Army and Air Force taken over by the new generation of 'whiz kids'?

by Lonnie Wolfe

The Air Force and the Army recently released two planning documents, titled *Airforce 2000* and *Airland Battle 2000*, recommending that the United States prepare for British-style colonial warfare in the developing sector.

The two documents, written by separate staffs, demonstrate the stranglehold the partisans of former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara have over military planning. They are statements of a new group of McNamara "whiz kids," advocating the same incompetent policies that destroyed the U.S. military in the 1960s, mired the nation in the Vietnam slaughterhouse, and produced McNamara's current advocacy of a "nuclear freeze."

The Air Force document includes among its recommendations and findings:

● By the end of this century or sooner, the superpower system will collapse, to be replaced by a global proliferation of powers armed with sophisticated weapons, in some case nuclear weapons.

● The major theatre of warfare is the developing sector, which requires mobile, conventional capability, anchored by bases in the developing sector and capable of guerrilla activities.

● There will be a significant number of regional wars which will not necessarily involve superpowers, but which will require police actions to prevent them from getting out of hand.

● The proliferation of worldwide terrorism will require special capabilities, as well as clandestine counterforces.

● Continued economic recession will require a scaleback of the Reagan defense program and an overall cut in defense spending. Cuts should be made without threatening the above conventional and regional war-fighting capabilities.

● The United States should spend its scarce research and development funds on computer gadgetry and Buck Rogers-like space weapons with battlefield applicability.

Military futurology

The McNamara thinking that went into such conclusions is best summarized by McNamara's former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Maxwell Taylor. Taylor's view—like McNamara's—is that the nuclear balance of terror makes strategic warfare between the superpowers impossible. This stalemate achieved, the U.S. must look to the "overpopulat-

ed" developing sector as the most likely theatre of conflict. U.S. forces must be structured to carry out Vietnam-style meatgrinder warfare against Third World populations, or, in a preferred scenario, to police wars in which those populations butcher themselves. Such warfare entails a diminished emphasis on strategic weapons systems, and a greater emphasis on battlefield gadgets to improve ratios of human destruction.

McNamara and Taylor have always had a fascination with gadgets; they devised such inane weapons systems as the Davy Crockett "nuclear rifle," which Taylor reluctantly gave up only after it was shown that its nuclear bullets killed the soldiers who fired them as well as enemy targets.

Taylor and McNamara refuse to think about the possibility of strategic nuclear conflict. They have resisted the development of ballistic-missile defense systems and directed-energy beam ABM weapons, precisely because that strategy supersedes the alleged balance of nuclear terror.

'Consensus' methods

The Air Force reported that its study, of which only a 17-page summary was declassified, was the product of months of work involving hundreds of outside scholars, aerospace analysts, and Defense Department officials. The Air Force team shaped their opinions into a "consensus" and published them as policy recommendations.

This is pure McNamara methodology, typical of the systems analysis McNamara used to justify his policies during the 1960s. The trick is to use sophisticated brainwashing techniques to "cook" a consensus of policy options based on absurd data. The findings can then be pre-rigged to say anything that McNamara whiz kids want.

In the case of the Air Force study, the data base was provided from the Carter administration's *Global 2000 Report* data. That report concluded that the elimination of 2 billion people over the next two decades was necessary and desirable, ruling out the technological advancement of society.

Once such a data base is accepted, defining resources as limited and population as a drain on wealth instead of a creator of wealth, any subsequent scenario will play out Global 2000. That is what the McNamara boys in the Air Force planning group did.

The Army document, entitled *Airland Battle 2000,* is

premised on the same data base and reaches much the same conclusions about the content and form of future warfare. There is a heavy emphasis on McNamara-type gadgetry to increase the battlefield kill potential:

"The environmental trends show that major world problems are mostly distribution and control of resources. These problems are not easily solved since there are so many different nations and interests involved. . . . We must be able to fight anywhere or have specialized forces capable of fight on all types of terrain and under any type of condition."

It has been 20 years since McNamara introduced systems analysis scenario planning into the Pentagon. Many of our prominent military figures have forgotten the principles of republican military doctrine on which such institutions as West Point were founded. Military figures such as former West Point commandant General Thayer committed the United States to economic and scientific development as a principle for devising a war winning military doctrine. McNamara and his systems analysts reversed these commitments, shared in this century by American General of the Army Douglas McArthur. They substituted numerics for policy—adding up bullets, missiles, etc., to produce an illusion of strength. It led ultimately to McNamara's infamous Vietnam "body counts" to determine which side was winning a "no-win" meatgrinder war that a general like McArthur or Washington would have never fought.

While there is a great deal of recognition, especially among middle-level military officers, of how Robert McNamara typifies military incompetence, the planning principles he used are still generally accepted. While the Air Force document is controversial, the same arguments retailed through "more sober" channels in the *Airland Battle 2000* report are favorably received, even at the highest levels of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. One general who hates McNamara and who should know better, reported that he was certain that the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Vescey, would want the proposals of *Airland Battle 2000*, with all its computer whiz-bangs, immediately put into effect.

One might believe that two decades of McNamara-ism have brainwashed the American military establishment to such an extent that thinking is now impossible. Yet a debate now raging through these circles on the need for the United States to develop beam weapons technology is awakening a sense that there is more to competent strategic thinking than the so-called balance of terror, systems analysis, and Global 2000. Enough hatred of the whiz kids exists to expel them from the military establishment. But for the time being, they continue to multiply and produce documents like *Air Force 2000* and *Airland Battle 2000*.

"The Whiz Kids are all around us," said an Air Force officer who stressed that both documents are only policy guides and still remain to be translated into actual policy. "We are not about to let McNamara and his whiz kids wreck the country and its defense again. Once was more than enough."

Documentation

The Global 2000 approach

The following are excerpts from a declassified summary of the summer 1982 report entitled Airland Battle 2000, *prepared by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.*

Headquarters, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command is charged with the mission of examining futuristic ideas regarding the nature of warfare. AirLand Battle 2000 is a future concept that tries to picture what warfare will be like in the 21st century. . . .

History has a great influence on future planning. The problems of the past are still with us. Today, as with Napoleon, our potential enemies have larger forces. Since we are not capable or willing to match them in the numbers of tanks, airplanes, soldiers, and artillery, we must make up our deficiencies in numbers by devising tactics that take advantage of his weaknesses, by using technology. *If we can't always be stronger, then we must be smarter* [emphasis added].

AirLand Battle 2000 is the implementation of the Concept Based Requirements System. . . .

One of the most significant trends since the 1950s has been the changing economic and political complexity of the world. We are no longer a bipolar world with 2 major competing superpowers. By the year 2000, third world nations, industrial cartels, and regional blocks of nations will play an even larger role. The Soviets will continue to seek control in certain areas—both political and economic, and the opportunities for conflict will increase. The different levels of conflict that are likely, will require that a force be prepared for more than one type of warfare.

Scarcity of resources cuts across all national boundaries. Cobalt, for example, of which the U.S. imports 93 percent, is essential for production of jet engines. We can be held hostage for much more than just oil. We are approaching a truly international economic and resource world. Dwindling U.S. heavy production capability is no secret. Today more people work for McDonald's than for U.S. Steel.

Mass media and interest groups have placed more emphasis on dissenting opinions. There is less agreement, less unity of opinion on national issues and more individualism and self interest. The implication for the military may be that we will never achieve complete agreement from all parts of our country on our policies and priorities. We may have to seek our own solutions and expect more resistance. . . .

World demography has very definite implications for the military. In both the Soviet Union and the United States, the average age of the population is getting older. There will be less people under 40 in the year 2000 in both countries. This means there are several options for the military. One is to develop a high technology, less manpower intensive force. Other ways include making better use of people over 40,

recruiting more women, or reinstituting the draft. The first choice must be made now to have an impact on the year 2000. The other options, such as the draft, have a shorter lead time and could be used to enhance a high technology force, that will eventually be less manpower intensive.

Another trend which impacts on military planning is worldwide urbanization. This has resulted in more diversified lifestyles and many nations becoming an information based society. Populations living in cities have more ready access to issues and can be influenced in mass more easily. Social values which result from a rural environment are more traditional, patriotic, and conservative than those of an urban environment. City dwellers are more adapted to technology, isolation, violence, and stress.

In summary, the environmental trends show that major world problems are mostly distribution and control of resources. These problems are not easily solved since there are so many different nations and interests involved.

We must be able to fight anywhere or have specialized forces capable of fighting on all types of terrain under any type of conditions. All units now have some sort of winter, jungle, and desert training but not to the required levels, nor in adequate numbers. We must truly be prepared to win the land battle in order to be in position to negotiate a favorable settlement. . . .

The capability to project power abroad faster will be a necessity by the year 2000. The opportunities for warfare almost anywhere in the world will continue to increase and our reaction times will increase. Currently there are several areas of potential conflict where we cannot project power without great difficulty. Forces of the future will have to be light, self-sustaining, and capable of rapid deployment. . . .

The human aspects of Airland Battle 2000 are of genuine concern for which we have far more questions than answers. Will soldiers be able to exist on the battlefield of year 2000? Or are we imagining such a technologically hostile environment that soldiers themselves will not be accommodated? We expect, in addition to more and more physical wounds, more psychological stress casualties. Whole battle staffs of professional officers may collapse; commanders may have to be replaced or dual commands instituted. Human engineering to immunize our soldiers against stress may be required just as we immunize now against disease. Military equipment will have to take into account this aspect of human technology and conditioning. Our younger population especially is becoming more adapted to a video display and computer game environment. Weapon systems of the future must take advantage of this trend. . . .

The following are excerpts of a declassified official briefing on the report, Air Force 2000: Air Power Entering the 21st Century, *prepared by the Air Staff's Directorate of Plans.*

We in the Long Range Planning business are well aware of the skepticism towards predicting the future. The future is not preordained and the right or logical course of action is not self-evident. We must cope with the present to reach the future, but to survive over time, we must discern broad future trends and issues and adjust current actions accordingly. It is in this vein that I present to you a briefing on Project Air Force 2000, an Air Force Chief of Staff-directed initiative to investigate the operational environment which will confront the Air Force at the turn of the century. . . .

While many past studies were restricted to an examination of future technological possibilities, this study takes a broader view by addressing economic, demographic, and environmental issues, as well as technological matters, to provide a more comprehensive picture of the operational context in which the Air Force of the future will carry out its missions. . . .

The world's population will grow from the present 5 billion to 6 billion. The fastest growing areas will continue to be those that can least afford it—Asia, Africa and Latin America. Over-population and hunger in these areas will lead to low productivity, migration, and demographic imbalances.

Deliverable nuclear weapons, which only a handful of nations currently have, could be possessed by many major powers and several minor powers by the year 2000. Further complicating the global environment, many Third World countries could have large quantities of military hardware embodying late 1970's and 1980's technology. Tensions in less-developed countries could increase because of economic problems, political differences, and increasing internal involvement with outside powers. With the Soviet Union and some other nations attempting to undermine American influence throughout the world, the possibility of a peaceful global environment in the future seems remote. . . .

Low level conflict

Low level conflict ranges from political unrest to small-scale regional conflict. The responsibility for deterring and defeating organized terrorism or insurgency will rest heavily on the nations involved. The current strategy of coalition-building, combined with a tailored, rapid-response capability, is well-suited for the year 2000. Above all, the Air Force must remain flexible. Peacetime support and training for friendly air forces, counter-terrorist/insurgency operations, crisis augmentation of friendly air forces, and special operations will be required capabilities.

This strategy can be best attained through the development of well-organized, high- and low-visibility military pre-conflict programs. These programs should be designed to counter anti-U.S. influence and may also be the foundation for greater Air Force presence. Once conflict begins, the primary goal is to properly supplement the above initiatives with a well-conceived strategy for supporting indigenous efforts through the application of conventional and special operations forces. . . .

In addition, low level conflict deserves far greater emphasis than it currently receives. . . .