



THINKING ABOUT PUBLIC POLICY: The White House, the Congress, the Media

March 2016

**BARRY R. McCAFFREY
GENERAL, USA (Ret.)**

GENERAL BARRY R. MCCAFFREY, USA (RET.)



Barry McCaffrey served in the United States Army for 32 years and retired as a four-star General. At retirement, he was the most highly decorated serving General, having been awarded three Purple Heart medals (wounded in combat three times), two Distinguished Service Crosses (the nation's second highest award for valor) and two Silver Stars for valor.

For five years after leaving the military, General McCaffrey served as the Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). Upon leaving government service, he served as the Bradley Distinguished Professor of International Security Studies from 2001-2005; and an Adjunct Professor of International Security Studies from 2006-2010 at the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY. He served as an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Sciences from 1973-1976 teaching American Government and Comparative Politics.

General McCaffrey is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and an associate of the Inter-American Dialogue. He has served on the Board of Directors of several corporations in the engineering design, technology, healthcare and services sectors. He joined the Board of Directors of Excelitas Technologies Corp. and the Board of Directors of Beacon Health Options. He serves on the International Advisory Board of Fleishman Hillard, and he is proud to serve on South Carolina's SCRA Board of Advisors.

General McCaffrey attended Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.; and graduated from West Point with a Bachelor of Science degree. He earned a master's degree in American Government from American University and attended the Harvard University National Security Program as well as the Business School Executive Education Program.

In 2015 he was selected for the Doughboy Award -- the highest honor the Chief of Infantry can bestow on any Infantryman -- for outstanding contribution to the United States Army Infantry. In 2007 he was inducted into the US Army Ranger Hall of Fame at the US Army Infantry Center, Ft. Benning, GA. In May 2010, he was honored as a Distinguished Graduate by the West Point Association of Graduates at the United States Military Academy. In 1992 he was awarded the State Department Superior Honor Award for the principal negotiation team for the START II Nuclear Arms Control Treaty. In 2004, Catholic University of America awarded him the James Cardinal Gibbons Medal (Highest Honor), to honor him for distinguished and meritorious service to the United States of America.

General McCaffrey is married to Jill Ann McCaffrey. They have three married adult children and six grandchildren. Their son, Colonel Sean McCaffrey, just retired from the Armed Forces after his third combat tour.

Currently, General McCaffrey is President of his own consulting firm based in Alexandria, Virginia www.mccaffreyassociates.com. He also serves as a national security and terrorism analyst for NBC News.

STRATEGIC SECURITY CHALLENGES

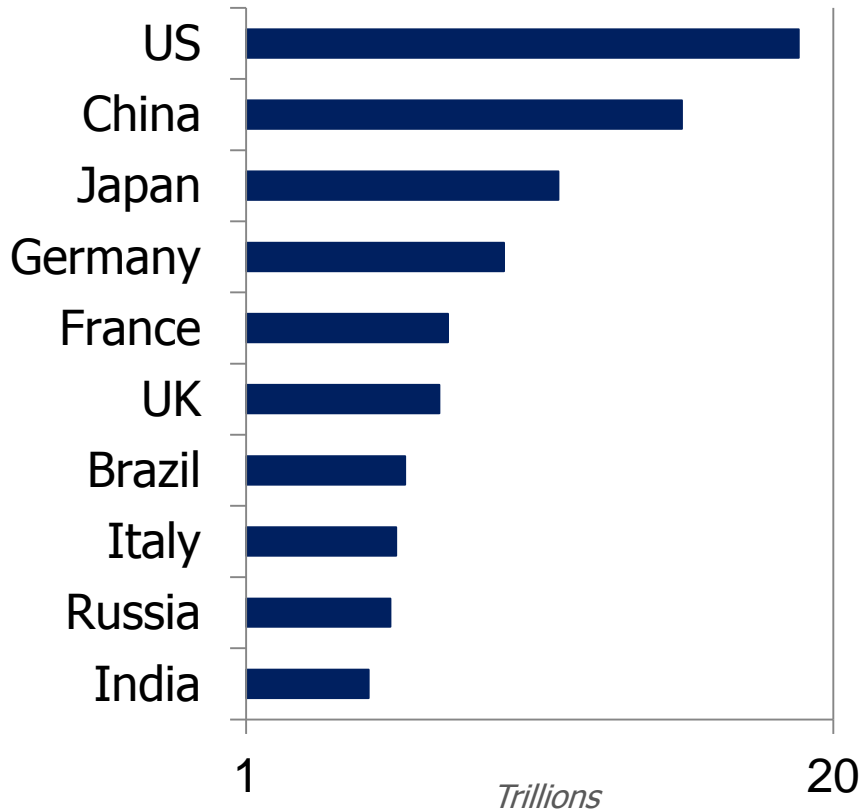


- Chinese naval and air power.
- North Korean threat to Japan and South Korea.
- Iranian threat to the Persian Gulf states, Iraq, Syria, and Israel.
- Russian border expansion; Ukraine, Crimea, The Baltic States, Poland.
- Civil war and failed states. (59,205 total US killed and wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan).
- The growing cyber-threat.
- The proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.
- ISIS/Al Qaeda/International terrorism. (US cites 59 Foreign Terrorist Organizations – 6 added in 2014).
- International crime and drug cartels.
- Refugees (19.5 million refugees worldwide at the end of 2014).
- Humanitarian crisis (Ebola, Tsunami, Natural Disasters).

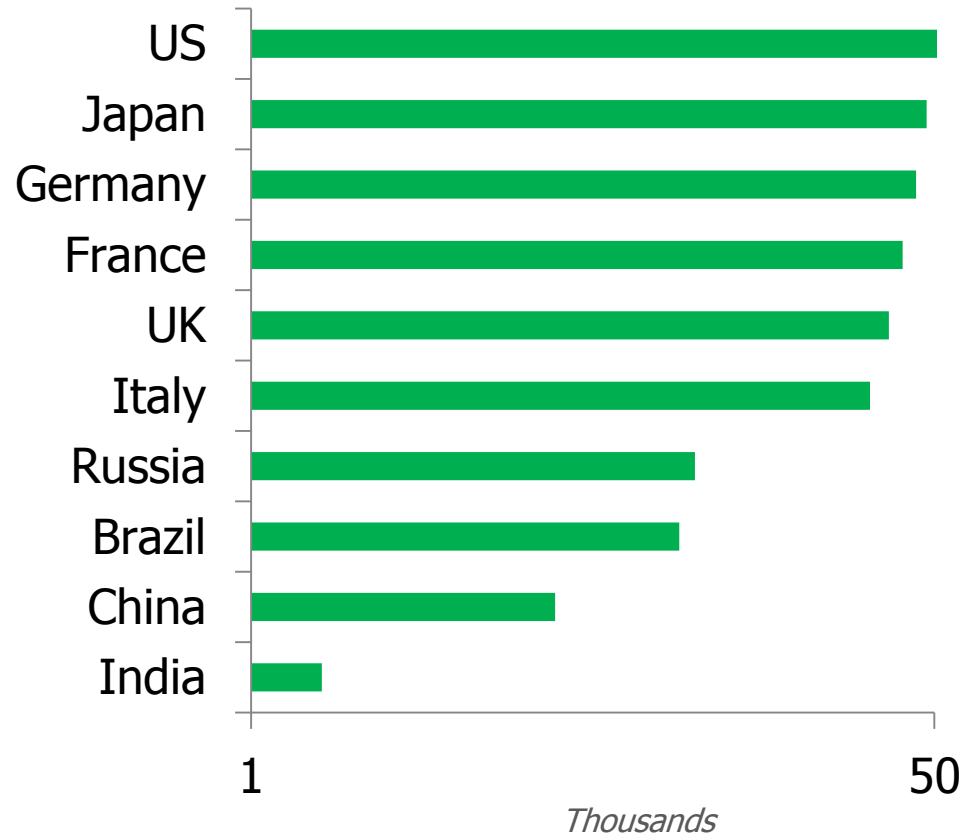
US WEALTHIEST NATION IN GLOBAL HISTORY

COMPARATIVE GDP DATA

2014 GDP



Per Capita



****All data retrieved from the World Bank – January 2015**

FIVE PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGY



- Strategy should be articulated by senior leaders at the top. Written in short, clear memos. Include a map or graphic. (Not end result of a bureaucratic process.)
- Strategy has no meaning unless it is closely tied to a five year budget.
- Strategy should focus on your own institutions' responsibilities -- not the global community.
- Strategy guides 5-15 year practical vision, not "futuristic thinking".
- Strategy drives doctrine, organization, technology, training. It is not window dressing for short-term White House policy.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY PROCESS



1st – Be appreciative and respectful of civilian political leadership.

- They know nothing about our equipment.
- They know a lot about America.

2nd – The DoD and Congress are supposed to shape the strategy and the future.

- The Generals are supposed to be warfighters.
- Normally we have reversed roles.

3rd – Old Generals don't like to fight –

- Young Executive Branch civilians reach for the military tool first.
- Both are problems for sound military strategy.

4th – Read and listen directly to the wise men and women of the National Security process. (Congressional testimony, transcripts of major speeches, mandatory reports to congress.)

5th – Read the law that defines your duties and others in the national security process.

6th – No one is in charge – apparently we like it that way.

REAL DECISION-MAKING IN WASHINGTON



1st – Shape National Security arguments based on logic, merit, and principle. Do not anticipate what the politics will allow.

(Colin Powell)

2nd – Write the concept paper and you will own the argument.
(If your spouse cannot follow the jargon – it will not work on civilians.)

3rd – Debate the policy – control the budget.

4th – Trick the senior leaders into reading your work.
(They never forget old-bad data.)

5th – Form inter-agency teams at the 05 thru 07 level (integrity and good ideas.)

6th – Work the media with experts (not PR) – the people have a right to know.

7th – Inform the Congress and staff – do not hide until end game.

WORKING WITH CONGRESS ON POLICY ISSUES



- Educate and inform – no “lobbying.” Absolute integrity. Always outline the “downside”.
- Leverage travel opportunities – CODELs and STAFFDELS to key events.
- Listen and respond rapidly. If you’re wrong, say so bluntly.
- Anticipate Congressional concerns to proposed policies.
- Propose prompt solutions to problems that have Congressional interest or require Congressional assistance.
- Build and maintain relationships with Members of Congress and staff.
- Don’t pander to the Congress. If you disagree – forcefully tell them why in written, unclassified documents.

THE ARMED FORCES AND THE MEDIA



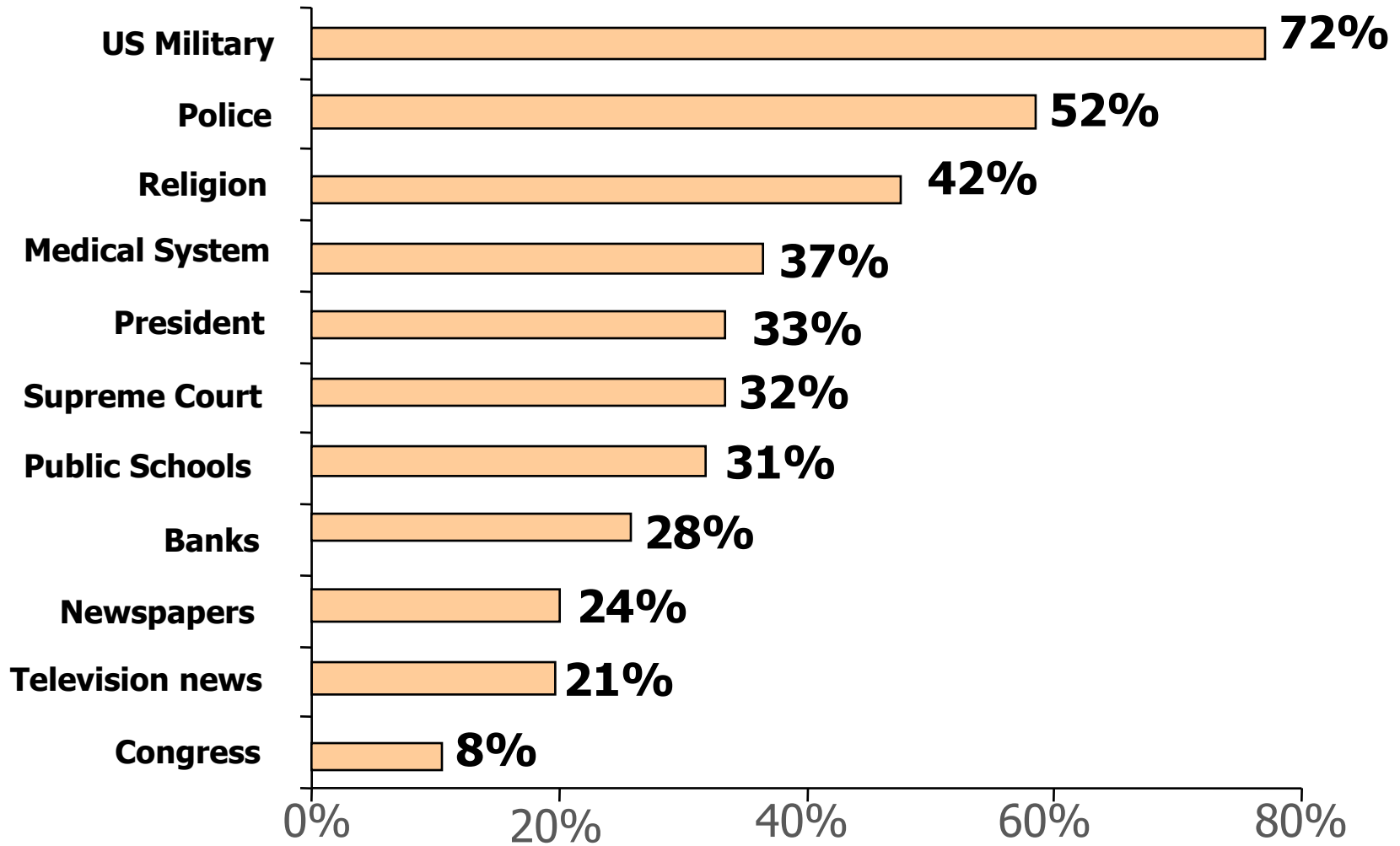
- 1st** – The media can't do their job effectively unless you help – transportation, safety, commo, food, access.
- 2nd** – The Generals tend to automatically hide information – both good and bad. The senior civilians leak all their info.
- 3rd** – The media need news – sound bites, conflict, names.
- 4th** – They work on deadlines. They will be objective. They will keep their word.
- 5th** – Form long-term relationships with serious print media.
- 6th** – When there is a problem – get in front of TV cameras.
- 7th** – You can refuse to help shape the story – they will still do the story.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF



- Be in good physical shape. (Exercise one hour per day.)
- Get 5^{1/2} hours of sleep, eat two meals, take 2 scheduled 1-week vacations per year.
- Remember your honor. Speak for the US Army's Company Commanders.
- For your mental health – only read Washington Post, WSJ, New York Times, after lunch, in paper format. Do not read news summaries.
- Be a complex person – read books, go to lectures, watch PBS NewsHour.

THE US ARMED FORCES – THE MOST TRUSTED INSTITUTION



***Source: The Gallup Organization, Poll dated June 2-7, 2015*