



The 19th International Scientific Conference
**“DEFENSE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
IN THE 21st CENTURY”**
Braşov, November 7th-8th 2024



HOW THE GLOBAL LANDSCAPE SHIFTS AND CHANGES THE DEFENSE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROCESS

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Abstract:

Every state considers its defense as important and maintains minimum defense deterrence against any type of foreign aggression. However, due to recent shifts in the global landscape, the defense resources management require realignment in order to cope with the challenges. Be it the Russian attack on Ukraine and its fall outs on global supply chain system; the trade war between America and China due to Thucydides trap; ever increasing risks to human lives due to sudden climate havocs; the ever sequencing resources due to debt burdens, the tech giants capitals coupled with their increasing influence on human beings beyond frontiers and last but not least the risk of any other pandemic like COVID-19 is compelling the policy makers to reconsider the defense resources management process in order to effectively address any kind of eventuality.

Key words: landscape shift, Thucydides trap, debt burden, climate change, techno dynamics, pandemic.

1.Introduction

Change is the unchangeable law of nature. It is very true that the one who foresees and adapt itself, can survive the tide of change. In the global political landscape, the events are changing rapidly which are compelling every nation state to reconsider its defense needs and resources in order to cope with the volatile and potentially difficult challenges. There is a long list of potential shifts but this research work will focus on Thucydides’ trap between America and China, Russian invasion of Ukraine, the climate change, the over increasing debt burden, the tech advancement and pandemic challenges. Detailed analysis of every problem reveals that in order to achieve peace, preparation for war has become a necessary and indispensable evil.

2. Thucydides’s Trap And Hard Choices

Gram Allison while analyzing the Thucydides’ trap between America and China has quoted the statement of Napoleon Bona Parte that ‘let the giant (china) sleep when it will awake it will shake the world’ (Allison, 2017). China has shaken the world with its phenomenal growth and worldwide influence in the shape of OBOR (One Belt One Road) initiative, advancement in AI, quantum computation and projection of its soft power image. What America has done in 20 years, China has replicated it, rather, surpassed it in less than four years span of time. This has put America and China in a Thucydides Trap. According to Thucydides, a Greek historian, the Sparta, the established power, has imposed war on rising Athens (Allison, 2017). Thucydides was a general and historian from Athens. He has elaborated this Thucydides Trap in his book History of the Peloponnesian War. Gram Allison has drawn the analogy of it between rising China and American’s fears while analyzing this trap and emphasized on the importance of avoiding it.

In twelve out sixteen such incidents of Thucydides trap, history has revealed that war could have not been avoided (Allison, 2017). The detail of these case are tabulated below:



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Sr. no	Time period	Established power	Rising power	Outcome
1	late15 th century	Portugal	Spain	No war
2	Early 16 th century	France	Hapsburg	War
3	16 th and 17 th centuries	Hapsburgs	Ottomans	War
4	First half 17 th century	Hapsburgs	Sweden	War
5	Mid fifty and late 17 th century	Dutch Republic	England	War
6	Late 17 th to mid-18 th century	France	Great Britain	War
7	Late18 th and early 19 th century	UK	France	War
8	Mid-19 th century	France	Germany	War
9	Mid-19 th century	France +UK	Russia	War
10	Late19 th and early 20 th century	China and Russia	Japan	War
11	Earlier 20 th century	UK	USA	No war
12	Early 20 th century	UK, France, Russia	Germany	War
13	Mid-20 th century	Soviet, France UK	Germany	War
14	Mid-20 th century	USA	Japan	War
15	1940-1989	Russia	USA	No war
16	1990 till present	UK+ France	Germany	No war

Trade war between China and America has already been started, America has tried to convince its allies about the potential of surveillance which Chinese government can use if 5G is used. Though it is stated that a full-fledged war cannot happen between China and America because of nuclear armaments presence, yet the proxy wars in the potential zones of conflict may get the trigger. These potential areas are, Taiwan, North Korea, together with potential of limited war in South China Sea between China and Japan (Mearsheimer J. J., 2018). Though America’s power will decrease in 2030 due to the fact that other rising powers will gain relative powers like China, India, EU, Brazil and Russia (Nye, 2015). Among these potential rising powers the most formidable is China (Mearsheimer J. , 2018). According to Joseph Nye, although China is creating many jobs due to development but not Steve Job hence cannot overtake America till 2041 (Nye, 2015). However, if we look on other side of the coin, though the trade war has been started by America in order to arrest the speedy development of Chinas’ rising power, yet due to the strong economy of china while putting all types of restriction, America cannot inflict any major dent into the Chinese economy (Lau, 2019). And since 2018, the ongoing trade war couldn’t yield the desired results. The influence of China is increasing with each passing day and month visa-a-vie America because of American engagements in other conflicts like Ukraine, Middle East and internal challenges of rising polarization in politics and economic recessions.

China is creating parallel international system in the shape of OBOR and AIDB (Asian Infrastructure and Development Bank) and is also trying to project its soft image through advocating the policy of non-interference into the internal affairs of other countries, respect for diverse culture and helping nations to resolve their mutual animosities like the normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Whether China will be able to take the leading role as super power? Whether



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it will defeat the American led system? If yes, then what will be status of US and its allies? Or the prevailing situation of tug of animosities will take considerable time and may lead to a multipolar system? These are the important questions for the policy makers. The nations are considering and are realigning their policies carefully. This shift of geo-political land scape also creates the favorable conditions wherein nations has to spend more on its defense. Though alliances are good and prove its utility, yet the best policy is always is the policy of self-reliance and resilience. Increase in self-defense has, therefore, become more important.

Secondly, the 5G of China is a reality and she is unfolding the 6G which may either be ignored or utilized. Nations in alliance with America are reluctant to use it on the pretext of possible espionage by Chines government yet this may be wrong strategy to remain outside the domain of fast development of technologies seems not a wise strategy. This single most superiority can become a problem in the realm of military strategy if ignored altogether. American assessment is of economic gains which China will accrue while selling it to allied nations but since it is a capability which can be employed in military tactics. Therefore, either you have to develop it or you must be using it other way round in order to remain in the game.

3. Ukraine War And Defense Expenditure Spree

Russia waged full-fledged war against Ukraine on 24th February, 2022. Russian aggression started when it annexed Crimea in the year 2014. The triggering cause of this annexation and attack was NATO expansion regarding which Putin has warned many times earlier (Mearsheimer J. , 2018). The European countries and USA are putting their efforts to teach Russia a good lesson but the non-ending conflict has started worsening. The small states in the neighborhood of Russia are much worried since this has shaken the reliance of people on trade and development and has set the momentum for shaping the politico-economic system. This shift in the geopolitical landscape, has triggered the disruption on global supply chain and led to inflation across the world. The neighboring countries in particular and other EU countries in general has therefore started increase in their defense budget. Most of them view that without safeguarding the frontiers, one cannot guarantee the real development and growth. The small states in the proximity of Russia are considering this war an imminent danger to their sovereignty.

There is another view point. It is the defense industry of Russia and America which has created this situation of fear in Europe in order to keep their economies afloat. Due to this Russian aggression, all most all the countries has started increasing their defense budgets and started purchasing new defense plat forms. These countries will keep on spending on the resource because each defense system require life cycle support along with acquisition cost. This view point, however, is not based on facts. The Russians approach is based on previous model of annexation and spread of its world view whereas, America wants that world should prosper with democratic and free capital market system. It has been experienced by the countries in their relationship with USA. The recent attack on Ukraine has once again proved this doctrine of Russia. Since Ukraine is putting a challenging resistance with the overt help of almost all the western countries yet the early ending of war is not possible due to two factors. Firstly, Russian are superior in artillery with the ratio of 5to 1 and secondly, the ground forces strength of Russia verses Ukraine is 5 ratio 1. Hence while controlling 20 to 23% of Ukrainian area, Russia can fight this war for longer period of time.

Since most of the European countries are part of NATO (the current members are 31) and are considering themselves safe against the aggression of Russia, yet this alliance only cannot guarantee the defense to the state. Each states has to rely on its defense capabilities. The defense expenditure which were low in the recent past are increasing now a days yet these are far less because the



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inflation and cost of defense has risen to a much higher level. The rise in defense expenditure seems adjusting the inflation and rising commodities cost instead of more defense capabilities. The PPP (Purchasing power parity) also plays an effective tool in the measurement of defense budget allocation and its utilization. In comparisons to Russia and China both are having superiority in PPP as compared to EU countries and USA. Particularly, China is moving for ahead in this area. Therefore, more defense allocation and its prudent utilization is imperative and need of the day. Because if one wants peace, war preparation is but a necessary evil.

If Russia manages to win this war in Ukraine with the help of China, the tilt of power will shift in opposite direction. Since America and Europe together with their allies are helping Ukraine to defeat Russia. Yet, it seems that Russia has already set the plan for a long time war without getting much damage to its economy. Earlier, US was in a better position to handle the Chinese rise but since Russia has opened a new Pandora box in the shape of Ukraine attack therefore, China seems gaining more strength at the end of the day due to the Ukraine war.

The rising debt burden across the world is very alarming. Many nations are facing this dilemma. Both developed and developing countries have to serve their debts out of revenue receipts and face the huge budget deficits. The debt are increasing on the fast pace. The reasons are numerous. Politicians indulgence in race of false development, balance of payments problems, less tax to GDP ratio, deficit budgeting and deficit financing are the main causes of accumulation of more debts. The debts apparently seems not a big problem, but it slowly entangles its user. There are many other theories and statements of different people who have stated that debt is made the part of deal in order to keep the countries under control. In this regard, the famous book, ‘The Confessions of an Economic Hit man’ is very relevant wherein the writer John Perkins narrated his real life time stories and his missions in different countries to make them indebted. Hence this proves that it is always easy to control the indebted countries.

The world debt is increasing with the rapid pace. In the recent pandemic, many government has taken enormous loans in order to feed their nations and to keep their industries afloat. In this regard the IMF, WB and many other international donors has rescheduled the loans of developing countries which has been hailed as a very positive decision at an international level. However if we look at the data of debt, the alarming figure are coming to the fore front. Many economists have different viewpoints about the debt and its management as well as upper limits but the fact is that it is a ticking time bomb and many nations will bear the brunt of it if it is not cured appropriately. EU

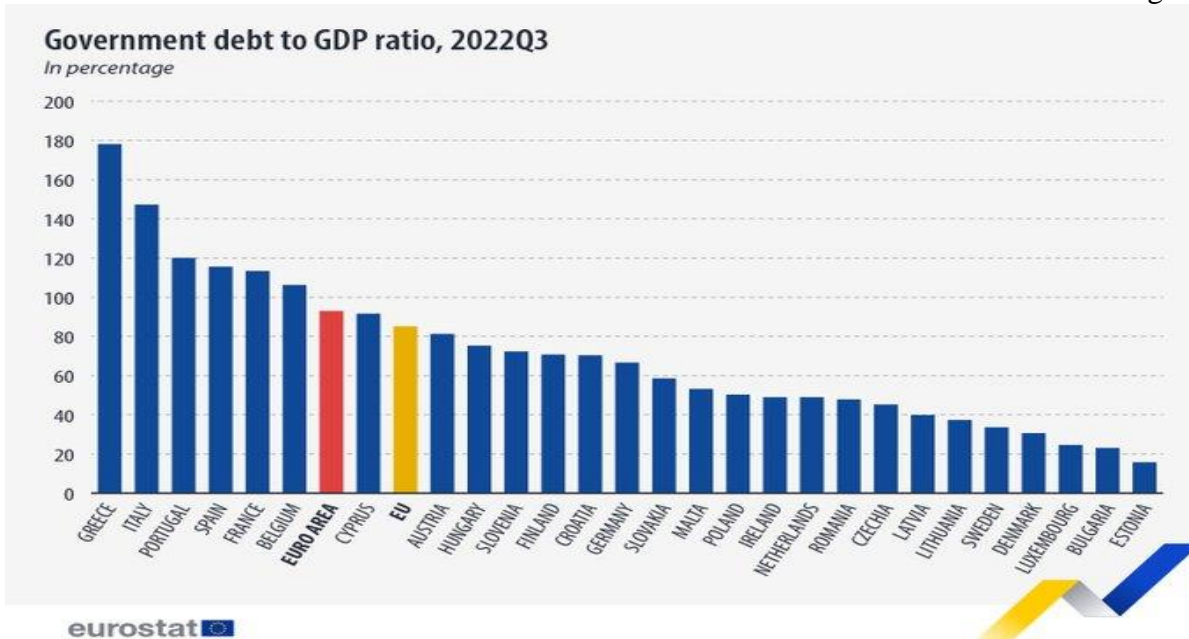


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countries debt to GDP status can be seen in the following figure:



The overall debt of EU is around 85.1% and of Euro area is 93.0% (Eurostate press office, 23 january,2023). The total debt of world at present is 238 percent of global domestic product. In US\$ terms it is 235 trillion (IMF, 2023). The debt of USA is around US\$70 trillion and of China is US\$47.5 trillion (IMF, 2023). This growing debt will be a big challenge in the wake of another economic recession which is predicted to happen in near future, the causes of it can be any but the fact is that it will come and will create ripple effects. Due to debt servicing the space for defense resource management is also squeezing.

The debt will become problem for every nation in future since its over increasing volume will be more crushing and nations have to jointly fight against this ill since it is a common enemy and threat to the welfare and security of entire humanity (Hudson, 2023). While analyzing the history of debt, he describes that how the impact of interest bearing debt led to the rise of rentier oligarchies in Rome and Greece, thereby causing economic polarization, widespread austerity, revolts and battles which led to the collapse of Rome. This is being replicated by pro-creditor western civilization which is on its fast way to collapse (Hudson, 2023).

Jesus (PBUH) asked the forgiveness of interest and debt burden which has been understood as forgiveness of sins (Hudson, 2023). The interest is forbidden in almost all the religions. But intelligent people has given the different definition to interest and the usury and has considered the interest as lawful prerequisite for development and declared usury being unlawful but in fact both interest and usury are the same. There is no difference in both interest and usury (Hudson, 2023). The question of its justification and lawfulness remained a debated question among the scholars and thinkers but one thing from historical record and present data is clear that this debt will come as a major factor halting the effective growth on one hand and will lead to scarcity of resources for better defense resource management. Since governments can neither shun the taste of it nor would be able to solve its multiple impacts on every sphere of society, therefore it is important for every nation to take care of this dilemma otherwise it will engulf much of the available resources chunk. Indebted countries can neither defend themselves nor can be able to feed their countrymen in future. Debt, apparently seems less lethal, is for more dangerous and destructive when it will unleash its impacts.



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One more international recession, will make the economies more and more indebted than before and will lead to complication of problem.

Technological development is creating new dynamics for the defense resource management realignment. The cyber-attack and counter attacks are constantly changing, the drones both air and water are being deployed with rapid pace in the modern warfare. In the recent battle between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the successful use of drones defeated the heavily armed Armenian Army. Thus how the military be ready and trained on these lines has become more important. Defense human resource management, is therefore, facing challenges because the young lot, those who are good in tech-oriented fields are not willing to join armed forces. It is because the private sector offers more lucrative salaries and comfortable job environment than the military. This tech generation which is called Z-generation (the 21st century generation) is different from Millennial (the generation which born during 20th century). This generation is less interested in bravery, vigor and challenging life. Therefore, defense planners either has to train the available human resources or to create equally good ground in order to attract the young capable generation. There is another problem. This is the hatred for war and bloodshed. Young people are less attracted to military be it the competitive salary because they don't want to fight and don't want to kill. Moreover, globalization can also be reckoned as the reason for it since humanity has come closer to each other and system of statehood is fading away.

Though, the employment of such young human resources in the military is a big challenge and many strategies are being devised like attractive salaries, compulsory conscription etc. But the optimum result couldn't be achieved. Innovative yet natural proposal is that if people are convinced through mass media that due to climate change, the survival of humanity is at stake, therefore people must come and join armed forces in order to save themselves and their loved ones in the wake of such calamities. This is a genuine cause and if is projected with appropriate vigor, it will definitely yield positive results.

Other challenges which can come across are the management of big data, the use of AI and quantum computation in the realm of military war planning and military war strategies. The military officers are important human capital and always remain the high value targets of opposite nations. In their private capacities, these people use all types of new tech gadgets and apps and their data is being stored by the big tech giants. Now these big giants are commercial organizations. Anyone can buy the information while giving handsome amounts or through hacking techniques in order to use it for their own designs. Thus military planner should also devise strategies to safeguard and put in place the resources to gain such information against the opponents. Without doing any offensive action one cannot devise a better defense. Therefore, be the first one to use this area of vulnerability lest the opponent use it and may be able to gain superiority.

The recent abrupt climatic havocs around the world has rang the alarming bell. The flash floods, the tornadoes, hurricanes, forest fire, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, sudden change in weather patterns all are posing serious challenges like severe drought, disruption in water supply, inundation of crowded cities, freezing and excess melting of snow reserves. A potential war between two armies may not be much destructive than a natural disaster of higher magnitude. Who can fight and rescue the people in such calamities? The answer is the armed forces of that country. It is because of the reason that they are always well equipped, work with discipline and can rescue many people out of danger instantly. So in order to be ready, the governments has to pay heed to this phenomenon.

If floods destroy a major portion of a population, it is the fault of ruler because he has not equipped its country against any potential danger (Machiavellie, 1550). Even the 15 century rulers were aware about the climatic impacts and this was the advice of Machiavelli in his master piece



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book, ‘The Prince’. 1.5 degree in rise of entire world temperature has caused havocs and if it continues to rise with this pace, the future devastations will be more severe (Climate Change Summit, solution for the future, 2023).

Though many remedies have been put forwarded by thinkers which are climate resilient industries, food safety, forest and agriculture and many more yet, the defense resources realignment in order to cope with such eventualities should be taken seriously. When the critical infrastructure of the country is hit hard by any climatic effect, it will have much impact on the defense line of action of that country. The storage of ammunition, the placement of units, brigades should be, rather, must be brought in protection zone while anticipating any possible impacts of any climatic havoc. This needs proper study and adjustments. It will definitely require extra-resources. The defense planners have to redirect the available resources in order to avoid damage and to be ready to provide excellent kind of help to the country in future.

The COVID-19 has shook the entire world. Each country had put its all resources including the military against the COVID-19. It has left many lessons which are very important for any such like pandemic in future. It is also relevant here to mention that the biological warfare has the similarity with COVID-19 pandemic. The dynamics of biological warfare is changing with rapid pace. Be it a natural pandemic or biological weapon used by the opponents, each nation has to prepare itself in the realm of offensive and defensive fields.

The world has witnessed the excessive amount of cost each nation made in order to address the pandemic. It was US\$12.5 trillion approximately (IMF, 2023), hence the preparation for such wars has therefore, become a necessary evil because these are complex in nature to handle and are costly. The pandemic is being discussed at many levels in order to see whether it can come again or not. If yes then what level of readiness is required? In this regard it is stated that this is very vulnerable area of warfare and defense resource management seems a big challenge. Conventional defense resource management though is relevant yet it has to be readjusted according to the ever growing needs and challenges. Especially in order to cope up with new techniques of warfare.

4. Conclusions

The problems can be identified but the real test lies in the proper remedy. Unless you have identified the problem accurately, you will not be able to suggest a better course of action. For political problems, remedies and solutions always vary from nation to nation. Yet, there must be a realization to cope up with the situation. Since two powers are in the so called Thucydides trap, the nations can either have to jump into one of the group or think in terms of self-preservation. Except one or two challenges, the other discussed above are common to all. There is another approach to deal with this problem. And this approach is nothing else but to sit on table and address it. This is too simple a statement which cannot be understood unless humanity may not see a devastating sufferings all around. Even then it will not happen because the victor will set its own agenda. Therefore, in my opinion, the more preparation of war for each one is important which will let others to think twice before jumping into any type of aggression.

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