



CFR & U.S. Army Chief of Staff: Use Army for Domestic Enforcement

The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) proposes that the U.S. Army be used to plan, command, and carry out (with the help of civilian law enforcement) domestic police missions. So says [a story appearing in the May/June issue of the influential organization's official journal, *Foreign Affairs*](#). The article lacks a single reference to the Posse Comitatus Act, which prohibits such actions.



In an article penned by Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, [General Raymond T. Odierno](#), the CFR would see the Army used to address “challenges in the United States itself” in order to keep the homeland safe from domestic disasters, including terrorist attacks. Odierno writes:

Where appropriate we will also dedicate active-duty forces, especially those with niche skills and equipment, to provide civilian officials with a robust set of reliable and rapid response options.

That’s right. Should the sheriff suspect that a particular citizen in his county poses a threat to security and feels he doesn’t have the proper “skills and equipment” to deal with the situation, he can just call out the U.S. Army and bring a “rapid response” force that is robust enough to eliminate the problem.

These are not the musings of an unknown academic written in an obscure journal of little importance. These are the black-and-white plans for “building a flexible force” as laid out by the man in charge and published for all the world to read by the people who may have put him there.

In order to justify this new (and illegal) mission for the Army, General Odierno points to three “major changes” that have precipitated the re-tasking of the troops: First, “declining budgets due to the country’s worsened fiscal situation; second, “a shift in emphasis to the Asia-Pacific region; and third, a “broadening of focus from counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and training of partners to shaping the strategic environment, preventing the outbreak of dangerous regional conflicts, and improving the army’s readiness to respond in force to a range of complex contingencies worldwide.”

There are so many things wrong with every one of these points that each deserves its own article focused solely on its deconstruction. Unfortunately, there is only so much space and each of these considerations has one critical flaw in common: no constitutional authority for any of it.

Start with the woeful economic state of American affairs. Odierno lists this first among his unholy trinity of reasons the army must “transition” from its traditional role to one with a wider domestic and international scope.

Perhaps it has escaped General Odierno’s attention, but the decline of America’s economic fortunes may be in some significant part tied to the illegal wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that siphon about \$13 billion *per month* from the U.S. Treasury. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, estimates are that Congress has approved [a total of \\$1.283 trillion in military operations](#), base security, reconstruction, foreign aid, embassy costs, and veterans’ health care spread over three operations: Operation Enduring



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Freedom (OEF) Afghanistan and other counter terror operations; Operation Noble Eagle (ONE), providing enhanced security at military bases; and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

There is a certain macabre irony to the claim by a military leader that his troops are forced to adapt to stringent budget considerations partially brought about by the use of his troops as the tip of America's sword of empire.

General Odierno's third "major change" is the need to use the Army to solve complex international conflicts. Again, these conflicts and the solutions to them are made more complex by the fact that there is not a single syllable in the Constitution that grants the President or Congress the authority to deploy American armed forces to work out the world's difficult dilemmas.

On this point, regarding the rules to govern the creation and governing of a federal army, the Constitution says very little. In [Article I, Section 8](#), Congress is authorized to "raise and support Armies" and to "make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces." That's it. That paucity of information has been magnified by the Council on Foreign Relations and their members in positions of power to include the use of the Army in ways and means that would seem unimaginable even to the most martial of our Founding Fathers.

One of the unconstitutional missions advocated by Odierno and the CFR is the use of the U.S. Army as "a critical guarantor of stability in the Asia-Pacific region." This is one of the many new "assigned missions" promoted by Odierno in his Foreign Affairs article.

This echoes the [pronouncement by his Commander-in-Chief](#) made in Australia last November:

This is the future we seek for the Asia-Pacific — security, prosperity and dignity for all. That's what we stand for. That's who we are. That's the future we will pursue in partnership with allies and friends and with every element of American power.

That is to say, General Odierno and President Obama believe that deterring aggression against our allies in Asia and the Pacific trumps any constitutional stricture on the appropriate use of the Army. There is nothing it seems that will stand in the way of our Army being placed at the disposal of foreign princes and presidents, provided they appreciate their resulting status as satraps of the American Emperor.

Not to worry; other provinces of the emerging American empire are accounted for in the Odierno/CFR plan.

"The posture of the U.S. military in the Middle East is critical to maintaining regional stability there," writes Odierno, again without any noticeable sense of irony.

Is the general privy to some reports of stability in the Middle East kept secret from the rest of us? There is no end to the [media's reminders of the instability](#) in the Middle East. In fact, it is this very unsettled foundation upon which the need for ongoing American military presence there is built.

In other words, the Middle East is stable because of the Army, the Middle East will remain stable only so long as the Army remains on permanent patrol, and if we were to completely abandon our posts, the region would devolve into outright — instability. Thus is the quality of the reasoning demonstrated by those with command and control of the armed forces of the United States.

One of the timeliest tenets of the Odierno/CFR proposal is the integration of "cyberspace capabilities into our tactical and operational units." According to [an article published last Friday in the New York Times](#):



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From his first months in office, President Obama secretly ordered increasingly sophisticated attacks on the computer systems that run Iran's main nuclear enrichment facilities, significantly expanding America's first sustained use of cyberweapons, according to participants in the program.

For the CFR it seems the message from the Obama administration is ask and ye shall receive.

Lest there remain any doubt as to America's resolve, Odierno wants our nation's enemies (foreign and domestic) to understand that we are not afraid to "compel capitulation." Should those "potential adversaries" be American, moreover, Odierno promises that the Army will "be ready to decisively achieve American ends, whatever they may be."

Finally, we will, Odierno declares, demonstrate "our country's commitment to global security."

Sadly, Americans know this too well, as there are rows and rows of white headstones and flag-draped coffins already demonstrating the seriousness of that commitment.

Photo of Gen. Raymond T. Odierno: AP Images



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