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## America's Army: Preparing for Tomorrow's Security Challenges

Robert H. Scales Major General

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# AMERICA'S ARMY: PREPARING FOR TOMORROW'S SECURITY CHALLENGES

*Every age [has] had its own kind of war, its own limiting conditions, and its own peculiar preconceptions.<sup>1</sup>*

*Carl Von Clausewitz*

## Introduction:

The chronicles of military history teach us the importance of preparing for future security challenges. It would be unrealistic to anticipate the next 25 years as the beginning of a peaceful century void of conflict. As Clausewitz observed, every age has indeed been marked with its own kind of war. While the means change over time, warfare will remain “An act of force to compel our enemy to do our will.”<sup>2</sup>

America's elected leaders should expect numerous international security challenges as the new millennium witnesses continued racial, economic and religious tensions. Some of these conflicts will be so severe that our very national viability and existence could be in jeopardy. The United States, moreover, must anticipate the rise of regional hegemon<sup>3</sup> who will undoubtedly challenge our vital national interests. In some instances, these security threats will require resolution by using the element of military power.

The Army is preparing to meet tomorrow's security challenges by implementing a strategy that will transform it from a heavy, forward-deployed force to a lighter, more versatile, power projection force. The knowledge-rich attributes of Force XXI will be enhanced with the physical agility of Army After Next Era Battleforces. These new capabilities, in combination with a fully trained

force consisting of high quality people from both active and reserve components, will enable America's Army to remain the world's dominant strategic land power during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## The World Beyond 2010:

While the first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will reflect dramatic social and economic change, some things will remain predictable. There is little evidence that suggests the Information Age will alter the perpetual characteristics of geopolitics.

Geopolitical interactions based upon the pursuit of international order, stability and the balance of power will continue to influence the national interests of the United States. The nation-state will remain fundamentally the same. These states will be identifiable political entities bounded by geographical parameters. They may exercise sovereignty in new ways as the old Industrial Age bureaucracy designed to regulate commerce and industry is pushed aside by Information Age innovations.

Global restraint, maintained through the balance of power during the Cold War, will be more difficult to achieve as the world is likely to disintegrate into areas of multipolar tensions with competing regional hegemon. Reduced influence of a bi-polar strategic balance has already allowed the world to return to its pre-Cold War natural

1. Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 593.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

3. For purposes of this discussion, regional hegemon are defined as nation-state actors who attempt to dominate their respective region of the world by either threat or use of military force.

## We Can Begin to Identify Geopolitical Trends

- Fracturing and Regionalization.
- Diffusion of Threats.
- Rise of Regional Hegemons.
- Resurrection of Lingered Hostilities dormant during the Cold War --- return to normal global chaos
- Anti-Access Strategies.

Conflict continues to center around States or State-Like Actors.

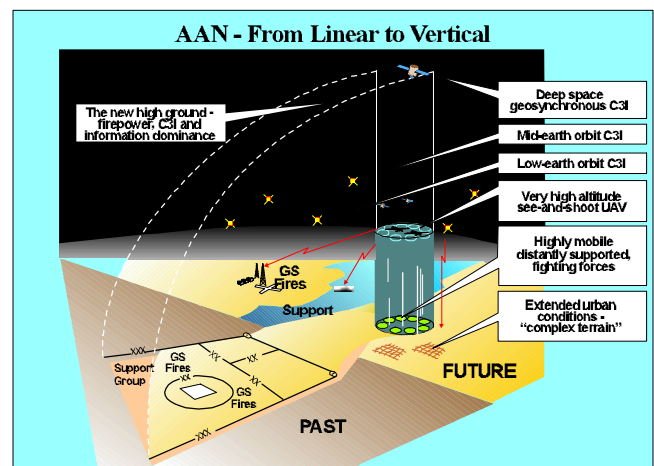
condition. Competing states will seek to gain dominance over their neighbors. Conflicts will abound as some nations redress historic grievances and others open old wounds that have been festering for hundreds of years. The proliferation of information, while increasing knowledge and understanding among nations, also galvanizes ethnic groups and contributes to cultural friction within troubled regions. Some states may disintegrate into smaller, ethnically based units. This fragmentation will cause both interstate and intrastate conflict.

What is different today is the fact that, thanks to the growing interdependence of world markets and the expansion of information, even the most local source of friction may spark sympathetic heat in distant places. The thousand year conflict in the Balkans has become more than a localized squabble between conflicting ethnic and religious groups. What goes on there affects relations among the West, Russia and the Muslim countries of the Middle East. The lingering territorial dispute and nuclear arms race on the Indian subcontinent, the conflicting interests over the Spratly Islands among China and other Southeast Asian nations, and the continuing issue of the relationship between Taiwan and China point to other likely areas of regional strife and disharmony.

Future conflicts will most likely occur along the same geopolitical and cultural fault lines that have separated civilizations for millennia. These historic lines extend across northern and southern Europe, converge in the Balkans, and traverse through the Middle East; continuing beyond Eurasia, turning south toward the Pacific Rim, down the Malay Peninsula and into the Indonesian Archipelago. As in the past, these geopolitical fault lines will continue to witness ethnic, religious, economic, and political confrontation.<sup>4</sup>

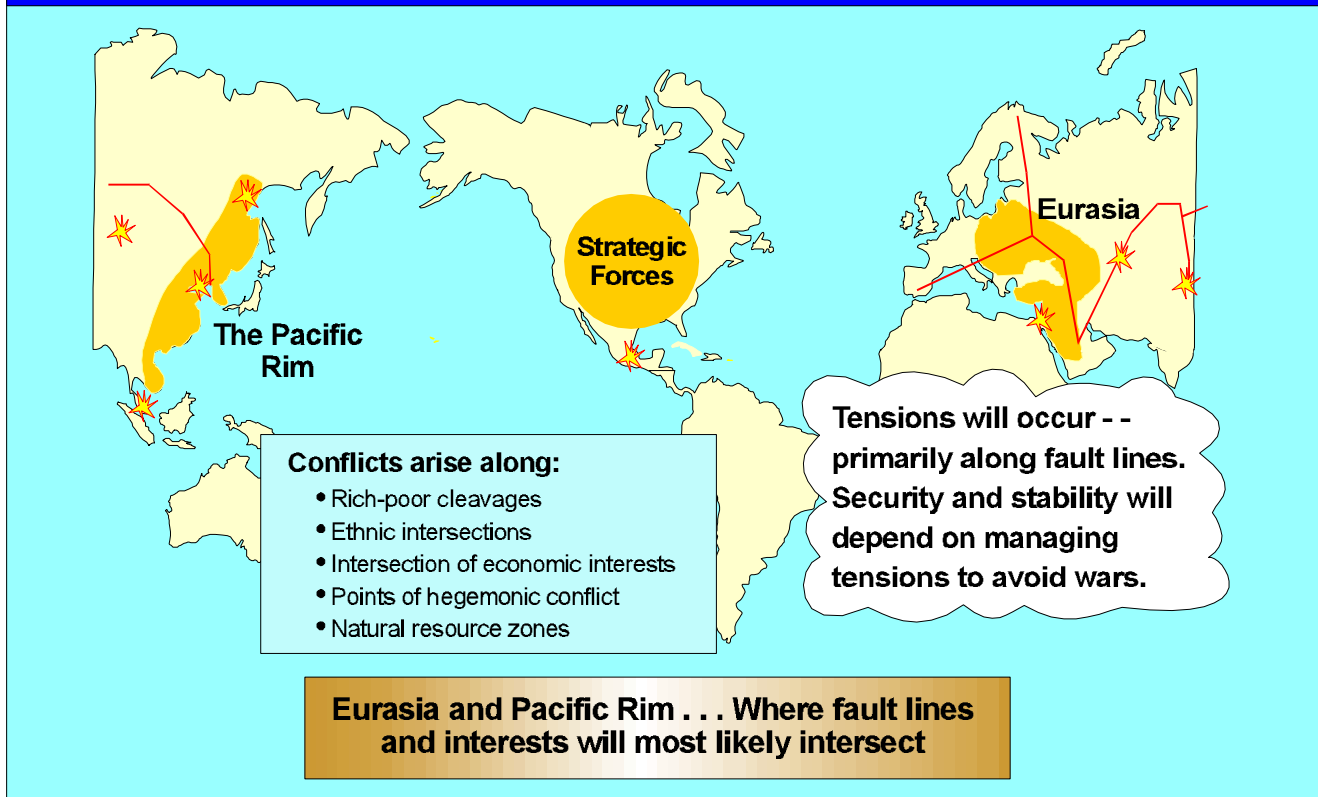
As the competition for resources and regional dominance intensifies, hegemons will likely develop where the intersection of sociopolitical zones collide. Since these regional fault lines contain abundant natural resources, particularly petroleum, these economic attributes will continue to capture the interest of the United States and other advanced countries. Between now and 2025, it is reasonable to assume that if an aspiring regional hegemon emerges to threaten either our interests or the interests of our friends and allies, conflict will likely occur.

Future militaries throughout the world will continue to reflect the societies they defend. Just as the Agricultural Age and Industrial Age affected how armies fought, information technologies will have a dramatic impact upon the character of military organizations and force structure. The



4. For greater detail see Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993, p. 25.

# GEOPOLITICS of 2025



power of the microchip already makes it possible to know much more about the location of both enemy and friendly forces. This enhanced situational awareness requires us to begin thinking in terms of a surface-to-space continuum that will transform the traditional battlefield of the past into a future “battle-space” that will be more vertical than linear.

This enhanced knowledge will mean American forces will strategically deploy with greater speed to the theater of operations and then act with greater speed throughout the operational and tactical battle-space. Digitization not only improves the ability to communicate, it fundamentally alters the relationship between fire and maneuver. With the capacity to attack an enemy’s center of gravity with great precision, our forces will maneuver with

greater dispersion and protection to overwhelm the opponent’s ability to resist.

Just as societies and states will reflect various stages of economic development and modernization, global militaries will likely retain elements of older, industrial armed forces while selectively buying state-of-the-art technology. In all likelihood, the proliferation of weapons and technologies will continue, thus contributing to the potential destabilization within regions of interest to the United States. For example, warriors from failed states might equip themselves with outdated weapons yet have access to weapons of mass destruction and employ the latest technology to exploit our information systems.

## America's Vital National Interests in the 21st Century:

The United States has little choice but to remain globally engaged beyond 2010. America is expected to maintain one of the world's largest economies, and we can assume with some certainty that the United States will continue to actively promote democratic principles, free market economies and human rights.

For the American military, the Third Millennium began in August 1990 when GEN(R) Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shifted the United States from threat-based planning to capabilities-based planning. This approach reflected the changing strategic landscape resulting from the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. For the last several years this methodology has been the basis for determining the required forces needed to secure America's national interests.

The President's National Security Strategy defines vital national interests as those of such importance that we, as a nation, will do whatever is necessary to defend them whenever our national survival is at risk. Vital interests include the physical security of our territory and the security of the territory of our formal allies. They also include the safety of American citizens at home and abroad. Part of insuring our security is maintaining access to trade and resources that are vital to our economic well-being. To defend these vital interests we are, and will remain, ready to use military force "unilaterally and decisively."<sup>5</sup>

Important but not vital national interests are those that affect our national well-being and the character of the world, but do not threaten our national survival. We may or may not use military

### Probable Long-Term U.S. Strategy (to 2025)

- **Security Policy will center on:**
  - Security of the United States.
  - Stability overseas in areas of vital national interest.
- **Military Strategy will center on:**
  - Defense of United States; land, sea, air and space.
  - Forward engagement (stationing) in vital regions.
  - Projectable Military Power.
- **Engagement & Enlargement will continue worldwide across the full spectrum of operations.**

force to address these interests, depending on the costs and risks and how these measure against the interests at stake.<sup>6</sup> Many of the threats to our interests through 2010 and beyond will fall into this gray area of "important" but not "vital."

The third level of interests addresses humanitarian concerns. These interests stem from our historical idealism and our democratic values and heritage. As a nation we will continue to stand for what is good and right. If people need our help, we may act because our values demand that we do so. Often, we will try to avert humanitarian disasters through diplomacy or by cooperating with a wide range of international and non-governmental organizations. In many cases, it will make more sense to take action early to alter a situation which, if left unattended, might grow into a disaster requiring a massive intervention, which might be costly in terms of both treasure and lives.<sup>7</sup>

Our national interests will remain focused on Europe, East and Southwest Asia.<sup>8</sup> These regions are strategically important to the United States because most of our vital interests extend from the continental United States to Europe, Asia and the Pacific Rim. The United States must be prepared to act wherever vital national interests intersect with

5. See *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 1998, p. 5.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

regions of potential conflict. Latin America is certainly important to the United States, as stated in the Monroe Doctrine, and we are mindful of events in Africa. But, not every conflict will require U.S. military action. Military intervention, however, may be required if an outbreak of conflict within these regions jeopardizes our national interests.

### Future Threats: Who Might Oppose the United States?

We can postulate with some degree of certainty that a major military competitor is not likely to arise from modern democratic states. Although warfare among or between democracies is not impossible, because of mutual economic interests and the similarity between political and social culture, such a prospect is highly improbable.

It seems almost a certainty that current threats will continue from hostile subnational groups, criminal cartels, and transnational terrorists. While each group may possess the capacity to cause great mischief, they are not expected to pose a threat to our continued existence and viability as a nation. Various rogue states may possess the will, but their lack of means to do us harm will not allow them to be more than a temporary threat to any vital national interest.

Likewise, failed states are not likely to pose a significant threat. Although there may be plenty of people in these states who have very little regard for our nation or its values, the only way they can threaten us will be through criminal activity involving various forms of terrorism. Although this is an area of concern, the states themselves will simply lack the means to threaten our vital interests.

## More than 8 YEARS into the 21st CENTURY we see a RISING PATTERN of ASYMMETRY

- Shedding Cold War Impedimenta
- Streamlining forces: Less weight, more mobility
- Less corrupt, more ideologically tuned
- From internal security to regional projection
- More mature, professional, educated
- Doctrinal focus on Operational Art. - Deflect air/seapower to preserve “Armies in being”
- Off-the-shelf information age technologies
- Just enough conventional weapons technology to keep low tech forces viable
- Offensive strategy: Satisfy long simmering hegemonic ambitions
- Defensive strategy: Primitive strategic forces to prevent interference from abroad.



|             | Army      | Asymmetric Investments |   |   |   |   |
|-------------|-----------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| India       | 980,000   | ✈️                     | 🚢 | 🚀 | 🚁 | 🚢 |
| North Korea | 1,000,000 | 🚀                      | 🚢 | 🚁 | 🚁 | 🚢 |
| Pakistan    | 520,000   | ✈️                     | 🚢 | 🚀 | 🚁 | 🚢 |
| Iran        | 345,000   | ✈️                     | 🚢 | 🚀 | 🚁 | 🚢 |
| Iraq        | 350,000   | ✈️                     | 🚢 | 🚀 | 🚁 | 🚢 |
| Russia      | 670,000   | ✈️                     | 🚢 | 🚀 | 🚁 | 🚢 |
| China       | 2,200,000 | ✈️                     | 🚢 | 🚀 | 🚁 | 🚢 |



The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a particular concern but this activity is not expected to threaten our national survival. It would be threatening to our homeland and overseas interests if any of these entities gain access to either chemical or biological weapons of mass destruction. However, delivery systems with limited range, along with the increasing sophistication of detection capabilities, constrain their viability as a weapons system. Moreover, there is no basis to assume that the current policy of deterrence will not continue to be effective as the United States has declared that the use of such weapons against our forces and homeland will incur a rapid and deadly retaliation.

### The Rise of a Major Competitor:

A major competitor, however, with both the will and the means to oppose us, could become a significant threat to our vital national interests and possibly to our continued viability as a global power. While we do not predict the emergence of a peer competitor, one that could match the United States in all military categories, certain regional states have both the national will and the convincing military means to challenge and threaten the regional interests of the United States and our commitment to favorable world order. These countries would not try to match American air, land, and sea capabilities. Instead, as regional powers, their conventional center of gravity would be protected by a large army and reinforced by selective investments in key systems such as missile defense, or cheap but effective air and naval counter measures. These resources would feature just enough precision and lethality to deter outside incursions and achieve regional dominance.

The famous study of strategy and warfare, written by Sun Tzu, warned: “In battle one engages with the orthodox and gains victory through the unorthodox.”<sup>9</sup> The most dangerous future

opponent will heed the lessons from the Gulf War and will subsequently design a strategy that avoids our strength and uses indirect means to erode our national will. This opponent will exploit perceived American weaknesses such as an over-reliance on technology, an aversion to casualties and collateral damage, a lack of commitment for sustained campaigns and sensitivity to world opinion. Willing to invest a disproportionate amount of resources into advanced weaponry, this potential adversary will not seek to defeat our military forces in the field. Rather, he would adopt a defensive-offensive strategy that seeks to counter critical American advantages and deter, or, at the worst, attain an operational stalemate.



Without question, beyond 2010, America should expect the new century to bring a new kind of war that will threaten a number of vital national interests. The most serious threat will likely arise from a transitional state bent on becoming a regional hegemon. This potential enemy may feature a partially modernized military, specially tailored to counter American technology and enriched with just enough Information Age advancements to seize the initiative. Such an adversary will not try to defeat us, but will seek to deter our incursion into a regional crisis, or make our involvement so costly that we withdraw. These opponents will realize that a stalemate can be defined as a victory. These nations and actors with

9. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, translated by Ralph D. Sawyer, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994, p. 187.

## We must anticipate the rise of a Major Competitor beyond 2010

### A Major Competitor:

#### Will Not

- Try to recreate a Cold War bipolar world
- Attempt to match U.S. system-for-system

#### Will

- Focus on landpower
- Apply limited resources asymmetrically
- Frustrate U.S. with just enough precision to kill and buy time
- Capitalize on intrinsic potential of mass, Popular Will, and inherent strength of the defensive

Not a Peer  
(U.S. Look-Alike)  
Competitor

Stalemate Works to the Advantage  
of the Competition

revolutionary impulses are going to be difficult to deter and defeat in the coming century.

## National Security Policy Beyond 2010:

As the world leader of democratic principles, our security policy serves three objectives. First, it must provide for the physical security of the United States by making sure our military capability is strong enough to deter aggression and protect our national interests. Second, we seek stability in those areas of the world where American vital interests are at stake. Third, we will promote democracy abroad and bolster economic vitality along the cultural fault lines where American interests and potential instability converge. Only a long-term commitment of American power to those regions will foster the kind of stability that will ensure that U.S. vital interests are not threatened.

Our national military strategy must further reflect our commitment to deter aggression and preserve our way of life. As a global power, the United States must be unmatched in its ability to defend U.S. interests by air, land, sea and space. It is no longer useful to think of this nation as a “maritime” or “continental” power. Air and sea lines of communications are the interior lines of a world where our far-flung interests may be threatened.

The Army of the 21st Century will use those air and sea lines of communications to move where it must to secure our interests. In the Roman Empire, the Mediterranean Sea both facilitated commerce and allowed for the movement of troops. The Empire was sustained for nearly four centuries largely because Rome was master of both the sea and the land. The Army will never participate in operations that are completely independent of the other services. During the next century, the United States must continue to be a global maritime and aerospace power. Joint, Unified and Coalition action will be necessary to secure our worldwide interests and respond to future threats.

## Developing the Army’s Long-Range Vision:

America’s Army will continue to be the only element of military power prepared to exercise direct, continuing, and comprehensive control over land, its resources and its people. During the next 25 years, the Army will exist to deter aggression and to fight and win the nation’s wars. Other requirements will include providing options during small-scale contingencies and peace operations such as humanitarian and domestic assistance. Despite the infusion of technological systems, the Army of the future will be a total quality force seamlessly integrated with active and reserve components. More importantly, it will continue to rely on a strong value system that demonstrates an organizational commitment to take care of people.

As the long-range transition from Force XXI to Army After Next continues, great change will occur in the Army’s physical, technological and cultural makeup. Beyond 2010, the Army must complete the metamorphosis from the rudimentary efforts initiated with Force XXI to the fully integrated force envisioned within the Army After Next. These changes will physically alter the institution’s war-making sinews and will ensure the Army’s viability well into the next century. While a future enemy may gain competencies that



would counter American technical advantages, we must retain a dominant ability to win quickly and decisively at low cost. Moreover, the Army must have the means to conduct battle rapidly and to end it while the paralytic effect of firepower is greatest.

To fulfill its role as the land component member of the joint team, the 21st Century Army must acquire a number of mental and physical capabilities that will ensure full-spectrum dominance. The Army must be sufficiently versatile to operate effectively across a wide range of missions as part of a joint force or multinational coalition that can win quickly and decisively. Combat elements will incorporate the effects of knowledge and speed to gain positional advantage while protecting the force within an environment of near total strategic, operational and tactical battle-space awareness. This force will be capable of moving rapidly to any point where conflict threatens our vital interests. The 21st Century Army will combine the effects of battle-space awareness and precision fires to derive the full potential of strategic speed and dominant maneuver. As these changes become fully integrated, the synergistic effects derived from these various capabilities will enable the Army to be the nations' force of decision on the 21st Century battlefield.

The objective must be to use all the capabilities of a balanced military force so that the final

outcome of any war will be decided before the first engagement. The way to do that is to collapse the enemy's will to resist. Strategic preclusion is a process that involves marshalling forces rapidly and moving them to points of conflict quickly.

In Operation Desert Storm we saw a glimpse of this. As soon as the decision was made to deploy American forces into the Persian Gulf in great numbers, the television news programs showed troops getting on airplanes, tanks on flatcars moving toward ports, aircraft taking off for bases in Saudi Arabia, and ships leaving port. Iraqi leadership saw a formidable force building and moving inexorably toward them. The psychological destabilization of the enemy begins with mobilization and deployment, and culminates with the total collapse of the enemy brought about through an integrated attack that combines the destructive effects of maneuver and precision engagement.

**Strategic Speed**

- Power projection from all points on the globe converge and paralyze enemy
- Simultaneous convergence of overwhelming land, air, space, and sea forces
- Overseas presence quickens global maneuver
- Being "First with the Most" reduces risk and begins process of psychological domination

Seize initiative, build momentum . . . an image of uncontestable competence and unstoppable force

The Goal: A globally self-deployable force capable of striking directly at strategic and operational centers of gravity

Beyond 2010 Knowledge Dominance will no longer be enough. We must have....

**Speed -- to Exploit Knowledge:**

- Forces must move to survive and succeed
  - Linear Speed -- Strategic preemption
  - Angular Speed -- Anticipate, out think, gain positional advantage
- Pulsed, continuous operations
- Agile, high operational transition capability
- Adaptive, full-spectrum force

## The Army's Contribution To Our National Military Strategy:

In the 21st Century, the twin pillars of our national military strategy will continue to be forward presence and power projection. Both active and passive deterrence will be essential throughout the regions where we maintain vital national interests. After more than three years of active investigation, we are convinced that four major categories of military forces will be required

in order to effectively execute a comprehensive National Security Strategy.

Global scouts are a key resource and part of the Army's effort to bridge active and passive deterrence measures. Consisting of attaches, foreign area officers, conventional and special operating forces, global scouts build and nurture a reservoir of trust and good-will with potential coalition partners. These soldiers seek to favorably shape the strategic environment. While these teams teach the fundamentals of combat, they also seek to educate other cultures on democratic values and governmental procedures.

**Three years of study and analysis hint at a military consisting of four categories of forces**

- Global scouts provide global awareness and the trust that binds warfighting partners together
- Forward deployed forces: deterrence, immediate response, accelerates strategic projection
- Preemption Force: Collapses aggressor before he "sets"
- CONUS Projection Force: Force of decision, ensures unrelenting dominance until enemy capitulates. Hedge against uncertainty

Forward presence forces demonstrate our national resolve and commitment to maintain peace and stability within a region. These resources serve to deter aggression and they help prevent major crises through aggressive engagement programs and coalition building. Either through the foresight of our predecessors or fate, we currently have forces throughout the world stationed in regions where our vital national interests endure. These forces are deployed on foreign soil and their presence is usually enough to deter hostile actions. If necessary, they can provide an immediate response to acts of aggression and stabilize the situation until reinforcements arrive. American forces stationed in South Korea are an excellent example of strategically positioned forward-deployed forces.

Because of its current forward positioning along historic lines of conflict that are of great interest to the United States, the 21st Century Army will play the largest role of all the services in favorably shaping the geo-strategic environment through peacetime engagement activities. Most countries throughout the world depend on large land forces to define and defend their way of life. Very few nations, in contrast, have significant navies or air forces as part of their military structure. In the eyes of our friends and allies, and even our potential enemies, troops stationed overseas represent the ultimate American commitment to peace and stability.

Global scouts and forward deployed forces will only be effective if they are backed with a credible reservoir of over-the-horizon forces that can mobilize and deploy from the United States to wherever acts of aggression occur. The essence of our military credibility will be continental-based forces that can rapidly deploy to either preclude aggressive actions or defeat an opponent before his forces have time to achieve complete victory.

### **Charting the Road Ahead – The Army as an Integral Member of the Joint Team:**

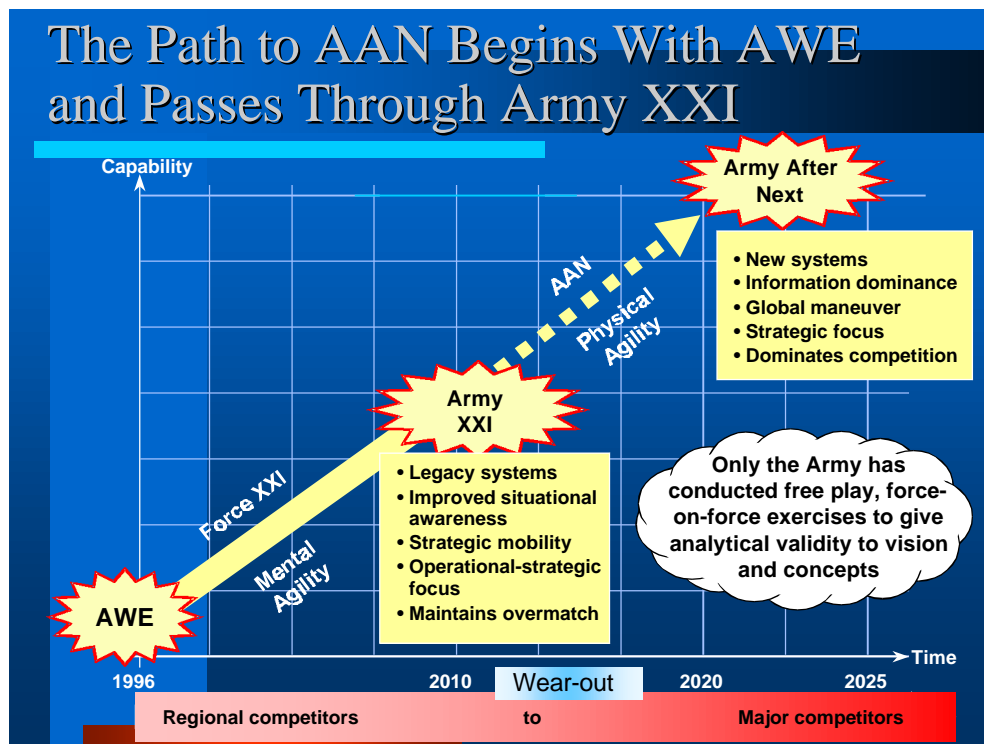
During the next 25 years, the world's security environment will be shaped by the interaction of nations undergoing various stages of national economic and social development. While the information revolution will undoubtedly affect most societies, only a few nations will have transitioned into the Information Age by 2010. For those nations that make this leap, information technologies will also permeate their older industrial production facilities as well as their agricultural sectors. In some nations, these effects will be positive, fostering greater socio-economic progress. In other societies, people may suffer while their government pours resources into building a military machine that could transform these nations into regional hegemon.

With few exceptions, major conflict between states will occur in the vicinity of long-standing geopolitical and cultural fault lines that separate civilizations. Nations and groups will continue to seek ways to impose their wills upon each other and when they do, war will result. American involvement will occur whenever its vital national interests intersect with conflict along these tectonic fault lines.

Certain nations will choose to invest in conventional military forces, information technologies and selected weapons of mass destruction. Their purpose will be to dominate selected regions while deterring American incursions. If confronted, they will employ an asymmetric strategy that seeks to avoid America's military strengths and exploits perceived weaknesses. Nations that follow this pattern represent our most significant future threat.

While the world beyond 2010 will present a number of strategic security challenges, America will remain as the single global military power. Although the fundamental nature of war in the 21st Century will not change, new weapons will alter the traditional relationship between fire and maneuver.

During the early decades of the 21st Century, the Army of 2025 will differ from today's Army in two distinct ways. First, it will achieve unprecedented strategic and operational speed by exploiting information technologies to create a knowledge-based organization. Second, it will exhibit tremendous flexibility and physical agility through streamlined, seamlessly integrated organizations that use new tactics and procedures. The collective result will be a versatile, full spectrum, capabilities-based force that can decisively respond to any future global contingency. As the world begins a new age and a new century, the Army is preparing for the next kind of war that will emerge.



In many respects, the Army's journey into the future started yesterday with the Advanced Warfighting Experiments (AWEs). The synergy of the Force XXI process has been linked with the intellectual examination of Army After Next ideas. These two transitional efforts collectively chart the Army's developmental path beyond the next quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Major General Robert H. Scales, Jr.  
Commandant

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\*\*\*\*\*

Composition  
Mrs. Mary Jane Semple

Cover Artist  
Ms. Roberta Hill

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