

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGE W. S. KUHN

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your invitation to address the Committee.

I am deeply disturbed by what I believe is this nation's inability today to fight and defeat a determined conventional threat against our vital interests by a first class military power. I would be less disturbed if today's unpreparedness were a temporary lapse in an otherwise reassuring record of credible conventional readiness, or if decidedly better prepared military forces were in the offing in the foreseeable future. The fact is we have been unprepared conventionally for over 30 years, and I see no truly decisive improvements in fighting power on the horizon. Without question, there is enormous activity in the defense area, and a constant flux in the forces. But in my view we have precious little to show for all the activity relative to the unceasing promises that things will be more or less well one day. We have heard those promises for years. That day never comes.

Our problems stem from two sources. Conceptually, we have largely misconstrued the character of war, the kinds of tasks and qualities needed to wage war successfully, and the consequent requirements for our people, tactics, and hardware. Today our forces are too small, their readiness and sustainability are dangerously low, and their fighting capabilities are imbalanced. To the extent these deficiencies are due to approaches to warfighting, their consideration is more appropriate to other forums.

The other source of these problems, however is structural in nature. Whatever answers are given to questions about war and the kinds of forces needed to win wars, the nation must maintain its structures and