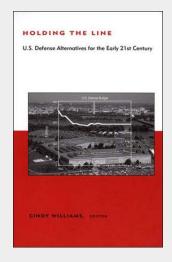
## Holding the Line - US Defense Alternatives for the 21st Century

Since the end of the Cold War, the US military has reduced its combat forces by 40 percent, closed about 20 percent of its bases, and withdrawn from many overseas posts. Even after these changes, the US military is by far the strongest in the world, with huge advantages in training, equipment, and technology. Despite cutting its annual spending by about 30 percent, the United States spends more than the countries with the six nextlargest military budgets combined. Heated debates continue to rage over US military spending. In the late 1990s, many commentators claimed that spending was too low, and the defense budget began to increase for the first time since the mid-1980s. Others argued that the United States had taken on too many military missions—including frequent humanitarian interventions or peacekeeping operations—and needed to scale back these deployments. Holding the Line presents objective and detailed assessments of the US defense budget and America's military strategy. Its contributors conclude that the United States must reshape its military to face the real challenges of the coming decades. They call for smaller US forces with more modern weapons, sensors, avionics, and communications systems. They offer recommendations that would enable the US military to transform its forces and make them more effective, while holding the line on defense budget increases.



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