

ADDENDA

as of 6 September 2015

Chapter 6

The text claims that the post-Cold War force drawdown began under Bush 41 [page 189]. That is correct; the Cold War ended during Bush 41's tenure. But the force drawdown began under Reagan, not due to the end of the Cold War, but due to budgetary pressures created by massive deficit spending on weapon systems.

Force levels were relatively flat during Reagan's years. The extraordinary military expenditures were for weapon systems acquisition rather than for manpower. It is relatively inexpensive to initiate a major weapon acquisition—initial funding is for research and development, but as programs advance to, for example, low-rate initial production, costs dramatically increase; the actual fielding of a new system—e.g., combat aircraft or tank—is even more expensive. Budgeteers refer to this cost progression as the “bow-wave effect.” The bow wave forced a choice between equipment and manpower, and equipment won.

Bush 41 inherited the bow wave and the end-strength decline. Added to those was the congressional pressure to capture the peace dividend imagined due at the end of the Cold War.

End-strength data can be found [here](#).