

Select Upcoming Events

THE FUTURE OF THE SECURITY COOPERATION ENTERPRISE: REFORMING THE SYSTEM TO MEET SECURITY CHALLENGES

Thursday, September 18, 2014

10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

CSIS, 1616 Rhode Island Ave., NW

BETTER BUYING POWER 3.0: A DISCUSSION WITH UNDER SECRETARY FRANK KENDALL

Friday, September 19, 2014

8:30–9:45 a.m.

CSIS, 1616 Rhode Island Ave., NW

Select Recent Events

PONI SPEAKER SERIES WITH AMBASSADOR BONNIE JENKINS

Featured a discussion on Ambassador Jenkins' experience in nuclear security and her thoughts for its future.

THE U.S.-EUROPE TRANSATLANTIC ALLIANCE: ASSESSING THE NATO SUMMIT AND ENERGY SECURITY IN LIGHT OF THE UKRAINE CRISIS

Featured a bipartisan discussion with two members of the U.S. House of Representatives as well as a panel with European ambassadors.

PONI LIVE DEBATE: U.S. NO FIRST USE

Featured a debate on whether or not the United States should adopt a "no first use" nuclear policy.

MILITARIZATION OF POLICE: COST SAVINGS OR SLIPPERY SLOPE?

STEPHANIE SANOK KOSTRO

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On August 9, police officers in Ferguson, Missouri, shot and killed an unarmed teenager who police maintain physically assaulted a law enforcement officer. This use of force ignited protests, to which police—dressed in camouflage, carrying M-4 rifles, and driving armored vehicles—responded with tear gas.

In addition to highlighting racial tensions, these events have spurred public discourse regarding police use of federally provided tactical equipment. On August 24, Attorney General Eric Holder announced a White House review of federal programs that arm local police forces with military-style equipment. Congress has already held hearings, in which members noted that “militarizing police tactics [is] not consistent with the peaceful exercise of First Amendment rights of free speech and free assembly” and stated that legislation on this topic is pending.

Several federal programs facilitate equipment transfers to law enforcement agencies. Congress and the media have repeatedly cited the Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) “1033 Program,” which allows federal and state agencies to acquire excess DoD property for a range of missions, including counterdrug and counterterrorism purposes. This property can include tactical items like armored vehicles, rifles, and ammunition, as well as office furniture and computer equipment. Other programs focus on purchase of spare parts, night vision equipment, and other items for counterterrorism and criminal justice activities. In total, since 1997, law enforcement agencies have reportedly received over \$5 billion in equipment through the 1033 Program, and these programs have been growing: in 2013 alone, transfers under the 1033 Program totaled about \$450 million.

One question raised by Ferguson relates to requirements and accountability. During a recent hearing, senators criticized a lack of coordination and oversight that could have led to militarization of police forces. Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO), in particular, stated that the federal government has provided equipment to law enforcement agencies “seemingly without regard to need or size of the agency that has received them.”

Since March of this year—months before the Ferguson event—a CSIS study team has been reviewing the DoD programs in question. It appears the programs do support law enforcement in a range of operations (e.g., hostage, active shooter, bomb disposal situations) by using equipment already bought using taxpayer funds. As the White House review moves forward, it should consider effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the potential shortcomings of these programs. ■

SOURCES OF THE RUSSIAN MILITARY’S UKRAINE STRATEGY: FROM KOSOVO TO KYIV

BRIAN LESSENBERRY

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Russian president Vladimir Putin has forcefully asserted that NATO’s intervention in Kosovo established the politico-legal precedent for Moscow’s incursion into Ukraine. While there are ample grounds for questioning this comparison, it is clear the Kosovo conflict has profoundly influenced Russian military doctrine and tactics in Ukraine.

As noted by CSIS’s Anthony Cordesman, the NATO air campaign in Kosovo demonstrated the use of precision-guided munitions on an unprecedented scale. These weapons gave the alliance unmatched freedom of action and highlighted the relative weakness of Russia’s military at the time. This led to three changes in Russian doctrine that have informed Moscow’s actions relative to Ukraine.

First, the disparity in NATO and Russian capabilities triggered a major military modernization program. As described by Nikolai Sokov, a former Russian Foreign Ministry official, Kosovo was a game changer that led to the development of a broad range of “modern” weapons systems including short-range ballistic and cruise missiles. Russian officials have acknowledged the forward deployment of one such system—the Iskander SRBM—amid the current tensions.

Second, NATO’s conventional superiority prompted Russian strategists to renew their focus on nonmilitary means of war. [Russian doctrinal statements increasingly emphasized indirect and nontraditional warfare](#) and called for “the utilization of political, diplomatic, legal, economic, environmental, informational, military, and other instruments for the protection of [Russian] national interests.” Russia’s intervention in Ukraine, replete with disinformation and “little green men,” has shown these nontraditional tactics in action.

Third, Russia revised its nuclear doctrine. [As explained by Sokov and others](#), Moscow lowered its nuclear use threshold after Kosovo to permit limited nuclear strikes in response to large-scale conventional attacks near its borders. While Putin’s August 2014 comments about Russian nuclear prowess may seem excessive in the Ukrainian context, they are consistent with a deterrent posture that seeks to prevent Kosovo-style conflicts in the Russian near abroad.

It would be wrong to describe Russian doctrine and tactics in Ukraine as a reaction to Kosovo alone. To be sure, other factors—including the Chechen and Georgian conflicts—have influenced Moscow’s strategy. Kosovo does, nevertheless, appear to have catalyzed important changes in Russian thinking that are evident in Ukraine today. ■

Multimedia



WATCH Kathleen Hicks brief the press ahead of President Obama’s visit to Estonia and Wales prior to the NATO summit.



WATCH “Destroying Syria’s Chemical Weapons: One Year Later,” featuring an interagency discussion on how the United States has helped rid Syria of chemical weapons and the lessons learned.

TECHNOLOGY OFFSET IN A NEW BUDGET AND SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

RYAN CROTTY
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Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel recently announced the formulation of a “game-changing offset strategy.” Technology offset is rooted in then-Secretary of Defense Harold Brown’s countering of Warsaw Pact conventional overmatch with investments in stealth, precision-guided munitions, and many other technologies that have become hallmarks of U.S. military preeminence.

Today’s nascent strategy similarly seeks to leverage technology investment, but in an arguably more complex security environment. The Pentagon faces a diverse array of challenges ranging from anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) threats to proliferation of advanced weapons to state and nonstate actors to cyber and space vulnerability to shrinking force structure.

Asking the question, “what are we offsetting?” will be important for focusing this strategy, but of course, so will “how can we afford to execute such a strategy?” Assuming that the expressed need for this strategy implies that current plans are insufficient, there are only two ways to answer this question: spend more or spend better. Although there has been discussion of repealing the budget caps to increase spending, prospects for such a shift in American political attitudes are not great, pressing international requirements notwithstanding.

So if the Pentagon can’t spend more, they have to spend better. In 2014, investment spending dropped to its lowest share of the defense budget since 1949 (28 percent). During the buildup after the Brown strategy, investment rose to 44 percent of the budget, which in FY2015, would be the equivalent of doubling the research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) budget. Even in the president’s FY2015–2019 budget (which is \$115 billion above the budget caps), investment spending remains well below the post–World War II average share of the budget. But to prioritize investment, readiness and force structure trade-offs will have to be made.

Spending better also means efficient use of existing investment resources. In inflation-adjusted terms, investment spending in the president’s 2015 budget is \$30 billion above the Brown budgets. The fact of the matter is that, while sequester has been hard on DoD, spending on defense today remains historically above average and \$100 billion above the normal trough of a down cycle. Acquisition reform, better incorporation of commercial technology, increasing competition, discipline in focusing investment priorities, and funding stability will all be crucial to delivering the right technology that serves the future needs of the military, no matter what is being offset. ■

Media Highlights

It is “an easy way for countries to sign up and say they’re part of this strategy.”

—Kathleen Hicks to the *New York Times* on the U.S.-sponsored Security Council Resolution and the international coalition the United States is seeking to build operation in Iraq.

“The amount of defense spending is unlikely to be increased—absent a larger agreement with Congress—and I have trouble seeing that larger agreement take place anytime soon.”

—David Berteau to *Politico* on the impact of defense spending trends on defense industry.

“There are key differences between the military force structures required to fight extremist terrorist organizations hiding among civilian populations from the Sahel to the Pakistan border and preparing for a high-end contingency in the Asia-Pacific region against the most advanced weapons ever fielded by enemy forces.”

—Sam Brannen in a *The Hill* op-ed on how our military is on course to be less prepared to deal with surprises in an increasingly unpredictable security environment.

THE FUTURE OF THE LONG-RANGE STRIKE BOMBER

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Shrouded in secrecy, the Long-Range Strike Bomber (LRS-B) is the last of three Air Force modernization priorities, following the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and KC-46 aerial refueling tanker. The LRS-B will replace the aging B-2 bomber fleet as a nuclear-capable, long-range, air-refuelable, highly survivable, stealth, penetrating aircraft. With enemy air-defense systems rapidly becoming more advanced, the B-2 is now the only bomber capable of reliably penetrating these hostile airspaces. Despite the importance of the program, the LRS-B remains an enigma, with senior officials simply referring to the classified aspect of the program when asked about any element besides its cost.

Senior Air Force officials, including Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James and Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Mark Welsh, have all publicly declared that the Air Force will procure 80–100 LRS-B aircraft at a cost of no more than \$550 million per aircraft, not including any research, development, testing, and evaluation costs. Despite a plan to keep production costs down through the use of mature technologies, Air Force acquisition history suggests the LRS-B will run significantly over budget. Similar to the LRS-B, initial procurement plans for the B-2 called for the procurement of 132 B-2 aircraft. However, the program grew so expensive that production was limited to just 21 aircraft.

Now, with just 20 B-2 aircraft and the B-52 and B-1 approaching 62 and 40 years in service, respectively, the United States cannot afford to simply curtail procurement as it did with the B-2. Nor in the current fiscal environment can the Air Force spend its way out of a problem as it did with the F-35. Congress and Pentagon officials should exert their oversight responsibilities and establish considerable programmatic review procedures to detect signs of trouble early in the acquisition process for LRS-B. With global strike a core tenet of U.S. defense policy, and the future of the mission in danger, the program cannot be allowed to flop. ■

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Recent Publications

READ “United States Air Force in 2014,” by Sam Brannen and Ryan Crotty, for a short overview of the major issues facing the service as top Air Force leaders convened for the annual Air Force Association Air and Space Conference.

READ “The War on ISIL: A High-risk Endeavor,” by Nathan Freier, for a quick analysis of President Obama’s plan for contending with the terrorist organization.

READ “Equipping Law Enforcement Agencies with Military and Tactical Equipment,” by Stephanie Sanok Kostro and Garrett Riba, for an overview of equipment transfers of military-style equipment and how the U.S. government might address concerns raised in light of recent events in Ferguson, Missouri.

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