



Rebuttal of A National Strategic Narrative

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Introduction

Captain Wayne Porter (United States Navy) and Colonel Mark Mykleby (United States Marine Corp) have drafted a National Strategic Narrative (NSN) which we will rebut issue by issue. They propose changing our nation's strategy because of climate change and a need to restore our values, abandon a win-lose mentality, establish a sustainable strategy and win back the respect of other nations.

We believe the draft NSN is rooted in naivety and ignorance regarding key issues, and would render the United States of America dangerously vulnerable to real-world dangers that actually do exist.

Historic and scientific references in their paper, A National Strategic Narrative, are weak or inaccurate, while political assumptions and projections are naïve.

What's particularly troubling is that the authors are senior advisers to the Joint Chief of Staffs, and as such have significant input to our nation's defense strategy.

We will demonstrate the errors contained in their paper, A National Strategic Narrative (NSN), and also the intellectually dishonest use of undefined terms, and the Orwellian nature of the "National Prosperity and Security Act" proposed by them.

Errors in the NSN will be addressed within each section of this rebuttal, but the following few statements, taken from the NSN, highlight some of our concerns.

The statement "we must stop behaving as if our national interests can be pursued without regard for our values" is fallacious and the assumption is insulting and wrong.

The statement concerning fossil fuel, "We failed to recognize that dominance, like fossil fuel, is not a sustainable source of energy" is wrong.

The statement, "We must regain our credibility as a leader among peers" is a political statement that contains a demonstrably false assumption.

The statement that, "Our former notion of competition as a zero sum game that allowed for one winner and many losers" is erroneous.

References to "the effects of global climate change" and the resulting need for "clean energy" and "sustainability" are invalid.

We will refute each of these statements, as well as many others in the NSN.

The NSN was published by the Woodrow Wilson Center with a preface by Anne-Marie Slaughter that seized on the paper to support a liberal doctrine for our national security.

Our nation is poorly served by the paper, A National Strategic Narrative, and by the interpretation presented in the preface by Ms. Slaughter.

Rather than repeatedly referring to the National Strategic Narrative, we have used NSN in its place. We have followed the author's original outline to maintain consistency between our rebuttal and the original text.

From Containment to Sustainment: Control to Credible Influence

The major themes of this section are seriously flawed. The NSN assumes our dominant position in the world occurred in a closed system, aided by a containment strategy, while the 21st century world has been heralded as a new open system, characterized as constantly changing and different from the 20th century. Students of history recognize that perversion. Our world has always been changing with technology, commerce, education and diplomacy being catalysts of an open system for well over 100 years

History also tells us that mankind is not always content with their status quo, giving rise to dictatorial types bent on enslaving others for religious, economic and other reasons. Consequently, our prosperity and security will continue to be served by a strong defense capability, ability to project power if needed, and exercising influence where necessary throughout the world – as we have done in the past.

A containment strategy will be necessary to deal with Islamic radicals as long as they strive to establish a new caliphate and enslave millions, no different from Soviet expansionism that forced us and our allies into a containment mode in mid 20th century. If we value our prosperity and security, we will maintain the capability to contain those who want to destroy us.

Contrary to the authors' claim, we are not an island fortress today, and have not been since the isolationism following World War I. Additionally, we have not lost our credibility in the world, but it has taken some hits from our recent efforts at appeasement. Contrary to our recent groveling and mea culpas over imagined transgressions, we have helped many nations rise and prosper prior to and since the ruin and despair of World War II.

Some people believe our dominant role flows only from our military strength and prosperity, while overlooking the largesse of our nation toward many nations of the world. For many in the world, we have been the shining city on a hill and have freely shared our resources to help others.

Contrary to the assertions of the NSN, our deeds have matched our words. We must be consistent and not vacillate, which sustainment could be interpreted to mean, so that our friends and opponents can rely on our word.

Our Values and Enduring National Interests

Freedom for us and for others has been at the core of our values. While we wrestled with isolationism after the First World War, we accepted the leadership role thrust upon us after the Second World War.

Since then, there has been little thought given to a narrow isolationist view. The fact that we have risen to the challenge of Islamic terrorism cannot be construed as retreating into an isolationist cocoon. The fact that we remain highly skeptical of anthropogenic climate change does not mean we are shrinking from a worldview that includes freedom for all. That we have been skeptical of anthropogenic climate change is actually in support of freedom, since many would curtail freedom in an effort to force their views about controlling climate change on everyone around the world.

The NSN is insulting when it infers we now support, or are indifferent to, “hurtful ideologies, prejudice and violations of human rights.”

Our security is, and should be, foremost in our national interest. While it’s nice to think that borders are unimportant, the fact remains that secure borders are important for our physical security and ability to absorb immigrants who want to assimilate into our culture. Having a strategy that results in a balkanization of American society with enclaves of people, who do not believe in the American culture, would be unsustainable and catastrophic to America’s security.

The Muslim enclaves in Europe’s cities are an example of how open borders can harm a country and its culture.

Security may not be achievable by one country alone, and there is every reason to encourage others to recognize security as a common interest, but we cannot ignore those who threaten us regardless of how others may view our actions.

Our Three Investment Priorities

The authors say, “We have for too long focused intensely on defense and protectionism rather than on development and diplomacy,” and without “respect for the global ecosystem”.

They begin by contending we must identify resources that are renewable and sustainable.

Identifying and categorizing resources as renewable and sustainable, is an exercise in crystal ball gazing and subject to a wide spectrum of error.

For example, the authors conclude that fossil fuels are not sustainable, but offer no concrete evidence to support their claim. In fact, there is strong evidence that we have sufficient indigenous sources of fossil fuels to sustain us through the current century and for centuries to come.

Sustainability is the same Malthusian nonsense we have been repeatedly subjected to since the emergence of the industrial revolution. Since the discovery of oil, there have been repeated cries that the world is running out of oil, yet, in each instance there have been new discoveries indicating there are sufficient supplies of oil for at least another 100 years. We really do not know the full extent of our fossil-fuel resources, but it serves as a canard for environmentalists and this administration to eschew development of our known resources.

Moreover, this President believes fossil fuels drive climate change and prefers subsidized renewable sources, despite their cost being 2 to 3 times greater for consumers than current fossil fuel energy. This strategic error is compounded by the fact that renewables, such as wind and solar, cannot replace the electrical energy we get from nuclear, coal and natural gas, regardless of the number of installations made. Of course, subsidies for wind and solar tend to distort our energy market by picking winners and losers and foisting the cost on consumers for government intrusion in our markets.

There is no question that our educational system at all levels – elementary, secondary and college – is seriously wanting. Since the establishment of our Department of Education, we taxpayers have invested hundreds of billions of dollars into elementary and secondary education with no tangible improvement in learning, as measured by testing.

Our problem is not lack of investment dollars, which have been tragically wasted. Instead, the problem revolves around the lack of an adequate and challenging curricula for all, some incompetent instruction, textual material that is not forthright and balanced, and too great of an accent on political correctness, multiculturalism and liberal views that alter the true history of our country.

Moreover, educational unions do nothing to improve education, while posing an impediment to the educational reform we so badly need to continue to prosper and remain secure in a competitive world – a world that is leaving us in the distance with respect to science, math and engineering.

Rather than spending more money as proposed by the authors, when we already spend more per pupil than every country except Switzerland, we need curricula for elementary and secondary school systems that are disciplined, challenging in context, and that will impart worthwhile knowledge, while developing the tools and art of learning we had many decades ago.

Recent reports of college level dropout rates of 50% by the end of two years is a testimonial to the lack of a sound secondary school education required to pursue college level work, as well as the folly of parents spending fortunes on siblings unqualified to perform at the college level. Yet these same parents are the ones whose taxes are supporting the substandard elementary and secondary school system, amounting to being hit twice by our substandard educational system that has too much federal government involvement.

And the college level system suffers from unnecessary proliferation of some worthless majors and courses that do little, if anything, to improve one's education, or better prepare graduates to be competitive for gaining entrance to the workforce in their chosen field — especially in light of severely restricted job possibilities.

But more importantly, we are not producing sufficient graduates in tough science, math and engineering majors to support our future needs. Why? Simply put, most of our secondary school graduates are either totally unprepared for such demanding majors, while some of those who have the necessary preparation are unwilling to put in the time and effort, and opt for easier majors.

The NSN authors completely overlook one of the most serious challenges we have today, which is our huge, uncontrolled and unsustainable debt.

Our economy today is in serious trouble from massive acceleration in deficit spending in the last two years, with no improvement in jobs or other economic indicators. Unless we get spending under control and reduce our debt, we will seriously impair our prosperity and eventually our security.

Without prosperity and security, there will be no sustainability.

Fair Competition and Deterrence

The assumption that the United States has viewed interdependence as a weakness rather than strength is bogus. The United States has been supportive of trade agreements, the formation of NATO and groups such as the Southeast Asian group of Nations (ASEAN).

The inference that we rely solely on intimidation and threat is also bogus.

Why the authors of the NSN make these assumptions is hard to fathom since our history refutes them.

The authors say that “credibility requires engagement, strength and reliability”, and to this we cannot disagree.

However, we do wonder what they mean when they say “imaginatively applied”, since it’s hard to maintain credibility when others can’t fathom what we are doing. Either we are a reliable partner or we are not. Either we remain strong or we don’t.

A Strategic Ecology

The underlying theme supporting the authors’ discussion is that climate change is a threat and a threat multiplier, posing significant national security issues for our country in the future. The origin of this phrase, climate change is a threat and threat multiplier, comes from the Center of Naval Analysis Military Advisory Board (CNAMAB) 2007 report, “National Security and the Threat of Climate Change”.

The CNAMAB’s sole basis for their alarming report is the findings and projections of future global temperatures incorporated the UN IPCC 2007 AR-4 report. The temperature projections stem from assumptions built into the IPCC computer models that are seriously flawed and have been shown by several peer-reviewed scientific research reports to be grossly overstated. Whereas the projected temperature rise threat has been shown to be bogus, it would imply, if true, more severe and frequent climate-related disasters (e.g. flooding, droughts, crop failures and water shortages within the global ecosystem). Those disasters would dislodge populations, cause some nation-states to fail, and precipitate numerous implications and consequences for national security, including armed conflict.

The seriously flawed findings and conclusions of the 2007 CNAMAB report and a companion 2009 report on energy-related issues, “Powering America’s Defense: Energy and the Risks to National Security”, have heavily influenced the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), resulting in our military services planning for these unlikely disasters and their consequences and looking at new sources of energy to power our defense of the future.

In sum, DOD and the services have bought into the unproven hypothesis of anthropogenic (man-made) climate change and have accepted the radical and flawed projections of future global temperatures as gospel. There is no empirical evidence that man is responsible for climate change. Long established scientific protocol demands such evidence to prove a hypothesis.

The services' efforts to find and develop alternative fuels to power the defense machine, is driven by belief that fossil fuels are not sustainable and that they drive climate change. *But* a recent RAND Corporation study has found the current effort to be totally inadequate to power the future.

The authors and many in the military establishment must not be aware of, or ignore, the many scientists who have debunked anthropogenic climate change.

For example, there are the Oregon petition and the report of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC).

The Oregon petition declared that CO2 was not the major cause of global warming and was signed by over 30,000 scientists and engineers.

The NIPCC report, written and edited by over 30 scientists, systematically rebutted the orthodoxy of global warming and climate change.

Closing the “Say-do” Gap – the Negative Aspects of “Binning”

Here we must object to three unseemly and inaccurate notions put forth in this section of the NSN.

The NSN wrings its hands over “binning”. By binning it means grouping ideas, principles and peoples into categories.

It claims that by calling Islamic Radicals terrorists, we have inferred that all Muslims are terrorists. Any good manager knows that a problem must be clearly defined before it can be solved. There is no politically correct way to call a radical Muslim who attacks unarmed women and children anything other than a terrorist.

The attacks that have been made on us and others were made by radical Muslims who killed wantonly and without warning. They weren't from some other religion and their attacks didn't conform to the rules of war.

It has been made abundantly clear that it was never intended to infer that all Muslims are terrorists. We have, in fact, worked with Muslim countries in their fight against Islamic radicals. Indonesia and Malaysia come to mind, though Pakistan and Afghanistan and others could also be included.

When the NSN says we have “binned” government departments, agencies, laws, authorities and programs into inflexible entities which undermined our credibility, it confuses “binning” with “silos”.

“Binning” is a convenient way to communicate ideas, while silos are structures that are isolated from each other, that prevent communications between groups.

This is always a problem with bureaucracies, and is a strong reason for reducing the size and complexity of government, something not mentioned by the NSN.

The NSN is extremely galling and insulting when it says: “We must stop behaving as if our national interests can be pursued without regard to our values.”

Our values have always been an important part of our national strategy, in war and peace.

We, for example, put the Philippines on a path to independence after the Spanish American War. We encouraged freedom and women's rights in Iraq and Afghanistan. We were supporters of the UN resolution that led to the establishment of Israel. We established an embargo on South Africa in an effort to end Apartheid. We provided humanitarian relief to countries around the world, some of which don't share our values.

If the authors of the NSN mean to infer we should abandon countries like Saudi Arabia because they don't adhere to our values, then they are naïve.

We abandoned Iran and allowed a different type of totalitarian government to take over the country. The new regime is an enemy of the United States and is a danger to many countries in the Middle East. The Iranian Theocracy treats its citizens no better than did the Shah's regime.

The NSN states: "We have assumed that competition is a zero sum game." This has never been an assumption in any policy statement or document, and is belied by multiple instances where the United States has helped nations in need so that they could become competitors. Business has always recognized that countries with strong economies tend to be good customers.

The Marshall Plan epitomizes this fact. Restoring Japan after WWII also supports that the United States has not viewed competition as a zero sum game. Supporting South Korea is another example of how we have encouraged strong economies and competition.

The arguments put forth in the NSN that we believe competition is a zero sum game, and that we have not lived up to our values, are insulting.

The United States "Walks the Talk" and practices what it preaches. There's no need to close the "Say – Do gap", because it doesn't exist.

Credible Influence in a Strategic Ecosystem

Some of the conditions and trends raised by the authors under "A Strategic Ecology" are normal results of underdeveloped countries transforming to developed countries, as we did in the latter half of the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. Other examples are the emergence of China and India from agrarian to industrial societies/countries in the last half of the 20th century. Those transformations did not present national security issues or major global environmental issues.

In reality, that is not what the authors are addressing. The trends and conditions the authors are addressing are those anticipated as a result of projected radical rise in global temperatures by the end of the 21st century, temperatures projected by seriously flawed UN IPCC computer models. As previously indicated, the CNAMAB 2007 findings and conclusions in its report, "National Security and the Threat of Climate Change", are not based on credible science. Moreover they bought the seriously flawed UN IPCC projections without question. In turn the 2010 QDR made the same fatal mistake, causing the authors to develop an environmental-related paper based on the same

flawed science. Since the IPCC “science” is wrong and drives totally incorrect future temperatures, the main basis for writing such a paper disappears, because climate change is natural and not driven by man’s emissions of carbon dioxide. Moreover the efforts within DOD to prepare for and combat the anticipated aspects of climate change, driven by a bogus and radical rise in global temperature, is a waste of time, money and effort. It follows that the NSN paper is based on a house of cards.

Additionally, the authors, members of DOD, either lack scientific acumen or have become pawns in a political game. This administration has not made sensible decisions or sensible policy based on solid science with regard to both climate and energy issues.

Failed leadership has its consequences!

The NSN harps on the impact of new technologies as though there is something new about their impact.

The 20th century saw the introduction of an abundance of new technologies, in transportation, communications, medicine etc., and these were integrated into the world community and our so-called “strategic ecosystem”. We will adapt to cyberspace and the other new technologies as we have in the past, without having to abandon our strategic interests or our values. This is not a prescription for putting our head in the sand, but merely an acceptance that change is constantly occurring and that we can adapt to change, whether it is in the climate or cyberspace, as we have in the past.

Opportunities beyond Threat and Risk

Here the authors of the NSN demonstrate their true feelings about America’s economic system.

They say, “Only by developing internal strength through smart growth at home and smart power abroad”, can we be successful.

“Smart growth” infers top down control, the antithesis to our free market system. For example, the NSN says there is a need for “carefully planned rural communities.”

The authors’ affinity for “smart growth” is nothing but a euphemism for supporting government control over our economy, education, energy sources and our free market system.

What’s actually needed is a lifting of governmental controls and bureaucratic rules and regulations that stifle innovation and economic growth.

A National Prosperity and Security Act

We agree in part that the strategic environment we face today is different in terms of some security threats, but anthropogenic climate change is not one of them.

There is no doubt that our Congress and Administration should be looking in depth into government structure and performance. They need to determine whether the government is operating efficiently, and whether its contributions are either necessary or

important on a cost-benefit basis. They should also ensure that interagency coordination and communication is working smoothly and seamlessly.

These are essential prerequisites for an efficient, cost-effective government where bureaucratic silos are eliminated as much as possible. Rather than a call for more government, as in the proposed “National Prosperity and Security Act”, it should be a prescription for less government.

Establishing top-down policies for sustainability with a melding of tax laws, research and government regulations into government policy, is antithesis to the free market system that has served us so well.

Allowing the free market to pursue the development of our resources, fossil fuels et al, and pursue innovation to alleviate any shortages in materials that might arise, is preferable to government picking and choosing winners and losers.

Our system is sustainable without government diktat because it automatically searches out solutions.

In short, the government should get out of the way in so far as activities such as education, research, resource development and the economy are concerned.

Our government’s role is to protect our nation through policies that secure our borders, contains threats such as Islamic Terrorism, encourages freedom without throwing allies overboard, supports a military strong enough to deter new threats no matter where they arise, and welcomes other governments who want to work with us in these efforts.

An Additional Observation

The authors of the NSN take serious intellectual liberties when they invent new terms or interject obscure terms to encapsulate their ideas without defining the terms. For example, they refer to a “strategic ecosystem”, “global ecosystem”, “smart growth” and “smart power” without defining what they mean. Even the term sustainability is not well defined in the literature and lacks meaning if not defined in the paper. If they borrowed terms from some obscure source, they should still have defined the terms as used in the NSN. Any credible paper would, at a minimum, include definitions of these terms in an appendix.

A Beacon of Hope, a Pathway of Promise

Contrary to this pronouncement, the NSN is a pathway to mediocrity.

Do we really need “A National Prosperity and Security Act” as a blueprint for government policy and direction to achieve our future prosperity and security? We don’t think so, and believe the author’s have failed to make a compelling case for a “National Prosperity and Security Act.”

Appendix

About the Authors

Donald K.(Deke) Forbes

Deke served 33 consecutive years in the US Navy, starting during WW II as a sailor on a cruiser, 4 years at the US Naval Academy as a midshipman and 27 years as a naval officer and aircraft carrier based fighter and attack pilot naval aviator. During his naval career he commanded two aviation squadrons, a naval air station and served as Commandant of Midshipmen, US Naval Academy for 3 years. His naval service spanned three wars, WW II, Korea and Vietnam. After naval service he joined Booz, Allen & Hamilton and served as the program manager for the Booz, Allen support to the multi-billion dollar Saudi Naval Expansion Program, a foreign military sales program to provide the Royal Saudi Naval Forces with ships, naval stations, trained personnel and other infrastructure.

Since total retirement in 1986, he has channeled his efforts into understanding two major issues before our country today, climate change causation and energy independence. He is a member of Virginia Scientists and Engineers for Energy and Environment, an organization dedicated to informing the public about the truths of climate change and energy-related issues. He has written extensively about climate change.

Deke is a 1950 Distinguished Graduate of the United States Naval Academy. He has a BS in Aeronautical Engineering from the US Naval Postgraduate School and an MS in Aeronautical Engineering from the University of Michigan. He is a graduate of the Naval War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Donn D. Dears

Donn began his career at General Electric testing large steam turbines and generators used by utilities to generate electricity; followed next, by manufacturing and marketing assignments at the Transformer Division. Later he led an organization of a few thousand people servicing these and other GE products in the United States. He went on to establish facilities around the world to service power generation, transmission equipment and other electric apparatus. At nearly every step, Donn was involved with the work done at customer locations: at steel mills, electric utilities, refineries, oil drilling and production facilities and open pit and underground mining operations. At every opportunity, he learned of the needs of these industries.

He is a graduate of GE's Manufacturing Management Program and of GE's prestigious General Management course at Crotonville, NY.

Donn has toured Saudi Arabia, including a close-up inspection of the eastern province with its oil producing and shipping facilities. He has investigated many of the other oil producing countries in the Middle East and Northern Europe, as well as examining iron-ore mining locations and major shipping centers in Europe and Asia. All told, Donn has visited over 50 countries and has knowledge of their need for the technologies that can improve their well being and their use of equipment manufactured in the United States.

Following his retirement as a senior GE Company executive, he continued to study and write about energy issues. He currently is president of TSAugust, a 501 (C) 3 think tank comprised entirely of volunteers. He writes for www.tsaugust.org and the blog "Power USA", at www.powerforusa.com, and has written two books as well as various papers and articles. He also speaks about energy issues, including cap & trade.

Donn is a graduate (with honors) of the United States Merchant Marine Academy and served on active duty in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War.