

Will The Military Miss The Market?

BY JOHN PETERSEN

Here's a new wrinkle on the widespread discussion of ways to transform the US military, redefine national security, and turn our attention as a nation to the environmental and educational crises. The interesting part is that it wasn't written by a limo liberal or a Berkeley leftist, but by a former naval flight officer and decorated veteran of the Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars. John Petersen, president and founder of The Arlington Institute in Arlington, VA, has worked and studied at the National War College, the Naval War College, the Institute for National Security Studies, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and on the National Security Council staff.

The Arlington Institute is the only institution I have ever encountered that includes William Colby (former Director of Central Intelligence), Amory B. Lovins (NER-beloved soft-energy-path guru), Peter Schwartz (futurist colleague of Stewart Brand), and Elmo Zumwalt (former Chief of Naval Operations) on its Advisory Committee. Strange bedfellows, a strange place for radical ideas to emerge, but these are strange times. I met Petersen at the Eco-Tech conference in Monterey, one of those gatherings that bring together people who might not ordinarily meet.

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—Howard Rheingold



THE STORY of how Detroit arrogantly discounted indications of change in the attitudes and values of the American car buyer is well known. The American automobile industry missed a major market shift. In the face of clear indications of changing perceived needs by American purchasers, auto executives took the position that: "We do big cars, and the American people want big cars." They would sell a different style or color, but size (and resulting poor fuel economy) was sacrosanct. The customers changed their minds.

Those early decisions — and later ones centered on quality — caused Detroit to miss the shift, and what was effectively a 100-percent market share has fallen to 60 percent, with the difference taken over by foreign manufacturers who were listening to the customer. If our auto industry is not dying, clearly it is in poor health.

The same strain of virus is afoot in this country again, but this time its victim may be the military. The fundamental concept of national security is changing — the market is shifting — but our armed services are not yet responding to this fundamental change. They still want to do business much as they have in the past.



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The Military Doesn't Know Its Customer

The armed services' problem comes in part from the fact that they don't know who their customer is. The situation is not as simple as it is for Procter & Gamble or Sony, who unambiguously sell their wares to individuals whose psychographics they can monitor. The Pentagon must be responsive to the Congress as well as to the Administration (not at all easy); and then there are the defense contractors, the retired-service-member community, and other groups with influence. In a real way, the ongoing necessity to match service policies with the moving target of official Washington causes the military to lose the perspective that they work for the American people.

Don't misunderstand. Military officers

certainly know that they serve the American people, but on a day-to-day basis they must deal with the vicissitudes of the people's representatives, and in so doing they forget that it is the people who vote, and everyone else, Administration and Congress, ultimately responds to that message. The American people are the retail market for the military, and they are ignored at great risk.

Because of their relatively insular international/Washington orientation, military professionals don't generally understand the American "domestic" market. They don't deal with the country's health-care problems, because they provide their own medical services. It is illegal for them to participate in politics. The major problems of our urban centers are remote. The country's physical infrastructure de-

cay is a problem dealt with by contractors.

The far-flung armed-forces fraternity, with members in every military town, makes it palatable for some career officers and their families to move as many as 25 times in 30 years. Because there are not many relationships with the larger community, the relative importance of the country's domestic problems often escapes them. They have a different job to do and they do it well.

A Shift in the Nation's National Security

The people of the United States are at the beginning of an attitudinal shift that is accelerating. If the military doesn't take notice and consider the implications of the change, their significance to our national security could markedly decrease.

While, in the past, security and defense were often synonymous, now defense is only one element in an expanding equation. Most Americans now believe that economic security is equal to national security. They also worry about the environment, and they are beginning to be aware of the potential byproducts of the world's exponential growth in population. They know intuitively that the poor developing countries cannot increase their wellbeing the same way the industrialized nations did without threatening the world's environmental health. They sense the complexity and interdependency of the global system and know that attempts to deal singly with problems often produce and exacerbate unanticipated others. Although they may not understand the details, they see the end result and how it affects their lives.

It is not enough that the number of security issues is growing; they are also all interconnected — not only at the local and regional level, but on a global basis. Driven in part by an information technology explosion, we find ourselves operating as part of a global system that is evolving very rapidly into a form that is not at all familiar.

A harbinger of the future importance

of environmental issues might be indicated by a recent Worldwatch Institute report. It suggests that the human inhabitants of the world have but a decade to change, in fundamental ways, their negative influence on the natural environment before present trends produce a long decline into economic and social ruin. Report director Lester Brown said in a *New York Times* interview that if the world does not respond to environmental degradation, it will lead to economic distress that is politically unmanageable. He said a look at many archaeological sites provided hints of what might come. "North Africa was once the granary of the Roman Empire. Now it's largely desert." Two weeks earlier, the Florida Institute of Oceanography had reported finding, in a five-year study, that the Florida Keys coral reef could be doomed by the year 2000 because of pollution and other human-oriented causes.

Notwithstanding these new global problems, Americans now believe that the most pressing security threats to this country are internal rather than external. At home, America's streets and bridges, schools, environment, cities, health care system and economy are in trouble, and the American people know it. Former Commandant of the Marine Corps General Alfred Gray has said, "The greatest threat to US national security is the combination of crime, drugs, lost educational opportunities, and the economic consequences of these failures."

The recession has crystallized these concerns and is producing new levels of anxiety and lost hope. Pollster Daniel Yankelovich, commenting for *Fortune* magazine, recently said about the recession, "People's jobs and homes are their main bastions of economic security, and the idea that both would be at risk is frightening, particularly for the generation that's younger than mine. Now they're getting a double whammy. Instead of the value of their homes going up, it's going down. Their debt becomes a nightmare. Then everyone knows someone who has lost his job. In restructurings the people who are laid off won't be laid back on again. The combination is an awfully big dose of reality.

"That leads to a moral significance. By putting the spouse to work, borrowing money, and piling up government debt during the 1980s, we were masking the reality that we were not doing better," Yankelovich said. "This time people don't have any real belief that things are going to get better. After failing to persuade them that no action was required, the political leaders are finally acknowledging the problem. But they haven't made a credible case that they have a course of action." He added, "What's panicking people is not the present but the future."

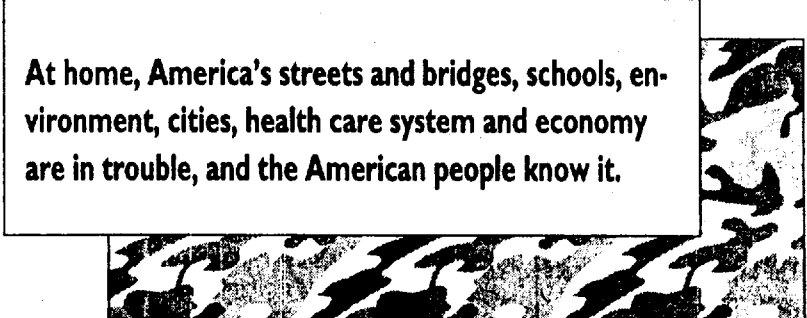
The most pointed example of this feeling is found in the "America First" sentiment and its own presidential candidate, both of which reflect frustrations with the way the country is not working (but discount the equally important interdependency we share with the rest of the world.)

Unless a high-profile conflict or enemy arises that requires American troops, sensitivity to these problems will only increase. The erosion at home has put in place coming events that are prede-

debt will sap even larger percentages of our country's ability to deal with these problems. If present trends continue, interest payments on the national debt will overtake discretionary domestic spending this fiscal year, and expenditures for defense in about three or four years.

These new problems are national security threats, as much as (or more than) Saddam Hussein or Libya's Quaddafi.

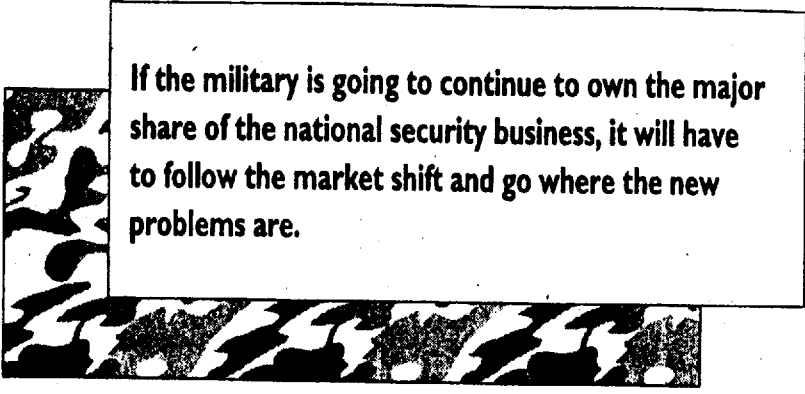
For the first time in most Americans' lives, the new, turbulent reality has forced traditional defense concerns to share the security platform with unfamiliar but equally valid and vocal advocates. As *U.S. News & World Report* writers Bruce Auster and Robin Knight have put it, "After two world wars, 45 years of nuclear confrontation and billions of dollars, pounds, rubles and francs invested in manpower and weaponry, military power suddenly has ceased to be the dominant measure of a nation's strength, or even the best guarantor of its security." Defense is being squeezed into the wings, out of the limelight.



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terminated... and largely negative. Sewer and bridge failures will become more common. Engineers and technologists that we need to compete in the information age will not be available. Fourth- and fifth-generation underclass families will live in inner-city neighborhoods that begin to remind one of the movie *Blade Runner*. More city and state governments will face bankruptcy, along with financial institutions. Pressure from the uninsured poor (and the states, which have to care for them) are forcing a reassessment of our health care system. Payment on the national

The military is profoundly aware of the net effect of this trend: a quarter of its budget is evaporating. But generals and admirals largely impute this new austerity to the implosion of the Soviet Union and communism; the other, more fundamental driving forces of the underlying shift are not apparent. In part, they are misled by history, because this shift is not a variation on the past. The new era is orienting itself in a way that is quite different from the memory of anyone now alive. The end of WWII produced major defense cuts driven by the assumption that there were no more



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meaningful threats. After Korea, the external foreign communist threat persisted. But now the enemy is not without, but within, and if we look to the past for direction and meaning we will be misguided. We must look to the future. Our security threats are not just decreasing — they are shifting.



Brand loyalty does not run deeply for most Americans. If the product they have been buying isn't meeting their needs, they will change brands or move to another product — just ask GM. Americans treat the US budget like their discretionary income— which it is. When important aspects of the country's security are not being served by the military, they will spend their money elsewhere. Just ask George Bush why he wants to take more money from defense and spend it in the domestic arena. Election-year scheming aside, if the American people had not already begun to discount the military, the president would never have proposed another cut in defense.

Along with their funding, the utility and relevance of the armed forces — in greater degree than they have imagined — are also being reassessed. As the new concept of national security evolves, the question will increasingly be, "What is the military doing to help us deal with our (new) security problems?" If the armed forces' answers appear to be tangential, their influence and stature will surely wane.

This is an issue of perception — not necessarily one of reality. As we will see, virulent external threats still per-

sist. But our budget decisions are based upon the feelings of the people; and right now, above all else, the real threats appear to be at home.



When the communist flagship went under, it became obvious that the US didn't need as large a military as it had. Plans were made to decrease all of the services substantially—25 percent over five years. For much of the last two years (with time out for Desert Storm), the Pentagon has been consumed with designing and planning for the cuts. But, missing the significance of the American attitude shift, they have (like their car-maker brethren) proposed only doing variations (mostly less) of the same thing that they have been doing for the past four decades; no major changes in roles. Parts of the strategic nuclear force will drop from the product line or be reorganized, but in the end, essentially only fewer airplanes, tanks and ships will be offered up.

If the military continues to be seen in only "armed forces" terms, Americans, through their elected officials, will act decisively: they will cut the annual defense budget much more deeply — perhaps to 50 percent of previous levels, about \$150 billion. At 25 percent, the services are reeling. At 50 percent they will feel annihilated.

There is a good news/bad news aspect to this coming train crash. The bad news is that if our services continue to respond as they have, the cuts will come so fast that there will be little time for effective contemplation and plan-

ning. Savings will be grabbed wherever they can be, with little relationship to the powerful forces driving the change. Negative synergy will disembowel the services, yielding hollow, unready, overextended forces. We know that's what will happen: it has happened every time in the past. After World War II, ships spent part of every day at sea dead in the water for lack of fuel. Boilertenders rotated up to man the guns because too many gunner's mates had been let go. Airplanes didn't fly and crews weren't trained.

In their hurry to unload the military, Americans may well miss the fact that future external threats may be worse than in the past. In a lucid and much-needed speech, Congressman Les Aspin, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, recently outlined his assessment of the major new military threat that confronts the US: nondeterrable terrorists armed with nukes. This looming problem will require serious resolve and new kinds of military capabilities. A very plausible scenario involves one of our major cities (New York would be a likely target) being threatened by a terrorist organization armed with a nuclear weapon.

Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was reported in the *Boston Globe* to have said that he would be "terrorized" at the prospect of what could occur in the disbanded Soviet Union. The *Globe* suggested that an estimated 2,000 tactical nuclear weapons are deployed outside the four nuclear states of the commonwealth. Another is that 50,000 tons of chemical munitions are dispersed across the lapsed union — toxic substances suited for bombs, missiles, rockets and mortars, and easily hidden. Some reports suggest that political leaders of the new republics have already given in to the temptation to convert "just a couple" of their warheads into hard cash.

In the face of pressing internal threats, shortsighted Americans are likely to lose interest in the gauzy problem of potential terrorism (after all, we've never had any significant terrorism here) and eliminate war-fighting capability that we may desperately need in



the future . . . or call back forward-positioned forces, setting up a far worse situation that may ultimately require much greater military action.

East Asia is a clear case of the latter. Almost every country in the area, Japan included, believes that American Pacific forces are the major guarantor of regional stability. Old, Balkan-style animosities simmer under a pacific façade — held in check by the regular presence of the US military.

If, for budget reasons (or a change in relationship with Japan), the US pulled back to Hawaii or the West Coast, most Pacific Rim thinkers believe that Japan would be obliged to begin a substantial arms buildup so as to be able to protect its lifeblood — the ability to import the many commodities on which the country depends. The way the relationship is going now, it would be understandable if Japan didn't place much confidence in our assurances that we would come to their rescue in the event of a serious problem. Other East Asian nations promise that in the face of such a

buildup, they too, remembering WWII, would do the same. Without the ameliorating role of the US, any number of destabilizing regional conflicts might ensue.

The good news is that extraordinary opportunity attends such massive change. However the military acts, the decisions of the next two to three years will almost certainly cast in concrete many of the capabilities that it will possess for decades to come. With all of the traditional rules off and everything up for grabs, perspicacious leaders can take advantage of the situation to put in place new structures and establish new roles that send our military in a direction aligned with the future rather than the past.



Anyone familiar with the consumer market knows there are two things that can be done to deal with a market shift: reposition and/or change the product

line. Just last spring, GM chairman Robert Stempel reportedly rejected board members' suggestions that the company cut executive salaries and drop money-losing Oldsmobile from the product line. The finally adopted plan was characterized by some analysts as "Draconian, [but] mainly continued past policy." Merely less of the same thing.

The military must not make the same mistake. The whole spectrum of the new security market must be addressed. At all costs, we must protect the capability to defend ourselves with force, particularly against the nuclear terrorist threat that confronts us. At the same time, though, energy must be directed into these new security-threat areas.

To make a safe adaptation to the new market, two things need to happen:

- The attitudes of the American people must be anticipated, understood, and believed.

If the military is to provide the best service to this country over the next decades, it must understand how Americans' attitudes are evolving and what the implications of that change might be. A number of well-known survey research firms track these trends. Analysis of historical value and trend shifts in specific social segments should be acquired and distributed and made a common component of all planning by the services.

- Better images and ideas must be developed of the country's broadest future security requirements.

Scientific, technological, population, environmental, and weapons-proliferation trends will continue to foment turbulence and uncertainty. The rates of change of these forces suggest that we might not recognize the world of 30 years from now if we could glimpse it today.

Turbulence calls for foresight — the ability to begin to anticipate what might be on our horizon. Methodologies coming out of the business community now make it possible, using new broad scenario-design techniques, to begin to understand the possible and plausible behavior of a domain like national security with much more confidence than

in the past. A systematic, regularly updated process needs to be established within the military hierarchy to illuminate unanticipated future options and problem areas.

A better knowledge of Americans' attitudes, coupled with a new understanding of the emerging security environment, would provide a resilient underpinning for pursuing new ways to reposition and/or expand the military "product line."

Present missions and activities should be analyzed in light of the new set of security concerns, and repositioned accordingly.

We should have a proactive, preventive component to our strategy of dealing with the nuclear-terrorist and global-development problems. The increasing disparity between the haves and have-nots is a breeding ground for those external threats, and it is critical that we confront the problems at their sources. As Alexander King and Bertrand Schneider have written in *The First Global Revolution*, "Reductions in economic disparity and aid to development of a wise and cooperative character, far from being a humanitarian gesture, is of fundamental self-interest to the rich countries." New models of economic development and nation-building would allow our military to contribute directly to these issues. Developing nations present real opportunities, both to realistically train and to make a contribution to this larger external problem.

The armed services have the organic capability, in both active and reserve forces, to establish the basic infrastructure required to efficiently support large numbers of people in primitive areas. They can build roads, buildings, food and sanitation systems, communication systems (phones, radio stations, TV stations), railroads, seaports, airports, and aviation control systems. They can drill wells and irrigate, establish police and fire departments and supply and distribution systems.

The problem is that they usually don't get the opportunity to exercise their equipment and evaluate its effectiveness in peacetime. These skills are best

honed by actually working in the type of context that might be confronted in war. Many countries desperately need the kind of help I've mentioned above. Their ability to become productive contributors in the global marketplace is hampered by a lack of physical infrastructure. Our military could play an extraordinary role in helping some nations in this way.

Some training required for combat readiness could also be the product of other activities. Already our military provides badly needed medical and engineering construction help in some developing countries, while Army physicians work in emergency rooms of inner-city hospitals — where they can practice repairing gunshot wounds.

We could lend a hand with bandit and pirate problems, develop customs and border-control processes, establish civil aviation systems and search-and-rescue procedures — all from internal military skills. A survey of the broad environmental state of the Amazon basin would be meaningful flying practice for an Air Force aircrew. Navy and Air Force units could help set up control and patrolling procedures for waterways and littoral areas.

These ideas are not new (in isolated cases some are already being tried); they just need to be revisited. Marine Corps combined-action platoons, for instance, demonstrated during the Vietnam War that military personnel can be very effective in nation-building assignments even under the worst of conditions.

With the military's humanitarian successes in helping the Kurds in Iraq, the flood victims in Bangladesh, the volcano refugees in the Philippines and the Haitian refugees in Cuba, disaster relief has become a de facto mission for our military. We should formalize and institutionalize this capability, and perhaps offer to work directly with the United Nations on such projects.

The benefit to our soldiers, sailors and airmen would, in every case, be good training, and would provide the extremely important experience of working cross-culturally (which is always needed and often not available in con-

flict situations). In the past, many countries have asked US military commanders to provide nation-building services, but most have had to be turned down because of American regulatory constraints — not for other potential problems.



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The nuclear-terrorism issue must be addressed head-on. If we plan and implement now, we can put in place capabilities that may well prevent future disaster. If we wait too long, we may not have time to react. Information is the best defense against terrorism. Information-gathering systems and processes should be upgraded and more highly prioritized. Traditional military capabilities need to give way to specialized capabilities that can identify and negate threats before they make it to our shores.

Internally, there's not much the military can do about the failure of our educational system or the health of the economy. But things like toxic-waste cleanup and infrastructure repair offer more promise. For example, retired Army general Frederic Brown advocates, in an upcoming book, fielding specially trained "Chernobyl battalions" that would be able to deal with nuclear and other toxic disasters. These units could train in our own back yard by helping to clean up some of our notorious nuclear-weapons plants.

The collapse of the social structure of many of our inner cities — one of the biggest problems we have — offers the most opportunity for the military's skills. Urban centers are the most important components of our economic system, and they are sick. If we are not successful in finding new, much more effective ways of dealing with our inner-city problems, we risk having them consume us. Generations of young people are not only being lost to society, but are trying to destroy it.

George Will, writing about UCLA professor James Q. Wilson's new book, *On Character*, says Wilson's definition of good character includes two qualities — empathy, meaning regard for the needs, rights and feelings of others, and self-control, meaning the ability to act with reference to the more distant consequences of current behavior. Who in our society does a better job at training, educating, and developing leadership and character in young people than the military? It is the great resource the military gives this country: highly qualified and motivated young people who are willing to work long hours in situations fraught with personal risk. One only needs to remember the images of our men and women in Desert Storm, watch the 21-year-old (average age) crew operate an aircraft carrier or observe a foot-slogging soldier trudging on miles past exhaustion to know that no other institutions come close to building quality in people like our services do. Those very skills are at the core of the problems that our inner-city communities face, and no one else has the capacity of the military to make profound change.

This is not just speculation; for over a decade there have been over 100 successful programs scattered around the country that use the military infrastructure to help urban kids. These are not "shock" boot camps (of the kind now run by most states), but programs running the gamut from tutoring to rigorous, multifaceted programs that systematically focus on establishing self-discipline and team building, self-

confidence, skill training, work experience in new settings and, finally, community reintegration and career development.

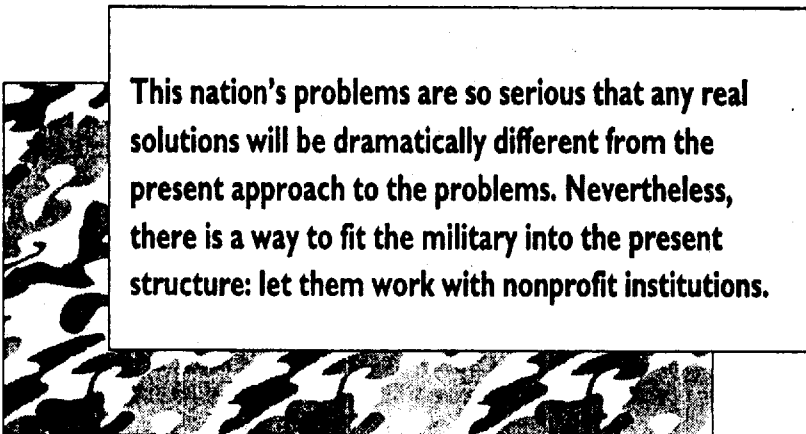
Memphis, Tennessee, has programs that can take a youngster step by step from the courtroom to the factory floor. Offenders who are offered the choice can enter a three-month "Project 1990s — Save America's Youth" program, described by *Insight* magazine as "basic training without combat as the goal." Participants are made a part of a ten- to twelve-person team that is directed by former Marine drill instructors. The DIs take care of the physical training and other "troop handling" and team-building responsibilities, moving the groups between classes taught by trained instructors. Schoolroom training may include emphasis on literacy, remedial academics, substance-abuse education and treatment, and family counseling. Intensive medical, psychiatric, psychological, substance-abuse, academic, and vocational assessment is central to the program. Instructors are likely to be retired or volunteer military members.

Youth Service USA, headed by Episcopalian priest Father Don Mowery, can take over from Project 1990s and provide job skills training and employment placement for 18- to 24-year-olds. After surveying potential employers to determine skills needed in the area, they put inner-city youths through an occupational-training program held on a military base and in government offices. Military trainers teach virtually every type of vocational skill through

competence-based, structured curricula. At the same time they provide classroom training in employability skills such as work habits, employer expectations, and job interviewing. The program places 80 percent of its graduates in jobs.

Retired Marine officer William Holmberg has approached the Marine Corps with a proposal to use marines and the Marine Corps base at Quantico, Virginia, to work with youthful offenders from Washington, DC. Holmberg's "Green Team" would teach youngsters the basic skills needed to compete in the larger world while having them work on ecology/environmental projects on the Quantico base. Activities would revolve around special projects, like: vitalizing a specified number of acres through selective clearing, repairing, mineralizing, and planting with correct species; harvesting, chipping, and arranging for transport of the bio-fuel recovered from their assigned acreage; working with other teams to compost fly ash and limestone sludge from nearby power plants and wastewater treatment plants; studying, protecting, and restoring a specific reach of the Potomac River or a section of wetlands; cooperating with other teams in preparing the land, planting, harvesting the crops and again preparing the land for high-density and scientifically advanced organic farms and gardens; and rehabilitating rooms similar to those found in public housing.

Between 1968 and 1972, the Department of Defense had a Domestic Action Council. The council's mission was to determine actions that could be taken by the Department of Defense to help resolve pressing domestic problems without degradation of military preparedness. The DDAC should be reestablished to provide direction for the military's efforts in this new security area and to keep pace with the "new market" being defined by the ongoing paradigm shift. A companion Joint Domestic Support Command would be staffed primarily by military personnel to support local and state governments in resolving certain pressing urban problems. An additional mission would be to coordinate the activities of federal departments and agen-



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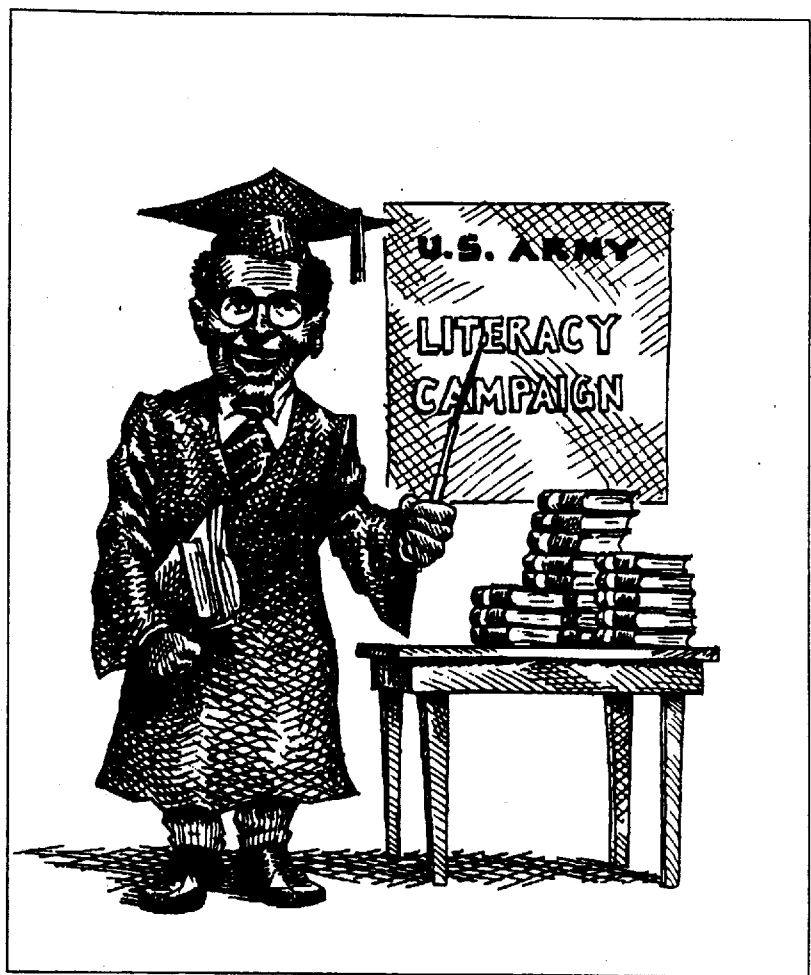
cies and marshal resources to support local governments in addressing these problems.

Some might worry about the "militarization" of our inner cities or of our armed services "competing" with commercial concerns. Old standards are not operative any more. This nation's problems are so serious that any real solutions will be dramatically different from the present approach to the problems. That is a given; the present methods aren't working. Nevertheless, there is a way to fit the military into the present structure: let them work with nonprofit institutions.

Peter Drucker wrote recently in the *Wall Street Journal* that virtually every success we have scored at solving the country's social problems has been achieved by nonprofits. He mentions that "Two-thirds of the first offenders paroled in Florida into the custody of the Salvation Army are 'permanently' rehabilitated — they are not indicted for another crime for at least six years. Were they to go to prison, two-thirds would become habitual criminals. Yet a prisoner costs at least twice as much per year as a parolee in the custody of the Salvation Army." Drucker says a well-managed nonprofit gets at least twice the bang out of each buck that a government agency does. He advocates "nonprofitization" as modern societies' way out of mismanagement by welfare bureaucracies. Military skills and resources coupled with nonprofit management savvy could go far in dealing with our internal deterioration.

Another major resource associated with our military is the government research laboratories. Most of the 70 national labs are being affected by the market shift in the same way as the military. Some of the major ones are actively discussing getting into new businesses, now that building nuclear (and some other) weapons is not a growth industry. Los Alamos National Laboratory, for example, recently sponsored a major conference on technology and the environment, hosting some of the foremost thinkers in the world on the subject.

But much more could be done. Our labs could look into desalinization of



seawater using solar power, since the availability of fresh water could well be the source of the next war in the Middle East. New closed systems are technologically feasible that could produce energy as well as a significant amount of fresh water. Novel approaches of this kind are needed in the developing world to bypass the waste and pollution products that attend(ed) the development of countries like ours. If our research labs seriously believed that environmental, energy, and waste-disposal problems were national security issues, they could bring many times more effort to bear on them than private institutions have been able to in the past. Even half (even a quarter) of their \$12 billion-per-year budget spent on these new threat areas would make a tremendous difference.

Our labs should think about linking up with the Russians to attack these problems. The *New York Times* reported that Dr. Yuri A. Trutnev, the physicist who

runs the day-to-day activities of the main nuclear-weapons lab of the former Soviet Union, suggested shifting the lab's nuclear work toward peaceful ends. He was in the country trying to drum up joint projects with our national laboratories. "The genie is out of the bottle," he said in an interview last month. "Let's use it for the benefit of mankind."



These ideas are not as radical as they may sound. The senior leaders of the Department of Defense are aware of the implications of change and have identified some of the opportunities that are available. Defense secretary Dick Cheney knows, from being a congressman and White House Chief of Staff, how the legislative body will react to the shifting sands of public opinion. Admiral David Jeremiah, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

was quoted recently in *Navy Times* as saying, "For the first time in 50 years we have a chance to reform the Department of Defense. Nobody else has been able to do that. We've been locked into this East-West conflict.

"Think about the fact that the population of the world will double to about 10 billion people by 2025," Jeremiah said. He further mentioned that about 90 percent of the world's population will live in underdeveloped nations and about 25 percent will be hungry most of the time. Ten or 15 percent of the world's population will be well taken care of; the rest will be disadvantaged. "You'll see competition for resources, not just oil, but increasingly,

Conservation Corps, but have been getting a cold shoulder from within the organizations.

Although Cheney and Jeremiah may be reading the tea leaves much better than most, their ability to influence the services is, in important ways, limited. The Defense Department is a huge, unwieldy organization with mixed allegiances. Those close to the heads of power regularly make the point that no one really dictates to the services what they will do. Directives that are not agreed with can be rather easily buried, or implemented very slowly.

Therein lies the problem. If the leadership of the services does not under-

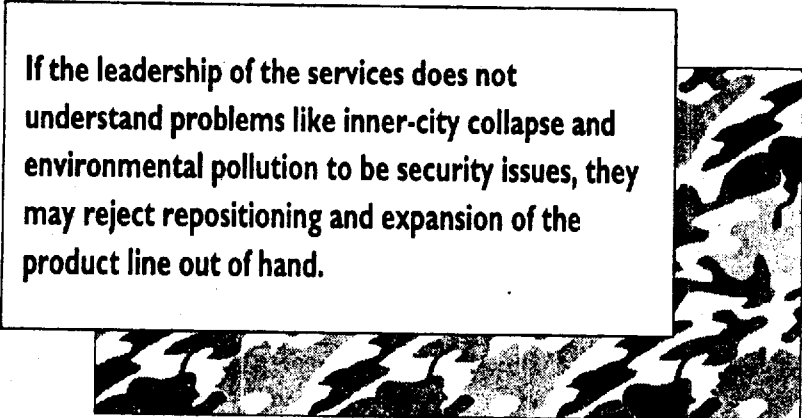
stand their people. In the long term, that is exactly what such initiatives would do; but in the short run, this radical change would look to many in the system like an attempt to emasculate America's armed forces and destroy the essence of what they have always stood for. Service leaders should look at what's happening to the US in the world and ask themselves if it is better to be the most important actor in the most important area of government responsibility, or just one of a number of players.

America needs a strong military. It is one of the few things in which we still excel. But there is a bonus here: the military skills and character of our armed forces beget the potential to deal with some of these ominous internal threats. There's an additional benefit: how much better it would be to be known around the world for a military that both had the ability to defend and to destroy, and that could materially work to prevent situations that required the use of force. Superb fighters could be equally effective nation-builders.

The times call for leadership and vision. The decision must be made now. If the light is seen after much of its capability has been eliminated, our military will be in no position to contribute as it might have . . . and some other agency (or perhaps some company) will have acquired the business.

D. Quinn Mills of the Harvard Business School was recently quoted as saying about General Motors, "In a sense the company is liquidating itself. It's giving up market share and laying off people in an attempt to be profitable at lower market-share levels." He noted that they have been losing about 5 percent of their market share every seven years. "They will survive and sometimes be profitable for another 15 years," Mills said. "But you wonder when the board is going to think it's time to be getting out of the [North American auto] business."

The American people will have what they want, one way or the other. The question is whether the military will continue to be the most significant purveyor of security to the country, or — like GM — give up great parts of its charter to others. ☛



If the leadership of the services does not understand problems like inner-city collapse and environmental pollution to be security issues, they may reject repositioning and expansion of the product line out of hand.

with that kind of population, you are going to see competition for things as simple as fresh water," he said. "You would like to deal with this on a political and social level." The military's role should be subtle, similar to the role it now plays in Central and South America — digging wells, building roads, and teaching the militaries of host nations how to operate under a democratic system, he suggested. He went on to propose that Operation Provide Comfort, the giant US military rescue mission to save Kurdish refugees, might have been "a precursor of what we can look forward to in the next decade if not the next century."

Individual senior defense executives have been bold enough to propose using military master teachers to help in our troubled educational system and setting up a version of the old Civilian

stand problems like inner-city collapse and environmental pollution to be security issues (like the early straight-arm they gave to the drug-fighting mission), they may reject repositioning and expansion of the product line out of hand. In the case of change as profound as that being advocated here, the services must see that their very role (and importance) in our society is at stake, and understand that expending time on the turf wars, trying to get a larger share of the budget wrested away from another service, is the proverbial deck-chair rearrangement on a sinking ship.

The change that Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine leaders would need to initiate and sell runs counter to the very essence of what, in some cases, they see as their most solemn (if unstated) obligation: to look out for the wellbeing of

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