



# Technological Superiority and Better Buying Power 3.0

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Each morning I start my day with a half hour or more devoted to reading the latest intelligence. I've been doing this for about four-and-a-half years now. It took me only a few weeks from the time I came back into government in March 2010 to realize that we had a serious problem. Some of the countries that might be future adversaries, (or that could at least be counted on to sell their weapons to countries that are our adversaries) were clearly developing sophisticated weapons designed to defeat the United States' power-projection forces. Even if war with the United States were unlikely or unintended, it was quite obvious to me that the foreign investments I saw in military modernization had the objective of enabling the countries concerned to deter regional intervention by the American military.

How did we get here? This journey began after the Cold War and in particular the First Gulf War that followed shortly thereafter. At that time, I was the Director of Tactical Warfare Programs in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition. For years, since the 1970s, the Department had been working on a suite of capabilities originally designed to overcome the Soviet numerical advantage in Europe. As a young Army officer, I had served in Germany in the 1970s and studied firsthand the problem



that successive echelons of Soviet armor formations posed to NATO forces. Our answer to this problem was something called Follow-On-Forces-Attack (FOFA), which had grown out of the Assault Breaker technology demonstration program at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. The basic idea was to combine wide-area surveillance, networked Command, Control and Communications, and precision munitions into an operational concept that would negate the Soviet numerical advantage. The concept could be summed up as “one shot, one kill.” From 1989 to 1994, I was responsible for the FOFA programs. In the First Gulf War, we had a chance to demonstrate the effectiveness of this concept, and we did so.

As we started operations against Saddam Hussein, most experts predicted thousands of coalition casualties. In the event, the number was only a few hundred. The combination of sensors like the JSTARS [Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System] and precision munitions like Maverick and laser-guided bombs made quick work of Iraqi armor formations. Stealth also was introduced to the battlefield to great effect by the F-117.

The dramatic success of American and coalition forces in 1991 did not go unnoticed. No country paid more attention to this stunning display of military dominance than China, followed closely by Russia. The First Gulf War marked the beginning of a period of American military dominance that has lasted more than 20 years. We used the same capabilities, with some notable enhancements, in Serbia, Afghanistan, Libya and Iraq. It has been a good run, but I am concerned that, unless we act quickly, this period will end in the not-too-distant future.

When I left the Pentagon in 1994, the intelligence estimates suggested that, while China might be a concern in the future, the United States then had no reason to be worried for 15 to 20 years. It is now 2014, and I am worried. There has been more than adequate time for countries like Russia, with its energy-revenue-funded military modernization, and China, with its spectacular economic growth, to develop counters to what has been called either the Military-Technical Revolution or the Revolution in Military Affairs that the United States introduced so dramatically in 1991.

The foreign modernization programs that I refer to include investments in cyber capabilities, counter-space systems, electronic warfare programs, land-and-surface-ship attack ballistic and cruise missiles with smart seekers, anti-air weapons, advanced platforms to host these capabilities and many more. Taken together, these modernization programs are clearly designed to counter American power projection forces and to ensure that the United States does not interfere in the areas close to Russia or China. Even if our relationships with



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these states improve and military confrontation is avoided, the capabilities I am concerned about will still quickly proliferate to other states, such as Iran and North Korea. We cannot afford to be complacent about our technological superiority, and we cannot allow other less-sophisticated threats to distract us from the task of maintaining that superiority. This brings us to Better Buying Power 3.0.

For the last four years, our focus in Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics has been on improving our business outcomes. Usually, we discuss the Better Buying Power goals in terms of productivity, waste elimination, better business deals, and efficient execution of programs and services. In BBP 3.0, my goal is to shift our emphasis toward the actual products we are developing, producing, fielding and maintaining. We will continue our efforts to improve productivity, but the focus of BBP 3.0 is on the results we are achieving—particularly our ability to bring innovative and game-changing technologies into fielded capabilities for the warfighter as quickly and efficiently as possible. Our technological superiority is not assured. I also do not expect the budget climate to improve for the foreseeable future. Sequestration may well return in Fiscal Year 2016—and, even if it does not, the threat is unlikely to be removed entirely.

We are going to have to work hard to bring the innovation and technology we need to our warfighters—and we are going to have to achieve this in a very tough environment. 