

military effectiveness of armed forces.”³

A central tenet of the RMA, and the reason why it has fostered such intense debate, are the claims that only those states who will be able to master the changes will be confident of victory in future wars.

“The traditional, fundamental principles of war will still apply. Yet major departures are coming for two reasons. Many military forces are going to become more powerful and capable of high-technology warfare at the high end of the conflict spectrum. And a growing number of conflicts likely will be fought at the low end of the spectrum. Sophisticated technology may not be dominant in many of them. Both trends, and their interaction, will change warfare. ...This dynamic is hardly surprising. Warfare has continually evolved over the past two centuries. Military establishments that best anticipated change have generally been the most successful in war. By contrast, those that failed to foresee the future, and remained complacent and static, have often been surprised and defeated.”⁴

Yet behind these general claims for the RMA is a more specific national claim, or rather expectation, that it will be the United States, the ‘founding father’ of the RMA which will reap the greatest benefits. While the RMA offers opportunities to other countries which will be able to afford the acquisition of “expensive modern weaponry and the skills to use it properly[...]only the United States, with its vast accumulation of military capital, better than four times the defense budget of the next leading power, and an unsurpassed ability to integrate large, complicated technological systems, can fully exploit this revolution.”⁵ The RMA offers America “the prospect of military power beyond that of any other country on the planet, now and well into the next century.” This is why American theorists have embraced the RMA for it appears to afford the United States the opportunity to perpetuate its power.⁶

There is indeed about the RMA an American “boosterism,” a profound sense of national uniqueness in the technology and doctrine of war. “The next century is confidently expected to be an American one where everyone follows our example: everyone must follow in our wake or fall apart. And that fact gives us a lasting information edge.” By using the technologies, including information warfare, America will be able to confound and quickly defeat its enemies, striking at whole countries and destroying their will along with their forces and infrastructure, while they will

³ Andrew F. Krepinevich, “Cavalry to Computer: The Pattern of Military Revolutions,” *The National Interest* 37 (Fall 1994), p. 30.

⁴ Richard L. Kluger, “Conventional Operations and Warfare: A New Era Ahead?” *Strategic Assessment 1999: Priorities for a Turbulent World*, (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Security Studies, National Defense University), p. 261.

⁵ Eliot Cohen, “A Revolution in Warfare,” *Foreign Affairs* vol 75, no 2, (March/April 1996), pp. 50-1.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 54.