

A/TQ

AIRLIFT/TANKER QUARTERLY
Volume 8 • Number 3 • Summer 2000



"Freedom Is Not Free"
From Korea to Kosovo and Beyond

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ON THE COVER: Photo Montage - "From Korea to Kosovo and Beyond," by Collin R. Bakse. A Korean War era C-54 and a Kosovo era C-17 head toward their respective world hotspots. Currently, whenever the nation needs to send mobility assets to a world hotspot the Tanker Airlift Control Center (TACC) at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, oversees the mission.

Watchwords of Change

by
Lieutenant Colonel Greg Cook

Introduction: Preparing Now for An Uncertain Future

Vision. Transformation. Integration. Innovation. As the 21st Century gets underway, these terms are being used with greater frequency in a continuing stream of military, government and independent publications, strategy documents and study efforts. Notably, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the military Services all released new vision statements in recent months that outline their intended strategic focus for the next twenty-five years. In addition, a high-powered Federal Advisory Commission established to review our national security published its second of three major papers expected to greatly influence a looming national security debate.

While many ascribe this activity to the upcoming presidential election of 2000, the momentum of strategic planning, transformation, and vision initiatives has been building since the early 1990s, driven by the uncertainties following the end of the Cold War. Now it approaches urgency as military Service budgets continue to bear the huge strains of a heavy operations tempo and readiness challenges as they simultaneously struggle to modernize for the future. All of them share the dilemma of how to adequately prepare for the future while maintaining force structure readiness and conducting current operations in support of our present national security imperatives.

The 1990s were tumultuous years for the U.S. military. Beginning with the Bush administration's Base Force plan in 1990, and continuing with the Clinton administration's Bottom-Up Review in 1993 and Quadrennial Defense Review in 1997, each successive examination of U.S. military force resulted in dramatic reductions in force structure, personnel, and weapons acquisition programs. At the same time, substantial increases in the number and scope of military missions and operations worldwide began to consume increasingly scarce resources at an accelerated rate. Despite the Services' efforts to adapt themselves to the changing post-Cold War environment, their attempts to invest in and modernize their forces for the future have been curtailed by the financial burdens of current operations and the maintenance of Cold War-era forces and infrastructure. This dilemma was noted in two independent studies, the first conducted by the National Defense Panel in 1997, and more recently in the ongoing Hart-Rudman Federal Advisory Commission, both of which highlight potential mismatches in strategy and force structure planning.

National Military Strategy in the 1990s

Three common themes prevailed in virtually all U.S. national security and national military strategy documents over the last decade. The first is that in the aftermath of the Cold War, U.S. military forces would face increasingly diverse and unpredictable threats amidst instability and vast changes in the international security environment, which would require them to perform a wider variety of roles and missions. From regional wars and internal conflicts to humanitarian crises and terrorism, America's armed forces would have to remain prepared to respond across the full spectrum of conflict, often on a moment's notice and without warning. It was assumed that this would be the price of maintaining our national security as the world's only remaining superpower, especially given our global interests and vast, unique military capabilities.

Another major theme driving our national military strategy is that the United States must maintain a force structure prepared to fight and win two major regional wars at approximately the same time. Referred to early in the decade as "Major Regional Conflicts (MRCs)," and now "Major Theater Wars (MTWs)," military strategy and force structure planning focused on back-to-back conflicts in both Southwest Asia and the Korean peninsula. It was assumed that maintaining forces at this level would reduce the risk of regional military adventurism while we were engaged in one major conflict, and also provide enough capability to respond to a wide variety of lesser contingencies and crises, or "Smaller Scale Contingencies (SSCs)." The Base Force plan, the Bottom-Up Review and the 1997 Quadrennial Defense all reinforced and institutionalized the two-war strategy, as did numerous other national security strategy and national military strategy policies and documents throughout the decade.

The last major theme that gained preeminence in the 1990s is that America's armed forces must transform themselves in order to prepare for operations in the 21st Century. Only by investing in the future, taking advantage of emerging technologies, and developing new operational concepts, it was argued, could we maintain our military superiority and the flexibility to respond to the varied challenges ahead.

Many strategists and analysts are now beginning to question, however, some of the assumptions underlying the second cornerstone of current U.S. national military strategy. Many claim that the two-war strategy simply perpetuates Cold War military thinking and drives us to maintain at great cost an unnecessarily large force structure unsuited for the geopolitical realities of the time. They argue that the military capabilities required to fight two major wars does not possess the right mix of forces necessary to respond to the large number of smaller scale contingencies and crises the U.S. has been involved with over the last several years and will likely face in the future. Two major independent study efforts, the 1997 National Defense Panel report and the current Hart-Rudman Commission, address the major themes driving U.S. national military strategy in the context of the Quadrennial Defense Review process.

The Quadrennial Defense Review and the National Defense Panel - 1997

The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) process was initiated by the Military Force Structure Review Act in 1996, which was included as part of the National Defense Authorization for Fiscal Year 1997. It required the Department of Defense to conduct a periodic review every four years of our Nation's defense establishment and needs as they related to our overall national security strategy. Congress also mandated an independent panel to review the work of QDR 1997, a National Defense Panel consisting of prominent statesmen, strategists, and former senior military officers.

Following an analysis of the international environment and the threats contained therein, the QDR developed an overarching defense strategy to effectively deal with the emerging geopolitical landscape, identified military capabilities for the future, and defined the policies and programs to support them. It emphasized that America's military forces would help to shape the strategic environment to advance U.S. interests, while simultaneously maintaining readiness to respond across the spectrum of conflict and preparing for the future. It embraced and set the stage to encourage a "Revolution in Military Affairs" that might result from

the infusion of information technologies into the U.S. military and encouraged overall transformation efforts. While still adhering to the two major war construct for sizing our forces, it also reduced some force structure areas and personnel end strength in order to reallocate resources towards modernization efforts, and advocated two more rounds of base closings to eliminate excess infrastructure.

The National Defense Panel report, while generally supportive of the QDR conclusions, identified some areas for improvement. It suggested that while the QDR adequately addressed the strategic environment, it did not provide sufficient connectivity between the overall strategy and the force structure, operational concepts, and program decisions to support it. Applauding the increased emphasis in the QDR on transformation efforts, it concluded that the traditional force-on-force two-war scenario and its associated force structure requirements inhibited real transformation by retaining Cold War-era operational concepts and strategies.

The United States Commission on National Security/21st Century

In late 1998, Congress and the Clinton administration formally chartered a Federal Advisory Commission to once again review our nation's security and the strategies and organizational structures to maintain it. Commonly referred to as the "Hart-Rudman Commission" after its co-chairmen, former Senators Gary Hart and Warren Rudman, it is packed with influential current and former national security policy makers and leaders. Their charter - to review once again our Nation's security system and recommend changes to address the needs of the 21st Century. Already it is challenging long-standing assumptions about U.S. national security and stimulating wide-ranging debate in the national security policymaking arena.

The Hart-Rudman Commission published the first of three planned reports in September, 1999, entitled "New World Coming: American Security in the 21st Century." This Phase I report examined current trends in international and domestic affairs, articulated basic assumptions and observations regarding the next 25 years, and communicated fourteen key conclusions on impacts to American national security strategy in the next quarter century. In the context of confronting a variety of complex, unpredictable threats, the report concludes in particular that "the mix and effectiveness of overall American capabilities need to be rethought and adjusted, and substantial changes in non-military capabilities will also be needed. Discriminating and hard choices will be required."

In April 2000, the commission released its Phase II report, "Seeking a National Strategy: A Concert for Preserving Security and Promoting Freedom." While advocating continued U.S. leadership on the world stage, it also cautions against limitless commitments abroad, especially with regard to military intervention. Instead it places new emphasis on the economic and non-military components of national security, with "a finer calculus of benefits and burdens" governing the use of military force. In a dramatic departure from current national military strategy, the commission declares bluntly that the "two major theater wars" construct for sizing U.S. forces "is not producing the capabilities needed for the varied and complex contingencies now occurring and likely to increase in the years ahead." Instead it advocates a broader mix of forces and capabilities better able to respond across the spectrum of conflict, from humanitarian and disaster relief to peace operations and large-scale conventional conflict.

The report states that the need to project U.S. power globally is fundamental to U.S. national security strategy, with "rapidly employable expeditionary/intervention capabilities" one of five key military capabilities required. Other specified requirements include nuclear capabilities to deter enemies and protect the U.S. and its

allies, homeland security capabilities, conventional means necessary to win major wars, and humanitarian relief and constabulary capabilities. In summary, the report concludes that a U.S. military with these types of capabilities will be able to deter wars, preclude crises from erupting into major conflicts, and when required, rapidly fight and win the Nation's wars.

The final report of the Hart-Rudman Commission, focused on current national security structures and processes, is due by mid-February, 2001 - just in time to exert major influence on the policies of the next administration and on the next Quadrennial Defense Review.

Transforming the U.S. Military for the 21st Century

As we begin the new century, the U.S. military establishment is trumpeting transformation as a national strategic imperative. Led by a joint vision guiding overall defense strategic direction, each military Service is pursuing a broad and challenging agenda for transforming its forces despite what they perceive as a severely constrained fiscal environment.

Joint Vision 2020

"The overall goal of the transformation described in this document is the creation of a force that is dominant across the full spectrum of military operations - persuasive in peace, decisive in war, preeminent in any form of conflict."

— Joint Vision 2020

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recently released *Joint Vision 2020*, which builds on and expands the conceptual underpinnings of the preceding *Joint Vision 2010* published in the mid-1990s. *JV2010* set in motion three important efforts. First, it established a common framework and language for the Services to develop and explain their contributions to the joint force. Second, it created a process for joint experimentation and training, and third, it began a process to manage the major transformations necessary to make the overall vision a reality.

The focus of *JV2020* is to sustain and build on the momentum of the overall Joint Vision process, continue the evolution of the Joint Force, and enable the continuing transformation of America's armed forces. In particular, it retains the four operational concepts of *JV2010* - Dominant Maneuver, Precision Engagement, Focused Logistics, and Full Dimensional Protection - as well as its key enablers. Most notable is its increased emphasis on innovation - not just technical innovation, but innovation in all aspects of military force, especially what it termed conceptual or intellectual innovation. The ultimate objective of this transformation and innovation effort is for U.S. armed forces to obtain "full spectrum dominance" across the full range of military operations, from full-scale war to smaller scale contingencies and peacetime operations. It emphasizes that the process to create the joint force of the future must also be flexible, to react to changes in the strategic environment or in potential enemies, to exploit new technologies, or to adapt to variations in the pace of change itself.

Transforming the Air Force

"Real transformation is not the result of a one-time improvement, but a sustained and determined effort. We have been engaged in that effort for more than ten years, and it is paying off in the dramatic improvements in capability that have been on display in places like the Persian Gulf and Kosovo. Impressive as those improvements have been, they are just the beginning . . ."

— Air Force Vision 2020

The U.S. Air Force remains at the leading edge of strategic think

ing and transformation efforts in the defense establishment, having already restructured both its organizational makeup and its operational framework during the 1990s. In 1992, it completely reorganized its major command structure, reduced the numbered Air Forces, and eliminated the air division. The Air Force has also outlined its overarching vision for the force through a series of published vision statements, beginning with the publishing of "Global Reach - Global Power" in 1992, and continuing with "Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st Century Air Force" in 1997. Just released is the latest vision statement, entitled "America's Air Force Vision 2020: Global Vigilance Reach and Power," which builds on previous vision statements to reflect key organizational and conceptual improvements, and lays the foundation for the future U.S. Air Force. In addition to the twin mantras of global reach and global power, this new vision adds global vigilance as a key component of aerospace power to anticipate and deter threats.

Another major change - implementation of the Aerospace Expeditionary Force - dramatically affects the way we operate as an Air Force. This construct meets one of the new Air Force vision's primary goals to size, shape, and operate the force to meet the needs of the nation while also managing the effects of operations tempo on Air Force people. Organized around a force of 10 AEFs with a full complement of deployable aerospace power, each AEF will be on call or deployed for a predictable 60-day period, with other forces prepared to back it up if necessary. The ultimate goal is to be able to employ a single AEF in 48 hours and up to five AEFs in fifteen days.

Given these major changes, USAF has embarked on a long journey of transformation, with *innovation* identified as the cornerstone of this effort and key to the realization of Air Force objectives. Born of technological innovation and boldly embracing new operational concepts and missions, USAF continues to look at and prepare for a dramatically different aerospace force of the future.

The drive from separate air and space forces toward an integrated aerospace force is gaining momentum across a broad range of Air Force planning activities. This is especially evident in recent Air Force publications and statements by senior Air Force leaders. One of the key pillars of the new Air Force vision is a white paper entitled "The Aerospace Force: Defending America in the 21st Century." It asserts that the best way to meet our war-fighting responsibilities to the joint team and the nation is through the further integration of air and space capabilities, and that doing so will increase our effectiveness and efficiency while creating new capabilities. It will also enable the Air Force to play a more effective role within the broader aerospace community that includes intelligence, civil, and commercial applications. Aerospace integration is a fundamental aspect of Air Force transformation and achieving the Air Force vision. To reinforce our commitment to these efforts, a new Transformation Division was formed under the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs (AF/XP) at the Air Staff in June 2000.

Air Force Planning, Programming and Budgeting

Promulgating a vision is the first step in the transformation

equation and the planning programming and budgeting process. What follows is the Air Force Strategic Plan, which encompasses two major elements - organizational performance planning and future capabilities planning.

Organizational performance planning is aimed at enhancing our ability to accomplish near-term mission-essential tasks. It establishes Air Force goals at the wing, major command, and headquarters levels, aligns specific tasks to missions, and identifies performance priorities.

Performance measurements and strategic plans are then developed at every level.

Future capabilities planning is focused on identifying and developing the future capabilities the Air Force needs to realize its vision for the long term. Through the Air Force Modernization Planning Process, implementation plans are prepared based upon strategic direction and planning priorities given by senior Air Force leadership. Major commands feed into the strategic planning process along the way by providing their own Strategic Plans, Mission Area Plans and Mission Support Plans.

The Annual Planning and Programming Guidance published by HQ USAF provides the link between Air Force strategic planning and the programming of Air Force resources. Under the guidance of the AF/XP, it is written jointly by the Directorate of Strategic Planning and the Directorate of Programs. It provides specific direction for developing the Air Force Program Objective Memorandum (POM) and supporting documents and activities for the Future Years Defense Program, or FYDP. Developed on a two-year cycle with an "amended" or APOM in the off year, the POM is a programming plan to fund all Air Force operations and activities over a six-year period in the mid-term. Recently submitted and currently under review is the Air Force POM for Fiscal Years 2002-2007.

Budget realities are hitting home. Trying to balance near-term operational and readiness needs against anticipated future requirements is difficult in the best of times, but even tougher when the future remains so unclear. Unlike the Cold War period, where major assumptions and force structure decisions were relatively straightforward given the superpower rivalry, the only common view of the future is one of instability and unpredictability.

Conclusion

This is just the beginning, but a new course has been set. After a decade of adjusting to the realities of the post-cold War world, the transition to a forward looking strategy is nearly complete. While many wonder what adjustments will come with the upcoming change in U.S. presidential administrations, the momentum of strategic planning, transformation, and vision initiatives is likely to carry on. The triple challenge of meeting a high operations tempo, maintaining readiness, and transforming for the future, however, will continue to strain defense resources and force many difficult decisions along the way. Yet the Air Force moves forward with a strong sense of direction, and the processes in effect to assure its continuing transformation and readiness for the years ahead.

Lt Col Greg Cook is a command pilot with over 3700 hours in the C-5, KC-135, C-21 and trainer aircraft. A veteran of multiple combat and contingency operations across the globe, he has also served as a mobility force strategic planner at both Air Mobility Command and USAF Headquarters. After commanding the 436th Operations Support Squadron at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, he now acts as the Chief of Program Integration in the Program Integration Division of the Directorate of Programs at HQ USAF. Lieutenant Colonel Cook is a Life member of the Airlift/Tanker Association, serves as its Public Affairs Coordinator, and is a frequent contributor to *A/TQ*.