



# **Shaping U.S. Military Forces: Revolution or Relevance in a Post-Cold War World (Praeger Security International)**

*D. Robert Worley*

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In *Shaping U.S. Military Forces*, D. Robert Worley assesses military force changes that have been made since the Cold War, explains the many changes that have not been made, and recommends changes that must be made—as well as exploring the ways in which political and military forces line up to resist them.

For over forty years there was consensus about maintaining large U.S. military forces. Today, as evidenced by the steady decline in defense spending since 1985, that consensus has evaporated, and a new equilibrium is being sought. Yet evidence of transformation is modest. By outward appearances, today's military is principally a smaller version of our Cold War forces, despite the fact that threat, missions, and strategies have changed.

There has been no lack of reform effort at the highest levels of the defense bureaucracy. Under the leadership of General Colin Powell, the Joint Chiefs of Staff reexamined the roles and missions of the services. Recommendations followed. But, according to observers, change occurred only at the margins. Worley argues that the highly institutionalized cultures of the uniformed services offer the best explanation for why the American military is not a different force well over a decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Significant historical events, primarily from World War II forward, are used to explain belief systems within the individual services and sometimes within specific branches within a single service. Force planners commonly measure military end strength in terms of divisions, wings, and battle groups. Therefore, Worley examines the most important organizational structures—armored and infantry divisions, fighter and bomber wings, and carrier battle groups—and does so in the context of conflicts, including Vietnam, the Gulf War, Panama, Kosovo, and Somalia, and of course the unfinished conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. He highlights problems associated with the clash of service conceptions of war and the requirements of real conflict to examine the shape U.S. military forces have—and the shape they should assume.

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