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A Reasonable Defense.

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Kaufmann, William W. *A Reasonable Defense*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1986. 113pp. \$8.95

Epstein, Joshua M. *The 1987 Defense Budget*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1986. 61pp. \$7.95

"How much is enough?" is the perennial question asked about defense budgets. The two works reviewed here attempt to answer that question, and their efforts are complementary. Epstein focuses on the fiscal 1987 budget, while Kaufmann gives an overview of defense budgeting. The Epstein volume is the latest contribution in a series of Brookings analyses of the Federal budget which was started in the early 1970s. In recent years Kaufmann has authored the annual examination of the defense budget, and readers of those earlier studies will find some of the same points made there in *A Reasonable Defense*.

Readers who are not familiar with the Federal budget in general and with the defense segment of that budget in particular should find these monographs helpful in understanding the defense budget. Kaufmann illustrates with the fiscal 1986 budget how difficult it can be to get the defense spending numbers straight. He then explains the various definitions of "defense" in the Federal budget, the relationship between budget authority and outlays, alternative budget formats (e.g. appropriations title such as military personnel, procurement, etc.; organizational

component such as Department of the Navy; and program budget with budget categories such as strategic programs, general purpose programs, etc.), the defense budget cycle, and the relation of the budget to the five-year defense plan (FYDP).

Kaufmann only mentions in passing the latest complication in Federal budgeting, the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings (GRH) Act. However, Epstein devotes his opening chapter to explaining GRH and its implications for national defense. Because Congress and the Reagan Administration have been unable to agree on how to deal with the large deficits in the Federal budget over the past several years, GRH establishes an automatic process to cut budget deficits. If the Administration and Congress are unable to agree on measures to reduce the budget deficit below specified levels, \$144 billion in fiscal 1987, GRH mandates cuts in both defense and nondefense spending. The cuts must be applied by reducing each program by an equal percentage irrespective of the priority of a program. Epstein shows how this form of budget cutting could have a devastating impact on defense capabilities.

Parts of GRH have been found to be unconstitutional so the defense budget may be spared the mindless cutting procedure of GRH. However, it is clear that, barring war or a major international crisis, defense spending will not continue the real growth that it has been enjoying under the Reagan Administration, (Kaufmann has a chapter on trends in

defense spending which shows defense spending's growth, its shares of the Federal budget and GNP, and the internal composition of the defense budget.) Both Kaufmann and Epstein believe that it is possible to reduce defense budgets from the levels proposed by the Administration in its budgets and FYDPs without reducing national security. They each propose ways of doing so by use of analysis of the programs which provide alternative ways of meeting national security objectives. They believe the failure to use rigorous analysis of defense programs has resulted in defense budgets which are excessive. Kaufmann argues for institutional reforms to get greater control over and rationality into the defense budget; the principal reform proposed is a return to more centralized planning by the Office of the Secretary of Defense as in the McNamara era.

Kaufmann compares the Reagan Administration's "Programmed Force" with a "Baseline Force" inherited in FY1981 from the Carter Administration and a "Combat Force" which represents Kaufmann's cost-effective solution to improving the ability of the Baseline Force to achieve U.S. security objectives by FY1992. The performance tests Kaufmann uses are the ability of U.S. strategic nuclear forces to have an effective second-strike capability on an extensive list of targets in the Soviet Union, the ability of theater nuclear forces to have an effective second-strike capability against a designated list of targets in a European war, and for conventional forces

to conduct a successful simultaneous defense in Central Europe, the Persian Gulf, and South Korea. As correlaries to these missions Kaufmann also tests the ability of airlift and sealift to deploy ground and air forces to key theaters, the ability to keep open sea lines of communication for resupply of overseas forces, and the combat sustainability of conventional forces. Kaufmann's Combat Force achieves all of these objectives with either a higher probability or to a greater degree than the Programmed Force, although the Programmed Force shows better performance in FY1992 than the Baseline Force but with considerably greater budgetary costs. Kaufmann discusses the various assumptions that he uses in making these force comparisons, but this work does not provide the details as to how he determines the probabilities of various outcomes.

The Navy does not fare well in these analyses. Both Kaufmann and Epstein would cut carrier battle groups to 12 from the Administration's programmed 15. The rationale for the 15-carrier force is to be able to conduct offensive action against the Soviet Navy in its home ports such as Murmansk. Kaufmann and Epstein conclude that this maritime strategy has a low probability of success and the likelihood of high losses in the attacking carrier battle groups. If, instead, carriers are used in defensive strategies to safeguard the sealanes against the Soviet Navy, a 12-carrier force is sufficient. However, the recent U.S. actions against Libya have shown that conditions in

the Third World may require multiple carrier employments because geography or political conditions may necessitate independent U.S. actions without access to forces based in allied nations. Would a 12-carrier program still be sufficient to meet such contingencies while simultaneously retaining enough forces to protect the sealanes against the Soviet Navy?

The climate for defense spending has changed significantly from a few years ago. These monographs should help readers see the nature of these changes and help stimulate thinking about how much is enough. While Kaufmann and Epstein cannot be said to provide the definitive analysis of the defense budget, they do further the debate on the best level and composition of the defense budget.

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Hudson, George E. and Kruzell, Joseph, eds. *American Defense Annual, 1985-1986*. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1985. 277pp. \$23, paper \$13.95

Kruzell, Joseph, ed. *American Defense Annual, 1986-1987*. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1986. 239pp. paper \$13.95

Believing that much of the public debate about defense issues is preoccupied with cost rather than policy, associates of the Mershon Center, Ohio State University, commenced

producing the *American Defense Annual* last year, the second issue appearing this spring. The goal is an authoritative annual assessment of American defense policy, a service provided by no other publication. *Military Balance* and *Strategic Survey*, published annually by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, do not examine U.S. policies in detail, nor does the *International Security Yearbook* published by the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies, which is worldwide in scope. The annual Brookings Institution critique of the defense budget is limited to cost trends and projections.

Since defense issues do not change dramatically each year, another objective is to find authors who will cover different phases of an issue or divergent policy views on the subject. Success under these circumstances critically depends on the contributors. In both *Annals* to date, the formula has worked well.

The 1985-1986 *Annual* offered a liberal-conservative debate on "U.S. Defense Strategy—A Debate" by Earl Ravenal and William R. Van Cleave which set the stage for much of what followed. The reviewer found the debate marred somewhat by misplaced acerbity; others may find this a useful device in order to highlight divergencies. Such diversity appears in treatment of "Strategic Forces" by Walter Slocombe in the first edition and Colin Gray in the second edition; in "The Defense Budget" by Leonard Sullivan and Lawrence Korb; in "Manpower" by