THE HART-RUDMAN COMMISSION
AND THE HOMELAND DEFENSE

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The American public and its leaders are paying increasing attention to the issue of homeland defense. With the exception of attacks by ballistic missiles, the continental United States was long held to be virtually immune from attack. For Americans, wars were something that took place in other countries. In the future, that may not hold.

But while strategic thinkers agree that homeland defense needs greater attention, there is less consensus on the precise nature of the threat. In this monograph, Dr. Ian Roxborough takes issue with the commonly held assumption that the main threat to the American homeland will come from terrorism inspired by U.S. leadership of globalization. Roxborough contends that the architects of the American strategy for homeland defense need a broader perspective that includes a wide range of existing or potential threats.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to publish this monograph as a contribution to the ongoing evolution of American thinking about homeland defense.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

IAN ROXBOROUGH is currently Professor of History and Sociology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He was previously employed at the London School of Economics and the University of Glasgow. During 1997-98 he was a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University. Dr. Roxborough has published several books and numerous articles on Latin America. His current research is a study of the post-Cold War debates about U.S. military strategy and doctrine. Dr. Roxborough has a B.A. from the University of York, England, and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
The U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, popularly known as the Hart-Rudman Commission after its chairs, has recently produced a series of reports. The commission believes that recent changes in the security environment mean the rise of new threats, in particular the likelihood of an attack on American soil resulting in thousands of casualties. As a consequence, the commission calls for major changes in the organization of national security institutions in order to respond adequately to these new challenges.

This monograph discusses the assumptions underlying the diagnosis and threat assessment made by the commission. It argues that several assumptions made by the commission are of debatable merit and rest on a very selective reading of social science. The commission relies heavily on the notion that globalization has both integrative and disintegrative tendencies. While for much of the world globalization increases integration, there will be an intense rejection of western culture and a backlash to globalization in parts of the Third World. The key assumptions underlying this picture are that people in traditional societies are disoriented by rapid social change and seek to turn the clock back.

In fact, this notion that globalization is likely to produce a backlash from Third World, and particularly Islamic societies, has very little to support it. The monograph argues that the work of the commission is based on poor social science and that there is the risk that this has produced an inaccurate diagnosis of the causes of conflict in the 21st century. The commission believes that fundamentally we are moving into an era of global cultural conflict. This is speculative, and there is little in the way of hard evidence to support such an assertion. We might equally be moving into a historical period in which global
resource conflicts and changing regional power balances will lead aspiring regional hegemons to embark on policies that lead to war.

The monograph discusses four assumptions underlying the work of the commission. They are: (1) globalization will be a mixed blessing, producing both more integration and also strident rejection; (2) social change is disruptive and produces conflict because people lose their moral bearings (what some authors call “anomie”); (3) what underlies conflict is ultimately a clash of fundamental values; and (4) the world is entering a radically new age. Each of these assumptions is, in the view of the author of this monograph, wrong.

The commission’s focus on a threat of mass casualty attack on the American homeland perpetrated by Third World states runs the risk of an unbalanced threat assessment. The threat of mass casualty by foreign states cannot be discounted, but it is not clear how the commission arrives at the conclusion that this is likely to be America’s biggest security challenge in the coming decades. This monograph argues, first, that there is also a substantial risk of mass casualty attack perpetrated by U.S. citizens. Focusing on primarily on a threat from foreign states may lead to defensive measures which may do little to reduce the domestic threat. Second, the focus on dealing with the threat of mass casualty attack on the United States needs to be balanced with a range of other security concerns, including the possible rise of would-be regional hegemons.

The monograph also discusses the analysis made by the Hart-Rudman Commission concerning likely future trends in American society and the implications these will have for American military power. The commission argues that globalization and declining social cohesion in American society will together lead to an erosion of the ties between citizens and the state. The commission believes that this will result in a rather brittle public support for American military operations. The monograph argues that this
analysis of social trends in American society is one-sided. While there are many matters that should concern us about likely future trends in American society, the redefinition of social ties should not be one. America is experiencing rapid change in patterns of family, work and leisure, and these will not uniformly result in less social integration. At any event, it is unclear that changing conceptions of citizenship will impinge on America's ability to conduct military operations in the ways which the commission thinks are likely.

For these reasons, while many of the policy recommendations of the Hart-Rudman Commission are eminently sound, there is some risk they will not provide a balanced and adequate strategic response to the changed security environment.

The monograph then discusses the implications for the Army and for the Department of Defense of the threat of a mass casualty attack on the American homeland. It argues that the Army should be cautious in the manner in which it accepts the homeland defense mission. First, with the addition of a new mission, there is likely to be a strategy-resources mismatch unless considerable additional resources are forthcoming (which is unlikely.) Second, the monograph argues that it is by no means clear that Army resources (and in particular, the National Guard) are the most cost-effective way to deal with the consequences of a mass casualty attack on the American homeland. While there is a great deal that the Army can and should do, the brunt of consequence management is likely to be borne by civilian emergency response agencies. While these agencies have the potential to deal effectively with the consequences of such an attack, they are at present seriously unprepared for the consequence management task, and should receive additional resources as a high priority.

The major recommendations of the commission concern reorganization of the institutions of national security. While
many of these recommendations, such as the call for a National Homeland Security Agency, should be adopted, the commission is prone to rely heavily on moral exhortation rather than, for example, economic incentives, as a way of changing what it sees as inefficiencies and defects in American government. This monograph argues that moral exhortation is unlikely to be effective except as part of a large package of policies.

The Hart-Rudman Commission calls for the United States to develop a “culture of coordinated strategic planning.” This is an important recommendation which plays to one of the Army’s strengths. It is in the Army’s interest to do what it can to encourage the development of strategic culture, and in particular of a balanced set of capabilities to deal with a wide range of diverse threats.
THE HART-RUDMAN COMMISSION AND HOMELAND DEFENSE

Introduction.

The U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, frequently known as the Hart-Rudman Commission after its chairmen, issued its third and final report in January 2001. The bottom-line conclusion is that the primary national security challenge that the United States will face in the next 20 or 30 years will be an attack by an adversary on the American homeland which could produce thousands of casualties. To deal with this threat, the commission calls for a major reorganization of the U.S. national security apparatus. The changed security environment and the changed threat to American society suggest a fundamental rethinking of the organizations designed to achieve national security: there is no reason to assume that an organizational structure established in the early days of the Cold War and designed to counter the Soviet threat will prove adequate to deal with the new threat that the commission forecasts.

The basic proposition of the commission is that the forces of globalization and the internet will have mixed results. They will produce greater global integration in some areas, and a rejection of modernity in others. As a result, the commission concludes that “like it or not, we are entering an era of global culture conflict.” The commission believes, in a formulation that is clearly indebted to the work of Alvin and Heidi Toffler, that “[w]e are witnessing a transformation of human society on the magnitude of that between the agricultural and industrial epochs—and in a far more compressed period of time.”

This analysis of the sources of conflict in the 21st century is certainly open to debate. In my view it is wrong. If so, the
policy implications suggested by the commission need to be considered carefully before being implemented.

I argue that the underlying assumptions of the commission led it to a mistaken analysis of trends, both globally and in the United States. This, in turn, produces a threat assessment which is heavily skewed to one particular kind of threat, and which does not properly balance a range of threats. Further, as a result of the underlying assumptions about the nature of trends in the United States, while the commission identifies some important areas for policy change, it misdiagnoses other issues.

Central Arguments and Underlying Assumptions.

The argument that the United States now faces a radically new security environment in which the threat of mass casualty attack on the American homeland is a serious possibility is not entirely original. In recent years several official panels and commissions, and many independent commentators, have turned their attention to the prospects of mass casualty attacks within the United States and appropriate responses. What distinguishes the work of the Hart-Rudman Commission is the intellectual effort invested in a careful analysis of the future security environment, embedded in a serious effort at analyzing future trends more generally. Together with three reports, the commission produced a 150-page supporting document, New World Coming: American Security in the 21st Century, which contains a detailed and careful analysis of global dynamics, regional trends, trends in technology, and trends in American society and culture. A large study group and support staff facilitated the work of the commissioners. As such, the work of the commission merits extended comment. It is the only official report to provide a sustained analysis of likely future trends, both in the United States and globally, which may bear on an assessment of the probability of a mass casualty attack on the U.S. homeland. The intellectual
courage of the authors of this valuable report is to be applauded.

An assessment of New World Coming is by no means a simple task. The report surveys a very wide range of scenarios and is reluctant to discount all but a few of them. As must necessarily be the case in any exercise in futurology, there is a certain quality of "maybe this, maybe that" about the report. The future, as the report suggests, is likely to be a mosaic of quite varied outcomes. It would therefore be easy to unintentionally emphasize some parts of the report and neglect other, qualifying statements. Nevertheless, basic themes in the report can be highlighted.

The commission subscribes to four underlying assumptions: (1) globalization will be a mixed blessing, producing both more integration and also strident rejection; (2) social change is disruptive and produces conflict because people lose their moral bearings (what some authors call "anomie"); (3) what underlies conflict is ultimately a clash of fundamental values; and (4) the world is entering a radically new age. These assumptions have become common currency among social commentators in recent years. Since they underpin much of the commission's analysis, they should not pass unacknowledged. Each of these assumptions is, in my view, wrong.

The proposition that globalization will produce a backlash that will be the fundamental security challenge to the United States has little empirical evidence to support it. Although popular writers like Robert Kaplan and Benjamin Barber have argued that globalization will generate a rejectionist backlash, the most authoritative recent social science texts³ give little weight to this, emphasizing instead the gradual development of global norms of appropriate conduct and the increasing extent to which politics is defined by notions of human rights, common humanity, and concern for the environment. Certainly there are people who oppose globalization; but it is by no means clear that
these people will pose the biggest security challenge to the United States in the coming decades. Certainly there will be conflicts; but many, and perhaps most of them, will be a response to factors other than globalization. There is a real danger of making globalization into a sort of bogeyman that is held accountable for all the troubles of the world. It is a diagnosis which is far too sweeping to usefully inform strategic choice.

An underlying argument of the commission is that social change produces dislocation and tumult. It produces a turn to pre-modern forms of social and political action. This is, according to the commission, already noticeable in the Muslim world. Like several other commentators, the Hart-Rudman Commission believes that the real threat to the United States comes from a rejectionist backlash to globalization which will take the form of jihad.

Pressures towards secularization inherent in the Western technology that will flood much of the world over the next 25 years will not necessarily overcome traditional ways, but might instead reinvigorate them... Geopolitics could become, in essence, a form of culture politics.

In this way, the authors of New World Coming manage to integrate a globalization backlash theory with a theory of cultural clash, not dissimilar to that suggested by Samuel Huntington.

This puts the United States in the position of a status quo power. As the Hart-Rudman Commission suggests, the notion of the simultaneously integrative and disruptive forces of globalization implies that

the essence of American strategy must compose a balance between two key aims. The first is to reap the benefits of a more integrated world in order to expand freedom, security, and prosperity for Americans and others. But, second, American strategy must also strive to dampen the forces of global instability so that those benefits can endure.
Of course, identifying which global changes are likely to promote freedom, security and prosperity, and which do not is no easy task. There exists the danger that all change will be seen as “instability,” leading U.S. policymakers into an unthinking conservatism that is both unsustainable and counterproductive. The achievement of more freedom, security, and prosperity will almost certainly produce greater global instability in at least some important spheres of economic, political, or social life. One can therefore reasonably ask of the Hart-Rudman Commission how policymakers are to distinguish change—which is necessary and inevitable—from instability. There is a real danger that the United States will make “instability” into a threat instead of developing a strategy that will enable it to adapt to the forces of global change over which it cannot expect to have total control.

Returning to the commission’s main theme of increasing risk of attack from foreign actors, it must be said that the empirical and logical basis for globalization backlash and culture clash theories is by no means self-evident or convincing, despite the popularity of these theories within Washington policy circles. Brookings analyst Yahya Sadowski argues that there is little or no empirical evidence to support theories which postulate a anti-modernist reaction to Westernization and globalization. He says:

> The great majority of the conflicts in the world today are not “clashes of civilizations” but fratricides that pit old neighbors, often from similar or identical cultures, against each other . . . Societies in the throes of globalization are not any more likely to suffer anomic social violence, culture clashes, or ethnic conflict than countries that are not.9

Not only are theories of globalization based on notions of anomic backlash fundamentally flawed, similar theories have been shown in instance after instance to be an inaccurate and misleading explanation of popular political radicalism. From early militancy by workers during the industrial revolution, to Third World urban protest, to the
rise of extremist movements like Naziism, anomie-based explanations have been consistently falsified by empirical research. And although U.S. policymakers may find anomie-based theories emotionally and cognitively comfortable, they are in fact a poor guide for the understanding of social dynamics, and a dangerous basis for policymaking. They lead both to overgeneralization and misidentification of the sources of conflict in the modern world.

With regard to the third underlying assumption of the commission, there is no consensus among social scientists that conflict in the 21st century will be based on a clash of essentially different values and cultures. Although Samuel Huntington has made a strong case for a clash of cultures as the fundamental driving force behind conflict in the 21st century, his proposition has been subjected to sustained criticism by other social scientists. The notion that the important fault-lines in the world lie between civilizations, and that therefore future conflicts will be about fundamental values ignores a mass of research on the role of strategic, organizational, political, and economic factors in war causation. It is a one-sided focus on a single factor which creates a gripping story, but is likely to be misleading as a guide to policy.

It should be noted that there are other ways to view the world of the early 21st century than the globalization theory espoused by the commission. The commission does not subscribe, for instance, to a realist view of international relations in which the most serious threats to U.S. national security would come from expanding regional hegemons. The commissioners note that these threats exist, but argue that the United States is unlikely to be challenged by a peer competitor and that threats from would-be regional hegemons, while they should be guarded against, do not constitute the most serious threat to the security of the United States. It is not unreasonable to disagree with the commission’s assessment here.
Finally, the broad conceptual scheme of a transition from agricultural to industrial to information-based society (the Toffler view) is but one among many diagnoses of our times. Certainly a lot of change is going on: whether this amounts to an epochal shift, and whether the Tofflers have correctly identified the nature of that shift, remain open questions. The periodization proposed by the Tofflers is too sweeping to provide a useful guide to predicting the future.\(^{14}\) The notion that we are entering a new age tends to downplay the continuing importance of economic and geopolitical factors in producing conflict, and also to downplay the relevance of realist theories of international relations. True, we live in a time of rapid change: this does not mean that everything will change. There will remain a great deal of continuity in the global system, and threats from would-be regional hegemons ought not be discounted.

In summary, the underlying assumptions of the commission’s diagnosis of the current threat environment are based on a highly selective reading of social science. I believe it is bad social science. This matters. As Bernard Brodie once said, “... good strategy presumes good anthropology and sociology. Some of the greatest military blunders of all time have resulted from juvenile evaluations in this department.”\(^{15}\)

**Threat Assessment.**

The commission’s choice of underlying assumptions has produced a threat analysis that is clearly skewed in a particular direction: the United States will probably face a threat of a mass casualty attack on the American homeland instigated by an adversary state. I will argue below that there is no reason to believe that this will be America’s major security challenge. Mass casualty attacks may be perpetrated by individuals and autonomous groups, and these people are as likely to be American citizens as foreigners. Moreover, it is by no means clear that the main
security challenge will come from this direction, rather than from instability caused by emerging regional hegemons.

Although the Hart-Rudman Commission believes that the principal threat will come from terrorists, they believe that these will not be acting on their own but will be sponsored by adversary states. They say,

Terrorism will appeal to many weak states as an attractive asymmetric option to blunt the influence of major powers. Hence, state-sponsored terrorists are at least as likely, if not more so, than attacks by independent, unaffiliated terrorist groups. ¹⁶

These states are likely to be Islamic, and they will avoid challenging the United States on its own terms. Instead, they will threaten the United States with long-range missiles or with attacks carried out by groups and individuals who have entered the United States. They do note that “there will be a greater incidence of ad hoc cells and individuals, often moved by religious zeal, seemingly irrational cultish beliefs, or seething resentment.”¹⁷ Nevertheless, the principal threat will be from states rather than individuals and autonomous groups.

There are two surprising things about this contention. First, while it is possible that the challenges to the United States will come mainly from adversary states, it is also possible that the challenge will come primarily from autonomous individuals and groups. The word “hence” in the sentence “Hence, state-sponsored terrorists are at least as likely...” does not convey a reasoned argument. The fact that some states are likely to look for asymmetric responses to the United States does not imply that state-sponsored threats of mass casualty attack are more likely than threats from individuals and groups. It is a simple logical non sequitur to argue that because terrorism will be attractive to weak states, these states will be the principal instigators of mass casualty attacks.
Second, to the extent that there is a threat of mass casualty attack on the United States, there are reasons to argue that the perpetrators are likely to be U.S. citizens committed to extreme right-wing world views. It is striking that New World Coming has little to say on this issue, particularly since the biggest mass casualty attack on the U.S. homeland in recent years was the Oklahoma City bombing. Despite initial assumptions that the attack must have been the work of Islamic fundamentalists, it turned out that the perpetrators were U.S. citizens. The commission’s argument that the threat of mass casualty attack arises from growing resentment against Western culture leads to the conclusion that the perpetrators of mass casualty attacks are likely to be non-Westerners. It is here that their underlying assumptions lead them astray. There are other possible sources of rage against the U.S. Government, and many of these are contained within American society and culture. Those Americans who believe that the U.S. Government has been taken over by a Zionist conspiracy, that black helicopters from the United Nations are threatening American liberties, or that the supremacy of white Christians is under threat from “mud people,” are as much a part of “Western culture” as the rest of us.

Specialists in terrorism note that in recent years right wing extremism has replaced leftist terrorism as the chief concern. They also note that, for a variety of reasons, right wing attacks are likely to produce more casualties than was the case with the left wing terrorists of the 1960s and 1970s. Defense analysts have only recently appreciated this threat. New World Coming ignores it almost entirely. It does so at our peril.

It may be that the commissioners’ focus on underlying values as the cause of conflict leads them to conceptualize the issues concerning American society more in terms of social cohesion than in terms of a threat from the extreme right.
Globalization, Social Cohesion and Moral Values in America.

Although the principal threat to the U.S. homeland is seen by the Hart-Rudman Commission as largely external, this does not mean that the authors of the report are sanguine about developments within the United States. Quite the contrary, the authors of New World Coming devote a long and carefully researched section of the report to a prognostication about likely future trends in American society and culture. They worry that a number of trends will lead to reduced social cohesion in American society. Reduced social cohesion matters because it can lead to a weakening of links between the individual citizen and the state. In turn, this might mean a rather brittle public support for U.S. military operations. The implications for the Army are potentially profound. In the first place, the weakening of emotional ties to the state will make recruiting increasingly more difficult. Second, public support for U.S. military operations will not rest on the broad patriotic consensus that characterized much of the postwar period. America's ability to project military power might be eroded from within.

The authors believe that globalization will mean that people's sense of emotional attachment to the state will wane... The implication for civil-military relations, broadly construed, can hardly be overstated: unless they feel themselves directly at risk, citizens will not endanger their lives for a state with which they feel little or no emotional bond.20

The ties that bind individual or group loyalty to a state can change and even unravel, and the next 25 years portend a good deal of unraveling.21

New World Coming is correct in noting that there has been a trend since the mid-1970s towards a decline in several measures of civic engagement, voter turnout being not the least of these. The authors of the report argue that
this is part of a much larger process of social change in America. Increasing income inequality, the growth of single-parent families, and increasingly bitter “culture wars” are also important trends. They worry about the state of race and ethnic relations in contemporary America. These trends, if they continue, may well result in a situation which, in the commission’s view, might lead to increasing social polarization and a loss of social cohesion.

The report addresses the issue of ethnic and religious diversity. The commissioners say,

> some observers are quite worried, based on the view that American society has become dangerously fragmented, along ethnic, racial, and sectarian lines... the unrestrained assertion of differences could push a benign impulse toward pluralism into fragmentation, undermining the sense of a shared national purpose.

There may well be trends towards greater social fragmentation in contemporary American society, but possibly not for the reasons suggested by this report. The commission is right to be concerned about the coherence of American society, but not only for the reason of support for government policy. Although the commission does not focus on this, the increasing alienation of a significant section of American society from their government creates a mass social base from which future perpetrators of mass casualty attacks may emerge. Nor is the commission’s diagnosis of the causes of social malaise to be taken as the last word in social scientific diagnosis: while there are many features of American society to worry about, it is far from clear that the trends towards greater pluralism in race and ethnic relations and the changes in the nature of families are what we should be concerned about.

To take one example, they note that children from single-parent households do less well than children from traditional families. They go on to conclude that “the sharp spike in the numbers of single-parented children over the past 30 years suggests that as these children become adults...
between now and 2025, the level of social dysfunction may rise proportionately." This may happen. On the other hand, as family structure changes, the link between single parenting and bad outcomes for children is likely to be attenuated. There is little discussion in New World Coming of the benefits of new forms of family life, nor is there much recognition that this is probably a trend which is unlikely to be reversed in the near future. Moreover, there are so many factors which produce decline in the forms of civic participation which are of concern to the commission that it is probably unreasonable to attribute too much causal weight to the increase in single-parent families.

Another example is the report's concern that "we may be headed for a considerably more stressful cognitive environment," which will make it harder for individuals and families to cope with modern life. Following Thomas Friedman, the authors suggest that the most important thing for parents will not be a need to get up to speed on high-tech skills but rather to follow "old fashioned fundamentals such as good parenting, a functional family life, and high quality basic education."

In raising these qualifications about the conclusions of New World Coming, I do not mean to suggest that there will not be increases in crime, mental illness, and violence, and decreases in the amount and quality of sociability. Sometimes bad outcomes happen. There is no reason to assume that things will always improve. However, prognostications in this area are notoriously difficult. The world is a complicated place, and simple explanations are not always the best explanations. The Hart-Rudman Commission has had the intellectual courage to venture its assessment, but readers of the report need to bear in mind that both the reasoning and the empirical basis for the commission's conclusions are open to serious challenge.

Finally, the connections between social and cultural change in America and citizen support for U.S. military operations is by no means as direct as the report suggests.
Indeed, the whole argument rests on so many uncertain assumptions and imputed causal connections that it is probably unrealistic to make serious predictions in this area.

The authors are probably correct that there will be major shifts in the nature of the relationship between citizen and state. But it is unclear how this will impact military operations. In what future scenario will large numbers of citizens be asked to “endanger their lives” for the state? Surely we do not anticipate fighting the kind of mass mobilization war that characterized much of the 20th century. If the commissioners are right that the fundamental security challenge of the 21st century will be responding to rejectionist attacks on the American homeland, these will not be countered by drafting large numbers of young men into the armed services. And in any case, if there is a real threat of mass casualty attack on the American homeland, surely many citizens will, indeed, “feel themselves directly at risk” and will support what they see as appropriate U.S. countermeasures. It is hard not to believe that the authors of New World Coming have not lapsed into nostalgia for the “good war” and the citizen-soldiers of the 20th century.

The argument put forward by the authors of New World Coming that the ties that bind citizens to the national state will weaken is probably true. Globalization is indeed likely to produce a redefinition of citizenship. People are increasingly likely to see themselves as participants in a global society, and this will undoubtedly mean a redefinition of their attitude to the national state. But rather than see this simply as a matter of concern, as a diminution of the state’s ability to assume unquestioning compliance on the part of its citizens, it would be more realistic to attempt to discern the ways in which redefinitions of citizenship might transform the nature of social cohesion.
For centuries conservatives have lamented the supposedly deleterious effects of social change on social cohesion and moral values. Liberals have optimistically maintained that progress is occurring (or would occur if the only the right policies were adopted), and that changes in morals produce greater individual freedom. The truth must embrace elements of both positions. Change is inevitable; some of it has good outcomes, some of it has bad outcomes. Things are, of course, complicated. New World Coming takes a generally conservative view of change, regarding it primarily as a source of conflict and of moral decay, rather than seeing it as having potential for increased individual autonomy and freedom. It is, as the commission suggests, likely that citizens will no longer routinely support their government. It is not obvious, as the commission implies, that this is necessarily a bad thing. A weakening of the nexus between citizen and state will require all sorts of changes in the ways in which politics is conducted. Rather than seek to turn back the clock, the commissioners would have done better to explore some of the ways in which America's military organizations can adapt to and benefit from these changes.

Whatever regrets for a past way of life the authors of New World Coming might have, this intellectual stance is unhelpful in providing an insight into the future. To take a pertinent example, most social scientists who have thought about the implications of the changing nature of citizenship argue that globalization will produce not just an increasing identification as part of a common global humanity, but also increased identification as participants in a particular locality. It is by no means clear quite what this will mean, but surely it would be worthwhile to devote some thought to exploring how this might be used to increase the national security of the United States. Is it not conceivable that localist identities might be harnessed to increase citizen participation in domestic preparedness, for example?
The Organizational Response.

Assuming that the threat of mass casualty attack on the U.S. homeland is a non-negligible possibility, what steps should be taken? There are many issues here, from the training of first responders to the organizational design of the national security apparatus. The Hart-Rudman Commission, as indicated in its charter, focuses on questions of organizational design at the broadest level.

The authors of New World Coming make an analogy with the early years of the Cold War. At that time America faced an entirely new strategic threat. As a result, new strategies (containment and nuclear deterrence) were forthcoming, and an entirely new organizational complex—the Department of Defense (DoD), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National Security Council (NSC), and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS)—was created. This had its counterpart internationally in NATO and, on a grand strategic level, in the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Quite reasonably, the commissioners call for a total reassessment of America’s national security institutions to deal with the new threat of mass casualty attack on the American homeland. The Phase III Report, released in January 2001, asserts that the commission “believes that the security of the American homeland and from the threats of the new century should be the primary national security mission of the U.S. Government.”29 (emphasis in original.) The focus of the third report is, therefore, on the organizational changes necessary to respond to the new threat. The commission takes an appropriately broad approach to the topic.

The Phase III Report of the commission, has four key themes. The first is the need, emphasized by many other commentators as well, for a national strategy to preserve American leadership into the 21st century. In the foreword to the Report, Gary Hart and Warren Rudman state that
the key to our vision is the need for a culture of coordinated strategic planning to permeate all U.S. national security institutions. Our challenges are no longer defined for us by a single prominent threat. Without creative strategic planning in this new environment, we will default in time of crisis to a reactive posture. Such a posture is inadequate to the challenges and opportunities before us.\textsuperscript{30}

The final report repeatedly stresses that no one is in overall charge of national security strategy.\textsuperscript{31} The report asserts that “strategic planning is largely absent within the U.S. government.”\textsuperscript{32} The commission suggests that there be a national budget for national security so that decisions about priorities can be made in a more rational manner.

There seems to be considerable public support for measures to protect the United States against mass casualty attacks. The idea of national missile defense is clearly popular, and there seems to be a constituency available for mobilization around measures aimed at domestic preparedness and consequence management in the event of a successful mass casualty attack on the U.S. homeland. At the same time, while there seems to be a constituency that can be engaged in domestic preparedness, there is still considerable discussion about exactly what form domestic preparedness and consequence management should take. It seems clear that, despite impressive efforts on the part of the government, current capabilities are still probably far from adequate.\textsuperscript{33} Here is an opportunity to elicit popular support for measures to improve preparedness.

Not surprisingly, the second major theme in the report is the need for reorganization of American governmental institutions. In addition to now-common suggestions for reform of the State and Defense Departments and the intelligence community, the commission suggests that the NSC staff has acquired more power and responsibility than is desirable, and argues that the National Security Advisor and NSC staff “return to their traditional role of
coordinating national security activities and resist the temptation to become policymakers or operators.\textsuperscript{34}

With regard to the national security mission which the commission regards as central, its key proposal is that a National Homeland Security Agency (NHSA) be established “to consolidate and refine the missions of the nearly two dozen disparate departments and agencies that have a role in U.S. homeland security today.”\textsuperscript{35} The new NHSA would be built upon the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Coast Guard, the Customs Service, and the Border Patrol would be transferred to it. The NHSA director would have Cabinet status and would be a statutory advisor to the NSC. One argument for the NHSA is that the “current distinction between crisis management and consequence management is neither sustainable nor wise. The duplicative command arrangements that have been fostered by this division are prone to confusion and delay.”\textsuperscript{36} The commission also suggests that a new office of Assistant Secretary for Homeland Security be created within DoD. The commission further argues that the National Guard should be “given homeland security as a primary mission, as the U.S. Constitution itself ordains.”\textsuperscript{37}

The creation of a NHSA could have considerable implications for the Army. Depending on how this Agency was structured, the Army could have a greater or lesser role in homeland defense. The devil, of course, is in the details. As proposed by the commission, the active component of the Army would probably have a secondary role. The National Guard and other Reserve forces, however, might well play major roles in the new Agency.

The proposal to establish a NHSA is a sound one, as is the notion of building it around FEMA. Some of the other more detailed suggestions, such as giving the National Guard homeland security as a primary mission, almost certainly require greater consideration and should not be adopted without careful analysis.
One difficulty with the organizational reforms suggested by the commission is that their focus is largely on top-level organizational changes. These are necessary, but major efforts need to be made at the local levels, particularly in terms of sustainability. As Amy Richardson and Leslie-Anne Levy have argued, much more attention needs to be devoted to creating an effective system of domestic preparedness based on local civilian organizations.\(^\text{38}\) The commission addresses some of these issues, particularly the need to provide better medical facilities, but the real emphasis of the commission’s thinking is elsewhere.

The third theme of the report is the need for massive investment in education and in basic science. Without this investment, the commission argues, the United States will rapidly fall behind in basic science, with potentially disastrous consequences not only for economic growth and well-being but also for national security. The commission argues that

> the inadequacies of our systems of research and education pose a greater threat to U.S. national security over the next quarter century than any potential conventional war that we might imagine... If we do not invest heavily and wisely in rebuilding these two core strengths, America will be incapable of maintaining its global position long into the 21st century.\(^\text{39}\)

The decline has already begun. As the report argues, the causes of American slippage in science and education are deeply-rooted and difficult to eradicate. The commission is surely right in its emphasis on science and education, and right again in its conclusion that the root causes must be tackled. It is worth emphasizing how important it is that a commission charged to investigate national security should conclude that massive investment in basic science and in education ought to be a top priority. Although the report does not stress it, investment in education may well have a further useful impact: increased education may possibly reduce both the sense of alienation and the propensity to
adopt paranoid apocalyptic theories on the part of distressingly large sections of the American public.

Finally, consonant with their earlier diagnosis of the ills of American society, the commission argues that something must be done to improve the quality and commitment of people working for the government, both as a whole and in the military. The commission believes the United States is “on the brink of an unprecedented crisis of competence in government.”\textsuperscript{40} The commission is undoubtedly right in its diagnosis of a serious problem here.

That said, it is therefore a little disheartening that the report seems to rely heavily on the ability of the president to exhort his fellow citizens to embark on a crusade to alter this state of affairs. The commissioners call for a “national campaign to reinvigorate and enhance the prestige of service to the nation.”\textsuperscript{41} They cite the example of “the clarion call of President John F. Kennedy . . . and remember how President Ronald Reagan reinvigorated the spirit of the U.S. military . . .”\textsuperscript{42} Moral exhortation is surely necessary; but it is also likely to be insufficient.

The reliance on moral exhortation to solve a deep-seated problem might appear to be at variance with the commission’s own diagnosis of the increasing malaise of American society, and their diagnosis of an increasing decline in citizenship and national commitment. The stress on moral exhortation is, however, part of a larger theme underlying the analysis offered by the Hart-Rudman Commission. At the deepest level, the commissioners seem to believe that the conflicts of the 21st century will arise from deep clashes of culture. The process of globalization will intensify contacts between societies and will stimulate a rejectionist backlash, which will add fuel to the fires of cultural conflict. The response by the United States involves not simply an organizational shake-up and measures of domestic preparedness; it requires efforts to reconstitute a nation of committed citizens. American culture must be saved from moral decay brought on by the social
fragmentation produced by rapid social change. Old-fashioned values should be reasserted. The bond between citizens and the national state should be reinvigorated. These diagnoses are problematic, and the prescriptions for governmental action that flow from them are likely to have minimal impact.

This search for national cohesion and national values underlies much of New World Coming’s analysis of trends in American society. Given the stress on values, it is hardly surprising that the commission turns to moral exhortation as a solution. If, however, one takes seriously the globalization argument propounded by the commission to the effect that there will be a loosening and redefinition of the bonds between citizens and their state, then one must ask whether moral exhortation is likely to be very effective. The commission has, it seems, contradicted its own intellectual analysis.

Implications for the Army: A Balanced Strategy.

The Hart-Rudman Commission calls for a “culture of coordinated strategic planning,” and notes that America’s “challenges are no longer defined for us by a single prominent threat.”43 The commission argues that

the United States needs five kinds of military capabilities: nuclear capabilities to deter and protect the United States and its allies from attack; homeland security capabilities; conventional capabilities necessary to win major wars; rapidly employable expeditionary capabilities; and humanitarian relief and constabulary capabilities.44

These conclusions are sound: a balanced set of capabilities to deal with a range of diverse threats is, indeed, what is required. The difficulty comes in weighing and prioritizing these threats and capabilities. Here the underlying assumptions of the commission come into play.

The three reports of the commission all place the question of homeland defense as a, perhaps the, key priority.
Among the 14 key points made in the first report, the need for homeland defense is placed first. In the recommendations for institutional reform in the final report, the most notable is the suggestion to create a NHSA. Despite disclaimers about the need for a balanced defense against a variety of threats, the commission has, indeed, a very clear message: the urgent concern of the United States in the security arena must be to protect the homeland against a mass casualty attack by an adversary state. This conclusion follows directly from the underlying assumptions of the commission.

New World Coming builds on underlying assumptions about the importance of values in conflict, about the importance of moral cohesion in modern society, and about the disruptive impact of social change to argue that the forces of globalization will produce a backlash, and that, as a result, America will be faced with a major threat from certain Third World nations.

I have argued that the commission’s underlying assumptions about the causes of disorder in the 21st century lead to a one-sided and overly general threat assessment. The commission is right to note that there is a new threat from disgruntled Third World states that could result in a mass casualty attack on the American homeland. It errs in arguing that this will be the principal threat that America will face in the coming decades. There is nothing in the analysis of the commission that justifies this conclusion. It is likely that the United States will face a number of diverse threats in the 21st century, and it must prepare to meet all of them.

The need to deal with a diverse collection of threats will make it extremely difficult to articulate a grand strategy which will capture the popular imagination. What we are likely to see is a jockeying for prominence between proponents of various strategic threats, with governmental attention to particular strategic issues rising and falling in response both to events in global politics and the working
out of a complex set of bureaucratic and political struggles. What is required of America in the early 21st century is a complex strategy designed to meet, and more importantly, prevent from emerging, a multitude of diverse threats. Developing and articulating such a grand strategy will be extremely difficult, and possibly beyond the capacity of the political system to achieve. This will make force planning difficult at best, and at times the process is likely to become divorced from strategic objectives. One lesson that the Army might draw from this is the need to consistently emphasize the importance of coherent strategic planning and the need to maintain versatile forces capable of responding to a wide range of situations.

Because it is impossible to accurately estimate at this point how these potential threats will evolve relative to one another, a prudent national security strategy will seek balanced capabilities to deal with all these potential threats. As the international security environment changes and as some threats become more salient, resources can be shifted from one threat area to another. By focusing largely on the threat of mass casualty attack on the American homeland, the globalization perspective of New World Coming downplays the potential challenges from other states that seek to challenge American hegemony. And by focusing largely on foreign states as the origin of this threat, the commission understates the danger from its own disgruntled citizens. An adequate strategic posture must prepare the United States to mitigate, and respond to, each of these possible threats.

These underlying assumptions lead to a threat assessment which may well be inaccurate and to policy recommendations that may not be effective. In terms of threat assessment, the commission probably overstates the threat from foreign states that are likely to employ mass casualty attacks on the American homeland, understates the threat from alienated American citizens, and may perhaps not give due weight to realist causes of interstate conflict.
The underlying assumptions of the commission lead not only to an overemphasis on one particular threat, they also lead to a poor characterization of that threat. The threat assessment that stems from the work of the commission is both too sweeping and too monotheletic. Instead of talking in general terms about globalization and backlash, the commission might have done better to examine the specific situations likely to foster extremist opposition to the U.S. Government. It is unhelpful to diagnose a general threat from Islamic nations supposedly threatened by globalization. It would be more helpful for threat analysts to examine the specific kinds of situations likely to produce anti-American activities.

For example, rather than an “ideological” or “religious” reaction to globalization, or a deep clash of cultures, what we may be witnessing is a nationalist response to American assertiveness in the world. It is tempting to believe that, because the language used by the perpetrators is frequently (though by no means always) religious or religiously-informed, the explanation of such behavior is to be sought in the body of religious beliefs. This may be too much of an intellectual shortcut. Religious vocabulary may shape what is at root a nationalist response. And these nationalist rages are likely to be responses to quite specific actions on the part of the United States. For example, the massive presence of U.S. military personnel in Saudi Arabia as a result of the Gulf War has produced—encapsulated in the person of Osama bin Laden—a strident nationalist rejection of America. The “backlash” may be less a primitivist rejection of globalization than a response to American intervention abroad.

Not only are the situations giving rise to anti-U.S. feelings likely to be specific, but there are also likely to be quite specific incubators that produce the militants who will attempt to carry out mass casualty attacks. Harvard professor Jessica Stern has pointed to the importance of religious schools in the institutional network that sustains and creates the social world where mass attacks are
thinkable and culturally approved. She has also noted that such schools are most prevalent in those regions where long-term guerrilla insurgency has transformed societies. Rather than sweeping generalizations based on a simple notion of globalization, we need much more careful and detailed analysis of the specific circumstances which facilitate the growth of extremist movements, both abroad and at home.

The Army (and DoD in general) should continue to devote resources to studying specific regions of the world, and should be cautious about reliance on overarching theories of globalization as an predictor of future conflicts. There is no substitute for detailed local area knowledge. If anything, the Army should consider increasing its specialized foreign area expertise.

**Implications for the Army: Domestic Preparedness.**

Turning to the question of Army missions, the work of the Hart-Rudman Commission has some obvious and important implications for the Army. There is, indeed, a threat of mass casualty attack on the American homeland. (The commission is right to emphasize this; it is one-sided in its evaluation of the likely source of this threat.) Policies are currently being developed to improve the capability of the government to respond to such a catastrophe, and the Army should ensure that its voice is heard in these debates.

The Army should reexamine the role it might play in homeland security. Many of the proposals of the commission have merit and relevance, and should be the subject of serious discussion. However, the Army should not allow itself to be distracted by the homeland security mission to the detriment of its other core missions. The Army should prepare for consequence management and for continuity of operations. However, the threat of a mass casualty attack on the American homeland should not distract the Army from preparing for other kinds of military operations, whether these are power projection or peacekeeping.
Indeed, it would be a great risk if increased attention by the Army to domestic preparedness came at the expense of its ability to conduct either warfighting or military operations other than war. Clearly there are important and complicated resource issues involved, which are beyond the scope of this monograph. A real danger is that the Army might find itself stretched too thin if it does not secure the extra resources necessary to adequately perform this additional mission.⁴⁶

Further, since the threat of a mass casualty attack perpetrated by American citizens cannot be discounted, the Army needs to consider the implications that Army involvement might have for civil-military relations. This is a very complex and sensitive issue, and beyond the scope this monograph. It is, however, a topic the implications of which need to be explored in detail. Finally, the commission is right about the need to reorganize the U.S. national security apparatus to deal with the threat of mass casualty attack. This will necessarily involve the Army in some way or other. Exactly what form these new organizational arrangements and what form Army involvement should take should be a matter for open discussion at this point. It is by no means clear that the top-down organizational reforms suggested by the commission are the most appropriate.

**Implications for the Army: Citizens and Their Army.**

The assumptions upon which the commission builds its recommendations rely heavily on the notion that the process of globalization will weaken emotional ties between citizens and their government. This is used to construct a picture of loss of social cohesion in America and decreased willingness of citizens to support the military either by enlisting or by supporting military operations. If the commission was right in its assessment, these would be matters of serious concern both for the Army and for DoD
more generally. In fact, however, there is little reason to suppose that support for U.S. foreign policy, including the use of military force, among the population at large is likely to show any significant downward trend, and certainly not because of the kinds of globalizing trends highlighted by the commission. It is possible that the armed forces will experience increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining officers and enlisted personnel, but the reasons for this may have less to do with waning patriotic values and more to do with trends in the economy.

The commission is probably right in its argument that the coming decades will see changes in the relationship between citizens and the state. Instead of wringing its hands over the moral decay of the nation, the commission would have spent its energies better if it had attempted to determine how the changing relationship between citizen and state might lead to new ways of organizing military operations. The old model of the citizen-soldier is no longer relevant. In any case, the notion of a huge army of citizen-soldiers that characterized World War II seems anachronistic. Some thought needs to be given to the ramifications of this for the way in which the Army will be organized in the future.

**The Commission's Policy Recommendations.**

In terms of policy recommendations, the emphasis on social cohesion leads the commission to seek a solution in the wrong area to the changing relationship between citizens and their government. There is too much hope placed in the efficacy of a moral crusade led by the government, and not enough attention paid to ways in which changes at the local level might be utilized to improve homeland security. This is manifest in the emphasis on organizational solutions at the national level, and a deemphasis on the need to build homeland defense measures from the bottom-up by incorporating local and regional civilian emergency responders as the core of the
homeland defense effort. One of the central issues in any effective homeland defense will be ensuring that military and civilian energies and capabilities are fused in a synergistic manner.

The commission has produced a complex analysis with a number of important policy recommendations. There is much value in their work, including the insistence on preparing for the possibility of mass casualty attack on the American homeland. Unfortunately, many of the assumptions underlying the commission’s analysis are, in my view, deeply flawed. This means that the threat assessment presented by the commission, and some of the commission’s policy recommendations, are seriously undermined and need to be treated with caution.

Conclusion.

The upshot is that the report that devotes the most attention to a social scientific diagnosis of the threat of mass casualty attack has a number of methodological shortcomings which make its conclusions of dubious value. It ignores almost entirely the threat from the domestic extreme right, and its analysis of American domestic trends is largely concerned with moral values and social cohesion. These are seen to matter because of the need for popular support for a national security strategy. The commission’s work relies heavily on the notion of an antimodern “backlash” to the dislocations and strains of social change—an approach that many professional social scientists no longer find plausible. It is true that “culture matters.” This does not mean that conflicts will be necessarily, or even likely, about culture. And the commission provides no reason for the assertion that foreign states present a greater threat of mass casualty attack than either domestic or foreign nonstate actors.

Despite its forward-looking speculations about the future, the intellectual framework of the commission remains caught up in the past. In its emphasis on a clash of
culture, on the deleterious impact of social change, on the need for social cohesion and strong moral values, in its suspicion of changing family forms, and in its call for moral leadership as the central element in a solution to the problems of government, the commission has provided a conservative diagnosis of our times. The commission may be right. We won't know until the future is upon us. But the underlying assumptions are so open to question that it would be imprudent to base a major strategic reorientation on the commission's recommendations.

Instead of basing threat assessment on questionable sociological theories and sweeping journalistic generalizations, it would be more prudent for future threat assessments to attempt to identify the concrete and specific social circumstances that facilitate the rise of the mass movements that provide the soil in which paranoid fantasies flourish. Readers of the reports of the Hart-Rudman Commission should not abdicate their critical judgement in the face of what is, in many respects, the most impressive effort at futurology published since the end of the Cold War.

ENDNOTES


4. New World Coming, p. 43.

6. New World Coming, p. 43.


8. Seeking a National Strategy, pp. 5-6.


14. Dividing human history into agricultural, industrial, and information (or global) ages leads to an emphasis on technology as the key driver in history. It means that the period before industrialization which we refer to as “the early modern period” or the “renaissance” and “reformation” is seen as part of a relatively unchanging, “traditional” agrarian age. In fact, at least from the 15th century (i.e., 350 years before industrialization), Europe was experiencing massive social changes. These included the expansion of markets, the origins of capitalist enterprise, an emphasis on reason in the understanding of the
world (which was to lead to modern science), increasing rationalization in many areas of social life, etc. In a similar way, the division between the industrial age and the information (or global) age ignores the major changes between early industrialization and its late 20th century successors. The rise of the corporation, of mass democracy, and of rapid growth in living standards all are social changes that post-date the onset of industrialization by many years. The three-fold periodization of history favored by the Tofflers (and hence by the commission) is not only too sweeping; crucially, it misstates the causal dynamics involved in the growth of modern society.


17. Ibid.


20. New World Coming, p. 35.

21. Ibid., p. 38.

22. Ibid., pp. 124-125.

23. Ibid., p. 121.

24. Ibid.

25. Robert Putnam estimates, for example, that the amount of decline in civic engagement that can be attributed to single-parent families is “probably not much . . . [a]part from youth- and church-related engagement, none of the major declines in social capital and civic engagement that we need to explain can be accounted for by the decline in the traditional family structure.” Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000, pp. 278-279.

26. New World Coming, p. 11.

27. Ibid., p. 12.
28. Though, in my view, they overestimate the instrumental bases of citizenship loyalty to the state in the past, and therefore underestimate the purely emotional elements in patriotism.


30. Ibid., p. iv.

31. Ibid., p. 47.

32. Ibid., p. 48.


34. Road Map for National Security, p. xi.

35. Ibid., p. vi.

36. Ibid., p. 20.

37. Ibid., p. ix.

38. Richardson and Levy.


40. Ibid., p. 86.

41. Ibid., p. 88.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., p. iv.

