

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL
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COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

**STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
CONCERNING THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FISCAL 2011 BUDGET REQUEST
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Introduction

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak to you today. As an American citizen, I appreciate the committee undertaking this independent look at the Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request and associated war costs. Our countrymen deserve this type of close scrutiny of the Executive Branch's view of national security. Moreover, such scrutiny serves to widen and deepen public discussion about our national security.

I am honored that the Secretary of Defense recently appointed me to serve as a member of the Independent Panel to Assess the Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review. As you know, this outside assessment is required by law. The Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Overview book incorporates a discussion of the Quadrennial Defense Review in chapter 2. Because deliberations of the Panel are ongoing with a final report not due to Congress until July 2010, I will limit my testimony to material contained in the other seven chapters of that book.

From Strategy to Budget to Operational Concepts

The Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request spells out in great detail what the Department's senior leaders believe is needed for our national security. In other words, this Budget identifies the *means* that the American Armed Forces will require and in many cases use in the coming years to protect our nation and its interests. More important than identification of the means, though, is an explanation of *why* the nation requires these means and *how* the Armed Forces will make use of them.

Our national strategies—security, defense, and military—are published to explain the “why” behind the “means.” That is, they are to give good reason for the purposes that underpin the strategies, goals and objectives and describe how they relate to the resources the Department of Defense is requesting. These strategies should also explain in increasing detail how American Armed Forces will use these means strategically. Finally, joint force and service concepts should explain how our forces will use these means operationally.

In Clausewitzian terms our strategies describe the *ends* we desire as well as the strategic *ways* we will seek to achieve those ends. Our operating concepts describe the military *ways* or methods available to support our strategies. I believe it important to continually remind ourselves that if we fail to get the strategies and the concepts right we are unlikely to get the means right either. A clear and compelling logic of ends, ways, and means must run through all of these strategic, budget, and operational documents. In the final reckoning, the quality of our thought will prove more significant than the quantity of our means. My remarks that follow are based on an analysis of the Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request using this ends, ways, means construct.

As I am certain the committee knows, in accordance with Title 50, chapter 15, section 404a of the United States Code, the President is to “transmit to Congress each year a comprehensive report on the national security of the United States . . . on the date on which the President submits to Congress the budget for the next fiscal year” and “not later than 150 days after the date on which a new President takes office.” In the first 14 years after Congress enacted the legislation containing this requirement, administrations submitted a national security strategy fairly regularly though often not at the time specified. However, the last administration submitted only three national security strategies in eight years and the current administration has yet to offer one.

A national security strategy informs the Defense Budget. In its absence we must seek other sources of strategic thought. To judge the thought behind the Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request I turned to President Obama’s speeches that address his administration’s strategic approaches, in particular those he delivered at Camp Lejeune in February 2009, in Cairo in June 2009, and at West Point and in Oslo in December 2009. In addition, I read Secretary of Defense Robert Gates’ *National Defense Strategy* of June 2008 and his article, “A Balanced Strategy” in the January/February 2009 issue of *Foreign Affairs*. To determine if the Defense Budget Request leads to a force that can implement the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen’s “vision for how the joint force circa 2016-2028 will operate in response to a wide variety of security challenges” I looked to his *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*. In addition, I reviewed current joint doctrine and operating concepts to

judge if the near term impact of the Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request will support the operational ideas they contain.

Evaluating the Strategy to Budget to Operational Concepts Construct

Placing my conclusions up front, in general I find a common theme and consistency among all these speeches and documents linking goals and objectives to the specific capabilities and capacities enumerated in the Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request. Furthermore, I am confident that achievement of those capabilities and capacities will, for the most part, support current and future operational ideas. This is not to say that room does not exist for improvement of selected aspects of the Budget Request. Later I will identify several. My greatest concern, however, is that current and anticipated economic conditions may not allow the Nation to sustain the effort it continues, and in some cases begins, in this proposed budget.

Statements of the President and the Secretary of Defense contained in the key documents mentioned above provide examples of the close relationship between these leaders' strategic "guidance" and the Defense Budget Request. To illustrate, President Obama in his West Point Speech said; "Our overarching goal remains the same: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity to threaten America and our allies in the future." Secretary Gates wrote in his *Foreign Affairs* piece, ". . . to fail—or to be seen to fail—in either Iraq or Afghanistan would be a disastrous blow to U.S. credibility, both among friends and allies and among potential adversaries." The Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request declares one of its objectives to be to "prevail in today's wars" and then describes actions "to increase the capabilities available to our deployed forces—especially those forces in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan." In addition, it lists as one of four key priorities, "enhance capabilities for current conflicts" and details those capabilities among which are the acquisition of additional rotary wing aircraft, greater intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support, and an increase of personnel for special operations forces. (See section 4 of the Defense Budget Request.) I find it relatively easy to follow the logic trail in this example as well as many others.

A second example of the relationship between goals, budget, and execution is seen in Secretary of Defense Gates's words in his *Foreign Affairs* article that point to the need to protect the United States' power projection capabilities. Such capabilities are detailed in section 4 of the Defense Budget Request—examples being shipbuilding, a next generation bomber, and a new missile defense approach—all of which relate to forcible-entry capabilities identified in the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*.

Another instance of the connection between the previously cited documents is the statement of President Obama in his Camp Lejeune speech that; "I want you to know this, military families are a top priority for Michelle and me, and they will be a top priority for my administration" and the Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request for nearly three billion dollars of additional funds for Military Family and Health Care Programs. (See figure 3-5 of the Defense Budget Request.)

Two of the most positive aspects of the Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request are that its text is very readable and that there is a long overdue recognition of the real reasons for military innovation and change. Recent predecessors to this Defense Budget Request made too many groundless assertions that there was an imperative to undertake fundamental change in the weapons, equipment, organization, or doctrine of the U.S. military. These assertions posited that "transformation" would "render obsolete current technology and methods of warfare." These unsupported claims—also made all too commonly in the larger defense community—revealed their authors' fundamental misunderstanding of why and how militaries alter or improve the means and methods they intend to employ in combat. Simply, these claims ignored first-rate research that pointed out that successful innovation in the past depended on "the presence of specific military problems the solution of which offered significant advantages to furthering the achievement of national strategy."ⁱ

For a decade and a half the U.S. military endured demands from senior defense leaders supported by pundits on the sidelines that it undertake transformation for transformation's sake alone. The effect was to draw most of the services' and joint community's intellectual energies into fool's work at the expense of thinking critically about how our forces might operate to meet emerging security problems. In my view, the Department of Defense wasted

hundreds of millions of dollars in the name of transformation. For the most part, all we have for the money spent is a handful of vacuous concepts and disingenuous reports on flawed experiments.

Recent leadership changes within the Defense Department and the U.S. Joint Forces Command have been a breath of fresh air as it has allowed subordinates to think about and plan for war as it exists in reality, not as the uninformed wish it to be!

I also find the Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request worthy in that it largely avoids focusing on many of the meaningless adjectives recently used to modify the nouns war and warfare; 4th generation war, asymmetric war, net-centric warfare, and so forth. We have squandered too much energy and too many resources in efforts to explain or define such terms when they are essentially meaningless. As noted strategist Colin Gray writes, "Warfare is warfare, period."ⁱⁱ Though, as Clausewitz observed, "War is more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case."ⁱⁱⁱ Thus, we can say warfare has two forms; "regular" where generally similar forces maneuver and fire to gain a position of advantage in relation to the other and "irregular," that is, wars of insurgency.

Properly, the Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request starts to rebalance our forces' capabilities and capacities between these two forms of war. The generation I represent learned hard lessons during the Vietnam War about how to operate against an insurgent enemy. Pained by the outcome of that war and overly focused on advancements the Soviet military made in the 1960s and early 1970s we neglected to capture these lessons and to codify them in new doctrine. Moreover, we failed to include the study of insurgency in the curricula of our professional military schools. Our sons and daughters have paid a high price for our disregard of this important form of war; once again they and our Nation have had to re-learn how to counter insurgencies through bitter experience. We cannot repeat this tragedy! The proposed defense budget provides strong evidence that defense leaders are well aware of this issue.

Much of the U.S. military's equipment and many of its weapons systems needed to confront a so-called regular enemy are degraded and in some cases are nearing obsolescence. In addition, the U.S. military's six or seven-year concentration on countering insurgencies has allowed too many of the tactical and technical skills that enabled early success in Operation

Iraqi Freedom to atrophy. The Army has majors in the combat arms who have never maneuvered as part of a brigade, the Marine Corps has gunnery sergeants who have never been aboard an amphibious ship, and the Air Force and Navy have pilots whose experience flying in a high-threat environment is very limited. In regard to the former, that is, rebuilding the U.S. military's capability to engage and win in "regular" warfare, I find strong evidence in the Defense Budget Request for both acquisition and refurbishing of the needed weapons and equipment. Unfortunately, I cannot find the same support for the professional education and training needed to reacquire and build both the knowledge and skills needed to fight nation-state enemies.

The joint forces and the services too often look to training and education accounts as bill payers when funds and personnel are short in other areas. Personnel directorates deny officers and staff noncommissioned officers schooling in order to support other functions and to fill wartime billets. Leaders direct professional schools to prepare students for their next assignments rather than the rest of their careers. Such actions hinder our future leaders.

Final Thoughts

In closing, I urge this Committee and the entire Congress to evaluate carefully the National Security Strategy when the White House submits its report in the near future, ensuring that it in fact does relate to and support the Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request. In addition, I entreat you to monitor closely the new National Defense Strategy that should flow from the Quadrennial Defense Review and the subsequent National Military Strategy that ought to draw from the Defense Strategy and Defense Review. I also ask that you look carefully at the structure of the services' operational units. There is a tendency to mask shortcomings in new organizations; one example being the Army's brigade combat teams that have only two maneuver battalions instead of the three battalions that brigades have traditionally had in the past. Two battalions not only have less combat power, especially in infantry, but they also limit the forms of maneuver available to a commander. In addition, look to the numbers of aircraft currently assigned to squadrons compared to the numbers in the past. Authorities usually justify lesser numbers by pointing to increased capabilities of newer systems, a shortsighted metric in some cases. Check closely the number of personnel actually

in units compared to these units' tables of organization or designed structures. Often we see a predisposition to create more units instead of ensuring existing ones are at full strength. This practice forces commanders to create a work-around when personnel are not available to operate in accordance with existing doctrine, tactics, and techniques.

I also ask you to examine closely the concepts and doctrine the joint force and services promulgate in the coming years to ensure that our Armed Forces have a body of knowledge that is informed by history, grounded in the realities of war, and that captures the hard earned lessons gleaned from more than eight years of war. Finally, I request you pay close attention to the manner in which the services select and assign officers to command and staff colleges and war colleges as well as the content of the curricula followed in these schools. The Nation cannot afford to allow near-term requirements to undermine the development of long-term capabilities.

Once more, I thank the Committee for the opportunity to share my thoughts and concerns.

ⁱ Williamson Murray and Allan Millet, eds. *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, "Innovation: Past and Future" (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1996), p. 311.

ⁱⁱ Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody century: Future Warfare* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005), p. 370.

ⁱⁱⁱ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and trans. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 89.