

1978

The Arms Control Implications of the Carter Defense Budget

Lawrence J. Korb

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Korb, Lawrence J. (1978) "The Arms Control Implications of the Carter Defense Budget," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 31 : No. 1 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol31/iss1/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

Historical evidence suggests that the basic policies of the full term of a President can be deduced from an examination and analysis of his initial budget. The arms control philosophy of the present administration is examined here.

THE ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS OF THE CARTER DEFENSE BUDGET

by

Lawrence J. Korb

Introduction. The Carter administration has been in office for a little less than two years. During that time, it has had opportunity to modify the FY 1978 Department of Defense (DOD) budget prepared and initially presented to the Congress by the outgoing Ford administration and to produce a defense budget entirely its own, the FY 1979 defense budget.

Before undertaking this budget analysis, three interrelated questions must be addressed: What are the objectives of arms control? What is the relationship of the U.S. defense budget to these objectives? Can meaningful statements about an administration's arms control philosophy be made on the basis of just "1 and 1/2" budgets?

To answer the first question, most analysts agree that arms control has three "normally accepted" objectives.¹ They are: to reduce the likelihood of war, to reduce the scope of violence if

war occurs, and to reduce the cost of preparing for war. While these three objectives are often seen as compatible and reinforcing, it is important to note that this is not always the case. As several analysts have noted, the best way to reduce the likelihood of war or to increase the possibilities for successful future arms control negotiations may be to increase the defense budget in the present.²

The answer to the second question is that the size and distribution of the defense budget and the objectives of arms control are inextricably intertwined because in defense, dollars in effect determine policy. This situation prevails within our political system for three reasons. First, plans remain irrelevant and operations impossible until the forces and weapons to support them have been purchased. For example, planning to defend the flanks of NATO is of little use unless sufficient power

4 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

projection forces³ are procured. Conversely, forces and weapons that have been procured and are on hand often determine the course of action that policymakers undertake. For example, many have argued that one of the reasons that the United States intervened militarily in Southeast Asia in the mid-1960s was that the Army had developed forces for that type of war in the early 1960s. Similarly, one of the reasons the United States undertook a massive air bombing campaign against North Vietnam was that the Air Force and Navy had on hand large numbers of sophisticated fighter and attack aircraft.

Second, decisions reflected in a particular defense budget have long-term consequences. A naval surface combatant ship funded in the FY 1979 budget will not become operational until sometime in the mid-1980s and will remain in the inventory until about 2015. Some B-52 aircraft still in an operational status were initially funded more than 25 years ago and will last at least another 10 years.

Third, the size and composition of the defense budget send signals to our allies and adversaries about our intentions.⁴ On the one hand, projected increases in either the defense total or in specific areas are often viewed as signs of a nation's resolve and can be used to enhance deterrence or as bargaining chips in arms control negotiations. On the other hand, these same increases can lead to a demand for concomitant increases by a potential adversary.

If the opinion of President Carter about his FY 1979 budget is accurate⁵ and if the history of post-World War II administrations is any guide, the answer to the third question is yes. Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Nixon and Ford all established the basic policies of their entire Administrations in their initial budgets. In his FY 1955 budget, Eisenhower laid the foundation for the policy of massive retaliation and a period of level defense budgets. Eight years later,

in the FY 1963 budget, Kennedy established the groundwork for the strategy of flexible response, a policy of being prepared to fight 2½ wars simultaneously, and an era of increased spending for defense. The FY 1971 budget of the Nixon administration shifted DOD toward a 1½ war strategy, a period of shrinking defense budgets, and a change in the military balance.⁶ In his first defense budget, FY 1976, President Ford reversed the downward trend in defense spending and laid the foundation for a period of real growth in the defense budget and reversal of the deterioration in the military balance. Figure 1 displays the budget patterns of these Administrations.

The Cost of Defense. One of the most controversial issues of the first part of the Carter Presidency has been his real impact on the level of defense spending. Throughout his first year in office, the new President has been attacked simultaneously for both increasing and decreasing the size of the defense budget.⁷

There are two reasons for the confusion. One is the President himself. Mr. Carter wishes to reconcile his campaign pledges to his party and to the electorate to reduce defense spending by \$5 to \$7 billion below current levels with his postelection promises to our NATO allies and the national security bureaucracy to increase defense spending by 3 percent a year in real terms. The second reason is the various ways in which the size of the defense budget can be expressed.

Mr. Carter claims that he has fulfilled both of his apparently contradictory promises, and, in a certain restricted sense, he has. As shown in Table 1, his budget request for DOD for FY 1979 is \$8.4 billion less in TOA and \$5.6 smaller in outlays than Ford had projected for FY 1979. Moreover, Carter's request for FY 1979 is \$9.4 billion more in TOA and \$9.9 billion higher in

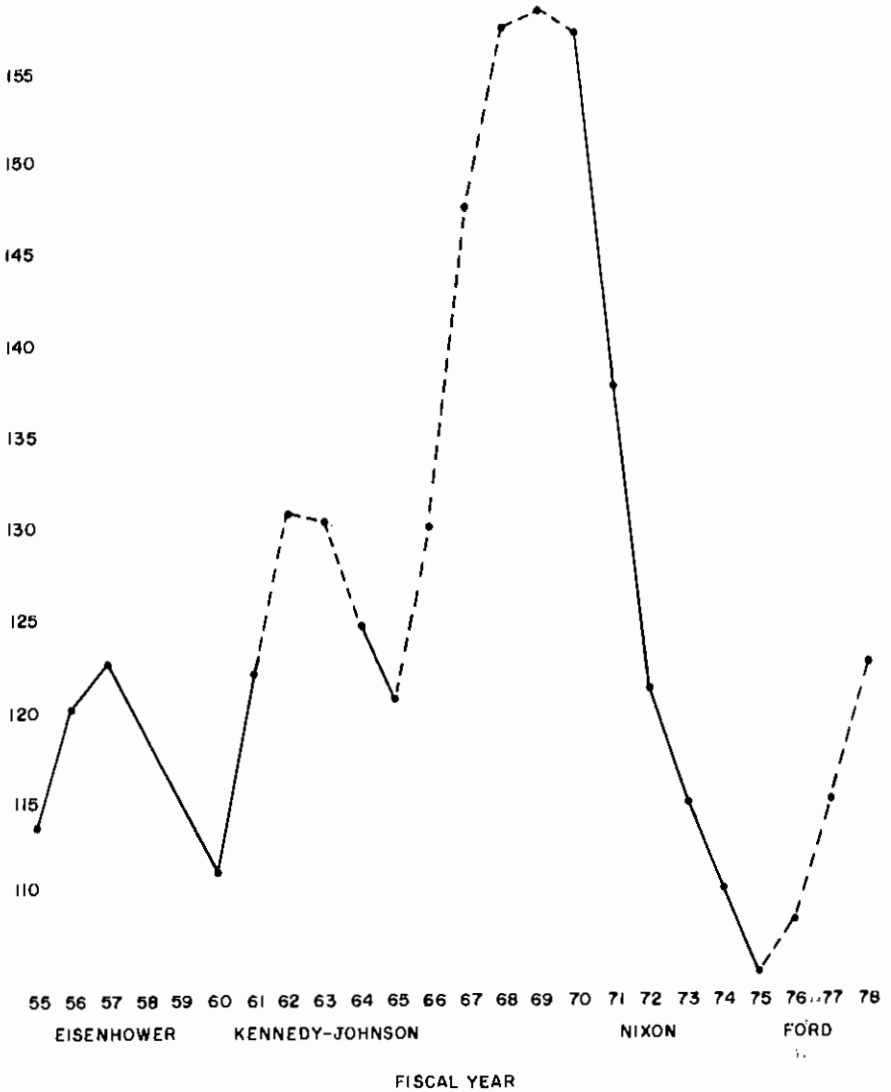


Fig. 1—Defense Budget Authority FY 1955-78
(in billions of FY 1978 dollars)

Source: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), *National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 1978*, p. 138.

6 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

TABLE 1—DEFENSE BUDGET TOTALS FOR FY 1978 AND 1979

Budget Category	Change			
	1978	1979	Amt.	%
TOA (Current Dollars)				
Ford	122.2	134.4	12.2	9.9
Carter	119.4	126.0	6.6	5.5
Congress	116.6	121.0*	4.4	3.8
TOA (Constant FY 1979 Dollars)				
Ford	129.5	134.4	4.9	3.8
Carter	126.5	126.0	-0.5	-0.4
Congress	123.7	121.0*	-2.7	-2.2
OUTLAYS (Current Dollars)				
Ford	109.5	120.8	11.3	10.3
Carter	109.1	115.2	6.1	5.6
Congress	105.3	110.6*	5.3	5.0
OUTLAYS (Constant FY 1979 Dollars)				
Ford	116.0	120.8	4.8	4.1
Carter	115.5	115.2	-0.3	-0.1
Congress	111.5	110.6*	-0.9	-0.8

* Assumes a 4% Congressional reduction.

Sources: Donald Rumsfeld, *Annual Defense Department Report FY 1978*, 17 January 1977, p. 8 and Harold Brown, *Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1979*, p. 12.

outlays than the amounts actually provided to DOD for FY 1978. This represents a real increase over the level of FY 1978 of only \$2.3 billion or 1.9 percent in TOA but \$3.7 billion or 3.3 percent in outlays.

However, there is an inconsistency in the argument; that is, he has mixed apples and oranges, and a rubber yardstick is used to prove a point. In reality the Administration has neither cut the budget \$5 to \$7 billion below the current level nor increased defense spending by 3 percent in real terms. Analysis of Table 1 will demonstrate why. The FY 1978 budget did end up \$5.6 billion below that of Ford in TOA and \$4.2 billion less in outlays, but that

was the result of action by the Congress, not the President. The President cut TOA by \$2.8 billion and outlays by only \$0.5 billion. Moreover, when the House Budget Committee adopted a target for the FY 1978 defense budget of \$116 billion in TOA and \$109 billion in outlays, both President Carter and Secretary of Defense Brown lobbied hard to increase the target.⁸

It is true that Carter's FY 1979 request is substantially below that which President Ford had projected for FY 1979. However, in 1976 candidate Carter had pledged to cut defense spending by \$5 to \$7 billion below its present level, not some future higher level. Moreover, in 1976 when Carter

made his statement, Ford was projecting that defense authority for FY 1978 would be \$121 billion and that for FY 1979 it would be \$130 billion.⁹

Similarly, the President's FY 1979 budget request most probably will not result in a 3 percent real increase in defense spending over the levels of FY 1978 because it is subject to being reduced by Congress. In constant dollars, the TOA and outlay requests for FY 1979 are less than requested a year ago, and if Congress makes a cut as small as 4 percent, the Legislature will actually appropriate less than it did a year ago. The only way that a 3 percent increase in the defense budget can be achieved is for the Congress not to make any reductions in the budget. Because Congress has cut the budget by an average of \$5.5 billion annually over the past 5 years, this is a highly unlikely prospect.¹⁰

However, it is true that President Carter has reduced defense spending below the level that would have prevailed had Ford remained in office. Thus, he has achieved one of the principal objectives of an arms control policy, namely reducing the cost of preparing for war. This point can be demonstrated by examining the data displayed in Tables 2 and 3. Table 2 compares the Ford and Carter projections for FY 1977 through FY 1983 for TOA and outlays in both current and constant dollars. As indicated in that table, President Carter's defense program will save the taxpayers a total of about \$40 billion in the FY 1978-83 period and will result in an annual increase in defense spending of approximately one percent less than the Ford program.

Table 3 compares the Ford and Carter programs in terms of the demands that defense places on the economy. The Carter program will consume about one-half percent less of GNP and about 3½ percent less of the Federal budget. Moreover, the Carter administration will be the first adminis-

tration since the Korean war to allow defense spending to fall below 5 percent of GNP¹¹ and to allot less than one quarter of its federal budget to DOD.

However, the confusion and disillusionment created by the President's conflicting pre and postelection pledges may well offset any gains achieved by his decreasing of defense expenditures. When our NATO allies realize that the President's FY 1979 budget request will not result in a 3 percent real increase in defense spending, they may not be willing to do their part in redressing the imbalance in central Europe where the Warsaw Pact currently outnumbers NATO in manpower, tanks and aircraft. Moreover, when the Soviet leaders recognize that this Administration, unlike its predecessor, is not willing to match the size of their defense budget, which has been rising by 3 to 4 percent per year in real terms since 1962, they may perceive this as a weakening of our resolve.

On the other hand, when the President's supporters become aware that he has not fulfilled his promise to cut the budget by \$5 to \$7 billion,¹² they will most likely demand further reductions in the FY 1979 budget even if these are not warranted by the international situation.

Distribution. While the size of the defense budget is important, it is not an end in itself. The objectives of arms control can also be weakened or strengthened by the programs on which the funds are spent.

The funds in the defense budget are spent primarily on two kinds of forces: strategic and general purpose or conventional. The final part of this discussion will analyze the arms control implications of the Carter programs in each of these areas.

Strategic Forces. Since taking office, President Carter has reduced proposed expenditures for the strategic program

TABLE 2—THE DEFENSE BUDGET FY 1977-82 IN CURRENT AND CONSTANT DOLLARS
(In Billions of Dollars)

Budget Category	Fiscal Year							Total FY 77-83	Average Annual Increase FY 77-82	
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983		Amt.	%
TOA (Current Dollars)										
Ford	110.2	122.2	134.4	144.8	155.7	166.8	180.1	904.0	11.7	10.5
Carter	110.2	116.6	126.0	137.7	148.6	160.5	172.7	861.6	10.4	9.4
Difference Amt.	----	6.6	8.4	7.6	7.1	6.3	7.4	42.4		
%	----	5.4	6.3	5.2	6.6	3.8	4.1	4.7		
TOA (Constant FY 1979 Dollars)										
Ford	122.6	129.5	134.4	136.6	139.3	141.9	146.3	828.0	3.9	3.2
Carter	122.6	123.7	126.0	129.4	133.0	136.6	140.3	789.0	2.9	2.4
Difference Amt.								39.0		
%								4.7		
OUTLAYS (Constant FY 1979 Dollars)										
Ford	98.3	109.5	120.8	133.3	145.2	156.0	166.7	831.5	11.4	11.5
Carter	98.3	105.3	115.2	125.8	136.5	147.9	159.5	790.2	10.2	10.3
Difference Amt.	----	4.2	5.6	7.5	8.7	8.1	7.2	41.3		
%	----	3.8	4.6	5.6	5.9	5.1	4.3	4.9		
OUTLAYS (Constant FY 1979 Dollars)										
Ford	111.3	116.0	120.8	125.7	129.9	132.7	135.1	760.2	3.9	3.5
Carter	111.3	111.5	115.2	118.7	122.2	125.9	129.6	723.1	3.1	2.7
Difference Amt.								37.1		
%								4.8		

Sources: Donald Rumsfeld, *Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1977*, 17 January 1977, p. 8 and Harold Brown, *Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1979*, p. 12.

TABLE 3—DEFENSE AND THE ECONOMY, FY 1978-83

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	Average
Outlays as a % of GNP							
Ford	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	5.4
Carter	5.2	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.8	5.0
Outlays as a % of Federal Budget							
Ford	25.0	26.0	26.9	27.6	28.0	28.5	27.0
Carter	22.8	23.0	23.1	23.7	24.5	24.5	23.6

Sources: *The Budget for Fiscal Year 1978*, pp. 24, 51, and 53 and *The Budget for Fiscal Year 1979*, pp. 33, 43 and 44.

by nearly 20 percent. Ford had envisioned spending \$23.5 billion on strategic forces for FY 1978 and 1979; President Carter proposes to spend only \$19.1 billion. Carter has achieved this reduction primarily by refusing to allow the B-1 bomber to move into full production¹³ and slowing down the M-X missile program by 3 years, that is, delaying its initial operating capability from 1983 to 1986.¹⁴ As indicated in Table 4, the decision to cancel B-1 saved \$4.5 billion and the M-X slowdown an additional \$1.5 billion. The President also saved \$28 million by not improving the guidance system on Minuteman II missiles. These savings are to be offset by the additional \$211 million to accelerate the cruise missile which will substitute for the B-1. Reductions in the strategic area would have been even greater if the Trident submarine program were not experiencing such large cost overruns. As shown in Table 4, Trident funding for FY 1979 had to be increased by \$450 million. This will pay for the cost growth on the first Trident submarine. The additional funding will not accelerate the program nor provide any extra submarines.

Cancelling the B-1 and slowing down M-X development will no doubt save

money in the short run. However, these decisions could cost more in the long run and may even hinder the prospects for meaningful strategic arms control agreements with the Soviet Union.

When he unexpectedly cancelled the B-1 on 30 June 1977, President Carter cited the cruise missile and the improved B-52 as early substitutes and the cruise missile carrier (CMC) and another manned penetrating bomber as future options.¹⁵ An FY 1978 supplement, presented in July 1977, and the FY 1979 budget contain funding for developing both the cruise missile carrier and another manned penetrating bomber. If this Administration, or a successor, find it necessary to implement both of these alternatives, the proposed savings from the B-1 may prove to be ephemeral.

This point can be demonstrated by examining Table 5. That table shows that it would have cost \$18 billion more to build 240 B-1 aircraft. These airplanes could have carried 5,760 cruise missiles and would have had a 0.7 probability of penetrating Soviet airspace to deliver a like number of gravity bombs. For approximately the same amount of money, the Pentagon could purchase 100 cruise missile carriers and

10 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

TABLE 4—MAJOR PROCUREMENT PROGRAMS FY 1978-79
(In Millions of Current Dollars)

Program	1978		1979		Total		Difference	
	Ford	Carter	Ford	Carter	Ford	Carter	Ford-Carter Amt.	%
Strategic Forces								
MINUTEMAN Improvements	338	333	146	123	484	456	28	5.8
M-X	294	134	1533	158	1827	292	1536	84.0
TRIDENT*	3626	3435	2339	2789	5965	6224	-259	-4.3
B-1	2162	443	2915	106	5077	549	4528	89.2
Cruise Missile*	358	382	229	416	587	798	-211	-35.9

*Carter increases.

Source: Department of Defense, *Program Acquisition Costs by Weapon System*, FY 1978 and FY 1979.

TABLE 5—CHARACTERISTICS OF MANNED BOMBERS

Type	Number	Cost ^a	Unit Cost ^b	Cruise Missile Capability	Internal Nuclear Payload	Penetrating Capability (Probability)
Cruise Missile Carrier	100	10.4	104	60	0	0.0
B-1	240	18.0	75	24	24	0.7
FB-111 H	165	7.0	42	12	4	0.6

^aIn billions of current dollars. Does not include cost of arming the aircraft.

^bIn millions of current dollars.

Sources: Ronald Tammen, "The Bomber Debate, Is There a B-2 in Our Future?" *Arms Control Today*, November 1977, pp. 1-4; "U.S. Détente Policy and the B-1 Bomber Controversy," *Congressional Digest*, December 1976.

165 stretched FB-111H bombers.¹⁶ This mixed force would be somewhat less capable than a B-1 force. It could carry 38 percent more cruise missiles but could deliver 83 percent fewer bombs on target and would have a 15 percent lower probability of penetrating Soviet airspace.

Even if the Carter administration never feels the necessity of exercising the option of building the mixed force of cruise missile carriers and penetrating bombers, the B-1 cancellation could

have three other undesirable side effects. First, it could weaken the case against the M-X. Our land-based ICBM force is becoming increasingly vulnerable. Most analysts agree that by the mid-1980s 90 percent of the Minuteman force could not survive a Soviet first strike.¹⁷ At that same time the ability of the remaining B-52s to penetrate Soviet airspace also will decline.¹⁸ It is difficult to conceive of an American President allowing two legs of the triad to be placed in jeopardy simultaneously.

Probably the only way to increase the survivability of the ICBM force is to build a mobile missile like the M-X.

The M-X is both an expensive and impressive weapon.¹⁹ Three hundred of these missiles will cost about \$40 billion, twice the price of the B-1 program. Each missile will contain 15 independently targeted warheads, each of which has a yield of 200 kilotons and a CEP of 300 feet. This will give the M-X 3 times the explosive power and twice the accuracy of the Minuteman III missile. To ensure survivability, an M-X will be placed in a 10 to 20-mile long trench system, and it will move at random intervals inside the trench. Such a powerful missile system could be viewed by the Soviets as a first-strike weapon and its mobility would make verification almost impossible. Indeed, it was for these reasons that President Carter has slowed down the program.

Second, this Administration's emphasis on the cruise missile will probably lead to a corresponding emphasis on the weapon by the Soviet Union. In the past, the U.S.S.R. has shown a great propensity to deploy weapons previously deployed by the United States and an unwillingness to negotiate until they have matched us. The Soviets already have the most sophisticated air defense system in the world—6,500 surveillance radars, 2,600 interceptors, and 10,000 surface-to-air missile launchers. To deal with our cruise missile they need only to increase the system's depth and density with such systems as the SA-10.²⁰ But to counter a Soviet deployment of cruise missiles, the United States would have to bear the enormous expense of building an air defense system from scratch²¹ or live with the imbalance.

Third, unilaterally cancelling the B-1 and slowing down the M-X may make it more difficult to achieve a SALT II agreement. The Carter administration has been trying for many months to win concessions from the Soviets that will

make a SALT agreement palatable to certain segments of the Senate. The B-1 and M-X may have proved to be the bargaining chips necessary to obtain such Soviet concessions.

Conventional Forces. President Carter has made less than a 5 percent reduction in funds allocated for general purpose forces. However, he has altered significantly the priorities for which those forces are configured. In its FY 1978 and FY 1979 budget decisions, the Administration has placed emphasis on increasing the capability of our conventional forces to fight a short intensive war in central Europe. Programs that contribute to that mission have been given priority while those not related to that function have been slashed. Essentially this has meant increasing funds available to the Army and Air Force and reducing the Navy budget.

This point can be illuminated by comparing the general purpose forces procurement programs of the Army and Air Force with those of the Navy. Table 6 outlines Army procurement programs by major category for the FY 1975-83 period. As indicated in that table, the Carter program increased Army procurement by \$1.5 billion or nearly 30 percent in FY 1979 alone, and by FY 1983 it intends to be spending more than twice as much as in FY 1978. Moreover, the Administration is making major increases in every category of Army procurement. None of the major categories is increasing at a rate of less than 39 percent a year, and two areas are increasing by more than 50 percent annually. In FY 1979 the Army will buy 223 helicopters, 10,260 missiles, 1,907 tanks and 7,500 other weapons.

Table 7 compares the shipbuilding budgets of the Carter and Ford administrations for the FY 1978-82 period. As that table shows, President Carter has made an overall reduction of 41 percent in the program proposed a year ago. The

12 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

TABLE 6—ARMY PROCUREMENT, FY 1975-83
(In Millions of Dollars)

Category	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1983	Total Change 75-83		Average Change 75-83	
							Amt.	%	Amt.	%
Aircraft	247	331	534	657	1017	1400	1153	466.8	144	58.4
Missile	392	415	473	536	773	1600	1208	308.1	151	38.5
Weapons & Tracked										
Combat Vehicles	415	679	1089	1421	1636	1750	1335	321.6	167	40.2
Ammunition	647	682	897	1171	1420	3250	2603	402.3	325	50.3
Other	655	895	1383	1400	1789	3000	2345	358.0	293	44.8
Total	2356	3002	4376	5185	6635	11000	8644	366.8	1082	45.9

Source: The Budget for Appropriate Years.

TABLE 7—SHIPBUILDING AUTHORITY FOR THE NAVY, FY 1978-83
(In Billions of Current Dollars)

	Fiscal Year						
	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1978-83
Ford	6.5	8.5	9.9	10.7	13.1	15.0	63.7
Carter	5.8	4.7	7.4	8.6	9.6	10.7	46.8
Difference							
Amt.	0.7	3.8	3.5	2.1	3.5	4.3	16.9
%	10.8	44.7	25.3	19.6	26.7	28.7	26.5

Source: Estimated from *The FY 1979 Budget*, p. 328 and letter from the Secretary of Defense to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 23 March 1978.

President has cut the Navy shipbuilding budget for FY 1979 almost in half.

The effect of these cutbacks is depicted in Table 8. As a result of the Carter modifications, the Navy will be able to purchase only 74 ships in the FY 1978-82 period, 83 fewer than the number proposed by President Ford. This will mean that the Navy will have only 440 ships in 1990 and by the year 2000 could drop to 400 ships. This figure is 200 fewer ships than a May 1976 National Security Council study had recommended.²² The effect of the Carter reduction falls most heavily on those ships normally employed in a power projection role, that is, carriers (CVV), major escorts (CSGN and DDG-47), amphibious ships (LSD-41), and mine countermeasures ships (MCM).

Table 9 compares the procurement programs for Navy and Air Force fighter and attack aircraft for the FY 1976-79 period. As indicated in that table, during the FY 1976-79 period, the Air Force received more than twice as much funding for tactical aircraft as the Navy, and was able to procure about 3 times as many aircraft.²³ This program will enable the Air Force to expand to 26 fully equipped tactical air wings, with 2,500 combat aircraft, by the mid-1980s. The Navy on the other hand is losing 3 of its 15 carrier air wings and will suffer a 30 percent decline in the number of aircraft over the next 5 years. It needs to procure 180 airplanes just to keep its tactical aircraft inventory level. In FY 1979 alone, it will suffer a shortfall of 121 airplanes or 67 percent.

TABLE 8—SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMS, FY 1978-82

	Ford	Carter	Difference Amt.	Ford-Carter %
Ship Type				
SSBN	8	7	1	12.5
SSN	8	5	3	37.5
CVV	2	1	1	50.0
CSGN	2	---	2	200.0
DDG-47	10	6	4	40.0
FFG-7	56	32	24	42.9
FFG-X	2	0	2	100.0
LSD-41	6	1	5	83.3
MCM	19	3	16	84.2
AO	14	1	13	92.9
OTHER	30	18	12	40.0
Total	157	74	83	52.9
COST	48.7	30.3	18.4	37.8
Active Ships in October 1978	456	456	----	-----
Active Ships in 1990	550	440	110	20.0
Active Ships in 2000 ^a	600	400	200	33.3

^aAssumes same shipbuilding rates continued through 1980s.

Sources: FY 1978 Defense Report, p. 190; FY 1979 Budget, p. 328; The FY 1979 Defense Report, pp. 167-185.

Strengthening our forces on the central front in Europe at the expense of our non-NATO forces makes three obvious contributions toward achieving arms control objectives. First, it allows DOD to increase its capability of meeting the primary threat to the security of the Western World without increasing the defense burden. Second, strengthening the ability of our conventional forces to fight a war in Europe makes it less likely that the United States and its NATO allies will have to resort to nuclear weapons to repel a Warsaw Pact blitzkrieg. Third, the emphasis on NATO will help to redress the conventional imbalance in central Europe where the Warsaw Pact currently outnumbers

NATO forces by approximately 2 to 1 in ground troops, 3 to 1 in tanks, and 1½ to 1 in tactical aircraft.²⁴ By FY 1983, the Carter program will give DOD the ability to double the number of ground troops and tactical aircraft in central Europe within 7 days. Such a balance on the central European front will make an attack in that region by the Warsaw Pact less likely.

However, this NATO first strategy could also have three undesirable side effects on arms control. First, the policy weakens U.S. capabilities on the northern (Norwegian Sea) and southern (Mediterranean) flanks of NATO and in the Pacific. These weaknesses may tempt the Soviets to think that they can

14 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

TABLE 9—NAVY AND AIR FORCE PROCUREMENT RATES AND COSTS, FY 1976-79

Navy Designation	Name	Number Procured					Total FY 1976-79		
		1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	Number	Funding ^a	Unit Cost ^b
A-4M	Skyhawk	---	3	21	---	18	42	236	5.6
A-6E	Intruder	---	11	6	12	12	41	659	16.1
A-7E	Corsair II	---	36	30	12	---	78	589	7.6
F-14A	Tomcat	---	45	36	44	24	149	3040	20.4
F-18	Hornet	---	---	---	---	5	5	1992	94.7 ^b
Totals		---	95	93	68	59	315	6516	20.6
Air Force									
A-10	Attack	---	---	73	100	144	162	479	6.1
F-15	Eagle	---	132	108	96	78	414	6486	15.7
F-16	Air Combat	---	---	---	105	145	250	4076	16.3
Totals		---	205	208	345	385	1143	13462	11.8

^aIn millions of current dollars.

^bUnit cost calculated from FY 1979 production costs only.

Source: *Program Acquisition Costs by Weapon System, FY 1978 and FY 1979.*

attack the flanks with impunity or that they can fight a one-front war. Such an idea could make it easier for the Soviets to start a war. Moreover, our allies on the flanks and in the Pacific may come to doubt our intentions.²⁵ This could lead to such destabilizing actions as a weakening of the NATO alliance, a desire on the part of the Japanese to rearm, or even a Sino-Soviet rapprochement.

Second, the NATO emphasis decreases the flexibility of U.S. Forces to be used outside of central Europe. Since the end of World War II, the American people have been unwilling to pay for the forces needed to carry out our national security objectives and to keep our military commitments. Traditionally, DOD has dealt with the situation by relying upon flexible forces, that is, forces usable in more than one place and for more than one purpose. Without this flexibility our ability to deter violence in many areas of the globe may be diminished.

Third, the U.S. buildup in central Europe may undermine the Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR)

negotiations. It will be difficult to convince the Soviets to reduce their forces in central Europe at the same time that we are increasing ours.²⁶

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Lawrence Korb is Professor of Management, Naval War College and an Adjunct Scholar of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. He has been a consultant to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council, and the Office of Education and has served on the faculties of the University of Dayton and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Professor Korb spent four years on active duty as a Naval Flight Officer and currently holds the rank of Commander in the Naval Reserve. He specializes in National Security Organization, Process, and Policy and is the author, co-author, and editor of numerous articles, monographs, and books on these subjects. His most recent publication is *The FY 1978-83 Defense Program: Issues and Trends.*

Conclusion. While the arms control philosophy of the Administration is clear despite the fact that it has only worked on 1½ budgets, the implications of that philosophy are still somewhat uncertain.

On the positive side, President Carter certainly has reduced the burden of defense on the American public, both in absolute and relative terms. His focus on the central front in Europe has made both a conventional and nuclear confrontation in that area less likely, while his slowdown of the M-X has increased the possibilities of a SALT II agreement.

However, these same decisions could have unsalutary side effects on arms control. Contradictory statements about the level of defense spending could confuse both our allies and adversaries. Cancellation of the B-1 may make deployment of the M-X missile more likely, and could initiate a cruise missile arms race. Likewise, unilateral reductions in strategic forces may weaken our position at the SALT talks. Finally, emphasis on the central front, at the expense of flexible forces, may unhinge deterrence in certain areas and could cause some of our allies to question our capabilities and intentions.

NOTES

1. For example see Jane Sharp, "Taking the Initiative: Proposals for United States Action at the UN Special Session on Disarmament," *International Studies Association*, February 1978, p. 12.

2. For example see Joseph Pechman, ed., *Setting National Priorities, the 1978 Budget* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1977), p. 141.

3. Both flanks have seacoasts that lend themselves to amphibious operations and sea-based airpower.

4. For example see Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "The Defense Budget's Message to the World," *Washington Post*, 29 December 1977, p. 19.

5. In his budget message, the President called his FY 1979 budget the most important of his administration. *The Budget of the United States Government, FY 1979* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1978), p. 141.

6. This occurred because the Soviets simultaneously embarked on a larger than anticipated military buildup. The size of their defense budget surpassed ours in FY 1969.

7. Speaker of the House, Thomas O'Neil (D-Mass.) said there is too much money in the budget for defense in the FY 1979 budget. Senator George McGovern (D-S.D.) called the size of the FY 1979 budget unbelievable. Senator Gary Hart (D-Colo.) called the budget a serious disappointment. Senator John Tower (R-Tex.) criticized it as being too low and Senator Dewey Bartlett (R-Okla.) argued that the FY 1979 budget is dangerously inadequate.

8. James Rowe, "House Votes Compromise Budget Target," *Washington Post*, 6 May 1977, p. A9.

9. Lawrence Korb, *The Price of Preparedness: The FY 1978-82 Defense Program* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1977), p. 7.

10. During the spring of 1978 there were indications that Congress may alter its attitude toward defense spending. The first concurrent resolution added \$0.3 billion to Carter's TOA request and cut the outlay figure by \$2.1 billion.

11. The last time that this occurred was in FY 1950, when defense consumed 4.5 percent of the GNP.

12. On 31 January 1978 Representative Parren Mitchell (D-Md.), Chairman of the House Budget Committee's Human Resources Task Force, charged that President Carter reneged on his campaign promise to trim defense spending by \$5 to \$7 billion.

13. The President halted B-1 production at four prototype aircraft. He plans to spend \$106 million in FY 1979 and another \$400 million in subsequent years to complete research and development on the system.

14. The President has not allowed the program to move into full-scale development. President Ford wanted to complete development in 1977.

15. Statement by President Carter, released at his news conference, 30 June 1977.

16. The FB-111H is a stretched version of the FB-111A medium bomber, with which it shares a 43 percent common structure. It is 12 feet longer, has a more restricted wing arc, uses

16 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

B-1 engines and electronics, and carries a modified tail section. Secretary of Defense Brown called preliminary development of this airplane a prudent step.

17. Harold Brown, *Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1978*, 2 February 1978, p. 63 and Clarence Robinson, "Carter Warns on Soviet Nuclear Advantage," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 7 November 1977, p. 21. For a more optimistic view see Congressional Budget Office, *Counterforce Issues for the U.S. Strategic Nuclear Forces* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1978), p. 30. CBO projects that 42 percent of the launchers would survive.

18. Senator John Culver (D-Iowa), "The Future of the Strategic Bomber," *AEI Defense Review*, February 1978, p. 3.

19. For information on the M-X see Alton Slay, "M-X—A New Dimension of Strategic Deterrence," *Air Force Magazine*, September 1976, pp. 44-49 and Representative Thomas Downey (D-N.Y.), "How to Avoid Monad—and Disaster," *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1976, pp. 172-201.

20. John McLucas, "The Case for a Modern Strategic Bomber," *AEI Defense Review*, February 1978, p. 19. For a contrary view see Robert Metzgel, "Cruise Missiles: Different Missions, Different Arms Control Impacts," *Arms Control Today*, January 1978, p. 1.

21. The strategic defenses of the United States consist of 57 surveillance radars and 330 interceptors.

22. John Finney, "Administration is Proposing \$7.5 Billion for Long-Term Shipbuilding Program," *The New York Times*, 5 May 1976, p. 1. The study was made public by Representative Les Aspin (D-Wis.) on 6 March 1977.

23. Unit costs of Navy aircraft are higher because production runs are smaller and because aircraft must be more sophisticated to use a sea-based platform.

24. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1977-78* (London: 1977), pp. 102-107.

25. Concern for this situation led Secretary Brown to assure our Pacific allies publicly in a speech to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council on 20 February 1978. The speech was summarized in Bernard Weinraub, "Brown Says U.S. Will Strengthen Its Forces in Asia," *The New York Times*, 21 February 1978, p. 7.

26. The current U.S. proposal seeks a 62,000-man Soviet reduction to be offset by a 29,000-man U.S. cutback.

ψ