

Strategy conference tackles Landpower, strategic issues facing the nation

by Thomas Zimmerman

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Gen. Ray Odierno, Chief of Staff of the Army, spoke about a wide-range of topics with NPR Newshour's Margaret Warner as part of the 2013 Army War College Strategy Conference. Odierno spoke about the importance of maintaining a proper balance in the Joint Force, the future of the Army and the importance of strong leaders. He also

answered questions from the audience. View the entire interview at www.youtube.com/usarmywarcollege

Carlisle Barracks, Pa. -- Experts from academia, military and government converged on Carlisle Barracks to discuss links between Landpower and vital strategic issues facing the nation and the world during the Army War College Strategy Conference April 9-11.

The theme of this year's event was "The Future of American Landpower" and was met head-on by conference keynote speaker Professor John Mearsheimer, University of Chicago.

"We're not only talking about the future of Landpower here, we are talking about the future of the U.S. Army," he said. "The pivot to the Pacific region, the effects the nation feels as the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts end, and the uncertainty of the U.S. economy will affect the future for the Army and not necessarily in a positive way."

Landpower is the principal ingredient of military power, it was hard for him to see a situation where a major land war would occur between the U.S. and China, said Mearsheimer.

"The most likely scenario in the Asia-Pacific region involving the Army will be aggression on the

Korean Peninsula,” he said. “It’s unclear whether other challenges in the region will involve a large-scale Army presence.”

He cautioned that this situation could cause the Army to fall behind the other services in the fight for funding in an already constrained environment.

“There is no reason to think that spending cuts are going away and this shift could have a drastic effect of Army funding, perhaps dropping all the way down to third behind the Navy and Air Force,” he said. “The Army needs to develop a narrative to describe how and why it’s necessary to American security.”

Professor John Mearsheimer, University of Chicago was the keynote speaker for the conference. He shared his thoughts on the future of the Army as the DoD re-balances to the Asia-Pacific region and what it could mean in terms of strategy and funding.

Gen. Ray Odierno, Chief of Staff of the Army, provided counterpoint in an interview with NPR Newshour’s **Margaret Warner** conducted as part of the conference.



“We are here to make sure we have the right Joint Force,” said the Army Service Chief. “We have to maintain the right balance. We can’t get so far out of balance that we cannot present all options to the President.”

Despite fiscal challenges, he conveyed confidence in the future of the Army.

“With our expertise we can adjust to any mission,” he said. “Only one Army in the world can deploy quickly and sustain for the short and long term – the U.S. Army.”

Odierno said that he realizes that as operations draw to a close in Iraq and Afghanistan changes are necessary.

“This is a time of evolution, not revolution. What we are doing now is a part of an iterative process to get national security right,” he said. “What we have to do is continue to evolve as we look to the future. We have to look at what capabilities we need to have as the world changes around us.”

He said that what the changes will require strong leaders and predictable funding.

“We still need leaders. The complexity of the challenges facing us is greater than ever before,” he said.

We are going to ask our men and women to do some very difficult things and we cannot let them down.”

In addition to the presentations by Mearsheimer and Odierno, the conference included five panel discussions on topics ranging from state sponsored crime and gangs to how to address rising non-hostile rivals like China, and evening presentations by experts like **Andrew Krepinevich**, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

The United States has a role in every corner of the world, but strategy is as much about deciding what we're not going to do as what we will do, said Krepinevich, speaking at the evening presentation, April 10.

He spoke of the increasingly lethal battlefield, even against irregular forces, suggesting that we run the risk of pricing ourselves out of certain forms of warfare.

Krepinevich noted efforts to deter aggression must be based on an understanding of the cost from the other country's perspective. China doesn't want war, he said, but they do want victory in the sense of Sun Tzu.

Each presenter contributed to the informed dialogue, according to **Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo**, Army War College Commandant.

“Here we question assumptions ... and examine all sides of the debate to effectively determine the way ahead,” he said during the opening of the conference. “We are all better after we have been challenged.”

A new wrinkle to this year's conference was the ability to participate remotely, so as to avoid travel costs. Each of the presentations were streamed live over the internet and an interactive discussion took place on Twitter using the hash tag #USAWCStratConf

All of the presentations from the conference can be found on the Army War College YouTube page at www.youtube.com/usarmywarcollege

- **Keynote Address - The Rise of China and the Decline of the U.S. Army**
- Professor John Mearsheimer, University of Chicago

- **Dialogue with Gen. Ray Odierno, Army Chief of Staff, and PBS NewsHour's Margaret Warner, with Q&A**
- *"The Future of American Landpower"*

- **Panel I - A Moderated Debate: Is American Foreign Policy Overly Militarized?**

- Moderator: Mr. Tom Bowman, NPR Pentagon Correspondent
- Debaters: Dr. Dan Drezner, Tufts University & Mr. Nathan Freier, Center for Strategic & International Studies

- **Panel II - Great Power Rivalry: How To Address Rising Non-Hostile Rivals**

- Chair: Dr. Andrew Scobell, RAND
- Panelists: Dr. Zhu Feng, Beijing University; BG (R) Gurmeet Kanwal, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses; Dr. Stephen Blank, SSI, U.S. Army War College

- **Panel III: Political and Socio-Economic Change: Revolutions and Their Implications**

- Chair: Dr. Paul Kan, U.S. Army War College
- Panelists: Dr. William Zartman, Johns Hopkins; Dr. Phil Brenner, American University; Prof. Greg Aftandilian, Center for National Policy

- **Panel IV - Augmenting Our Influence: Alliance Revitalization and Partner Development**

- Chair: Dr. John Deni, SSI, U.S. Army War College
- Panelists: Dr. William Tow, Australian National University; Dr. Sean Kay, Ohio Wesleyan University; Dr. Carol Atkinson, Vanderbilt University

- **Panel V - State Sponsored Crime and Non-State Actors: Gangs, Guns, and Graft**

- Chair: Dr. Stephen Blank, SSI, U.S. Army War College
- Panelists: Edward Lucas, The Economist; Karen Saunders, Forum Foundation for Analytic Excellence; Douglas Farah, International Assessment and Strategy Center

- **Luncheon Speakers**

- Moderator: Dr. Steven Metz, SSI, U.S. Army War College
- Presenters: Dr. Lawrence Korb, Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress; Mr. Thomas Donnelly, Co-Director, Marilyn Ware Center for Security Studies, AEI

- **Banquet Keynote - American Defense Budget and the Future of U.S. Landpower**

- Dr. Andrew Krepinevich, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

- **Luncheon Speaker - Recoiling from Long Wars, or How We Re-Learn to Stop Worrying and Love the Bombs**
- Dr. Conrad Crane, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center

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