

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: “The National Security Adviser”

SUBJECT: Impact of the 2002 National Security Strategy on Reshaping America’s Military

Subsequent to my memorandum on defense alternatives, you released your National Security Strategy (NSS), the National Security Presidential Directive, and the Homeland Security Policy Directive (NSPD-17/HSPD-4). These documents call for potentially the most profound changes in national security policy in the past fifty years. Consequently, they have generated a great deal of debate about how they will be implemented. In a separate and longer memo, I will lay out some alternatives for you on how you might clear up some of the questions raised about your NSS and the NSPD-17/HSPD4 for the American people.

The purpose of this memo is to analyze the implications of the NSS of September 20, 2002, and the NSPD-17/HSPD-4 of December 2002 for defense policy, programs, and budgets.

In the opening pages of the Council Policy Initiative (CPI), *Reshaping America’s Military: Four Alternatives*, my memorandum to you noted that “an overarching discussion of the principles behind your budgets and the implementation of your plans” was absent from the defense budget debate. The National Security Strategy (NSS) and NSPD-17/HSPD-4 attempt to provide those principles.

In these documents, you outline three tasks that your national security establishment must be capable of accomplishing:

- It must be capable of defending the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants;
- It must be capable of preserving the peace by building good relations among the great powers;
- It must be able to extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent.

In carrying out these tasks or accomplishing the goals that you outlined, you argue that this nation must recognize certain strategic principles:

- Traditional deterrence will not work against terrorists or the tyrants who rule rogue states;
- Given the rapid dissemination of information in today's globalized world and the proliferation of technology, threats from terrorists and rogue states can materialize much more rapidly than in the past;
- Preemptive attack against terrorists or tyrants who control rogue states is a legitimate form of self-defense;
- The United States must maintain its military dominance in order to discourage other nations from acquiring sufficient military capability to challenge American power;
- While multilateral organizations can play a role in helping the United States accomplish its strategic goals, they cannot have veto power over U.S. actions.

The NSS and NSPD-17/HSPD-4 should have profound implications for U.S. defense plans, programs, and budgets. Potentially their impact on America's military could be as profound as NSC 68, which was completed in the opening days of the Cold War and provided the intellectual underpinnings for the national security policy of containment, the military strategy of deterrence, and the largest peacetime buildup of U.S. military forces in the nation's history.

Your new bold strategy appears to be most clearly aligned with the CPI alternative of 'enhanced defense.' Indeed the NSS actually calls for increased defenses, especially missile defense.

In the defense CPI, enhanced defense was defined as:

"The United States is the sole superpower in the world and must substantially increase spending on both existing and future capabilities. We must do this in order to ensure the country's capability to deal with both traditional (and

symmetrical) and nontraditional (or asymmetrical) threats, such as those that were horribly realized on September 11, 2001.”

The CPI noted that the enhanced defense would “give us high confidence in our ability to deter, prevent, or defeat current and future threats—foreseen or unforeseen.”

The NSS argues that:

“Today, the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence....Defending our nation against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the federal government. Today, that task has changed dramatically. Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now, shadowy networks of individuals can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank. Terrorists are organized to penetrate open societies and to turn the power of modern technologies against us.”

“We will build defenses against ballistic missiles and other means of delivery. We will cooperate with other nations to deny, contain, and curtail our enemies’ efforts to acquire dangerous technologies. And as a matter of common sense and self-defense, America will act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed.”

“...The United States must and will maintain the capability to defeat any attempt by an enemy—whether a state or non-state actor—to impose its will on the United States, our allies, or our friends. We will maintain the forces sufficient to support our obligations, and to defend freedom. Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States.”

The NSS and NSPD-17/HSPD-4 also would appear to be farthest away from the option or alternative we labeled cooperative defense. That approach stipulates that “The United States cannot and should not attempt to meet the array of existing threats by itself, but should cooperate with its allies and help build international institutions to share the necessary security responsibilities.”

The NSS does call for organizing coalitions of states able and willing to promote a balance of power that favors freedom and insists that the United States is committed to lasting institutions like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Organization for American States, and NATO as well as other longstanding alliances. However, the new strategy makes it clear that while the United States will respect the values, judgments, and interests of its friends and partners, America will be prepared to act apart when its interests and unique responsibilities require.

In the debate between an evolutionary and revolutionary approach to military transformation, which we discussed in the defense CPI, the NSS leans heavily toward the revolutionary approach. Your new strategy argues that a military structured to deter massive Cold War–era armies must be transformed. The Department of Defense is told it must develop such assets as advanced remote sensing, long-range precision strike capabilities, and transformed maneuver and expeditionary forces.

The need for the military to transform itself is made more urgent by the strategy’s support for preempting emerging threats militarily. The NSS argues that the U.S. military must be prepared to preempt not only terrorists but rogue states as well. This more aggressive strategy requires that the U.S. military take advantage of the revolution in military affairs very quickly so that with superior information it can locate the enemy precisely and strike him rapidly from a very long distance with a force that is mobile, stealthy and agile. This means increasing spending dramatically on such items as Joint Direct Attack Missiles, communications satellites, Remotely Piloted Vehicles like the Predator and Global Hawk, and advanced infantry gear like robotic vehicles. In addition, since a strategy of preemption may provoke attacks on the United States by rouge states with weapons of mass destruction, as you noted in your statement of December 17, 2002, we need to accelerate the deployment of the first phase of a national missile defense.

Finally, the Wilsonian overtones in the new strategy could lead to a much more ambitious role for the U.S. military in the international arena than even our enhanced option called for. In fact, in the CPI we specifically ruled out the United States playing the role of global policeman. However, the new strategy envisions the United States promoting global security, advancing democracy and openness, and extending the benefits of freedom across the globe. Implementing this vision would require a much greater U.S. military involvement around the world and a much larger active duty force than currently planned. As you know, our forces, particularly the U.S. Army, are already stretched thin with existing deployments.

To bring the defense budget in line with the NSS and NSPD-17/HSPD-4, you would have to increase U.S. military spending across the board and continue raising the defense budget by \$40 billion to \$50 billion a year over the next five years. Therefore, the baseline defense budget for FY 2007 would be at least \$600 billion rather than the projected \$470 billion and will consume nearly 4 percent of the GDP and 20 percent of the overall Federal budget. The cost of the continuing military operations in Afghanistan or a war against Iraq would have to be added to this figure. At the present time the U.S. military is spending about \$2 billion a month in Afghanistan. Your National Economic Council estimates that a war against Iraq could cost as much as \$200 billion. Others, like the American Academy of Science put the cost much higher.

Given the fact that the cumulative budget surpluses from 2002 to 2011, which were estimated to be \$5.6 trillion when you took office, have turned into a deficit of \$3 trillion over the next decade, it will be difficult to provide these additional funds to defense and not run huge deficits, raise taxes, or forgo other domestic priorities like prescription drug benefits for seniors.