

Inside the Pentagon by Tecumseh

The treason called 'military reform'

William Lind spelled it out: desertion of Europe and abandonment of the republican conception of a citizens' army.

With the Congressional budget cuts enacted in the spring, even the most optimistic projections of the future of the U.S. military budget are exceedingly grim. And with each round of spending reductions, the voices of the ubiquitous "military reformers" are raised in chorus, aggressively revealing the strategic military plans which underlie the budget cuts.

Anyone naive enough to believe that "balancing the budget" is Congress's aim, should listen closely to the strategy proposed by the "pro-defense" Military Reform Caucus.

To judge them, judge the actual consequences which would result if one were to follow their prescriptions. William Lind, a leading spokesman for the reformers, recently gave a pretty fair idea of what the cuts, and the "reforms," are meant to do to the U.S. armed forces.

The occasion for Lind's remarks was a forum at the Ft. Meyer Officers Club in Washington, addressed by himself and another leading "reformer," Jeffrey Record. The general subject matter of the discussion was the proposals advanced by Lind in a new book, entitled *America Can Win*, which is the most complete statement of the reform movement's purpose published to date. Lind's remarks at the gathering provoked some sharp questioning which was answered with an unusually frank description of the reformers' intent.

Since the general public is not privileged to hear such exchanges, and

the news media not likely to remedy the problem, we will recount the essence of the issue here, and leave a detailed review of *America Can Win* to a later date. Lind's points can be summarized thusly:

1) The problems facing the military are not the size of the budget, but the nature of the organization of the armed forces.

2) The current officer corps contains a surplus of officers above the junior grade, and should be cut in size by 50% promptly. Those officers who remain, should not be educated in engineering sciences but in a nebulous discipline called "the art of war," which supposedly will instruct them in "how" to think and not "what" to think.

3) Reorganization of the force structure should proceed with the objective of fighting a "maritime" as opposed to a "continental" war.

As you might suspect, a continental strategy is a land war in Europe—the maritime strategy considers Europe expendable. Lind's accurate aside concerning this element of his theory: "Deterrence falls out of this. . . ."

Lind briefly touched the more complex question of weapons systems, and proposes an armory roughly suited to the purposes described above.

A member of the audience soon rose to point out to Lind that the ultimate purpose of the American military is not war, but to present a force so formidable as to deter war on the nation or its allies. U.S. military pol-

icy, therefore, is a mobilization strategy based on the Hamilton and Calhoun model of an *expandable* army. In peace-time, the army is necessarily "top-heavy." Any reduction of the officer corps would decapitate the mobilization capability.

The reformers' technical criticisms of specific weapons systems have the same purpose.

Lind's response to this insightful critic shows that well aimed firepower will force even an accomplished sophist like Lind out into the open:

"Our equipment base is not oriented to a mobilization," said he. "There are many bottlenecks built into our high technology weapons systems which can't be overcome within the limits of our present economy, and why, therefore, should we maintain a strategy based on an economic mobilization the nation will never again be oriented to carry out?"

Further: "Middle-level and senior officers are of little consequence in such a mobilization."

As for Europe: "Increasingly, our problems do not come from the Soviet Union . . . and ultimately, the real deterrent in Europe is the French nuclear force, which will stop the Soviets when they encounter it—which they will do when they reach the Rhine. The French have always considered the Rhine their actual border in any case. . . ."

The case could not be presented in a clearer fashion, and as Lind pronounced the last cited remark, with a flourish followed by a few professorial puffs on his pipe for emphasis, he awaited his audience's response.

What there was of it made apparent to this writer that, even at this late hour, even in the face of such open proposals to hand Europe to the Soviets, most of the officers and military thinkers present were not prepared to believe that Lind and his friends in Congress mean exactly what they say.