for a strong national intelligence director, outside of DoD, with powerful budget authority over the military's many intelligence agencies and programs. But the debate over restructuring the intelligence community is moving so fast that the issue is best left for treatment elsewhere.<sup>8</sup>

### *The Two-War Framework*

Since the cold war ended, U.S. armed forces have been designed to be able to fight and win two full-scale regional wars at once. The Bush administration modified the requirement in 2001 so that only one of the victories needed to be immediate and overwhelming. The new force planning framework was dubbed "1-4-2-1,"<sup>9</sup> meaning that the American military would be designed to defend the homeland, maintain a presence and deterrent capability in four theaters, fight up to two wars at a time, and be capable of winning one of them overwhelmingly, by overthrowing the enemy government and occupying its territory.<sup>10</sup>

Even as specifics are debated and modified, the United States has maintained a two-war capability of some sort for good reason. It permits the country to fight one war without letting down its guard everywhere else and thereby undercutting its deterrent capability and perhaps increasing the likelihood of a second conflict. Given the strains on the U.S. military in Iraq and to a lesser extent in Afghanistan, this purported two-war capability is somewhat shaky today. The United States would have a hard time conducting another major operation abroad now and for the foreseeable future. But in extreme circumstances, it would still have options. Most Air Force and Navy assets are available to respond to possible crises, and in a true emergency, the Army and Marines would have several active duty divisions in the United States available for deployment, while the Army National Guard could supply several more. These units would not be rested, a considerable amount of their equipment would be inoperable and in the maintenance depot, and some of their ammunition stocks could be low. But they could still probably operate at anywhere from 50 to 80 percent of full effectiveness, constituting a substantial combat capability.

If any such second major war occurred, there would be little additional pool of units—that is, a rotation base—from which to sustain forces and ultimately to substitute forces for those sent to fight it. Any large war that required such a deployment while the Iraq operation remained substantial in scale would probably therefore immediately require full activation of the National Guard—and perhaps even consideration of extreme steps, such as a limited military draft. But at present, that option need not be considered and the quality of America’s overall deterrent capability need not be seriously doubted.

So the two-war logic is still sound, and U.S. forces are still capable of backing it up. Nonetheless, with the Iraq invasion now over, 1-4-2-1 no longer seems quite the right framework for American force planning. In one sense, of course, it is still applicable, in that the last “1” is precisely the kind of operation that continues in Iraq today. But there is a need for greater flexibility in thinking about what the “2” might entail in the future. A major conflict with China over Taiwan, emphasizing naval and air assets, would be much different from a war on the Korean Peninsula; a conflict with Iran that focused on the Persian Gulf’s waterways would be radically different from another land war against a country like Iraq. There is a temptation, therefore, to advocate a slogan such as 1-4-1-1-1, with the latter three “1s” describing a major naval-air confrontation, another large land war, and a large stabilization mission like that now under way in Iraq. The last chapter of this book explores some of the other scenarios that could fall within these categories.

### *Preemption Doctrine*

To what extent might the Bush administration’s preemption doctrine affect the two-war logic? That doctrine, enshrined in the fall 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States, is more accurately described as a policy of preventive war than of emergency preemption. Whatever the label, it was intended by the Bush administration to emphasize that in a world containing not only terrorist organizations but extremist states that possess weapons of mass destruction, the United States could not wait for dangers to “gather” before taking action to confront them.

The preemption doctrine is a highly controversial cornerstone on which to base American security policy.<sup>11</sup> In this author’s view, it was counter-



productive for U.S. interests because it fostered the widespread (if exaggerated) image of an America unfettered by international constraints or the need to seek legitimacy for its use of force.<sup>12</sup> Much of the opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq came from the worry that it might not be the last major “war of choice” undertaken by the Bush administration.<sup>13</sup>

From the strategist’s and military planner’s point of view, however, preemption is an option that must be retained. No U.S. president could stand by while an enemy visibly prepared to attack the country. Indeed, many American leaders have given consideration to preemptive or preventive options in the past, including President Clinton with regard to North Korea in 1994, when options for destroying North Korea’s nuclear infrastructure were examined.<sup>14</sup>

That said, appropriate targets for preventive or preemptive attack are likely to remain relatively few. All-out war involving regime change is a very difficult option to employ, and there is little prospect that any “silver bullet” technology would make it easy to conduct effective surgical strikes against an enemy in the future, primarily because countries can hide most weapons of mass destruction from existing and planned sensors.<sup>15</sup> Such scenarios may become slightly more practical with certain kinds of innovative and exceptional equipment, such as unmanned aerial vehicles or long-range stealthy aircraft (not to mention the outstanding personnel needed to operate it), but they are unlikely to require large numbers of such assets and therefore unlikely to be fundamental determinants of the proper size of the U.S. armed forces. However, as witnessed in recent years from Yemen to the Philippines to Afghanistan, those scenarios do place a premium on maintaining a flexible and diverse global network of military bases as well as the political relationships needed to employ those bases when necessary. So with or without the preemptive doctrine, the basic logic of a two-war capability, not more and not less, seems appropriate for the United States in the future.

### *Readiness*

There is little doubt that the readiness of U.S. military forces should be very high. Readiness, according to the Pentagon, refers to the ability of individual military units to perform their assigned tasks in a timely and proficient way. In other words, readiness does not refer to broad decisions

about sizing or modernizing the military or properly defining military strategy. It refers instead to how well DoD's individual fighting units can carry out the missions they have been assigned to implement a strategy after the larger strategic decisions have been made. Even viewed this way, readiness is still an extensive subject. Measuring it accurately requires a wide array of metrics, ranging from the training, competence, and even morale of personnel to the availability of spare parts, ammunition, and fuel and the condition of major equipment.

Readiness has generally been quite good since the Reagan administration. It may have suffered some decline due to the high demands of recent activities, and it was recently described by General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as "good" rather than the more customary "high" or "excellent."<sup>16</sup> But on the whole, readiness funding (and military pay, one key to keeping good people) has been consistently protected throughout the last quarter-century.

Some indicators are worrisome, such as the recent increase in the number of serious aircraft accidents.<sup>17</sup> But at the same time, Air Force Chief of Staff John Jumper noted that fourteen of twenty aircraft systems improved their overall readiness ("mission capable") rates in 2003 relative to rates in 2002, and he also noted that other indicators suggested that readiness had not declined since the 1990s.<sup>18</sup> Nor did Marine Corps aircraft show any dip in readiness.<sup>19</sup> And funding for readiness has been generous throughout the Bush presidency; the only threat to readiness has arisen from the high pace and strain of deployments, not lack of resources. This threat, discussed below, is serious—but it also is specific and should be solvable.

There have been occasional complaints that one administration or another abused readiness—for example, by leaving divisions unready for combat for months at a stretch—a charge that then-candidate Bush made against the Clinton administration in 2000 and that recently has been made against the Bush administration. But the need of recently deployed divisions, air wings, or carrier groups for a few weeks or months of recovery after being deployed is no surprise and generally presents little risk. The fact that several Army divisions returning from Iraq in late 2003 and early 2004 needed several months of recuperation before being certified as fully fit for combat operations, for example, probably did not pose a

major risk to the United States. It could have delayed any deployment to a possible additional war in a place like Korea. But American forces still could have been sent there, in imperfect condition if necessary. In any event, South Korean military capabilities (as well as American forces normally stationed in the region) would have remained strong. So some perspective is in order.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Current Deployments***

Prior to September 11, 2001, the United States military had about 250,000 uniformed personnel stationed or deployed overseas at any given time. Just over half were at permanent bases; the others were on temporary assignment away from their main bases and families. In broad terms, just under 100,000 U.S. troops were in East Asia, mostly in Japan and South Korea or on ships in the Western Pacific. Just over 100,000 were in Europe—mostly in Germany but with other substantial totals in the United Kingdom and Italy. Some 25,000 were ashore or afloat in the Persian Gulf region.

Since that time, of course, deployments have increased enormously in the Central Command's (CENTCOM's) theater of responsibility, encompassing as it does Afghanistan and its environs as well as Iraq. In the last two years, there have been about 200,000 personnel in the CENTCOM zone. Altogether, these deployments made for a grand total of about 400,000 uniformed personnel overseas in one place or another (see table 1-3).<sup>21</sup>

The Department of Defense is planning major changes in its overseas basing.<sup>22</sup> Among the proposed changes are plans to reduce American forces in Korea and relocate most of those that remain south of the Han river and to move large numbers of troops that have been garrisoned in Germany either back to the United States or to smaller, less permanent bases in eastern Europe, where they would be closer to potential combat zones. More is said about these topics in chapter 3.

### **The Pentagon Budget**

America's defense budget is, at least at first blush, staggeringly high. Specifically, 2005 U.S. national security funding is \$423 billion for normal "peacetime" activities. That total includes the Department of Defense

**Table 1-3. U.S. Troops Based in Foreign Countries, Early to Mid-2004<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Country or region</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Country or region</i>	<i>Number</i>
<i>Europe</i>		<i>North Africa, Near East, and South Asia</i>	
Belgium	1,534	Afghanistan	14,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,931	Bahrain	1,496
Germany	40,603–55,603	Kuwait	50,859
Iceland	1,754	Qatar	3,432
Italy	8,354–13,354	Iraq	130,000
Portugal	1,077	Afloat	592
Spain	1,968	Other	1,387
Turkey	1,863	Total	201,766
United Kingdom	11,801	Sub-Saharan Africa	770
Afloat	2,534	Western hemisphere	2,201
Other	2,088	Other foreign countries	19,421
Total	76,507–96,507	Total foreign countries	398,551–418,551
Former Soviet Union	162		
<i>East Asia and Pacific</i>			
Japan	40,045		
South Korea	40,258		
Afloat	16,601		
Other	820		
Total	97,724		

Sources: For all entries except Afghanistan, Germany, Italy, Iraq, and Kuwait, see Department of Defense, Directorate for Information and Reports (DIOR), "Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Area and by Country (309A), March 31, 2004" ([web1.whs.osd.mil/mmid/M05/hst0403.pdf](http://web1.whs.osd.mil/mmid/M05/hst0403.pdf) [July 28, 2004]). The number for Afghanistan is an estimate based on the author's communications with the DIOR, July 2004, indicating that 12,350 troops were deployed to Afghanistan in March 2004 and on news reports that 20,000 troops were deployed there at the end of April 2004. For troop levels in April 2004, see Kathleen T. Rhem, "Operations Bringing Security to Afghanistan," *American Forces Information Service*, April 30, 2004. Since approximately 54,000 troops from the 1st Armored Division (1st AD) stationed in Germany were deployed to Iraq at the height of the invasion and 20,000 troops were deployed as of April 21, 2004, I estimate that between 20,000 and 35,000 troops from the 1st AD were deployed to Iraq at the end of March. For the number of 1st AD troops deployed at the height of the invasion, see "Statement of General James L. Jones, USMC Commander, United States European Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee," March 4, 2004. For the number of 1st AD troops stationed in Iraq as of April 21, 2004, see General Richard B. Meyers, "Hearing of the House Armed Services Committee on Iraq's Transition to Sovereignty," April 21, 2004 ([www.dtic.mil/jcs/](http://www.dtic.mil/jcs/)). For Iraq, see Michael O'Hanlon and Adriana Lins de Albuquerque, "Iraq Index: Tracking Reconstruction and Security in Post-Saddam Iraq" ([www.brookings.edu/iraqindex](http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex) [July 28, 2004]). Number for Kuwait was arrived at by subtracting the number of troops stationed in Iraq, as well as the number of Navy and Air Force troops, from the total number of troops devoted to Operation Iraqi Freedom as presented by the DIOR, "Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Area and by Country (309A)." The percentage of military personnel in foreign countries according to branch of the armed services is as follows: Army, 55 percent; Air Force, 17 percent; Navy, 14 percent; and Marine Corps, 14 percent.

a. Only countries with more than 1,000 troops are listed individually. The balance for each region can be found in the "Other" row. The military personnel in Kuwait and Iraq include personnel involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The total number of military personnel in foreign countries includes personnel involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**Table 1-4. Recent Supplemental Appropriations for the Department of Defense through 2003<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Amount</i>
September 2001	14
January 2002	4
August 2002	13
February 2003	10
April 2003	63
November 2003	65
Total	168

Source: Steven M. Kosiak, "Funding for Defense, Military Operations, Homeland Security, and Related Activities since 9-11," *CSBA Backgrounder* (Washington: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, January 21, 2004), p. 5.

a. Billions of dollars. Numbers do not add to total due to rounding. In addition, total costs in fiscal year 2004 exceeded supplemental funding by more than \$10 billion. See General Accounting Office, *Military Operations: Fiscal Year 2004 Costs for the Global War on Terrorism Will Exceed Supplemental, Requiring DoD to Shift Funds from Other Uses*, GAO-04-915 (July 2004).

budget as well as \$18 billion for the nuclear weapons activities of the Department of Energy and some smaller costs (though it does not include the budget of the Department of Homeland Security). In addition, the defense bill for 2005 includes almost \$100 billion in expected funding for Iraq and Afghanistan, making for a total cost of more than \$500 billion. (See table 1-4 for other recent supplemental funding bills.) The request for 2006 is \$442 billion (discretionary totals for 2005 and 2006 are \$421 billion and \$439 billion, respectively), with again nearly \$100 billion in total supplementary costs likely.<sup>23</sup>

As previously noted, U.S. defense spending almost equals that of the rest of the world combined, depending on how the spending of countries like China and Russia is estimated. And even after the dollar is adjusted for inflation, current U.S. spending exceeds typical levels during the cold war, when the United States faced the Soviet Union, a peer competitor with global ambitions and enormous capabilities deployed throughout much of Eurasia.

But in a broader sense, judging whether U.S. defense spending is high or low depends on the measure used. Compared with that of other countries, it is obviously enormous (see tables 1-5 and 1-6 on international comparisons). Relative to the size of the American economy, however, it remains moderate in scale by modern historical standards: about 4 percent

**Table 1-5. Global Distribution of Military Spending, 2003<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Defense expenditure (billions of 2005 dollars)</i>	<i>Global total (percent)</i>	<i>Running total (percent)</i>
<i>United States and its major security partners</i>			
United States	410.6	40.6	40.6
Non-U.S. NATO <sup>b</sup>	227.8	22.5	63.1
Major Asian allies <sup>c</sup>	70.1	6.9	70
Other allies <sup>d</sup>	28.1	2.8	72.8
Other friends <sup>e</sup>	58.2	5.8	78.6
<i>Others</i>			
Russia	66.1	6.5	85.1
China	56.7	5.6	90.7
North Korea	5.6	0.6	91.3
Iran	3.1	0.3	91.6
Syria	1.5	0.1	91.7
Cuba	1.2	0.1	91.8
Libya	0.8	0.1	91.9
<i>Remaining countries (by category)</i>			
Asia	48.2	4.8	96.7
Europe	14.5	1.4	98.1
Middle East and North Africa	10.6	1.0	99.1
Others <sup>f</sup>	7.9	0.8	99.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,011</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2004/2005* (Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 353–58.

a. Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

b. Includes the new NATO member states of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

c. Includes Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

d. Includes New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines, and the Rio Treaty countries except Cuba and the United States.

e. Includes Austria, Belize, Egypt, Guyana, Israel, Ireland, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, and Taiwan.

f. Includes principally African and Caribbean countries.

of GDP, less than the level during the Reagan or even Ford and Carter administrations and only half of the typical cold war level (table 1-7). And given the relatively modest size of the U.S. military—which represents only about 8 percent of all military personnel in the world today—the budget is best understood as a means of fully and properly providing

**Table 1-6. Defense Spending by NATO and Major Formal U.S. Allies, 2003**

Country	Defense expenditure (billions of 2005 dollars)	Defense expenditure as percentage of GDP	Size of active duty armed forces (thousands)
<i>NATO</i>			
United States	410.6	3.7	1,427
France	46.3	2.6	101.4
United Kingdom	43.4	2.4	212.6
Germany	35.6	1.5	284.5
Italy	28.1	1.9	200
Turkey	11.8	4.9	514.8
Canada	10.3	1.2	52.3
Spain	10.1	1.2	150.7
Netherlands	8.4	1.6	53.1
Greece	7.3	4.1	177.6
Norway	4.4	2.0	26.6
Poland	4.2	2.0	163
Belgium	4.0	1.3	40.8
Denmark	3.4	1.6	22.8
Portugal	3.2	2.1	44.9
Czech Republic	1.9	2.2	57
Hungary	1.6	1.9	33.4
Romania	1.3	2.3	97.2
Slovakia	0.6	1.9	22
Bulgaria	0.5	2.4	51
Slovenia	0.4	1.4	6.5
Lithuania	0.3	1.8	1.27
Luxembourg	0.2	0.9	0.9
Latvia	0.2	1.9	4.9
Estonia	0.2	2.0	5.50
Iceland	...	...	...
Total, non-U.S. NATO	227.8	1.0 <sup>a</sup>	2,324.8
Total, NATO	638.4	2.8 <sup>a</sup>	3,751.8
<i>Other major formal U.S. allies</i>			
Japan	43.4	1.0	239.9
South Korea	14.8	2.8	686
Australia	11.9	2.3	53.6
Total	70.1	4.7 <sup>a</sup>	980
Grand total	708.5	...	...

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2004/2005* (Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 353–55.

a. Total defense expenditure as percentage of GDP is a simple average of all countries' respective percentages in 2003 dollars, not a weighted average.

**Table 1-7. U.S. National Security Spending in Modern Historical Perspective<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Year or period</i>	<i>Mean spending level</i>	<i>Mean spending (percent of GDP)</i>
1960s (1962–69)	382	10.7
Peak year 1968	463	9.5
1970s	315	5.9
Peak year 1970	414	8.1
1980s	379	5.8
Peak year 1989	440	5.6
1990s	359	4.1
Peak year 1991	430	5.4
2000	325	3.0
2001	328	3.0
2002	364	3.4
2003	412	3.7
2004	454	3.9
2005	445	3.8
2006	412	3.4
2007	395	3.3
2008	402	3.2
2009	412	3.2
2010	418	3.2

Sources: President George W. Bush, *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2005: Historical Tables* (Office of Management and Budget, 2004), pp. 126–28. *Budget of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2006*, tables 8.2 and 8.4 ([www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/pdf/hist.pdf](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/pdf/hist.pdf) [February 7, 2005]). Inflation is calculated according to Budget of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2006, table 12-1 ([www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/sheets/12\\_1.xls](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/sheets/12_1.xls) [February 7, 2005]).

a. Discretionary outlays in billions of 2005 dollars. Peak year refers to the year when the inflation-adjusted dollar total was highest for the period in question. This table shows budget function 050, including the Department of Defense and Department of Energy, but it does not include homeland security activities except those carried out by DoD. It also includes spending for supplemental appropriations when known.

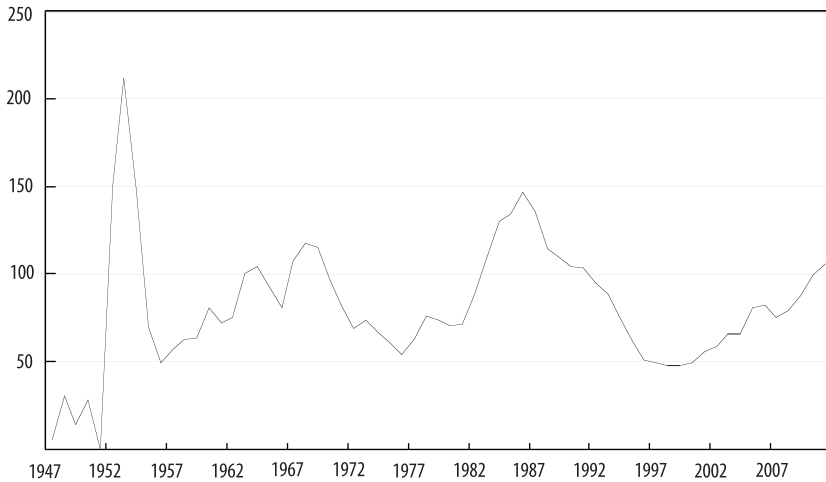
resources to the limited number of men and women in the country's armed forces. It does not reflect an American ambition to field an enormous fighting machine.

The reasons for a very large U.S. defense budget are not hard to understand. The United States has security alliances or close partnerships with more than seventy countries, featuring all of the other twenty-five members of NATO, all of the Rio Pact countries in Latin America, several allies in the Western Pacific, and roughly a dozen countries in the Persian Gulf–Mideast region. It alone among the world's powers takes seriously the need to project significant military force quickly over great distances



**Figure 1-1. Department of Defense Procurement Funding<sup>a</sup>**

Billions of constant 2005 dollars



Source: Department of Defense, "National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 2005," March 2004, pp. 110–15 ([www.dod.mil/comptroller/defbudget/fy2005/fy2005\\_greenbook.pdf](http://www.dod.mil/comptroller/defbudget/fy2005/fy2005_greenbook.pdf) [April 12, 2004]). "President Bush's FY 2006 Defense Budget," Department of Defense, February 7, 2005 ([www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2005/d20050207budget.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2005/d20050207budget.pdf) [February 7, 2005]). Inflation is calculated according to Budget of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2006, table 12-1 ([www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/sheets/12\\_1.xls](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/sheets/12_1.xls) [February 7, 2005]).

a. Billions of 2005 dollars. The 1951–90 cold war annual average budget authority for procurement was \$94.7 billion.

for sustained periods. Indeed, as discussed further below, the United States possesses by my estimates more than two-thirds of the world's collective power projection capability and an even higher share if one focuses on high-quality military units.<sup>24</sup> The United States alone undergirds a collective security system that helps many countries in the Western world feel secure enough that they do not have to engage in arms races with their neighbors, launch preemptive wars of their own, or develop nuclear weapons.

### ***Recent Growth in the U.S. Defense Budget***

Still, one might ask why the annual cost of an active duty military that has grown by less than 5 percent since the Clinton administration has increased by more than \$100 billion during the Bush presidency.<sup>25</sup> Inflation accounts for some of the growth, but the real-dollar increase in the

**Table 1-8. Department of Defense Discretionary Budget Authority, by Title<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Category</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
Military personnel	104.0	106.8	107.6	108.6	110.0	111.3	111.8
Operations and maintenance	137.0	144.9	148.1	151.3	154.2	155.4	156.1
Procurement	78.1	76.5	88	95.4	97.0	100.5	104.4
Research, development, testing and evaluation	68.8	68.0	64.2	62.6	66.7	62.1	52.5
Military construction	6.0	7.6	11.8	12.8	10.2	9.5	9.6
Family housing	4.1	4.1	3.7	2.8	2.5	2.4	2.4
Revolving and management funds/ other	2.1	3.1	2.3	1.6	3.5	3.1	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>400.1</b>	<b>411.1</b>	<b>425.7</b>	<b>435.2</b>	<b>444.1</b>	<b>444.2</b>	<b>442.0</b>

Source: "President Bush's FY 2006 Defense Budget," Department of Defense, February 7, 2005 ([www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2005/d20050207budget.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2005/d20050207budget.pdf) [February 7, 2005]). Inflation is calculated according to Budget of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2006, table 12-1 ([www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/sheets/12\\_1.xls](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy06/sheets/12_1.xls) [February 7, 2005]).

a. Billions of constant 2005 dollars. Totals are for each fiscal year and exclude supplemental appropriations. Inflation in 2011 is assumed to be the same as in 2010. Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding.

annual budget is still about \$100 billion. (Note that these figures do not even count the costs of military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.) Of the total increase, 27 percent is in military personnel costs; 27 percent for operations and maintenance; 17 percent for procurement (see figure 1-1); 25 percent for research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E); and about 4 percent for nuclear weapons activities (table 1-8).

Of these totals, the increases in personnel costs are due primarily to more generous compensation packages (funds for activating reservists and for temporarily increasing the size of the active duty military come primarily from supplemental appropriations bills). Some of these allocations are more helpful for strengthening today's military than others. But as a general proposition, in a time of national crisis and high demand on the military, overall compensation must remain robust to attract and retain good people and to be fair to those who risk their lives for their country.

The operations and maintenance increases reflect the relentless upward pressure on the cost of health care, equipment maintenance, environmental cleanup, and the like. They also result from the Bush administration's decision to fund "readiness" accounts for training and equipment

maintenance even more generously than the Clinton administration had done. The increases in acquisition funding are partially due to missile defense (\$5 billion a year higher than under Clinton) and partially due to Secretary Rumsfeld's "transformation" initiatives (at least \$5 billion annually). They also reflect efforts to restore funding for hardware to typical historical levels after a "procurement holiday" in the 1990s.

As noted, most emergency costs, including those for protecting American airspace through Operation Noble Eagle, are funded out of supplemental appropriations bills. However, some costs now found in the normal defense budget are related to 9/11 and its aftermath. The Pentagon's funding for homeland security, for example, is about \$8 billion, to cover activities such as those of some 25,000 soldiers in the United States that involve protecting the homeland.<sup>26</sup> Similar activities overseas, such as base security, make the total for activities funded through the regular DoD budget about \$10 billion annually.<sup>27</sup> Roughly another \$5 billion may have been devoted to increases in the classified \$40 billion annual intelligence budget (hidden within the Department of Defense's budget), some of which are clearly tied to the war on terror.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the annual budget for special operations command has been increased by about \$3 billion, to \$6.6 billion (personnel totals have risen by about 5,000 ).<sup>29</sup> But even after adding up all these amounts, less than 20 percent of the \$100 billion real-dollar growth in the annual Pentagon budget is due to the direct effects of the war on terror.

### *Further Planned Budget Increases*

The era of increases in defense spending does not yet appear to be over. Expectations are for continued annual increases of about \$20 billion a year—twice what is needed to compensate for the effects of inflation (or to put it differently, real budgets are expected to keep rising by about \$10 billion a year, as shown in table 1-8). By 2009, the annual national security budget will exceed \$500 billion—not counting the additional costs of any activities funded by supplementals and again, not counting most homeland security activities.

That means almost \$450 billion when expressed in 2005 dollars. Given the administration's plans, that is a conservative estimate of what its future defense program would cost the country, even without including any

added costs from future military operations or the ongoing missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that to fully fund the Pentagon's current plans, average annual costs from 2010 through 2020 will exceed \$480 billion (in 2005 dollars) and perhaps reach as much as \$530 billion.<sup>30</sup>

### *The Fiscal Backdrop*

Although it must protect itself, the United States cannot afford to waste money doing so. Federal deficits, which, as noted, already exceed \$400 billion a year, could exceed \$500 billion annually in the next decade, even if President Bush succeeds in his goal of halving the deficit in 2009 (likely to be a temporary accomplishment at best). They would thus remain at the economically unhealthy level of around 4 percent of GDP, driving down national savings rates and increasing America's dependence on foreign investors to propel its economy. Longer-term fiscal trends are even worse, given the pending retirement of the baby boomers together with rising health care costs.<sup>31</sup> The United States cannot afford to buy combat formations and weapons that are not truly required.<sup>32</sup> If more ground forces are needed in the coming years, it becomes even more important to look for economies and trade-offs in other parts of the Pentagon budget to help fund the new requirements and avoid continued rapid growth in annual expenditures.

Indeed, in political terms, it may actually be easier to find some of those economies now—while the country is increasing its defense budget and increasing support for troops in the field—than to wait until a later period of general budgetary austerity. No one could reasonably accuse any politicians of being antidefense if they are now supporting \$20 billion annual budget increases for the Department of Defense, so they may be in a better position to push for tough choices and economies today than in the future.

### **Containing Defense Spending While Expanding the Ground Forces**

Many current trends continue to push real defense spending upward, even while troop strength is not growing. Historically, weapons costs per troop have increased at 2 percent to 3 percent a year in real, inflation-adjusted terms. A similar trend pertains in the operations and maintenance

accounts. The rising cost of health care, environmental cleanup, and other such activities affects the military as much as any other sector of the economy. For example, DoD's health program budget almost doubled in real terms between 1988 and 2003, to just under \$30 billion.<sup>33</sup> In addition, while compensation is now rather good for most troops (relative to that for civilian jobs requiring comparable experience and education), it is important that it stay that way. To attract top-notch people, military pay increases must keep up with those in civilian pay, which can require real growth of at least 1 percent a year.<sup>34</sup> Further increases in pay may be appropriate for specific groups, such as highly skilled technicians with much more remunerative job opportunities in the private sector, or reservists called up for active duty for extended periods who sacrifice large amounts of income as a result.<sup>35</sup> Fairness concerns also argue for other changes, such as a major increase in the benefit paid to the families of those who die on overseas missions (just \$12,420 as of this writing).

There are several opportunities to save money within the defense budget and possibly counter these broad trends. In all probability, they will not save a great deal of money quickly. In fact, they are best viewed not as means of saving money in the literal sense at all, but of reducing the rate of defense budget growth relative to what might otherwise occur. But by this measure, they should be able to free up enough—\$5 billion a year soon, perhaps two to three times as much by the decade's end—to help fund the temporary increase in troop strength that seems necessary given the demands of the Iraq mission and the war on terror.

### *Emphasizing Advanced Electronics and Computers in Defense Modernization*

Weapons purchases are one reason that the Pentagon budget is slated to grow so much in coming years. Some of the upward pressure arises from high-profile issues such as missile defense, but most comes from the main combat systems of the military services, which are generally wearing out. Living off the fruits of the Reagan military buildup, the Clinton administration spent an average of \$50 billion a year on equipment, only about 15 percent of the defense budget; in contrast, the historical average is about 25 percent. This "procurement holiday" is now ending, as it must.

Nevertheless, the Pentagon's weapons modernization plan is excessive. Despite President Bush's campaign promise in 1999–2000 to "skip a gen-

eration” of weaponry, his Pentagon has canceled only three major weapons systems—the Navy’s lower-altitude missile defense program; the Army’s Crusader howitzer, which was not especially expensive; and more recently the Army’s Comanche helicopter. Although procurement budgets must continue rising, the rapid increases envisioned in current plans are not essential. Economies can almost certainly be found by expanding the application of modestly priced technologies, such as the precision weapons, unmanned vehicles, and communications systems used so effectively in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Like those of its predecessors, the Bush administration weapons modernization plan lacks clear priorities. It proposes to replace major combat systems throughout the force structure with systems typically costing twice as much. Simpler systems often will do. Even though procurement budgets have not yet risen dramatically, the current plan will soon oblige them to do so. It has already led to historic and huge increases in the RDT&E budget for advanced systems development, above and beyond high-profile missile defense programs. That budget was about \$50 billion a year in the late cold war years and about \$40 billion annually in the mid- to late 1990s. Today it is about \$65 billion (all these figures are in constant 2005 dollars).<sup>36</sup>

A more discriminating and economy-minded modernization strategy would equip only part—not most or all—of the armed forces with extremely sophisticated and expensive weaponry. That high-end component would hedge against new possibilities, such as unexpectedly rapid modernizing of the Chinese armed forces. The rest of the U.S. military establishment would be equipped primarily with relatively inexpensive upgrades of existing weaponry, including better sensors, munitions, computers, and communications systems. This approach would also envision, over the longer term, greater use of unmanned platforms and other new concepts and capabilities, while being patient about when to deploy them. Such an approach would not keep the procurement budget in the current range of \$70 billion to \$75 billion, but it might hold it to \$80 billion to \$90 billion a year instead of the \$100 billion or more now projected.

### *Privatization and Reform*

All defense planners endeavor to save money in the relatively low-profile parts of the Pentagon budget known as operations and mainte-

nance accounts. These accounts, which fund a wide range of activities including training, overseas deployments, upkeep of equipment, military base operations, and health care costs—in short, near-term military readiness—have been rising fast in recent years, and it will be hard to stop the upward trend.<sup>37</sup>

Some savings are already in the works. Congress has agreed to authorize another round of base closures in 2005.<sup>38</sup> Since the cold war ended, U.S. military forces have shrunk by more than one-third, yet domestic base capacity has fallen only 20 percent. That suggests that another reduction of 12 to 15 percent might be appropriate. The recent Bush administration decision to bring about 70,000 troops home from abroad might reduce the scale of the next BRAC (base realignment and closure) round, implying a net reduction closer to 10 percent of existing domestic capacity. But after initial implementation costs that could reach \$10 billion or somewhat more, retrenchment of base capacity reportedly will save about \$7 billion annually, including some savings from abroad.<sup>39</sup>

Overhauling military health care services by merging the independent health plans of each branch of military service and introducing a small copayment for military personnel and their families could save \$2 billion per year.<sup>40</sup> Other savings in operations and maintenance are possible. For example, encouraging local base commanders to economize by letting them keep some of the savings for their base activities could save \$1 billion a year or more within a decade.<sup>41</sup>

All that said, the activities funded by these accounts are crucial to national security and have proved tough to cap or contain. Privatization is no panacea; it takes time, sometimes raises complicated issues about deploying civilians to wartime environments, and generally saves much less than its warmest advocates claim.<sup>42</sup> Often it leads to increases in the size of the civilian personnel payroll funded out of the defense budget without reducing uniformed personnel—thereby potentially increasing, not reducing, total costs.

Another broad approach is to improve efficiency in employing and deploying military forces, which could lead to some cuts in personnel, at least over time. The Navy has some of the most interesting ideas on this, and they can be pursued further, perhaps allowing a modest decrease in the size of the fleet (in addition to reducing the strain on people and equip-

ment). For example, more ships can be based near the regions where they are used, as with attack submarines on Guam. Crews can be airlifted from the United States to relieve other crews on ships deployed abroad, rather than sailing the ships all the way back to the United States so frequently. And the Navy's innovative concept for "surging" carriers from U.S. ports to hotspots during crises (or for exercises or other purposes)—instead of slavishly maintaining a constant presence in key overseas theaters—also could offer at least modest benefits.<sup>43</sup>

These cost-saving ideas all require further development. In particular, methods to reduce the cost of new weapons are discussed in chapter 5.

### **More Burden Sharing?**

Today the United States outspends its major allies by about 2 to 1, but it outdistances them in military force that can be projected overseas and sustained there by a ratio of at least 5 to 1. Most American allies spent the cold war preparing to defend their own or nearby territories against a Soviet threat. American forces focused on how to deploy and operate forces many thousands of miles from home. Most U.S. allies have gotten serious about this effort only since the cold war ended (if then).

Shifting defense responsibilities to U.S. allies is an idea that is attractive in the United States. Unfortunately, the near-term prospects for doing so to any significant extent are not good, even though many U.S. allies have good militaries, strong military traditions, and a high-tech industrial base. The problem is largely political. It is not that Europeans are as force-averse as some argue. The claim that "Americans are from Mars, Europeans from Venus," meaning that the former are inclined to use force and the latter to use more peaceful inducements in their foreign policy, is overstated—as evidenced by European military action in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Africa, and to some extent even Iraq. However, it is probably true that Europeans do not believe the world to be quite as dangerous a place as Americans typically do. Several European countries face fiscal deficits that combined with their political priorities and their voters' perceptions of threat probably preclude big defense buildups. They also have strong incentives to free-ride, at least somewhat, on U.S. commitments



and capabilities. On the other hand, European nations often cite their substantial contributions to peacekeeping missions as evidence that they are already bearing a considerable share of the defense burden. Germany and Japan are disinclined to remilitarize, and many of their former adversaries who vividly remember World War II hesitate to urge them to abandon their reticence.<sup>44</sup>

Some progress has been made. European militaries are developing the combined capacity to deploy up to 60,000 troops at a considerable geographic distance and to sustain them there for a year. Japan is slowly enlarging its interpretation of which military missions are consistent with its post-World War II constitution. U.S., British, and French programs are slowly helping African militaries improve their skills. And the recent transatlantic quarrel over Iraq may help motivate European countries to develop more military capability to gain greater influence in global decisions on the use of force.

But much more is needed. And much more is possible. Reallocations of about 10 percent of current allied military spending could, even without increased defense budgets, give other Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries fully half as much deployable military capability as the United States within a decade.<sup>45</sup> That in turn could allow modest reductions in American troop strength—if not right away, then eventually.

Reductions in U.S. forces could never be as great as increases in allied forces, since there is no assurance that the latter would be available in large numbers in a given operation. But there are nonetheless benefits to greater allied capabilities. Even the Iraq stabilization effort, as unpopular as it has been, has seen an allied contribution of 15 percent of total forces—probably a floor below which future contributions would rarely if ever drop. More often, with better diplomacy than employed by the Bush administration on Iraq policy, it should be realistic to expect allied assistance in the range of at least 25 percent of a given operation's total strength. Levels could reach 50 percent or more in operations near Europe (as in the Balkans, where Europeans have typically provided 75 percent of the total). So a larger pool of capable forces from friendly countries would help the United States—eventually.

## Growing the Ground Forces

The case for increasing expenditures in one part of the defense budget—the size and cost of ground forces—also needs to be made. Enormous strain is now being imposed on U.S. soldiers and Marines by the Iraq mission and other responsibilities. The Rumsfeld Pentagon has pursued a number of approaches to free up more soldiers and Marines for deployment out of those already in the armed forces. But those initiatives, while worthy and indeed bold, are not enough given the demands of the times, as argued at greater length in chapter 3.

The United States should promptly increase the number of combat soldiers and Marines by a total of roughly 40,000 active duty troops—and perhaps more depending on future events—beyond the increase of some 25,000 that the Bush administration has already carried out. Today's operations, which could last several more years, are too much for the all-volunteer force to be expected to sustain at its current size. Indeed, an increase is already eighteen months overdue. Even though it could take two to three years to carry out fully, it must begin—even if there is a chance that the Iraq operation will be terminated or substantially downsized while the increase is being put into effect. The cost of modestly and temporarily increasing the size of the U.S. ground forces, while large, is not terribly onerous. By contrast, the consequences for the nation of continuing to overdeploy soldiers and Marines and thereby risking a rapidly intensifying personnel shortage would be enormous. It is not necessary to run that risk.

Over the longer term, even after the Iraq and Afghanistan missions are completed, the United States will still need substantial ground forces, in addition to major naval and air capabilities. In all likelihood, a force structure similar in size to today's will be needed then, though it may eventually be possible to reduce personnel rosters by 5 to 10 percent. The types of future scenarios that could require these forces are sketched in chapter 6. But for now, the pressure of current operations is what must concern American defense planners most—and that pressure requires a temporary increase, not a decrease, in Army and Marine Corps personnel.