

# Backgrounder

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## What People Are Saying About National Security, Defense Spending, and the Debt

*Compiled by Scott Nason and Janice A. Smith*

Washington policymakers, facing unprecedented deficits and drastic measures to deal with a \$14.3 trillion debt, are considering cutting the budget for national defense. Yet as former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, his successor Leon Panetta, and other U.S. officials like Admiral Mike Mullen have said, defense spending is not the cause of our fiscal problems. Even eliminating the entire defense budget would not solve our budget woes.

Neither the Administration nor Members of Congress should lose sight of their constitutional obligation to provide for the full defense of America. They would do well to consider these sage statements from a number of current and former policymakers and experts from the U.S. and overseas.

### Administration Officials

#### President Barack Obama

- “The men and women of our armed forces are the best our nation has to offer, and they deserve nothing but the absolute best in return.” — May 20, 2011<sup>1</sup>
- “[A]s we face multiple threats...we will maintain the military superiority that has secured our country, and underpinned global security, for decades.... We must maintain our military’s conventional superiority, while enhancing its capacity to defeat asymmetric threats.” — May 2010<sup>2</sup>

### Talking Points

- “The most significant threat to our national security is our debt.” (Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff)
- “I have long believed...that the defense budget, however large it may be, is not the cause of this country’s fiscal woes....” (Robert Gates, former U.S. Secretary of Defense)
- “Defense spending is not what is sinking this country into fiscal crisis. And if the Congress and the President act on that flawed assumption, they will create a situation that is truly unaffordable—the decline of U.S. military power.” (U.S. Senator John McCain)
- “No other power than America could form the hub of a coalition to maintain global security. No wider international grouping, not even the U.N. Security Council itself, could do so either....” (Liam Fox, U.K. Defense Secretary)

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### Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

- “Our global commitments have not shrunk. If anything, they continue to grow, and the world is a lot less predictable now than we could have ever imagined. . . . Cuts can reasonably only go so far without hollowing the force.” — February 17, 2011<sup>3</sup>
- “[A]ny massive cuts . . . would be dangerous now, given the national-security requirements that we have.” — October 7, 2010<sup>4</sup>
- “The most significant threat to our national security is our debt.” — August 27, 2010<sup>5</sup>

### Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta

- “[T]he debt ceiling agreement contains a sequester mechanism that would take effect if Congress fails to enact further deficit reduction. If that happens, it could trigger a round of dangerous across-the-board defense cuts that would do real damage to our security, our troops and their families, and our ability to protect the nation. . . . The United States must be able to protect our core national security interests with an adaptable force capable and ready to meet these threats and

deter adversaries that would put those interests at risk.” — August 3, 2011<sup>6</sup>

- “[M]y number-one job will be to ensure that America continues to have the best-trained, the best-equipped, and the strongest military in the world in order to make sure that we protect our country.” — June 9, 2011<sup>7</sup>
- “We face the challenge of rising and changing powers and nations in turmoil, particularly in the Middle East, undergoing enormous political transformation. We are no longer in the Cold War. This is more like the ‘blizzard war,’ a blizzard of challenges that draw speed and intensity from terrorism, from rapidly developing technologies and the rising number of powers on the world stage.” — June 9, 2011<sup>8</sup>

### Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy

- “[W]e have to really be prepared for the downsides of this security environment, for the contingencies that could come out of proliferation, the aggression, terrorism, the failure states and the creation of chaos in certain areas.” — March 26, 2010<sup>9</sup>

1. Press release, “Remarks by the President in Department of Defense Personnel Announcements,” The White House, May 20, 2011, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/30/remarks-president-department-defense-personnel-announcements> (August 4, 2011).
2. Introduction, *National Security Strategy*, The White House, May 2010, at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf) (August 4, 2011).
3. Testimony in *Hearing to Receive Testimony on the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2012 and Future Years Defense Program*, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, February 17, 2011, at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2011/02%20February/11-04%20-%202-17-11.pdf> (August 4, 2011).
4. Dave Cook, “Q&A with Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen,” *Christian Science Monitor*, October 7, 2010, at [http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/monitor\\_breakfast/2010/1007/Q-A-with-Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff-chairman-Adm.-Mike-Mullen](http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/monitor_breakfast/2010/1007/Q-A-with-Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff-chairman-Adm.-Mike-Mullen) (August 4, 2011).
5. CNN Wire Staff, “Mullen: Debt Is Top National Security Threat,” August 27, 2010, at [http://articles.cnn.com/2010-08-27/us/debt.security.mullen\\_1\\_pentagon-budget-national-debt-michael-mullen?s=PM:US](http://articles.cnn.com/2010-08-27/us/debt.security.mullen_1_pentagon-budget-national-debt-michael-mullen?s=PM:US) (August 4, 2011).
6. “Meeting Our Fiscal and National Security Responsibility,” letter to all Defense Department personnel, August 3, 2011, at [http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0711\\_message1/](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0711_message1/) (August 5, 2011).
7. Testimony in *Hearing to Consider the Nomination of Hon. Leon E. Panetta to Be Secretary of Defense*, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, June 9, 2011, at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2011/06%20June/11-47%20-%206-9-11.pdf> (August 4, 2011).
8. *Ibid.*
9. Transcript of interview with Charlie Rose, March 26, 2010, at <http://www.charlierose.com/download/transcript/10934> (August 4, 2011).

### Pentagon Spokesman Geoff Morrell

- “[Secretary Gates] has been clear that further significant defense cuts cannot be accomplished without reducing forces [sic] structure and military capability.” — April 13, 2011<sup>10</sup>

### Director of National Intelligence James Clapper

- “The debt does pose a potential threat to our national security....” — February 10, 2011<sup>11</sup>
- “Although I believe that counterterrorism, counterproliferation, and counterintelligence are at the immediate forefront of our security concerns, it is virtually impossible to rank—in terms of long-term importance—the numerous, potential threats to U.S. national security. The United States no longer faces—as in the Cold War—one dominant threat. Rather, it is the multiplicity and interconnectedness of potential threats—and the actors behind them—that constitute our biggest challenge.... [T]he capabilities of the NATO alliance will also face strains as deficit countries are compelled to make painful cuts in government outlays, including for defense.” — February 10, 2011<sup>12</sup>

### Army Chief of Staff General Martin Dempsey, nominee for Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

- “[Dempsey] described the need to maintain the ‘fairly predictable, traditional balance’ among three key categories: personnel; training, opera-

tions and maintenance; and modernization.... If you stray too far and rob from one category to sustain another, a ‘hollowing’ of the force will occur—something Dempsey said he is ‘extraordinarily concerned about.’” — April 24, 2011<sup>13</sup>

### Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

- “[O]ur rising debt levels... poses a national security threat.... And it also sends a message of weakness internationally.” — September 8, 2010<sup>14</sup>

### Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates

- “I have long believed—and I still do—that the defense budget, however large it may be, is not the cause of this country’s fiscal woes.... [T]he continued strength and global reach of the American military will remain the greatest deterrent against aggression, and the most effective means of preserving peace in the 21st century, as it was in the 20th.” — May 24, 2011<sup>15</sup>
- “The lessons of history tell us we must not diminish our ability or our determination to deal with the threats and challenges on the horizon, because ultimately they will need to be confronted.... Beyond the current wars, our military credibility, commitment, and presence are required to sustain alliances, to protect trade routes and energy supplies, and to deter would-be adversaries from making the kind of miscalculations that so often lead to war.” — April 22, 2011<sup>16</sup>

10. Quoted in Michael J. Carden, “President’s Plan Likely to Affect 2013 Defense Budget,” American Forces Press Service, April 13, 2011, at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=63551> (August 4, 2011).

11. Testimony before House Select Committee on Intelligence, quoted in Phil Stewart, “U.S. Intelligence Faces ‘Belt-Tightening,’” Reuters, February 10, 2011, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/10/us-usa-intelligence-idUSTRE71913V20110210> (August 4, 2011).

12. “Statement for the Record on the Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community for the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence,” February 10, 2011, at [http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20110210\\_testimony\\_clapper.pdf](http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20110210_testimony_clapper.pdf) (August 4, 2011).

13. Lance M. Bacon, “The New Chief’s Challenges,” *Army Times*, April 24, 2011, at <http://www.armytimes.com/news/2011/04/army-new-chiefs-challenges-042411/> (August 4, 2011).

14. Transcript, “A Conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton,” Council on Foreign Relations, September 8, 2010, at <http://www.cfr.org/diplomacy/conversation-us-secretary-state-hillary-rodham-clinton/p22896> (August 4, 2011).

15. Speech to the American Enterprise Institute, May 24, 2011, at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/robertgatesamericanenterpriseinstitute.htm> (August 4, 2011).

16. Speech at Notre Dame University Commencement, April 22, 2011, at <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1568> (August 4, 2011).

- “Defense is not like other discretionary spending. This is something we’ve got to do and that we have a responsibility to do. And so the two shouldn’t be equated. They have not been equated in the past. I mean, that’s why they call it non-defense discretionary spending and so on.... I got it that we’ve got a \$1.6 trillion deficit. But defense is not a significant part of that problem. If you took a 10 percent cut in defense, which would be catastrophic in terms of capabilities, that would be \$50 billion on a \$1.6 trillion deficit.” — February 23, 2011<sup>17</sup>
- “Our military must remain strong enough and agile enough to face a diverse range of threats, from non-state actors attempting to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction and sophisticated missiles to the more traditional threats of other states building up their conventional forces and developing new capabilities that target our traditional strengths. We shrink from our global security responsibilities at our peril.... [W]e should learn from our National experience since World War I that drastic reductions in the size and strength of the U.S military make armed conflict all the more likely with an unacceptably high cost in American blood and treasure.” — February 17, 2011<sup>18</sup>
- “The truth...is when it comes to the deficit, the Department of Defense is not the problem. I think in terms of the specifics they [the Deficit Commission] came up with, that is math, not strategy.” — November 16, 2010<sup>19</sup>
- “[M]y greatest fear is that in economic tough times that people will see the defense budget as

the place to solve the nation’s deficit problems.... [A]s I look around...and see a more unstable world, more failed and failing states, countries that are investing heavily in their militaries... I think that would be disastrous....” — August 9, 2010<sup>20</sup>

#### Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld

- “While there are substantial savings to be found in the defense budget, hundreds of billions cannot be cut without impairing our security.... Even if President Obama tomorrow brought home each and every troop in Iraq and Afghanistan, tore down the Pentagon, shuttered the CIA and the national security agencies of government, and pink-slipped the three million men and women defending the country, it would not solve America’s financial woes.” — June 30, 2011<sup>21</sup>

#### Former Secretary of Defense William Cohen

- “Cutting missile-defense funding at this critical juncture sends the wrong signal to both our adversaries and our allies. It would embolden North Korea, Iran and other rogue states to pursue missiles of increasing range. It would also confuse our allies and undermine their trust in America’s security guarantees.” — May 28, 2009<sup>22</sup>

#### Former Secretary of State, National Security Adviser, and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell

- “I don’t think the defense budget can be made... sacrosanct.... But the real money [is] in the entitlements, it’s Social Security and Medicare and

17. Stephen F. Hayes, “Robert Gates on Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Defense Budget: An Interview with the Secretary of Defense,” *The Weekly Standard*, February 23, 2011, at [http://www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/robert-gates-libya-afghanistan-iraq-and-defense-budget\\_552349.html](http://www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/robert-gates-libya-afghanistan-iraq-and-defense-budget_552349.html) (August 4, 2011).

18. Testimony in *Hearing to Receive Testimony on the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2012 and Future Years Defense Program*, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, February 17, 2011, at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2011/02%20February/11-04%20-%202-17-11.pdf> (August 4, 2011).

19. Quoted in Julian E. Barnes, “Gates Warns Against Defense Cuts,” *The Wall Street Journal*, November 16, 2010, at <http://blogs.wsj.com/ceo-council/2010/11/16/gates-counter-punches-on-deficit-commission-proposed-defense-cuts/> (August 4, 2011).

20. Transcript of Pentagon Press Briefing, August 9, 2010, at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4669> (August 4, 2011).

21. Donald Rumsfeld, “The Peril of Deep Defense Cuts,” *The Wall Street Journal*, June 30, 2011, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304584004576416271311589238.html> (August 4, 2011).

Medicaid. And unless we do something about those, you can't balance the budget." — January 23, 2011<sup>23</sup>

### Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger

- "I agree with Secretary Clinton that the deficit constrains our ability to act and probably keeps us from or may keep us from doing things that we would otherwise do and should do.... [O]ver a period of time, when countries are making their assessment of what risks they are going to run together with us and what commitments they will make in relation to us, the indebtedness of the United States will be a big handicap." — September 8, 2010<sup>24</sup>

### Members of Congress

#### Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH)

- "[I]f we don't restore fiscal sanity to Washington and reduce our National debt, one of the concerns that I have is that the rising debt payments will begin to significantly crowd out the finances we have to be able to protect our Nation and its interests...." — March 3, 2011<sup>25</sup>

#### Senator Mark Begich (D-AK)

- "I can't imagine a worse time to talk about cutting the missile defense program with North Korea playing games with international peace and security.... While I appreciate the Depart-

ment of Defense's goal of scrutinizing spending and the deployment of resources, cutting the missile defense program is absolutely the wrong choice...." — April 6, 2009<sup>26</sup>

#### Senator John Cornyn (R-TX)

- "[I]t looks like we are about to make the same mistake we made in the 1970's and 1990's. We are about to cash in a so-called 'peace dividend' by growing domestic spending and weakening our defenses.... Given the threats we face, now is not the time to cash in a peace dividend." — May 7, 2009<sup>27</sup>

#### Senator James Inhofe (R-OK)

- "[President Obama's] budget is expanding the welfare state, gutting the defense modernization, and jeopardizing our national security—all while our troops are here fighting for us." — April 6, 2009<sup>28</sup>

#### Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI)

- "While defense and other war related costs—adjusted for inflation—have experienced substantial growth of 74% (\$364 billion) in the ten years since 2001, these costs are clearly related to the cost of countering terrorism, defending the homeland, and supporting a larger veteran population. We need an honest debate on how much is needed to preserve our security, but let me say this—we can only substantially cut

22. William S. Cohen, "No Time to Cut Missile Defense," *The Washington Times*, May 28, 2009, at [http://www.cohengroup.net/news/op\\_ed/op\\_ed052809\\_2.cfm](http://www.cohengroup.net/news/op_ed/op_ed052809_2.cfm) (August 4, 2011).

23. Transcript of interview with Candy Crowley, CNN, January 23, 2011, at <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1101/23/sotu.01.html> (August 4, 2011).

24. "Kissinger: Hillary Is Right, U.S. National Debt Could Be a Big Handicap," transcript of interview with Greta Van Susteren, Fox News, September 8, 2010, at <http://www.foxnews.com/on-air/on-the-record/transcript/kissinger-hillary-right-us-national-debt-could-be-039big-handicap039> (August 4, 2011).

25. Statement in *Hearing to Consider the Nomination of General Martin E. Dempsey, USA, for Reappointment to the Grade of General and to Be Chief of Staff, United States Army*, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, March 3, 2011, at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2011/03%20March/11-08%20-%203-3-11.pdf> (August 5, 2011).

26. Press release, "Sen. Begich Opposed to Missile Defense Cuts," Office of Senator Mark Begich, April 6, 2009, at <http://begich.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=00b6ae2e-2e14-42e8-8a1d-683f1bd00652> (August 5, 2011).

27. "No Time to Cash in a Peace Dividend," speech at the American Enterprise Institute, May 7, 2009, at <http://www.aei.org/docLib/Cornyn.pdf> (August 5, 2011).

28. "Inhofe Says Obama Defense Cuts Will 'Disarm America,'" blog post from Afghanistan, April 6, 2009, at [http://inhofe.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressRoom.PressReleases&ContentRecord\\_id=7cb76731-802a-23ad-476b-e79693aaa59b](http://inhofe.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressRoom.PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=7cb76731-802a-23ad-476b-e79693aaa59b) (August 5, 2011).

these programs at our Nation's peril." — June 30, 2011<sup>29</sup>

#### Senator Joe Lieberman (I-CT)

- "[W]e must not and cannot balance our budget by retreating from the world.... We will not close the deficit by gutting the defense budget.... Our real fiscal challenge and foremost responsibility lies in tackling the runaway cost of our entitlement programs." — June 20, 2011<sup>30</sup>

#### Senator John McCain (R-AZ)

- "Defense spending is not what is sinking this country into fiscal crisis. And if the Congress and the President act on that flawed assumption, they will create a situation that is truly unaffordable—the decline of U.S. military power." — June 9, 2011<sup>31</sup>

#### Senator Jim Webb (D-VA)

- "Because more than nine years of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have greatly increased the wear and tear on our ground vehicles, weapons, and aircraft, I support provisions in the defense authorization and appropriations bills that will modernize and recapitalize the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. I also supported past increases to the personnel end strength of both the Army and Marine Corps so they are able to meet their increased operational commitments in a way that does not place disproportionately heavy burdens on the shoulders of our service members.... A strong viable Navy

is high on my list of defense priorities.... The size of the Navy's fleet has fallen to a 90-year low with less than 290 ships—an insufficient number to meet our national security requirements. The Navy's long-range shipbuilding plan calls for 313 ships, but we should view this as a floor—the minimum number of ships necessary for the Navy to meet its global commitments in our uncertain world. I personally believe the number should be substantially higher." — July 14, 2011<sup>32</sup>

#### Representative Eric Cantor (R-VA)

- "American success in foreign policy and our strength comes from the notion we do promote peace through strength." — May 4, 2010<sup>33</sup>

#### Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA)

- "[S]trengthening national defense must remain among our top funding priorities. New security threats will continually emerge, some far more serious than others, making it even more necessary that we are prepared to confront any situation that arises with a fighting force that is second to none." — June 14, 2010<sup>34</sup>

#### Representative Doug Lamborn (R-CO)

- "While I wholeheartedly support finding cost savings through efficiencies in all areas of the federal government, including defense, I will resist any actions that would compromise our nation's qualitative edge when it comes to national defense. It is well known that weak-

29. Press release, "Statement of Chairman Daniel K. Inouye," Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, June 30, 2011, at <http://appropriations.senate.gov/news.cfm?method=news.view&id=0af47771-15fa-4ca2-b0a0-a8988a1e5863> (August 5, 2011).

30. Remarks at the Hudson Institute, June 20, 2011, at <http://lieberman.senate.gov/index.cfm/news-events/news/2011/6/lieberman-delivers-address-to-hudson-institute-condemning-isolationism-from-the-left-and-the-right> (August 5, 2011).

31. Statement in *Hearing to Consider the Nomination of Hon. Leon E. Panetta to Be Secretary of Defense*, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, June 9, 2011, at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2011/06%20June/11-47%20-%206-9-11.pdf> (August 5, 2011).

32. Statement, "Providing for a Strong National Defense," July 14, 2011, at [http://webb.senate.gov/issuesandlegislation/armedservicesandveterans/Strong\\_National\\_Defense.cfm](http://webb.senate.gov/issuesandlegislation/armedservicesandveterans/Strong_National_Defense.cfm) (August 5, 2011).

33. "House Minority Whip Cantor: I Fear We're Making the Same Mistakes Prior to 9/11," transcript of interview with Greta Van Susteren, Fox News, May 4, 2010, at <http://www.foxnews.com/on-air/on-the-record/transcript/house-minority-whip-cantor-i-fear-we039re-making-same-mistakes-prior-911> (August 5, 2011).

34. Duncan Hunter, "Chopping U.S. Defense Amid War Is a Mistake," *Defense News*, June 14, 2010, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4668156> (August 5, 2011).

ness invites aggression. Threats do not always announce themselves in advance. In order to prepare for unpredictable threats, we must modernize our defense systems. We certainly cannot let them age and deteriorate.” — February 16, 2011<sup>35</sup>

**Representative Buck McKeon (R–CA),  
Chairman, House Armed Services Committee**

- “It’s my sense that White House defense decisions are putting this great Republic on the fast track for decline. The logic has been simply baffling to me: expand our military commitments while cutting the funding for our armed forces.” — May 5, 2011<sup>36</sup>
- “Cutting defense will undermine our ability to project power, will strengthen our adversaries and weaken our alliances.” — December 1, 2010<sup>37</sup>
- “Cutting defense spending amidst two wars is a red line for me and should be a red line for all Americans.” — November 15, 2010<sup>38</sup>

**Representative Paul Ryan (R–WI)**

- “Our fiscal crisis is above all a spending crisis that is being driven by the growth of our major entitlement programs: Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. In 1970, these programs consumed about 20 percent of the budget. Today that number has grown to over 40 percent. Over the same period, defense spending has shrunk as a share

of the federal budget from about 39 percent to just under 16 percent—even as we conduct an ambitious global war on terrorism. The fact is, defense consumes a smaller share of the national economy today than it did throughout the Cold War. If we continue on our current path, the rapid rise of health care costs will crowd out all areas of the budget, including defense.” — June 3, 2011<sup>39</sup>

- “Like all categories of government spending, defense spending should be executed with greater efficiency and accountability. But responsible budgeting must never lose sight of the fact that the first responsibility of the federal government is to provide for the common defense.” — April 5, 2011<sup>40</sup>

**Representative Mike Turner (R–OH)**

- “Simply cutting our defense budget while we are in the midst of three wars puts at risk a fighting force already stretched thin.” — April 27, 2011<sup>41</sup>

**Foreign Officials**

**British Prime Minister David Cameron**

- “My view is clear: the cause of peace and progress is best served by an America that is engaged in the world. And the values we hold dear are best defended when Britain and the United States, and the United States and Europe, stand together.” — November 29, 2007<sup>42</sup>

35. Press release, “Lamborn Leads Fight to Restore Defense Cuts,” Office of Representative Doug Lamborn, February 16, 2011, at <http://lamborn.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=150&itemid=727> (August 5, 2011).

36. “America’s Choice in a Dangerous Age: Lead or Follow,” speech at The Heritage Foundation, May 5, 2011, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Lecture/2011/05/Americas-Choice-in-a-Dangerous-Age-Lead-or-Follow> (August 5, 2011).

37. Howard “Buck” McKeon, “Opposing View on Defense Spending: Military Cuts a ‘Non-Starter,’” *USA Today*, December 1, 2010, at [http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2010-12-02-editorial02\\_ST1\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2010-12-02-editorial02_ST1_N.htm) (August 5, 2011).

38. Speech at Foreign Policy Institute, quoted in Rick Maze, “McKeon: Defense Cuts Unacceptable,” *Military Times*, November 15, 2010, at <http://www.militarytimes.com/news/2010/11/military-mckeon-defense-cuts-111510w/> (August 5, 2011).

39. Remarks to Alexander Hamilton Society, quoted in Jennifer Rubin, “Paul Ryan’s Foreign Policy Vision,” blog post, June 3, 2011, at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/post/paul-ryans-foreign-policy-vision/2011/03/29/AG8MDWHH\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/post/paul-ryans-foreign-policy-vision/2011/03/29/AG8MDWHH_blog.html) (August 5, 2011).

40. *The Path to Prosperity: Restoring America’s Promise, Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Resolution*, Committee on the Budget, U.S. House of Representatives, April 5, 2011, at <http://budget.house.gov/UploadedFiles/PathToProsperityFY2012.pdf> (August 5, 2011).

41. Column, “Working to Put Our Government Finances in Order,” April 27, 2011, at <http://turner.house.gov/News/DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=238479> (August 5, 2011).

**U.K. Foreign Secretary William Hague**

- “In our lifetime and that of our parents the United States has been not only the ‘arsenal of democracy’ without which tyranny might have prevailed, but has also been, because of its extraordinary political diversity and the power of its example, a source of hope and inspiration to millions of people mired in conflict or oppression elsewhere in the world. My belief and my hope is that the United States will always continue to fulfill this indispensable role in world affairs, and it will find in the United Kingdom a redoubtable ally.” — November 17, 2010<sup>43</sup>

**U.K. Defense Secretary Liam Fox**

- “[F]or the UK, our relationship with the United States, in the context of NATO, will remain critical for our security. It is our most prized and important strategic relationship.” — June 5, 2010<sup>44</sup>
- “No other power than America could form the hub of a coalition to maintain global security. No wider international grouping, not even the U.N. Security Council itself, could do so either.... The fact is that, in the end, only America is taken seriously by tyrants and aggressors.” — February 16, 2006<sup>45</sup>

**Then-U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair**

- “The danger with America today is not that they are too much involved. The danger is if they decide to pull up the drawbridge and disengage. We need them involved. We want them engaged. The reality is that none of the problems that press in on us can be resolved or even contemplated without them.” — March 27, 2006<sup>46</sup>

**Former U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher**

- “America today is the only global super-power.... Only America has the reach and means to deal with Osama bin Laden or Saddam Hussein or the other wicked psychopaths who will sooner or later step into their shoes.” — December 9, 2002<sup>47</sup>

**Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard**

- “You were indispensable in the Cold War and you are indispensable in the new world, too.” — March 10, 2011<sup>48</sup>

**Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd**

- “[O]ur alliance with the United States remains core for us—the bedrock of Australia’s national security interests. The United States provides

42. Speech at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D.C., November 29, 2007, at [http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2007/11/David\\_Camersons\\_first\\_speech\\_in\\_Washington\\_DC.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2007/11/David_Camersons_first_speech_in_Washington_DC.aspx) (August 5, 2011).

43. “International Security in a Network World,” speech at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., November 17, 2010, at <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/129769-international-security-in-a-network-world-british-foreign-secretary-william-hague> (August 5, 2011).

44. Speech at 9th International Institute for Strategic Studies Asia Security Summit, The Shangri-La Dialogue, Singapore, June 5, 2010, at <http://www.iiss.org/conferences/the-shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2010/plenary-session-speeches/third-plenary-session/liam-fox/> (August 5, 2011).

45. Remarks at The Heritage Foundation as Shadow Secretary of Defense, February 16, 2006, at [http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2006/02/Fox\\_Security\\_and\\_Defence\\_\\_Making\\_sense\\_of\\_the\\_special\\_relationship.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2006/02/Fox_Security_and_Defence__Making_sense_of_the_special_relationship.aspx) (August 5, 2011).

46. Speech to the Australian Parliament, March 27, 2006, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2006/mar/27/uksecurity.terrorism> (August 5, 2011).

47. Remarks at The Heritage Foundation, December 9, 2002, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Lecture/Heritage-Event-The-West-Must-Prevail> (August 5, 2011).

48. Address to Congress, quoted in Mark Kenny and Matthew Franklin, “Julia Gillard’s Speech in the US Congress Marks a New Era,” *Herald Sun*, March 10, 2011, at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/julia-gillard-speech-us-congress-marks-new-era/story-e6frf7l6-1226018751459> (August 5, 2011).

49. “Australia’s Foreign Policy Priorities and Our Candidature for the UN Security Council,” speech to the National Press Club, Canberra, June 1, 2011, at [http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/2011/kr\\_sp\\_110601.html](http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/2011/kr_sp_110601.html) (August 5, 2011).



the cornerstone of security in our region....”  
— June 1, 2011<sup>49</sup>

#### South Korean President Lee Myung-bak

- “[I]n such times, the strategic role of the United States is more important than ever, not only on the [Korean] Peninsula but throughout the region.” — September 21, 2009<sup>50</sup>

#### South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan

- “[T]he ROK–U.S. alliance is a cornerstone for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia....” — February 20, 2009<sup>51</sup>

#### Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa

- “For more than 60 years, the United States has secured the safety of the ocean as a global commons. U.S. forces alone have the capacity to deploy throughout this entire area.” — June 5, 2010<sup>52</sup>

#### President of Taiwan Ma Ying-Jeou

- “[America’s] presence in the very system it helped create decades ago is crucial to that system’s survival. In the end, only a strong US commitment, backed by its credibility in East Asia, can guarantee the peace and stability of this region.” — May 12, 2011<sup>53</sup>

#### Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

- “[T]he momentous trials of the last century and the unfolding events of this century attest to the decisive role of the United States in defend-

ing peace and advancing freedom. Providence entrusted the United States to be the guardian of liberty.” — May 24, 2011<sup>54</sup>

#### Foreign Policy Experts

**Arthur C. Brooks, President, American Enterprise Institute; Edwin J. Feulner, President, The Heritage Foundation; and William Kristol, Director, Foreign Policy Initiative**

- “[The military] is neither the true source of our fiscal woes, nor an appropriate target for indiscriminate budget-slashing in a still-dangerous world.... [M]ilitary spending is not a net drain on our economy. It is unrealistic to imagine a return to long-term prosperity if we face instability around the globe because of a hollowed-out U.S. military lacking the size and strength to defend American interests around the world. Global prosperity requires commerce and trade, and this requires peace. But the peace does not keep itself.... Strength, not weakness, brings the true peace dividend in a global economy.” — October 4, 2010<sup>55</sup>

**Kim R. Holmes, Vice President, Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, The Heritage Foundation**

- “Unless we reform Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, the Congressional Budget Office forecasts spending on just those three entitlements plus interest on the debt will consume all federal revenues by 2035. Nothing would be left for defense—or any other discretion-

50. Transcript, “Meeting with His Excellency Lee Myung-bak,” Council on Foreign Relations, September 21, 2009, at <http://www.cfr.org/diplomacy/meeting-his-excellency-lee-myung-bak/p20255> (August 5, 2011).

51. Transcript of press conference, “Secretary Clinton’s Remarks with South Korean Foreign Minister Yu,” February 20, 2009, at <http://www.cfr.org/world/secretary-clintons-remarks-south-korean-foreign-minister-yu/p18596> (August 5, 2011).

52. Speech at 9th International Institute for Strategic Studies Asia Security Summit, The Shangri-La Dialogue, Singapore, June 5, 2010, at <http://www.iiss.org/conferences/the-shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2010/plenary-session-speeches/second-plenary-session/toshimi-kitazawa/> (August 5, 2011).

53. Transcript, “US–Taiwan Relations in a New Era,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 12, 2011, at [http://csis.org/files/attachments/110512\\_transcript\\_ma.pdf](http://csis.org/files/attachments/110512_transcript_ma.pdf) (August 5, 2011).

54. “Transcript: Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu’s Address to Congress,” *The Washington Post*, May 24, 2011, at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/israeli-prime-minister-binyamin-netanyahus-address-to-congress/2011/05/24/AFWY5bAH\\_print.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/israeli-prime-minister-binyamin-netanyahus-address-to-congress/2011/05/24/AFWY5bAH_print.html) (August 5, 2011).

55. Arthur C. Brooks, Edwin J. Feulner, and William Kristol, “Peace Doesn’t Keep Itself,” *The Wall Street Journal*, October 4, 2010, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704483004575524763315951380.html> (August 5, 2011).

ary spending, for that matter.” — February 23, 2011<sup>56</sup>

**Dan Blumenthal and Michael Mazza,  
American Enterprise Institute**

- “The long-term costs of defense cuts are not worth the short-term savings. If America skimps on its military, China will become the regional hegemon.” — July 5, 2011<sup>57</sup>

**Max Boot, Council on Foreign Relations**

- “Is this any time to cut defense spending? Apparently President Obama thinks so.... [T]he implication is that the U.S. armed forces will have to do everything they’re currently doing—but with significantly fewer resources. That’s a recipe for trouble—a prescription for American decline.... The U.S. military is already operating at full capacity. It is already too small for all the missions thrown its way. It is already overstressed and over-deployed.... There is an urgent need to recapitalize the force—and also to expand the number of soldiers and marines, rather than to downsize the force, as currently planned.” — April 14, 2011<sup>58</sup>

**Thomas Donnelly, American Enterprise Institute**

- “By every measure, the armed forces of the United States have been ‘doing more with less’ for more than two decades. The number of Americans on active duty has been reduced by a third. Reservists have helped pick up the burden of repeated deployments. Reagan-era weapons have been refitted with new electronics, new munitions, and employed in innovative ways.... But a nation

cannot long secure itself or its interests if its defense ‘planning’ depends upon genius generalship, unending sacrifice by lieutenants, captains, and NCOs, and constant deployment of rapidly aging planes, ships, and vehicles. In war, you usually get what you pay for.” — April 25, 2011<sup>59</sup>

- “[T]he capacity of the U.S. military is both dangerously small and imperfectly shaped for the coming decades. At the same time, it is also apparent that the world’s appetite for American security guarantees is growing and that there is no obvious substitute in sight.” — March 3, 2011<sup>60</sup>

**Frederick Kagan, American Enterprise Institute,  
and Kimberly Kagan, Institute for the Study of War**

- “Cutting U.S. defense spending would put the nation and the current global order at grave risk. International stability and American security are threatened by dangerous contingencies that are becoming increasingly likely.” — November 21, 2010<sup>61</sup>

**Gary Schmitt, American Enterprise Institute,  
and William Kristol, Foreign Policy Initiative**

- “We have today an aging and shrinking Air Force and Navy, an Army that is overstretched, reserve forces that are far too ‘active’ in their rate of deployment, and too few dollars to rebuild and modernize.... The gap between what is needed to modernize the military and the resources being provided is larger than any ‘reform’ can bridge.... It’s far from clear that the U.S. military can withstand another eight years of flat or declining budgets and remain the preeminent

56. Kim R. Holmes, “Defense Budget Cop-Out,” *The Washington Times*, February 23, 2011, at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/feb/23/holmes-defense-budget-cop-out/> (August 5, 2011).

57. Dan Blumenthal and Michael Mazza, “Asia Needs a Larger Defense Budget,” *The Wall Street Journal*, July 5, 2011, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304803104576425414030335604.html#articleTabs%3Darticle> (August 5, 2011).

58. Max Boot, “A Prescription for American Decline,” *Commentary*, April 14, 2011, at <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/2011/04/14/prescription-for-american-decline/> (August 5, 2011).

59. Thomas Donnelly, “In Defense of Defense,” *The Weekly Standard*, April 25, 2011, at [http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/defense-defense\\_557491.html](http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/defense-defense_557491.html) (August 5, 2011).

60. Thomas Donnelly, “Assessing the Strategic Readiness of US Armed Forces,” testimony before the House Committee on Armed Services, March 3, 2011, at <http://www.aei.org/speech/100198> (August 5, 2011).

61. Frederick Kagan and Kimberly Kagan, “Does America Need to Cut Defense Spending?” *The Washington Post*, November 21, 2010, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/11/19/AR2010111904544.html> (August 5, 2011).

global force it is today, continuing to spare us the costs that come with a world in which there is increasing anarchy and less order as American military power recedes.” — May 3, 2010<sup>62</sup>

**William Perry and Steven Hadley,  
Quadrennial Defense Review Panel**

- “The aging of inventories and equipment used by the services, the decline of the size of the Navy, escalating personnel entitlements, increased overhead and procurement costs, and the growing stress on the force means a train wreck is coming in the areas of personnel, acquisition, and force structure.” — August 3, 2010<sup>63</sup>

**Former Senator Malcolm Wallop,  
founder, Frontiers of Freedom**

- “The Obama administration’s proposed defense budget cuts—particularly the deep cuts to our homeland missile defense system—are signaling North Korea and Iran that we do not have the will to counter their aggressive actions.” — August 13, 2009<sup>64</sup>

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62. Gary Schmitt and William Kristol, “Our Country’s Battles,” *The Weekly Standard*, May 3, 2010, at <http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/our-country%E2%80%99s-battles> (August 5, 2011).

63. William Perry and Steven Hadley, “Joint Statement of William J. Perry and Stephen J. Hadley Before the Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing on ‘Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel,’” August 3, 2010, at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2010/08%20August/Perry-Hadley%2008-03-10.pdf> (August 4, 2011).

64. “Malcolm Wallop: Obama’s Deadly Defense Cuts,” NewsMax, August 13, 2009, at <http://www.newsmax.com/InsideCover/wallop-obama-defense/2009/08/13/id/332340> (August 4, 2011).