

U.S. defense policy needs a good public airing

WITH the end of the Cold War and the potential for a new world order in sight, the United States must re-evaluate its strategic posture through informed and intelligent discussion.

The strength of a democracy, after all, is the diversity of views which can lead to a sensible and honorable policy.

Prerequisite to this type of discussion is accurate information on the state of the nation's defenses and the potential of external threats. Of the latter there is plenty. Strangely enough on the former this nation falls short.

In the days before Hitler, the public had easy access to most of the relevant information for mapping defense policies.

The Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, published in two volumes until the early 1930s, offered a wealth of information on ships and personnel, on the costs of each navy yard and base, and



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even, if one looked carefully, on the state of strategic philosophy. This source, along with information provided by the War Department, provided fodder for some of the most relevant, informed and exciting discussions on the nation's history.

For example, the 1920s debate between proponents of air power and battleships not only enlivened discussion but also laid the political and strategic framework for the successful carrier buildup of the late 1930s.

The questions before us today are even more important because of the degree to which the nation's defense defines the economy.

Fending off relative decline of America requires a retrenchment and a reorientation of defense costs.

In the next few years, for instance, we need answer the following questions. Which of our hundreds of bases worldwide should close? Which legs of our nuclear triad should be maintained? What type of training will our soldiers and sailors require in an increasingly technical profession, and what role should universities play? Should we continue to build and deploy \$4 billion aircraft carriers, or can the submarine-launched cruise missiles accomplish these missions just as well? What should be done to protect strategic industries such as scientific research, commercial shipping or computer design? These questions should not be left simply to congressmen, West Pointers or blue ribbon commissions.

Each of these politically sensitive questions demonstrates the information have always been difficult to obtain and will continue to be so. A collective security resolution in the Security Council needs nine of the 15 votes. The nine votes must include the votes of all five permanent members.

It is realistic to assume that at least four of the 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council would support military action against an aggressor. Of the five permanent members, Britain, and, to a lesser extent, France can be relied on to support an American position on collective security. Perhaps China would also go along with the West.

terdependence of economics and strategy. The Defense Department and intelligence agencies have undoubtedly studied these questions, but the data and results remain secret.

In the history of military politics, such policy recommendations frequently reflect personal agendas rather than objective readings of the data. For a recent example look no further than the Navy report which found homosexual sailors, on the average, to be more effective than their heterosexual counterparts. Yet homosexuals are still being dishonorably discharged — an economic shame at best.

Secrecy was the hallmark of the Cold War, a pattern which allowed and even encouraged profligate defense budgets, immoral clandestine wars and a suppression of political rights abroad and at home.

We won the Cold War at great cost. We must now win the peace. This requires that the public have access to the information needed

to make the tough choices. Defense policy is harder to formulate in a democracy, but a little effort goes a long way towards promoting freedom and decency. We can afford that right now.

The Department of Defense and the sprawling intelligence establishment must publish detailed, objective reports of expenditures, findings and goals.

Greater public participation would also assuage critics who call for a scaling back of the overly secretive style of government which they call the "cold war at home."

On the other side, glasnost accelerated the dismantling of the Soviet military apparatus which had so long dominated Eastern Europe. Is the American defense establishment worried that the people of the United States would do the same?

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Collective security won't work miracles in world affairs

PRESIDENT George Bush perceives the post-Persian Gulf War world order to be based on collective security and the rule of law. His perception ignores the realities of world politics. Collective security, if approved by the United Nations Security Council, maintains the rule of law by punishing an aggressor with the overwhelming military force of a large number of countries. This was indeed done during the war.

However, countries in the allied war coalition, arose outside supporting it, more concerned about their national interests than about collective security.



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China, after some hesitation, accepted collective security because that country continues to need the West for economic development. A war in the gulf also

Other nations supporting the coalition were also guided by their national interests, including: survival, rivalry with Iraq for leadership in the Middle East, foreign aid, loyalty to the United States and, of course, oil.

The only other time in its 46-year history that the Security Council enforced collective security was from 1950 to 1953 against North Korea. That military action was made possible because the Soviet Union boycotted the Security Council in protest against the acceptance of Taiwan's representative of China. Since they refused to take part in the council's decisions the Soviet Union was not

ported, resolutions in the Security Council.

Collective security is not merely a vote by the Security Council. It is an enforcement action against an aggressor by a majority of the world's nations.

The less developed countries, however, have begun complaining that the two collective security wars simply gave imperialists an excuse to invade their lands to test Western weapons and to promote Western inter-

Such a position will likely reduce the enthusiasm of less developed countries for future collective