Identifying the Continuity Patterns in the Contemporary U.S. Defence Planning

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The article is aimed at analysing the U.S. contemporary defence and military planning from the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), developed in the 1990s and consolidated during the War on Terror, to the Third Offset Strategy that will guide the Pentagon's efforts until 2030. It will be argued that this process of military innovation based on the legacy of the RMA and aimed at keeping the American military-technological edge while countering the Anti-Access/Area-Denial threats may inspire a new revolution capable of transforming the art of war while ensuring the country's military supremacy up to 2050.

Keywords: United States, defence planning, revolution in military affairs, transformation, third offset strategy, American way of war

'The United States is by its nature a technological nation. The American regime is a technical contrivance intended to achieve an unnatural end – peace and tranquility [...] technical solutions to the problems of war are as natural as bravery was to Spartans [...] For Americans, weaponry is even more essential than courage or leadership'.[1] With this evocative quote about the United States' fascination with technology begins *The Future of War,* published in 1998 by George Friedman – founder of the

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Stratfor strategic intelligence consulting firm and founder and chairman of *Geopolitical Futures* – and his wife Meredith. Based on the idea that smart weapons would revolutionize warfare and that US technological superiority would guarantee its future military supremacy, this book was written when the country was in an exceptional situation: its main antagonist had disappeared, Washington had been consolidated as the great pole of global power, the world would enjoy apparent peace and stability, many nations of the former Communist Bloc wished to integrate into the Western sphere, the American economy was once again taking off and its warfare hegemony seemed guaranteed by the achievement of a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) that claimed to set a cleaner, more effective, precise and resolute style of waging war.

However, many of those hopes vanished in Afghanistan and Iraq, the military occupation of which once again demonstrated the severity of war. Although the campaigns of Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrated the weaknesses of fighting in irregular scenarios and moderated the proclamations of the previous decade, they allowed the country to develop revolutionary technologies and produce smart weapons, drones or cybernetics, as well as to exploit new methods of warfare, to conceive joint operations in the ground, aerial, naval, space and cybernetic dimensions, and to identify the soldier as the weakest element in the war machine. Today, having consolidated the revolution, buried the War on Terror, popularized the technologies that made up the hard core of the past RMA while looking towards Asia-Pacific, the United States again seems to hear the siren songs of technology with the launch of the Third Offset Strategy, aimed at increasing the technological and military gap with its potential adversaries, replacing the traditional model of forward presence and power projection, capable of culminating in a new RMA, as the Second Offset Strategy did in the 1970s.

This article will analyze the US defence planning from the RMA developed in the 1990s and consolidated during the War on Terror to the Third Offset Strategy. This process of military innovation based on the legacy of the last RMA will guide the country's strategic planning until 2030 and may inspire a new revolution capable of transforming the art of war. Thus, understanding that 1) defence policy is the dimension of national security which establishes the goals, sets the objectives, and provides the necessary means to guarantee the defence of the country

with military instruments, and 2) that defence planning is the process focused on defining and obtaining the force structure and the catalog of capabilities needed to meet national defence objectives with available resources, this article will analyze the configuration of the US defence planning and will highlight the continuity patterns between the RMA in the 1990s and the Third Offset Strategy that will guide the Pentagon's efforts until 2030.

Revolution

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 triggered a succession of political changes that culminated in the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the disappearance of the USSR, and the reconfiguration of the European map. Those great events marked the end of the bipolar international system, placed the United States at the top of a new world order, and forced it to restructure the defence policies of the old foes.

In this historical context, the US defence planning was marked by the payment of the 'peace dividend' or the reduction of military expenditure, demobilization of forces, and reorganization of units. It also entailed the configuration of the country's post-Cold War strategic pillars (the articulation of a hegemonic order that would prevent another regional or global competitor from emerging) and the search for an RMA that promised to provide its armies with military dominance against any opponent, permitting to reduce both spending on defence and support the strategy of primacy that the Bush Administration would profile to build the new world order[2] [3] [4]. Thanks to the information revolution based on the country's technological and industrial leadership along with a focus on widening the military gap with its strategic competitors, this revolution seemed to be the solution to all the political, military and economic issues that the United States had to address after the end of the Cold War.[5] [6] [7]

Considered as the paradigm of a successful military innovation,[8] an RMA entails a profound change in the way of waging war that stems from the exploitation of new technologies, doctrines and forms of organization. This new catalogue of military capabilities[9] renders the pre-revolutionary model irrelevant or obsolete and provides enormous superiority to the military that first achieves this revolution. However, it will be able to maintain this military superiority for a limited time, as with the passage of time new technologies will spread and its adversaries will try to emulate (to copy in an uncritical way), assimilate (adapt

to their specific situation) or develop answers (either asymmetric or counter-revolutionary) to end this superiority.[10] [11]

Although there were numerous RMAs throughout history –from the reforms of Xenophon in the fifth century BC to nuclear war in the twentieth century– that have transformed the way we conceive of making war, the revolution that Washington sought in the immediate post-Cold War era and consolidated during the War on Terror[12] began to take shape in the 1970s, coinciding with the advent of the Information Age. Since then, computer science, the Internet, satellite communications, geolocation systems, and robotics or artificial intelligence[13] have been integrated into the militaries and have transformed their processes, practices, organization and capabilities. Its greatest advantages lie in providing a unique capability to acquire, filter and interpret unlimited amounts of information of military interest, share it with users who need it almost instantly and neutralize any possible threat with unprecedented speed and precision.[14] It is therefore not uncommon for sensors (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance or C4ISR), platforms (invisible to remote sensing or detection systems) and precision or smart weapons to be considered as the pillars of this revolution whose preliminary effects were observed in 1991.[15] [16] [17] [18] [19]

Although individually these technologies provide great improvements in the way to conceive, to plan and to conduct the operations, what is truly revolutionary is that all systems – as it can be observed nowadays with the connectivity between computers, smartphones, tablets and other electronic devices – are networked, allowing soldiers to know and control what happens around them, either by recognizing the terrain, identifying the threats, designating targets or beating targets based on their situation, threat or availability. This is the premise on which the concept of 'system of systems' is based, which, regarded as the essence of this RMA, allows to accumulate an immense amount of information on the area of operations, to turn it into useful intelligence data for the forces that operate on the terrain and immediately take advantage of it to beat the adversary.[20] [21] The 'system of systems' also laid the foundations of the 'network centric warfare', a new style of combating based on the use of small forces integrated in networks, organized in swarms, distributed on the battlefield and able to beat enemy targets before they realize they have been discovered.[22] Indeed, network centric warfare will not only be one of the central elements

of this RMA, but also of the Third Offset Strategy recently launched by the Pentagon, based on network interconnection and using swarms of land, marine, submarine, and aerial robots.[23] [24]

In conclusion, the integration of sensors, decision makers, platforms, weapons, and forces into a network would not only improve the planning and conduct of operations, but also lay the foundations of a revolution that would occur when the armed forces implemented new capabilities aimed at exploiting the potential of the 'system of systems'. Consequently, in order to achieve this revolution, not only should new platforms, sensors and weapons be acquired, or the existing systems be digitalized to conduct network centric operations, but new forms of action should be developed (joint, combined, rapid, decisive, expeditionary and effects-based operations and consolidation of the space and cyber domains), as well as organization (streamlining and flexibilization of command structures and networking the services), and leadership styles (decentralized tactical command and direct strategic control).[25] [26] [27]

On the practical level, this revolution began to take shape after the Vietnam debacle in the aftermath of the crisis of the traditional American way of war, grounded on the country's industrial capacity to sustain a long war,[28] and the growing threat of war on the European front.[29] [30] [31] This revolution was based on the dream of Undersecretary of Defence William Perry – who, between 1993 and 1997, served as the head of the Pentagon and whose work was essential to consolidate the RMA – '... to be able to see all high value targets on the battlefield at any time; to be able to make a direct hit on any target we can see; and to be able to destroy any target we can hit'.[32] It was projected as a Second Offset Strategy[33] that would alter the fragile balance of forces on the European Central Front in favor of NATO in the 1970 by harnessing Western technological potential to multiply allied military power by balancing the Warsaw Pact's quantitative superiority without resorting to nuclear weapons in the event of a war in Europe. The revolutionary effects of these changes were identified by the Soviet General Staff[34] in the 1970s and analysed in detail by the Pentagon in the 1980s.[35] However, it was not until the spectacular triumph of the coalition led by the United States in the Gulf War of 1991 that this revolution reached worldwide fame.

Therefore, it is not surprising that this RMA seduced the American political, military and industrial class and articulated its defence

planning until the War on Terror. Not only did it seem to be akin to the American strategic culture,[36] along with the promise to supplement the reduction of human, material, and financial resources due to the peace dividend with technology,[37] but it also promised Washington the future warfare supremacy and the possibility of continuing to use military power as a foreign policy tool with little to no political, economic or social costs. In other words, '… this revolution in military affairs offers the United States the possibility of doing "more with less", enabling it to maintain its military power even at a time of shrinking U.S. defence budgets'.[38]

However, the Pentagon initially showed a lukewarm interest in this possibility because after the debacle of the USSR its main priority was to accommodate the strategic pillars of the country to the immediate post-Cold War and to outline a strategy of primacy that would preserve its future political hegemony. Only some key players, such as the Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney, Undersecretary Paul Wolfowitz and General Colin Powell (who would return to prominent posts in the George W. Bush Administration years later) and the armed forces – with the sole exception of the Navy, fearing that the RMA would render its formidable naval and anti-submarine fleet obsolete – joined in the discussions. They were attracted by the effects that this revolution could have on the country's military strategy, its fighting style, or because they could use it as a weapon in its internal struggles for the allocation of resources and political influence in a situation marked by the financial crisis and the collection of the 'peace dividend'.[39] [40] [41]

It was not until 1993 – coinciding with the conceptual consolidation of the RMA and the elaboration of the *Bottom-Up Review*,[42] the first major revision of the US post-Cold War defence policy – that the Department of Defence not only began to consider using the possibilities offered by the revolution to solve some of the strategic issues that the country had to face, such as maintaining the capacity to fight in two geographically separate conflicts (Korean Peninsula and Middle East) with a smaller force structure than that maintained during the Cold War,[43] but also started the search for this revolution, which was considered increasingly fundamental for maintaining hegemony both on the battlefield and in international affairs.[44]

Three years later, the Pentagon sponsored the revolution with the publication of the *Joint Vision 2010*.[45] This guide for the development of military capabilities planned for 2010 confirmed its existence, and set

the course for achieving this revolution that promised to inaugurate a 'new American way of war' that, based on the US technological edge, full knowledge of the battlefield and the ability to conduct precision attacks from great distances, would allow the country to obtain fast, clean and decisive victories against any adversary.[46] In 1997, the political class did the same with the first *Quadrennial Defence Review*.[47] This roadmap that drove the defence policy of the second Clinton administration (1996-2000) not only recognized its existence and supported the pillars of the revolution identified by the military elite, but understood that its achievement was vital to facing future dangers and contributing to American political hegemony well into the 21st Century.[48] [49]

To this end, it was proposed to take advantage of the 'strategic pause'[50] to develop and implement revolutionary capabilities, to accommodate the country's military architecture to future risks, and to modernize selected legacy military platforms to maintain sufficient forces to participate in any conflict that could be unleashed while designing the army of the 21st Century. This process, aimed at achieving the revolution and preparing the American defence framework to meet the risks and threats that could materialize in the first decades of the third millennium, was called 'Transformation'.

Although this roadmap considered it essential that the United States transform its military power to achieve the revolution and prepare for an uncertain future, the timidity of the proposed changes in the structure of forces and in the catalog of military capabilities; the low budget allocation for the development and acquisition of new capabilities (the initially proposed expenditure objective was never achieved)[51] and the high participation of its armed forces in peace operations and crisis management (which in the face of the Republican Congressional refusal had to cover expenses with funds initially earmarked for modernization and training), *de facto* paralyzed the transformation until George W. Bush reached the White House.[52]

Transformation

The election of the former Governor of Texas, George W. Bush, as the President of the United States was the definitive impulse to the RMA. Captivated by the promises of the revolution, advised by some of his staunchest supporters and aware of its role in supporting the shaping of the 21st Century world order,[53] President Bush and his Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld outlined an ambitious transformation pro-

cess aimed at achieving the revolution by 2015-20 while preparing the US defence architecture to meet the emerging challenges. To this end, not only did they design a security policy that would bury the warfare paradigm of the Cold War, but they also set the defence transformation – from the force structure, catalogue of capabilities, and military deployment patterns to the organization, operation, administration, and financing of the Pentagon – as one of the top priorities of the Republican Administration.[54] [55] [56] [57]

However, transformation replaced the revolution as the framework for US military planning, as witnessed by the *Quadrennial Defence Review* following the events of September 11.[58] This fateful date not only ended the 'strategic pause', initiated after the end of the Warsaw Pact and marked the beginning of the War on Terror whose effects still continue, but it also forced the White House to rethink its defence policy by convincing it of the extreme urgency of accommodating its security architecture – a huge, rigid and bureaucratic structure still anchored in the Cold War paradigm – to the 21st Century, accelerating its transformation and allowing it to test the revolution.[59]

Grounded on the search for Osama bin Laden, the dismantling of Al Qaeda and the Afghan and Iraqi military campaigns, the War on Terror served to uncover the limitation of US military power, to break the apparent unipolarity of the post-Cold War international order and facilitate the rise of new powers capable of limiting influence and disputing regional hegemony of the United States.[60]

The baptism of fire of the new American way of war took place in Afghanistan, where a small force specifically formed for *Operation Enduring Freedom*, with permanent close air support, collaborating with the Northern Alliance, equipped with modern technologies and using sophisticated tactics overthrew the Taliban regime, isolated Al Qaeda in the mountains and in neighboring Pakistan and established a transitional government in just over a month. This victory surprised the Pentagon, which preached that the way the war was waged was an unmistakable sign that the revolution was about to consolidate. Thus, it proposed to accelerate the transformation.[61] [62] [63]

A few months later, preparations for Iraq's invasion began. Determined to overcome the shadow of Vietnam embodied in the *Weinberger-Powell*[64] doctrine, Rumsfeld developed a plan of operations that would exploit the revolution and drive the transformation. After a brief deployment and concentration of forces, a joint ground-am-

phibious force with permanent air support paralyzed the Iraqi government, causing a total confusion in its armies, nullified the military opposition, and achieved a stunning, overwhelming, and seemingly decisive victory in a few weeks.[65] [66]

Both triumphs seemed to validate the preliminary results of the RMA, the potential of the military transformation and the effectiveness of the new American way of war. However, following the transition from major combat operations to stabilization, factors such as the small volume of forces used,[67] armaments employed, limited training in stabilization, reconstruction or counter-terrorism, limited knowledge of both countries or the lack of intelligence grid on the ground;[68] combined with the absence of coherent plans for peacemaking or the incorrect decisions taken after overthrowing both regimes, helped an insurgency breakout that jeopardized local authorities and forced Washington to wage a long, controversial, and costly war.

The emergence of the insurgency – as it happened in Vietnam decades before – caught the Pentagon, which, seduced by technology, had forgotten that war is a clash of opposing wills and that any actor tries to exploit its opponent's weaknesses, fights with the means it has at its disposal and uses the strategies that provide greater revenues. Thus, faced with the technocentric US military style, the Afghan and Iraqi insurgencies conceived responses that exploited the limitations of the American way of war and the vulnerabilities of the advanced societies. Among these weaknesses one can stress the volatility of domestic public opinion and the pressure of the international community; the fear of human loss and collateral damage; the subjection to restrictive and anachronistic war customs; the anxiety about political costs and electoral effects of operations; the requirement to restrict its scope, impact and duration; the reluctance to use ground forces in operations or the need to use force in a limited and restrictive way.[69]

Not only did the insurgency reveal the shortcomings of the new American Way of War in low-intensity environments and the limitations of RMA's technocentric model, but it also showed how difficult it is to pacify hostile territories, the human and material costs involved in any imposed change of political regime or new operational requirements motivated by participation in both campaigns.[70] [71] [72] These factors motivated the abandonment of the revolution in the US military agenda and a change of direction of the military transformation – from preparation for future conflicts to resolution of the present problems –

that the services adopted immediately but that was not formalized until the *Quadrennial Defence Review 2006*, which laid the groundwork for Bush's second term and the appointment of Robert Gates as head of the Pentagon.[73] [74]

This strategic turnaround led Gates to focus on conducting the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns and building adequate capacities for post-conflict stabilization, national building, or counter-insurgency during his tenure at the Pentagon (2006-11). This was accomplished through adjustments in defence planning (prioritizing the resolution of identified problems), military programming (redefining, slowing down or deferring the purchase of the big ticket programs to free up funds that would allow the acquisition of other materials needed for present missions[75]), expenditure structure (defraying ongoing missions and maintaining training standards and modernization plans) and force structure (by increasing Army and Navy personnel, reconverting artillery units into infantry units, increasing special operations forces, civil-military cooperation units, rethinking deployment cycles or regulating the presence of military contractors); and consolidated with the signing of the *Defence Directive* 3000.07 of 2008, which placed irregular war on the same level as the conventional one and required the services to implement all changes necessary to efficiently fight in both types of conflict.[76] [77] [78] [79]

However, the elimination of Osama bin Laden allowed President Barack Obama to redefine the War on Terror,[80] to advance the withdrawals from Iraq (2011) and Afghanistan (2014, postponed until the situation improves); and to replace the current strategic model with a new framework that will guide defence planning over the next decades. It is conditioned, therefore, by the lessons learned from ten years of war – especially by the shortcomings of a force prepared to fight against technologically advanced opponents when having to wage an irregular war and the limits of the American way of war – as well as by the current domestic and international situation, which again focuses on maintaining the warfare supremacy against any future enemy by launching a new process of military innovation capable of motivating a new RMA.

While the War on Terror has had dire effects on US policy and international security, revealed the limits of its military power and facilitated the consolidation of new regional powers capable of competing with Washington, it has also once again demonstrated the

country's unbeatable conventional superiority, exposed the military gap with its competitors, and has matured revolutionary technologies and capabilities (especially drones, robotics, and cyber) to the expected *Revolution in Military Affairs* which has been a great qualitative leap in the art of war, since the United States' way of fighting today has little to do with its past.[81] [82] [83] [84] Despite this, American military supremacy no longer seems so large due to the diffusion of technologies that articulated the past revolution and its integration into asymmetric and hybrid strategies; the economic crisis, which has forced to reduce the total cost of defence[85] as well as the War against Terror, which has consumed vast resources, eroded the military institution, forced to develop capacities of limited utility for high intensity conflicts and prevented implementation of the major modernization programs projected in previous years.[86] [87] Although this new model more closely related to the American strategic culture began to be articulated in early 2012 with the presentation of *the Defence Strategic Guidance*,[88] [89] it was consolidated in late 2014 with the launch of the Third Offset Strategy.[90]

Offset

Based on the legacy of the RMA and the technological leadership of American industry,[91] this process of military innovation seeks to address the strategic issues that Washington must face after the War on Terror and to maintain – as it has promised the previous revolution in the immediate post-Cold War – the level of military ambition with less economic, human or material resources and greater political constraints, as well as to widen the capacity gap with its potential adversaries. More specifically, it is intended to increase the country's capacity to project its military power in anti-access and area denial (A2/AD)[92] environments, to reinforce conventional deterrence and to impose a high opportunity cost on potential adversaries seeking to compete with the country in technological matters.[93]

Since the Gulf War of 1991, the country's potential adversaries have studied the characteristics of the new American way of war and have been equipped with technologies (C4ISR systems to digitalize the battlespace, smart weapons to accurately beat the enemy targets and stealth or unmanned platforms to enter risk areas), and capabilities (joint action, network centric warfare, special operations forces or cyberwar) linked to the RMA.[94] [95] [96] On the other hand, they have also developed responses – such as A2/AD measures – to prevent Washing-

ton from projecting its power and exploiting its technological-military potential. In the words of former Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel: '... We are entering an era where American dominance on the seas, in the skies, and in space – not to mention cyberspace – can no longer be taken for granted. And while the United States currently has a decisive military and technological edge over any potential adversary, our future superiority is not a given'.[97] More specifically, the Pentagon considers that it faces four major problems when it comes to projecting its military power:[98]

- The vulnerability of facilities where US forces are stationed, such as the bases of Guam (United States), Diego Garcia (United Kingdom) or Okinawa (Japan) to Chinese missiles, thus compromising the model of advanced presence and power projection.
- US opponents are fielding C4ISR systems capable of detecting, identifying and following any American movement over great distances.
- Non-stealth aircrafts, which represent the bulk of the country's air fleet, are increasingly vulnerable to advanced enemy air defences.
- Satellites, and thus the capabilities they provide, from global positioning and navigation to intelligence, observation or communications, are increasingly vulnerable to physical or cyberattacks.

In other words, the diffusion of the capabilities that provided the country with post-Cold War supremacy and laid the foundations of the RMA, together with the development of A2/AD means specifically designed to limit the country's military superiority, are increasing the vulnerability of forward bases, surface ships, manned aircraft or space satellites. This reduces the military gap produced by the RMA, and reduces the utility of the paradigm of presence and power projection, effective since the dawn of the Cold War. And when this happens, its conventional deterrence model will be compromised, the impact of its advanced presence on regional stability will be limited and its superpower role will be damaged.[99] [100] As a result, Washington's allies –particularly those in the Asia-Pacific or the Middle East[101]– are likely to question the country's ability to defend them in case of need, leading to a security dilemma likely to trigger new weaponry proliferation and even transform the current system of alliances.[102]

Consequently, the Third Offset Strategy is based on the legacy of the contemporary RMA and the American scientific and technological potential to redraw the military divide between Washington and its opponents, guarantee the capacity to project its military power to any point on the globe and reinforce the security commitments between the country and its allies.

To achieve these objectives, the Pentagon will draw two lines of action: on the one hand, it will exploit the supremacy that the United States maintains in key military capabilities of the recent RMA, such as unmanned operations, naval and air operations to large distances, stealth operations, submarine warfare or engineering and systems integration to ensure, with a smaller but more advanced army, the advanced presence and power projection in A2/AD environments while reinforcing its strategic leadership and forcing its opponents to embark on arms race that they probably will not be able to follow, as in the case of the Second Offset during the Cold War.[103] On the other hand, it will prioritize conventional deterrence by denial (reducing the enemy's perception of their ability to achieve their military objectives) and deterrence by punishment (by ensuring the ability to retaliate against high-value targets to show that any disruption of the status quo will have an unaffordable cost for the attacker).[104] [105] In any case, if it cannot avoid aggression against US interests or its allies, Washington must be able to respond quickly and decisively to stop the attack, to force the cessation of hostilities or to achieve an undisputed victory over the enemy.[106]

In conclusion, with the Third Offset Strategy, the Pentagon will try to:

- Combine legacy capabilities (Cold-War systems or those that have been used ever since) with the development of new materials and operational concepts that allow the country to combat the full range of operations in multiple operations theaters concurrently.
- Reduce US dependence on forward naval, air and ground bases.
- Protect itself against the loss or degradation of satellites.
- Take advantage of the global presence of its air and naval forces, the responsiveness of its aviation and missiles and the effectiveness of its unmanned platforms.
- Exploit precision strategic strike capability to threaten any enemy target inside or outside the theater of operations.

- Lead a new arms race by exploiting the technological-military areas that lead the country (such as drones, artificial intelligence, cyberspace, submarine warfare, strategic attack, systems integration) and where its opponents still lack the necessary know-how.
- Use alliances between the country and its allies and friends to strategically position itself and share regional defence costs and responsibilities.

Developed as the answer to the strategic questions that surround the United States, the Third Offset Strategy will guide US defence planning until 2030. However, taking into account that it may be implemented in a restrictive budgetary environment, even President Trump has promised to boost the military spending and rebuild the military[107] and several modernization projects cannot be deferred (nuclear arsenal, anti-missile shield, satellites or cyber capacities),[108] [109] the Pentagon will try to combine, as much as possible, the material assets inherited from the Cold War or those that have been used since 1991[110] with the development of new systems – strategic stealth drones, new stealth bombers, combat robots, cyber weapons, C4ISR systems or electromagnetic guns – which will become the technological strands of the future wars.[111] [112]

Although this strategy will possibly guide US defence planning until 2030, its development – and more specifically the acquisition of material means the acquisition of the necessary enablers or the research of revolutionary technologies – in a context marked by the scarcity of financial, human, and material resources, will require implementing unpopular measures that will raise controversies between the political and industrial class and corporate resistance in the military. On the one hand, the structure of forces, the catalog of capabilities, deployment patterns and institutional balances among the three armies set by the *Quadrennial Defence Review* for the period 2014-19[113] should be transformed. On the other hand, the Pentagon's spending structure should be reconsidered in order to guarantee the financing of the Third Offset armament programs. The development and acquisition of these projects will require funds to be obtained by reducing the structure of forces, rationalizing infrastructure, processes and programs, outsourcing services or suspending – as a step prior to the definitive withdrawal – modernization plans for all those materials deemed obsolete within the new strategy, unable to survive in A2/AD environments, such as

non-stealth reconnaissance planes, manned tactical aviation or mechanized units.[114] [115]

Conclusion

Despite enormous changes in the international scene since the end of the Cold War, the Pentagon's reflections have revolved around technological innovation as the engine of military change and its defence planning has been grounded –apart from the War on Terror, which altered the initially proposed order of priorities – in maintaining a military-technological gap with its potential adversaries as a tool to achieve military supremacy and political hegemony. This techno centrism cannot be explained only by the technological and military leadership of the country or by the innovative capacity of its military-industrial complex, but by a strategic culture that prioritizes the search for technological solutions to any strategic, operational or tactical problem that surrounds the country.

In this context, in the immediate post-Cold War period, US defence planning was marked by search for a revolution that based on the application of information technologies in the field of defence not only promised to contribute to the peace dividend and to solve the strategic issues of the country once the Soviet threat disappeared, but also to extend its supremacy against any of its future adversaries. Although the campaigns of Afghanistan and Iraq revealed the new face of the war and exposed the limitations of the new American style of fighting, these conflicts also allowed accelerating the transformation to achieve the revolution. However, while Washington was articulating this change in the way of combat, the technologies associated with this revolution – smart weapons, drones, C4ISR systems or cybernetics – spread globally, access to them was democratized and many countries emulated the US military model, attempted to assimilate the revolution and adapt it to their needs or conceive measures to end the superiority of this RMA.

Today, once the War on Terror has been stopped and with a focus on the Asia-Pacific region, the Pentagon has launched a new process of military innovation capable of motivating a new RMA. Based on the country's technological capabilities, focused on ensuring access to any part of the globe regardless of an enemy's A2/AD measures and aimed both at enhancing the links with its allies and partners and forcing potential competitors to initiate arms race that its military-industrial

complex should not be able to follow in the short-medium term, the achievement of the Third Offset Strategy will not only motivate the development of new operational concepts, new military capabilities and new styles of planning and conducting operations, but it will also consolidate a new RMA.

However, by refocusing its attention on technological supremacy as a tool to guarantee political hegemony and to steer the strategy towards China, the United States not only runs the risk of forgetting the lessons of the War on Terror and obviating foreign strategic tendencies unconnected to high politics, but also of turning a hypothetical conflict between Washington and Beijing into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Time will eventually tell how this new process of military innovation is configured and consolidated, and if successful, how it will motivate a new revolution in military affairs that will bring a new leap in the art of war.

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Notes

1 George Friedman and Meredith Friedman (1998), *The Future of War: Power, Technology and American World Dominance in the Twenty-First Century*, New York: St. Martin's Griffin, p. 17.

2 Guillem Colom (2013), 'Cambio y continuidad en el pensamiento estratégico estadounidense desde el final de la Guerra Fría', *Revista de Ciencia Política* 33(3), pp. 675-692.

3 Richard Lacquement (2003), *Shaping American Military Capabilities after the Cold War*, Westport: Praeger.

4 Posen states that any policy of primacy rests on technological superiority that allows power projection in the common spaces (oceans, air, space and

cyberspace). Not only has this idea been present to this day, but it also is latent in the Third Offset Strategy recently set by the United States to expand its future military gap with its competitors (Barry Posen (2003), 'Command of the Commons: The Military Foundation of U.S. Hegemony', *International Security* 28(1), pp. 5-46).

5 Robert Tomes (2012), 'An Historical Review of U.S. Defence Strategy', *Defence & Security Analysis* 28(4), pp. 303-315.

6 Frederick Kagan (2006), *Finding the Target: the Transformation of American Military Policy*, New York: Encounter.

7 Elinor Sloan (2002), *The Revolution in Military Affairs*, Montreal: McGuille-Queens.

8 It is generally considered that any military innovation has three components: it changes the way in which military forces operate in the field; it is significant in scope and impact, and it is tacitly equated with greater military effectiveness (Adam Grissom (2006), 'The Future of Military Innovation Studies', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29(5), pp. 905-934). Although an innovative action can take place both in peacetime and at war, it is more likely to come up during a war either because a conflict tests previous approaches or it forces adaptation to war surprises, as it happened in the case of the RMA (Serena Chad (2011), *A Revolution in Military Adaptation*, Washington DC: Georgetown University Press; Guillem Colom (2008), *Entre Ares y Atenea: el debate sobre la Revolución en los Asuntos Militares*, Madrid: Instituto Universitario General Gutiérrez Mellado).

9 Military capability is composed by Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel and Facilities (DOTMLPF), being technology a necessary but insufficient element to develop a new military capability (Joint Chiefs of Staff (2015), *Joint Publication 1-02: Department of Defence Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Washington DC: DoD, A-51).

10 Michael Horowitz (2010), *The Diffusion of Military Power: Causes and Consequences for International Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

11 Guillem Colom (2016), *De la compensación a la revolución: la configuración de la política de defensa estadounidense contemporánea (1977-2014)*, Madrid: Instituto Universitario General Gutiérrez Mellado, pp. 38-47.

12 Although the latest study on this RMA situates its consolidation between the years 2025-35 (Barry Watts (2011), *The Maturing Revolution in Military Affairs*, Washington DC: CSBA), there is an enormous disparity of opinions from those that consider that the revolution occurred in the eighties to those that consider that they will overlap in time (Colom 2008, pp. 147-51). However, the authors of the article consider that this has already occurred because the ways of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan (normalizing the use of drones and smart weapons, conducting joint operations or exploiting cyberspace) are different from the past, as many potential adversaries of the country are endowed with the capabilities linked to the revolution, along with the fact that Washington has launched a new process of military innovation that could culminate in a new RMA.

13 Most of these technologies, such as Internet, GPS, drones, precision projectiles, stealth platforms or C4ISR systems had been developed by the Pentagon's *Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency* (DARPA) and were a part of the 'Assault Breaker' program, one of the pillars of the Second

Offset Strategy. To learn more about the close links between DARPA and RMA, see Richard Atta (2003), *Transformation and Transition: DARPA's Role in Fostering an Emerging Revolution in Military Affairs*, Alexandria: IDA.

14 Martin Libicki (1994), *The Mesh and the Net: Speculations on Armed Conflict in a Time of Free Silicon*, Washington DC: NDU Press.
15 Watts (2011).
16 Dima Adamsky (2008), *American Strategic Culture and U.S. Revolution in Military Affairs*, Oslo: IFS.
17 Sloan (2002).
18 Friedman and Friedman (1998).
19 Although public opinion recalls this war with the images of precision-guided munitions reaching their targets and stealth aircraft penetrating enemy's defences, precision weaponry represented only 10% of projectiles launched by the United States (contrasting with 70% employed in 2003) and 7% of stealth aircraft, which had to be permanently escorted by fighter-bombers (Andrew Cockburn (2015), *Kill Chain: the Rise of the High-Tech Assassins*, New York: Henry Holt & Co.; Peter Singer (2009), *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century*, New York: Penguin).
20 William Owens (1995), 'The Emerging System-of-Systems', *Proceedings* 121(1105), pp. 35-39.
21 This concept was forged by Admiral William Owens, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff between 1994 and 1996, who argued that the technological pillars of the RMA already existed as they were the result of millionaire investments to confront the Soviet Union. However, the integration of all elements of forces into a 'system of systems', that would provide almost real-time information on everything that goes on the battlefield and allowing accurately beat virtually any target from great distances and with little to none collateral damage, was completely revolutionary.
22 David Alberts, John Garstka and Frederick Stein (1999), *Network Centric Warfare: Developing and Leveraging Information Superiority*, Washington DC: CCRP.
23 Thimoty Walton (2016), 'Securing the Third Offset Strategy Priorities for the Next Secretary of Defence', *Joint Forces Quarterly* 82, pp. 6-15.
24 Paul Scharre (2014), *Robotics on the Battlefield: The Coming Swarm*, Washington DC: CNAS.
25 Watts (2011).
26 Colom (2008).
27 Friedman and Friedman (1998).
28 Russell Weigley (1973), *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
29 Tomes (2012), pp. 303-315.
30 Adamsky (2008).
31 Kagan (2006).
32 William Perry's testimony to the US Senate Armed Services Committee (February 28, 1978).
33 The First Offset Strategy was launched in 1955 with the *New Look* of the US defence, which prioritized the use of nuclear weapons to reduce the total amount of the country's defence and to counter the Soviet conventional superiority, which was reflected in the construction of an impressive atomic arsenal, the configuration of the nuclear triad and

the development of the Mutual Assured Destruction (Robert Martinage (2014), *Toward a New Offset Strategy: Exploiting U.S. Long-Term Advantages to Restore U.S. Global Power Projection Capability*, Washington DC: CSBA).

34 Although the United States promoted this military innovation, the first to identify its revolutionary potential were the Soviet strategists, who articulated the concept of Military Technical Revolution to warn that these technological advances would allow the NATO to stop a Soviet aggression in Western Europe without the nuclear weapon, thereby altering the balance of forces on the continent (Adamsky 2008).

35 The potential existence of a Military Technical Revolution aroused the interest of the American analyst Andrew Marshall, whose influence would not only be vital to consolidate the RMA, but also to articulate the Third Offset Strategy (Andrew Krepinevich and Barry Watts (eds.) (2015), *The Last Warrior: Andrew Marshall and the Shaping of Modern American Defense Strategy*, Nueva York: Basic Books). Marshall, the mentor of several generations of defence analysts who have held key positions in the Pentagon and major think tanks in the country, led several task forces to work out whether these changes could transform the art of war and how Washington should proceed to achieve the revolution. The most influential group and supporter of the revolutionary theses brought together experts such as Fred Ikle, Albert Wohlstetter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger and Samuel Huntington (Alfred Ikle and Albert Wohlstetter (eds.) (1988), *Discriminate Deterrence*, Washington DC: GPO).

36 Defined as the set of objective factors (geography, demography, economy or history) and subjective factors (ideas, values or military tradition) that explain the perception that countries hold on the use of force or their predilection for a certain war style above another, strategic culture conditions national defence and military culture. In this sense, the US tends to be anti-intellectual, ahistorical, anti-strategic, optimistic, pragmatic, technocentric, industrial and mechanistic (Adamsky 2008). Consequently, the RMA and currently the Third Offset Strategy are adapted to its strategic culture.

37 Indeed, this revolution also seemed to be the solution to the problems of advanced societies at the turn of the century, such as the erosion of the citizen-soldier model and the end of universal conscription (that took place in the United States in 1973), the reduction of military spending, growing participation in crisis management operations, the need to preserve military supremacy in the face of future adversaries, and especially, it seemed to mend the growing difficulty of post-heroic societies to employ military force as political tool (Guillem Colom (2014a), 'La revolución militar posindustrial', *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 50, pp. 113-126)

38 Sloan (2002), p. 29.

39 Kagan (2006).

40 James Mann and Jim Mann (2004), *The Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet*, New York: Penguin.

41 Eric Larson, David Orletsky and Kristin Leuschner (2001), *Defence Planning in a Decade of Change: lessons from the Base Force, Bottom-Up Review, and Quadrennial Defence Review*, Santa Monica: RAND.

42 Department of Defence (DoD) (1993), *Report of the Bottom-Up Review*, Washington DC: GPO.

43 Secretary of Defence Les Aspin's Commencement Address at the National Defence University (June 16, 1993).
44 Michael O'Hanlon (2000), *Defence Planning for the Late 1990s. Beyond the Desert Storm Framework*, Washington DC: Brookings.
45 Joint Chiefs of Staff (1996), *Joint Vision 2010*, Washington DC: GPO.
46 Max Boot (2003), 'The New American Way of War', *Foreign Affairs* 82(4), pp. 41-58.
47 Department of Defence (DoD) (1997), *Quadrennial Defence Review*, Washington DC: GPO.
48 Tomes (2012), pp. 303-315.
49 Kagan (2006).
50 Seen as the period between the demise of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a new global competitor, this concept was first officially used by Secretary of Defence Les Aspin in the *Bottom-Up Review* (1993). Widely used by the Clinton Administration to justify its defence decisions, it was heavily criticized by the opposition, which sought to take advantage of the apparent post-Cold War stability to transform the defence to achieve the RMA.
51 It is worth mentioning that, in order to fund the RMA the *Revolution in Business Affairs* was launched, based on the promotion of scale economies, centralization of the procurement processes, simplification and flexibilization of administrative procedures, the use of dual and commercial off the shelf (COTS) technologies or the outsourcing of services that would allow optimization of the defence management and guarantee the necessary funds to pay for the revolution (Ashton Carter and John White (2001), *Keeping the Edge: Managing Defense for the Future,* Cambridge: MIT Press).
52 Eric Larson, David Orletsky and Kristin Leuschner (2001), pp. 83-120.
53 Although this conviction can be observed in several public statements, his first pre-election speech in defence, written by Richard Armitage and delivered at the Charleston Military Academy (South Carolina), on November 23, 1999 is very significant (James Kitfield (2005), *War & Destiny: How the Bush Revolution in Foreign and Military Affairs Redefined American Power*, Washington DC: Potomac).
54 Stephen Cimbala (ed.) (2010), *The George W. Bush Defence Program: Policy, Strategy & War*, Washington DC: Potomac.
55 Donald Rumsfeld (2002), 'Transforming the Military', *Foreign Affairs* 81(3): pp. 20-32.
56 Hans Binnendijk (ed.) (2002), *Transforming America's Military*, Washington DC: NDU.
57 Department of Defence (DoD) (2001), *Quadrennial Defence Review*, Washington DC: GPO.
58 Department of Defence (DoD) (2001).
59 Bush's security and defence program was outlined by the so-called *Vulcans* – a group led by Condolezza Rice and composed by Richard Armitage, Richard Perle, Dov Zakheim, Paul Wolfowitz, Scooter Libby, Robert Zoellick, Robert Blackwill or Stephen Hadley (Mann and Mann 2004) – and contains several of the proposals drawn by the neoconservative think tank *Project for the New American Century* in its controversial document 'Rebuilding America's Defences' (Thomas Donnelly (dir.) (1999), *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century*,

Washington DC: PNAC). More specifically, it called for the withdrawal of the forces deployed in peace operations, the limitation of interventions abroad to the defence of the national interest, the preparation of the armed forces to combat future conflicts, and the direction of the expenditure towards the construction of an anti-missile system and the transformation of security and defence architecture of the country (Kitfield 2005).

60 Codified in the *National Security Strategy* (2002), the War on Terror was removed from official jargon after Obama's appointment and was replaced by *Overseas Contingency Operation*, used to prove missions' spending, *War Against Al Qaeda* present in the *National Security Strategy* (2010) *or The Persistent Threat of Terrorism* stated in the 2015 edition.

61 Cimbala (2010).

62 Kagan (2006).

63 In this regard, it is important to note the speech of Bush at the Charleston Military Academy (December 11, 2001), Rumsfeld's words at the National Defence University (January 31, 2002) or the parameters on which the controversial exercise Millennium Challenge (2002) was articulated, which had to validate all the principles of the RMA and ended up suggesting the limitations of the new American way of war.

64 Elaborated by Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger in 1984 and refined by Chief of Staff Colin Powell in 1991, this doctrine suggests that the country's armed forces should be used as a last resort above all with strategic objectives and defined political ends. Raised to avoid another Vietnam, it was dismissed by Rumsfeld as anachronistic, obsolete and restrictive.

65 Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor (2006), *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, New York: Pantheon Books.

66 To this end, it is important to note the statements of Secretary Rumsfeld and General Franks –commander of the multinational force in Iraq– before the Senate Committee on Armed Forces (July 9, 2003) or the speech of Under Secretary of Defence for Policy Paul Wolfowitz at the US Naval War College (June 20, 2003).

67 Estimates by military commanders set force levels between 100,000-150,000 for Afghanistan and 350,000-500,000 for Iraq. However, the invasion of Afghanistan began with just over 5,000 soldiers and that of Iraq with less than 100,000 due to Rumsfeld's determination to exploit the new American Way of War.

68 Paradoxically, this allowed the controversial *National Security Agency* to become an indispensable player in both campaigns by providing huge volumes of phone and internet information about insurgent actors and consolidating the RMA's cyber side.

69 Guillem Colom (2014a), 'La revolución militar posindustrial', *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 50, pp. 113-126.

70 Guillem Colom (2014b), 'La seguridad y la defensa estadounidenses tras la guerra contra el terror', *Colombia Internacional* 81, pp. 267-290.

71 Tomes (2012), pp. 303-315.

72 Kagan (2006).

73 Robert Gates (2009), 'A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age', *Foreign Affairs* 89(1), pp. 6-18.

74 Department of Defence (DoD) (2006), *Quadrennial Defence Review*, Washington DC: GPO.

75 Indeed, the reform of the military programming is one of the main challenges that the Pentagon must face due to the inflexibility, corporatism and lack of coordination of this model still anchored in the Cold War. Although the *Revolution in Business Affairs* was promoted in the 1990s, at that time an attempt was made –though without much success– to rationalize procedures, unify requirements, outsource management, increase competition, strengthen public-private partnerships, increase financial flexibility, use a spiral design to save costs on R+D or cancel obsolete programs (Ashton Carter (2014), 'Running the Pentagon Right: How to Get the Troops What They Need', *Foreign Affairs* 93(1), pp. 101-112).
76 Chad (2011).
77 Cimbala (2010).
78 Gates (2009), pp. 6-18.
79 This, in turn, will facilitate the consolidation of the concept of 'hybrid warfare', which combines the use of regular and irregular means while exploiting propaganda, information warfare or cyber operations, as can be observed in Ukraine (Rens 2016).
80 Although US strategic documents continue to underline the importance of combating international terrorism and Washington is leading the operations against *Daesh*, this mission is the fifth in the order of priorities outlined by the *Quadrennial Defence Review* (Department of Defense (DoD) (2014a), *Quadrennial Defense Review*, Washington DC: GPO, p. 61).
81 Cockburn (2015).
82 Guillem Colom (2015), 'Rumsfeld Revisited: la tercera estrategia de compensación estadounidense', *UNISCI Discussion Papers* 38, pp. 69-88.
83 Colom (2016).
84 Martinage (2014).
85 In 2011 the *Budget Control Act* was signed into law which reduced the Pentagon's base budget – the necessary item to ensure the Pentagon's minimum operation – to $487 billion, a figure that might be reduced by half if the public deficit is not contained. In addition, a sequestration mechanism of an additional 7% was introduced that would be activated if government and opposition did not agree on spending, as happened in 2013. However, since then the base budget has increased as follows: $496,300B (2014), $497,300B (2015), $521,300B (2016), $521,800B (2017) and $574,500B (2018).
86 Mark Gutzinger (2014), *Shaping America's Future Military: Toward a New Force Planning Construct*, Washington DC: CSBA.
87 Paul K. Davis and Peter A. Wilson (2011), *Looming Discontinuities in U.S. Military Strategy and Defense Planning. Colliding RMAs Necessitate a New Strategy*, Santa Monica: RAND.
88 Department of Defence (DoD) (2012). *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defence*, Washington DC: GPO.
89 In fact, the content of this strategy – prepared by Obama's Administration to present an adjustment plan prior to the 2013 budget debate and block the Republican Congress – has been formalized in the *Quadrennial Defence Review* (2014) and in the *National Security Strategy* (2015). In addition, on the military level, many of its provisions had already been suggested in the *National Military Strategy* (2011) and codified in the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (2012).

90 Department of Defence (DoD) (2014b), *The Defence Innovation Initiative*, Washington DC: GPO.

91 Although most of the technological advances traditionally came from the military – and in the US from DARPA – today many of the leading technologies (robotics, remote guidance, visualization, biotechnology, miniaturization, advanced computing and big data) come from the civil sector. In fact, this is the idea behind the *Long Range Research and Development Plan* (2014) that will support the technological proposals of US civilian industry to mature them and integrate them into the systems that will be essential to consolidate this strategy.

92 In general terms, while anti-access strategies are intended to hinder the deployment of forces in the theater, area denial strategies seek to not keep an opposing force out, but to limit its freedom of action within the operational area (Andrew Krepinevich, Barry Watts and Robert Work (2003), *Meeting the Anti-Access and Area-Denial Challenge*, Washington DC: CSBA). Although A2/AD measures have been a latent concern of American strategists since the Clinton Administration, proliferation of anti-aircraft systems, anti-ship missiles, cruise missiles, anti-submarine weapons and a wide range of asymmetric means by countries like China or Iran are forcing Washington to consider how to project power in these environments and launch the Third Offset Strategy.

93 Secretary Hagel's statement in Simi Valley (November 15, 2014).

94 Martinage (2014).

95 Horowitz (2010).

96 As stated in *The Third U.S. Offset Strategy and its Implications for Partners and Allies* (January 28, 2015), Deputy Secretary Robert Work – one of the main supporters of the Third Offset Strategy and maintained in his role by General Mattis – argued that these developments are summarized in nuclear weapons, anti-ship, anti-air missiles; long-range strike missiles; counter-space; cyber; electronic warfare and special operations capabilities.

97 Hagel's speech in Newport (September 3, 2014).

98 Aaron Friedberg (2014), *Beyond Air–Sea Battle: The Debate Over US Military Strategy in Asia*, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

99 Martinage (2014).

100 Sam Tangredi (2013), *Anti-Access Warfare: Countering A2/AD Strategies*, Annapolis: USNI.

101 Although in the wake of increasing Russian assertiveness – in spite of Washington's numerous appeals to increase military spending and thus sustain its own security and support the transatlantic link – an arms race is deemed improbable in Western Europe, the United States is reinforcing its military presence in the region to ensure its commitment to its allies and partners.

102 Martinage (2014), pp. 63-65.

103 Although the arms race is always mentioned, and especially 'Star Wars' initiated by Ronald Reagan, as one of the factors that contributed to the systemic crisis of the Soviet Union, it is necessary to remember that the Second Offset Strategy was crucial. In fact, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, the top Soviet military authority between 1977 and 1984, warned that the new technologies (guided armaments, drones and C4ISR systems) developed by the United States would allow the Atlantic Alliance to defeat the Warsaw Pact without resorting to the use of nuclear weapons. Consequently, if

Washington succeeded in undermining the Soviet strategy of maintaining a larger volume of conventional forces than the ally, not relying on nuclear deterrence to ensure European security and the transatlantic link, the balance between the two blocs in the region would inevitably disappear. In addition, it was stated that Moscow lacked the technical skills, organization or industrial infrastructure needed to develop these technologies, and therefore could not compete with the United States in the arms race based on information technologies (Adamsky 2008, Kagan 2006, Atta 2003).

104 Martinage (2014).

105 The role of the nuclear arsenal can be seen as the ultimate reason for national deterrence and pillar of widespread deterrence as the country's commitment to the security of its allies is obviated. In this sense, although the American doctrine states that this type of attack could motivate an atomic response, the emphasis in the conventional means seems to suggest that the country tries to replace the extended nuclear deterrence with the conventional deterrence to avoid being involved in a nuclear conflict due to a limited crisis in Europe, the Middle East or Asia-Pacific.

106 Thomas Manken (2014), *Cost-Imposing Strategies, a brief primer*, Washington DC: CNAS.

107 Aaron Metha (2017), 'Trump: Military Spending 'More Important' Than Balanced Budget', *Defence News*, 27 January, available at: <http://defencenews.com/articles/trump-military-spending-more-important-than-balanced-budget> (accessed 12 December 2017).

108 Walton (2016), pp. 6-15.

109 Department of Defence (DoD) (2014a).

110 Indeed, many weapon systems used then – such as the *M1-Abrams* tank, the AH-64 *Apache* attack helicopter, the *Tomahawk* cruise missile, the F-117 *Nighthawk* and *B-2 Spirit* stealth bomber, or the *AEGIS* an anti-aircraft integrated naval weapons system, to name just a few – were the product of the Second Offset and formed the basis of the last RMA.

111 Shawn Brimley and Loren Dejonge (2016), 'Sustaining the Third Offset Strategy in the Next Administration', *War on the Rocks*, available at: <https://warontherocks.com/2016/03/ sustaining-the-third-offset-strategy-in-the-next-administration> (accessed 12 December 2017).

112 Carter (2014), pp. 101-112.

113 Department of Defence (DoD) (2014a).

114 Martinage (2014).

115 Shawn Brimley et al. (2015), *Ideas in Action: Suggestions for the 25th Secretary of Defence*, Washington DC: CNAS.