
Department of Offense

Posted by Kevin Ferrizzi - 2008/10/09 23:06

The military does not seem to be a big topic with libertarians, but one cannot deny that it is an important power asset to our nation. We know niether liberals nor conservatives have figured out how to properly use our armed forces. The question is: What would be your plan for our military?

1. Bring all combat units stationed in allied countries home
 2. Redeploy at least 2 divisions worth of specialized troops to Afghanistan.
 3. Increase our special forces capabilities
 4. Increase our intelligence capabilities
 5. Decrease naval operations in the Persian Gulf
 6. Make sure all US military prisons and commissions adhere to the Geneva Conventions and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
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Re:Department of Offense

Posted by Jay Edgar - 2008/10/10 09:30

Good summary. I thought our 2004 platform was great. In 2006 and again in 2008 the delegates decided to dumb down the platform into just basic statements. Our current national platform reads:

3.1 National Defense

We support the maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the United States against aggression. The United States should both abandon its attempts to act as policeman for the world and avoid entangling alliances. We oppose any form of compulsory national service.

Our 2004 platform can be read at a web archive [here](#). It was much more substantive and covered most of what you wrote.

National should go with both a brief summary of principles AND a more in depth platform.

Re:Department of Offense

Posted by TJAndriesen - 2008/10/13 15:16

We support the maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the United States against aggression.

Do we want to defend against agression or deter agression? Defense implies when someone attacks we can fight back successfully. Deterance suggests they would hesitate to attack in the first place. One might argue that a defensive deterrence will ultimately be more effective than a purely defensive position as we will be less likely to need to engage in a war.

The United States should both abandon its attempts to act as policeman for the world and avoid entangling alliances.

I'll buy the first part but again the second is more complex. It seems like there are many countries who benefit from the US military strength without paying the price. There is probably value in alliances when they provide a balance for the members. Our so far have allowed others to spend fractions on defense spending while we are required to spend more and when push come to shove, American troops go in harms way. Alliances, using market principles (fair value for fair value), like trade can create greater value for both parties and should be part of our policy.

We oppose any form of compulsory national service.

No arguement against that.

In the last presidential debate, as question was asked about the Obama/McCain Doctrine on the use of force. The correct answer IMHO is we should only use military force when there is a clear and compelling American interest and when the use of force can be successful.

Re:Department of Offense

Posted by Kevin Ferrizzi - 2008/10/14 03:43

I think defense and deterrence can be one in the same. If we concentrate on building our defensive and intelligence capabilities, our enemies must realize that effectively attacking us would be very difficult and the retaliation would be swift and overwhelming. Part of the problem is that fundamentalist terrorist groups really don't care what kind of defense we have, they only have to get a few people through (or one with a nuke). No amount of infantry or armored divisions will be a successful deterrent to our current enemies.

I agree with you about the alliance issue. The problem is we really don't have anything to gain from our European alliances. They depend on us. Forming alliances with Arab, Asian, or Central/South American governments could possibly have some economic and security benefit to us. I believe any such alliances should be economic or diplomatic in nature, such as common markets, free trade agreements, technological exchanges and food aid. If both parties are making money and securing resources for their nations, there is a much lower chance of their ever being a conflict.

I am against the use of force in any situation in which we have not been attacked. It makes me cringe to say it, as personally I have never waited for someone to punch me in the face, I prefer to strike first when I sense there is a threat. But global war is not equivalent to a bar room brawl. If the United States wants to keep its moral leadership, then we cannot initiate violence, ever. Sometimes being the good guy sucks, but being the bad guy is a much worse option. We should use our military might to end wars, not start them.

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