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Proper Use of the U.S. Military

Do you ever wonder why we are still in Iraq after defeating Saddam Hussein's forces in March, 2003? Are we peacekeeping until the Iraqis can establish "stability" and "democracy?" Will that ever come? Why are we in Afghanistan? Proving we can outlast the English and the Russians in an endless battle with Afghani tribesmen?

Why are we still guarding the 38th parallel in Korea, almost 57 years after a truce was declared? More than 28,000 U.S. troops currently are stationed in South Korea. Why? Supposedly, we are there to protect our ally South Korea against attack from North Korea. But South Korea is an economic and technological dynamo compared to its communist neighbor to the north, a centrally planned dictatorship that is such a pathetic economic basket case it can't even feed itself. In fact, the North Korean regime has had to rely on foreign assistance for the past several years to prevent mass starvation of its population. Consider the following statistical comparisons of the North and South Koreas from the CIA's World Fact Book.



Korea Comparison	South Korea	North Korea
Population:	48.6 million	22.7 million
GDP:	\$1.35 trillion	\$40 billion
GDP per capita:	\$28,000	\$1,900
Electricity production:	440 billion kWh	20.9 billion kWh
Males fit for military service:	10.9 million	4.1 million



With its population base, economic base, industrial base, energy, technology, infrastructure, transportation, education, agriculture — virtually every relevant measure — South Korea dwarfs North Korea, and has done so for many years. So, perhaps we should be asking, particularly in light of the recent rattling of sabers, firing of missiles, and flaring of tensions between Seoul and Pyongyang: Why are the lives of tens of thousands of Americans still being put at risk on the Korean Peninsula? Isn't it time for South Korea and the "economic tigers" of Asia to defend themselves?

And with our nation trillions of dollars in debt and running annual deficits of over a trillion dollars, we have to ask ourselves, from a purely economic standpoint, why do we still have more than 35,000 troops stationed in Japan and 78,000 troops stationed in Europe?

In fact, why are hundreds of thousands of our troops stationed in some 130 countries around the world? The largest bulk of those troops, of course, is in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to the Department of Defense, as of December 31, 2009, more than 222,000 U.S. troops (including members of the Reserves and National Guard) were deployed in and around Iraq and Afghanistan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). These numbers, of course, tell only part of the story, since, as the Congressional Research Service (CRS) has reported, the number of actual uniformed troops in those areas has always been exceeded by the number of "contractors" — American and foreign civilian operatives — carrying out the Pentagon's military objectives. According to the December 2009 CRS study, during the seven quarters from March 2008 to September 2009, contractors comprised between 55 percent and 69 percent, respectively, of the U.S. forces in the OIF/OEF theaters. This enormous "outsourcing" of our national military operations, which is unprecedented in scope, has injected many legal, ethical, and economic problems into the mix, not to mention the serious conflicts it causes concerning military command authority when numerous "independent" contractors are acting in the name of — and in the pay of — the United States. Little wonder that the DOD's accounting for the Iraq-Afghanistan operations — projected to continue at roughly \$11 billion per month for Fiscal Year 2011 — has been less than sterling, and billions of dollars that simply "disappeared" in Iraq remain unaccounted for.

The ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as U.S. military operations in a number of other countries, were begun during the Bush administration under the rubric of a "war on terrorism" following the 9/11 attacks — even though there was never any connection proven between Iraq and the 9/11 attacks. After Saddam Hussein was toppled and President Bush declared "Mission Accomplished," on May 1, 2003, rather than withdrawing from Iraq, the Bush administration began adopting new excuses for staying, even invoking the model of Korea and suggesting U.S. troops may have to occupy Iraq for decades to come. Bush repeatedly invoked the need for continued U.S. military involvement for "nation building" in Iraq, a United Nations concept that President Bill Clinton had tried to implement in



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Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti, and for which Clinton was rightfully scorned and repudiated by the American military and the American electorate. In addition to nation building, President Bush added the claim that U.S. troops would remain “to advance democracy in the broader Middle East,” and to “help transform the Middle East.”

The Obama administration has specifically abandoned and rejected the Bush administration’s “war on terrorism” terminology. According to President Obama’s White House Advisor on counterterrorism, John Brennan, we are simply at war, globally, with al-Qaeda. “We are at war with al Qaeda,” Brennan declared in August 2009. “We are at war with its violent extremist allies who seek to carry on al Qaeda’s murderous agenda.”

If it is true that it is al-Qaeda, a will-o-the-wisp terrorist group, that is our principal enemy in the world, does it make sense to continue fighting them in the manner that we have been, with huge conventional armies occupying entire countries? Informed opinion on al-Qaeda’s numerical strength varies significantly among various experts and alleged experts, from lows of a couple hundred (according to Egyptian intelligence) to around 500 (the CIA), to highs of several thousand. According to Jack Cloonan, a 25-year FBI veteran and former member of the CIA-FBI task force tracking Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda’s numbers “are minuscule.” This is true in Iraq as well, where U.S. officials often have cited al-Qaeda as a major threat. But according to most reliable analysts, al-Qaeda is and always has been a bit player in Iraq.

“Al-Qaeda in Iraq,” according to intelligence veteran, author, and Iraq hand Malcolm Nance, “is a microscopic terrorist organization.” This evaluation appears to be strongly supported by the publicly available evidence, as well as by the consensus of veteran analysts such as former CIA officers Vincent Canistrero and Larry Johnson, and DOD analysts Col. W. Patrick Lang and Alex Rossmiller — to name but a few.

According to the U.S. State Department’s *Country Reports on Terrorism 2008*, released in April 2009, al-Qaeda’s “organizational strength is difficult to determine” and “it is impossible to estimate their numbers.”

So, we continue to deploy hundreds of thousands of troops abroad on foreign soil supposedly to fight an enemy whose numbers are “impossible to estimate.” Like swatting flies with a sledgehammer, we do more harm than good, create more enemies than we kill, and spend far more blood and treasure than we can afford. November 27, 2006 marked the day when the Iraq War became longer than the U.S. involvement in World War II. During that time in WWII, we defeated Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany and their combined allies. We have now been in Iraq three and a half years longer than we were engaged against Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo, and there is still no end in sight. Afghanistan, of course, has gone on even longer; June 7 of this year marked the 104th month of our engagement there, surpassing the Vietnam War as the longest war in our nation’s history.

And what of the regimes that we are supporting in Baghdad and Kabul? Are they worth the price we are asking our troops (not to mention our taxpayers) to pay? Are the governments of Nouri al-Maliki in Iraq and Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan exemplars of freedom and commitment to democratic rule? Hardly. Nor are they reliable guarantors of “stability.” Their popular support is dubious. To top it off, both al-Maliki and Karzai are closely allied to Iran, which Democrats and Republicans alike acknowledge to be a chief antagonist — if not outright enemy — of the United States. And this is who we are supposed to further bankrupt our nation and continue sacrificing our sons and daughters for?



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And as if Iraq and Afghanistan (and now an expanded carry-over war into Pakistan) are not enough, there are influential voices calling for us to expand this insanity — to invade and/or bomb Iran, Yemen, Somalia, and other real or alleged al-Qaeda sanctuaries or areas of operation.

When Should We?Commit Troops?

Do these actions constitute proper use of the U.S. Military? How is one to determine what is the proper use of our military? Is it purely a military decision, simply a matter of prevailing military opinion as to the most efficacious means of engaging a designated enemy?

We are blessed to live in a constitutional Republic under “a government of laws and not of men,” as John Adams and the Massachusetts Constitution phrased it. All of our political and military leaders pay lip service to this “rule of law,” and all of them solemnly swear to uphold, obey, and defend the Constitution. However, for many of them, in this area, as in so many others, their oaths of office are meaningless, empty words that they regularly ignore and willingly violate.

If we are to save our country and restore it under the Constitution, we must get back proper control of our military. To do that we must look at what the Founding Fathers intended when they established our military.

Let’s begin with the Declaration of Independence, where the Founders declared:

We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

The primary purpose of government, therefore, is to protect the God-given rights of the citizens. Why then are we failing our own citizens but “protecting” the peoples of other lands (including those who do not want our “protection”), and using our military for “nation building” and spreading democracy?

Our United States Constitution, of course, is the final word, the supreme law, regarding the government’s use of our military forces. In the Preamble of the Constitution, “We the People of the United States” stated that one of the general purposes for establishing the Constitution was to “provide for the common defense.”

This phrase is repeated again in Article I, Section 8, where we read: “The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and *provide for the common defense*.” (Emphasis added.)

Article I, Section 8 continues with these specific delegated powers:

To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas, and offenses against the law of nations;

To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water [Emphasis added.];

To raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years;

To provide and maintain a navy;

To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces;



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To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States.

Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution specifies:

The President shall be commander in chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States;

Arguably, the most important of the aforementioned war powers is the power to declare war, which the Founders firmly fixed as a congressional prerogative.

James Madison, in his famous [Notes on the Constitutional Convention](#), records that this was an important point of debate among the delegates. They understood that the power to declare war is tantamount to the power to make war. The Founders chose the wording they did to allow the President the ability to respond immediately to a sudden threat without violating the Constitution; he could use the military to repel an attack, but not to initiate war.

As Alexander Hamilton explained in [The Federalist Papers](#), No. 69, the President would not be given the autocratic power of a King to commit the entire nation to war. Said Hamilton:

The President is to be commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States. In this respect his authority would be nominally the same with that of the king of Great Britain, but in substance much inferior to it. It would amount to nothing more than the supreme command and direction of the military and naval forces, as first general and admiral ... while that of the British king extends to the declaring of war and to the raising and regulating of fleets and armies — all which, by the Constitution under consideration, would appertain to the legislature.

Moreover, a President may not circumvent the congressional power to declare war by causing conditions calculated to lead to war. Daniel Webster addressed this issue in this manner:

No power but Congress can declare war; but what is the value of this constitutional provision, if the President of his own authority may make such military movements as must bring on war?... These remarks originate purely in a desire to maintain the powers of government as they are established by the Constitution between the different departments, and a hope that, whether we have conquests or no conquests, war or no war, peace or no peace, we shall yet preserve, in its integrity and strength, the Constitution of the United States.

As it is the whole people that must bear the cost, in blood and treasure, of war, and as Congress is the branch of the federal government that most represents the people, the Founders intended it would have the final say in committing the nation to war.

“History shows,” said Senator Robert Taft, “that when the people have the opportunity to speak, they, as a rule, decide for peace if possible. It shows that arbitrary rulers are more inclined to favor war than are the people at any time.” Senator Taft’s voice in this matter is particularly important in that in the 1940s and ’50s his voice was one of the most influential in the Republican Party, so much so that he was dubbed “Mr. Republican.” A genuine constitutionalist conservative, Taft firmly embraced the non-interventionist policies of our Founding Fathers, unlike the internationalist neocons who have taken over the GOP and are anxious to intervene militarily everywhere around the globe.

Senator Taft, like all true Americans, could unreservedly endorse the sentiments eloquently expressed



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by John Quincy Adams, who said:

The United States goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is a well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. If the United States took up all foreign affairs, it would become entangled in all the wars of interest and intrigue, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. She might become the dictatress of the world. She would be no longer the ruler of her own soul.

President Adams was expressing a very important premise of the Christian beliefs embodied in the principles of a “just war” — to which our Founders adhered but which many Christians today seem to have forgotten.

The “just war” is perhaps most succinctly described by the great Christian essayist, philosopher, poet, and historian G.K. Chesterton, who quipped: “The only defensible war is a war of defense.”

“The blood of a man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man,” wrote the great English statesman and author Edmund Burke. “It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime.”

Economist, historian, and Christian philosopher Dr. Laurence M. Vance summarizes Christian just-war doctrine thusly: “A just war must have a just cause, be in proportion to the gravity of the situation, have obtainable objectives, be preceded by a public declaration, be declared only by legitimate authority, and only be undertaken as a last resort.” Do our present wars meet any of these criteria?

Undeclared War and Entanglements

We have not declared war since 1941, although we have definitely been at war several times. Congress repeatedly has abdicated its constitutional responsibility and has allowed Presidents — both Democrat and Republican — repeatedly to take us to war. We have been involved in 153 foreign military actions through 2004. The undeclared wars include the Korean and Vietnam Wars, Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Yugoslavia, Iraq again, Afghanistan, and Haiti.

Have these wars been necessary to defend American lives, property, and liberty? No, in most cases they have been waged to satisfy some ill-defined national interest or international goal. George Washington dedicated a large portion of his farewell address to discussing foreign relations and the dangers of permanent alliances between the United States and foreign nations. Thomas Jefferson made it bluntly clear that war and foreign entanglements are an extreme danger to liberty and are to be avoided at almost any hazard.

However, President Barack Obama has indicated he will be following the precedents set by George W. Bush and other previous White House occupants in deploying America’s military abroad to serve an internationalist agenda. Speaking to our future military leaders in his commencement address at West Point on May 22, President Obama claimed that the Iraq War is ending, but that a strong American “presence” would remain there to guarantee “a democratic Iraq that is sovereign and stable and self-reliant.” Which seems to be a guarantee for a perpetual U.S. occupation, à la Korea, Japan, and Germany.

In his address, Obama repeatedly stressed his vision for an “international order” and an “international system” that involve, he says, strengthening “old alliances” while building “new partnerships” and shaping “stronger international standards and institutions.”

For those familiar with the policies and policymakers that have led to our present economic and



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political decline, this is an ominous prescription for continuation and expansion of American interventionism in foreign lands.

What is our foreign policy? Despite the political rhetoric, it stays the same regardless of which party is in the White House. Globalists in both the Democrat and Republican parties have decided — without any constitutional authority — that we are to be the world's police force. Our military is to be used to subdue whatever regime they claim offends us, then we set up interminable "peacekeeping" and "nation building" operations, generally resulting in a communist form of government with strong ties to the UN. How many of these countries have we actually helped with these policies? Have we improved the lot of the people there? Is the world a better, safer place because of all our military actions? Is this the way to fight the war on terrorism? Or is there another agenda?

We claim to be the last superpower, despite our greatly reduced military establishment and aging equipment, much of it worn out. Meanwhile, China is building a huge military complex armed with state-of-the-art weapons and ominously hints at using their might aggressively.

We have proven we can secure the border between Syria and Iraq but refuse to protect our own southern border from the invasion in progress.

From at least the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Obama administration today, America's foreign-policy establishment has been completely dominated by the globalists of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). We do not have the space here to detail the sordid history of this organization; that has been done extensively in many articles in previous issues of this magazine, as well as in such outstanding books as James Perloff's [*The Shadows of Power*](#) and John McManus's [*Changing Commands: The Betrayal of America's Military*](#).

As John F. McManus shows in his article "[What to Do About Afghanistan?](#)," President Obama has followed the path of his recent predecessors, filling his Cabinet and the upper echelons of the executive branch with certified internationalists from the CFR membership roster. His Secretaries of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, and Treasury are all CFR members, as are his Ambassador to the United Nations and many of his top economic, national security, and foreign-policy advisors. In this regard, his administration looks little different from those of Bush II, Clinton, Bush I, and, in general, the alternating Demo-Repub, CFR-dominated retinues dating back to FDR. This helps explain our nation's ongoing globalist military agenda.

Both our active duty and reserve forces troops are returning to Iraq and Afghanistan for up to four tours of duty. It is difficult to truly measure the effect on morale, marriages, family life, and employment situations for Guardsmen and Reservists, but it must be devastating. The number of post-deployment suicides is alarming. At least the general population is supporting the troops and welcoming them home, unlike our Vietnam experience. The American people support our troops, but they are rightfully challenging the purpose of these deployments.

How do we extract our forces from all these entanglements and utilize them for valid national interests? The key lies with the U.S. Congress. Ultimately, Congress must receive an unmistakable message from us — from you and me, "We, the people" — to get us out of the UN and its NATO military alliance. In the first week of May 2010, NATO finalized its 21st Century Strategic Doctrine. The CFR-created and U.S.-led NATO military bloc is preparing for even more interventions around the world. This must be stopped. Congress must honor its responsibilities, starting with its duty to declare wars, and only wars that are necessary and that we intend to fight and win. That would require all forces to be withdrawn



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from the illegal wars we are currently fighting. This would be emotionally difficult for those who have served in these actions and for the families of those who have been injured and died. But we must not continue to squander the lives of our patriot warriors in military operations that are not required to protect our nation. The efforts of our warriors must be honored, as they were acting in good faith, unaware of the true reasons for their involvement.

Congress must repeal the unnecessary 1973 War Powers Act that allows the President to employ our armed forces for up to 90 days simply by advising Congress of his actions. From 1975 to the present, Presidents have submitted 118 reports to Congress as the result of the War Powers Act. As we've noted, the President has always had the clear constitutional authority to commit forces to repel sudden attacks; but this cannot be allowed to be misused for non-defensive purposes. Congress can cease funding for any misadventure begun by a President and can use its impeachment powers to remove a President who has assumed authority not granted to him by the Constitution. A politically motivated declaration of martial law would be such an act.

A nation that will not defend its borders will cease to exist. Guarding the country's border is the primary responsibility of a government. One of the powers given to the Congress is to "provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions." This can be interpreted to mean only the State's National Guard units. Under the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act, the U.S. military is prohibited from being used as a domestic police force. The use of the military during the siege and slaughter at Waco, Texas, was a clear violation of this act. However, the use of our active duty military to protect our border would not be a violation. But instead, our troops are scattered to far-flung corners of the Earth, while our borders are violated almost with impunity.

Congress must fund our military to provide adequate forces for our defense; this is the primary duty of the federal government. Congress must determine the proper international deployment of our Armed Forces during peacetime to defend our national interests. They must stop the use of war as an instrument of national policy, as it has destroyed all nations that followed such a policy.

How do we get the Congress to change its way, which is to do the bidding of the CFR and multi-national corporations? How do we stop Congress from converting us to socialism and leading us into world government? We replace incumbents who are advocates of interventionism and internationalism with constitutionalists who will restore this nation. A simple majority of 218 members would be a good start. Two hundred and ninety-one would guarantee a presidential veto override. A properly functioning Congress will not embroil us in needless wars, will not fund any socialist programs, and will defund existing programs that are bankrupting our nation and spreading our military forces to all points of the globe. It can stop the use of mercenaries that are augmenting our armed forces.

This next election may be our greatest opportunity to elect such a Congress and save this great nation.

Lt. Col. George B. Wallace, USAF (retired), served in the U.S. Air Force 1952-1978, including a combat tour in Vietnam as an F-105 fighter pilot. He is a member of the National Council of The John Birch Society.



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