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The American Foreign Policy Establishment's Perfect Sleeping Act

Too much in America's military plate: America's war against Islamic *Jihadis* was going just fine. Then came August 11 – the day that Russia invaded Georgia. Should America continue to take on the *Jihadis* or divert military resources to stop the Russians from breaking America's global hegemony? That indeed is the great American dilemma.

Army of the brave? Here's what the United States Army has: A total of 33 Active Component brigades (the U.S. Army is in the process of increasing the number of Active Component brigades from 33 to 43). According to GlobalSecurity, "there are some 250,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen deployed in support of combat, peacekeeping, and deterrence operations. This figure does not include those forces normally present in Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom or Japan unless bases at those locations are actively supporting a combat operation. Furthermore, tours of duty in these locations are routine and not considered hardship tours. If one were to include these forces the number of deployed troops worldwide would be around 350,000."

Navy of the brave? Here's what the United States Navy (USN) has: The world's largest carrier fleet with 11 aircraft carriers in service and 2 under construction. USN has a total of 295 ships and submarines--280 active service--out of which 100 are currently deployed. USN has some 332,000 personnel on active duty and more than 3,700 aircraft.

The American balancing act: Currently, America has between 14 to 16 combat brigades deployed in Iraq and a combat brigade each in Afghanistan and South Korea (Afghanistan and Kosovo both have a Guard Combat brigade each). With more than half of all combat brigades deployed the U.S. Army is thus fully deployed (tours of duty for all active-duty Army units are a standard 12-months deployed plus 12 months home although the

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Secretary of Defense recently lengthened tours of duty to 15 months).

More and More aircraft carriers: America projects its power through its aircraft carriers. Of the 11 aircraft carriers in service, USS Harry Truman, USS Nimitz and USS John Stennis are at their homeports, USS Enterprise is under a 16-month maintenance, USS Carl Vinson is non-deployable, USS George Washington is under repair, USS Kitty Hawk is off the coast of Hawaii, USS Abraham Lincoln is heading towards Yokosuka (Japan) and USS Ronald Reagan is deployed not too far away from Pakistan.

Military might isn't everything: In a nutshell, after Iraq and Afghanistan the United States Army has no surplus, deployable combat troops. That strategic miscalculation had essentially opened a strategic window for Russia to strike and break the uni-polarity. In that sense, Russia struck just at the right time.

"Shock and awe" for American strategists: America is now being forced to negotiate both with Iran and Russia. Then there's North Korea that has reportedly reactivated its nuclear facility at Yongbyon. Can America defend Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, America's allies in the Baltic? Then there's the pro-U.S. coalition government in Ukraine to be saved. American foreign policy establishment is in a state of shock and American foreign policy is in shambles.

Can America choose? America cannot continue to fight the 'war on terror' and block Russia's expansionist foreign policy at the same time. Uncle Sam would have to choose one or the other. What would it be Russians or *Jihadis*?

Is the United States of America, world's hyper-power, in a position to choose, really? Drones on Afghanistan are an old sight now; could the US afford to send drones over Moscow?

Not so easy to choose.