The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

THIRD WAVE OR THIRD STRIKE:
THE FUTURE OF THE NATION-STATE AND THE UTILITY OF ARMED FORCE

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM S. HUGGINS
United States Air Force

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:
Approved for public release.
Distribution is unlimited.

USAWC CLASS OF 1998
U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050
Third Wave or Third Strike:
The Future of the Nation-State and the Utility of Armed Force

by

William S. Huggins, Lt Col, USAF

Professor Douglas Lovelace
Project Advisor

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:
Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.
ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: William S. Huggins, Lt Col, USAF

TITLE: THIRD WAVE OR THIRD STRIKE: THE FUTURE OF THE NATION-STATE AND THE UTILITY OF ARMED FORCE

FORMAT: "USAWC Strategy Research Project"

DATE: 1 APR 1998   PAGES: 34   CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Many scholars and analysts have predicted changes in the global political order of the next century. Some foresee a shift in emphasis from nation-states to ethnic, religious, or cultural groupings. Others anticipate that growing global social and economic interdependence will facilitate the emergence of a variety of new nonstate actors. In either case, the position of the nation-state as the preeminent sovereign unit in the global order could change, and with it the utility of armed forces. This paper examines the key features of these two types of models for future global order, assesses their impact on the utility of armed forces in general, and draws implications for U.S. armed forces in particular.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTORS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERESTS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTILITY OF ARMED FORCE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A NEW GLOBAL CONTEXT</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS MODEL</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility of Armed Force</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for U.S. Armed Forces</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE INFORMATION AGE MODEL</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility of Armed Force</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for U.S. Armed Forces</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL THOUGHTS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENDTNOTES</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The simultaneous arrival of a new millennium and the end of the cold war has fueled an explosion of opinions and predictions about the global order of the next century. In response, the U.S. armed forces have begun a substantial effort to anticipate and begin preparing for war in the next century. A solid understanding of the nature of war in the future requires an appreciation of the context in which it will be fought. This paper will consider how the evolving context of the global political order might affect the legitimate use of armed force.

The predictions for the shape of the new global order cover a wide range of alternatives. Any future global order models that retain the nation-state as the dominant global actor suggest little would change regarding the role of armed forces in the political order. The nation-state centric arrangement that has prevailed for the three and a half centuries since the Peace of Westphalia is familiar to all. Of more interest are those alternatives that anticipate the eclipse of the nation-state in the future by other actors.

This paper will focus on two models that merit attention precisely because they differ most significantly from the current order - the information age world described by Alvin Toffler and Samuel Huntington's clash of civilizations. If a new global order emerges along the lines envisioned by either Toffler or Huntington, it could substantially alter the conditions under which armed force is employed to serve political ends. In the contexts of the Toffler and Huntington models, this paper examines prospects for the continued
predominance of the nation-state, the nature of interests and how a new global order might redefine them, and the implications for U.S. armed forces. This study will recommend areas on which the U.S. armed forces might focus attention today in order to better prepare should either of these two alternative predictions ultimately prove accurate.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

ACTORS

Stanley Hoffmann asserts that, historically, the international order has conformed to one of three structural types: empire, feudalism, or sovereign units. For the last three and a half centuries, since the Peace of Westphalia, the sovereign-unit type has prevailed, with the nation-state assuming the role of sovereign unit and dominating the global political order. While other actors may make appearances on behalf of one or another constituency (Medicins Sans Frontieres, World Trade Organization (WTO), International Olympic Committee), nation-states exercise the highest order of sovereignty in the current global system.

INTERESTS

If nation-states are the principal actors on the global stage, the pursuit of interests (survival, security, prosperity, influence) is the drama’s main story
line, the central purpose of political activity. In the current global order, citizens look primarily to the institutions of their nation-state to secure these interests. When domestic threats to the economic and political order surface, the appropriate institutions of the state respond. Criminals are arrested and prosecuted. Civil order is restored. The money supply is tightened (or loosened) as appropriate. Repairs of hurricane damage get funded. When, on the other hand, the political order is threatened from outside the state, other institutions of the state react. Aggressors are repelled, allies defended, and access to the resources upon which the economy depends is forcibly re-established.

UTILITY OF ARMED FORCE

It is in this latter capacity that the responsibilities and authorities of the nation-state and its primary agent, the government, are of most interest to a military audience. In the current global order, the nation-state, as sovereign unit, alone possesses the legitimate authority to employ armed force in the pursuit of interests. Military force is particularly well suited for the protection of populations and territory, both defining characteristics of a nation-state and crucial elements of the generation of wealth and prosperity in an industrial age world. If the next century spawns a new global order, in which sovereignty is redistributed and interests redefined, the nation-state's sole claim on legitimate
use of armed force may evaporate. If it does, how and why the U.S. armed forces go to war would require re-examination.

A NEW GLOBAL CONTEXT

THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS MODEL

Actors

As indicated earlier, this study focuses on the role of the nation-state in differing visions of the global order of the next century. Because our tradition ties the legitimate use of military force so closely to actions of the nation-state, we can assume that changes in the status of the nation-state might result in changes in the conditions under which legitimate force would be employed in the future. Views on the prospects for the future of the nation-state fall into one of two general categories, depending on whether the holder of the view is generally optimistic or pessimistic about the future. This section will focus on what may be called the pessimists' predictions that the nation-state will see its standing on the global scene diminish, due to the emergence of problems for which nation-states will not be the actor-of-choice in searching for solutions.

While the details of the predictions vary among the "pessimists," in general they suggest that the global order will suffer a sort of deterioration into a tangle of actors of differing stripes, among whom there may be widely varying
frames of reference and motives for action. In the current global order, nation-states act more or less rationally in pursuit of national interests with generally recognizable common characteristics (security, prosperity, etc.). Actors on the pessimists' future global scene may clash along lines better understood by reference to ethnicity, religion, or cultural identity than to geostrategic interests of security or trade. Some of these actors will lack a meaningful identity with a recognized state, leading to conflict over interests incompletely or ineffectively addressed by conventional diplomacy and international institutions.

Kaplan suggests that "...disease, overpopulation, unprovoked crime, scarcity of resources, refugee migrations,...the empowerment of private armies, security firms, and international drug cartels..." in less developed regions of the world will create conditions with which the local nation-states will be unable to cope.9 Should this prediction prove accurate, we can expect that, where such conditions exist, the sovereign-unit form of global structure might be replaced with what Kaplan has called a "...jagged-glass pattern of city states, shanty states, [and] nebulous. and anarchic regionalisms."10 The emergence of such conditions, while probably not likely to reshuffle the entire global order, could result in radical redistribution of power within the affected global region.

Huntington's vision, though not quite as dire, also leads to an erosion in the dominance of the nation-state. Predicting a clash of civilizations, Huntington anticipates that the future will see conflicts develop along "fault lines" between actors defined by ethnicity, religion, and culture, and not simply
between nation-states. Though Huntington does not predict the eclipse of the
nation-state, his clash of civilizations model suggests that national interests
will yield considerable ground to more broadly held cultural interests. In his
view, people in the future will tend increasingly to identify with the culture to
which they belong, at the expense of the national identity that has dominated
recent history. While remaining the principal source of purposeful action,
nation-states would tend to serve merely as agents of the increasingly
influential civilization groups.

**Interests**

Nothing about the pessimists' vision suggests that security and
prosperity will not remain vital interests. However, the chief proponents of
these interests may change. In some cases, decisions on when to go to war and
how to fight could migrate from the governments of nation-states to actors who
exercise influence over a particular civilization group - for example, the
leadership council of a religious body, the board of a multinational or cultural
organization, or a clan.

Such a redistribution of the responsibility for entering into conflict could
redefine the political direction of conflict, as well. Unlike Clausewitz's famed
formulation of war as an extension of politics, conflict in the new world order
would, in the most dire cases, actually substitute for politics. It could
represent the sole remaining form of interaction available to the actors
floundering in a sort of “wild west” political order from which classical norms of orderly interaction would have disappeared. Clausewitz’s celebrated trinitarian model of people, government and army would not apply. Where tribes clash, the “people,” the “government,” and the “army” are one and the same. Fighting would not involve field armies, fighting on behalf of and in defense of the interests of a wider population. The fighting would be done by the members of the tribes themselves, as would be the governing.

Utility of Armed Force

Conventional armed forces of today’s nation-state might be ill-suited to prosecute war in the pessimists’ world. If conflict occurs when nation-states have failed and government institutions have crumbled, as some predict, the fighting likely would be spasmodic, low-tech, and vicious. The high-tech conventional armed forces of today’s modern nation-state would have as little utility against crudely armed bands of irregularly organized warriors as nuclear weapons have in today’s interstate conflicts. If, on the other hand, conflicts occur between civilization groupings of a number of nation-states, it could involve the most advanced weapons available. In fact, Huntington argues that non-Western interests in high tech weapons, particularly in weapons of mass destruction, could affect global politics profoundly.
Implications for U.S. Armed Forces

If Kaplan's vision of localized, low-tech, communal conflict dominates the future world order, direct large-scale threats would be replaced by a series of localized crises that would jeopardize regional stability and call for military intervention to restore order. In that event, U.S. armed forces would not need to defeat opposing armed forces so much as they would need to be able to dictate cessation of hostilities. Overwhelming destructive capability could be of limited use.

Perhaps, in order to preserve the relevance of U.S. conventional armed forces, it will be necessary to enhance their capacity to fight in smaller, self-sustaining units that can be employed in an immature theater with weapons and equipment that can be made compatible with those of the local nation-states. Since decisively destroying an enemy force will not be the primary aim, greater emphasis on nonlethal weapons would enhance the range of military force employment options available, preserving scope of action. While work on technologies in this area is already well underway, we need to ensure that it continues to receive the appropriate emphasis. Adaptations that preserve the government's options for intervention in a chaotic world enhance the likelihood that it will be able to influence events in a way that reinforces its standing and preserves its legitimacy as the key actor.
Ironically, nonlethal weapons carry a risk of their own sort. Enhanced reliance on nonlethal weapons could lead to increased incidence of violent conflict by making intervention too attractive. These weapons could seduce policymakers into intervening when the ends might not justify the risk, while leaving the intervention forces inadequately armed to control escalation. In the end, intervention will remain risky, regardless of the weapons used.

If, as Huntington predicts, conflicts in the future will pit civilization against civilization, weapons of mass destruction may be viewed as the *sine qua non* of legitimacy.\(^{17}\) In that event, force protection and counterproliferation will require sustained emphasis.

Interestingly, the U.S. commitment to maintaining the capability to intervene unilaterally may lead to inappropriate application of defense resources, if future fighting is to be done overwhelmingly by civilization groups, not nation-states. The current assumption that we likely will fight future wars predominantly in coalitions suggests that Huntington may be on to something. If so, any modernization of U.S. military capabilities that further widens the gap between our capability and that of the civilization partners alongside whom we will fight could diminish the combat effectiveness of the overall force. We should examine more closely the potential problems in this area and, with appropriate regard for U.S. economic interests, consider reinforcing cooperative research and development efforts that will promote integration of our national military capabilities with those of our allies. Additionally, we should support
and assist likely coalition partners in rationalizing their own military capabilities.

Also, if we expect to fight our future wars in coalitions, we should do all we can to sustain and strengthen the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This alliance of like-minded Western nations represents almost a half century of unprecedented military cooperation. Its integrated military structure is undergoing an overhaul to make it better able to conduct the complete range of military operations, from a limited crisis response to full scale war. NATO represents a fifty-year head start in the potential race between civilizations to build a credible defense arm. Prudence argues that we take care to hold on to that lead.

THE INFORMATION AGE MODEL

**Actors**

The model reviewed above predicts that the nation-state will be swamped by a wave of change that will reshuffle political allegiances, as the global order adapts to emergent social, cultural, and environmental pressures. Another group of visionaries questions whether, in the future, the nation-state will be forced to share the exercise of sovereignty with other actors for wholly different reasons. In the view of this group, generally more optimistic in outlook, innovation in technology and in social and cultural organization will send a
wave of change washing over the global order, touching most aspects of life. This wave of change will fundamentally alter the nature, sources, and holders of power.\textsuperscript{18}

Presumably, in the optimists' future global order, as in the current international structure, interests and their protection would remain the chief pursuit of global actors. Even in the optimists' future global order, states would still exist. They would still protect the interests associated with the physical safety and security of their citizens. Beyond that, the picture becomes more complex.

The advent of an information age could bring what Toffler has called a "de-massification" that will simultaneously generate subnational economies and identity groups, supranational groups, a vast and interdependent world economy, and a fundamental reordering of political relationships.\textsuperscript{19} The third wave will bring improvements (for example) in transportation, telecommunications, and information management. New sources of energy will reshuffle the natural resources balance of power in the world. Those who share a common interest in something, whether they speak the same language or even live on the same continent, will be able readily to interact and form effective organizations to represent their cause. As such, these organizations would be essential to well-being and prosperity and, therefore, of great importance and value to individuals. As individuals and groups commit ever greater attention and resources to the new organizational arrangements that
(thanks largely to information technology) readily cross current political boundaries, the role of the nation-state as representative and regulator would decline.

**Interests**

The real challenges to national security policy makers posed by the arrival of the third wave probably will reside in adaptation of the process by which national interests are identified, prioritized and defended. The optimist vision seems to suggest that an increasingly broad range of emerging actors - subnational, nonnational, transnational, or supranational - will be better suited than established national governments to protect some vital interests. These actors each would focus on a discrete issue area in public life.\(^{20}\)

In particular, the prediction that the information age will bring true globalization of markets for all economic goods raises issues of enormous importance to an examination of the continuing relevance of the nation-state and the implications for the use of military force in pursuit of interests.\(^{21}\) In that domain, the corporation and the information technologist could play the central role now played by governments and diplomats. If economics dominate the interaction in the global order of the future, the forum for the interaction, the optimists seem to be saying, will be the virtual global marketplace and trade would replace diplomacy (and its extension-war) as the predominant form of interaction.
Such a world would present new challenges to national leaders. Since interests would be defined by, and pursued primarily in, the virtual marketplace, the development of strategic security policy would reasonably include those actors most important in that arena. Policymaking bodies likely would include representatives of the actors most able to influence these vital interests. Such policymaking bodies already include national trade and commerce officials. However, in the future, they might also include representatives of transnational or nonnational organizations, when those actors have the primary means to influence the pursuit of a particular interest. When such policymaking bodies confront decisions about the employment of force, transnational and nonnational actors would be in a position to exercise influence - if not outright authority - over the application of military force. Our own National Security Council might be forced to open its deliberations to representatives of Microsoft, the World Trade Organization, or the European Union in order to ensure that the policies it develops and implements fully meet the redefined and expanded needs of Americans.

Some of the newly powerful transnational and nonnational actors might not find satisfactory the process of working to meet security needs through national policymaking bodies. These actors might create their own security forces or might arrange privately with national governments for the security of their assets and operations to be provided by traditional, national armed forces. In the case where a nonnational actor raises its own armed forces, the
nation-state's current monopoly on the legitimate use of armed force would be threatened. Such forces would give these new actors scope to develop and execute security policy made on their own.

**Utility of Armed Force**

Further, the advent of the age of information could alter substantially the utility of armed conflict itself in protecting the redefined interests of the future. If the production of wealth (and prosperity) depends less in the future on physical assets, and more on intangibles, the utility of industrial age means (such as armed force) in securing and protecting those assets could decline.

Wars often have been fought over tangibles (territory, citizens, natural resources) that enhanced security or wealth. However, the third wave could supplement the classical factors of production - land, labor, and capital - with other factors, such as time and information. If, in the future, the key territory to be defended will be *virtual*, the classical means of defending *real* territory, conventional armed forces, would be of little use.

In fact some might predict that conflict itself might become obsolete, at least among those actors fully sharing in the third wave information and technology revolution. The arrival of the global order envisioned by the optimists could render armed conflict, at least as we have known it in the current state-centric global order, obsolete in two ways. Armed forces are expensive. Rather than raise their own security forces, new actors arriving on
the global scene would have a strong incentive to "de-legitimize" the resort to conflict and preclude altogether the need for armed forces.

Also, the importance of intangible assets would grow with the arrival of the third wave. Market access and a favorable technological climate could replace mineral deposits and merchant fleets as critical national assets. If that occurs, the utility of traditional armed force in protecting critical national assets would decline. As a result, armed force would be less effective as an instrument of power in compelling behavior in other actors. In the industrial age global order, an encroachment by one nation-state on the territory of another in order to control key terrain or minerals tends to take the form of, and be resisted by, traditional armed force. The stakes involve tangibles. In the future, one actor in the global order may try to compel another to exercise fiscal discipline and to practice transparency in economic reporting, both crucial to effective functioning of a global economy. Traditional armed force would be ill-suited to such a purpose.

As the links between domestic and foreign financial and economic activity become more complex, nongovernmental and transnational actors could see their influence grow, as well. The United States could become increasingly dependent on the effective functioning of such institutions (International Monetary Fund, WTO, World Health Organization, United Nations). Someday, U.S. security policymakers may deem it essential to intervene forcefully to protect such institutions. When that time comes,
policymakers will have to decide which instruments of national power to use. As long as humankind has physical needs—shelter, food, and freedom from attack by others—traditional armed forces employing the means of violence in service to legitimate authority will have a mission. However, if the optimists' vision of the future is realized, the usefulness of traditional armed force in promoting other crucial purposes—expanding influence, obtaining commercial advantage, or encouraging conformity with global financial norms—may be more limited than in the past.

Implications for U.S. Armed Forces

To protect vital interests effectively, armed forces must know clearly what those interests are, how they might be threatened, and how the armed forces might be expected to respond when called upon. If, in the future, vital interests are determined with the participation of a variety of governmental, business, and social actors, the circumstances under which the armed forces might be employed will be harder to predict. As such, strategic planning and force structure development will have to consider a wider range of possible missions, spread out across the conflict spectrum. Command and control of operations would grow more complex, especially if U.S. armed forces are employed in defense of an interest that, though vital, is not strictly national. If conflict arises over control of organizational structures or assets of the "global economic community" (data processing centers, telecommunications facilities,
satellites), the application of force will have to be strictly regulated, since excessive destruction could lead to a collapse that would deny their use not only to “the enemy” side, but to the friendly side as well.

A hypothetical example helps illustrate some of these challenges. Suppose that scientists perfect an affordable way to run vehicle engines on hydrogen. Suppose further that it will take some time to get the process to market, and estimates vary widely as to how long that might be. Investment in oil exploration and production begins to dry up, as nervous investors withdraw from the oil sector, fearing that the cheap hydrogen engine will come sooner rather than later, and that they will not be able to unload their interests in oil. Economies within the oil-revenue-dependent countries fall into a deepening recession, threatening a world-wide crisis and provoking a humanitarian disaster in the oil producing region. An international financial relief organization puts together a bail out program that will impose short term austerity and long term economic dislocation, as the affected economies are forced to reorient to other productive sectors.

Fearing social collapse, the governments of the oil producing countries raise an armed force and seize a regional operations center which belongs to the international financial organization but is located on the territory of one of the oil producers, taking captive the governors of the regional center. They threaten to kill their captives and plant logic bombs in key information systems on which the smooth functioning of the international financial system depends.
In return for the restoration of peace, they demand that member nations of the international financial organization agree to require vehicle manufacturers to equip a percentage of their vehicles with gasoline engines over a period of twenty years while the oil producing nations adjust their economies.

Determining the appropriate policy on which to base a response to such a problem could pose a significant challenge. Clearly, the oil producers' use of force should not be tolerated. However, determining who should respond and how would be difficult. The captives were taken based on their international positions, not their nationality. A series of national responses would not necessarily represent the most appropriate option. Military operations, conducted by a coalition of member nations from the financial organization could be used to free them, but could trigger the release of the logic bombs that would cripple the entire global financial system. Coalition members would have to decide if they owe more to the captives than to the vastly larger numbers of people who would suffer in the wake of widespread financial chaos. Also, considering the size of the automobile industry in the technologically advanced and financially dominant countries, there could be significant domestic pressure to reach some accommodation with the hostage takers, since doing so might benefit domestic auto industries, at least in the near term.

The eventual response could include a limited direct action against the hostage takers, or a larger scale military operation against the territory of the oil producing nations sponsoring the hostage taking force. The situation could
become even more complicated if the regional financial center were located on U.S. territory, and one of the member nations of the financial organization wanted to conduct a unilateral rescue mission that could lead to collateral damage and American civilian casualties. The U.S. armed forces could be put in the awkward position of defending the hostage takers from attack by one of America's own allies. While the nature of the defensive military operation itself might be thoroughly conventional, the rules of engagement could be staggeringly complex.

The scenario laid out above suggests that if an actor (multinational trade organization, international body, nation-state) attempts to employ armed force in an information age global order, the forces shaping the interests involved and the formulation of an effective response could be much more complicated than in the current global order, in which interests tend to be more discretely associated with the nation-state. Leaders of the U.S. armed forces in such a future world would need an enhanced sensitivity to the complexity of the milieu in which interests are defined.

Policymakers concerned with American security could face still another kind of challenge in an information age global order in which nation-states share the pursuit of vital interests with other actors. Modern cousins of the Hudson's Bay Company could emerge, pursuing and defending their own commercial interests with means organic to the organization. If these information age corporations found it expedient to develop the means to impose
their will on other corporations or on other actors (including nation-states),
conflict could occur. Here another illustration might help. "Cosmic Infotech,
Inc.," (CI) concerned about losing market share to "MicrosoftWorld, Inc." (MSW)
in the rapidly growing field of teleportation, might seek - with directed energy
devices - to cripple the satellite constellation MSW is putting in orbit. This
otherwise criminal act would have national security implications for the United
States. if we had arranged with MSW to place equipment aboard those
satellites which supports our strategic ballistic missile defense program. The
U.S. might be forced to conduct conventional military operations against an
international commercial enterprise. Reprisals either from CI or from other
actors interested in seeing MSW's influence diminished would have to be
anticipated. Intelligence and warning, target selection, and controlling the
spread of the conflict would all pose thorny problems for military planners,
particularly as the line blurs between law enforcement and conventional
military operations.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Whatever eventually may come, predictions of the eclipse of the nation-
state in the next century seem premature. Daily news reports provide plenty of
reason to believe that statehood remains the desired status for those who do
not have it. The Palestinians long have sought statehood, as have the Basques
in Spain, the Quebecois in Canada, the Kurds in Northern Iraq and Southeast Turkey, and the Catholics in Northern Ireland. Far from abandoning the nation-state model, they embrace it. Presumably they seek the conventional status within the global framework that, in exchange for responsible behavior, will yield security and opportunity for prosperity. Statehood would confer the legitimate right to employ the armed force. By contrast, use of armed force by these organizations today simply gets them branded terrorists and criminals.

Admittedly, there will be those nonstate actors, however confrontational, who do not seek statehood. Greenpeace, drug cartels, and Hezbullah, for example, do not seek nation-state status. While they may, from time to time, exert substantial influence over policymaking in a state, they have neither the breadth of popular support nor the independent means to establish a state. In fact, they depend on the structures maintained by states -- financial systems, transportation networks, regulatory organizations. Without states, these non-state actors would suffer as well.

Even if the arrival of a third wave brings greater global political influence for some transnational and nonnational actors, there will remain a need for the nation-state. Nation-states provide the social and legal framework within which trade - virtual or otherwise - takes place. Without the rule of law, embodied in legal code and enforced by courts, possession of property and the accumulation of wealth is not possible. Until another framework emerges, the nation-state likely will remain an important feature of the political order.
In the end, the long-range prospects for the nation-state, its influence over the pursuit of interests, and the role of armed force in that pursuit remain speculative. The world may align itself into competing cultures which fight over the ideologies by which they define themselves. All nation-states, the more- and the less-advanced, would belong to one or another cultural group. If conflict erupts, it could take any form, from a localized, low-tech crisis to a major war between advanced armed forces. American security policymakers, in effect if not by deliberate act, have anticipated such a global order in their expectation that the U.S. armed forces of the future likely will fight as members of a coalition. The challenge to America's military, in such cases, will be to remain properly equipped and appropriately trained to fight alongside the forces of coalition partners. Supporting and expanding multinational integrated military command structures and formations, of which NATO is a superlative example, should receive substantial emphasis, as well.

On the other hand, the next century may arrive on a wave of advances in information technology, production processes, and organizational innovations that leads to an erosion in the primacy of the nation-state as principal sovereign actor on the global political stage. These changes could further reinforce the global interdependence already well established in the economic and financial arena. If so, the legitimate resort to armed conflict could, at the least, become more complicated, and, in the extreme, could lose its utility altogether. Until that happens, American armed forces must be prepared to
collaborate in a security policy process (from development through implementation) that could include a wide variety of non-state participants and would involve use of the armed forces in complex and ambiguous situations. Not yet having a reliable picture of the changes, if any, that the new century will bring, we must think imaginatively about all the possibilities and begin to prepare now.

Word count: 5104
ENDNOTES

1 For an excellent overview of the principal models and underlying considerations receiving the most attention in the literature devoted to the emerging global order, see Robert E. Harkavy, “The Images of the Coming International System,” Orbis (Fall 1997): 569-590.


6 Ibid., 54.

7 For a good, simple typology of interests see Alvin and Heidi Toffler, War and Anti-War (Boston, Little, Brown, and Company, 1993): 248-249.

8 I use, admittedly loosely, the term “optimists” to mean those whose vision of the future is primarily characterized by the changes that will follow from the technology associated with the information age. Use of the term is intended to convey the sense that information age visionaries seem, in general, to foresee a world in which resort to armed force is increasingly less necessary or appropriate. By contrast use of the label pessimists is meant to indicate those who, far from predicting an end to armed conflict, rather suggest that it will become a more pernicious force in world politics, as the nation-state grows increasingly unable to effectively address it.

9 Kaplan, 45.

10 Ibid., 72.

11 Huntington, 22.


13 Kaplan, 73.

14 See Peters, 24; Kaplan, 72; and van Creveld, 212.

15 van Creveld, 208-210.


17 Ibid.

18 For a representative presentation of this theme see Toffler’s The Third Wave and John L. Petersen, The Road to 2015 (Corte Madera, CA: Waite Group Press)

19 Alvin Toffler, The Third Wave, 248. While Toffler here treats the “demassification” concept explicitly, it lies at the heart of his entire vision and
touches all facets of life. As such, its influence can be detected throughout his The Third Wave.


22 For example, see Harkavy, 582, where he discusses the zones of peace and turmoil concept; and Waltz, 76-78.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


