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## Winter 1985 Full Issue

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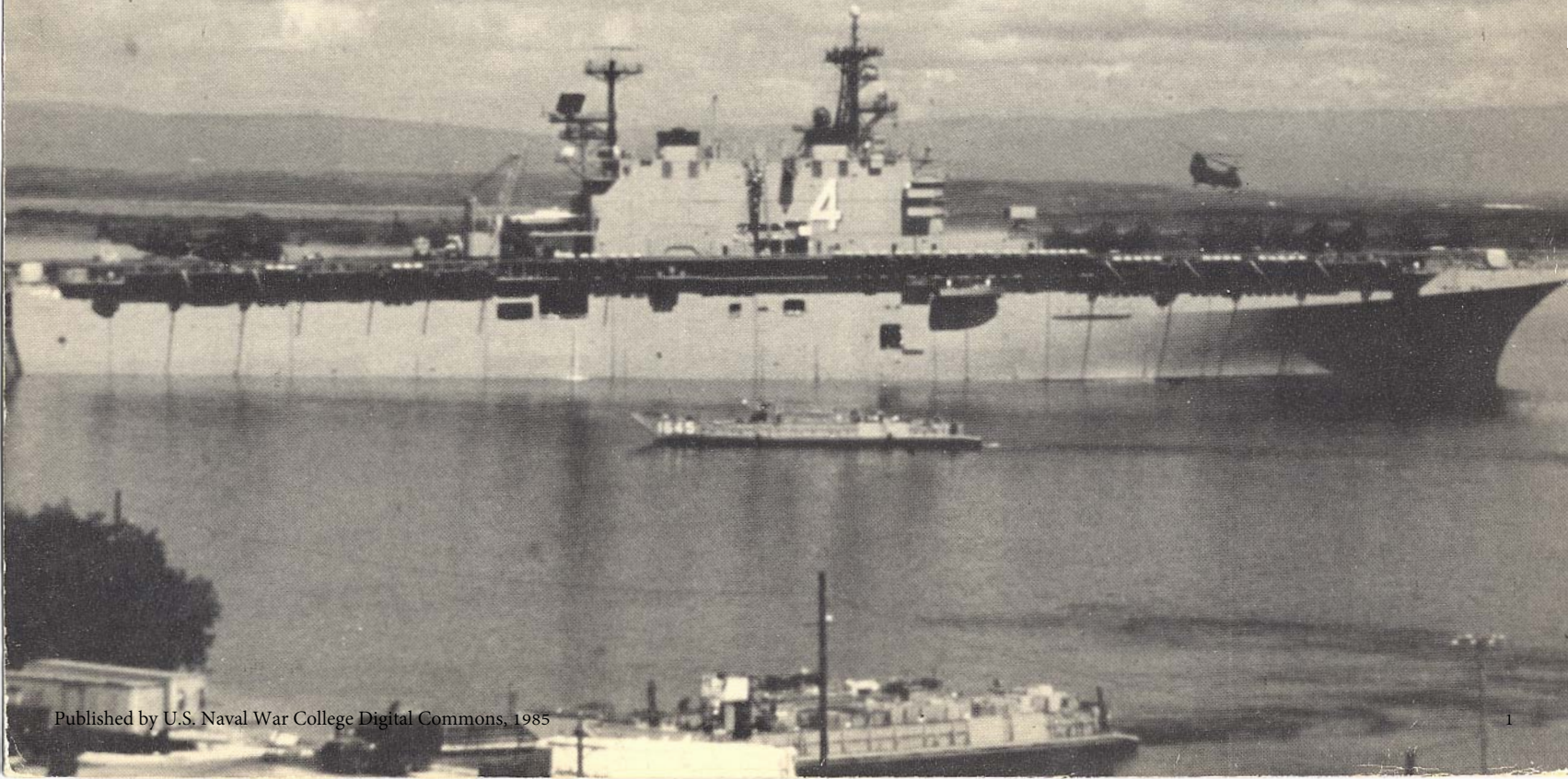
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War College: Winter 1985 Full Issue

# NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

January - February 1985





# NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

The *Naval War College Review* was established in 1948 by the Chief of Naval Personnel in order that officers of the Navy and Marine Corps might receive some of the educational benefits available to the resident students at the Naval War College. The forthright and candid views of the authors are presented for the professional education of the readers. Articles published are related to the academic and professional activities of the Naval War College. They are drawn from a wide variety of sources in order to inform, to stimulate, and to challenge the readers, and to serve as a catalyst for new ideas. Articles are selected primarily on the basis of their intellectual and literary merits, usefulness and interest to servicewide readership, and timeliness. Reproduction of an article published in the *Review* requires the approval of the Editor, *Naval War College Review*, and the author. Reproduction of articles published in the *Review* is subject to the Copyright Act of 1976 and treaties of the United States, to the extent that they are applicable. Caution should be exercised in the case of those articles protected by copyright, as may be indicated by a copyright notice at the beginning of such articles. *Review* content is open to citation and other reference, in accordance with accepted academic research methods. The thoughts and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Navy Department or the Naval War College.

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**Cover: The USS *Nassau* (LHA 4) at Guantanamo Bay. Note that while she conducts aircraft operations forward, she is trimmed by the stern to conduct boat operations aft. Official Navy photo.**

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The Secretary of the Navy has determined that this publication is necessary in the transaction of business required by law of the Department of the Navy. Funds for printing of this publication have been approved by the Navy Publications and Printing Policy Committee.



## President's Notes

One of the exciting aspects of this centennial year for me has been the publication of the Centennial History of the Naval War College. In reading the history, I was particularly intrigued by the international influence that has persisted throughout the history of the War College. This influence was formalized in 1956 with the establishment of the Naval Command College (NCC). As you may know, this senior level college was the inspiration of Admiral Arleigh Burke. His vision extended to human terms when he said, "When a man reaches the end of his active career in the service, he finds that the greatest asset that he takes with him for a lifetime of work in his service, is his friends. Men whom he knows, respects, admires—and above all—men he can *trust*." And that is the genesis of the Naval Command College, which since its creation has graduated eight hundred twenty-nine senior officers from 63 countries.

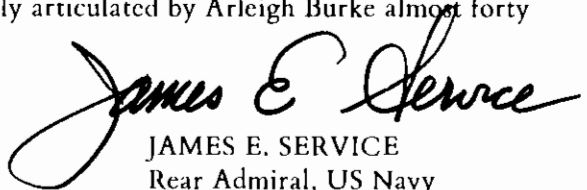
The international influence at the War College, however, dates back one hundred years to Luce's thinking. He stressed professional exchanges and interaction between nations. Luce's ideas paralleled the professional thinking then taking place in England, Germany, and France. He corresponded freely with his European colleagues, as did Mahan who also visited Europe. As early as 1894, two Swedish officers were assigned here and, as a result of their attendance, the Swedish Naval War College was subsequently developed. The following year a Danish officer was assigned, but in later years security clearance problems hampered the full development of a free and unrestricted international exchange of ideas. This reluctance to share tactical concepts and wider perspectives was changed with World War II when the importance of allied cooperation became clear and the need to understand and cooperate with officers from other navies became critical to preserving our national

security. Later, with the creation of Nato, the peacetime need to understand the viewpoints of international military officers became more apparent. NCC can, in many ways, be considered as an answer to this need for cooperation among international naval officers.

It was no coincidence that the President of the Naval War College at the time of the first International Seapower Symposium (ISS) in 1969 was Admiral Colbert, who had earlier served as the first director of NCC in 1956. He envisioned the Seapower Symposium as a forum to promote mutual understanding among the naval leaders of the world's maritime nations. This unusually successful meeting brought together 74 delegates representing 37 countries to discuss "changing maritime postures." Yes, NCC was the seed for the ISS and out of that Symposium, the Naval Staff College was developed. The CNOs from many nations asked that the War College expand its international program. In fulfillment of this expressed need, the Naval Staff College was created to complement the more senior course offered by NCC.

Thus, an intermediate level course was conceived that would educate mid-career officers to be the international counterparts of the students in the College of Naval Command and Staff. Four hundred sixty-one officers representing 68 countries have attended the college since its inception.

The success of the War College is mirrored by the success of our international programs. Already our international graduates are assuming senior positions in their navies and indeed their countries. With two-thirds of the NCC alumni attaining flag rank, our US students enjoy the unique opportunity of studying alongside the best officers from friendly foreign navies throughout the world. This interaction has indeed fostered the respect, admiration, and trust so capably articulated by Arleigh Burke almost forty years ago.



JAMES E. SERVICE  
Rear Admiral, US Navy  
President, Naval War College

# The Use of Naval Forces In Peacetime

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Laurence Martin

**I**f *peacetime* is defined generously as virtually every state short of all-out war, the use of naval force in such a state presents a subject of immense scope. For, contrary to some of the more alarmist media, peace—if sometimes a little hot—is the normal condition. Armed forces discharge most of their functions without warfare and, indeed, short of the point at which any shooting takes place. This has certainly been a longstanding characteristic of navies. Writing of his experiences in the Mediterranean in the 1890s, for instance, Vice Admiral H.H. Smith of the Royal Navy declared: “I don’t think we thought very much about war with a big ‘W.’ We looked on the Navy more as a World Police Force than as a warlike instrument. We considered that our job was to safeguard law and order throughout the world, safeguard civilisation, put out fires on shore and act as a guide, philosopher and friend to the merchant ships of all nations.”<sup>1</sup> Paradoxically, the traditional success of armed forces in exercising their influence short of war, encourages the illusion that they are irrelevant.

Particular problems are raised in the nuclear age when one attempts to define peacetime by distinguishing it from all-out war. No such neat distinction can be maintained in theoretical discussion for the dominant task of both strategic thought and practical policy is to ascertain and maintain the limits of such a war. Moreover, even if it is possible to draw a pragmatic line between peace and war, the course and outcome of such a war would inevitably be very much determined by peacetime operations. The habitual tendency of the democracies to begin their wars by being taken by surprise, then devote the early phase of combat to making up lost ground, can scarcely be tolerated in a world where military technology can produce such rapid and decisive results as the present.

The peacetime role of sea power is also complicated by the broad scope of sea power itself. As Admiral Mahan was at frequent pains to indicate, sea power comprises much more than the military navy. Today it embraces, in addition, not merely the merchant and fishing fleets, but the industries of shipbuilding, marine engineering, and electronics, the network of port facilities, and the systems of finance and insurance, many of which are now in

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the service not merely of shipping but of the new off-shore industrial and strategic installations. The Navy then, is the military component of sea power and the maritime component of military power.

Today, however, the Navy is not unchallenged even in this role. Technology has blurred the lines between the typical service organizations originally based on modes of locomotion. Broadly speaking, sailors sailed and soldiers rode or walked. As soon as airmen began to fly, however, and even more when missiles appeared, the seaborne and land-based military forces became able to penetrate deeply into each other's spheres. We need, therefore, to be clear from time to time, whether we are speaking of power exercised at sea or power wielded from the sea.

Possibly even more important than technology in changing the context of sea power has been the evolution of legal and political concepts. Naval power is critically conditioned by the legal status of the high seas, an arena now much eroded both by the extension of territorial waters and the massive expansion in the number of sovereign littoral states. Even more pervasive has been the changing climate of political opinion both domestic and international about the overt use of force. The use of force is still endemic but the aura of disapproval that has developed during this century—as typified in the Hague Conventions, the League of Nations and United Nations—has combined with distaste of affluent societies for hardship and danger to increase very greatly the political costs of resorting to force, at least among the democratic nations.

In such a strategic context, it cannot be assumed that sea power, in its narrower sense of coercive naval power, is politically useful merely because it clearly exists and could be employed. Nevertheless it does seem that naval power, even in our own age, partakes of some enduring characteristics which make it particularly relevant to the contemporary strategic scene. That scene is one in which conflict, at least between the major political blocs centered upon the nuclear superpowers, is both persistent and muted. It is a world in which struggle is conducted in twilight; in which the ultimate terror of nuclear war and, on the democratic side at least, the more general inhibitions about the use of force ensure that the contending parties are remarkably restrained in their response to acts and provocations which in earlier ages would have been almost automatic *casus belli*. In this world, in which action is often indirect and oblique, and in which threats often take the place of execution, some of the qualities of sea power are especially well adapted.

Foremost among these is strategic flexibility. This often noted attribute stems partly from the technical characteristics of naval power and partly from its political context. Technically, the payload of naval vessels combines with their relative mobility and speed to provide an unrivaled combination of range and endurance. The marriage to shipborne aircraft and missiles adds a formidable capacity to reach beyond the shoreline, best exemplified in the



modern aircraft carrier, a package of mobile air power capable of arriving on the scene of action rapidly and ready for action.

Such technical attributes could not take effect, however, were it not for the freedom of the high seas which renders them a uniquely permeable strategic medium in which rival national forces can legally penetrate and operate amongst each other in peacetime. This offers a freedom of access that can best be appreciated by contrast with the endless problems of overflight in the absence of any aerial equivalent to the concept of peaceful passage.

In combination, these legal and technical characteristics make naval power singularly well-adapted for today's twilight world of maneuver and demonstration. At their most conspicuous, naval vessels are formidable mobile pieces of national territory whose characteristics have introduced "showing the flag" into the English language as the epitome of open assertion. Yet exploiting their capacity to loiter and the vastness and emptiness of the oceans, naval vessels are the ideal "over-the-horizon" force, making their point only to specialized audiences equipped to take it. The range of operations is thus extended from committed forceful intervention, to blockade or mere presence. Moreover the intensity of commitment is relatively adjustable. Less dependent than land or air power on fixed and local bases, less subject because of this to scrutiny as to "force levels" in any particular arena, naval power seems preeminently suited to a period in which the capacity to "hang loose," to tune and retune the style of operation, has unprecedented value.

So far as the United States in particular is concerned, sea power was from the start inevitably a vital element in the life of what was an "island power" in relation to main centers of world politics. After the standoff of 1812-14 ensured a permanent truce between the United States and Great Britain, the Royal Navy served to shelter the Americas from European interference. But once Britain began to lose its naval supremacy, the potential collapse of the European balance of power led many American strategists and statesmen to fear a danger of actual physical threat to the United States from hostile European and Asian powers. American sea power thus became a means to project a forward defense in two World Wars and, in the present era, much the same thinking has transformed the United States into the keystone of an alliance, Nato, that testifies to its dependence on sea power by actually being named after an ocean.

It is true that once a balance of nuclear deterrence arose and the instruments of that balance acquired intercontinental ranges, it could be argued that the only serious physical threat to the United States could be warded off by a retaliating strategic force independent of overseas territory. But to a large extent the threat of invasion or even any significant physical attack on the mainland had always been somewhat mythical, used chiefly as a surrogate menace to jolt American public opinion into forestalling a more

subtle danger: the deterioration of the American "strategic milieu" and the isolation of a democratic and commercially oriented United States in a hostile world of militarism and totalitarianism. A president as early in American history and as repelled by overseas entanglements as Jefferson already found himself sponsoring maritime operations against piracy. George Washington's warning had in any case been merely against the "ordinary vicissitudes"<sup>2</sup> of foreign affairs and the challenges of the twentieth century clearly transcend that definition.

Consequently the United States finds itself today the chief pillar sustaining a world compatible with American ideals. To this world there are two threats, related but distinguishable. One is the challenge of the other superpower. When a colossus of the land faces a leviathan of the sea, sea power is an essential means for the latter to project its countervailing power. The rapid development of the Soviet Navy, however, has given this colossus a maritime arm with which to extend its own power, so that the competition is now on, as well as at the margin of, the sea.

The second threat is contained in the forces of conflict or mere anarchy that detract from the standards of world order. Like most dominant states, the United States has an interest in order, born partly of the self-interest of a trading and traveling nation, partly of the risk that violence anywhere may spread, with particular danger in a nuclear world, and partly, from a genuinely altruistic benevolence. The latter quality sometimes absent, even more frequently derided, nevertheless does exist to the point, in fact, at which it often complicates and frustrates rational response to the crueler imperatives of the balance of power.

Clearly the two problems, that of the Soviet Union and that of precarious order in the wider world, are linked by the virtue of the latter being an arena for superpower rivalry as well as an autonomous source of problems. Nevertheless the two are different and grave errors can derive from failing to recognize this; in particular to see all the problems of the Third World as episodes in the containment of Soviet communism leads inevitably to over-extension of Western defensive resources.

This is not the place to debate either the general issue of Soviet expansionism—is it defensive or offensive?—or the more specific question of whether Soviet naval expansion is the product of strategic defensiveness or geopolitical aggressiveness. Probably the strategic-defensive element has been predominant in the case of the Navy. What is undeniable, however, is that the improved Soviet Navy and its potential for the geopolitical role has not gone unnoticed by Soviet leaders. Even if some of Admiral Gorshkov's boasts about the global advancement of Soviet state interests can be discounted as service special pleading, the pledges of such as Marshal Grechko that Soviet military power ensures the irreversibility of socialist gains around the world clearly endorse an "imperial" role for the Soviet Navy which

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recent history well illustrates.<sup>3</sup> Since the minor adjustments to the postwar settlement in Austria and Finland, Soviet gains have proved irreversible wherever they have been contiguous to the Soviet Union itself. Where clients have been separated from Soviet territory, as in Egypt and Somalia, reversals have taken place. Clearly the Soviet Navy could, if it became ascendant, offer a kind of extended contiguity that might make such breaks for independence impossible. Be that as it may, the mere presence of the Soviet Navy on all the high seas has radically altered the context within which the United States must consider both the war and peacetime exercise of its own sea power.

In a comprehensive review of the uses of naval force in peacetime the submarine ballistic forces might well rank first in importance. They are the archetype of residual deterrence and, if general war were to take a more protracted form than a single spasm of mutual destruction, counter-SLBM warfare and equivalent defensive measures might well become a major preoccupation. Despite the need to anticipate this, however, the SSBNs fall somewhat outside the scope of this survey.

More difficult to exclude or to evaluate in reference to peacetime operations is the likely scale of maritime warfare in a major European, or Northeast Asian war. At one phase in postwar strategic thought it was believed that, because such a war would be rapid and probably nuclear, such earlier phenomena as the battles of the Atlantic were unlikely to recur. The Royal Navy suffered a well-known fall in morale when the 1957 Defence White Paper admitted that the "place of seapower in future large scale war is uncertain"<sup>4</sup> and even a much more recent British study of sea power emanating from the Royal Naval College suggested in 1982 that "traditional naval activities seem to be more open to the charge of being irrelevant than ever before."<sup>5</sup>

Such a view is misplaced. The charge is undoubtedly raised both by rival armed services and in pacifist circles, but ready answers are available. In the most general terms, recent political history in the Western Alliance shows there is a clear imperative not to accept the prospect, still less to render it inevitable by our own policies, that a future major war could only be brief and catastrophic. When the whole thrust of Nato strategy for war in Europe is to raise the capability for prolonged conventional defense, the naval component becomes increasingly prominent. This thrust of Western policy is reinforced by the common historical experience in this century that predictions of short wars in Europe are falsified in the event.

Admittedly the questions of how long such a war might in fact be, how it should be fought on the sea, what proportion of our resources should be devoted to preparation and in what form, are all vexed questions which it is fortunately not the task of this paper to answer. On any assumptions, peacetime preparation for such operations will preempt a great deal of naval effort in Nato and by the United States in particular.

In weighing the demands of the big war in Europe against the lesser but more frequently acute requirements for naval operations elsewhere, a prudent answer should take several considerations into account. Among these is the fact that if there is any arena of potential conflict in which nuclear deterrence can be relied upon to discourage aggression, Europe is surely it. While it may be politically unacceptable and strategically imprudent to rely entirely upon such deterrence, it would be equally unwise to ignore it when allocating scarce resources. Europe may be the most important geopolitical stake at issue but war in Europe is also among the less likely contingencies. There is a school of thought that implies that the United States should be willing to run the risk of not deterring, and of losing if they occur, any of a wide range of encounters around the world while keeping its powder dry for the "big one" in Europe.<sup>6</sup> This not only runs the risk of subordinating likelihood entirely to gravity but also neglects two possibilities: the first, that war in Europe might evolve precisely from some extra-European encounter that gets out of hand and, the second, that the deterrence of aggression in Europe may well be greatly reinforced by demonstrations of will and the readiness to use force elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

In turning to the occasions on which sea power is called upon to act in contingencies other than a major East-West encounter, we find that they have been both numerous and demanding. The bulk of active peacetime maritime operations and almost all the actual spilling of blood since 1945 have occurred in "third world" contingencies. Two well-known and substantial studies have clearly established both the frequency with which armed force has been employed and the preeminence of naval power in such events. Leaving aside such major conflicts as the Korean and Vietnamese wars and excluding the numerous actions of such medium powers as France and the United Kingdom, US armed forces alone were employed no less than 215 times between 1946 and 1975; 177 of these operations involved the US Navy and 100 were conducted solely by the Navy. Aircraft carriers participated in 106 incidents and amphibious forces in 71; the US Marine Corps was committed twice as often as Army units.<sup>8</sup>

For comparison, 190 peacetime uses of Soviet armed forces have been identified between 1944 and 1979. In these the Soviet Navy was involved only 43 times but, significantly, it was deployed in two-thirds of the incidents that were not contiguous to Soviet territory.<sup>9</sup>

It is perhaps worth noting that the study of American operations, conducted by the Brookings Institution, concludes that three-quarters of the employments of US forces were "successful" in achieving American political objectives and that half could be regarded as successful even over the long term. While many such peacetime operations can be on a small scale, they are potentially demanding. There is, of course, the intrinsically difficult task of bringing force or the threat of force effectively to bear on political situations.

From the solely military point of view, the rapidly increasing quantity and quality of armed force at the disposal of local and regional powers poses problems for would-be interventionists, even if instances of this being exercised are not yet numerous. The Argentine performance in the Falklands war is perhaps a precursor of things to come while any thought of intervention in the current conflicts in the Persian Gulf must inevitably be conditioned by a healthy respect for regional military potential.

In all regional situations the Soviet Navy has now also become a factor with which to reckon. Merely by existing with a demonstrated capability to operate in any ocean and with a widespread permanent presence, the Soviet Navy affects the strategic calculations of not merely the United States but of any other parties that might be affected, positively or negatively, by American naval operations. In all limited operations, prudence requires anticipating what the outcome would be if the incident escalated to higher levels. Thus, ideally, one should enter a nonbelligerent demonstration with the ability to prevail if it evolves into limited war and limited war with the confidence of winning any larger conflict that might result. This is the preferred condition for dominating the process of escalation, even if in practice states frequently act on a riskier basis. "Gunboat diplomacy" had its full efficacy when behind the gunboat was known to lurk a cruiser, and behind the cruiser a formidable battle fleet. By posing a new and added dimension to the possible evolution of any naval operation, the Soviet Navy is thus a latent factor in any responsible strategic calculation, however cautious its behavior has been hitherto.

Any general consideration of the use of naval power in peacetime must take into account the powerful and well-founded inhibitions against any use of force to resolve political problems. These inhibitions can be derived from both altruism and self-interest. At least among the Western democracies there is an admirable though by no means always decisive reluctance to inflict injury, or to override with brute force the self-determining political processes of others. Such reluctance is reinforced by that element in democratic political theory that persists in believing, admittedly sometimes contrary to experience, that the political settlements reached by peaceful self-determination are more stable and lasting than those attained by forcible coercion. Further and perhaps more effective inhibitions arise from the multiple costs and special element of unpredictability that are involved in military action—characteristics that arise both from the actual course of operations and the reactions of governments, politicians, media and public opinion. There are consequently powerful motives to contemplate political and economic measures before resort to the military.

Nevertheless, force has qualities as a political instrument that make it uniquely relevant to some contingencies. While politico-economic means do operate by influencing the behavior of others, often over a substantial period

of time, force can often execute an immediate physical transformation. This was achieved in the *Mayaguez* rescue and equally dramatically not achieved in the attempted rescue of the Teheran hostages. Force is often the only quick and direct way of prevailing against the force of others and anyone who is known to be wholly adverse to and utterly inhibited from acting on that principle is handicapped even in the exercise of lesser sanctions—the effective defiance by Mussolini of League sanctions in the thirties being an often cited broad-brush instance of this.

In calculating the costs of employing US naval power in the present era, it is not possible to ignore the risk of collision with the Soviet Union, most probably though by no means necessarily in the form of the Soviet Navy. Whatever level of naval investment the United States may choose, it will not be possible to restore the virtual monopoly of capability for power projection that excluded this danger in the past. However, it would be going to extreme to be so inhibited by the danger of encounters between the two superpowers as to confer an effective monopoly on the Soviet Union.

So far the pattern of military intervention in Third World areas has not significantly involved direct confrontations between the superpowers. Rather the pattern has been of action against local powers or insurgent forces, sometimes the clients of a superpower and sometimes not. The task of Western forces is to hold the ring against the Soviet Union while either conducting operations against local opponents or, much more satisfactorily, letting allies, local or not, deal with the local situation. The inhibition of one superpower from intervening where another takes action is, of course, derived ultimately from the whole range of superpower military capability that weights the risks of war between the two. But both theories of crisis management and the pattern of power projection so far in the Soviet-American rivalry suggest that there is particular value in what might be called locally relevant power. Because, in the nuclear age, local issues are dwarfed by the potential consequences of an ultimate war between the superpowers, one tends to concede a monopoly of directly wielded force to the other according to which appears to have the greater stake and commitment. An established local presence, the capability to create one, to escalate within the local context rather than by broadening the conflict, and to achieve prompt success may be the most significant ways of establishing the right to prevail. As a force characteristically able to display such qualities in distant theaters of conflict, sea power is thus relevant not merely to immediate operations but to the wider political context that sets the rules for particular conflicts. Many dimensions of sea power that may not seem directly relevant to a strategic problem may thus play an important latent part. It may well be, for instance, that the massive potential of American aircraft carriers dictates the outcome of crises in which their actual deployment has never been needed or contemplated.

The delicate relationship of Western public opinion to the use of force constitutes a special reason for the value of locally relevant power. Peacetime operations, however fuzzily defined, always fall short of those contingencies in which national survival is clearly at stake. The less direct and dramatic the challenge, the more room there is for dissension as to the wisdom of meeting it, let alone in what manner that should be done. There is a free rein for debate both internationally and domestically, between government and opposition and among the agencies of government itself. Politics tends not to stop at the water and the record of solidarity among the Western allies on Third World issues is not encouraging—Suez, Vietnam, the Falklands and Grenada all offering illustrations of varying degree.

While there may be no adequate basis to assert that moderate and limited action minimizes costs in this complex political arena, there are times when rapid, decisive and overwhelming action may produce a *fait accompli* that stills debate. Also governments see the merit and value the capacity to tailor their responses to the political climate and will frequently find it useful to deal with problems so far as possible by local measures that are clearly appropriate to the challenge. This further brings into question the idea that the provision of forces capable of meeting challenges “in their own terms” can be obviated by the concept of horizontal escalation.

Whatever course is ultimately chosen, the political inhibitions of national leaders about the use of force typically impose additional difficulties on military commanders who are frequently asked to act later than would have been optimal, under burdensome rules of engagement, and after far less than maximum advantage has been taken of political and strategic warning. Political leaders often ask military commanders to achieve more than is reasonable and the commanders frequently demand wider margins of safety than the politicians can afford.<sup>10</sup> In this respect, better mutual understanding is much to be desired. To cite once again that distinguished voice from this college, Admiral Mahan wrote: “diplomatic conditions affect military action and military considerations diplomatic measures. They are inseparable parts of a whole: and as such those responsible for military measures should understand the diplomatic factors and vice versa.”<sup>11</sup> If it cannot be said that military leaders always display political sophistication, it is at least undeniable that their colleges and journals pay frequent attention to the problem; it is far from clear that political leaders devote similar effort to comprehending the nature, capabilities and limitations of the military tools at their disposal.

Obviously the flexibility of sea power, its range, speed, size and variety of payload, and its capacity to loiter offshore or strike deep inland are qualities well-suited to help political leaders orchestrate the application of force to fit specific contingencies. To maximize such qualities requires effort and choices about the level of investment in forces and in bases or in the capacity to do **without them. Moreover, in the perpetual struggle to meet strategic needs on**

limited resources, decisions must be made about priorities, for flexible though they are, naval forces are not infinitely adaptable. Today particularly difficult choices have to be made between quantity and quality; one of the most important being whether a smaller number of carrier forces tailored for the most demanding requirements of the North East Atlantic should be preferred to a greater number of less heavily supported ships for the "global policing" role.

More generally it would seem that modern technological trends could, if consciously exploited, contribute considerably not merely to the overall enhancement of naval force but specifically to its suitability for discharging the politically sensitive tasks of peacetime. Improved means for command, control and intelligence should do something to offset the tendency to act late and to demand close political control of operations. Modern techniques for target location and precise delivery of weapons are combining to produce an era in which military forces should be unprecedentedly able to achieve the exact effects they intend. This should permit a "strategy of intended effects" which cuts costs on all sides, and it must be recognized that in limited operations it may be almost as desirable to circumscribe enemy losses as one's own. Without in any way drawing conclusions from the specific example, it must surely be that if President Kennedy had asked today's Air Force about the practicability of a "surgical" strike on the Cuban missiles, he would have received a more helpful answer.

The payoff from limited operations becoming more practicable may not be merely a direct and obvious contribution to the solution of particular problems. It may also, by permitting demonstrations that force is still usable in discriminating ways, enhance the credibility of action, which is the main criterion of success in deterrence and may, therefore, paradoxically reduce the need for continued actual use.

To suggest both that force remains a useful instrument of policy and that it can be rendered even more so, is not to assert that it should be used lightly. If President Kennedy had received a more optimistic technical answer, it does not necessarily follow that he should have availed himself of it. Force remains a costly tool from many points of view. There is a danger that because it has some capacity to cut political knots, it may be employed merely because no satisfactory solution can be reached by diplomatic or other coercive means. Force can by no means be relied upon to resolve such impasses satisfactorily. It cannot bail out failed politicians or make a success of ill-conceived policies. Equally, a failure of force to succeed should not be over-interpreted, as has sometimes been the tendency in the democracies, as a wholesale and permanent demonstration that force is useless or irrelevant. The Soviet record with regard to interventions in the Third World shows a resilient capacity to shrug off failure and, while that example is certainly not one to follow blindly, it evinces a certain realism about what can and cannot be achieved that merits reflection.



Nevertheless, the hope that democratic governments and peoples can develop a mature and realistic appreciation of the place of military force in serving the national interest cannot require the democracies to abandon the values that make them worth defending. Nor—though we may hope to see some of the more excessive self-indulgences of the mass media disciplined by public taste—can we expect that military operations will ever again be conducted by democracies except under intensive public scrutiny as well as proper political supervision. This will be particularly the case with peacetime operations. Never, then, has it been more important to foster that mutual understanding between the politician and the military man for which Mahan pleaded. The broadly based work of the Naval War College has consequently never been more close to the heart of strategic debate than today.

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### Notes

1. H.H. Smith, *A "Yellow" Admiral Remembers* (London, 1932), p. 54; quoted in A.J. Marder, *British Naval Policy, 1890-1905* (New York: Putnam, 1940).
2. Italics added.
3. Admiral Gorshkov's thesis is well known as embodied in *Seapower of the State* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976). He makes the "state interests" point on p. 292 and elsewhere. Marshal Grechko's view was expressed on one occasion as "At the present stage the historic function of the Soviet Armed Forces is not restricted merely to their function in defending our Motherland and other socialist countries. In its foreign policy activity, the Soviet state actively, purposefully opposes the export of counter-revolution and the policy of aggression, supports the national liberation struggle, and resolutely resists imperialist aggression in whatever distant region of our planet it may appear." Quoted in H. Gelman, *The Politburo's Management of its America Problem* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand, 1981), p. 24.
4. *Defence: Outline of Future Policy*, Cmnd 124, 1957.
5. Geoffrey Till et al, *Maritime Strategy and the Nuclear Age* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 181.
6. An eloquent expression of a view which seems at times to come close to this is Robert W. Komer, *Maritime Strategy or Coalition Defense?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Abt Books, 1984).
7. In Norway, for instance, the role of the Royal Naval Commandos in the Falklands is regarded not as an unfortunate diversion of resources, but as evidence not merely of their professional competence, but also of the fact that they do indeed deploy and fight when needed.
8. Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force without war: US Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1978).
9. Stephen S. Kaplan, *Diplomacy of Power: Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1981).
10. An interesting study illustrating this problem is Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen and Cold War Crises* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).
11. Quoted in Till, p. 209.

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An adaptation of a lecture given at the Naval War College's Current Strategy Forum.



## Security in Northeast Asia: A Trilateral Alternative

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Edward A. Olsen

**T**hanks to the TV comedy series *M\*A\*S\*H*, the US military presence in Korea is arguably the best known but least understood component of the United States' strategic presence in Asia. In the wake of the American debacle in Vietnam juxtaposed with the economic and other successes of the United States' South Korean protege, it comes as no surprise to Americans that Washington wants to keep US forces steadfastly committed in Korea—a place where they fought and, after a fashion, won. However, such thinking is based on some assumptions that will be questioned here as we examine what is committed to Korea, why the commitment exists, how long the status quo should continue, and what viable alternatives exist.

***US Forces: Size and Distribution.***<sup>1</sup> In the pre-Korean war period the numbers of US forces in Korea reflected the low level of interest Washington had in that peninsula. Before that war the Republic of Korea (ROK) was more or less a backwater of American foreign policy. During the conflict, however, the number of US forces in Korea escalated rapidly and stayed at a high level until hostilities ceased. Following the truce in July 1953, US force levels dropped off in proportion to the reduced threat and to the ROK's improved ability to fend for itself. The number of US forces quickly reached a plateau of about 60,000, where it remained static through the late 1950s and the 1960s. President Nixon reduced their size by about 20,000 in 1971 in keeping with his Guam doctrine of stressing self-reliance by Asian allies. Despite the efforts of the Carter administration to reduce further the number of US forces—for reasons to be evaluated below—the size of US forces in Korea has remained roughly the same since the Nixon years: roughly 40,000. President Reagan's November 1983 trip to Seoul caused some speculation that the American troop presence may be expanded slightly, but that remains to be seen.

US forces in Korea today have two basic functions: to deter a renewal of the stalemated war by being there as a visible expression of the United States'

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commitment to South Korean defense, and to fight such a war should deterrence fail. To that end there are three large generic elements in the US strategic presence. The most visible and symbolic are the ground forces of the Second Infantry Division and associated units which hold the line against North Korean aggression in one of the most likely traditional avenues of approach to Seoul, should an attack be launched. This slot was originally designated an American chore because US forces were more reliable and better equipped than their ROK counterparts. That argument has lost its validity, but the so-called "tripwire" significance of American forces being among the first to die in any North Korean aggression has more than compensated for it. To the leaders of the ROK, American ground forces located in between the DMZ and Seoul are the best guarantee that the American people will not be fickle in their support of Washington as the United States tries to keep its oft-repeated commitments.

The other two elements are far less visible but no less important if the United States is to keep its commitments. First, there are the large Air Force contingent and sizable Army artillery units whose roles go beyond that of the Second Division "symbolic" frontline fighting forces. Unlike the forward infantry and armored elements, these forces are intended to take the action to the enemy's turf via their planes and missiles. Whether conventionally or nuclear armed, US Air Force units in the Western Pacific—but especially those actually stationed in South Korea—and Army artillery units in Korea are charged with being a deterring factor which, if used, would threaten to obliterate North Korea. In that sense these units go beyond symbolism and put enough teeth in the US commitment that the deadly implications of the tripwire thesis should not have to be tested.

Backing both the ground and air frontline elements is a congeries of widely scattered Army and Air Force logistical units which enable the line forces to function. Equally important the logistical support units in Korea represent the enormous capacities of the United States to reinforce and resupply all existing fighting forces in South Korea. As such they represent the end of a pipeline which stretches back to the states. Similarly, and perhaps of greater importance in a short conflict, the logistical pipeline also reaches the major skills and depots of Japan.

Thus, though the ROK is a small country, it hosts a major complement of American armed forces. The US Army and Air Force constitute most of these forces, with a handful of Navy and Marine Corps personnel playing primarily a coordinating role to assure efficient use of their main forces in nearby Japan and elsewhere in the Western Pacific should reinforcement be necessary.<sup>2</sup> United States forces are found in almost all areas of South Korea, but are concentrated north of Seoul and in comparatively rear areas. The bulk of the frontline duty today, especially on the ground, but also in the air, is done by

ROK forces which have matured since 1953 into some of the most professional and proficient armed forces anywhere in the world.

In addition to commanding US forces in Korea from the Korean War until October 1979, the senior US general on the scene also had operational control of the ROK forces. Since 1979, an integrated command structure—the Combined Forces Command (CFC)—has been in operational control. The CFC is led by the senior US general in Korea with a senior ROK general as his deputy. Beneath them are a variety of staff functions headed by US and ROK generals. Though this system was designed to facilitate cooperation, reduce frictions, and improve the image of the US-ROK decision making hierarchy, its ability to function smoothly remains problematical. Cultural differences and national pride tend to create obstacles to easy cooperation, even in peacetime. Renewed war could well aggravate frictions similar to those experienced between the United States and the Republic of Korea when then General Chun Du-hwan defied the CFC by using ROK forces in Seoul and Kwangju in the tumultuous six months from December 1979 to May 1980 to wage an intramilitary coup and subdue a local popular uprising. Though the CFC seems to be back to good working order, for some time its harmony was in considerable disrepair. Aggravating the possibility of a repeat of such frictions is the ill-concealed sense of superiority which characterizes the attitudes of ROK uniformed personnel toward their American counterparts—stemming partly from ROK individual proficiency levels, South Korean nationalism which chafes under an American-led command structure with the “leash” that implies, and often open derision for US style civil-military relations which appear to make the US armed forces a bit wimpish. None of these interacting factors help what is at best an awkward and unwieldy command structure.

***Why are US Forces There?*** If one looks at the reasons why American forces were originally committed to Korea and remain there today, a number of factors are evident. Most clearly visible are the oft-repeated rationales: to defend South Korea from communist aggression, to preserve South Korean freedom and democracy, to uphold the Asian sector of a global anti-Soviet containment effort, to prevent trouble in Korea from spilling over into Japan, to maximize US influence in the region, and to foster American national interests in all of the above. All of these reasons are more or less valid. They normally are cited as a package, with little or no attempt to assign a priority to them. Frequently Seoul puts its emphasis on the intrinsic importance of the ROK and its role as an anticommunist and anti-Soviet bulwark. Though this argument was thin in the 1950s, by the 1970s and 80s it began to gain credibility as the South Korean economy flourished. Seoul’s position was bolstered by its willingness to be the sort of cooperative ally in Asia that Washington hoped Japan would become. Though South Koreans long have recognized—albeit reluctantly—that the United States is preoccupied in

Northeast Asia with Japan's importance, it has been making an increasingly persuasive case that the US-ROK connection is becoming virtually as important.

The largest ripple in this evolution was the Carter troop cutback episode. Primarily as a result of the ROK's self-vaunted economic successes, President Carter correctly decided that South Korea had matured sufficiently to foot much more of the bill, thereby, permitting the United States to shift some of its troops away from Korea and put them to more productive use. According to that plan, announced in 1977, US forces in Korea would have been cut to 12,000 by 1982. That idea was officially scuttled in 1979 when it was revealed that US and ROK intelligence had uncovered new evidence that North Korean forces were considerably larger than had been thought. The idea was shelved by the Carter administration and abolished by the Reagan administration.<sup>3</sup> On the surface this reversal appeared logical. The danger posed by North Korea's large armed forces and Pyongyang's transparent desire to defeat the ROK supported Seoul's argument that it needed help a while longer, and that it was in the United States' interest to continue to meet this need. Moreover, there were behind the scene moves that doomed the Carter initiative. These included the appeals made by ROK officials to more conservative US legislators, some of whom had personal ties to Korea, primarily via military service but also via various economic channels. Just as important, if not more so, was the effective lobbying done by the Japanese through their executive branch, legislative branch and private sector connections—all of which stressed the dire consequences for Japan should the United States fail to keep its commitment in Korea. Lastly, a tremendous amount of bureaucratic infighting occurred in which the positions of Seoul and Tokyo were echoed by State and Defense Department old-Korea and old-Japan hands. Usually these arguments emphasized the logic expressed by Seoul and Tokyo about the danger to each's position, each's bilateral ties with the United States, and the potentially disastrous consequences for Northeast Asian peace and harmony. The protagonists in the cutback effort sensed a disproportionate amount of localitis and old-boy cronyism in all of this bureaucratic infighting, but seemed unable to devise any effective counter-arguments. The net result was the collapse of Carter's ideas on troop redeployment and human rights initiatives and a retrenchment into the *status quo ante*.

**Was the Carter Initiative Wrong?** Was President Carter wrong about wanting to reduce the number of US troops in Korea? Many will say *yes* and rejoice that the effort was halted. There is a widespread attitude today in South Korea and in Washington that the issue is resolved permanently—the US forces are in Korea for as long as South Korea needs them. This attitude is central to the strengthened perception of the ROK as a strong and vital ally

which is becoming ever stronger and more vital. However, this writer contends that a valid case can be made that the United States' strategic interests in Korea per se are not strategically, politically, or economically *vital* in the sense that a setback in or the loss of Korea would be devastating to the United States. Furthermore, important US interests in Korea are only made to seem "vital" by virtue of being derivative of truly vital US interests in Japan.<sup>4</sup> It is this set of interests which has since 1945 compelled the United States to involve itself deeply in Korea. Moreover, today the rapidly accelerating value of Japan as a potential strategic partner in Asia makes the Japanese connection far more important than it was in the past.<sup>5</sup> This approach directly contradicts the view of the ROK which holds that advances in South Korea now make US-ROK relations "reciprocal, mutually dependent, and inseparable."<sup>6</sup> Moreover, it contradicts all those Americans who accept South Korea's position.

Clearly it is not popular today to suggest that Carter was right about the troop reduction idea, but I will say so in a modified way. The Carter administration's ideas were valid as far as they went. It was, and is, true that the ROK's economy enables it to better fend for itself and that it should do so. Moreover, South Korea (like its Japanese role model) is becoming an economic competitor that impinges upon some important sectors of the United States' economy. Certainly the ROK can bear much of the load for its own defense and (unlike Japan) it already does so. It is at this point that the Carter logic fell apart. If the ROK is already doing so much, how can it be expected to do more—particularly in the face of a stepped-up level of readiness in North Korea? This flaw in Carter's approach allowed the ROK to undermine the cutback idea. Since then it also has fostered an American willingness to bolster the ROK's preparedness and extend indefinitely the US commitment. An excellent example of such thinking was the Heritage Foundation's analysis of the ROK's security. It called for the United States to help by staying and by underwriting some of the strengthened defenses it prescribed.<sup>7</sup>

Where Carter failed was in not taking his argument to its logical conclusion by putting US-ROK relations where they belong—in the context of a much broader and more important setting of Washington's long-term goals in Asia. It is not enough to judge the utility of keeping American forces in Korea mainly on the basis of what they mean to Seoul or to long entrenched perceptions of what the United States has at stake in Korea. It is time to recognize that the American stake in Korea is changing as rapidly as its stake in Japan. Clearly, Washington has ample reason to want peace and stability in Northeast Asia. However, that desire should *never* exceed the desires of Tokyo and Seoul for the security of their region. Similarly, both allies today are vastly better able to provide for their own and the region's security than they were in the past. Consequently, there is no reason for the

United States to be *more* anxious than Japan or Korea and, then, end up bearing a disproportionate burden.

In this broad context and in light of the admitted need by South Korea for enhanced defense against the North Korean threat, why should the United States be the sole external power willing to assist? Washington has been pressing Tokyo for years to do more for its own defense. More recently that pressure has extended to a stretch of the sea lanes which are so vital to Japan's economic health. Since these SLOCs are more immediate and more important to Japan than to the United States, there is ample logic in such a US argument. However, virtually no pressure has been exerted on Tokyo or Seoul by Washington toward an expanded Japan-ROK defense relationship. The very same people who protested the Carter planned cutback regularly caution against pursuing this approach, citing the well known antipathy that Koreans and Japanese share toward one another. This attitude permitted Japan to discuss and lobby for a US troop presence in Korea in a contrived and discreet manner, thereby, enabling Tokyo to disclaim any responsibility for the ultimate decision. Against such a background Washington has persisted in its dual-track Northeast Asia policy, bolstering the ROK materially and psychologically while it tries separately to nudge Japan into a more forthright strategic posture.

There is a fundamental contradiction in what the United States is doing in Northeast Asia. It is true that the United States faces a strategic threat in the area which warrants an American commitment. However, that threat is of greater consequence to our allies than to us, or it would be if it were not for our excessive commitment. Given their ability to contribute to a joint effort and given the pressing needs of the United States elsewhere in the world, it is both reasonable and prudent that the United States press burden-sharing in Northeast Asia by doing less. Such an effort must be made with care and in consultation with our allies, but it cannot be dragged out interminably. Surely Japan must see the value for itself, the region and its relations with the United States by playing a more active security role in the greater Northwest Pacific basin.

It is time that the Carter troop proposal be taken off the shelf. But such a move should not be used to punish the ROK for the error of its ways in denying its people the full-fledged democracy they so evidently want and deserve. The struggle for human rights is important, but it should not be permitted to obfuscate broader strategic goals.<sup>8</sup> Reordering our regional strategic priorities must rank first, but it cannot be done without problems. After decades of assuring South Koreans that they can rely on the United States and acting as a buffer between Seoul and Tokyo, can Washington expect these two parties to play a cooperative role meeting the legitimate security needs of the area? I would expect that an immediate response of the majority of this readership would be no, but I believe that after careful consideration this same body would see the logic of the choice.

Precisely what Japan's role would be is a matter to be worked out trilaterally. It will be a difficult issue but it must be done if the United States' commitments to Korea and to Japan are to remain credible.<sup>9</sup> Given Japan's ability to do so much more for itself—doubling its financial commitment for defense is not an unreasonable expectation—an American rescue of the ROK while Japan remains a bystander would be subject to the most severe criticism. The American public would rightly ask, “why should Americans be so willing to do the job while the Japanese stand idly by?”

Might Japanese forces be called on to defend South Korea? Koreans, Japanese, and their American empathizers would recoil from the prospect. And ground forces almost certainly will be beyond the pale for a number of years, but naval and air support is not so unreasonable to contemplate—as would the sharing of intelligence, logistics, and planning functions. In the interim there should be a sharing of the bill for the sort of assistance the ROK would need to build the conventional forces it requires to forestall any North Korean aggression. A workable formula between South Korean manpower and Japanese and US subsidies for equipment and support would be both feasible and reasonable.

Such action should not be taken as a failure of the United States to shoulder its commitments to Northeast Asia. But rather, its purpose is to equitably share the security burden for the area and, further, to enable the United States to keep its commitments in the region without resorting to nuclear weapons. A “high-ranking U.S. government official” reporting on Secretary of State Shultz' talks with ROK Foreign Minister Yi Won-kyong during the Reagan visit in November 1983 said the United States would not exclude “nuclear retaliation” should the North attack the South.<sup>10</sup> ROK Defense Minister Yoon Sung-min subsequently implied that Seoul would sanction such a US action.<sup>11</sup> In the abstract such talk is not any more dangerous than the reassurances provided to the United States' Nato allies or Japan. However, in those situations the chances of really “nuking ‘em” are slim to none. In Korea, on the other hand, it is not quite so unthinkable. Should the United States be heavily engaged in hostilities elsewhere—the Middle East or Central America stand out as likely instances—it would be imperative that Washington maintain its guard on the European front. Thus tied down, an overcommitted United States would be very hard pressed to keep its commitments to the ROK using only conventional arms. It is quite conceivable that in dealing with a major offensive by the North, the United States would feel compelled to respond with nuclear weaponry despite the risks of escalation. Making such a decision less difficult is the deep enmity that exists between the US/ROK and North Korea. This rancor aggravated by such monstrous and irrational acts as the DMZ ax murders and the Rangoon terrorist bombing could also reduce the inhibitions of US launch authorities who might otherwise be deterred by events.



Such a scenario may not be on the horizon, but it exists. Its possibility is scary, but also portends some dire consequences far short of escalation to a US-Soviet war. Assuming that ultimate catastrophe could, in fact, be prevented; the United States would nevertheless confirm by its resolute action the suspicion of many friends and foes that it is unpredictable and (the only country which has used atomic weapons in war) dangerous. Such beliefs would damage the United States worldwide, not least in neighboring Japan where many of its citizens still hold memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Thus, while we would act to rescue South Korea and ultimately Japan, the impact on Japan is likely to be adverse.

Many of the gains made by the United States vis-à-vis Japan are likely to be swept away in the wake of Korean nuclear retaliation. Though North Korea would pay a terrible cost, the price of victory on behalf of South Korea would be incalculable. The ROK might have to live next door to what US strategists jokingly refer as the "North Korean parking lot" phenomenon for many generations. That would have damaging psychological, physiological, and economic effects throughout whatever remains in Korea. What could conceivably be won by winning in such a response? Even the less drastic possibility that nuclear retaliation could be restricted to surgical strikes would do severe damage to US-Japanese relations and world opinion.

The most promising alternative to this bleak prospect is to strengthen the conventional capabilities of the ROK to fend for itself. Certainly the United States can be of assistance, but so can Japan. If Tokyo wants to keep peace in its part of the world and wishes to prevent such scenarios from drifting toward reality, it too must contribute toward both the ROK's defense and toward the United States' ability to respond more flexibly worldwide. It is this latter concern that leads one to question the wisdom of semipermanently tying down sizable numbers of US forces in Korea.

We like to think those forces help counteract Soviet designs in Northeast Asia, but their static deployment tied to a long-term North Korean threat better serves Soviet purposes, by preventing their use where they could be more effectively employed. A sizable portion of US ground forces redeployed from Korea to more pressing duties would be replaced by ROK forces backed by the cooperative energies of the United States and Japan. As such, South Korea's security as well as the security of its key supporters will be enhanced. No longer would Seoul be the subject of gibes of other states about being an American "client." More important, a shift toward greater US-Japan-ROK interdependence would greatly aid the ROK by giving it a viable third leg on which to rely.

Even North Korea might be compelled to change its tune a bit. For example, the increased security provided by a strengthened trilateral defense arrangement would enable South Korea to face North Korea with increased confidence and self-reliance. Because such an arrangement could legiti-

mately entail some reduction—perhaps, the eventual removal—of American forces in Korea, Seoul would be in a much stronger position to address North Korea's routine demand that US forces be withdrawn from Korea as a precondition for unification. In effect, the trilateral measures proposed here constitute concrete confidence building steps within Korea and the region. Though they may initially aggravate tensions with North Korea which regularly denounces a nascent tripartite "plot," the consequent increase in allied strength produced by a trilateral alternative would compel Pyongyang to face the fact that it cannot defeat its adversaries and might as well adjust to reality in a pragmatic and peaceful manner.

What is being suggested here is qualitatively different from President Carter's proposal. Should the United States realign its Northeast Asian burdens in the manner suggested, all three partners would benefit. There is nothing inviolate about existing US commitments to either Japan or the ROK. If better ways can be devised to keep the United States committed to its interest in maintaining peace, they should be pursued. That pursuit will not be easy. Both Japan and South Korea will place obstacles in the way. Both prefer the existing arrangements which are easier and cheaper for Tokyo and Seoul. That should not deter the United States from striving for enhanced equality and reciprocity in its Northeast Asian relations. The ROK has signaled its cautious willingness to participate in a stronger trilateral arrangement so long as Washington retains firm leadership. One prominent South Korean leader recently called for US-ROK cooperation aimed at "harnessing" Japan.<sup>12</sup> Seoul's attitude in this regard constitutes a new variation of the old saw about well enforced military discipline: "you Americans get the Japanese to jump and we Koreans will tell them how high." Such views in Seoul or Washington are profoundly naive. When Japan is brought into the partnership it will be as a full-fledged member warranting complete equality as a decision making authority.

As they assume more mutual responsibilities for each other's and for the United States' interests in the area, both the ROK and Japan are certain to claim more authority and equality. This will require sophistication and finesse on the part of US leadership and of those US forces which will remain in Korea and Japan over the long haul. As but one example, in the future the CFC in Korea may well be run by a Korean officer. It probably will also contain Japanese liaison functions. Another possibility would be the equivalent of a trilateral US-Japan-ROK version of the CFC, perhaps with rotating command functions. There are many permutations of complex decision making for closer allied cooperation, all of which will require relatively fewer American uniformed personnel in Korea, but people who are capable of interacting with Koreans and Japanese on the basis of far greater interdependence and mutuality than has characterized US policy to

## Notes

1. For additional detail on the evolution of the US armed forces in the ROK, see: Ralph N. Clough, *Deterrence and Defense of Korea, The Role of U.S. Forces* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1976); C.I. Eugene Kim, "The Impact of U.S. Military Presence on the Republic of Korea" in Joe C. Dixon, ed., *The American Military and the Far East*, Proceedings of the Ninth Military History Symposium, US Air Force Academy, 1-3 October 1980, pp. 220-239; and William E. Berry, "The Influence of American Combat Forces in the Republic of Korea on the Attainment of U.S. Foreign Policy Goals in Northeast Asia," paper presented at the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society International Meeting, 21-23 October 1983, Chicago, Illinois.

2. Among that handful the admiral serving as commander of US naval forces in Korea also wears another hat: the crucial position of chief of the UN side at Military Armistice Commission dealings with North Korea.

3. For a succinct survey of that episode, see Claude A. Buss, *The United States and the Republic of Korea, Background for Policy* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1983), pp. 148-164.

4. The author advocated this controversial thesis before a gathering of conservative American and South Korean security specialists in his "U.S.-ROK Strategic Relations" presented at the Second Annual US-ROK Conference on Northeast Asian Security, sponsored by Pacific Forum and the Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security (PF/IFANS), 1-3 November 1983, Seoul, Korea. It will appear in a forthcoming Pacific Forum publication.

5. The author explores other ramifications of that partnership and what it will require of both sides in a forthcoming book: *U.S.-Japan Strategic Reciprocity* (Hoover, 1984).

6. Editorials on the then upcoming Reagan visit in the government-influenced press emphasized this theme. See, for example, the virtually identical wording in *Yong-A Ilbo*, 20 October 1983, p. 2, and *Kyonghyang Shinmun*, 21 October 1983, p. 2.

7. "The Korean Peninsula Military Balance," *Asian Studies Center Background*, No. 2, Heritage Foundation, 11 July 1983.

8. Nevertheless, as those strategic goals are pursued, human rights must be integrated into them as a crucial portion of stability and security. The writer addressed this mix in "Human Rights and U.S. National Security Policy: Perspectives on Asia and a Reassessment of Stability" in *Ripon Forum*, July 1983.

9. The author has tried to make a case for such cooperation to Japanese and Korean audiences. See his "Bei ga nihon ni nozomu mono" (What the U.S. expects from Japan), *Sankei Shinbun*, 5 December 1981; "Amerika mo nihon no boei seisaku ni manabo" (America, too, let's learn from Japan's defense policy), *Shokun*, August 1982; "Nichi-bei-kan sogo anpo taisei o nozomu" (Desiring a Japan-US-Korea mutual defense system), *Chuo Koron*, February 1983; and "Mi-II/Mi-IIan ui iwonhwaboda Han-Mi-II sangakhyubryug haramjig" (ROK-US-Japan Triangular System More Desirable Than Two Systems of US-Japan, US-ROK), *Hanguk Ilbo*, 4 November 1983.

10. F.B.I.S., IV, 14 November 1983, p. E10.

11. *The Korea Herald* (U.S. edition) 20 November 1983, p. 1.

12. At the PF/IFANS conference cited previously.



# The Rhetoric and Realities of Japan's 1,000-Mile Sea-Lane Defense Policy

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Since the creation of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) in 1953, the process of defining the specifics of Japan's self-defense role has become a focal point of US-Japanese discord. In recent years the Japanese have made an effort to alleviate this tension by adopting a more extensive defense policy which has included an official Japanese statement of policy to extend its defense responsibility to incorporate a 1,000 nautical mile "Sea Lanes of Communication" (SLOC) security responsibility. While the military implications of the policy suggest a Japanese willingness to significantly increase the capabilities of the JSDF, this willingness is not reflected in Japanese defense planning now or for the future.

Until the recent 1,000-mile SLOC policy, the Japanese had been reluctant or incapable of assigning any significant regional responsibility for their self-defense forces. US efforts to establish a security burden-sharing arrangement in the Pacific, therefore, had been frustrated by Japan's inability to broaden its defense capabilities. Although the Japanese adaptation of this 1,000-mile SLOC defense policy would appear as a positive step toward the establishment of such an arrangement, there exists a significant chasm between the political commitment to adopt such a policy and the reality of Japan's efforts to attain the necessary capability.

Through an analysis of the 1,000-mile SLOC defense concept, it becomes apparent that Japan may be supporting a policy which has the immediate goal of improving relations with the United States. Though it is likely that the Japanese leaders who support this new policy are firmly committed to its development and practical application, little is being done to reduce the barriers to its realization. As a result, the military significance of the Japanese 1,000-mile defense policy is rather questionable.

## Evolution of the 1,000-Mile SLOC Concept

The defense of vital sea lines, or lanes of communication is not an entirely new concept for postwar Japan. The Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force

was in fact created with the primary missions being “to defend Japan against seaborne invasions and to secure the safety of sea lanes in the waters surrounding Japan.”<sup>1</sup> Though this description obviously lacks a clear definition of how far the “waters surrounding Japan” actually extend, it is not unlikely that Japanese defense planners assumed the possibility of a 1,000 nautical mile sea lane responsibility even during the early development of their maritime forces.<sup>2</sup> By the early 1970s, support for the development of such a sea lane responsibility for Japan became more apparent both inside and outside the Defense Agency. Commander Hideo Sekino, a retired Imperial Japanese naval officer and an expert on Japanese national security affairs, claimed that Japan “must at least secure the sea communications north of Indonesia on her own.”<sup>3</sup> Whereas Sekino agreed that such a task was being emphasized by the MSDF, such a position was not publicly voiced by the Defense Agency until 1977. In November of that year, Asao Mihara, the Director General of the Japanese Defense Agency, explicitly stated that the future of the JSDF would include the defense of “key sea transport routes within 1,000 miles” of Japan’s coasts.<sup>4</sup> Despite this rather concrete statement of support by the Defense Agency, it is important to note that the 1,000-mile defense had not become an official policy of the Japanese government.

In January 1980, US Secretary of Defense Harold Brown made an official visit to Japan. During the course of his talks with Japanese leaders Brown conveyed the security problems which the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Crisis (fall 1979) had created for the Pacific region. Specifically, because the United States had chosen to deploy Pacific naval forces to the Indian Ocean, it had become apparent that the security of the West Pacific could no longer essentially be the sole responsibility of the United States. For the United States to avoid an overextension of its forces and thereby hinder adequate security for the region, Brown announced that “steady and significant increases” in Japanese defense expenditures and capabilities were necessary.<sup>5</sup> In nominal terms, “steady and significant” was interpreted by the Japanese Ministry of Finance as implying a minimum increase of 9.7 percent in the defense budget. While this 9.7 percent figure was less than the US Administration desired, it was “accepted in public and private talks as the minimum necessary increase.”<sup>6</sup> When it became obvious later in the year that Japan could only meet a 7.6 percent nominal increase, Secretary Brown voiced intense public criticism of the Japanese.<sup>7</sup>

Secretary Brown’s criticism of the Japanese in December of 1980 did little to establish an atmosphere of cooperative US-Japanese relations. Recognizing this, in January of 1981 the Reagan administration took immediate steps to improve the situation.<sup>8</sup> While the criticism of the Japanese by Brown was based on US perceptions of Japan’s hesitance to adopt “steady and significant increases,” it became obvious that the definition of such increases was somewhat unclear. The Reagan administration recognized that defense

capabilities could not be directly traced to arbitrary estimates of defense spending. Consequently, the administration affirmed that the emphasis of defense cooperation should be based on the specific roles and missions within individual security arrangements.<sup>9</sup> During testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee in March of 1981, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger further emphasized such a position and stated that a "rational division of labor among the U.S., Japan, and our NATO Allies would be a central thrust of the administration's defense policy."<sup>10</sup>

By adopting a defense policy which espoused a division of labor between the United States and its Allies, the Reagan administration attempted to reduce the ambiguities of Japan's efforts to attain a significant security role. The United States chose to clearly define its intended role in the defense of the Pacific and encourage the Japanese to do the same. In meetings with the Japanese foreign minister, Secretary Weinberger outlined a two-phase US security role for the region. This security role was summarized by Assistant Secretary of Defense Francis J. West, Jr., in 1982, "Mr. Weinberger stated that in the Northwest Pacific the United States would provide the nuclear umbrella, offensive projection forces as necessary, and assist the Republic of Korea in the defense of its territory. In the Southwest and Indian Oceans the U.S. would provide the nuclear umbrella, projection forces as necessary, and sea-lane protection."<sup>11</sup>

By dividing its security role into two distinct regional responsibilities, the United States was attempting to deemphasize Japan's reliance on US defense air and sea control forces in the Northwest Pacific. Clearly, the administration was trying to create a security arrangement in which the United States could comfortably and adequately protect interests in the Indian Ocean without leaving vital areas in the Pacific exposed to additional threats. The Weinberger statement excluded a US commitment to provide for defensive sea-lane protection in the Northwest Pacific. It appeared logical, therefore, that the Japanese would be expected to assume this responsibility in accordance with US proposals for a "rational division of labor."

In May of 1982, Japanese Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki visited the United States and participated in talks with President Reagan. The joint communique issued by the two leaders confirmed "the desirability of an appropriate division of roles between Japan and the United States" as a means of "insuring peace and stability in the region."<sup>12</sup> While the communique made no specific mention of the 1,000-mile SLOC defense, in response to a question at the National Press Club, Prime Minister Suzuki stated that the 1,000-mile SLOC defense responsibility was indeed a part of Japanese national defense policy. It has been argued that Suzuki made this confirmation with little knowledge of its military implications, but his statement was significant in that it introduced the 1,000-mile SLOC concept as official Japanese policy for the first time.<sup>13</sup> When Suzuki's successor, Yasuhiro Nakasone, visited the United

States in January 1983, the new prime minister reaffirmed Suzuki's commitment to the 1,000-mile defense. In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Nakasone stated, "For the ocean, our defense should extend several hundred miles, and if we are to establish sea lanes, then our desire would be to defend the sea lanes between Guam and Tokyo and between the Strait of Taiwan and Osaka."<sup>14</sup> Nakasone's knowledge and experience with defense issues seemed to lend a greater degree of credibility to any Japanese commitment to the 1,000-mile policy.

With the Suzuki and Nakasone statements, the 1,000-mile SLOC defense concept became generally accepted as a genuine policy of Japan. The 1983 Japanese White Paper on Defense further emphasized this policy. In a five-point support of the policy, the white paper cited the significance and necessity of adopting a 1,000-mile SLOC burden. The white paper stressed the importance of protecting maritime traffic to and from Japan and helped define the geographic parameters of the policy.<sup>15</sup>

As consistent with Nakasone's statement, the SLOC area was established as a zone which extends south from Tokyo to Guam, west from Guam to the Straits of Taiwan, and northeast from the Straits of Taiwan to Osaka. The extreme limits of this zone are approximately 1,000 nautical miles from Tokyo and the zone includes the most heavily used sea routes to Japan. These sea routes are essential to maintaining the flow of imports to Japan which include vital crude oil supplies from the Middle East. An analysis of ocean trade routes emphasizes the necessity for adequate protection of this SLOC zone. The ocean trade routes which pass through the 1,000-mile zone accommodate a majority of Japan's trade and are clearly the most heavily used routes in the hemisphere. In a wartime situation, Japan's dependence on trade through this zone could critically inhibit the nation's overall survivability if these trade routes were not adequately protected. As the Japanese Naval Attache to the United States accurately observed, Japan's dependence on trade through this zone had eliminated the enemy's need to invade the island in order to defeat Japan.<sup>16</sup> With this prospect in mind, the Defense White Paper contended that the Japanese would be "exercising their right of self-defense" by assuming responsibility for the protection of these sea routes.<sup>17</sup>

### The Political and Military Significance of the 1,000-Mile SLOC Policy

By adopting the 1,000-mile defense policy, Japan has been forced to contend with diverse political and military implications. With respect to relations with the United States, the 1,000-mile policy is extremely significant in that it signalled a Japanese willingness to accept a realistic role in the "division of labor." The 1,000-mile policy closed the gap of sea-lane responsibility which had been left open by the US decision to primarily

provide sea-lane protection in the Southwest Pacific and the Indian Ocean. More importantly, the 1,000-mile policy implied a Japanese intention to expand its military capabilities in order to play a greater role in its own defense. This perceived intention, whether real or imaginary, was, at least temporarily, extremely valuable in reducing US political pressure and criticism.

An examination of what the 1,000-mile SLOC defense means in terms of military requirements helps to explain why the Japanese political commitment to such a policy was so enthusiastically supported by the Reagan administration. Essentially, the Japanese 1,000-mile SLOC policy was and is perceived as requiring a substantial increase in Japanese military capabilities. The value of this perception to the United States is that by achieving a 1,000-mile defense role, Japan would at the same time increase its overall capabilities to meet a potential threat in other areas. This overall increase in Japan's capabilities would be an advantage to Japan and the United States in two specific ways. First, the increase would create a safety zone around Japan in all directions and reduce US responsibility for the defense of the region. Second, the larger Japanese capability would contribute to global security as the Soviet Union's military planning became complicated by the additional consideration of a respectable Japanese force. The frustrations of Secretary Brown and the Carter administration had apparently been eliminated by the Japanese acceptance of a larger, more realistic self-defense role. A logical corollary to this acceptance was that the Japanese would have to strive for increased defense spending to attain the capabilities required for a 1,000-mile SLOC responsibility.

Though it is generally accepted that the Japanese will have to significantly increase their defense spending to meet the SLOC policy, there are varying opinions as to where the thrust of this spending should go. Obviously, a sea-lane defense would have to counter threats from aircraft, surface ships, and submarines. For Japan, each particular threat is formidable and necessitates a relatively extensive increase in countercapabilities. In several recent defense white papers, for example, Japanese vulnerability to the submarine threat has been emphasized.<sup>18</sup> A more predominant perception, however, is that the Japanese must concentrate their efforts in the development of a capable air defense system. Presently Japan and the SLOC zone are extremely exposed to air attacks originating from over 2,000 aircraft stationed in the eastern part of the Soviet Union. At this time, the Japanese maritime and air forces have no means to cope with such a formidable air threat. With respect to Japanese anti-air defenses, Larry Niksch, an Asian expert with the Congressional Research Service, adequately cites this vulnerability: "It is unlikely that the Air Self-Defense Forces could control the skies over Japan and adjacent waters in the face of attacks by modern Soviet Mig-27s, Mig-23s, and SU-19s, which have become the backbone of the Soviet attack fighter force in eastern Siberia."<sup>19</sup>



With the prominence of the air threat in mind, Prime Minister Nakasone proposed that the first objective of Japan's new defense policy would be to create an impenetrable air defense system on the Japanese islands. In his interview with *The Washington Post* in January of 1983, Nakasone was quoted as saying that this system would "be like an unsinkable aircraft carrier."<sup>20</sup> Though Nakasone's statement caused much controversy in Japan, the simile still stands as a symbol of his emphasis on air defense. Masahara Gotoda, a chief Japanese cabinet secretary, explained that the concept of the unsinkable aircraft carrier is "nothing but a kind of metaphor" which emphasizes Nakasone's commitment to make Japan capable of countering the Soviet military buildup in East Asia.<sup>21</sup> Clearly, most air threats to the SLOC zone from the Soviet Union would have to first pass over the Japanese islands. A formidable air defense system in Japan, therefore, is seen as the vital prerequisite for a credible 1,000-mile SLOC defense.

While it is obvious that opinion will vary as to where the Japanese should exert the greatest effort in the process of achieving a 1,000-mile SLOC defense capability, it is also quite obvious that an overall increase in several Japanese defense capabilities is necessary to achieve this goal. An effective air defense system, for example, is only capable of handling the air threat. Currently, Japanese forces are not prepared to counter the submarine or surface threat, and they are similarly unprepared to conduct adequate minelaying or blockading operations.<sup>22</sup> The exclusive improvement of merely one of these capabilities will do little to improve overall Japanese readiness to assume the 1,000-mile responsibility. US Defense Department officials are aware of this overall need and are currently engaged in talks with Japanese defense officials which will help determine what the 1,000-mile burden should necessitate in terms of actual procurement.

Though the conclusions of this joint US-Japanese study will most likely remain classified, general unclassified estimates of what is required to fulfill the SLOC responsibility do exist. In a statement to the Congress on 27 June 1983 Senator Carl Levin of Michigan submitted such an estimate. Senator Levin's assessment was included in a rather harsh criticism of Japanese defense burden-sharing efforts and it represents one of the few specific lists which provide any insight as to the type of capabilities the Japanese need to defend themselves and their sea lanes out to 1,000 miles. A summary of Senator Levin's estimate is contained in Table 1.

While it is true that Senator Levin cannot be considered a credible military strategist, it is inaccurate to assume that these figures merely represent a random, uneducated compilation of military force levels. When questioned as to origin of these figures Senator Levin's assistant, Mr. Peter Lenmon, asserted that the list was derived through consultations with official and unofficial sources knowledgeable in defense strategy and the Japanese SLOC defense issue.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 1.<sup>23</sup>**  
**Increased Capabilities Needed for Defense of Japan**  
**and 1,000-mile SLOC**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b># Needed in Addition to 1983 Force level</b>
F-15 Fighter Aircraft	300
AWACs Equivalent Aircraft	8-10
KC-10 Tanker Aircraft	10-14
Tactical Jet Aircraft	60-90
SAM Groups	3-7
Attack Submarines	10-12
Frigates-Destroyers	20
P-3C ASW Aircraft	130
 <b>Personnel</b>	
Active	25,000
Reserves	30,000

Norman Polmar, an internationally recognized authority on the US and Soviet navies, commented that, except for certain exceptions, Senator Levin's figures appear to be a reasonable estimate of what the Japanese need in order to achieve the SLOC defense capability. Mr. Polmar stated that several of the figures (F-15, AWACs, SAM groups, tactical jets) were somewhat inflated yet, at the same time, he noted that the list excluded the need for other necessary capabilities such as LAMPS (Light Airborne Multi-Purpose System) helicopters (2 per frigate or destroyer) and some number of AV-8B Harrier jump jets.<sup>25</sup> Whereas Senator Levin's figures appear to stress air defense of the SLOC by land-based F-15 fighter aircraft, Mr. Polmar emphasized that the size of the SLOC zone necessitated a capability for some sea-based aviation. In both cases, the force estimates indicate that major increases in Japanese defense expenditures will be necessary.

### **Obstacles to Japan's Acquisition of the SLOC Defense Capability**

While the Japanese commitment to expand its sea-lane responsibility to 1,000 miles has had favorable effects on US-Japanese relations, several obstacles to Japan's realization of such a capability imply that this initial improvement of relations will be the only tangible product of the commitment. Some of the obstacles to Japan's attempts to achieve the SLOC defense, for example, are linked to public opinion and the constitutional prohibition of military expansion. Specifically, Article Nine of the Japanese Constitution explicitly states that "land, sea, and air forces, as well as other

war potential, will never be maintained.”<sup>26</sup> Although the very existence of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces appears to directly contradict this constitutional provision, Japanese leaders have been fairly successful at convincing the populace that the SDF forces comply with constitutional restrictions. As previously explained, however, the military increases necessary to provide credible 1,000-mile protection would create a respectable and relatively large Japanese defense capability. It is likely that such an increase in military capabilities would evoke a greater effective resistance from the government opposition. In his support of the 1,000-mile responsibility, Prime Minister Nakasone suggested that this constitutional renunciation of war and war-fighting capabilities had already become a major obstruction. Nakasone went on to imply that he felt that constitutional revision may be necessary before Japan could attain the SLOC defense capability.<sup>27</sup>

Despite Nakasone’s position, the legitimate obstructive potential of the constitutional issue is somewhat dubious. The Japanese have been successful at “constitutionally” justifying significant increases in defense capabilities in the past, therefore, the constitutional renunciation of war, in itself, is not necessarily an obstacle to increased defense capabilities. However, public opinion opposed to increases in defense spending may indeed increase the salience of the constitutional issue by using it as an excuse for reduced spending. Currently, public opinion supports established defense policy guidelines but opposes major increases such as those suggested by the SLOC role.<sup>28</sup> Also, the Japanese government’s attempts to finance this larger defense role will most likely be impeded by the reluctance of the ruling Democratic Party to raise taxes. Specifically, farmers and small businessmen are the most lightly taxed group in Japan and also represent the largest block of political support for the LDP. The LDP, therefore, will avoid a tax increase which could alienate this group and subsequently diminish the party’s vital rural support.<sup>29</sup>

Whether it is linked to the constitutional issue or to other internal political factors in Japan, it is evident that the 1,000-mile policy lacks the financial commitment to defense which the policy requires. With respect to financial commitment, perhaps the major obstacle to Japan achieving the 1,000-mile SLOC capability is related to the problems which most democratic governments experience when attempting to raise the funds necessary to support particular policies. Certainly, raising the defense budget involves an intense domestic debate through which the limit on defense spending is governed. The defense budget debate for the fiscal year ending in March 1984 emphasizes this point. When the Japanese accepted the 1,000-mile role, US defense specialists estimated that their defense budget would have to increase annually by 10 to 12 percent in real terms (approximately 15 percent nominally) in order to facilitate the procurement of the corresponding capabilities within a reasonable time frame. The Japanese Defense Agency

originally agreed with this US estimate, but for FY-1983 they decided to push for only a 8.8 percent nominal increase over the FY-1982 budget. The cabinet debate and decision reduced the proposed increase even further to 6.5 percent. Secretary Weinberger confirmed US disappointment with the Japanese defense budget: "We had rated the FY-1982 defense budget as a significant first step, but the FY-1983 budget cannot be considered the second step. It is insufficient to achieve the stated goals and even greater defense build-up efforts are needed."<sup>30</sup>

With the FY-1983 budget increase fixed at this 6.5 percent maximum, it is possible to conclude that the Japanese have not significantly altered their defense planning to financially accommodate their political commitment. Yet, the Japanese have remained committed to the 1,000-mile policy. The inadequacy of the FY-1983 budget has been justified by Japan's self-proclaimed domestic financial problems. Secretary Weinberger expressed hope that these financial conditions would improve and that in the future the Japanese would implement "the kind of increases which will be necessary to achieve their own self defense goals."<sup>31</sup>

The Japanese failure to commit sufficient funding for defense is cited as the most obvious indication that the 1,000-mile capability will not be realized in the near future. A more convincing indicator is related to the fact that a country's spending in defense does not directly translate to capability. Cost, therefore, is not the critical factor in determining whether Japanese efforts are consistent with their SLOC defense commitment. Specifically, though limited by budget constraints, Japanese spending in defense is not oriented toward the development of a sustainable or practical military capability.

For its one percent of GNP, Japan has procured front line equipment that has limited logistic support and dubious utility in Japan's overall defense needs. For example, Japan maintains 13 army divisions, which only possess enough ammunition for one month of fighting.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, experts question the necessity of maintaining such a large army force when the threat of invasion is not the most realistic threat to Japan's security. Currently, "more than a quarter of the budget, or about \$3 billion, is being spent on manning an army which does not meet the acknowledged threat."<sup>33</sup> Certainly, if Japan cannot increase its defense spending, action should be taken to divert funds from the army to accommodate the more pressing and contemporary needs of Japan's defense. The thrust of Japan's air and maritime spending has also ignored the importance of sustainability. While the Maritime Self-Defense Forces critically lack the necessary replenishment capabilities, the Air Self-Defense Forces lack both "depth and sustainability."<sup>34</sup>

Characteristics of the FY-1983 defense budget imply that a Japanese spending/capability gap clearly exists. When faced with budget cuts, the Defense Agency chose to reduce spending in logistics.<sup>35</sup> More importantly,

the Defense Agency is basing its recommendations for spending on guidelines set forth in its 1981 Mid-Term Defense Plan. The purpose of this plan was to carry out Japan's 1976 National Defense Program Outline. The 1976 outline, however, was developed before the 1,000-mile SLOC defense became national policy. It is highly unlikely that the Defense Agency's requests for military procurements for FY-1983 are in tune with the capabilities required for the SLOC defense, and a majority of these requests have in fact been cut significantly. With respect to some of Senator Levin's estimates, Table 2 illustrates the huge disparity between what the defense of Japan and the 1,000-mile SLOC may demand and what has actually been procured:

**Table 2<sup>36</sup>**  
**1983 Japan Front-Line Procurement**

Equipment	Requested	Approved	Total Needed in Addition to Current Forces
F-15s	20	13	300
P-3Cs	10	7	130
Destroyers/Frigates	3	2	20
Submarines	1	1	10-12

While it is unrealistic to assume that the Japanese could achieve the total necessary capability in one year, the 1983 procurements indicate that, at such a pace, Japan is well over a decade away from obtaining the 1,000-mile SLOC capability. Furthermore, it is important to note that such procurements were made at the expense of increased logistical capabilities.

In March 1983, the US Department of Defense prepared a report for the Congress which was entitled *Allied Contributions to the Common Defense*. In this report, Japan's performance was criticized and its dependence upon the 1976 outline and the Mid-Term Defense Plan was deemed inappropriate. The report stated, "The MTDP was drafted in 1981. Although it followed the Suzuki announcement, the MTDP makes no mention of, or provisions for, a SLOC protection force. The MTDP is inadequate to make Japan's present forces sustainable and to build the requisite level of Air and Maritime Forces."<sup>37</sup>

**T**he most significant implication of Japan's acceptance of a 1,000-mile SLOC responsibility is that the responsibility requires a major increase in Japanese military capabilities. For the United States the increased Japanese capability would contribute to a more effective deterrent in the West Pacific and promote greater regional security. For Japan, this increase would provide for the SLOC defense in a zone vital to that nation's trade and survival. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, the overall increased capability would alleviate US political pressure on the Japanese.

Though Prime Minister Nakasone appears to be genuinely committed to the SLOC policy, Japanese defense planning is inconsistent with the needs of this defense responsibility. The 1976 Defense Outline is not designed to produce the capabilities necessary for the 1,000-mile SLOC defense, yet it continues to be the guideline for Japanese defense spending. While a new plan is obviously necessary, there are no indications that one will emerge in the near future. As the Research Institute for Peace and Security noted in a 1983 report on Japan's defense posture, "All there is at the moment is general acceptance that some build-up will have to be made to keep Washington happy, but no more than that. Extra defense spending is prompted not by a revised military concept but simply by a need to placate the United States."<sup>38</sup> Clearly, if the 1,000-mile SLOC defense policy is to be regarded as anything more than empty rhetoric aimed at fulfilling a political requirement, Japanese defense planning must be reassessed and directed toward creating the necessary capability. The prospects for such a change in the near term appear unlikely.

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Of all men, naval officers ought to be most entertaining. In the first place they go to sea and it stands to reason that a great deal more of what is worth telling must happen on such an uncertain floor as the top of an ocean wave than on the fixed and stable earth. People who live in earthquake countries are the only ones who have an equal advantage.

From an 1883 review of W.H. Parker, *Recollections of a Naval Officer*

## The Naval Dimension of the Sino-Soviet Rivalry

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Kenneth G. Weiss

**D**espite recent efforts to improve relations, Moscow and Beijing's competition in Asia has continued with little letup since their proxy war in Indochina (1978-1979). Sino-Soviet talks held since 1982 have yielded an increase in trade and contacts between China and the Soviet Union, but have made little headway in normalizing relations. As a result, China continues to look to the United States for support in its relations vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Indeed, Sino-American relations, which had been strained in the early years of the Reagan administration, improved dramatically after Secretary of Defense Weinberger's warm reception in China in September 1983, Premier Zhao Ziyang's visit to the United States in January 1984 and President Reagan's trip to China last April.<sup>1</sup>

How then do we account for the relative lack of change in relations among the United States, China, and the Soviet Union—despite significant leadership changes in all three countries since 1979? The reason is simple: strategic realities, as the Chinese like to put it, make a dramatic transformation in the triangular equation difficult. And as in the past, recent Sino-Soviet negotiations have been accompanied by a competition for political and military advantage in Asia. This rivalry has spread to the seas bordering China. It is from a maritime perspective that this essay will view current dynamics in the Sino-Soviet conflict. But before looking at the naval element in the Sino-Soviet rivalry, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the strategic realities.

Since World War II, the Soviet Union has sought to secure its borders by fostering "friendly regimes" in Eastern Europe, Mongolia, China, North Korea, and most recently Afghanistan. To the Soviets, a friendly regime is generally one that Moscow dominates through a ruling Communist Party. The Brezhnev Doctrine, in turn, justifies Soviet efforts to sustain a friendly Communist Party in power. While the restoration of a friendly regime in Beijing remains a long-term goal,<sup>2</sup> the Soviets have never dared to apply the Brezhnev Doctrine to China because their fear of the Chinese verges on the

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irrational and because they believe the United States would exploit a Sino-Soviet conflict.<sup>3</sup>

As a method of managing this problem, Moscow has placed an enormous number of Soviet military forces on China's border. Of the total Soviet ground forces consisting of approximately 191 divisions or about two million men, about a quarter, 52 divisions or 500,000 men are deployed on or near the Sino-Soviet border. Similar proportions apply to Soviet air, naval, and missile units in Asia. Indeed, since 1979, the Soviets have increased the number of divisions on China's border from 44 to 52, and the number of SS-20s in the Far East from less than 40 to 135. The VTOL carrier *Minsk* has been joined by its sister ship, the *Novorossiysk* and the number of Backfire bombers in the region has increased to 80.<sup>4</sup> The Chinese fear that the Kremlin might take limited action to shake the Zhongnanhai\* or launch a full-scale invasion to install a new government in Beijing—if Moscow thought a short war were possible.<sup>5</sup>

The United States has benefitted greatly from the Sino-Soviet dispute. The benefits are obvious: US forces in the Pacific are no longer tied down by a hostile China, and, as we have seen, a significant number of Soviet forces are deployed against China instead of the West.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Chinese forces are also countering Hanoi along the Sino-Vietnamese border, and Chinese arms are being used by the guerrillas against the Soviets in Afghanistan and against the Vietnamese in Kampuchea.<sup>7</sup>

This strategic reality makes fundamental changes in the triangular equation difficult, if not impossible. Neither China nor the United States can push bilateral differences to the breaking point for fear of giving the Soviet Union additional leverage in their ongoing rivalries. Nor can the Soviets seek rapprochement or even détente with China or with the United States, without changing their policies and behavior that give rise to that rivalry. It is for this reason that the Chinese insist the Soviets meet their demands concerning the Sino-Soviet border, Mongolia, Afghanistan, and Kampuchea. What the Chinese are asking for is nothing less than the elimination of the Soviet threat to China's security. Our concern here is, how does this impact on the naval dimension of the Sino-Soviet rivalry?

### Sino-Soviet Naval Rivalry

**The Naval Balance.** The Pacific Ocean fleet, the largest of the Soviet Navy's four fleets, is more powerful than the entire Chinese Navy. Soviet naval forces in the Pacific have grown steadily from about 50 principal surface combatants in the mid-1960s to almost 90 today. The addition to the fleet of such vessels as *Kiev*-class carriers, *Kara*-class missile cruisers, and *Krivak*-class missile destroyers represents a significant qualitative increase in Soviet naval capabilities in the Pacific. This quantitative and qualitative improvement can

also be seen in subsurface capabilities of the nuclear-powered submarines like the *Delta III*-class SSBN and *Victor III*-class SSN, and the new class of diesel-electric *Kilo* conventional attack submarines. The added Soviet warship strength in the region has been matched by an increase in the striking power of Soviet naval aviation. Since the midsixties the number of Soviet naval aircraft has increased over 50 percent to a current force of about 440 aircraft. Some 30 naval long-range Backfire B aircraft, deployed to the Far East since 1980—in addition to the Soviet Air Force Backfires in the area—can strike anywhere in China and in much of the Pacific as well. Moreover, an 8,000 man division based near Vladivostok constitutes the largest contingent of naval infantry in the Soviet Navy. As one analyst puts it, the Pacific fleet is “far superior [to the Chinese navy] in long-range submarines; major surface combatants; fleet support ships; ocean going missile-armed air, surface, and sub-surface platforms; and fixed-wing ASW (anti-submarine warfare) aircraft.”<sup>8</sup>

Yet the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is not a negligible force. It boasts the third largest submarine force—100 mainly Romeos and Whiskeys form the backbone of the Chinese Navy. Although the submarines are of an old design, they are well suited to operations in the shallow waters along the China coast. The Chinese have also developed the *Han*-class SSN and the *Xia*-class SSBN. The recent successful testing of an SLBM in their one Golf-class SSB and the projected deployment of six *Xia*-class SSBNs will add the final leg to the Chinese triad of land and sea-based nuclear missiles and nuclear-armed bombers. At any one time, the Chinese can also deploy some 200 missile-equipped ships mounting some 500 SS-N-2s. The Navy has also developed a significant underway replenishment capability, effectively extending the range and endurance of its largest surface warships—the *Luda*-class destroyers and various frigate classes—and the naval air component has some 800 land-based aircraft.<sup>9</sup>

Despite these impressive numbers, the Chinese Navy is mainly a coastal defense force of poor sea-keeping qualities. Indeed, the British noted during their port visit to Shanghai in 1980 that the decks of the warships in the harbor were painted yellow—a protective coloring more suited for operations along the China coast than on the open sea. Chinese ships are generally based on Soviet designs of the 1940s and 1950s. However, Chinese destroyers and frigates armed with SS-N-2s and conventional weapons have a good antisurface warfare capability. But they are highly vulnerable to enemy submarines and aircraft because they lack modern sensors and weapons. They have little in the way of electronic warfare (EW) or electronic countermeasures (ECM) and, apparently, have yet to deploy an operational SAM system. Indeed, the *Luda* destroyer does not have a combat information center (CIC), so orders and decisions must come from the bridge. As a result, Chinese surface ships are not likely to operate

beyond this land-based air cover in wartime.<sup>10</sup>

The PLA naval air force itself is largely composed of obsolete aircraft. Like the surface force, its large numbers are a fair threat to surface warships, but it is deficient in antisubmarine and antiair warfare capability. The bombs and torpedoes of the IL-28 Beagle provide the main threat to Soviet warships, but the Chinese can also use Mig-19 and Mig-21 fighters and the more capable TU-16 bomber. However, China's lack of sophisticated airborne sensors and seaborne helicopters would make it difficult for the Chinese to detect and kill Soviet submarines in wartime. The Navy's air defense is handicapped by a lack of all-weather fighters, air-to-air missiles, and air and shipborne-controlled intercept radars. Chinese naval aircraft, some 800 planes, also lack an aerial refueling capability. Thus, their combat radius is limited to 150 nautical miles offshore.<sup>11</sup>

The Chinese have a potent submarine force. Their Romeo and Whiskeys have the range and endurance to operate anywhere in the Pacific. However, they are slow, and noisy when they snorkel. On long-range patrols, they would be highly vulnerable to the Soviet Navy's more sophisticated ASW capability. In turn, they lack the modern sensors and weapons to conduct effective operations against enemy submarines. Thus, in wartime, they are likely to operate in the China seas where the shallow waters would offset their disadvantage in speed and where the coastal crevices would make their detection more difficult. (Indeed, the fact that the Soviet's new *Kilo* class of diesel submarines is built and deployed so far only in the Far East indicates that they may be designed to ferret out Chinese submarines hiding along the continental shelf—an area where Soviet SSNs would be at a disadvantage.) Chinese planning also may require submarine support for PLA ground operations. The British noted on their port visit to Shanghai that Chinese submarines were equipped with storage areas for infantry weapons. This indicates that submarines might be used to land small groups of soldiers to disrupt the enemy's rear.<sup>12</sup>

China's efforts to update its submarine force have met with mixed results. A new version of the Romeo, the *Ming*-class SS, has yet to go into serial production. The development of the *Han*-SSN and the *Xia*-SSBN was plagued with problems. Until recently, the Chinese have had a Golf SSB and then a *Xia* SSBN without a usable SLBM.<sup>13</sup>

Since its establishment, the PLA navy has been largely managed and organized like its imperial predecessor in the 18th and 19th centuries. For example, the Communists adopted a proposal first made in 1880 by organizing the Navy in three fleets: the North Sea Fleet based at Qingdao, the East Sea Fleet at Shanghai, and the South Sea Fleet at Zhanjiang.<sup>14</sup>

The imperial and Communist navies are similar in structure and organization because they have had a similar mission: coastal defense. That mission was a natural one for a land-oriented Chinese leadership that achieved victory in 1949 through guerrilla warfare. It was also compatible

with the Soviets "Young School" of naval strategy that influenced the Chinese Navy in the days of compatible Sino-Soviet relations. The Young School theorized that a "peace-loving" socialist country only needed a defensive navy deployed in coastal waters. Thus, the Chinese Navy was structured for submarines, fast patrol boats, shore based aircraft, missiles, and artillery. The Chinese called the doctrine "guerrilla warfare at sea." However, the Soviet Navy abandoned the teachings of the Young School long ago, and the growth of the Soviet Pacific fleet has forced the Chinese to reconsider guerrilla warfare at sea.<sup>15</sup>

**The Soviet Naval Threat.** There are indications that Beijing's perceptions of the Soviet naval threat mirror China's experiences with Western and Japanese naval power in the 19th and 20th centuries. Although the Chinese seem to think that the Soviet's main effort would be on the ground, the Soviet Navy might play an important role in a Sino-Soviet war. Conceivably, a Soviet amphibious assault would be preceded by an aerial bombardment, then a landing by naval infantry, perhaps supplemented by paratroops, immediately followed by a motorized infantry division. The Chinese would probably counterattack while the PLA Navy would no doubt concentrate on cutting off the SLOCs to the Soviet beachhead. The Chinese have hinted that the navy would set up four lines of resistance: 1) submarines operating 150-200 miles out to sea; 2) naval aviation, 100-150 miles; 3) surface ships, 50-100 miles; and 4) coastal artillery and missiles. (Presumably, the Chinese would also lay a protective barrier of mines since they have a considerable mining capability.) This strategy is similar to the one advocated by the Young School and even somewhat similar to Chinese operations in 1894-1895.<sup>16</sup>

Whether Moscow has the ability to undertake such landings or actions is debatable. Some argue that the Soviet Navy probably could mount a successful assault and inflict disproportionate losses on the Chinese Navy. If the Soviets did undertake naval operations against China proper, they would be more likely to make nuisance raids against Chinese ports or seize a Chinese coastal position bypassed in a Soviet ground offensive.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the massive Soviet attack in Manchuria in 1945 so surprised the Japanese Army that hazardous operations like amphibious landings along the Korean coast and paradrops behind the Japanese lines at Harbin, the Liaodong Peninsula, were successful. As in 1945, the confusion caused by the ground offensive, coupled with the damage inflicted on Chinese defenses against sea attack, might make a major amphibious landing (and paradrop) possible. The Liaodong Peninsula is a likely candidate for such an operation because its seizure could help ease any Soviet logistic problems in occupying Manchuria.<sup>18</sup>

Whatever the case, the Kremlin has *not* been above encouraging Chinese fears of such military moves in crisis situations. As we will see, Soviet activity

in these crises indicates that, at the very least, the Soviet Navy would be deployed to isolate China from the sea, protect Soviet SLOCs in the Far East, engage the Chinese Navy, and warn the United States against intervention.<sup>19</sup>

**Soviet Naval Diplomacy.** Since 1969, the Kremlin and the Zhongnanhai have moved away from direct confrontations to proxy conflicts. In that year, bloody clashes along the Ussuri river in March escalated to the brink of major conflict. Timely concessions by the Chinese (and the Nixon administration's support for China) probably prevented a Soviet attack. Since then Moscow and Beijing have confined their competition to the periphery while maintaining large forces along their borders. Politically, each nation has sought to encircle the other. The Soviets have gained the support of India, Vietnam and occupied Afghanistan. The Chinese have looked to the United States, Japan, Pakistan, ASEAN, and Nato among others. Indeed, the Sino-Vietnamese border war of 1979 was an outgrowth of intense Soviet and Chinese efforts to gain or deny support to each other. Militarily, the Soviets have used the buildup and modernization of their armed forces in the Far East to pressure the Chinese while the Chinese have maintained large forces in a determined effort to resist such pressure.<sup>20</sup>

Naval forces are a key component in this psychological warfare. The Soviet Pacific fleet is largely designed to protect the Navy's SSBN force in the bastion formed by the seas of Japan and Okhotsk, and secondarily to interdict US and Japanese sea lines of communications (SLOCs) in the Pacific in wartime. Even so, navies are flexible instruments of power—often designed for one purpose, used for another. The Soviets have used their naval forces to pressure the Chinese by increasing their sense of isolation and encirclement. Soviet units have been active in the seas near China since 1968. Ten years later 140 Soviet warships traversed the Tsushima Strait.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, in 1978, Moscow took advantage of tensions between China and Vietnam over Kampuchea to draw Hanoi into a military alliance. As a result of the ensuing border war between Beijing and Hanoi in early 1979 over Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea, the Soviets gained access to naval and air force facilities at Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, and the Cambodian port of Kampong Saom.<sup>22</sup>

The Soviet presence in Vietnam not only demonstrates support for Hanoi in its continuing confrontation with Beijing but also constitutes the southern anchor in a virtual military encirclement of China. (Soviet military facilities in Indochina also represent a threat to Western and Japanese SLOCs to the Persian Gulf and the US military forces in the Philippines.) Some 20-25 Soviet warships are now stationed in the South China Sea including cruise missile submarines, major and minor surface combatants, and assorted auxiliaries. A submarine tender stationed at Cam Ranh Bay has allowed the Soviets to double their submarine days at sea. They have also constructed a pier and

shelter for nuclear submarines, underground fuel storage tanks, navigation aids, and an electronic monitoring station. In addition long-range naval Bear "D" reconnaissance and Bear "F" ASW aircraft operating out of Cam Ranh Bay give the Soviets the ability to cover the entire Chinese coastline, island possessions and claims. Even more ominously, about nine strike, tanker, and electronic combat versions of the TU-16 bomber have deployed to Cam Ranh Bay.<sup>23</sup>

Moscow has also begun to beef up the Vietnamese Navy. Since delivering two *Petya*-class frigates to Vietnam in late 1978, the Soviets have also provided eight *Osa* and three *Komar*-class fast missile-attack craft, 8 to 10 *Shershen*-class torpedo boats, and a squadron of 10 Ka-25 Hormone antisubmarine helicopters. Much of the Vietnamese Navy is concentrated at Da Nang where joint antisubmarine warfare exercises are conducted with the Soviet Navy. These exercises are no doubt aimed at improving the Vietnamese and Soviet ability to cope with the Chinese submarine threat in the South China Sea. Moreover, the Soviets and the Vietnamese recently practiced joint amphibious exercises in the vicinity of Cam Ranh Bay and Haiphong. In one exercise, some 500-1,000 Soviet "marines" waded ashore near Haiphong supported by eight Soviet warships, including the *Minsk* and the *Ivan Rogov*, and an assortment of Vietnamese vessels.<sup>24</sup>

Besides this ongoing presence, the Soviet Navy's "surge" capability in crisis situations has been used by the Kremlin to warn or pressure Beijing without violating Chinese territory or airspace. Although the Ussuri River crisis involved bloody military clashes along the border, the Soviets also used large-scale military exercises accompanied by extensive naval maneuvers to wage psychological warfare against the Chinese. Since then the Soviet Navy's importance in signaling the Chinese in crisis situations has increased as the focus of the rivalry has shifted away from the explosive border region to the periphery.<sup>25</sup>

In 1978-1979, for example, Moscow and Beijing limited their confrontation to Indochina—the Kremlin's response to the Chinese invasion of Vietnam was largely a naval one. To warn Beijing to limit its incursion, the Soviets deployed approximately 20 surface vessels and some submarines in an arc off the Chinese coast stretching from the Tsushima Strait to the East and South China Seas. On 25 February, the *Minsk* carrier task group began its initial deployment to the Pacific when it entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea. This was just eight days after the invasion—the exact number of days the Turkish government requires for advance notification of the movement of Soviet warships through the Straits of the Dardanelles. Intentionally or not, this powerful task group, composed of the *Minsk*, two *Kara*-class cruisers, the largest Soviet amphibious ship (the *Ivan Rogov*) and an oiler, reminded the Chinese and other observers of Soviet ability to project power in the Pacific.<sup>26</sup>

Soviet port visits to Vietnam during the crisis further underlined Moscow's support for Hanoi. Intelligence ships also collected information and presumably passed it on to the Vietnamese. In addition, Soviet naval activities in the vicinity of Hainan and especially the Paracels were probably designed to underscore Chinese vulnerability to Soviet naval capabilities. During the crisis, the Kremlin also conducted naval air reconnaissance from the Soviet coastal area to the South China Sea—including the Paracel islands. In direct support of the Vietnamese, the Soviets initiated an air and sealift of military supplies to Vietnam while Soviet transport aircraft helped shuttle troops and supplies within Indochina. Although there were no direct clashes along the border during the crisis, the Soviets accompanied their extensive naval effort with one of the largest military exercises they ever held in the Far East. The Soviet Pacific Fleet then has been a key element in Moscow's efforts to pressure Beijing and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.<sup>27</sup>

**China's Response.** The Zhongnanhai has been concerned about Moscow's effort to dominate China's maritime flank. As *Peoples Daily* put it in 1977: "[The Soviet Union] intensifies expansion of its Pacific Fleet in a frenzied attempt to surround us from the sea . . . . Failing this kind of serious military provocation and war clamor, we are like opening the door to admit robbers and bringing a wolf into our house if we do not build a powerful navy and strengthen our coastal defense."<sup>28</sup>

In a sense, the Sino-Vietnamese border war marked China's first move in this effort. The Chinese believe that Southeast Asia figures importantly in the Soviet strategy to achieve naval domination and to threaten China from the seas. After Moscow backed Hanoi's invasion of Kampuchea in 1978, the Zhongnanhai openly challenged the Kremlin by invading Vietnam. When Soviet naval units deployed in reaction, the South Sea Fleet signaled Chinese determination by conducting task group exercises during the conflict. This was the first time the Chinese had undertaken task group operations, and it marked a move away from a coastal defense strategy.<sup>29</sup>

In response to the growth of the Soviet Pacific fleet, the Chinese began to change their force structure in the mid-1970s. The construction of missile patrol boats, primarily associated with the guerrilla warfare strategy, was curtailed. The Chinese stepped up their production of larger surface warships, particularly the *Luda*-class destroyer, and introduced a new class of frigates, the *Jianghu*. They also began production of the *Dajiang*-class multipurpose ocean auxiliary and the *Fuqing*-class underway replenishment oilers—ships necessary for extended operations. The Zhongnanhai also put more emphasis on the development of nuclear submarines. Professionalism was stressed over politics in the navy. These developments were fought by the radicals in the Chinese leadership. But the fall of the Gang of Four and the

second resurrection of Deng Xiaoping in 1977 spurred further transformation of the Chinese Navy.<sup>30</sup>

Naval combined arms replaced guerrilla warfare at sea as the navy's guiding doctrine. Although the Chinese intend to continue traditional coastal defense operations for the time being, they have begun to emphasize the mobile task force as the basic unit of naval combat operations. Presumably, combined arms task groups will consist of surface, submarine, and shore-based naval air elements—the three combat arms of the navy—with a primary emphasis on the surface force. Since 1979, frequent task group exercises have been conducted throughout the fleet areas. In 1980 a naval task force sailed to the South Pacific to observe and recover the missile used in China's first ICBM test. The lessons from these operations have been studied closely and have been incorporated into the navy's training programs.<sup>31</sup>

As in 1979, these task group operations have also allowed the Chinese at times to counter a Soviet naval presence in the Far East with one of their own. For example, in May 1981, a task group of three destroyers, a supply ship, and a fleet tug "displayed the flag" by sailing from North Fleet to waters off the southern coast of Japan, through the Philippine Sea to the South China Sea and the Tonkin Gulf—finally returning to Qingdao after sailing past Hong Kong and through the Taiwan Strait. Recently, in May 1983, a training squadron consisting of a 20,000-ton supply ship and a 2,000-ton transport vessel took a similar cruise in reverse—sailing from South Fleet waters, past the Spratly Islands, to the Philippine Sea, rounding Iwo Jima, and finally returning to homeport at Zhanjiang after steaming through the East China Sea and the Taiwan Strait.<sup>32</sup>

Although other nations no doubt took note, these cruises were largely aimed at Vietnam and its patron. Beijing has extensive island and maritime resource claims in the region, but the Chinese have been anxious to gain US, Japanese and ASEAN support against the Soviet Union as well as economic and technological aid for China's Four Modernizations.<sup>33</sup> So these voyages were probably meant to delineate China's defensive perimeter—in a symbolic effort to counter the Soviet naval threat to China's coastal waters. Furthermore, the Zhongnanhai was also using these naval transits to keep up the military and economic pressure on Vietnam, in effect, asserting China's claims to Vietnamese islands in the Spratlys and to Tonkin Gulf resources also claimed by Hanoi.<sup>34</sup>

Hanoi is apparently concerned about the threat China's navy poses to Vietnam. Both Hanoi and Beijing have accused the other of interfering with fishing and merchant vessels in the Gulf of Tonkin and off Hainan Island.<sup>35</sup> The Chinese Navy is also being used to protect off-shore oil exploration

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\*The Philippines and Taiwan also hold islands in the Spratlys. Malaysia has occupied a reef in the area. But, for reasons already mentioned, Manila, Kuala Lumpur and Taipei probably viewed Chinese naval transits in the vicinity with less alarm than the Vietnamese did.



activities in the South China Sea<sup>36</sup> and could be used to assert China's right to drill in waters also claimed by Hanoi. At the very least, China's naval presence inhibits oil-poor Hanoi from exploiting the potential resources of those waters; thereby maintaining military, economic, and political pressure on Vietnam.

Vietnam complains, "In 1981, a force of five warships, including three destroyers, of the North China Sea fleet was sent on a mission as far as the Gulf of Tonkin. This incident was a sign of concern for all of China's neighboring countries because it marked the emergence at sea of Chinese warships."<sup>37</sup> Further, "Our country's coastline is long. Our territorial seas are large and have a very important position in the political, economic, security, and national defense fields. Our country's sea areas are contiguous with those of China, and the Beijing expansionists and hegemonists are daily and hourly sending armed vessels to encroach on our territorial seas, conduct spying activities, hinder the normal work of our fishermen, and threaten our national security."<sup>38</sup>

### The US Naval Factor

The Chinese have based their security considerations on a strong Nato alliance and a powerful US presence in the Pacific. Ever since the Nixon administration supported China in the Ussuri crisis in 1969, Beijing has looked to Washington to counter Soviet power.<sup>39</sup> The Chinese have expressed their support for Nato and the US-Japanese security treaty. They have also approved US support for ASEAN as a check on Vietnamese expansionism. The Zhongnanhai's support for these various security arrangements is based on sound strategic principle: as long as the "polar bear" is preoccupied with the United States and its allies, the Soviets cannot concentrate their attention on China.<sup>40</sup>

So it is not surprising that Beijing sees the Soviet naval threat in a wider strategic context. As the Chinese Communist Party journal, *Hongqi* (Red Flag) puts it: "[The geographical situation of the USSR] makes it imperative for the Soviet hegemonists to establish for themselves a 'bow-shaped navigation line' in the east that links the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Southwest Pacific, the Sea of Japan, and the three continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa . . ."<sup>41</sup> The growth of the Soviet Navy weakens the Nato alliance by reducing the (real or perceived) ability of the US Navy to counter Soviet activities in the Mideast and Persian Gulf, thereby threatening the flow of oil to Europe and Japan. It also reduces the relative strength of US forces in the Pacific and their potential ability to aid China in a crisis. If the Soviets can dominate (or appear to dominate), the "bow-shaped navigation line," the United States will be pushed out of Europe and the Far East as the Europeans and Japanese scramble to make

amends with the Soviet Union. The United States will no longer pose a threat to the Soviet Union in a Sino-Soviet confrontation. China would be alone, isolated, vulnerable to Soviet attack or intimidation.

That the US naval and military presence in the Asian region figures strongly in Chinese calculation can be illustrated by a few examples.

- During the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971, the United States sent a carrier task group to the Indian Ocean to discourage New Delhi from attacking West Pakistan after its victory in the East. According to Henry Kissinger, Zhou Enlai later claimed that the United States had “saved” Pakistan.<sup>42</sup>

- As the dispute between Beijing and Hanoi over Kampuchea became more heated in the spring of 1978, Moscow conducted naval exercises near China in a show of support for Vietnam. In riposte, the Chinese improved their naval posture in the South China Sea and turned a chance visit to Hong Kong by the *Enterprise* into a show of US support. Representatives of the New China News Agency visited the carrier while in port—an unprecedented event. The Soviet and Vietnamese media denounced the incident as evidence of American and Chinese collusion.<sup>43</sup>

- During China’s invasion of Vietnam in early 1979, the United States deployed the *Constellation* carrier task group to the South China Sea. A *Tass* report complained: “It is not hard to guess in whose support this showing of the U.S. flag is being carried out.” Indeed, the Chinese may also have played further on Soviet sensitivity in this regard. The Hong Kong Communist press claimed approvingly that American SAC reconnaissance planes, C-135s, overflew Hong Kong on a surveillance mission of Soviet ships near the Paracels!<sup>44</sup>

- The day after the Chinese announced their withdrawal from Vietnam, the Carter administration announced that the *Constellation* was being deployed to the Indian Ocean in response to the Soviet-supported invasion of North Yemen by South Yemen. The Chinese noted the development approvingly; the Soviets condemned it and linked it with US collusion with China in the Indochina crisis. Perhaps to counter the *Constellation* and then *Midway* deployments to the Arabian Sea, the *Minsk* showed the flag in the Gulf of Aden in May 1979 before proceeding to the Pacific in June.<sup>45</sup>

- Whenever Vietnam seriously encroaches on Thailand’s territory in its antiguerrilla offensives in Kampuchea, a kind of Kabuki drama is played out among China, the United States, and the Soviet Union. In events similar to June 1980, Hanoi violated Thai territory and airspace in its spring offensive in 1983. The Chinese responded by shelling Vietnamese territory bordering China while the United States supported Bangkok’s security, quickened arms deliveries, and announced joint US-Thai military exercises. The Soviet Union expressed its support for Vietnam by

deploying the *Minsk* to the region, but timed the deployment so as not to be associated with the violation of Thailand's sovereignty. (In 1983, the *Minsk* deployment occurred before the Vietnamese offensive. In 1980, it came some time afterwards.)<sup>46</sup>

So the Chinese take a keen interest in US efforts to counter Soviet military strength in the Pacific. Recently, the Chinese press noted approvingly US Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger's support for a "strong, secure, and independent China" and his call for "greater Japanese self defense efforts."<sup>47</sup> Beijing also paid close attention to the press conference held in Bangkok by the Commander in Chief of US Pacific Command, Admiral Crowe, in December 1983: "It is necessary to deter Soviet aggression in this part of the world. In the past three years we have seen continued improvement of our strength and modernization of the naval and air forces in these regions."<sup>48</sup>

The Chinese have credited the Reagan administration for increasing US military strength in the Pacific: "The Reagan administration has reinforced the U.S. Seventh Fleet with 15 Los Angeles-type submarines, equipped the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier 'Carl Vinson' and the refurbished battleship the 'New Jersey,' has plans to increase the number of ships of the Seventh Fleet to 100 from the current 80, and is preparing to equip their submarines and ships with guided cruise missiles which can carry nuclear warheads. Meanwhile, the United States has stepped up the renewal of its air force in the Asian-Pacific region, equipping 72 new-type F-15 and 3 early warning aircraft on the Kadena Air Force base at Okinawa, and substituting F-16s for F-4s on some bases in South Korea. It is also planning to deploy two squadrons of F-16s on the Misawa Base of Aomori, Japan. In addition, in recent years there has been an obvious increase in the number of U.S. troops stationed in this region. The coming back to Asia of U.S. military strength is to a certain extent a change in U.S. policy concerning the Asian-Pacific region that has attracted attention."<sup>49</sup>

The Zhongnanhai is no doubt relieved at Washington's efforts to reverse the decline of its military strength in the region. As one official put it during President Reagan's trip: "There was no question in the private meetings about the Chinese concern for what the Soviets are doing . . . and they did not object in any way to our arms buildup."<sup>50</sup>

Indeed, the Chinese seem to have associated the United States with China's coastal defense. To protect their oil rigs from attack, the Chinese withdrew them from the Gulf of Tonkin during the Sino-Vietnamese border war.<sup>51</sup> Since then, Western oil companies, including US ones, have become involved in China's considerable effort to develop its offshore oil reserves.<sup>52</sup> As a result, many Westerners, including Americans, may eventually become involved in developing China's coastal reserves.<sup>53</sup> This will give the United States a

considerable stake in China's coastal defense. Indeed, China and the United States have already begun to tacitly cooperate in overseeing the welfare of the offshore rigs. A severe storm, in the fall of 1983, sank the Glomar Java Sea oil drilling ship in the South China Sea.<sup>54</sup> Chinese naval vessels cooperated with US air patrols in the search for survivors.<sup>55</sup>

Furthermore, Beijing is still looking to the West, and the United States in particular, for the technology and technical expertise to strengthen China's economy and military capabilities. It was, after all, Defense Secretary Weinberger's visit to Beijing in September 1983 and the US agreement to loosen controls on technology with military applications that further eased Sino-US relations.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the Chinese continue to flirt with the idea of purchasing some US arms. They are hesitant because they lack sufficient foreign exchange for large arms purchases and because they fear becoming dependent on the United States for military equipment. Even so, the Chinese remain enamored with the idea. For example, Premier Zhao Ziyang said in January 1984: "If the United States is willing to sell to China some weapons which we need and can afford, then we will purchase them. But specific items are now still being discussed."<sup>58</sup>

A recent report claimed that a delegation led by Zhang Pin, the son of China's defense minister Zhang Aiping, visited Washington to pave the way for closer Sino-American military ties and Chinese arms purchases.<sup>59</sup> And during President Reagan's trip to China, it was announced that Zhang Aiping himself would visit the United States in June. Moreover, Beijing indicated its interest in US aid for the PLA navy when Xinhua cited Secretary Weinberger's comments during his visit to the Chinese naval base at Shanghai: "Weinberger told his Chinese hosts that the naval men did very well in keeping the vessels in good shape. He expressed the hope that the discussions in Beijing on military exchanges would continue so that good results would be brought about to benefit the modernization of both Chinese and U.S. navies."<sup>60</sup>

**T**he Sino-Soviet rivalry, viewed through a maritime prism, seems intractable. Indeed, both China and the Soviet Union have used their navies to indicate as much. During their renewed discussions with Moscow in October 1982, the Chinese signaled that they had not gone soft on the Soviets by successfully testing their first submarine-launched ballistic missile<sup>61</sup>—a development of considerable concern to the Kremlin.<sup>62</sup> The Soviets, in turn, demonstrated their support for Vietnam by deploying the *Minsk* to the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean from October 1982 to February 1983, roughly

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\*Curiously, in a gesture perhaps aimed at both the United States and China, Vietnamese naval vessels also participated in the rescue mission.<sup>56</sup> Whatever Hanoi's motives in doing so, Vietnam's participation represented tacit recognition of the political and military importance of Western involvement in China's offshore drilling efforts.

the period between the first and second sessions of the talks.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, the Chinese met with the Soviets in a third session only after hosting Secretary Weinberger in Beijing.<sup>64</sup> And as we have seen, the Zhongnanhai was careful to hold out the possibility of Sino-US naval cooperation. The Soviets, in riposte, deployed TU-16 bombers to Cam Ranh Bay for the first time in the fall of 1983.<sup>65</sup> It is interesting to note that the next meeting of the Sino-Soviet talks held in March 1984 was preceded by Premier Zhao Ziyang's visit to the United States in January and his favorable statement regarding Chinese purchases of US arms. On the other hand, the Soviets deployed an additional *Kiev*-class carrier *Novorossiysk* to the Pacific in February. After the meeting, Hanoi's April offensive in Kampuchea again encroached on Thai territory provoking Sino-Vietnamese clashes along the northern Vietnamese border.<sup>66</sup> (The United States again expressed its support for Bangkok and promised tank and aircraft deliveries to Thailand.)<sup>67</sup> And as President Reagan's trip to China approached, Moscow stepped-up its support for Hanoi by conducting joint amphibious exercises with Vietnam near Cam Ranh Bay and Haiphong.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore the Soviets deployed TU-16 bombers near the Afghan border to support a major offensive against Afghan guerrillas in the Panjshir Valley.<sup>69</sup> The Chinese in turn conducted naval exercises near the Spratlys.<sup>70</sup> The Sino-Soviet talks have changed little of substance—trade and contacts may increase, military tensions could even decline, but the rivalry will continue. It may even increase as China's growth in economic and military power poses an ever greater threat to the Soviets in Asia. And as Zhao Ziyang points out, both China and the United States are Pacific nations and are responsible for the peace and stability of the region.<sup>71</sup>

## Notes

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65. *The New York Times*, 30 January 1984, p. 2.

66. See *FBIS: China*, *FBIS: Asia*, and the *Washington Post* for the period of March-May 1984. As in 1983, the level of fighting along the Thai-Kampuchea and Sino-Vietnamese borders is open to debate; the expressions of hostility and rivalry are not.

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68. *Washington Post*, 17 April 1984, p. A1; *The Economist*, 28 April 1984, p. 47; Xinhua Beijing, 18 April 1984, *FBIS: China*, 25 April 1984, p. C1.

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# Superpower Interests and Naval Missions in the Indian Ocean

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Howard M. Hensel

Over a decade and a half ago, two events of considerable significance occurred in the history of the Indian Ocean basin. First, in January 1968, the British government announced its decision to withdraw its military forces from the region east of Suez. Shortly after this announcement, Soviet naval vessels appeared in the waters of the Indian Ocean. Most scholars and policymakers from both the littoral and interested Western states agreed that these two developments would have an impact on the regional power balance. Some observers argued, however, that, while these events were perhaps significant for the region itself, they were of marginal importance for Western security. Others disagreed and stressed the global importance of these regional developments.<sup>1</sup>

Given the perspective of a decade and a half of superpower naval rivalry in the Indian Ocean, it is perhaps an opportune moment to reflect upon the many and varied interpretations that have been posited in Western foreign policy and national security oriented publications concerning superpower interests in the Indian Ocean and the roles which their respective navies play in promoting those interests. Such a review of superpower interests and naval missions in the Indian Ocean basin should help to clarify some of the key determinants of US and Soviet policy in this increasingly important region.

## US Policy in the Indian Ocean Region

During the past 15 years, many Western analysts of Soviet national security policy have stressed the military significance of the Indian Ocean, within the context of Washington's effort to maintain a stable strategic nuclear balance, as one of the key factors explaining US interest in the region. Early commentators pointed out that by the mid 1960s, submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) technology had made it possible for American ballistic missile carrying nuclear submarines (SSBNs) to be deployed in the Arabian Sea and, if called upon, hit significant targets deep within European Russia.<sup>2</sup> Indeed,

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Washington's overtures to London during the mid-1960s concerning development of communications facilities on the island of Diego Garcia and the Northwest Cape of Australia seemed to suggest that a US SSBN deployment was imminent.<sup>3</sup>

Almost from the outset, other analysts questioned the validity of the contention that the United States was deploying or was about to deploy nuclear submarines in the Indian Ocean. First, they pointed out that Washington had never acknowledged that there indeed were US SSBNs in the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, they maintained that Diego Garcia was not equipped as a submarine base and without such a base, an SSBN deployment in the Indian Ocean would not be cost effective. Too much time would be consumed in transit to the station area, thereby significantly reducing the time on station. Similarly, US SSBNs would have to be accompanied by a submarine tender, yet no American tender had ever been sighted in the region.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, by the late 1970s, many of the original proponents of the US SSBN theory had revised their position. They concluded that, since Diego Garcia had apparently not been developed as a submarine base, it was unlikely that the United States maintained a permanent SSBN presence in the basin. Conversely they pointed out that the United States might consider such a deployment in the future, especially if technology were to make antisubmarine warfare operations more effective. Finally, it was suggested that in a crisis with the USSR, Washington might deploy its SSBNs into the basin as an emergency measure to elude Soviet antisubmarine warfare (ASW) efforts.<sup>5</sup> Looking to the future, some analysts argued that the relative geostrategic significance of the Indian Ocean would tend to decrease as the new US Trident submarines came on line.<sup>6</sup> Others disagreed, contending that the increased range of the Tridents would allow US SSBNs to be stationed virtually anywhere in the vast Indian Ocean expanse, thereby complicating Soviet ASW efforts. Thus, many felt that the Indian Ocean would increase, rather than decrease in military significance.<sup>7</sup>

Another category of American interest in the Indian Ocean centered on the US Navy's traditional use of the Indian Ocean as a transit route for naval ships steaming from the Atlantic to the Far East. Indeed, several analysts have consistently suggested that an American naval presence in the Indian Ocean serves as a vital link between the US naval presence in the Far East and that in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Conversely, since the Indian Ocean is also a pivot between the USSR's Pacific and Black Sea Fleets, they note that US control of the Indian Ocean would be vital for both the worldwide projection of US naval power and the inhibition of Soviet naval activities in the event of a military confrontation between the superpowers. Furthermore, both in peace and in times of crisis, a US naval presence in the Indian Ocean would help guarantee the security of the United States' worldwide

communications and satellite tracking network, while simultaneously helping to facilitate the collection of intelligence material in the basin.<sup>8</sup>

Economic factors constitute a third category of American interests in the Indian Ocean basin. Virtually all analysts agree that it is extremely important for the United States to ensure a dependable flow of strategic materials from the countries of the Indian Ocean to the Western industrial consumers. The term, strategic materials, however, is an umbrella phrase which includes both nonfuel minerals, as well as petroleum. For example, oil, drawn from sources in the Indian Ocean area is important in varying degrees to all the Western industrial powers, as well as to the less developed countries. One should also remember that the regional oil producers have an interest in keeping petroleum flowing to the consumers, since much of their revenue is derived from oil sales. Based upon this global interdependence, some analysts have consistently emphasized that international market forces are sufficient to keep the oil flowing. However, others argue that these market forces are not immune to the impact of regional instability, which often assumes a violent character.<sup>9</sup>

There are two distinct aspects to the interest of ensuring the free flow of strategic materials from the basin. First, the Western powers are interested in the security of the sources of these materials. For example, the oil flow could be interrupted at the source by disrupting or closing operations at the oil fields or at those refineries located in the oil producing regions. The other aspect of guaranteeing the free flow of materials from the basin centers on uninterrupted maritime traffic. In this context, naval analysts have stressed the significance of numerous "chokepoints" as potential sites of maritime vulnerability.<sup>10</sup>

Threats to the sources of strategic materials or the maritime routes can take a variety of forms. First, there is the possibility that terrorists might upset the flow of strategic materials, especially oil. One of the most cited points of vulnerability to terrorist attack is the Strait of Hormuz. Professor Rouhollah K. Ramazani, however, suggested that this strait's vulnerability to terrorist attack may be overdrawn. He noted that there are several bypasses available which would enable ships to pass through the strait, while remaining outside the effective range of most shore-based weapons. Moreover, guerrilla operations designed to close the strait would need a nearby base from which to operate and there is little prospect of such a base being established. Finally, Professor Ramazani pointed out that, even assuming that the terrorists were successful in sinking one or two tankers, it was unlikely that such a development could physically block passage through the strait. He admitted, however, that such an act could generate "great fears about the vulnerability of the Strait's channels."<sup>11</sup>

Regional instability, involving states which produce materials vital to the West or which are located in close proximity to one of the Indian Ocean's

maritime chokepoints could also pose a threat to the flow of strategic materials. Such instability could take the form of revolutionary upheavals within any of a number of regional countries or it could assume the form of military conflicts involving one or several of the states in the basin. Finally, many Western and regional analysts have discussed the prospect of a Soviet threat to secure access to materials vital to the Western industrial societies. While this threat will be examined more fully later in this study, suffice it to say for the moment that many, both in the West and in the region, take it extremely seriously.<sup>12</sup>

In reference to discussions of the US commitment to the defense of strategic materials, especially oil, originating from the Indian Ocean basin, some analysts have observed that since these resources are more vital to the United States' allies than to the United States itself, it would be appropriate for these states to assume a greater responsibility for protecting access to them. In an effort to explain this apparent lack of willingness Philip Towle contends that the possibility of military intervention to prevent an interruption of the oil flow at source "has never been taken seriously in Japan or Western Europe." Other analysts have emphasized that many Western powers, either collectively or individually, lack the capacity to defend access to materials vital to their interests. Hence, many continue to argue that the United States must protect the vital interests of the entire Free World, not merely those of the United States.<sup>13</sup>

Besides its importance as a source of vital materials, the Indian Ocean basin has additional economic significance for the United States. American companies and private American investors have extensive interests in the economies of many of the littoral states. The United States also exports agricultural products to several of the countries of the basin. Finally, the United States trades in arms and manufactured goods with many of these countries. In short, while the relative importance of these additional economic factors pale in comparison to the significance of the basin as a source of strategic materials vital to the survival of the Western industrial economies, the importance of the former should not be underrated either. Hence, many analysts emphasize that the United States must be capable of protecting American property and, if necessary, evacuating American nationals from the area in time of emergency.<sup>14</sup>

Intimately related to the above-mentioned cluster of economic interests, but analytically distinct for purposes of clarity, are US political interests in the Indian Ocean basin. Some scholars such as Professor Howard Wriggins have contended that the United States "has an interest in the continued openness and reasonably orderly development of the littoral countries, done in their own way with a minimum of outside interference."<sup>15</sup> This implies that the United States should deter all powers from intervening in regional conflicts or the domestic affairs of the Indian Ocean states, while itself refraining from doing so.

Other Western scholars have gone even farther and argue that the United States has an interest in preventing any power which threatens Western security from dominating the basin. The focus of most discussions along these lines usually concentrates on the "Soviet threat." Suffice it to say at this point that proponents of this viewpoint argue that for geostrategic reasons, as well as American prestige generally, the United States must oppose any and all encroachments upon the states of the Indian Ocean basin, even if American economic or military interests are not immediately jeopardized.<sup>16</sup>

Insofar as Soviet encroachments would involve Soviet or Soviet proxy military and/or naval forces overtly violating the integrity of a particular state in the basin, or interfering in a regional conflict, there is a coincidence of viewpoints between the position exemplified by Professor Wriggins' comments and those who feel that the United States must contain the Soviet threat. However, opinions differ concerning the proper US response in situations where overt, external military interference is not involved but, instead, the threat emanates from foreign-sponsored subversion from within. In these instances some maintain that the people of the region must be allowed to decide their own fate, even if that involves the demise of a pro-American government and the establishment of one with an anti-American, even Marxist orientation. Others sharply disagree and emphasize that US political interests demand that elements hostile to the United States, especially those seeking to spread communism, must be contained. Proponents of this latter viewpoint maintain that this overrides any American commitment to noninvolvement in the affairs of the region beyond deterring external intervention.

Another element complicating a clear definition of US political interests in the region is that quite often, pro-American governments have a record of violating the "human rights" of their citizens. When confronted with such situations, some argue that the attitude of the government toward the United States must be paramount. Others disagree and contend that defense of the cause of human rights must come first. On balance, Washington has traditionally urged pro-American authoritarian regimes to adopt a more enlightened domestic policy, but generally has not done so at the expense of US political, military and economic interests.<sup>17</sup> Yet, often, the American commitment to the principles of human rights, like its commitment to national self-determination and its opposition to communism or any other elements inimical to US interests, has created vexing dilemmas for Washington in determining American priorities abroad.

Just as many analysts argue that a US SSBN presence in the Indian Ocean would help promote the United States' interest in a stable strategic nuclear balance, the US surface naval presence in the basin is often cited as reinforcing American economic and political interests in the region.

Indeed, some contend that naval power is the most effective way to influence the littoral countries. To support this conclusion, they argue that throughout history foreign domination over the littoral countries has been most often exercised from the sea. Some analysts, such as Professors Cottrell and Burrell, have asserted that naval power “has an historical acceptance in the area.” Others such as Dr. Ferenc Vali have disagreed, stating that, “In most countries around the Indian Ocean gunboat diplomacy is naturally unwelcome, except when it is directed against an enemy.”<sup>18</sup> Regardless of its degree of acceptance by the littoral powers, proponents of naval power have consistently stressed that naval power is flexible and “has none of the potential provocation of a territorial military commitment.”<sup>19</sup>

Thus, Western analysts have collectively assigned some seven different roles which US naval power can play in promoting American political and economic interests in the Indian Ocean basin. First, it has been suggested that US naval power in the Indian Ocean serves as a *symbol* of the United States—recognizing the importance of the region to the United States and the other Western industrial powers, support for littoral friends, determination to counterbalance the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean, and cooperation with the PRC. Second, American naval forces could assist in humanitarian relief efforts in response to natural disasters which periodically occur in the littoral countries.<sup>20</sup>

Third, deployment of naval forces in the Indian Ocean also serves as a deterrent to any other powers which would otherwise be tempted to intervene in the affairs of the basin. This role takes two forms. In situations involving a military confrontation between two or more of the Indian Ocean states which jeopardizes US interests, the deployment of US naval forces could help isolate the conflict and prevent it from escalating through the intervention of external (especially Soviet) or indigenous (especially Soviet proxy) forces. Moreover, in situations of revolutionary unrest within a particular Indian Ocean state, the United States may wish to exercise the same deterrent role vis-à-vis other regional or external powers. Implicit behind any credible deterrence must rest a resolve, or at least a perception by those who are to be deterred of resolve, that appropriate force will be used should deterrence fail.<sup>21</sup>

Fourth, deployment of US naval vessels in the basin would enable the United States to guarantee the freedom of the Indian Ocean’s maritime routes. Here, again, proponents of this mission point out that the mere presence of US naval forces may serve to deter any who would threaten those routes. But, if challenged, the United States must be prepared to commit its forces to combat in order to “police” these routes.<sup>22</sup>

There are some analysts, however, that even go beyond deterrence and argue, fifth, that the United States should be prepared to use its naval power to intervene in the internal affairs of the littoral states if domestic

developments within, or military confrontations between those states appear to be taking a course which clashes with US interests, irrespective of whether the threat of outside intervention exists or not. For example, many have suggested that US naval power should be used to break a prolonged oil boycott, prevent the overthrow of a friendly littoral government, or affect the outcome of a war between the littoral countries.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Geoffrey Jukes went so far as to state that "Western naval presences, though often justified in terms of a hypothetical Soviet threat are really determined by a perceived Western need to maintain a means of bringing pressure on oil producing states." Hence, for Professor Jukes, "this perceived need existed long before any Soviet presence came into being and would continue even if that presence were withdrawn."<sup>24</sup>

Sixth, many have observed that, irrespective of an interventionist, or even a deterrent mission for US naval forces in the Indian Ocean, the United States should have naval vessels available to facilitate the evacuation of American citizens from portions of the basin, should local developments make such an evacuation necessary. Seventh, it is also argued that the presence of US naval forces in the region helps facilitate the "administration of military assistance programs."<sup>25</sup>

In discussing the implementation of these various missions, some analysts have maintained that, "in the nuclear age, a superpower need not have large fleets and bases all over the world to be insulated from military challenges," and that US military/naval power could be projected into the basin from existing American bases in the Mediterranean and the Far East. Others sharply disagree and argue that bases outside the region are incapable of supporting US naval operations in the Indian Ocean. Therefore, they emphasize that the only guarantee that the United States will be able to project force into the area is to have a permanent naval force on station, supported by adequate regional base facilities.<sup>26</sup>

In a larger sense, several observers have raised questions as to the viability of using American naval power to support its politico-economic interests in the region. For example—regarding securing the flow of strategic materials, especially petroleum—many Western analysts have questioned the US military/naval capacity to guarantee access to the sources of these materials should their security be jeopardized by local terrorists, domestic revolutions, or regional hostilities. More specifically, in securing the Persian Gulf oilfields and refineries, several observers have noted that an American expeditionary force would, quite likely, be confronted with facilities already destroyed by the retreating hostile forces. Moreover, even after the local facilities were secured, a permanent American garrison would be needed to maintain security. It is probable, however, that such a garrison would be surrounded by hostile elements. In addition, the United States would possibly stand alone in such a venture and, some suggest, even face hostility from our allies as well as

the threat of intervention by the USSR. Finally, while the American people might be prepared to support a rapid operation, many doubt their willingness to support a prolonged involvement.<sup>27</sup>

Simultaneously, many analysts have questioned the American capacity to effectively use naval power to guarantee the security of the strategic maritime routes, especially at the Strait of Hormuz, should there develop a concerted challenge from terrorists, revolutionaries, or regional hostilities. Such an action would encounter difficult operational problems, as well as the threat of possible local hostility and Soviet counterintervention. Even if these difficulties could be overcome, it is still possible that supertanker crews would refuse to enter such a dangerous area, and that Western insurance companies would so increase insurance rates as to significantly reduce shipping in this area.<sup>28</sup>

From another perspective, several writers have pointed to the changing attitudes toward the traditional concepts of the freedom of the seas. While some feel that "showing the flag," especially at certain chokepoints such as the Strait of Malacca, would help assert the international character of these waters, others argue that questions such as this must be resolved by political and diplomatic methods, not military or naval power.<sup>29</sup>

Concerning symbolic naval visits and even military and naval interventions on behalf of friendly littoral governments, many analysts feel that American naval power often is, at best, ineffective in influencing the course of events and may possibly even be counterproductive, especially in highly charged nationalistic atmospheres. As evidence, several writers cite the example of Iran in late 1978 and early 1979, where American naval power was incapable of positively influencing the course of domestic developments and, indeed, may have served as a negative factor in promoting the US objective of supporting the Iranian monarchy. Moreover, others maintain that naval forces alone are insufficient and, that in order to effectively influence events such as these, the regional states must be prepared to allow the United States to maintain ground forces on their soil. Yet, given the traditionally hostile attitudes of the littoral countries to such a presence, this does not appear to be a viable possibility. Thus, many analysts have concluded that the most the United States can and should do is to provide weapons and advisors, but avoid heavy reliance upon naval power in order to affect regional developments.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, regarding the argument that the American naval presence has influenced the actions of the Soviet Union, a contrary body of opinion holds that the Soviets would have behaved the same way over the last decade and a half even if there had been no regional US naval presence. Many admit that a unilateral Soviet naval presence "would reinforce the widespread belief that Soviet power is waxing whilst Western power is waning," but proponents of this viewpoint hasten to add that, "such a belief does not, of course, rest only on the growth of Soviet naval power."<sup>31</sup>

In summary, Western analysts clearly disagree as to the exact definition and priority of US interests in the Indian Ocean basin. Moreover, they disagree as to the role which American naval power can and should play in promoting those interests. There is a consensus, however, that the United States has at least some significant interests in the region and that American actions, particularly its military and naval policy in the region will ultimately have an impact on those interests.

### Soviet Policy in the Indian Ocean Region

Military-strategic factors are often identified by Western observers as being of paramount significance in Moscow's decision to deploy naval vessels in the Indian Ocean. These analysts argue that one of the principal factors, if not the primary motivation which led to that decision, was concern about the prospect of a US SSBN deployment in the Arabian Sea. Thus, Soviet military planners, allegedly building upon a "worst case" estimate, were said to have argued that even if the US SSBNs were not yet deployed in the area, sooner or later the United States would decide upon such a deployment. Therefore, according to this line of analysis, the Soviet naval high command urged the Kremlin leaders to authorize the deployment of Soviet naval forces in the basin to watch for signs of a US SSBN presence, as well as to familiarize themselves with a heretofore relatively unknown ocean.<sup>32</sup>

Other scholars have consistently questioned this interpretation, arguing that, since there are neither signs nor an acknowledgment by Washington that the United States deploys SSBNs in the basin, attributing the Soviet decision to send naval ships into the area to Soviet concern for US SSBNs is to base the analysis "on nothing more than speculation and conjecture." Moreover, critics of the military-strategic defense interpretation of Soviet behavior remind their colleagues that the USSR did not possess an effective ASW capability when the decision to deploy naval vessels in the basin was made. Furthermore, even now, the Soviet ASW capability appears to be quite limited.<sup>33</sup>

In response, proponents of the military-strategic defense argument maintain that it is "irrelevant" whether the United States had actually deployed SSBNs in the basin when the Kremlin leaders made their decision to send Soviet naval vessels into the region. They contend that prudence dictated that Soviet naval planners would have to base their estimates and recommendations and, ultimately the Kremlin leadership itself would have to act, based upon a "worst case" estimate. Regarding the lack of an effective ASW capability, one proponent of the military-strategic defense interpretation commented that, "all navies live in hopes of a breakthrough in anti-submarine warfare, and it is sensible to acquire operating experience in the likely deployment area against the hoped for day of the breakthrough."<sup>34</sup>



By the late 1970s, however, many of the original proponents of the military strategic defense explanation had modified their position in response to what even they came to admit was an absence of a permanent US SSBN deployment in the basin. Those who felt that the Indian Ocean would remain a likely but, as yet, potential deployment site for US SSBNs, argued that the Soviet naval high command would continue to want to provide their crews with area familiarization cruises. Indeed, given the Soviet Navy's reliance on conscripts, "the Soviet naval presence acquires its own self-sustaining momentum from the exigencies of the Soviet training cycle." Conversely, those who felt that the increased ranges of US SLBMs would reduce the geostrategic significance of the Indian Ocean concluded that "the combat mission that first brought the Soviet navy into the Indian Ocean on a permanent basis is likely to cease to have even the hypothetical significance that it has had in the past." Thus, they felt that "having first entered the Indian Ocean for familiarization," the Soviet Navy "has found other functions to fulfill."<sup>35</sup>

Another, albeit long-range element in the Kremlin's Indian Ocean calculations was said to be Soviet concern about the future possibility that the PRC might deploy naval forces in the basin. Even more haunting is the future prospect of the development of a Chinese SLBM capability which would enable them to use the Arabian Sea as a staging area for Chinese SSBNs directed against Soviet territory. Most dreaded of all is the Soviet nightmare of Sino-American military-naval collusion in the Indian Ocean area.<sup>36</sup> Conversely, however, some Western analysts have pointed out that the Indian Ocean provides a possible site for Soviet SSBN deployments directed against targets in the PRC.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to its military-strategic significance, the Indian Ocean also has logistical importance for the USSR. While only a relatively small portion of Soviet domestic trade passes through the Indian Ocean, the significance of the maritime passage for Soviet domestic transportation could increase dramatically in the event of Sino-Soviet hostilities and the loss, or even threatened loss of rail links between the eastern and western portions of the USSR. Similarly, the Indian Ocean constitutes the only dependable link between the USSR's three European based fleets and the Soviet Pacific Fleet in the Far East. Hence, some observers have suggested that the Soviets may have deployed their naval forces in the basin in order to secure control over their seaborne lines of communication.<sup>38</sup> Since one of the main threats to Soviet maritime routes would be from submarines, (either Western or potentially Chinese) this further reinforces the ASW mission of the Soviet Navy discussed earlier.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to the military-strategic and logistical factors, several analysts have drawn attention to the USSR's economic-scientific interests in the Indian Ocean area. This cluster of interests ranges from commercial

considerations and access to strategic materials,<sup>40</sup> to the emergency recovery of Soviet space vehicles.<sup>41</sup> Soviet fishing activities also constitute an important Soviet maritime interest in the Indian Ocean. These activities have a number of dimensions. First, Soviet trawlers regularly work the regional fishing grounds, especially those off the coasts of southern Africa. In addition, the Soviets also assist several littoral countries in the latter's efforts to develop their own fishing industries. Consequently, Soviet oceanographic activities are often designed to help refine both Soviet fishing activities, as well as those of Moscow's regional associates. In this context, a measure of the USSR's "scientific research" in the Indian Ocean also has a military application in that it is designed to help improve Soviet ASW efforts.<sup>42</sup>

Soviet fishing activities are, of course, intimately linked with Soviet political interests in the Indian Ocean area. Most Western analysts agree that Moscow seeks—with varying degrees of determination depending largely upon the circumstances—to undermine the West's political, military, and economic position throughout the developing world, while simultaneously attempting to expand its own presence and influence. As applied to the Indian Ocean area, many observers have maintained that prior to 1968, the British presence east of Suez deterred the USSR from "introducing its naval forces into a long-established British preserve." They argue, however, that London's withdrawal announcement created a political vacuum in the basin and "tempted Moscow to pursue its traditional policy of watching for any reduction of Western vigilance and thereafter seizing the first available opportunity for replacing Western influence with its own, particularly when it appears that the United States is not prepared to fill the vacuum."<sup>43</sup>

Other analysts, however, have sharply disagreed with the proponents of the "vacuum thesis." Many scholars along the littoral maintain that the alleged "power vacuum" is really "a myth, something created by major powers to deny access to other powers."<sup>44</sup> In this context, Nehru University Professor K. P. Misra was perhaps representative of the thinking of littoral intellectuals when he observed that: "This line of thinking carried several implications, particularly in the context of superpower rivalry. First, if one power failed to act, it would be placed in a disadvantageous position because the other was bound to take appropriate initiatives, thereby creating for the 'timid' one an unfavorable balance of power in the area. Second, related to the first was the implication that the littoral countries needed some kind of guardian or caretaker in the area so that the weaker countries could be protected from the possible encroachments of outside powers. Third, in case of conflict among countries within the area, it was thought that the major outside powers, thanks to their superior military capability, could act as arbiters whenever necessary. Fourth, though it was not clearly and openly articulated, implicit in the power vacuum concept was the desire of outside powers to be in a position to influence domestic trends in littoral countries if

these proved unfavorable to them and if, in their judgment, the cost of influencing did not outweigh the benefits. Thus, the power vacuum theory, generating an artificially created atmosphere of competition and contention in the area, had international and regional as well as domestic ramifications.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, many intellectuals from the littoral states contend that the great powers, especially the United States and the USSR complicate rather than ameliorate basin problems and insist that the destiny of the region must be left in the hands of the Indian Ocean peoples, without outside interference.<sup>46</sup>

From another perspective, Professor Laurence Martin rejected the "vacuum thesis," reasoning that "only if one views the tasks of contemporary strategy and diplomacy entirely as a huge campaign to contain communism can the Indian Ocean be seen as a great hole to be plugged . . . . Such a view would tend to render all the problems of the area aspects of the single threat of Communist expansion and suggest a single strategy of containment." Indeed, Philip Towle contended that irrespective of the scope of the British military commitment in the basin, "it is probable that the rivalry between the two Super Powers in the area would have increased." In a similar vein, John Badgley suggested that, since the USSR "correctly perceives itself as an Asian power, with vital strategic interests along its vast border, in the Atlantic, Pacific, and in the Indian Ocean" then "objective analysis justifies Soviet strategic interest in the Indian Ocean." Finally, Dr. Oles Smolansky argued at the outset of the 1970s that, irrespective of the British military presence or the lack thereof in the region east of Suez, it was Western initiatives that were "a major consideration impelling the establishment of a Soviet naval presence in the area. Thus, far from the aggressive intent so frequently ascribed to these recent Soviet moves, Moscow's main concern seems to have been military defense."<sup>47</sup>

Beyond the alleged timing link between the British withdrawal announcement and the subsequent arrival of Soviet warships in the waters of the Indian Ocean, some scholars interpret Soviet policy from a historical perspective and argue that the Kremlin's interest in the region "is an extension of an old Czarist thrust for an outlet to the south, dating from the time of Peter the Great." Many go on to assert that this historical motivating factor "is overlaid with the ideological drive for world-wide Soviet hegemony."<sup>48</sup> Other writers, however, take issue both with the historical parallel,<sup>49</sup> as well as with the ideological interpretation of contemporary Soviet policy.

Finally, some analysts interpret Soviet behavior in the context of a perceived desire to gain control over the Persian Gulf oil sources, as well as establish control over the petroleum transit routes and thereby hold hostage a resource vital to many Western states.<sup>50</sup> In this context, some analysts stress what many project as a coming Soviet oil shortage.<sup>51</sup> Here, as will be

further discussed, many observers question the Soviet capacity to achieve this goal.

Notwithstanding differences of opinion concerning the validity of these interpretations, most analysts agree that the Soviet Union and the United States will continue to compete with each other for influence throughout the basin for the foreseeable future. Indeed, because of the politico-economic instabilities which presently characterize most of the states of the basin, the opportunities for "Soviet penetration either directly or via revolutionary groups" exist.<sup>52</sup> Many scholars and policymakers accept the analogy that Moscow "is prepared to push on every door to see if it will open easily." When they sense little or no counterpressure, they press on; conversely, when counterpressure is present, they retreat and move on to the next door. The problem, however, lies in determining "how hard they will push" and "how much resistance they would want to overcome in moving through the door."<sup>53</sup> Some analysts feel that the USSR will tend to move cautiously, engaging in "low-risk" political competition.<sup>54</sup> Others see the Soviets as behaving more aggressively and adopting a more adventurist strategy in pursuing their objectives.

Finally, in addition to Moscow's interest in its own position in the region relative to that of the West, many observers remind us that the Soviets are also interested in "containing" PRC attempts to strengthen its position throughout the Indian Ocean basin. Many claim that the Soviets are attempting to "outflank Peking and shield the Ocean from Chinese incursions." Similarly, others interpret Soviet links with various states in south and southeast Asia as part of a larger effort "to foster self-defense and cooperation against China" under the protection of the USSR. Although agreeing that the Chinese factor is an element in Soviet interest in the Indian Ocean basin, most observers appear to agree with Dr. Cottrell who commented that "this is surely secondary to their other aims."<sup>55</sup> In short, while there tend to be differences as to the relative weight assigned to the various component parts, most Western scholars agree that the Soviets have a variety of political and economic interests in the Indian Ocean area.

Consequently, they argue that, in addition to deploying Soviet naval forces in the basin to help promote the USSR's military strategic security and protect Soviet lines of communication which pass through the region, the Kremlin also hopes to use its naval power in the basin in order to help promote its political and economic regional interests. Drawing upon the propositions set forth earlier regarding the traditional role played by seapower in shaping the political and economic development of the littoral countries, some analysts feel that the Kremlin leaders seek to display Soviet power in terms which are readily comprehensible to the littoral peoples and especially the regional political leaders. In any case, most Western observers seem to agree with Professor Smolansky's observation that the Soviet decision to deploy

naval forces in the Indian Ocean was based, in part, upon a desire to demonstrate "Moscow's status as a superpower with genuinely global interests and the ability to protect them."<sup>56</sup>

More specifically, Soviet naval forces are said to play a variety of political and economic missions in the basin. For example, Soviet naval forces assist in intelligence gathering operations, as well as in the recovery of space vehicles. They also provide a measure of support and protection for Soviet fishing trawlers and merchant ships operating in the basin.<sup>57</sup>

In addition, the Soviet naval presence provides a symbolic challenge to what has been, since the 16th century, a Western dominated ocean. In this way, Moscow may be attempting to assert a claim to participation in any international or regional efforts to determine the future political directions of the region. Indeed, some observers have raised the possibility that the Soviet Union could potentially offer its naval forces in the service of the UN resolutions, with the side effect of gaining still further respectability among the littoral states. Equally important, Soviet naval forces provide a symbolic reminder to the littoral states that the USSR has an interest in their activities and empathy for their problems.<sup>58</sup> In this context, Soviet naval forces have occasionally assisted certain littoral countries in performing maritime oriented tasks, such as the mine-clearing operations conducted for Bangladesh during the early 1970s.<sup>59</sup>

Beyond this, the Soviets have apparently deployed their naval vessels in the area in order to deter other external powers, especially the United States, as well as the West's regional associates from intervening in the domestic affairs of the Indian Ocean states when developments within these countries are taking a direction which accords with Soviet interests. Similarly, the Soviet Indian Ocean squadron appears also to be designed to deter unwanted intervention by Western or pro-Western littoral states in regional confrontations involving one or several littoral countries.<sup>60</sup>

Some observers, however, feel that the Soviet Navy is also deployed in the Indian Ocean in order to influence the domestic and foreign policies of the littoral governments along lines desired by the Kremlin, especially at times of crisis or decision. More specifically, some feel that the Soviets are prepared to use naval power to demonstrate support for and perhaps directly intervene on behalf of friendly governments in the basin.<sup>61</sup> In addition, some argue that Moscow also seeks to capitalize upon regional instability by using Soviet naval forces in support of pro-Soviet national liberation forces.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, some feel that the Kremlin leaders want to be in a position to use their naval power to intervene in regional hostilities, irrespective of whether there is a prospect of Western intervention or not, when to do so would coincide with Soviet interests.<sup>63</sup> Finally, several Western writers suggest that the USSR might attempt to use its naval power to interrupt the flow of strategic materials, especially petroleum,

to the Western industrialized powers, either at source or in transit, or both.<sup>64</sup>

Several scholars, however, have expressed reservations regarding the Soviet capacity to perform these last two missions. For example, assessing the prospects of a Soviet attempt to cut the oil flow, Professor Smolansky observed that, "the prospect of controlling the flow of petroleum to some of the major allies of the United States would no doubt have an enormous appeal to Soviet leaders were it easily attainable." He and several other analysts, however, raise a variety of questions concerning the feasibility of attaining this alleged objective.<sup>65</sup>

Discussing the possibility of a Soviet military seizure of the oilfields of the Persian Gulf in order to compensate for domestic shortages, Dr. Jukes observed that this scenario "rests on an implicit predatoriness of the Soviet Union for which there is no evidence in Soviet political or military doctrine, nor very much historical Soviet behavior with regard either to the Middle East area or to other strategic raw materials (e.g., rubber) in which the Soviet Union is deficient." Dr. Jukes and others also assert that even if the Soviets did undertake such an operation, there would be enormous risks of indigenous resistance and sabotage to the local oil facilities. Moreover, as Dr. Smolansky observed, "Moscow must be perfectly aware of the fact that Washington would not tolerate a Soviet takeover of the Middle Eastern oilfields and that no prize, Middle East or otherwise is worth a nuclear holocaust."<sup>66</sup>

Similarly, many scholars have cast doubt on the USSR's ability to sever the maritime transit routes through the Indian Ocean. First, they suggest that the size of the Soviet naval squadron would have to be considerably increased from its present size in order to give the Soviets clear command of the seas. Moreover, skeptics contend that any Soviet effort to interfere with Indian Ocean shipping generally, and the oil flow specifically, would alienate both the oil producing states, as well as those Third World states dependent upon Persian Gulf oil for their own consumption. Finally, most significant of all, such an initiative would undoubtedly be interpreted as an act of war by the Western industrial powers.<sup>67</sup>

Many writers, of course, argue that in a general war between the USSR and the United States, the Soviet Navy would attempt to sever the West's maritime links with the Indian Ocean, and especially the Persian Gulf. Even here, however, a number of analysts have expressed reservations and have pointed out that the USSR would experience problems in attempting to cut the sea lanes. For example, it is unlikely that Soviet surface ships would be able to play an important role given the improved surveillance and communications technology available to the Western navies. In this context, "the life expectation of the surface-ship component of the Soviet Indian Ocean force would be measured in days rather than in months," and that to be effective, the Western powers would have to be deprived of petroleum for a

prolonged period. Indeed, some are of the opinion that dispersion of Soviet naval forces implied in the commitment of large numbers of combatants into Indian Ocean waters would actually facilitate their early destruction. Thus, many writers conclude that it would be illogical for the Soviets to use their surface vessels in this manner. Submarines, of course, would present a more serious threat to maritime shipping, but limitations as to capacity to carry munitions, etc., would require some form of support to service operations. These support systems would then be targets for counteraction by the West.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, skeptics have argued that none of the chokepoints in the area, except the Suez Canal, constitutes a real bottleneck. Consequently, given the width of the straits in the basin, the sinking of a small number of ships would create a navigational hazard, but a totally effective blockade would require a disproportionately large commitment of Soviet naval vessels in the basin. Thus, given the operational problems and the absence of counterbalancing opportunities in the Indian Ocean, many writers would agree that "a major Soviet submarine effort against Western sea lanes is likely to be mounted nearer to the tankers destinations in Europe and Japan, simply for operating convenience and closeness to bases in Soviet home territory, which are more effectively protected and therefore more likely to continue to function in war."<sup>69</sup>

Of course, Soviet interference with maritime transport routes would inevitably lead to countermeasures directed against Soviet shipping on the high seas. For example, it would not be unreasonable to expect Japan to react defensively to Soviet threats to Japanese maritime lifelines. Japan's location, in turn, would enable it to impede Soviet access into the Pacific Ocean. Similarly, the USSR's merchant and naval operations emanating from the Black and Baltic seas would be vulnerable to European countermeasures. In short, given all these difficulties associated with severing maritime transit routes, many writers have simply discounted the prospect of such a Soviet initiative. In the event of a general war, they contend that Soviet efforts to deprive the West of petroleum would be more effectively accomplished by air and ground strikes at the sources of the oil, and consequently, would not require a Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean to perform that mission.<sup>70</sup>

In response, while analysts less sanguine about the Soviet threat to maritime transit routes admit that "the contingency is implausible, at least in the foreseeable future, that the Soviet Union itself might directly undertake hostile operations against vital Western sea lanes," they stress that there is still a threat posed by local radical regimes. Discussing the possible linkages between these regimes and the USSR, Professors Cottrell and Hahn write that, "the Soviet Union could transfer shore guns, missile patrol boats, land-based aircraft, and a variety of other weapons and naval platforms which would threaten Western shipping." Finally, these two scholars are much more reluctant to dismiss the submarine threat, stressing instead that

submarines would be "particularly troublesome" due to "problems of detecting and identifying them and of establishing state accountability after the damage has been done."<sup>71</sup>

Several Western analysts have also expressed reservations concerning the Soviet capacity to use naval power to intervene in the domestic affairs of the littoral states or regional conflicts between those states. For example, many have noted that, thus far, the Soviets have intervened only in situations in which there was very little prospect of direct military confrontation with the United States generally, and its naval forces particularly. Moreover, the Soviets would need a large naval force, larger than they presently deploy, in order to effectively intervene in most situations. Hence, given the risks of superpower confrontation, operational problems, and the threat that an amphibious operation could be transformed into a protracted involvement, many have concluded that "in the past the Soviet Union has normally not risked sending forces into noncontiguous countries and probably would not do so in an Indian Ocean littoral state."<sup>72</sup>

Finally, in addition to the USSR's military-strategic, economic, and political interests in the Indian Ocean basin which help explain the Kremlin's decision to deploy naval vessels in these waters, several Western analysts have cited one last factor to complete the equation. This is the impact of Soviet domestic politics, particularly the politics of the Soviet military high command. According to this interpretation, the Soviet naval deployment in the Indian Ocean represents an aspect of an effort by the Soviet Navy to expand its mission and, therefore, increase its relative importance in the Soviet defense establishment. Since the death of Mr. Stalin, the Soviet Navy has grown from the maritime adjunct of the Soviet Ground Forces to an important service branch in its own right and a visible, worldwide symbol of Soviet power. In another sense, however, in order to justify the commitment of past defense resources and reinforce arguments that additional resources should be allocated in the future, the Soviet Navy is under obligation to produce tangible results. Consequently, in this sense, investment in the expansion of naval power and the accompanying expansion of both mission and deployment areas, often acquires a momentum of its own. On the other hand, Dr. Jukes reminds us that "however much naval officers might relish the prospect of penetrating new seas, political leaders are bound to look askance at the costs involved and the possible political repercussions."<sup>73</sup>

## Conclusions

The preceding review of Soviet and American interests in the Indian Ocean basin and the survey of the various missions performed by the respective superpower navies in promoting those interests suggests a number of considerations which must be taken into account in the policy formulation



process. Clearly, neither the regional interests of the two superpowers, nor the missions assigned to their respective naval forces operating in the region are unidimensional. Rather, they represent a complex, mutually reinforcing matrix, only a portion of which can be explained in terms of superpower rivalry. Whether that portion constitutes a majority or minority of the whole depends largely upon the individual analyst's assumptions concerning the degree of aggressiveness inherent in contemporary Soviet foreign policy. Irrespective of the question of proportion, however, superpower rivalry itself does not constitute the whole and, consequently, a complete interpretation must take into account those elements which transcend that rivalry.

For example, the United States has been, is presently, and is likely to continue to be interested in secure access to strategic materials and regional commercial opportunities, as well as guaranteeing the physical safety of its citizens living and traveling in the area. Moreover, it is concerned with the freedom of the maritime transit routes which traverse the basin. Finally, it is concerned with insuring the protection of the human rights and national self-determination of the littoral peoples. Obviously, challenges to these American interests may, in individual situations, be inspired by Moscow, but to interpret all challenges to these interests as being solely the result of Moscow's machinations would be erroneous. Many regional events, ranging from the Kurdish uprising in northern Iraq, to the fall of the Iranian monarchy, to the periodic hostilities between Iran and Iraq, have been the products of factors indigenous to the regional and local context and are only marginally attributable to Soviet activities. Challenges to American interests, such as these, would arise irrespective of whether or not the USSR maintained a regional presence. Conversely, the Soviet Union remains particularly alert to Chinese activity in the basin and is likely to continue to do so regardless of the nature and scope of an American presence.

Finally, American interests in maintaining reliable communications links throughout the area and in supporting scientific-technical activities have little to do with superpower rivalry. Similarly, Soviet interests in regional fishing, utilization of the basin for scientific research and as a possible site for the recovery of space vehicles, as well as utilization of the ocean's maritime transit routes as an alternative link between the European and Asiatic portions of the USSR, are equally independent of Soviet-American relations. In short, to overemphasize any single interest, or even cluster of interests to the exclusion of the others in assessing the regional policies of either of the two superpowers would be to oversimplify what is, in reality, a very complex picture. Such an error, in turn, is likely to yield unrealistic strategy recommendations. Instead, all dimensions of Soviet and American interests must be taken into account and then juxtaposed against state capabilities to fulfill those interests. These factors, in turn, must be framed against the perceptions, interests, and objectives of the littoral states and the various

factional groups within those states. Only then can analysts prescribe viable strategy options for the United States in such a complex and diverse area as the Indian Ocean region.

### Notes

1. Alvin J. Cottrell, "Indian Ocean of Tomorrow," *Navy Magazine*, March 1971, pp. 10-16.
2. Among the first analysts to publicly discuss US SSBN capabilities vis-à-vis the Arabian Sea were: Robert W. Herrick, *Soviet Naval Strategy* (Annapolis: US Naval Institute, 1968), p. 96; T. B. Millar, *The Indian and Pacific Oceans: Some Strategic Considerations* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1969), p. 6; John Badgley, "An American Policy to Accommodate Asian Interests in the Indian Ocean," *SAIS Review*, Summer 1971, p. 3; Howard Wriggins, "Heading Off a New Arms Race: Let's Try to Neutralize the Indian Ocean," *War Peace Report*, August/September 1971, p. 10; George Thomson, "Problems in the Indian Ocean," *Pacific Community*, October 1971, p. 137; Geoffrey Jukes, "The Soviet Union and the Indian Ocean," *Survival*, November 1971, p. 371; Oles Smolansky, "Soviet Entry into the Indian Ocean: An Analysis," in Alvin J. Cottrell and R. M. Burrell, ed., *The Indian Ocean: Its Political, Economic, and Military Importance* (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp. 340-341, 352; T. B. Millar, "Geopolitics and Military/Strategic Potential," in Cottrell and Burrell, eds., p. 67; Howard Wriggins, "U.S. Interests in the Indian Ocean," in Cottrell and Burrell, eds., pp. 371, 373-374. One of the most complete discussions of the subject, however, remains Geoffrey Jukes, *The Indian Ocean in Soviet Naval Policy* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1972), pp. 6-12.
3. Millar, *The Indian and Pacific Oceans*, p. 6. Smolansky, pp. 340, 342; Jukes, *The Indian Ocean in Soviet Naval Policy*, pp. 7-12; Monoranjan Bezboruah, *U.S. Strategy in the Indian Ocean* (New York: Praeger, 1977), pp. 137-138, 140; Geoffrey Jukes, "Soviet Naval Policy in the Indian Ocean," in Bowman and Clark, eds., pp. 175-176; Constantine G. Papavizas, "Soviet Naval Power in the Indian Ocean: Motivations and Interests," *Journal of International Affairs*, Fall-Winter 1980-81, p. 401.
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6. Hedley Bull, "The Indian Ocean as a 'Zone of Peace,'" in T. T. Poulse, ed., *Indian Ocean Power Rivalry* (New Delhi: Young Asia Publications, 1974), pp. 186-187; Blechman, p. 70; Kapur, p. 145; Jukes, "Soviet Naval Policy in the Indian Ocean," p. 178; Papavizas, pp. 401-402.
7. Vali, p. 240; Bezboruah, p. 139; Dale R. Tahtinen, *Arms in the Indian Ocean* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1977), p. 17; Blechman, p. 70.
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9. Harry F. Young, *Atlas of United States Foreign Relations* (Washington: Department of State, 1983), pp. 61-63; Jonathan Alford, "Strategic Developments in the Indian Ocean Area," *Asian Affairs*, June 1981, pp. 141, 146.
10. Wriggins, "Heading off a New Arms Race," p. 8; Wriggins, "U.S. Interests in the Indian Ocean," pp. 361-362.
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12. Ramazani, pp. 11-13; Hanks, p. 22; Hanks and Cottrell, pp. 101-110; Thomson, p. 133.
13. Philip Towle, "The United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean: Blind Alley or Zone of Peace?" in Bowman and Clark, eds., p. 214; "A Committee Report of the Strategic Planning Study on U.S. Alternatives for an Indian Ocean Area Policy," *Naval War College Review*, June 1969, pp. 164-165; Wriggins, "Published by US Naval War College Digital Commons, 1985

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14. Young, pp. 58-60, 65, 66; Coye, pp. 45, 47.
15. Wriggins, "Heading Off a New Arms Race," p. 8; Wriggins, "U.S. Interests in the Indian Ocean," pp. 361-362, 364.
16. "A Committee Report . . .," pp. 164, 171; Millar, *The Indian and Pacific Oceans*, p. 6; Coye, pp. 44-47.
17. Towle, *Naval Power in the Indian Ocean*, p. 23.
18. Cottrell and Burrell, "The Soviet Navy and the Indian Ocean," p. 34; Vali, p. 59; Wriggins, "U.S. Interests in the Indian Ocean," p. 367; "A Committee Report . . .," pp. 161-162.
19. Cottrell and Burrell, "The Soviet Navy and the Indian Ocean," p. 34.
20. For example, see: Griffith, p. 14; Cottrell and Burrell, "The Soviet Navy and the Indian Ocean," pp. 33-34.
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22. Coye, pp. 47-48; Harrigan, pp. 15-20; Hanks, p. 22; Cottrell and Burrell, "The Soviet Navy and the Indian Ocean," pp. 33-35; Alexander Ghebbardt, "Soviet and U.S. Interests in the Indian Ocean," *Asian Survey*, August 1975, pp. 680-681; S. P. Seth, "The Indian Ocean and Indo-American Relations," *Asian Survey*, August 1975, pp. 645-646.
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25. Coye, p. 47; Cottrell and Burrell, "The Soviet Navy and the Indian Ocean," p. 34.
26. Tahtinen, p. 44; Cottrell and Hahn, pp. 37-39; Alvin J. Cottrell and Thomas Moorer, *U.S. Overseas Bases: Problems of Projecting American Military Power Abroad* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977), pp. 31-35; Cottrell and Hahn, 37-39.
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### Operational Competence

Historians have tended to explain the German victories in the first years of the war as the result of operational and strategic factors. What they have generally overlooked are the doctrinal, training, and organizational elements that contributed to the victories; in other words, they have rarely addressed the issue of German military competence . . . .

The critical element in the German evaluation process was the system of after-action reports. Nearly all military organizations use similar systems, but German reporting methods were unique because they worked. Unlike many armies where the reporting system is distorted by what commanders wish to hear, the German system was both highly critical and honest within tactical operational spheres. The higher the headquarters, the more demanding and dissatisfied were commanders with operational performances . . . . This willingness to criticize itself was to be a major factor in the German army's high level of competence throughout the Second World War.

Williamson Murray's  
*The Change in the European Balance  
of Power, 1938-1939.*

# American Perceptions of The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the Iranian-Iraqi War: The Need for a New Look

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James R. Kurth

## US Policy Seen in the Light of Lebanon and the Persian Gulf

**R**ecent events have provided both an opportunity and a necessity to reexamine some of the basic perceptions and assumptions underlying the policies of the United States toward the Middle East. The collapse of the Reagan administration's policy in Lebanon revealed grave errors in the way US policy makers perceived the politics of that hapless Middle Eastern country, rather like the collapse of the Carter administration's policy in Iran earlier revealed similar errors about the politics of that apparently solid Middle Eastern ally.<sup>1</sup> And the increasing involvement of US naval vessels and military aircraft in the spreading Persian Gulf war carries with it the probability that comparable errors in perceiving the Middle East will lead to even more costly failures in the region.

The repercussions from the advance of Syria and the retreat of Israel in Lebanon in turn raise anew the question of US policy toward the disputed territories of the West Bank (Judea and Samaria), East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and the Gaza District. Similarly, the repercussions from the growth of Shiite power in Lebanon and the growth of US involvement in the Persian Gulf raise anew the question of US policy toward the Iranian-Iraqi War and particularly toward the spread of the Shiite revolution from Iran into other countries of the Gulf and to the west. This essay accordingly will examine the need to reconstruct US policies toward (1) the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and (2) the Iranian-Iraqi War, upon new and truer perceptions and assumptions about the realities of politics in the Middle East.

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## US Policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Centrality of the Disputed Territories

The United States and Israel each held national elections in 1984 which will set the course of their countries for several years to come. The period after these elections, particularly early 1985, might provide an opportune time to reconstruct US-Israeli relations on a foundation that accords with new conditions, on a basis that will be more mature and realistic than has been the case in recent years.

The essential commonality of interests between the United States and Israel is well known, and the fundamental basis of US-Israeli relations is quite sound. The United States values Israel as a strategic asset, one that provides a wide range of military and intelligence benefits for the US policy of containing the military expansion of the Soviet Union in the Middle East.<sup>2</sup> The United States also values Israel as a political democracy, one with which Americans share political, cultural, and religious norms and practices. From time to time, of course, there have been disputes about a variety of issues, such as sales of US advanced weapons to Arab countries, the amount of US aid to Israel, and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. But these disputes have generally been temporary, and after the issue has been decided, the fundamental equilibrium of US-Israeli cooperation has been restored.

There is indeed only one major and continuing issue of dispute in US-Israeli relations, and this concerns the territories that Israel acquired as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, that is, the West Bank (Judea and Samaria), East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and the Gaza District. It is the argument of this essay that the position of the United States on this issue rests upon assumptions which no longer correspond to the realities of the Middle East, and that the time and the opportunity have come to bring this dispute to an end.

***The New Realities of the Disputed Territories.*** It has now been a generation since Israel entered into these territories. Israel has now ruled the West Bank and East Jerusalem almost as long as did Jordan, and the Gaza District almost as long as did Egypt. And it is usually forgotten that the Jordanian occupation, like the Israeli one, was never recognized by other Arab states. Indeed, the only states that recognized Jordanian rule in these territories were Britain and Pakistan.<sup>3</sup>

It has also been almost a generation that US administrations have been fruitlessly objecting to the continuing, expanding, and maturing Israeli presence within the territories. This presence now comprises a dense network of many strands—economic integration, political administration, military security, and permanent Jewish settlements—and it is now highly institutionalized. Indeed, in the view of many sober and responsible analysts of this presence—including both those who support it and those who criticize it—it is now irreversible.<sup>4</sup>

Of these strands, the permanent Jewish settlements in the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) have been especially controversial from the perspective of the United States. But these settlements have also become especially important in establishing the irreversibility of the Israeli presence in the disputed territories. They now compose an ensemble of considerable variety and great extent:<sup>5</sup> (1) towns and settlements surrounding Jerusalem; (2) settlements on the western ridges of the Samarian mountains overlooking the coastal plain; (3) settlements in the Jordan River Valley; and (4) settlements in the heartlands of Judea and Samaria adjacent to Arab cities, such as Nablus, Ramallah, and Hebron.

Of these categories of settlements, the first three are overwhelmingly supported by all major groups and parties in Israel, including both the Likud and the Labor coalitions. The settlements surrounding Jerusalem and on the Samarian ridges are natural extensions, indeed suburbanizations, of the cities of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Many of these settlements are bedroom communities that are within a thirty-minute commute from their city. These settlements rest upon a solid base of economic and social realities. It is precisely their suburban quality, their very ordinariness, which will make them an enduring presence, whatever the ebbs and flows of Israeli party politics. Indeed, they will become a solid mass that will help guide that ebb and flow; in the multiparty Israeli political system, even a small group, if it represents a concentrated and consistent interest, can acquire substantial leverage, or at least a veto power, as an indispensable element of the governing coalition in the Knesset. The suburban voters on the West Bank are likely to become such an interest.<sup>6</sup>

The settlements in the Jordan River Valley grow out of the Allon Plan of Labor as well as the supporting policies of Likud. Lying between the Jordan River itself and the hills rising to the west, they result from the recognition that the most, indeed the only, viable eastern strategic frontier for Israel is the river and its hills. These frontier settlements form a line reaching from the Red Sea to the Sea of Galilee; two-thirds of this distance lies in the West Bank territory acquired in 1967. Without the settlements in the Jordan River Valley and on the western ridges of the Samarian mountains, central Israel around Tel Aviv is only nine to thirteen miles wide. With them, the width of central Israel quadruples to about forty-five miles. These settlements rest upon a solid base of obvious military necessity.

Indeed, in Israel the only controversial category of settlements is the fourth, those in the heartlands of Judea and Samaria adjacent to Arab cities. But even these settlements are now supported by such powerful and committed political constituencies that even a new Labor government is most unlikely to abandon them.

Given these new realities about the disputed territories, why have US policy makers persisted in their increasingly sterile and counterproductive opposition to the Israeli presence?



**The American Conception of the Disputed Territories.** At one level, the motives behind the US position have been to maintain good ties with the “moderate Arab states,” to appear “even-handed” in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This has especially been the case in regard to Saudi Arabia, with its obvious oil wealth; Jordan, with its presumed strategic potential (for example, a possible strike force for use in the Persian Gulf); and even Syria, which US State Department officials have perennially hoped to wean away from the Soviet Union.

This view of the importance of the Arab-Israeli conflict for US relations with the moderate Arabs might have been a plausible enough approach in the first few years after 1967. But today, it is now clear that the policies of different Arab states will vary over time for a host of reasons completely unrelated to the issue of the territories.<sup>7</sup> Does anyone really think that any Arab state gives high priority to the PLO, given the fate of the PLO in Arab politics in the past two years? Or that the Jordanian monarchy would be any less rickety and its policy any less vacillating if it had the responsibility to govern the West Bank or had a neighbor in an independent Palestinian state? Or that the Syrian regime would be any less a Soviet client if it had returned to it the Golan Heights?

There is another, more fundamental level of perception, however, which better explains the persistence of the US opposition. Here, the motive behind the US position on the territories has been the idea or premise that the Israeli presence in them is somehow unnatural, that the occupation of the territory of one people by the state of another is not feasible in the contemporary world, that “nationalism” is the relevant issue and the inevitable reality. This premise behind the US opposition to Israeli policy in the territories rests upon the misapplication of European and American conceptions of politics to Middle Eastern realities.

People in the West view the Middle East through the prisms of their own political experiences. For Europeans, this is especially the prism of the nation-state; for Americans, it is especially the prism of the pluralist democracy (although by now, most US policy makers have recognized that this idea is wildly irrelevant to the Middle East, and they have retreated to the European notion). But in the real Middle East, there are no nation-states (other than Turkey), and there are no pluralist democracies (other than Israel itself).

It is true that for about two generations—from about 1945 to about 1975—there was among some Arabs a hope, and among most Europeans and Americans an expectation, that there would soon be real nation-states in the Middle East, perhaps even one great, unified Arab nation-state. But this idea largely faded away in the 1970s, with the death of President Abdul Nasser of Egypt, with the failure of every attempt at unity between Arab states, and with the Islamic revolution in Iran.<sup>8</sup> And the fading of this idea allows us to see what was always the real political structure of the Middle

East, which had been operating there all the time beneath the fog of Arab nationalism.

***The Middle Eastern Reality of Millet Societies.*** The reality of the Middle East always has been a series of political and military centers, or cores, constructed by peoples who are more organized and more militant than their neighbors. Each center, or core, is surrounded by a series of other peoples or ethnic communities who are less organized, less militant, or perhaps merely less numerous than those in the core. Together, the core and the associated peoples form a society. The core people organize the state structure and the military security which in turn surrounds and provides the framework for the entire ensemble of disparate peoples. The associated peoples and their leaders, however, assume many of the other political and administrative tasks involving their own ethnic community.<sup>9</sup>

At its best, this is a system of shared authority and communal autonomy (e.g., Lebanon in its "Golden Age" from 1946 to about 1970). More commonly, it is a system of bureaucratic authoritarianism and precarious autonomy (e.g., Egypt under Sadat). And at its worst, it is a system of secret police and state terror (e.g., contemporary Syria and Iraq).

In Ottoman times, this Middle Eastern reality could be called by rather accurate terms; there was what was known as the "Ottoman ruling institution," which ordered a complex society of ethnic communities, known as "milletts." In modern times, however, Westerners have given this reality their own misleading terms; they try to see in the Middle East a series of actual and potential nation-states.

It would be impossible, however, to redraw the map of the Middle East or of any particular state within it so that all or even most ethnic communities have their own states, as in much of contemporary Europe. The ethnic communities of the Middle East are, and always have been, condemned to live several of them together in a wider society and under a "ruling institution," that is, in a state structure organized primarily by one of them.

It would also be impossible, of course, to redesign the societies of the Middle East so that this ensemble of communities could live together in a pluralist political system, as in the United States. This arrangement can work in a society in which religion and politics, church and state, have been largely separated since nearly the origin of the society. However, in the Middle East, nothing like this separation, this "secularization," exists.

There is today, however, one major political system whose ethnic components are organized very much in the way of the Ottoman Empire (and of the Byzantine Empire before it). That is the Soviet Union (like the Russian Empire before it). In the Soviet Union, the Russians (more precisely, the Great Russians as distinct from the Little Russians or Ukrainians and the White Russians or Byelorussians), who have always been more organized and

more militant than their neighbors, have organized the state structure and the military security which, in turn, has surrounded the ensemble of disparate peoples, ranging from Estonians to Kazakhs. In regard to this particular multiethnic system, of course, one would not say that the associated peoples and their leaders assume many of the other political and administrative tasks involving their own ethnic community. Rather, in the Soviet Union, we have something of a worst-case analysis, i.e., secret police and state terror.<sup>10</sup>

It is, however, this very way of organizing an ensemble of ethnic communities, a multinational empire, that makes the Soviet Union such a relevant and useful political model for certain authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. This is especially the case where the regime represents a militant but minority ethnic community, e.g., the Alawi-based regime of Hafez Assad in Syria (the Alawis represent a variation of Shiism) and the Sunni-based regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. In Syria, the Alawis comprise some 12 percent of the population; in Iraq, the Sunnis comprise some 45 percent. A minority regime tends to compensate for its smaller numbers of natural supporters with greater intensity of repression and terror. Such regimes are natural admirers and consumers of Soviet secret police organization, methods and advisors.<sup>11</sup>

***The Israeli Practice within the Disputed Territories.*** The Israeli policy toward the territories they acquired in 1967 is in accord with these enduring military and social realities of the Middle East of “ruling institutions” and “millet societies,” but it is so in a relatively benign form.

A glance at a map quickly and clearly shows that any viable framework for military security for the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River would have the military security border be at or near the river and on the Golan Heights. As the core people in that land, the Israelis organize the military security of the area, including the disputed territories. Each core people has always had its political and even spiritual center, the center of the center, so to speak. For the Israelis, of course, this is Jerusalem, an integral part of the system we have described.

The Israelis also provide a wider range of economic and social services than normally has been provided by other core peoples in the Middle East. Many other political, administrative, economic, and social functions in the territories are either shared with or assumed by other authorities, such as local councils of Arab communities and even the Jordanian government.<sup>12</sup>

Different Palestinians respond to this structure in different ways. Some Palestinians see their primary concerns as economic, and their political concerns as primarily local. For them, Middle Eastern practice, economic interests, and political focus converge in making communal and personal autonomy within the Israeli military security framework a viable and acceptable situation.

Other Palestinians weigh concrete economic interests less and value abstract political ideas more. For them, they could come to find their natural political arena to be within Jordan, for, in large measure, Jordan has become a Palestinian society within a Hashemite or Transjordanian state.<sup>13</sup> Amman, the capital of Jordan, is now the largest Palestinian city in the world. The time is not far off where there could be in Jordan a reversal of the cores, when the Palestinians themselves could organize the state structure within Jordan.

The overall system, then, is one composed of (1) an Israeli-organized realm composed of Jewish and Palestinian peoples and (2) a Jordanian-(or potentially a Palestinian-)organized realm of Jordanian and Palestinian peoples. This system, or course, is not a stable one in the sense that nation-states, such as France, or pluralist democracies, such as the United States, are stable (although even here there have been times, such as in 1968, when "stable" was not the first adjective that came to mind). The point, however, is that this is the most stable political system for these lands that the social realities can produce.

More particularly, no Israeli government can accept either a pure American or a pure European model for Israel. Pluralist democracy, American-style, would result in an Israeli state that was no longer distinctively Jewish. A nation-state, European-style, one composed only or overwhelmingly of Jews, would shrink to frontiers even less viable and defensible than those before 1967. For a Jewish state in the Middle East to be secure against its enemies in the Middle East, it must have a state-community structure, Middle Eastern style.

**Implications for US Policy.** These considerations about millet society in general, and the disputed territories in particular, suggest that the United States would be wise to develop a new policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict more in accord with these Middle Eastern realities. The United States could contribute to a more realistic environment in the Middle East by no longer opposing and disputing the Israeli presence in the territories. It would also be sensible, although now obviously controversial, for the United States to better align its diplomacy with this reality by recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and by moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

In addition, a new US foreign policy that recognized and accepted the realities of the territories, including the centrality of Jerusalem within them and within the wider Israeli realm, would itself liberate political and intellectual energies within the American foreign policy community. For too long, American policy makers and policy analysts have squandered their talents in attempting to reconstruct the always-unstable and now-vanished conditions that existed before 1967, or to construct a European or American fantasy-state among the Palestinians in the West Bank. However, if these

talents and energies can be harnessed to build on the rock of reality, rather than on the sand of fantasy, the United States, Israel and the more reasonable and constructive Palestinians together can work out a political order that will be as stable, humane, and authentic as the doleful history of the Middle East can permit.

### US Policy Toward the Iranian-Iraqi War: The Case for a Partition of Iraq

In the past year, US policy makers have expressed concern about the potential defeat of Iraq by Iran as the final outcome of the long Iranian-Iraqi War. President Reagan and other officials have said that the defeat of Iraq would be against the national interests of the United States. This, in turn, has given rise to speculation about various kinds of military action that the United States might be compelled to undertake, either to contain the Iranian expansion or at least to keep the Iranians from attacking oil tankers in the Persian Gulf.

It is possible, of course, that this issue may become a moot question. The stalemate in the war, which has already lasted four years, may persist, with the Iranian advantage in manpower being contained by the Iraqi advantage in material. There seems to have developed a pattern in the war, in which Iran normally launches a "great offensive," an "Operation Jerusalem," twice a year: once in February, at the time of the anniversary of the coming to power of Khomeini and the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran; and once in September or October, before the onset again of winter. The Iranians achieve some initial advances and take some territory, but the Iraqis then contain the Iranians with their firepower and with their progressive escalation into more ruthless tactics, initially the bombing of Iranian ships and towns and later the use of poison gas. The Iranian offensive grinds to a halt, and the stalemate resumes again for another six months or so.

If, however, the Iranians should at last be able to break this pattern, to break through the Iraqi defenses, and to bring about the defeat and overthrow of the regime of Saddam Hussein, would it really be necessary for the United States to respond in some hostile, and perhaps desperate, way? Here, it is once again useful to consider the millet society nature of Middle Eastern politics.

***Iran and Iraq as Multinational Empires.*** The conventional way to look at both Iran and Iraq is to see them as nation-states; in fact, each is a multiethnic society, indeed a multinational empire.

**Iran.** Of the total population of Iran of some 40 million, about two-thirds are Farsis, the core ethnic group. Substantial minorities, each concentrated in a peripheral region, are the Azerbaijanis (5 million), Kurds (4 million), Arabs (2 million), Turkomens (1 million), and Baluchis (1 million). On the other

hand, as seen from the perspective of the religious dimension, more than 90 percent of Iran's population is Shiite.

These figures suggest that the Islamic Republic may be able to spread its revolution to other Shiites in the Middle East. But they also suggest that, as the revolution spreads to additional non-Farsi ethnic groups, the government in Teheran could find itself stretched thin beyond its natural ethnic base, and that the Islamic Republic of Iran would have to be content with indirect rather than direct rule, with loyal allies rather than annexed provinces.

Further, the actual extent of the spread of the Shiite revolution may be relatively limited. Other than Iran itself, the countries in which a majority of the population is Shiite are actually only two: Iraq (55 percent) and Bahrain (70 percent). There are substantial minorities in several other countries: Kuwait (24 percent), United Arab Emirates (18 percent), Qatar (16 percent), and Lebanon (about 30 percent). In Saudi Arabia, the Shiites comprise nearly 50 percent of the 1 million population of the oil-rich Eastern Province, but only 8 percent of Saudi Arabia as a whole.<sup>14</sup>

These figures suggest that the Shiite revolution itself would be relatively easy to contain. The waves from its overflow from Iran would first break upon, but in the end would break apart, on the rocks of more numerous ethnic communities, which provide the core peoples and the state structures in most countries in which Shiites reside.

Bahrain, with its large Shiite majority, may not be a rock against revolutionary Shiism; but it is an island, one with a small population (360,000) and with no obvious capacity to be a dynamic center of spreading Shiism. The serious territorial threat, then, actually involves only one country, Iraq.

**Iraq.** Iranian defeat of Iraq in the Iranian-Iraqi War probably would result in a revolution among the Shiites in Iraq, located in the populous southern half of the country and including Baghdad as well as the Shiite holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. This region could well be converted into a satellite or, at least, a loyal ally of revolutionary Iran.

However, since Iraq has always been not a nation-state but a multinational empire, a revolution among the Shiites in Iraq would not be the same as a revolution in all of Iraq.

In particular, the Kurds in northern Iran, who are Sunni in religion and comprise some 18 percent of Iraq's total population, would resist this spread of revolutionary Shiism and Iranian control. As they have done many times in the past, they would see in the revolutionary turmoil in the south a "window of opportunity" through which to escape from the hated control of Baghdad.<sup>15</sup>

At the same time, Turkey would see in the Shiite revolution in Iraq its own window of opportunity to split off an oil-rich area of Iraq (including the oil fields of Mosul and Kirkuk) and to make it an ally or even a province of Turkey, as it was in Ottoman times. And, in fact, in the past year and with the

cooperation of the Saddam Hussein regime, the Turks have sent military units into the Kurdish areas of Iraq, to undertake patrols and to provide order while the Iraqi army itself is engaged in the south.<sup>16</sup> An Iranian invasion of the southern region of Iraq and a Shiite revolution could detonate a Turkish occupation of the northern region of the country and the separation of Kurdistan from the rest of Iraq. There could be a partition of Iraq into an Iranian sphere and a Turkish sphere.<sup>17</sup>

**Implications for US Policy.** This possible outcome of the Iranian-Iraqi War could easily serve, rather than subvert, US interests in the Middle East. Turkey, a traditional US ally and a natural barrier to Soviet expansion, would be strengthened with the addition of revenues from the oil fields of Mosul and Kirkuk. These oil revenues, along with providing other obvious benefits, could go a long way toward financing Turkey's heavy burden of foreign debt with Western banks and governments. Iran, a current US adversary, but also a natural barrier to Soviet expansion, would likewise be strengthened with the end of the military and financial hemorrhage of the war and, in the unlikely event that Iran would annex the areas it occupied, by addition of revenues from the oil field around Basra.

Further, the Shiite revolution would have largely reached its natural limits with the revolution among the Shiites in Iraq. Of course, in the flush of enthusiasm and triumph after the Iranian victory and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, Shiite groups scattered around the Middle East would doubtless undertake this or that violent and disruptive action, perhaps, for example, in the oil fields of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. But the natural strength of the majority communities in Middle Eastern countries would soon make its weight felt, and a new and relatively stable equilibrium would ensue.

Indeed, the new equilibrium would likely be more stable than the conditions of the recent past. The partition of Iraq, after all, would mean the partition of a state which for more than a generation, since 1958, has been one of the most destabilizing forces in the Middle East. In its internal politics, it has been one of the most repressive and brutal. And in its observance of the norms of international behavior—its exporting of assassinations, its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons, and its use of poison gas—it has been one of the most disruptive, indeed barbaric.<sup>19</sup>

Of course, any chain of events that would bring about benefits to Iran seems extraordinarily controversial, indeed repugnant to most Americans at the present time. This is the country whose revolutionary regime has inflicted the humiliation of the hostage crisis upon the United States, executed thousands of its own citizens, and sent tens of thousands of its own children to die in the marshland battlefields; whose President, Ali Khamenei, recently declared, "if the Americans are prepared to sink in the depths of the Persian

Gulf waters for nothing, then let them come”;<sup>20</sup> and whose supreme leader, Ayotollah Ruhollah Khomeini, doing his executive officer one better, also recently declared, “the Americans lack the courage to come to Iran and do something.”<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, the Iranian revolution, like most other revolutions before it, will one day enter into its Thermidor, its period when revolutionary enthusiasm is succeeded by bureaucratic stabilization. The Iranian revolution, too, will likely produce its Napoleon, now perhaps a young major demonstrating his prowess and his promise in those marshland battlefields at the confluence of the Tigres and the Euphrates, and he will one day enter into his Eighteenth Brumaire, that moment when a military leader seizes political power from revolutionary civilians (or mullahs). At that time, Americans will once more see clearly, as they did from 1945 to 1978, that the United States has a profound interest, indeed a natural ally, in an Iran whose territorial integrity is preserved by a strong central government, whose multiethnic ensemble is contained in a strong state structure centered in Teheran. And the first Americans who will have glimpsed this renewed reality will be those who today are taking a new look.

### Notes

1. On US misperceptions of Lebanon, see John Keegan, “Shedding Light in Lebanon,” *The Atlantic*, April 1984, pp. 43-60; also David Ignatius, “How to Rebuild Lebanon,” *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1983, pp. 1139-1156.

2. Steven L. Spiegel, “The U.S. and Israel: A Reassessment,” in Steven L. Spiegel, ed, *American Policy in the Middle East: Where Do We Go From Here?* (New York: Josephson Research Foundation, 1983), pp. 139-155.

3. Sasson Levi, “Local Government in the Administered Territories,” in Daniel J. Elazar, ed, *Judea, Samaria, and Gaza: Views on the Present and Future* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1982), pp. 105-106.

4. Meron Benvenisti, *The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984) (a summary is given in Benvenisti, “The Turning Point in Israel,” *The New York Review of Books*, 13 October 1983, pp. 11-16); Arthur Hertzberg, “Israel and the West Bank: The Implications of Permanent Control,” *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1983, pp. 1063-1077; Daniel J. Elazar, “Present Realities in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District,” in Spiegel, ed, pp. 111-122. For a comprehensive background, see the essays in Elazar, ed.

5. The following section is drawn from Elazar, “Present Realities in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District,” pp. 114-117.

6. Benvenisti, *West Bank Data Project*, pp. 57-60; Walter Reich, “A Stranger in My House: Jews and Arabs in the West Bank,” *The Atlantic*, June 1984, pp. 57-60.

7. Haim Shaked, “The U.S. and the ‘Moderate Arab States’,” in Spiegel, ed, pp. 77-83.

8. Daniel Pipes, “How Important is the PLO?” *Commentary*, April 1983, pp. 17-25; Bernard Lewis, “The Return of Islam,” in Michael Curtis, ed, *Religion and Policies in the Middle East* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1981), pp. 9-29. The fading of Arab nationalism is also discussed in several other essays in the Curtis compendium.

9. The pattern of Middle Eastern politics and society is discussed in Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), especially chapters 1-2; Daniel Pipes, *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), especially chapters 1, 7-9; James A. Bill and Carl Leiden, *Politics in the Middle East* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979). Gellner reviews Pipes’ book in his “Mohammed and Modernity,” *The New Republic*, 5 December 1983, pp. 22-26.

10. Daniel Pipes, “The Third World Peoples of Soviet Central Asia,” in W. Scott Thompson, ed, *The Third World: Premises of US Policy*, revised edition (San Francisco: ICS Press, 1983), pp. 155-174.



11. Karen Dawisha, "The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1982/3, pp. 438-452.
  12. Elazar, "Present Realities in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District," pp. 118-119; Levi, "Local Government in the Administered Territories," pp. 103-122.
  13. Mordechai Nisan, "The Palestinian Features of Jordan," in Elazar, ed, pp. 191-209.
  14. James A. Bill, "Islam, Politics, and Shiism in the Gulf," *Middle East Insight*, January/February 1984, pp. 3-12.
  15. Yosef Godlieb, "Sectarianism and the Iraqi State," in Curtis, ed, pp. 153-161.
  16. Robert D. Kaplan, "Bloodbath in Iraq," *The New Republic*, 9 April 1984, p. 22; Mark A. Heller, "Turmoil in the Gulf," *The New Republic*, 23 April 1984, p. 19.
  17. On Turkey's policies in the Middle East, see Ali I. Karaosmanoglu, "Turkey's Security and the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1983, pp. 157-175. The attraction of the Kurds in Turkey to the Turkish state, as well as the nature of millet society more generally, is discussed in Jeffrey A. Ross, "Politics, Religion, and Ethnic Identity in Turkey," in Curtis, ed, pp. 323-347.
  18. In past Arab-Israeli wars, Iraq has sent between a third and a half of its army as an expeditionary force to take part in battles against Israel. As a result of the Iranian-Iraqi War, the Iraqi army has doubled in size, from 10 to 20 divisions, and has obviously gained in combat experience. An undefeated postwar Iraq could become a serious threat to Israel's security. This problem is discussed in "The Implications of the Iran-Iraq War for Israel's Security," *For Your Information*, 7 May 1984 (Philadelphia: Consulate General of Israel).
  19. An informed, logical, and vigorous critique of US support of Iraq has been made by my colleague at the US Naval War College, Steven T. Ross, in his letter to the editor, "The Case for a Washington Tilt Toward Teheran," *The New York Times*, 25 May 1984, p. A22.
  20. *The New York Times*, 30 May 1984, p. A1.
  21. *The Washington Post*, 31 May 1984, p. A1.
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## Commentary by Professor John Spanier

Professor Kurth's paper is both interesting and provocative. But policy makers ought to think hard and long before they accept his solution with equanimity: the demise of Iraq, its division between Turkey and Iran which, we are told, would strengthen the two strongest anti-Soviet states in the area.

I find it a bit ironic that the solution of Iraq's division seems in part to be proposed because Iraq is a rather nasty state because externally it has, among other things, been a leader of the rejectionist front against Camp David and, more recently, used poison gas in its war against Iran; and internally, because it has been a very repressive authoritarian state. If one wishes to focus on morality, is there a significant moral difference between Iraq, far inferior in manpower, using gas, and Iran which uses human wave tactics, including whole classes of 9-12 year old children? If one focusses on policy, Saudi Arabia also rejects, at least in public, the Egyptian-Israeli peace. Despite that, she is considered a friend of the United States and a recipient of US arms. In any event, since when has the nastiness of a particular regime been the critical criterion preventing US alignment with the regime if it is believed to be in America's national interest? Did not the President in 1984 return from Communist China, hardly a model of liberalism and democracy, but a nation with whom the United States has certain common or parallel strategic interests? Churchill's advice the day of the German attack on the Soviet

Union in 1941 seems sounder advice: He would make a pact with the devil to beat Hitler, said Churchill, but he would “sup with a long spoon” during the time they were allied.

And it is in terms of these strategic interests that Professor Kurth’s advice must be questioned. The hope—since this cannot be a certainty—that Iranian Shiite fundamentalism would wash up on the hard rocks of ethnic nationalisms in surrounding societies seems a weak reed upon which to base a US policy of standing by while Iraq is defeated and divided. First, there is the question whether Iran, a multiethnic nation itself, will survive as a national entity. We particularly cannot know whether in the aftermath of Khomeini’s death or the possible weakening or collapse of the regime, some of these nationalities might not seek greater autonomy or self-government and independence. And none of this addresses the issue of possible Soviet intervention in northern Iran (as right after World War II). And the expectation that Khomeini’s Iran will become a bulwark against the Soviet Union seems rather a fragile one.

Second, and of more immediate concern, how secure can the Persian Gulf oil states feel as Iranian power expands into Iraq? Will they feel any less threatened by the assurance that this expansion will run into a “natural barrier” and that this expansion will recede; or that Khomeini’s theological and fanatical regime will suffer an “inevitable” thermidor? In terms of US and Western European interests in the area—be it the advance of the Arab-Israeli peace process or access to oil—Iranian expansion under the present regime has to be considered a disaster. It would also strengthen other anti-Western countries, such as Syria which supports Iran against Iraq and has already humiliated the United States in Lebanon, in their determination to oust Western influence through the area. In short, Iran’s defeat of Iraq would jeopardize all Western interests. In turn, this might at some point necessitate US military intervention.

Thus the logic of the situation has for some time suggested that a more appropriate course would be to swing US support to Iraq if it looks as if it may be defeated. Iraq, inferior in manpower and economically hurting because Syria has shut off one of the main oil pipelines, has become increasingly desperate as its original Blitzkrieg mired down in a war of attrition. Iran has refused to negotiate a settlement unless Iraq’s President resigns, obviously an unacceptable condition. Thus even if the United States should not encourage an Iraqi attack on Kharg Island, it should not oppose it either. For Iran, with its superior manpower resources and increased oil production to pay for the war, can be hurt mainly by cutting off its oil exports. Given the width of the Hormuth Straits at their narrowest point, the United States and allied navies should not have a serious problem preventing Iranian blocking actions, whether by air attacks or the sinking of ships. Oil tankers in the Gulf can be escorted and protected. Even if insurance rates on these tankers rise sharply, it

is the oil producers who would—or should—have to absorb these increases. Oil is available from other sources, both OPEC and non-OPEC,

Something like this scenario has in fact happened. Iraq has stepped up its air attacks on tankers in a 50 mile “exclusion zone” around Kharg Island and continues to threaten the latter with destruction. Iran, in turn, has been increasing its air attacks on ships getting their oil from other Gulf states, who—especially Saudi Arabia—have helped finance Iraq’s war. In this escalating cycle, the United States has vowed again to keep the Straits open but placed two preconditions on US military intervention: one, British and French participation since Western Europe, unlike the United States, remains heavily dependent on Gulf oil; and two, that the Gulf states “stand up and be counted” by furnishing US forces with necessary bases. Washington has sent 400 Stinger missiles to the Saudis who are well equipped with a larger number of more sophisticated F-15s than Iran; and American AWAC and air refueling helped the Saudi F-15s shoot down a couple of Iranian fighters penetrating Saudi air space. Thus the United States is already deeply involved.

The soundness of this increasing US swing to Iraq is, of course, debatable. It is a far from risk-free course and it raises all sorts of issues about which the answers are unclear: whether the United States has the resolve if this conflict becomes a protracted one and American lives are lost; whether the Europeans have the will to defend their vital interests or leave it to the United States; and whether the Gulf states and particularly Saudi Arabia, the recipient of so much American military equipment, will protect themselves if Iran escalates its attacks on tankers to their ports or on their oil fields. But the present course (June 1984) seems a more appropriate policy than watching Iraq be defeated and the hope that somehow the “natural forces” in the area would straighten things out and indeed strengthen anti-Soviet forces, thus enhancing Western interests. All this if only we do nothing!



## A Case Study of Military-Diplomatic Command: 1940-1941 Graeco-German War

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Robin Higham

**T**he Commander in Chief of the British forces in the Eastern Mediterranean—up until shortly after the loss of Greece and Crete in the late spring of 1941—was the imperturbable, one-eyed General Sir Archibald Wavell, a man of many talents including being a poetry editor. Talent was an essential for the job, as Wavell was not only called upon to run campaigns in such widely scattered places as East Africa, the Western Desert, and Greece, but he was also the satrap of all the Middle East under British control. Besides, he had to conduct a separate campaign against the irrepressible Prime Minister, Winston Churchill—always ready to urge him to some madcap scheme such as the seizure of Pantelleria or Sicily or the Dodecanese, for which he had not the forces.

The Italian attack on Greece on 28 October 1940 opened a whole new Pandora's box for Wavell, then preparing an underdog's offensive against the Italian Army which had invaded Egypt. London ordered that air support be given immediately to the only ally fighting the Axis on the mainland of Europe and insisted on honoring the 1939 Guarantee Treaty, which should have been declared null and void by the fall of France, the other signatory. After all, it had scarcely been envisaged that England would have to honor the treaty with the Mediterranean closed and the French knocked out of the war. Added to the diplomatic pressures were those of the royal connections—the Duke of Kent, King George VI's brother, was married to Princess Marina of Greece—and the even older classical and Byronic attachments which permeated the education of British officers and gentlemen.

The result was that in very short order half of Wavell's very meager air force in the Middle East was on its way to Greece. But only support troops were sent with it because at first no others could be spared. Actually, apart from a horrendous language barrier, another reason for not going so soon became obvious—the British had neither weapons nor knowledge to pass on to an

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army which was engaged in mountain warfare and to have attempted to do so would have been to have insulted a courageous small force which was halting and then repelling the Italians. What the Greeks really needed were the sorts of things the British were least in a position to supply—French and Polish metric-sized weapons and ammunition, motor vehicles, and British coal for the railways.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, economically, financially, and militarily, Greece was—in the period before World War II—very much oriented towards the Continent. And its war with Italy, which had seized Albania in 1939, took on the trappings of a limited war within an unlimited war.

The tugs between emotion and reality were very much evident in watching the Greek High Command through British and American eyes during the period of 28 October 1940 to 26 April 1941.<sup>2</sup> Up until his death at the end of January 1941 the President of the Council in Athens, General Ioannis Metaxas, managed to keep control over the situation. Besides having an appreciation of Greece's weaknesses, his training in Berlin provided him with insights into German military power and its familiarity with the Balkans. His implacable hatred for the Italians made him determined to beat them, but he fully recognized that if the Germans came in, Greece had to surrender. Moreover, by the time of his death it was becoming obvious that the British could not provide the aid the Greeks needed and that this failure, when combined with winter weather and the weakness of the Greek economy, would see the Greeks run out of fighting strength in the spring. After all, Metaxas was first of all a Greek. He kept his lines of communication to both Cairo and Berlin open. This was a necessity, for until the Germans actually attacked on 6 April 1941 the German embassy in Athens was that of a neutral. For Metaxas, for his king, Giorgios II, and for his Chief of Staff, General Alexandre Papagos, the war against the Italians was to the death. For the British, on the other hand, it was only a limited sideshow—at the most to keep a toehold on the mainland of Europe.

Wavell was sensitive to the delicacy of the position. He consulted London as to whether or not it would be proper for him to visit Athens and was advised against it until January. Instead, a Military Mission was sent under the Greek speaking Rear Admiral Charles Turle. But the Mission was separate from the British Air Forces Greece under Air Vice Marshal J. H. D'Albiac, an airman who refused except under duress to use his aircraft for tactical support of the Greek Army. Turle, D'Albiac, and Major General T. G. G. Heywood formed an uneasy quadrumvirate with the British Minister in Athens, Sir Michael Palairret, whose constant emotional appeals upset even the Foreign Office staff in London. Yet in general, the Military Mission kept Cairo well informed of the war on the Albanian and  
Albanian fronts.

When ordered by Churchill, Wavell and Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, the AOCinC Middle East, went to Athens in mid-January 1941 to offer military aid to the Greeks. Longmore did not have to say much, for the Greeks were already aware both of his limited resources and of their own shortcomings in all-weather airfields. Wavell briefed Metaxas on his limited resources, which were not much at all, and certainly not enough to make the canny Greek leader wish to accept them and bring the Germans in against Greece. He and Wavell saw eye to eye. At the same time, they and Longmore were in the process of fending off a scheme emanating in London which would have converted the limited RAF effort—in support of the Albanian front and in defense of Athens—into an offensive against the German-controlled Rumanian oilfields at Ploesti.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, shortly after the Graeco-Italian War broke out, the British had taken over the defense of Crete to allow the Greek battalions to be transferred to the mainland. Although Crete was a pivotal bastion for the right wing of the British position in the Eastern Mediterranean, somehow, its place was never fixed in British grand strategy. During the six months it was garrisoned by British and Commonwealth troops, it had six commanding officers and little progress was made in putting its defenses in order—in building airfields or in making Suda Bay a secure naval refueling base. Yet Crete lay at the crossroads of the routes from Egypt to Greece and from Italy to the Dodecanese. Along either of these axes or at the ends of any of them fighting might break out. What delayed it was the weather in the Balkans and the successful British offensive begun in the Western Desert on 9 December 1940. But, the Germans were not ignoring the area. They had already conducted extensive photo reconnaissance of the Athens area on 13 July 1940 and followed it with another equally high-flying survey on 19 January 1941, just after Wavell departed from his meeting with Metaxas.<sup>4</sup>

At that time the Greeks were preparing a major offensive which they hoped would tumble the Italians back into Albania and stabilize the front there. London was resigned to allowing Wavell to continue his offensive in the desert and leaving the Balkans quiescent until the spring. There was talk of taking the Dodecanese,<sup>5</sup> but Turkey had refused to move, and so it looked like most of the action would take place on Downing Street for some time to come as Britain had no power to strike anywhere else. Then on 29 January the President of the Council, Metaxas, died and a most interesting period began. It can be described as a Greek tragedy in which a Graeco-German War, already foreordained, became inevitable.

From at least the First World War, the British and the French had attempted to create a Balkan *entente* or *bloc*. The Greeks had also tried unsuccessfully to cement such a group together, but always found the Yugoslavs unwilling to make a commitment. Both they and the Bulgars

coveted Salonika as their natural outlet to the Aegean-Mediterranean basin. Conversely, the Greeks appeared to have the best rapport with their erstwhile enemies the Turks. In 1939 the British and the French extended guarantees to both Greece and Turkey, but the United Kingdom's problem after the fall of France in June 1940 was how to implement them. Both the Greeks and the Turks needed military aid, of which in the face of invasion, Britain had none to spare. Nevertheless, Churchill made offers of ten RAF squadrons and other material, ordering Wavell to supply them from his stocks. These stocks were similar to the four-division reserve which the CinC had been ordered to create in the Nile Delta in January 1941—an idea on paper which London then assumed existed and could be deployed to support policy. Wavell, in fact, often found himself in the position of Sir Herbert Richmond's eighteenth-century admirals, ordered to use military forces as an instrument of policy; only unlike his naval predecessors, he did not enjoy the material support they usually did.

In the meantime, on 13 December 1940 Hitler decided on Operation Marita to tidy up his Balkan flank before the offensive against Russia. London knew about it and a scheme was proposed to Middle East Command, without betraying the ULTRA source, that bombers based in Greece should attack the Ploesti oilfields. It was eventually abandoned as impracticable given the equipment available. Up to 29 January 1941 all these efforts had come to nought because Metaxas had doughtily and sensibly refused to endanger Greece by challenging the Germans. He had recognized that if the Germans attacked, Greece would have to surrender.

Early in February events started on a tragic path. The new civilian President of the Council, Alexandre Koryzsis, was unaware of Metaxas' rejection of British aid on 18 January 1941, but, when he had read of it, asked for a reexamination of its contents and assumptions. The British Minister, Palairet, and London, promptly assumed that this was a request for help, especially since London wished to get further involved. Churchill at once decided to send his heir, Anthony Eden, now the Foreign Secretary and formerly Secretary of State for War, and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir John Dill, to the Middle East with *carte blanche* to act as they thought best—never dreaming that they would in fact go ahead and sign an alliance without referring it back to London for approval. In the meantime, Wavell, that master of deception long familiar with the leakiness of Cairo security, had been hearing from many intelligence sources that the Germans were massing to attack Greece and could be expected in Athens before the end of March. Faced with pressure from London for action to save the noble Greeks and from the Western Desert to go on to Tripoli, a gamble that would clear North Africa and allow a linkup with the French in Tunisia, Wavell appears to have devised his own deception recognizing, in his own phrase, that “war is an option of difficulties.”

Thus when on 19 February Eden and Dill arrived finally in Cairo after a much delayed journey, Wavell already had plans in motion for the Greek expeditionary force to start sailing at the beginning of March. Its dispatch was to be on a leisurely schedule owing to a shortage of shipping; so, it would be between three and six months before even half of the paper 126,000-man force with 20 to 23 RAF squadrons would be in Greece, even if the Germans did not block the Suez Canal, which they had already started to do by aerial mining in January. Metaxas might well have smiled from his grave and repeated what he had said at their January meeting—it was the action of a commander in chief. Wavell was, in other words, obeying his political orders with minimum damage to his own military position.

Eden arrived in Cairo full of enthusiasm to create a Balkan bloc, determined to bring in his fellow Etonian Prince Paul of Yugoslavia; while at the same time, ignoring the political and strategic realities which the ruler in Belgrade faced. Eden was convinced that all the Greeks needed was a little stiffening to be able to resist a German attack from Bulgaria, if only the Turks, too, would join in.<sup>6</sup> On the 22nd Eden, Dill, Wavell and company left for Athens. They stopped in the desert to tell Jumbo Wilson that if the Greeks agreed, he had been selected for command of the combined forces in Hellas, and flew on to the secret meeting at the Tatoi Palace, a Gothic country house outside Athens. There, after prolonged discussions well into the night, the small Greek team—heavily dependent upon its Chief of Staff, General Papagos's, expertise—finally agreed that depending upon the reply from the Yugoslavs, the Greeks would withdraw their forces from the Metaxas line, a fortified zone in Macedonia, and join the British on the Aliakmon line, a grease-pencilled mark on a map. But whether or not the Greeks would move, clearly depended upon whether or not the Yugoslavs joined the bloc and protected the Monastir Gap, thus giving the new alliance a fighting chance even though it had less than half the strength Metaxas had reckoned satisfactory. Eden then left for Ankara.

There the Foreign Secretary was unsuccessful with the Turks. More importantly, it was in the Turkish capital that the Yugoslav ambassador reported that his government would not join the proposed bloc. Eden flew into a tantrum and neglected to report the news to Athens. Thus Papagos took no action to move his troops from Macedonia to the Aliakmon line, for which the British blamed him. The Greek Chief of Staff was down to his last reserves, his offensive in Albania was petering out, his forces were almost out of ammunition and supplies, and the Greek economy was exhausted. He did not wish his weak troops to be caught in the flank as they moved across the Macedonia plains nor did he wish to leave the Greek population there undefended. Nevertheless, he was then cajoled and browbeaten by Sir John Dill into creating paper divisions to man the Aliakmon and help prepare positions for the British Commonwealth forces about to arrive. And so it was agreed. The Greeks would resist the inevitable German attack launched from the lands of their old enemy Bulgaria.



Nevertheless, there was an attempt to play the fiction out that Greece and Germany were still not at war. Though British troops were inspected by the German military attaché as they marched past the German Legation on their way to the station in Athens, General Wilson was kept in mufti in the British Legation and not allowed to go to his headquarters in the Hotel Acropole until shortly before the Germans attacked on 6 April.

In the meantime Wavell's timetable was attenuated by the further mining of the Suez Canal and his deception was endangered by late snows which blocked the Bulgarian passes for a month longer than usual. Yet in spite of these setbacks, London was so upset at Eden's arrangements that it never insisted until too late on seeing a comparative schedule of estimated German and Anglo-Greek arrivals on the Aliakmon line. Having failed with the exception of setting up the Anglo-Greek alliance, Eden and Dill finally started home in late March, only to be sent back to Athens from Malta when the Yugoslav coup occurred. Prince Paul was expelled, but the new military government soon had to face the same realities and their actions in the end only accelerated the German attack as they made Hitler more determined than ever to clean up the Balkans and rid himself of the mess Mussolini had made on his flank before the Nazis attacked the USSR. In spite of meetings between Dill and Papagos and the Yugoslav staff, no plans were made, and the Germans quickly divided and conquered. Eden and Dill went home. Wavell lost Greece, Crete, and all that he had gained in Cyrenaica. The Navy saved the troops, but all the equipment was left behind.

The British performance was restricted by the conditions prevailing in the Middle East theater at the time, and by the fact that Wavell realistically regarded aid to Greece as participation in a limited war.

The reasons for the sorry performance of the British in their attempts to aid Greece in 1940-1941 were related to their lack of knowledge of the area—political, diplomatic, military, geographic, economic, social, and psychological—their failure to develop a grand strategy for the war and failure to provide for adequate logistics.

The British had mixed views of the Greeks as descendants of the noble classical people, while at the same time viewing them as Balkan peasants. Politically and diplomatically, London took the view that it knew what was best for the Greeks regardless of the actual circumstances. Yet London was ignorant of Balkan political realities and geography. Militarily the Greeks needed weapons and equipment which the British could not supply. That is unless they captured large quantities of comparable Italian material, and even then they could not transport it because of a shortage of ships and a peacetime accounting mentality. The Greek Army and Air Force were at least as professional as the British of the day, but many British officers did not think so. The Greek economy was very weak and essentially oriented to

the Danubian axis except for coal, which came from Britain. But the coal ships were stuck on the south side of the Suez Canal. Metaxas was correct when he asked for material, not men, and a few airplanes in exchange for Crete.

The British failed to grasp the importance of Crete as a bastion and a base from which the eastern Mediterranean could be secured and as part of the pincer with which to snip off the Dodecanese. The Italian attack on Greece provided the opportunity of securing it, but lack of a grand strategy and adequate means lost the island six months later.

Lastly, Wavell, though much overworked and short of staff, as army and theater commander, grasped that to satisfy Churchill and the spies in Cairo, he had to send a token force to Greece. He gambled that Metaxas would live and hold the Greek front from absorbing too much, that the Bulgarian snows would melt, and that the Germans would reach Athens before but a few of his precious reserves had debarked in Hellas. As the best senior British commander of the day, he knew the limitations of his forces. He also knew that the Greeks could not survive—the Military Mission had told him that. And if they could not beat the Italians in a *limited* war, they had no hope against the Germans in an *unlimited* one. Thus from his point of view, he had to keep the Greek involvement limited so he could win the total war.<sup>7</sup> And that was really as humane a view for the Greeks as Metaxas had had.

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### Notes

This study is based upon my *Diary of a Disaster*, to be published by the University Press of Kentucky, 1985. It made use of extensive published sources and of the documentation available from British sources, the Greek White Papers including that published in 1980 on the coming of the Gracco-German War, and upon the *U.S. Foreign Relations* series and supplementary papers from the National Archives. In addition to the British Cabinet minutes and the series *Cabinet Telegrams: Middle East* and the official histories by Playfair *et al*, *The Mediterranean and The Middle East*, Roskill's *The War at Sea*, and the medical series, extensive use was made of the Foreign Office papers and of the reports from the British Military Mission in Athens and of the documents of various Army and RAF units in the Public Record Office. Some of the most helpful of the official histories are those of the Australians and of the New Zealanders who were much involved at the operational, but not at the diplomatic level.

1. The Ptolemais coalfields just north of Kozani were not discovered until after World War II. Until that time the very inadequate Greek railway system depended upon British coal. Once Italy entered the war, colliers had to quadruple the length of their route by sailing all the way around Africa.

2. Since the members of the Military Mission spoke Greek, they enjoyed unusually close rapport with the Greek High Command including the King and thus tended to short-circuit Sir Michael Palairat, the Minister. The English-speaking community was a tight one and now in addition to the *Foreign Relations* series, this is revealed in John Iatrides' edition of *Ambassador MacVeagh Reports* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

3. "The Ploesti Ploy—British considerations and the idea of bombing the Roumanian oilfields, 1940-1941." To appear in a Rumanian publication in 1984.

4. Thanks to Colonel Roy M. Stanley II, USAF, these negatives are now in the National Archives Cartographic Section together with the German interpretation of the prints.

5. Interestingly in spite of several abortive British attempts, the Axis retained control of the Dodecanese Islands until the surrender in May 1945.

6. Official diaries were kept of both Eden's and Dill's journeys, but they do not always agree. The more reliable is Brigadier Mallaby's which was kept meticulously as they went along, while Pierson Dixon made Eden's up every few days, and on the occasion of the return to Athens, for instance, it is quite demonstrably wrong as to times and places.

7. For a new analysis of Wavell's role, see my article "British Intervention in Greece 1940-1941: the anatomy of a grand deception," *Balkan Studies*, 23.1, 1982, pp. 101-126.

## Can a Battle be Lost in the Mind of the Commander?

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Colonel Theodore L. Gatchel, US Marine Corps

One of the current fashions among military writers is to disparage the “can do” spirit of certain military organizations. Such a spirit can undoubtedly cause problems if carried to the extreme of “We can do anything with whatever resources we are given, no matter how inadequate they may be.” Even that exaggerated point of view is less dangerous, however, than the increasingly popular one that seems to say, “We would be overwhelmed by the Soviets in any war against them regardless of what percent of our national treasure we devote to defense.” The danger of such a negative view lies in the fact that the outcome of a battle depends on the perceptions of the opposing commanders as well as the actual conditions on the battlefield.

The day when a commander could literally see the entire battle unfold before him and base his decisions on first-hand information has been replaced by a time when commanders at all levels, save the lowest, must base their decisions on second-hand, frequently inaccurate, information that may be outdated by the time it reaches the man who needs it. These shortcomings, combined with the speed with which forces can be moved today, have considerably thickened Clausewitz’s well-known “fog of war.” After visiting the Bulgarian Army in Thrace during the Balkan War of 1912, a British staff officer wrote with no small amount of prescience: “In fact, in large-scale modern battles there must often be a period when the confusion is so great that none of the actors really know which side is winning or which side has lost—nobody knows the *total* score along a line 25, 50 or 100 miles long. If that is so, then there must often be a period when the result hangs in the balance, when those who can be made to *think* that they are winning will win; and those that think that they are losing will be lost—whatever be the real state of affairs as a whole.”<sup>1</sup>

A small scale but instructive example of a battle being won or lost in the minds of the opposing commanders is the struggle for the control of Hill 107, that occurred during the German invasion of Crete in 1940. By May of that year the Germans had successfully completed their hastily conceived and executed conquest of Greece. Greek and British Commonwealth forces that

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Colonel Gatchel is on the faculty of the Naval War College.

had escaped the German net had been evacuated to Crete where they waited for the situation to develop. Although suffering from the psychological impact of their recent defeat, the Allied forces were adequate in both size and combat readiness to place the outcome of any German assault on the island in doubt.

General Kurt Student, Commander of the *Luftwaffe's* XI Air Corps and the German officer responsible for the invasion of Crete, fully understood the risks he was taking. Student's plan called for the rapid seizure of at least one of Crete's three airfields (Maleme, Retimo, Heraklion) by elements of the 7th Parachute Division. Once an airfield had been secured, the bulk of the invading force would be flown in by transport aircraft. The German plan was a bold one, particularly in light of the fact that the preparations in Greece for such an operation precluded secrecy. The Allied commanders also appreciated the importance of the airfields but, at the same time, mistakenly believed that the Germans might try to crash-land transports on open areas throughout the island. In general, however, the Allied forces were well deployed to meet the German assault.

When the assault came at 0715 on 20 May 1941, the Germans found themselves literally jumping into a maelstrom. The division commander was killed on the way to Crete when his glider came apart in mid-air. The commander of the 1st Assault Regiment, which landed at Maleme, was severely wounded within minutes of landing. Many of his men met the same fate. Within an hour, all of the officers of the 3d Parachute Battalion were either dead or seriously wounded. In the ensuing battle, 400 of that unit's 600 men, including the battalion commander, were killed in action. As other airborne assaults have done since, the battle for Maleme airfield rapidly deteriorated into savage fighting between small groups of men who were frequently isolated from their parent commands.

Because of Allied success in containing the German air drops at Retimo and Heraklion, the focus of the battle for Crete soon shifted to Maleme. Control of this vital airfield, in turn, required possession of Hill 107, a rise of ground that dominated the airfield itself. Hill 107, along with the airfield, was defended by the 22d Battalion of the 5th New Zealand Brigade. The battalion commander, Lt. Col. L.W. Andrew, had deployed his battalion around the airfield in a series of company positions. Lt. Col. Andrew located himself with the company that was dug in on Hill 107. In addition to his own 644 men, Andrew could call on reinforcements from two of the 5th Brigade's other battalions that were located immediately east of Maleme airfield. Because of the extreme importance of Hill 107, Lt. Col. Andrew had been ordered to hold it "at all costs."<sup>2</sup>

From the very start, Hill 107 proved to be a tough nut for the Germans to crack. The glider assault group initially ordered to take the hill met with disaster. Smashed gliders and withering fire from the New Zealanders on the

hill reduced the attacking force to a small group of survivors pinned to the lower slopes, unable to move forward. The remnants of the ill-fated 3d Parachute Battalion fared no better on the other side of Hill 107. After a relatively successful drop west of Maleme, yet another battalion, the 4th, had fought its way east to the base of Hill 107 but had suffered heavily in the process. That night the battalion commander, Capt. Walter Gericke, received an order to seize the hill "at all cost."<sup>3</sup> By that time Captain Gericke was facing a host of problems. He had no contact with, or reliable information about, the other German forces scattered around the base of Hill 107. The men who remained under his command were exhausted from a day of fighting in intense heat with little water and uniforms that were much too heavy. To add to his troubles, he was running out of ammunition and had little information about the enemy he faced. That enemy, it turns out, was in much better shape than might have been expected. The companies of the 22d Battalion were generally intact, still in good defensive positions and more than willing to fight. Unfortunately, Lt. Col. Andrew did not realize his good fortune. Lacking radios, Andrew relied on telephones and runners for contact with his companies. Once the battle started, phone lines were soon cut, and German fighter aircraft prevented the New Zealanders from moving around the battlefield by day. Even visual contact was reduced by thick clouds of dust. By nightfall Andrew had lost contact with his subordinates. This isolation, combined with the other uncertainties that existed in Andrew's mind, apparently produced in him a state of mental paralysis. One factor contributing to his discomfiture was the perception shared by many Allied commanders about the capability of the German airborne arm. One part of this image was fully justified by the performance of the parachutists and glider troops in Norway, the Low Countries and in Greece itself. The second part, on the other hand, was based on rumors, fears, exaggerated news reports and Nazi propaganda. In hindsight, the capabilities attributed to the airborne forces by these latter sources appear almost comical.\* At the time, however, it made the German *fallschirmjaeger* appear to be a sinister, omnipotent enemy, a picture remarkably similar to the view many US naval officers seem to have formed about the Soviet Backfire bomber. In any case, Andrew convinced himself that his lack of contact with his companies meant that his command had been destroyed. Accordingly, while Captain Gericke mustered his forces at the base of the hill for yet another attack, Lt. Col. Andrew began a withdrawal from the crest. The reaction of the first Germans to reach the empty trenches on top of the hill was that of utter disbelief. Even after having gained a clearer picture of the state of his battalion, Andrew remained pessimistic enough to reject the idea of an immediate counter-attack. The situation could still have been reversed. In the words of one

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\*Large numbers of parachutists landing disguised as nuns and priests were reported during the invasion of Holland, for example.

of the German officers that had reached the top of Hill 107 that night, "Fortunately for us the New Zealanders did not counterattack. We were so short of ammunition that, had they done so, we should have had to fight them off with stones and sheath-knives."<sup>4</sup> Daylight brought with it the return of the *Luftwaffe*, both fighters for support and transports filled with infantry reinforcements. The tide of battle was shifting. Although Andrew was absolved of any blame, most observers agree that his withdrawal from Hill 107 was the turning point in the battle for Crete.

Why did Lt. Col. Andrew abandon such a strong position under the circumstances he faced? Why, on the other hand, did Captain Gericke persevere in the face of such overwhelming odds? The answer cannot be found in terms of personal bravery, at least not in the commonly accepted sense of the term. In that respect, both men were remarkably similar. Lt. Col. Andrew had received the Victoria Cross in WWI for heroism under fire. Captain Gericke received the German equivalent of the V.C., the Knight's Cross, for his actions on Crete. If there is an answer, it lies in understanding how the two commanders dealt with the many uncertainties that faced them on that critical night in Crete. Captain Gericke perceived that he could win. Lt. Col. Andrew perceived that he had already lost. In effect, the issue was decided in the minds of the two commanders and not on the battlefield.

Regardless of what might have caused the differing perceptions of these two opponents, the results of those perceptions suggest at least two actions for us today. First, we must somehow develop in our own commanders' minds the perception that we can fight the Soviets and win. In other words, our commanders must learn to think more like Captain Gericke than Lieutenant Colonel Andrew. Second, we must induce the opposite perception into the thinking of our potential enemies. Such a view would not only contribute to deterrence but, if called upon, would pay dividends on today's battlefield as great as those that were afforded the Germans on Hill 107 in 1941.

## Notes

1. Howell, *The Campaign in Thrace, 1912* (London: Hugh Rees, 1913), pp. 137-138.
2. I. McD. G. Stewart, *The Struggle for Crete 20 May-1 June 1941* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 236.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
4. Cajus Bekker, *The Luftwaffe War Diaries* (London: Macdonald, 1966), p. 194.



### Taking Sides, Again

Sir,

I am writing in regard to the review of *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, published in the July-August 1984 issue. Your reviewer, like the author of the book, apparently lacks a firm background in the murky details of the Arab-Israeli conflict. As a result, he did not recognize that what might appear to be a "sober but convincing case" is, in reality a poorly disguised anti-Israeli polemic. All the material presented in the volume was based on a carefully and purposefully chosen set of U.S. government documents. Many are "raw" intelligence reports of dubious reliability, merely entered into files without comment. Had the author, (or reviewer) bothered to check, he would have found contradictory documents in every instance. The very fanciful theories are not based on the cold evaluation of the available evidence, but on the author's propagandistic objectives.

The case of the U.S.S. *Liberty* presents a particularly important example of the techniques employed in the book. As Goodman and Schiff demonstrate conclusively in their exhaustive analysis of the incident, (see *The Atlantic*, September 1984), this tragic incident was the result of a combination of US and Israeli intelligence errors during the "fog of battle." The very partial evidence presented in this book is designed not to enlighten, but to create an historically inaccurate version of events which turn Israel into the villain.

In a general sense, Stephen Green, the author of *Taking Sides*, is a member of the "anything is plausible" school of evidence. In the place of facts, this school believes in a coarse mixture of a few facts, a clear villain, and a bit of imagination. (The now-popular theory that the US arranged to have KAL flight 007 shot-down by the USSR, presents a similar combination of polemic and plausibility.) This case demonstrates again that a little knowledge, particularly in the form of "raw" declassified documents, is a dangerous thing.

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Political Science Department  
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Jerusalem, Israel

## Nato Credibility

Sir,

This letter is written in concerned response to Karl Kaiser's article "Nato Strategy Toward the End of the Century," published in the January-February 1984 issue. I was somewhat troubled by this article after my initial reading, and was even more disturbed after a recent second reading.

While I agree with many of Kaiser's thoughts, his thesis regarding the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence in Europe requires careful, critical analysis. Kaiser argues that NATO's option of early nuclear response, currently embodied in the "flexible response strategy" with the open option of first use of tactical nuclear weapons, has preserved the peace in Western Europe since World War II. He acknowledges that no "final evidence" of this thesis can be provided, but describes it as "in the realm of a relatively convincing probability." He then proceeds to use the premise that nuclear deterrence has prevented European war to argue against endorsing a no-first-use agreement regarding nuclear weapons. He also sees a no-first-use pact as a severe dilution of United States commitment to Western European security.

These arguments appear to rest on the rather fundamental proposition that, were it not for NATO nuclear deterrence, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies would have long ago invaded Western Europe. Furthermore, the flexible response strategy is seen as the key to this deterrence, and Kaiser argues for the strengthening of this strategy. Interestingly, Western Europe was markedly *uncomfortable* with flexible response during its implementation by President Kennedy and Secretary of Defense McNamara in the early 1960's. Henry Kissinger, in his 1965 book *The Troubled Partnership*, described in detail the Western European objections to instituting the flexible response strategy in place of the prior Eisenhower-Dulles strategy of massive retaliation. It was predicted at that time that the U.S.S.R. would see flexible response as an opportunity to invade or blackmail Western Europe with much less risk, and flexible response was seen in many European capitals as a severe decrease in American commitment to the security of its NATO allies! Thus, the arguments which Kaiser uses in support of flexible response were once used against it by his predecessors!

Secondly, it should not be uncritically assumed that nuclear deterrence, in whatever form, is the only thing which has effectively blocked Warsaw Pact expansion into Western Europe. It is clear that worldwide expansion of communism remains a goal of the Kremlin. It is much less clear that such an expansion *by force* would have been attempted in Western Europe were it not for NATO nuclear power. Indeed, cogent arguments to the contrary have been presented. George Kennan, in *The Nuclear Delusion*, argues that the U.S.S.R. has not invaded Western Europe, and is unlikely to do so in the future, at least partly because of a recognition by the Soviet leaders that they could not then effectively control the Western European people. Kennan's argument deserves careful consideration. The Soviet Union has had frequent problems keeping its Eastern Europe satellites "in line," even though these countries came under Soviet domination immediately after a world war which had devastating effects on their economies, populations, and nationalistic fervor. In 1984, the Western European countries are in far better condition. Economically, Western European countries are relatively healthy, with a standard of



living far exceeding that typical in Eastern Europe. While political dissension does exist, the national pride and unity in Western European nations is strong, certainly strong enough to have resulted in important intramural disputes within the NATO alliance! Clearly, even if it succeeded in overrunning Western Europe, the Soviet Union would have very severe problems in controlling these countries, infinitely greater than those they have faced in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Afghanistan. The Soviet military commitment which would be required to maintain any semblance of control in Western Europe would be a severe economic drain, and could be so great as to leave the Soviets vulnerable in other areas, such as their border with China. Such an economic drain and/or military vulnerability would not serve the Soviets' vital interests.

In summary, those who are concerned about the security of Western Europe should remain aware of all arguments and theories regarding that security. Kaiser is correct: there is a one hundred percent correlation between NATO nuclear power and Western European peace since World War II. However, a correlation only means that two things have occurred together. It does *not* prove that one has caused the other! Other factors, such as those noted by Kennan, may also have contributed greatly to Soviet caution. The Soviets do have vital interests in addition to avoiding nuclear annihilation over Europe, perhaps including avoiding overextending themselves economically, militarily, and politically in Europe. It would behoove NATO to do all it can to remind the Soviets that this is true. Further increasing the nationalism and political unity of the Western European people would do much to remind the Soviets of the severe burden they would incur by invasion or nuclear blackmail. A decrease in NATO reliance on nuclear strategy could, as noted by Kaiser, do much to increase the political cohesiveness of Western Europe's citizens, and this increased cohesiveness could well offset any decreased military risk to the U.S.S.R. Furthermore, it would also decrease the risk of expansion of communism to Western Europe through internal political upheaval as opposed to outside invasion. NATO would do well to recognize and maximize *all* factors which contribute to its own security.

David B. Mather

Lieutenant, Medical Service Corps, US Navy

### British View of Falklands Air War

Sir,

As the CO of 801 Royal Navy Sea Harrier squadron which operated from HMS *Invincible* during the Falklands War, I feel I must respond to some of the issues raised by Commander Colombo in his account of his squadron's part in the campaign. I do so not simply to correct some of the misapprehensions which I believe are reflected in the article, but more especially to give balance to his conclusions and lessons learnt, which could be misleading.

The first point I should make is that notwithstanding the spirited performance of his squadron, which I acknowledge, the fact is that they failed in a first principle—the

maintenance and achievement of the Aim. Their aim was doubtless to deprive the task force of its already limited air power by sinking or totally disabling at least one or preferably both of the British aircraft carriers in the Force, HMS *Invincible* and HMS *Hermes*. As one who was there throughout the campaign, I can assure readers that neither ship was hit by any form of ordnance, Exocet or iron bomb, at any time. The implied claim of an Exocet hit on HMS *Invincible* on 30 May 1982, to quote, “. . . the other two (aircraft) indicated that they followed the missile’s trajectory and arrived at the objective (HMS *Invincible*) which was wrapped in a dense smoke which was a consequence of missile impact only an instant beforehand” reflects either—a not uncommon feature under stress—that people believe what they want to believe rather than the hard evidence before them, or that their observation was poor and totally inadequate; or perhaps it was pure propaganda. In any event they were quite wrong, and neither carrier was hit!

Had either carrier been disabled or sunk, this would undoubtedly have affected the course of the air war. Sea Harrier might not have been able to dominate the airspace over the islands to the degree that it did. (The aircraft could of course have operated from a disabled platform, such is the joy of VSTOL!) At the end of the day, therefore, the Etendard effort failed to have the impact on events which they desired and trained for. In the event all their training and planning resulted in the sinking of one escort and one merchantman: a far cry from *Invincible*, and a great deal less than they hoped and planned for.

Several other points arise from the author’s narrative.

**Training.** The delivery of a stand-off air-to-surface guided weapon is not as demanding as the author would have the reader believe. That it should require “hundreds” of practice launches before the event may be interpreted in one of two ways: either the statement is an exaggeration, or the pilots concerned were at a lower level of training than my own team. Whatever the reason, the task is hardly high-work load or “very complicated,” particularly by day. Tactically, the training left something to be desired: why else did the pilots attack the wrong ships?

**Pre-war preparations.** The huge effort that reportedly went into preparing for attacks on British warships before the declaration of hostilities puts the sinking of the *Belgrano* into perspective. The Argentines apparently had every intention of sinking our capital ships but were unable to do so.

**Operational launch of the first air-to-air surface missile.** Although the author’s enthusiasm on this matter is understandable, he is nevertheless mistaken in his claims. The first operational success with an air-to-surface missile in fact took place off South Georgia when a Royal Navy helicopter successfully attacked the surfaced Argentine submarine *Santa Cruz* with an AS12 missile.

There are, I suggest, flaws in the conclusions and lessons which Commander Colombo chooses to draw from his squadron’s part in the war stemming from the fact: in the final analysis the Argentine air forces failed to achieve either their strategic aim of preventing the deployment of maritime power—including its organic air power—to retake the Falkland Islands, and his squadron failed to achieve the tactical aim of sinking or wholly disabling one or both aircraft carriers. He ignores the major deficiency of the task force in the lack of AEW, a deficiency

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post strike reconnaissance and intelligence, factors which (unless the reports are propaganda fabrications) led Argentine commanders to conclude that a carrier had been disabled or sunk—a conclusion that could have been disastrous for them had the Argentine Navy been more adventurous, notwithstanding their deep rooted fears following the *Belgrano* sinking. In short, I suggest that the real lessons of the air war in the wider context are:

- Fighter Ground Attack aircraft carrying stand-off air-to-surface missiles constitute a threat to Naval Forces which can affect tactical deployment.
- Accurate target identification is essential if strikes by such aircraft are to be effective and achieve their aim.
- Accurate and timely post strike intelligence is important in the appreciation of force capabilities following an attack.
- AEW is vital.
- Organic maritime air power equipped with rugged, capable, versatile aircraft, and with highly trained, bigly motivated crews, operating from well exercised platforms, can take on and defeat air forces—even at a numerical disadvantage of some 8 to 1, to the extent of effectively destroying the main part of those air forces.

In no way do I wish to depreciate the spirit and courage displayed by many Argentine aircrew—Naval and Air Force—but I believe the real results as well as the experiences of my own squadron, cast doubts on the lessons they claim from their activities, and on their training and preparedness. The outcome of the air war in the South Atlantic, in the end, speaks for itself.

Commander N.D. Ward, DSC, AFC  
Royal Navy



# PROFESSIONAL READING

*Operation Peace for Galilee* is important and should be read not only for its discussion of the campaign in Lebanon and Israeli strategy, but because it contains larger, more far-reaching concepts. These concepts involve the connection between Israeli policy in Lebanon and US regional objectives as well as a classic example of the problems which military forces can have in limited wars with limited objectives.

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Colonel E.V. Badolato, US Marine Corps

Gabriel, Richard A. *Operation Peace for Galilee: The Israeli-PLO War in Lebanon*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1984. 242pp. \$16.95

**R**ichard Gabriel has written what will likely be the definitive work on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. But what really makes *Operation Peace for Galilee* even more appealing is that in addition to analyzing the Lebanese campaign, it ranges deep into Israeli military strategy and policy. Gabriel is well-qualified to do this; he probably knows the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) as well as any Western writer. A former US Army Intelligence Officer turned professor with teaching posts both in the United States and in Jerusalem, he has lectured frequently in IDF schools and, in fact, many of his writings are required reading for the Israeli military. Fortuitously, he was researching a book on the IDF when the invasion of Lebanon occurred. This prior research, along with his well-developed military connections, has provided Gabriel with an extremely interesting perspective on the Lebanese campaign.

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Colonel Badolato is assigned to the Office of Policy and Analyses, US Department of State.

Gabriel's discussion of Israeli military strategy is especially interesting in light of our own recent strategic agreement with them. As discussed in *Operation Peace for Galilee*, the Israeli strategy is based on four underlying assumptions: they lack strategic depth; they must have a fast war; they will never be able to ultimately defeat the Arabs militarily; and they must take into account the effects of any war on the Israeli people in terms of its economic, sociological, political and psychological impact. According to Gabriel this forces the Israelis to operate with high quality closely held intelligence and to mobilize rapidly and strike with surprise for quick and decisive victories prior to any US or Soviet intervention. The book's insightful discussion of Israeli strategy is a useful backdrop for considering the long-term aspects of our military relationship with them, and in his discussion it is obvious that Gabriel comes down on the side of the military analysts who believe that Israel will be an enduring strategic asset for the United States.

Gabriel is an unabashed Israeliophile, yet he still presents a fairly balanced view of the campaign. If there is any weakness at all in the book it is minor, and it stems from his admiration of the Israeli Army and an understandable bias against the PLO. From the 1975 massacre at Ain Rummanah, which became Lebanon's Sarajevo, to the evacuation of Beirut in 1982, Gabriel characterizes the Palestinian Movement as made up of international terrorists whose motivations are greed and self-interest. This description probably will not win him any friends among his Arab readers. Also the Lebanese Muslims might take issue with being generally left out of the descriptions of the fighting in the South and the IDF's subsequent actions to control their rear areas. Gabriel also echoes the IDF complaint that the US Marine positions around Beirut airport formed a barrier which protected PLO ambush teams from Israeli retaliation. *Operation Peace for Galilee* makes no mention of the exasperation the Marines felt on their side of the wire with the aggressive IAF behavior. This situation tapered off only after General Barrow's letter to Secretary of Defense Weinberger criticizing the Israeli actions was made public. But these comments are really differences of perspective, and they do not detract from the overall excellent analysis of the campaign.

When the Israeli cabinet approved the 6 July 1982 attack of Southern Lebanon, it believed that the mission it had agreed to was to push the PLO back beyond the 40-kilometer range and destroy PLO infrastructure in South Lebanon. Unfortunately, this operation began a series of uncontrollable events which would attach the Israelis to the Lebanese tarbaby and eventually also draw the United States into Lebanon. At the outset of the fighting, Defense Minister Ariel Sharon had a larger goal in mind—he wanted to remake the political map of the Middle East—and his real war aim was not against the PLO, but against Syria. Gabriel carefully details the change of the military objectives and Sharon's subtle orchestration of the campaign from what was initially believed to be a limited operation into a two-front war

with broad regional objectives. Sharon alleges that he previously cleared his objectives with Secretary of State Haig, and the debate over whether Haig actually gave Sharon a green light or even an amber light still continues in the press. According to Sharon, he thought he received the go-ahead and thereupon proceeded with his secret objectives which, in addition to securing Israel's northern border, were to expel the PLO and Syria from Lebanon, create a new government in Beirut, and obtain peace and normal relations with Lebanon.

*Operation Peace for Galilee* describes in detail how Sharon manipulated both the IDF and the Israeli government during the initial phase of the campaign. The IDF gradually outflanked the Syrians who initially were spectators, thus placing Syrian SAMs within range of IDF artillery. When the Syrians reinforced their SAM sites, Sharon persuaded Begin to authorize a preemptive strike to remove that serious threat to the operation. The attack on the Syrian SAMs along with the loss of large numbers of Syrian aircraft sealed the eventual fate of the Syrians in Lebanon and expanded Sharon's military options. After the strike against the Syrians the campaign broke down into engagements in the flat Bekaa Valley, fighting in the mountains and amphibious landings along the coast termed by Gabriel "a series of minor improvisations . . . each with little relation to the objectives of the other." The Defense Minister had opened his two-front war and was headed for Beirut. Some Israelis have been worried about the decline of civilian control over the Israeli military since the June 1967 War and events described in *Operation Peace for Galilee* will do little to allay those fears.

Less than a month after the invasion the IDF was at the outskirts of Beirut, ready to begin the siege of Beirut. Viewed from a post-campaign perspective, the attempt to seize Beirut was a monumental miscalculation. As Gabriel states "For the first time, the Israeli Defense Force found itself employing tactics and strategies dictated more by political considerations than by military expedience. The struggle for Beirut was far more a test of will, endurance and politics than of military might." (These comments might also fit our own involvement in Beirut.) Gabriel makes it evident that the Israeli government was not prepared for nor had it considered the consequences of the siege of Beirut. First Israel had not considered its own domestic reaction to the heavy casualties it would take. Neither did it take into account the public relations impact that Israeli bombs and artillery shells falling on apartment buildings would have on world opinion. Even though Gabriel describes in detail the Israeli desire to avoid civilian casualties, the besieged Arafat received much prime time media coverage and the PLO won the TV battle hands down. Perhaps the most frustrating development was the inaction of the Christian Militias who waited to see how the operation would turn out rather than launch an attack against the PLO from their side of the city. Also disregarded by the Israelis was the limited wars axiom "before you

get in, plan on how you're getting out." There was no prior concept of how or when or under what conditions to terminate the operation short of military victory.

Besides the serious political problems the Israelis were to face with siege warfare, there was the IDF's lack of urban warfare experience and training. Gabriel points out also that the restructuring of the IDF after the 1973 war had reduced the infantry in its force structure in order to build up its combined arms attack, and it did not have the large numbers of infantry in its brigades to do the job properly. On the other hand, the PLO was able to regroup after fleeing the South and adapt to urban warfare. It had its camps and neighborhoods in Beirut, and it had been preparing its positions, stockpiling supplies and training there for years.

On 29 August, thirty-three days after the siege was ended through negotiations, Israel's problems were only beginning: the Sabra Shatilla massacre, Bashir Gemayel's assassination, the difficulties in the Shuf and South Lebanon, the continuing attrition of Israeli soldiers, Prime Minister Begin's resignation, previously unheard of instances of military disobedience, civilian peace marches, abrogation of the 17 May 1983 agreement with Lebanon, and continued terrorist attacks. Was it really worth it? Gabriel says that the Israelis were militarily successful, but most Middle East analysts agree that Israel failed to obtain its political objectives. The PLO was not destroyed, Palestinian nationalism is as fervent as ever, the volatility of Lebanon continues, the northern borders are not really secure and the IDF occupying force continues to take casualties. In fact, even David Kimche, the Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry has stated that as soon as they can achieve some security arrangements on their northern border, "we shall get the hell out of there."

The discussion on Lessons Learned is both interesting and useful. It is interesting because US operating forces are for the most part still waiting to study our own lessons learned from Beirut. The Long Commission Report was helpful, but it was an investigation rather than a detailed tactical study. The military reader will find *Operation Peace for Galilee's* comments and lessons on armor, infantry, artillery, medical care, engineers, logistics and helicopters extremely useful. One interesting comment by Gabriel was his grudging acknowledgment that the Syrian military's fighting ability was "probably the best the Israelis had seen." Gabriel feels that Israeli superiority in manpower and material produced the victory, and if all had been equal, the terrain and Syrian tactics may have made it a close thing. His description of the performance of the Syrian helicopter gunships and their infantry-tank tactics point out that there will not be any more easy wars in the Middle East for anybody. Another interesting lesson which must be relearned by the IDF (but as Gabriel says, probably won't be) is that Israel was preparing for the

again, it was not prepared to fight in the mountains and cities of Lebanon. But if Gabriel has one single important message, it is to study the Clausewitzian dictum that before starting a war, there should be a clear understanding of its political purpose and operational objective. *Operation Peace for Galilee* showed that the Israelis not only ignored Clausewitz, but they paid scant attention to their own strategic assumptions. Further, they ignored the basic ingredients for the successful use of force which they have used so well in the past: it should be in pursuit of vital interests, be used as a last resort, support the diplomatic effort, have clear objectives, have domestic support, and be winnable.

*Operation Peace for Galilee* is important and should be read not only for its discussion of the campaign in Lebanon and Israeli strategy, but because it contains larger, more far-reaching concepts. These concepts involve the connection between Israeli policy in Lebanon and US regional objectives as well as a classic example of the problems which military forces can have in limited wars with limited objectives.

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Coutau-Bégarie, Hervé. *La puissance maritime soviétique*. Paris: Institut Français des Relations Internationales, 1983. 198pp. 95F.

Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, a young French political scientist writing under the auspices of the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), has taken a major step toward a needed diffusion of knowledge by producing this work. It merits our attention for two principal reasons. First, it is, in its own right, a first-class professional job on a complex topic. Drawing from an extensive bibliography, the author carefully and comprehensively discusses the functional components of maritime power which have been exploited to bring the Soviet fleet to today's place of prominence. The second reason is equally important. H. Coutau-

Bégarie brings a fresh voice and differing insights to the problem. He also represents a continental West European constituency which has a vital stake in Soviet developments. As he notes in his bibliography, most of the major works on the subject are *not* available in French libraries. Only when the dimensions of this relatively new Soviet threat to Western democracies are known to those threatened will national consensus be reached to counter the threat.

The back cover provides a good encapsulation of the author's views:

"Confronted with that new situation, the Anglo-Saxon strategists have reacted in contradictory ways and are mired in Byzantine squabbles over the real import of this new dimension of the Soviet threat. . . .



One learns then that the USSR has been able to become a maritime power on all counts: its strategic force rivals that of the United States; its fleet and naval aviation threaten the positions and traffic of the West and support diplomacy all over the world. The interventions in Angola, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Exercise Okean are very clear warnings."

The author points out the importance of the watershed of Cuba in 1962 when the Soviets not only embarked on an accelerated building of maritime power but also mandated the progressive enlargement of the navy's missions to allow it to intervene in local crises. Thus a major step was taken away from the traditional defense of Soviet territory toward the much broader role of "protection of the interests of the state." He also notes that the new role of the Soviet Navy did not really become apparent to Western observers until the Six-Day War in 1967 when they were taken aback by the appearance of Soviet warships on the scene.

Throughout this writing, M. Coutau-Bégarie sensibly takes a cautious approach and urges discretion in predicting the actions of the Soviet Navy in time of war. Drawing upon the writings of our own Frank Uhlig, he cites the examples of the Germans before 1914 and the Americans before 1941 on the switch from the anticipated use of submarines against warships to their employment against merchant shipping. He also warns against focusing on the strategic ASW battle or the anticarrier battle because Soviet literature

reserves them a major role. He notes that the Gorshkov writings are viewed by most Western analysts as self-serving and not an actual expression of doctrine. An interesting and instructive quotation from Moltke the Elder is used: "In war, the enemy always has the choice among three solutions, in general it is the fourth that he selects."

In summing up the difficulties of analyzing the Soviet naval enigma, the author warns against coming to a single conclusion as long as the flexibility of maritime power exists. He does not feel that the analyses done to date have been in vain. Rather, he says that a number of valid conclusions have been reached over the past decade (once the futile discussions on the offensive or defensive nature of Soviet naval strategy are set aside). He thus concludes that the differences in view on Soviet naval posture are in degree rather than kind. He postulates that a fleet of the first rank must fulfill three functions: strategic nuclear, general military, and political. Each of the ensuing chapters is then dedicated to each of these functions with an objective examination of them and an assessment of how well the Soviet Navy can perform them.

A great deal of factual information is presented textually and in accompanying tables and annexes. The chapter on general military functions is particularly good as types of ships and naval aviation are described as well as bases, logistics and personnel. Each is analyzed in the context of overall strategy. While the primary

theater of operations has now been changed from neighboring waters to the high seas, possible scenarios in both areas are discussed with a careful eye to Soviet weaknesses as well as strengths. The author judges that, for now, Soviet deployments are very limited and can only be seen as demonstrating a presence. Soviet deployments are thus for political as well as military purposes.

It is in the political realm that the author is at his best. His final chapter provides an excellent overview of Soviet naval diplomacy and the importance the Soviet Union attaches to it. The credibility of the USSR in the Third World and the symbolism of the fleet as evidence of US-Soviet parity in the strategic arena rank high as Soviet aims. Short but fascinating case histories of Soviet naval diplomacy—adventures as well as misadventures—are used to illustrate its coercive and its cooperative nature. Successes have been limited and failures have been many.

However, Coutau-Bégarie cautions that one should not underestimate the effectiveness of Soviet naval diplomacy. Just because one cannot measure its influence beyond local crises, one should not conclude that it has no influence. He believes that the fundamental goal of Soviet naval diplomacy is the maintenance of the *status quo*. What really counts is the maintenance of total power and parity with the United States. One should especially not conclude that the military or diplomatic functions are secondary. On the contrary, he

asserts, the fleet is now a key player of the Soviet armed forces and an indispensable instrument in local crises. The author concludes with the view that, whatever the military worth or the degree of effectiveness of its naval diplomacy, the Soviet fleet is first and foremost a method of affirmation of power, and in this role, it has acquired a privileged place in the structure of Soviet power—a role which will only be increased in the course of the coming years.

The “good news” is the book itself. The “bad news” is the fact that it is presently available only in French. Since this work is the first in a series on “Maritime Power in the 1980’s,” one hopes that IFRI will provide an English version as a significant contribution toward the better understanding of a serious problem.

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Sigal, Leon V. *Nuclear Forces in Europe: Enduring Dilemmas, Present Prospects*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1984. 181pp. \$22.95, paper \$8.95

At first blush it would seem like an impossible task to fit the myriad complexities of the Euronuclear issue into 173 pages of text. But Leon Sigal has come close, in this well-organized and cogently argued book.

Sigal reminds the reader that while deterrence is the *raison d'état* behind the Euromissile force, deterrence

itself may present contradictions with *assurance* (the political dimension of European security), and especially with *stability*. Particularly with respect to the latter, Sigal notes that extending US deterrence to Europe theoretically implies first use—itself not exactly conducive to the stability of the European military situation. He returns to this point in the last chapter on battlefield nuclear weapons, whose vulnerable presence near borders and difficulty of use imply special stability problems. One can disagree with Sigal's implied recommendation of "no first use" of battlefield nuclear weapons (which would erode what deterrent effect they may have) and still appreciate their very limited contribution to European security, especially comingled with conventional weapons.

In his examination of the rationale for the Euromissile modernization decision of 1979, Sigal looks at the most common justifications and finds them wanting. The new weapons do not give more target coverage, as Pact targets are already covered by present systems. This is true, though Sigal might have noted that many of these systems are aircraft, which would have difficulty penetrating Soviet anti-aircraft defenses. He also finds flaws with the "continuum of deterrence" argument, which implies that escalation must only run up a "ladder" of weapons structured according to their range. He additionally faults the public rationale for long-range modernization, noting that both the Pershing IIs and cruise missiles were planned in advance of

the first Soviet SS-20 site preparation.

The vulnerability to preemption of these systems is noted by Sigal, as is the difficulty of crisis dispersion; a move in itself that could raise the risk of Soviet preemption. But Sigal does find limited rationale for the long-range theater weapons in that their presence in Europe complicates Soviet ability to perform an overall nuclear first strike. But, for Sigal, the overall contribution of these forces to European security is quite marginal, in *military* terms.

Indeed most of the Euromissile controversy, according to Sigal, is *political*, with the initial decision to modernize the force made largely to mollify the political right in several European Nato nations, particularly Germany. The ensuing debate has imposed its own cost on the European Nato host nations, with large-scale demonstrations against the weapons breaking out. Moreover, Chancellor Schmidt found himself caught between his political left and right, as well as in conflict with both the Carter and Reagan administrations. Political problems existed in the other host nations as well, and Sigal gives a good account of the internal political factors that made it difficult for Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy to either fully embrace or reject the new weapons scheduled to be based on their soil.

Political problems in the host nations gave a real impetus to arms control negotiations at the Euro-theater level. But these negotiations were hampered seriously from the

start by the distance between opening US and Soviet positions, and by Soviet insistence that British and French systems be placed on the agenda. The distance began to narrow with the so-called "walk in the woods" arrangement (75 launchers each) in July 1982, but ultimately no agreement emerged. Sigal indicates that serious differences may continue this state, noting that equal ceilings on weapons may be difficult to achieve, given that Soviet weapons seem related to target requirements different from Nato's. Moreover, verification and monitoring problems remain formidable, particularly given the mobility characteristic of European-based nuclear systems and especially the short-range weapons which are virtually identical to conventional weapons.

British and French nuclear systems compound not only arms control negotiations, but also Western nuclear policy. Sigal points out that French doctrine not only implies first use, but also a limited ability to extend deterrence into Germany. And while British policy is more restrictive and closely tied to Nato, both European nuclear powers steadfastly refuse to have their weapons negotiated away from them by the United States.

Given the breadth of the topic, Sigal has covered it admirably. It is a one-sided treatment, as Sigal concentrates on the Nato side, and one will have to find the Soviet postures elsewhere. But it is a fair and comprehensive treatment and should be required reading for anyone desiring

a well-documented scholarly overview of Nato's nuclear posture and problems.

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Bradley, Omar N. and Blair, Clay. *A General's Life: An Autobiography by General of the Army Omar N. Bradley and Clay Blair*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983. 752pp. \$19.95

This autobiography, written in the first person by Clay Blair, author of *Silent Victory: The U.S. Submarine War Against Japan* and other books, takes Bradley from his youth in Missouri through his tenure as the first chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with an Afterword covering his subsequent activities. A studious boy, he "loved every minute" of his four years at West Point and graduated with the class of 1915. During the interwar years Bradley spent much of his time as an instructor at service schools, "not a bad way," he concluded, "to learn your profession thoroughly." At Ft. Benning Infantry School he met and favorably impressed George Catlett Marshall. "No man," says Bradley, "had a greater influence on me personally or professionally."

Ordered to duty on the General Staff in 1938, Bradley learned the politics of War Department management and the Washington scene, while acquiring administrative experience that prepared him for

future roles. Rearmament following the fall of France, brought rapid promotions and Marshall appointed him commandant of the Infantry School at Ft. Benning with the rank of brigadier general. Soon a major general, he reactivated the 82nd Division in 1942 and then commanded a National Guard division in need of improvement. Finally, in February 1943, he arrived in North Africa for his first taste of combat. Critical of the British "peripheral" strategy and Eisenhower's direction of the North African campaign, Bradley concludes that "Ike was a political general of rare and valuable gifts, but as his African record clearly demonstrates, he did not know how to manage a battlefield."

Holding several jobs in the North African and Sicily campaigns, Bradley points out mistakes and missed opportunities with critical assessments of several colleagues, including Generals Patton and Montgomery. Although sharing with Marshall and Eisenhower a distaste for this diversion from a cross Channel assault, Bradley came to believe that the North African venture served as an essential training ground for the American troops destined to land in France.

Sent to London to prepare for the long-delayed invasion of the continent, Bradley presents a detailed account of the planning, staffing, strategy, and tactics of the successive campaigns. Portraying much of the high command bickering, animosity, resentment, faultfinding, and blame among those in the higher echelons,

Bradley concentrates most of his ire on Montgomery and Eisenhower's failure to control the "megalo-maniac" British commander. He supports the decision to concentrate on bombing the French railway and bridge systems in preparation for the invasion, and credits the Navy with saving "our hides" at Omaha Beach by close in-shore bombardment as it did in Sicily. The decision to refrain from racing the Russians to Berlin is defended, as is the "broad front" strategy over the "single thrust" favored by Montgomery. Insights on the intra and inter-service squabbles over strategy and the allocation of resources, involving top military and political leaders of Britain and the United States, provide some of the most fascinating reading.

The war's end in Europe found President Truman faced with demobilization and a flood of ex-service personnel, many with problems to be handled by the Veteran's Administration. Notified by Marshall that the President wanted him to head the agency, Bradley was "devastated," though he accepted the post after being assured by Eisenhower that he would have a good chance of later becoming Chief of Staff of the Army. With full support from Truman and the Congress, Bradley made numerous changes in the organization to improve medical care and handle the complex demands imposed on the agency.

Appointed Army Chief of Staff in February 1948, Bradley struggled with the recently "unified" Defense Department, the austere military

budget, war plans, the overseas commitments of the Truman Doctrine and the North Atlantic Treaty, and the frequent crises that erupted during the cold war. Unification had created a four-headed monster with the services and the Secretary striving for strategic and budgetary dominance. Military capability to support containment was virtually nonexistent. As Bradley put it, "the Army of 1948 could not fight its way out of a paper bag."

Soon after he assumed the newly created position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Bradley was confronted with what he calls the "Navy's mutiny"—an attack on Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, the B-36 and the Air Force, and the whole concept of strategic bombing. Bradley is vitriolic in his account of this episode, in which he publicly labeled the insurgents "fancy Dans" and privately considered Chief of Naval Operations Louis Denfeld "an affable glad-handing Washington bureaucrat," with "no grasp at all of large-scale land warfare." Yet some progress was being made on formulating a military policy to cope with cold war demands by two papers known as National Security Council No. 20/4, distributed on 24 November 1948, and No. 68 in April 1950. These studies constituted a virtual blueprint for the expansion following the outbreak of war in Korea.

Bradley's previous frustrations seem miniscule compared with those he suffered during the Korean conflict. The conviction that ROK forces could defend against the North

Koreans proved mistaken. Douglas MacArthur, inflicted with "localitis," pursued an absurd strategy, gave wrong advice, and was insubordinate, while the Joint Chiefs failed to exercise proper control of the battlefield. Of primary concern was the possibility that the Korean attack signalled the first of numerous Soviet initiatives in other parts of the world that could lead to general war, contingencies that demanded a global approach to the allocation of military resources which were all too meager. As Bradley notes, "In those days we held the rather simplistic belief that *all* communist moves worldwide were dictated from Moscow by Stalin personally." Agonizing about what to do with MacArthur plagued the Washington hierarchy and is a constant theme during this chaotic period.

Bradley emerges from this book as a dedicated, strictly professional soldier, devoted to his country and his family, whose appeal was in startling contrast to the more flamboyant military heroes. Most revealing are his perspective and his unsparing judgments of other leaders, with whom he was associated, and the issues and events with which he was involved during these troubled years. Based on numerous taped interviews with Bradley and others, private papers, memoirs, government documents, and authoritative studies, this readable narrative presents a personal account of the man in his time. Ably assisted by his wife Joan, Blair has produced an admirable blending of autobiography

and biography that will remain a classic in its field.

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Hamilton, Nigel. *Master of the Battlefield: Monty's War Years 1942-1944*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983. 863pp. \$25.95

Nigel Hamilton's middle volume of his monumental three-volume biography of Montgomery covers the period 1942-1944, beginning with Alamein and ending with victory in the Battle of Normandy. It is of special interest to Americans because it was during this period that Monty was first thrown into close contact with Patton, Bradley, Eisenhower, and other Americans. In Normandy, Monty had serious disagreements with Ike and the others over basic strategic questions. This led to thriving controversies over what Monty did or did not say, and what he did or did not intend to do. In dealing with these controversies, Hamilton takes Monty's point of view. He agrees with Monty on every issue, indeed sometimes claiming more for Monty's genius than even Monty himself would claim. The one criticism Hamilton has of Monty is that Monty simply could not or would not adjust himself to his role, or take some pains to be aware of the pressures on his superior, Eisenhower.

What will be of most interest to serving officers, however, is not Hamilton's defense of Monty on this or that disagreement, but rather Hamilton's admirable discussions of

Monty on the subject of command. Monty had a fine mind, and he had used his powers of thought to concentrate on the problem of command. He had tested his ideas in battle, at almost every level of command. He knew what he was talking about, and can be read with great profit today by those put into command situations.

Although Eisenhower never benefited from it, in certain areas Monty did have broadness of mind. Far more than Patton or indeed most other fighting generals, Monty was sensitive to the problem of public morale. In the spring of 1944, for example, during the preparations for Overlord, Monty took the time to visit the factories where the war goods were being manufactured. He would make a speech, urging the workers to one last great effort, to give his boys the tools with which to win the war. Then he would break off and chat informally with the workers. He was tremendously popular, a man who cultivated his own image, vain, difficult—but a superb showman and politician as well as general. He really did do wonders for British morale. It is one of Hamilton's virtues that he brings this out.

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Rivlin, Alice M., ed. *Economic Choices 1984*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1984. 171pp. \$22.95, paper \$8.95

Kaufman, William W. *The 1985 Defense Budget*. Washington, D.C.:

Brookings Institution, 1984. 54pp. paper \$6.95

After fourteen years the Brookings Institution has ceased publication of its widely acclaimed annual analysis of the proposed federal budget. In place of that volume this year Alice M. Rivlin, director of the Brookings Economic Studies Program and former director of the Congressional Budget Office, has edited a work by herself and other Brookings staff and consultants that examines key issues affecting the US economy. The proposed FY 1985 defense budget is treated in a chapter in *Economic Choices 1984* that is based upon Kaufman's longer monograph *The 1985 Defense Budget*.

The Brookings authors see the principal challenge to the US economy in 1984 to be the development of policies that will sustain economic growth and facilitate economic change. Economic growth is essential to meet the expectations of Americans for a rising standard of living and to ease the process of economic change that forces like technology require of dynamic economies. After a period of relative economic stagnation and increasing inflation in the 1970s, factors seem favorable for a return to noninflationary growth as in the 1960s. However, the Brookings analysts believe that the otherwise optimistic outlook for a growing US economy is marred by federal budgetary policies which have created high deficits and interest rates that will discourage the private investment necessary for a growing, productive, and internationally competitive economy.

Although these prospective budget deficits could be reduced or eliminated by raising taxes, by cutting nondefense spending, or by less defense spending, the Brookings analysts argue for a compromise plan which would eliminate part of the deficit through actions in each of these areas. They recognize that one's policy preferences depend upon value judgments about the relative size of the public and private sectors, and the importance of the various functions performed by the federal government. However, if the basic economic assumptions of the Brookings study are accepted (and the Reagan administration has tended to make more optimistic ones that result in a smaller deficit problem), less action in one direction such as raising taxes means more vigorous moves in other areas such as cutting government spending programs. While some have argued that excessive defense spending has been the source of the deficit problem, a review of the data shows that increases in defense spending have been offset by even greater cuts in nondefense spending, and the budget deficits result principally from revenue losses due to tax cuts and the decline in national income when the economy has been in recession.

In the Brookings plan for deficit reduction about half of the deficit eliminated through legislative actions would come from tax increases. In raising taxes one wants to avoid impacts that would retard economic growth and make the tax system less



equitable. The Brookings study proposes a tax on the cash flow of individuals and corporations. Such a tax would fall on spending rather than income and encourage the savings and investment that fuel economic growth. Alternatives to this proposal such as a value-added tax are discussed, but the emphasis is that increasing tax rates to raise more revenue to deal with the deficit problem is not enough. The tax system also needs reform to improve fairness and to promote economic efficiency.

Although domestic spending as a percentage of GNP is projected to decline through the end of the decade as a result of large cuts in a number of programs, further cuts are called for to deal with the deficit problem. In the short run the Brookings plan would make the greatest reductions in federal spending growth in nondefense categories, while by 1989 these reductions would about equal the proposed cuts in the growth of defense spending. In the first stage they call for a one-year freeze on nondefense spending, except for programs to help the poor. In later years the growth of spending would be reduced through changes in social security benefits, payment to hospitals for medicare services, civil service and military retirement programs, and agricultural assistance. Such proposals are likely to meet substantial resistance from the affected parties, and it will be hard to secure their passage by Congress. Reforms of military retirement will take a considerable period to show any favorable budgetary effect if

present service members and retirees are not subjected to benefit reductions. Also any changes in retirement benefits would have to be considered in terms of the total military compensation package and what form that package must take in order to attract and retain enough persons to meet military personnel requirements.

Given the difficulties in raising taxes and in cutting nondefense spending further, defense spending is almost certainly going to be reduced below the levels considered most desirable by administration defense planners. Although the Reagan administration has been able to accelerate sharply the rate of growth in real defense spending, it has not been able to increase budget authority at the rate it believes necessary. Unless there is some international crisis that raises Congressional and public perception of the threat to national security, it is likely that the real growth in defense spending will be at a slower pace than proposed by the administration. What are the implications for national security? If all defense programs cannot be funded fully, where should cuts be made? Much debate has been generated on these questions and Kaufman's analysis of the FY 1985 defense budget will add more fuel to this discussion.

Although Kaufman does not disagree with the basic national defense strategy of planning to defend against expected threats to Western Europe, the Persian Gulf, and Korea, he believes that with more efficient defense programs the FY 1985

defense budget could be reduced to about \$260 billion and almost \$175 billion in outlays could be saved over the FY 1985-89 period without weakening the nation's defense capability. He would achieve these savings by reducing duplication in defense programs, by slowing the pace of modernization of defense equipment, and by eliminating programs that support questionable objectives. An example of each type of action will be given to show the flavor of his analysis. (Kaufman also provides alternative five-year defense plans for high-threat and low-threat situations.)

An example of duplication that Kaufman sees in defense programs is the Navy's procurement of the F-18 fighter, A-18 attack aircraft, the AV-8B Marine attack aircraft, and the F-14 fighter. If only the F-18 and A-18 are purchased, Kaufman sees savings of \$3.1 billion in FY 1985 budget authority. However, he does not explain why he believes these different aircraft are close enough substitutes so that only two types could be procured.

The requirement for carrier battle groups provides an illustration of savings that Kaufman argues are possible by eliminating programs that support questionable objectives. Although he sees some missions for carrier battle groups in contingencies in the Persian Gulf, in the Atlantic or Mediterranean, and in the Far East, he does not believe that the Navy will require 15 deployable carrier battle groups as the FY 1985-89 program calls for by the end of the

1980s. Allowing three battle groups for each contingency and another three in overhaul or refresher training would reduce the carrier battle group requirement to 12 with billions of dollars in budgetary saving. He does not think that it makes sense to use carrier battle groups to attack the Soviet Navy in its protected bases or to use carrier battle groups to deal with the long-range Soviet naval air threat when land-based interceptors could do it more cheaply. Hence, Kaufman concludes that serious justification has not yet been provided for 15 carrier battle groups and would cut three of them from the defense plan.

Although Kaufman agrees that US military equipment needs periodic upgrading and replacement, he finds the current modernization program is acquiring equipment at a pace that is too rapid and could make it difficult to afford to operate and support weapons systems. He finds the historical relationship is that, on average, operation and support costs will equal about 11 percent of the value of the equipment in inventory. If weapons are acquired so fast that operations and support funding falls below this proportion, it may be difficult to realize the full potential of all equipment. To avoid such problems Kaufman proposes an investment strategy that says, in the absence of dramatic technological improvements or more rapid Soviet acquisition of equipment, the United States should replace military equipment only at the end of its normal service life and the replacement value

of weapons and the investment budget should only grow at a rate of 5 percent a year in real terms. Many persons may find these rules-of-thumb too mechanical and believe that the pace of Soviet modernization is faster than Kaufman assumes. But defense planners do have to face the question of how to modernize without compromising readiness. If not Kaufman's approach, another is needed.

Both of the works reviewed here are worth reading. Even if one disagrees with the conclusions of the Brookings analysts, the reader will be stimulated by the arguments on some important issues facing US policymakers.

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Rohwer, Jürgen. *Axis Submarine Successes 1939-1945*. Introductory material translated by John A. Broadwin. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1983. 386pp. \$23.95  
*Axis Submarine Successes 1939-45* is a translation and complete revision of Rohwer's *Die U-Boote-Erfolge der Achsenmächte*. Entirely superseding the earlier work, Rohwer's English version has now corrected and expanded the data using recently released action reports from archives in London, Washington, and Ottawa as well as extensive correspondence with naval officers involved in both sides of the submarine war and available Ultra signal information. After more than thirty years of compilation and analysis, Rohwer has produced,

unquestionably, the most accurate listing of Axis submarine attacks and their targets for World War II. Rohwer has replaced the inflated wartime claims from all sides of the war with solid data, based on critical examination of all available evidence.

The book is divided into two major portions. The largest of them (291 pages) is a chronological listing of submarine attacks in each major operating area: North Sea, Northern Theater, Baltic, Black Sea, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and Pacific. Each of these listings has 15 columns of data. Three of them give the nationality, name, and commanding officer of the submarine, while the remaining columns describe the time, the position, the ship attacked, and the weapons used. This information is supplemented by extensive footnotes explaining any discrepancies between the reports of attacking submarines and other evidence.

The second portion of the book (83 pages) is devoted to four different indexes which give page references to individual submarines, the names of submarine captains, the designations of allied convoys, and the names of the ships attacked. The indexes are followed by nine pages of charts which legibly reproduce the worldwide, standard grid system which the German Navy used during World War II.

Rohwer's book is a gold mine of information which can be used in a variety of ways. It will be useful and interesting for survivors, relatives, and students who search for data on a

particular ship or individual and it will delight those buffs who glory in all types of statistics. More importantly, Rohwer's compilation is a research tool for historians who seek broader understanding about the nature and role of submarine warfare. For these historians, this book provides the carefully refined data from which they can more confidently measure the results which Axis submarines achieved in relation to the objects which Germany sought. This type of generalization will require extensive use of this book in conjunction with analysis of other types of historical material. It is a difficult task which remains to be done satisfactorily. While Rohwer has provided the basis for important future work, he has already drawn some valuable conclusions about the nature of wartime statistics.

Even very recently in America, the statistics which support claims of success in warfare have been controversial, but Rohwer's analysis of those from a different problem, in a different time, sheds some light on a larger issue which often confronts students of military and naval affairs. In many instances, Rohwer notes that the figures for German U-boat success contained in the reports of the German Armed Forces High Command greatly exceeded the actual numbers. In the postwar period, these extreme overestimates were often made out to be deliberately falsified reports, inflated estimates by Headquarters or complete fabrications for propaganda purposes. Rohwer's detailed analysis

shows that, with minor exceptions, these are false conclusions. The real cause of the overestimates was the difficulty which submarine commanders faced in getting accurate data following an attack. Interestingly, when single U-boats attacked solitary merchant ships, false reports of hits or sinkings were rare. When visual conditions were normal, tonnage estimates were generally good. However, when Allied counterattacks made visual observation difficult, submarine commanders were prone to misinterpret acoustical information.

For example, U-boat captains generally classified all torpedo explosions as hits, and all types of acoustical noise as "sinking sounds," even though, for a variety of reasons, torpedoes often misfired. In addition, when U-boats operated together against convoys, the claims of one submarine often duplicated that of others. U-boat officers often assumed that multiple detonations indicated hits on more than one ship, although in fact, different torpedoes often struck the same ship. Similarly, an explosion heard by one submarine may well have been the result of another submarine's torpedo, while its own failed to fire. These are some of the usual causes which made the figures reported by submarines in a wolfpack to be exaggerated. In addition, one needs to take into account the conditions of light during night attacks and the extent of antisubmarine activity to understand the large errors in wartime statistics. Another source of error can be found in the

estimate of size in attacking merchant ships. The convoy runs between Gibraltar and the United Kingdom often consisted of small ships, sailing in ballast. U-boat commanders easily overestimated their tonnage under difficult conditions. In short, Rohwer has stressed that we understand the human element in warfare before we leap to broad conclusions, even about statistical data.

After having examined all reports in detail, Rohwer concludes that there was seldom a wrong report for which there was no reasonable explanation. Most errors were caused by reduced chances for visual observation; a few from the overoptimistic temperament of the observer or from lack of experience. Only very rarely were exaggerations solely the product of a captain's imagination.

In terms of decisionmaking in high command, Rohwer's most interesting conclusion is that Command Headquarters accepted and forwarded, with few exceptions, the unverified data from U-boat commanders. Staff officers failed to use other intelligence sources to examine critically the overestimates. Therefore, they allowed policy and strategy to be formulated on the basis of inflated data.

With Rohwer's remarkable compilation in hand, historians can now move forward. By juxtaposing the original reports with actual successes, one can now begin to evaluate the extent to which overinflated figures affected High Command decisions. Naval historians can look

forward to such new insights and generalizations which Rohwer's long research now makes possible.

JOHN B. HATTENDORF  
Naval War College

Homze, Edward L. *German Military Aviation*. New York: Garland, 1984. 244pp. \$39

With *German Military Aviation* Edward L. Homze, already one of the leaders in his field, establishes a claim to be the front runner. This volume is a part of a series titled as *Military History Bibliographies* edited by Robin Higham and Jacob W. Kipp. It covers the literature on the German air arm from the days of Kaiser Wilhelm II down to those of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Homze logically organizes his work along chronological lines. In addition to the mandatory chapters on the great wars, he includes one on the infancy of aviation and another that covers the story after German rearmament began in the fifties. Each of these chapters begins with an authoritative bibliographic essay that demonstrates the erudition of the author that is clear and readable. Official and private works are considered in both the English and German languages, and some French literature is included. Each of these essays closes with some astute recommendations for further research which should be useful for either students at the war colleges or in graduate schools. The treatment is

largely confined to documentary sources and books.

The literature on the *Luftwaffe* has been so massive that one could not hope to treat the periodical writings in the same comprehensive way that the book literature is considered and still remain within one volume. The essays are particularly valuable to a researcher at the beginning of any given study in the field for Homze's complete grasp of his subject gives quick and understandable surveys of the various interpretations that have been placed on the history of the episodes of the German air arm—it makes it possible for the new student to organize his thinking on the subject with far greater ease. At the end of each of the chapters there is a comprehensive listing of the books relevant to that period.

The production work on *German Military Aviation* was carefully done and the mistakes are few and far between. The index is far superior to those usually found in works of this kind and that greatly enhances the value of the book as a research tool. Of course, as Homze himself points out, there is something new published on the *Luftwaffe* every day. Thus, any bibliography would quickly become dated. But *German Military Aviation* is a definitive work that will long hold its value as a research tool. Meanwhile, periodic updates will suffice to enable its owners to work their research gardens with dispatch and confidence.

The purchase of the book is imperative for any library with pretensions in the field of military history; its

acquisition for the personal collections of airpower historians is highly recommended.

DAVID R. METS

Lieutenant Colonel, US Air Force

Burns, Richard Dean and Leitenberg, Milton. *The Wars in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos 1945-1982: A Bibliographic Guide*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio Press, 1984. 290pp. \$58.50

This new, comprehensive bibliographic guide will be of value to both the specialist and the beginner interested in the Vietnam war or—to use the more accurate phrase of the authors—the *wars* in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. A number of other bibliographies and guides have previously appeared but most resemble library catalogues rather than bibliographies. The Burns and Leitenberg's guide is well organized, divided into logical subject chapters (with each chapter arranged into topical subheadings), well indexed, and easy to use. Also included are a number of graphs and tables on subjects ranging from "U.S. Expenditure of Munitions in Indochina" to "A Statistical Portrait of the Vietnam Veteran."

Each chapter contains a general introduction by the authors presenting what they view as the essential issues and problems of the period or subject discussed, together with brief descriptions of what they consider the most important books and articles bearing on those issues. For the most part, the authors' observations are judicious and balanced, although

there are occasional inaccuracies and lapses as when the one-dimensional and long outdated books by Alexander Kendrick and Thomas Power on "the war at home" are described as "solid surveys."

The authors also include a graph which purports to illustrate "the technological substitution of firepower for manpower: decline in ratio of casualties to manpower deployed." What the graph actually shows is a decline in the rate of battle deaths per thousand since World War II. That such figures are practically meaningless for determining the combat intensity of a war like Vietnam seems not to have occurred to the authors. Their idea that increased use of firepower is directly connected to lower casualty rates is as simplistic as charges by writers like John Helmer that US tactics in Vietnam produced unnecessarily high casualties.

Vietnam specialists will doubtless find other things to quarrel with in this guide; but despite any such shortcomings, it is nonetheless a valuable contribution to Vietnam studies and one certain to be extensively utilized.

RONALD SPECTOR  
University of Alabama

Shultz, Richard H., and Godson, Roy. *Dezinformatsia Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*. New York: Pergamon Press, 1984. 210pp. \$19.95

The Soviet active measures program involves the use of overt and covert techniques for influencing the actions of foreign countries. Active measures may entail influencing the

policies of another government, undermining confidence in the leaders and institutions of the target state, disrupting relations among rival nations and discrediting and weakening both governmental and nongovernmental enemies. Active measures may be conducted overtly through officially sponsored foreign propaganda channels, diplomatic relations and cultural diplomacy. Covert techniques include the use of covert propaganda, disinformation, agents of influence and international front organizations. Active measures programs are coordinated at the highest levels of the Soviet regime and are executed by important elements of the state and party bureaucracy including the KGB.

Professor Richard Shultz and Professor Roy Godson have written a detailed accurate study of Soviet disinformation. They describe the organizational structure for active measures and offer a detailed discussion of Soviet overt propaganda themes from 1960 to 1980. They go on to provide examples of Soviet techniques including the use of international front organizations, agents of influence and forgeries. They provide interviews with former Soviet bloc intelligence officers which reveal many of the techniques used by the KGB. They conclude that active measures do indeed form an important element in the Kremlin's approach to foreign policy.

Although based exclusively on unclassified published sources Shultz and Godson have written a clear informative and detailed

exposition. There is more they could have said. For example, elements in the Dutch peace movement are Soviet controlled and the Hungarians under Soviet direction once forged and distributed throughout Africa a bogus edition of *Newsweek*. They might also have attempted to judge the impact of active measures initiatives, although such an effort might not in fact be possible. In any case these are minor points. Shultz and Godson have produced a fine book on an important aspect of Soviet foreign policy methods. Their contribution is especially important because active measures have not heretofore been studied in such detail.

STEVEN ROSS  
Naval War College

Griffith, Samuel B. II. *The Battle for Guadalcanal*. Annapolis: The Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company, 1979. 282pp. \$18.95

Lee, Robert Edward. *Victory at Guadalcanal*. Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1981. 260pp. \$15.95

Two years ago in my review of Herbert C. Merillat's *Guadalcanal Remembered*, I made the point that while the volume was one of the best of the Guadalcanal books, it was not apt to nudge aside Brigadier General Samuel B. Griffith's *The Battle for Guadalcanal*. What I should have added was that Griffith's classic account was once again in print.

*The Battle for Guadalcanal* was first

published in 1963. The present edition forms part of the Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company's Great War Stories series which also includes such titles as Colonel Robert D. Heinl's *Victory at High Tide*, Captain Cyril Falls' *Armageddon*, John Buchan's *History of the Great War*, and two particular favorites of mine, C.S. Forester's *The General*, and Alan Moorehead's *Gallipoli*. The books are facsimile copies of the original editions, printed on good paper, uniformly bound, and with matching book jackets, so that they make a handsome set.

Sam Griffith died last year after a very full life as Marine, scholar, and author. As a lieutenant, he chased the elusive Sandino in Nicaragua. Then came service in China as a language student and an observer of the Sino-Japanese War. He was probably the first person to translate Mao Tse-tung's *Guerrilla Warfare* into English (1941) and one of the first Westerners to rediscover Sun Tzu. He had firsthand knowledge of Guadalcanal: he fought there with Edson's Raiders, first as executive officer, then as commanding officer.

Winston Churchill, in his *Marlborough*, speaks of great battles which "won or lost, change the entire course of events, create new standards of values, new moods, new atmospheres in armies and in nations, to which all must conform." Griffith applies Churchill's definition to the Battle of Guadalcanal.

CominChUSFlt Admiral Ernest J. King had tersely defined the US plan of operations in the Pacific in nine



words: "Hold Hawaii; Support Australasia; Drive northwestward from New Herbrides." In mid-April 1942, Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift was told to ready his 1st Marine Division, then in North Carolina, for a move to New Zealand. On 25 June, Vandegrift reported to Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley at Auckland and learned that his division was to wrest Guadalcanal from the Japanese.

The main landing on 7 August by the 1st and 5th Marine regiments was virtually unopposed, but there was hard fighting for the 1st Raider and 1st Parachute Battalions across Skylark Channel at Tulagi and Gavutu. Japanese air raids roared overhead the next day, mostly Betty medium bombers with Zero fighter cover. After an ineffective intercept, Rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher, short of fuel, withdrew his carrier task force.

That night, 8/9 August, Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa came down The Slot with his cruisers and in the Battle of Savo Island smashed up British Rear Admiral V.A.C. Crutchley's escort group of Australian and US cruisers and destroyers. Next day, Rear Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, left uncovered and with his amphibious ships only partially unloaded, pulled out of the objective area.

Left alone on the beach, Vandegrift saw his greatest threat as coming from the sea and the air, but there was also an unknown number of Japanese on the island. He decided to throw a defensive perimeter around the unfinished airfield the

Japanese had begun. His engineers, using mostly captured Japanese equipment, went to work on the airfield (soon to be named Henderson Field for a Marine squadron commander killed at Midway). On 20 August two Marine squadrons, one of SBD Dauntless bombers, the other of F4F Wildcat fighters, landed on the coral-surfaced airstrip.

The Japanese were receiving reinforcements of their own. The Ichiki regiment had arrived. On the 21st it destroyed itself in *banzai* attacks against the Marines' left flank along the line of the Ilu River (because of bad maps, both the Japanese and the Marines thought it was the Tenaru). Next day news reached Vandegrift that the Japanese Combined Fleet had sortied from Truk. Fletcher's carriers held off the Japanese carriers in the Battle of the Eastern Solomons, but the transports and their escorts pushed through to 100 miles north of Guadalcanal where they were pounded by a mixed bag of Marine and Navy aircraft from Henderson Field.

The flyers could not stop all Japanese reinforcements. Most of those who got through came by destroyers and barges, and were landed at night. So it was that Major General Kiyotaki Kawaguchi had most of his brigade in hand by the end of August. After an almost incessant day-and-night air and naval gunfire bombardment of the Marine positions, Kawaguchi on 12 September began his attack against what would come to be called "Bloody Ridge." His brigade took 20 percent casualties

in the two-day battle before falling back into the jungle.

On 18 September, Kelly Turner's transports brought in a fresh regiment, the 7th Marines. Vandegrift used them first for some inconclusive attacks to the west against Japanese positions along the Matanikau.

Lieutenant General Harukichi Hyakutake moved the headquarters of his Seventeenth Army to Guadalcanal on the night of 9 October. He planned to take personal command of an attack to begin 17 October using the 2d ("Sendai") Division and the still en route 38th Division.

On the night of 11 October Rear Admiral Norman Scott with four cruisers and five destroyers intercepted a Japanese force thought to be two cruisers and five destroyers (it turned out to be stronger) near Savo Island. He squeaked out a victory in a close-fought action, shielding the Marines from another naval gunfire bombardment but not stopping the steady parade of reinforcements joining Hyakutake.

Vandegrift was also receiving reinforcements. The National Guard's 164th Infantry regiment disembarked on 13 October. That night the airfield received a 70-minute bombardment by the battleships *Kongo* and *Haruna*.

Hyakutake had planned a complicated three-pronged attack. His columns had trouble moving into position and the attack did not get off until late on the 23d. Even then it was badly coordinated and got off piecemeal. Each prong was defeated by

the Marines as it came, the last on 26 October.

The ground action overlapped the standoff naval Battle of Santa Cruz Islands which pitted the Japanese Second and Third Fleets against the US Navy's carrier Task Forces 17 and 61. Ashore, Vandegrift planned once more to advance west of the Matanikau. The attack, begun at midnight on 31 October with a crossing of the river, did not go well. Vandegrift fed the newly arrived 8th Marines into the fight. It managed a 400-yard advance before Vandegrift broke off the attack on 11 November. From 13 through 15 November the naval Battle of Guadalcanal was fought, possibly history's last great surface action of opposing battleships, cruisers, and destroyers.

Hyakutake's two divisions were down to about half strength but they were strongly dug in. On 8 December, Vandegrift turned over command of the operation to Major General Alexander M. Patch, US Army, commander of the American Division, most of which was now on the Canal. Vandegrift departed for Australia. His malaria-ridden regiments soon followed. Patch decided to wait for the arrival of the US 25th Division before continuing the attack.

The 2d Marine Division's organic infantry regiments—the 2d, 6th, and 8th Marines—were already in the fight. A bobtailed 2d Marine Division headquarters arrived to take over command. The two Army and one Marine divisions were bundled together into a brand new XXIV Corps

under Patch. He began the final attack against the Matanikau line on 10 January 1943.

Hyakutake, in a remarkable evacuation conducted during the first week of February, managed to extricate the remnants of his Seventeenth Army, some 10,000 men who lived to fight another day.

Although Griffith writes vividly of the great sea battles that intersticed the ground operations, he writes, understandably, from the viewpoint and perspective of the Marines looking outwardly from the island. For a reader who wants a fuller appreciation of the air-sea-land battle, a comparative reading of Samuel Eliot Morison's *The Struggle for Guadalcanal* is recommended.

There are many other good books on Guadalcanal; so many, in fact, that there seems to be no reason for a book such as Robert Edward Lee's well-intentioned but poorly executed *Victory at Guadalcanal*. Presidio Press is one of the foremost publishers of military history, and it has brought out a number of good Marine Corps books. This, unfortunately, is not one of them. Lee's book is written in adventure magazine language with imagined dialogue that can best be described as being at the television docu-drama level.

EDWIN H. SIMMONS  
Brigadier General, US Marine Corps (Ret.)

Karnow, Stanley. *Vietnam: A History*.  
New York: The Viking Press,  
1983. 750pp. \$20.

In *Vietnam: A History*, Stanley  
Karnow has produced an interesting,

factual, and unbiased volume that makes a substantial contribution to the growing bibliography of works about the war in Southeast Asia. The book was written as a companion to the television series produced by the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), and serves in that role well. The volume, divided into sixteen chapters, smoothly covers not only the American experience in Vietnam, but the long centuries of war that preceded US involvement and the bitter years since our withdrawal. It contains a fairly good if sketchy chronology, thumbnail portraits of some of the major actors, and a superb set of photographs that precede each chapter. Finally, the book contains six clear and useful maps. It is well indexed and captioned throughout, functioning as an excellent resource work and reference on the war.

Yet Mr. Karnow has given the reader more than a simple chronological treatment of the war. The work has the lean yet anecdotal style common to wartime journalism, and manages to mix the reporter's traditional cynicism and the observer's distant concern about the fate of Vietnam.

Of particular note is the first chapter, the title of which, "The War Nobody Won," more or less illustrates Mr. Karnow's central theme. Agreeing with Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., Karnow points out that the "United States won a tactical victory but suffered a strategic failure in Vietnam." The essence of the conflict, according to the author

was the fanatical sense of dedication felt by the North to unify the country. This led to the North's ability to accept tremendous casualties and physical destruction from the bombing campaigns with equanimity. While hardly a new thesis concerning the war, Mr. Karnow's workman-like and reasoned analysis represents a centrist view of the conflict. He manages to discuss the US involvement in Vietnam without becoming emotional or biased, and carefully points out the various stages of American presence and the political decisions that motivated the action. The author is particularly cogent on the subject of Vietnam today (1983), showing a country that is learning that winning a war can be easier than running a country. The Vietnamese Gulags and the story of the boat people are told well under Mr. Karnow's steady approach.

From a critical standpoint, there are a few problems with the volume. The scope of the war, of course, was vast. It would hardly be possible to complete the history of the US involvement in less than 10 volumes, as one group of writers is currently doing. Additionally, the war wasn't prone to dividing up into neat segments as Mr. Karnow presents it. There was, of course, much overlap between the stages of the war; yet Mr. Karnow seems to provide little transition between many of the chapters—giving one the sensation that the war was only a series of vignettes, connected only by the geographic theater. One could also fault the author for an excess of color

and anecdote at the expense of larger events, particularly in a volume that calls itself "The First Complete Account of Vietnam at War."

But these are relatively small concerns when compared to the overall effort of the work. Mr. Karnow has contributed a solid, reportorial volume to the literature of America's longest war. One leaves *Vietnam: A History* with a sense that a good deal of work and tribulation went into the book. It is a large canvas that Mr. Karnow seeks to paint, and he does a credible job of covering the detail and the sweep of a long and bitter struggle.

JAMES STAVRIDIS

Lieutenant Commander, US Navy

Beckett, Ian, and Gooch, John, eds. *Politicians and Defence: Studies in the Formulation of British Defence Policy, 1845-1970*. Manchester, NH: Manchester University Press, 1983. 202pp. \$20

Too little has been researched and written in the field of defense policy-making, and this work by two academic men, the coeditors, and authors of two of the eight articles, is a well-written addition. Ian Beckett, Senior Lecturer in War Studies at Sandhurst, and John Gooch, Lecturer in History at the University of Lancaster, have researched and written in the field of defense policy-making in which too little work has been done. *Politicians and Defence* is principally concerned with several British cabinet ministers responsible for the Army, and two of those more

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recently in charge of overall defense policies. There is relatively little here on the Royal Air Force. The last two chapters chronicle efforts to coordinate all the services under one minister, Duncan Sandys (Minister of Defence, 1957-1959), and Denis Healey (1964-1970).

The book is not a continuing history and analysis of political leaders of the services, but rather a series of twenty-page selections by different authors. These subjects are Earl Grey, Secretary of State for War in the mid-nineteenth century; Lord Cardwell, who dealt with the purchase of commissions; H.O. Arnold-Forster, caught in the controversies following the Boer War; his brilliant successor, Lord Haldane, in office into World War II; the popular but ill-fated Earl Kitchener, a career soldier pushed into the frock coat of a wartime cabinet minister; and Leslie Hore-Belisha, charged with preparing the Army just before World War II.

The chapters on Arnold-Forster and Haldane give some new insights on the Esher Committee, the formation and early work of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and the pre-World War I intrigues among politicians and the military. That on Hore-Belisha enlarges our understanding of the role of his *éminence grise*, Captain B. H. Liddell Hart, which so weakened the Secretary's position in the government and the army.

defense in peacetime Britain, in spite of its large budget compared with other departments of state, and its key role in the Government's responsibility for national survival. In peacetime, ministers for defense and the services have increasingly been felt unneeded in the inner cabinet, as their constituencies have shrunk in numbers and importance, contrasted with the advocates of the welfare state. And defense ministers may do threatening things such as drafting voters' sons, or demanding expensive deterrents against a war which may never occur, or sending soldiers to defend a few colonists and large sheep meadows. Ambitious politicians tend to avoid these portfolios.

The difficulties of these men who were (except for Haldane and Kitchener) quite uninformed on taking office as to the complexities of strategic planning and weapons systems, were compounded by the existing procedure of rendering professional advice. Unlike the political heads of all other departments of state, they received *two* streams of overlapping and often conflicting official advice prior to collegial policymaking in the cabinet. They received reports from the civil service manager of the War Office, the Permanent Secretary, as well as the uniformed head of the Army, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, backed by his various staffs. A chief scientific adviser might well add another strong view. After World War II, this flood of expert recommendations, now tripled by bringing the three services into a single

ministry, brought governments (in the United States and Canada, as well as Britain) to structure a process which would, at least in theory, reduce the options before the elected decisionmakers.

The effort to induce coordination of defense policy, and relate it to foreign policy, has been long and hard fought. The problems of interface in a democracy between the cabinet and the professional military level led Leonard Beaton to write in *The Guardian* a quarter century ago, "America is moving gradually and Britain imperceptibly towards a central authority commanding and controlling the separate Services." That this movement took place at all in a Britain whose overseas responsibilities were steadily declining and whose people were demanding the transfer of defense costs to America, the new superpower, was largely due to Sandys and Healey. Sandys was well-connected politically, ambitious and possessed of an unusual level of *chutzpah*. Healey had nearly six years in office and thus was not a member of the unfortunate postwar "defence minister of the month club." But he inherited a greatly strengthened central machinery from its chief architect, the late Admiral of the Fleet Earl Mountbatten.

Even though Mountbatten did not accept the Secretaryship of State for Defence when it was offered to him and remained as Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), he is entitled to more than the half-dozen sentences allotted to him in this book. He served as CDS

under Sandys, Healey, and Thorneycroft and Healey, bringing his talents, contacts experience and commitment since World War II to interservice and interdepartmental reforms.

A complication to the policy-making process which was just beginning to make its appearance during Healey's regime has been the demand to be heard by the Select Committee on Expenditures of the House of Commons. Politicians deeply involved with defense are now not only in the cabinet and among a few retired Colonel Blimps in Parliament, but they now serve on the Subcommittee on Defence and External Affairs, made up both of the governing party and the opposition.

More effective policies may come out of this development, but the committee investigations, debates and reports will surely focus public opinion more pointedly upon the Secretary of State and the cabinet. This will doubtless include both such examples of strong opposition to government war policy as Suez, and of support, such as the Falklands. And possibly this added Parliamentary involvement will improve the decisionmaking in all its complexity of those politicians mentioned in the authors' Introduction, who are, "... transient figures, dependent upon professional advice and, whatever the administrative structure, reliant on winning the respect and confidence of both political and professional colleagues if they are to have much chance of success."

Trefousse, Hans L. *Pearl Harbor: The Continuing Controversy*. Malabar, Fla.: Krieger Publishing, 1982. 215pp. \$6.50

This book is part of the extensive series of Anvil paperbacks prepared for use in college courses, and was obviously designed for undergraduate students who are new to the controversy over the reasons why US forces in Hawaii were taken by surprise. Trefousse presents a defense of Franklin Roosevelt against charges by the late president's critics that somehow Roosevelt maneuvered the Japanese into attacking the US Fleet so that he could openly support Britain in its struggle against Germany. Trefousse includes over one hundred pages of documents relating to the attack, including deciphered Japanese messages, official state papers (such as the Tripartite Pact) and excerpts from testimony given to the Naval Board of Inquiry. There is also a brief but comprehensive bibliography of major books and papers which address the issue of a possible conspiracy at the highest level of the US government to incite the Japanese to war.

The problem with this version of *Pearl Harbor* is that it confronts the wrong issue. Trefousse refutes the charges of past critics such as Harry Elmer Barnes and Charles Beard, but he also notes (rather late) that "Even modern revisionists no longer maintain that the fleet was deliberately exposed at Pearl Harbor to provide Japan with a worthwhile target." The only "modern revisionist" who has picked up where Barnes and

Beard left off is John Toland, and Toland's argument (in *Infamy*, 1982) is basically that Roosevelt allowed the attack to take place. The claim that Roosevelt deliberately set up Pearl Harbor by gradually and carefully leaving the Japanese no other alternative is just not taken seriously anymore, and Trefousse can be accused of wasting time on what is, in effect, a "nonissue." Remember, though, that Trefousse has written for undergraduates unfamiliar with the evolution of the Pearl Harbor controversy who may nevertheless harbor strong opinions about Roosevelt's culpability and motives. Even given this important qualification, however, it is still fair to say that Trefousse misses the point of much recent controversy about the attack.

In fact, writers such as John Costello (*The Pacific War*, 1981) have argued that the real focus of attention should not be on Roosevelt but on Winston Churchill. Costello believes that somehow British code-breakers got wind of the Japanese attack plans and that Churchill chose not to warn Roosevelt because he knew Pearl Harbor would bring the United States into the war. Costello's conjectures run afoul of the very pertinent claim that they are based completely on circumstantial evidence. Costello's rejoinder has been that we may learn the truth when Churchill's most confidential papers are finally opened in the 21st century. Trefousse is a healthy and concise antidote to such speculation, if only because he demonstrates that it makes little sense to put the blame for

Pearl Harbor on one individual or office. However, the strange disappearance of HMAS *Sydney* on 19 November 1941, coupled with the fact that not everything is yet known about the work of US and British code-breakers and radio traffic analysts in the Pacific in the fall of 1941, means that the controversy over who knew or inferred how much (and when) will continue. (In his *Who Sank the Sydney?*, published by Cassell, Milbourne, in 1981, Michael D. Montgomery claims the Australian cruiser was sunk by a Japanese submarine, and that the Australian government may have known this.)

There are two matters which Trefousse did not consider but which he should have: (1) the rapid destruction of Army air power in the Philippines in light of General MacArthur's claims that it was the key to his defenses and despite the fact that his forces had ample warning that the war was on, and (2) what Admiral Kimmel might have done to resist the Japanese attack on Hawaii if he had been given one or several days' warning. Pearl Harbor was bad enough, but what about the Philippines? Why didn't MacArthur's forces develop the kind of ground observer organization which Major General Claire Chennault's Chinese allies created to warn the American Volunteer Group? Why didn't Army B-17s attack Japanese airfields on Formosa before the Japanese could raid Clark Field in the Philippines? These are important questions, and they

should be considered whenever the causes of Pearl Harbor are argued.

Perhaps a more obvious question is whether Kimmel could have defeated the Japanese with the Navy and Army forces available in Hawaii in 1941. What if the "Winds-Execute" message had indeed been intercepted and translated by Navy code-breakers on 4 December? What if its specific "meaning" had been grasped immediately and Kimmel warned? Had Kimmel sent his eight battleships to California immediately, he might have saved them. However, the approaching Japanese were by then committed to attack. They might have been recalled by a signal from Tokyo, but they might also have worked over Pearl Harbor and/or searched for Kimmel's carriers. *Lexington* and *Enterprise* were Kimmel's only available carriers on 4 December. Together, they did not have the force to overwhelm the six attacking Japanese carriers, even if they were to hit first. To strike the Japanese with some hope of success, Kimmel would have had to rely on Army bombers, but the Army's bomber strength in Hawaii was minimal because of the effort to pass B-17s through to the Philippines.

Kimmel's position was nearly impossible. He had been told not to attack first; he had also been denied the resources he needed to absorb the first blow and then return the attack; finally, he was expected not to lose. His predecessor, who strongly protested against this situation, was relieved. Kimmel accepted the situation. Could he have made it



acceptable? That is the interesting question—not whether Roosevelt knew something he did not reveal or whether Churchill withheld vital intelligence from Roosevelt. Kimmel was outnumbered and his enemy had the initiative. What could he have done? Thinking about that question is important because there are US military commanders today who find themselves in a similar situation. *Pearl Harbor: The Continuing Controversy*, like most of the literature on the topic, does not address that question. It is, however, an accurate summary of the other issues raised by investigators of the attack, and its lengthy documents section is valuable even to people who have some knowledge of the Pearl Harbor debate.

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Goldrick, James. *The King's Ships Were at Sea: The War in the North Sea August 1914-February 1915*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1984. 356pp. \$21.95

This work by an Australian naval officer starts with late June 1914, when the newly enlarged Kiel Canal permitted the German navy to swing between the North Sea and the Baltic. After a comparison of British and German naval strengths and the steps that led to war, James Goldrick correctly notes that "The North Sea was to be the critical theatre of operations for both British and Germans." He sketches the geographical and material advantages and

disadvantages on both sides and notes that the British Board of Admiralty was much better than the German organization. The latter, with three offices where one would do, resulted in departmental in-fighting and an inability to agree upon policy. Goldrick's vignettes of major naval leaders are well done, as are the characteristics he gives of all classes of surface ships, submarines, aircraft, and lighter-than-aircraft.

After these introductory chapters Goldrick concentrates upon operations: the firing of the first shots; the northern and southern blockades of the North Sea by the British and French; reciprocal use of submarines, minelayers, and major combatants; the crossing of the British Expeditionary Force; and, except for the Battle of the Heligoland Bight on 28 August, the inactivity of the High Seas Fleet until the end of 1914. The chapter devoted to that battle contains an excellent analysis of the successes and failures of the commanders, ships, and weapons on both sides.

Chapter 5 deals with the first operations undertaken by submarines. The sinking of warships and then of merchant ships by U-boats opened German eyes to the submarines' utility for blockade and a war of attrition against the British fleet. If the British rushed to develop anti-submarine devices and doctrine, the careful Adm. John R. Jellicoe's caution grew with respect to his fleet's operations. Germany meanwhile occupied twenty-one miles along the Flemish coast and built U-

boat and destroyer bases thereon. British ships and aircraft failed to drive them from this advantageous position.

In Britain, for lack of a staff, a small group comprised of Winston Churchill, Sir John Fisher, and Sir Arthur Wilson, aided by Henry Oliver, made the decisions. In Germany, following the Battle of the Heligoland Bight, Adm. Friedrich von Ingenohl on the Kaiser's orders kept his High Seas Fleet tethered except for raids on the British east coast by Commander, Scouting Forces, Franz Hipper, in October and December 1914. Though Room 40 decoded German wireless radio intercepts and obtained a fair idea about German intentions. British errors enabled Hipper to escape.

One of Hipper's sorties led to the Battle of the Dogger Bank, 24 January 1915. Goldrick describes the battle in the penultimate chapter, and analyzes the reasons why the British were able to do better than the Germans despite their many errors. Ingenohl was discredited; he had not reduced the strength of the Grand Fleet by attrition tactics. His successor, Adm. Hugo von Pohl, shifted his efforts to a U-boat campaign.

Goldrick concludes, first, that navies must "derive sufficient knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of novel technology during peacetime operations so as to minimize the deficiencies of their equipment and to be able to create realistic strategy and tactics for a possible conflict. Second, navies must develop

systems by which operational experience at all levels can be assessed effectively and rapidly in order to maintain advantages and remove deficiencies in wartime."

Goldrick has obtained more British and German naval records than the official British historians, Corbett and Newbolt, did for their 5-volume *Naval Operations*, published in 1920-1931. He says that his objective is to retell the story they told in their first two volumes but without the official and unofficial constraints under which they labored. Since he prefers not to state where the earlier writers—and also Arthur Marder in *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*—fell short in their analyses and interpretations, he leaves the readers up in the air. He says little about the reaction of neutrals to either British or German attempts to control sea trade, and he shortchanges French naval contributions. While he has provided a fine operational history, he might have included an analysis of the mistakes in Grand Adm. Alfred Tirpitz's prewar assumptions. It was those errors that did much to cause Germany to lose the naval war and, in the end, enabled Allied sea power to strangle German land power.

PAOLO E. COLETTA  
Annapolis, Maryland

Miller, Kenneth E. *Tiger the Lurp Dog*.  
Boston: Little, Brown, 1983.  
214pp. \$14.95

*Tiger the Lurp Dog* is not an animal story for children. It is a novella

encapsulating the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP =Lurp) microcosm of the American war in Vietnam. As a war story it is not a latter day "All Quiet on the Western Front." It is a *tranche de vie* cut out of a specialized experience.

As a means of communicating the techniques of Lurp, the book somewhat resembles a remarkable combination of a vivid Army Field Manual with a highly personalized unit history. The author achieves the smell of authenticity in a setting which might have tempted the odor of verisimilitude. There are no heroes, no human heroics and no real point or message. Perhaps the one dimensional result is a significant accomplishment.

In its tightly controlled narrowness, there is a strong resemblance to a prison novel. The young airborne troopers emulate their role model "lifer" NCO leaders, and all are subordinated to the techniques—the tricks of the trade. The language and setting are well done and set the stage for a predictable drama; but when it is over there is no sense of tragedy nor residual sadness. Two Lurp teams get wiped out in the same nasty jungle area and are never heard from again.

Tiger, ". . . the sneakiest little thief and coward in the world . . .," is the vehicle threading the various parts of the story together. It is always risky to attribute human thoughts and actions to dumb animals. However, to challenge the dog is pointless: he is a necessary ingredient. One entire chapter uses the dog

as a means of describing a Special Forces Camp on the Laotian border. The high mark of the chapter is Tiger getting into the maze of minefields, punji stakes, claymores, etc., and then working himself out while various characters—Americans, Vietnamese, Chinese Nungs, Cambodians—react. The low position of dogs in Vietnamese society counters any romantic thought that his safe return through a seemingly impenetrable defense perimeter represents an apocryphal portrait of Vietnamese survivability.

This short novel is in many respects a reflection of the total war—remote, exotic and lacking in clearly defined purpose. Whether this is art or just making the best of the situation, the author writes with skill. Reading the book is a help in understanding the Lurp operation. It is sometimes funny; it is not light reading.

The flaw as well as the strength is in the narrow drawing of the scene. It is strictly a soldier's story. Officers are an embarrassment, and when inserted are (like the civilians) caricatures—negative or antagonistic outsiders. The enlisted people, particularly the young, seem to have learned how to kill and to die; not how to live. Perhaps there ought to be a worldwide school for this purpose that is as proficient as the many educations in the techniques of death. It always seems a shame to see men so alienated that all they have to live for is a chance to die well.

WILLIAM F. LONG, JR.  
Colonel, US Army (Retired)

# RECENT BOOKS

## Selected Accessions of the Naval War College Library

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Annotated by

George Scheck, Mary Ann Varoutsos, and Jane Viti

Boorstin, Daniel J. *The Discoverers*. New York: Random House, 1983. 745pp. \$25.00  
This work chronicles major discoveries and innovations from classical antiquity to the present. It is a survey of the history of thought and human achievement written in a lively and imaginative manner. The focus is on man's need to understand the world in which he lives; the approach is biographical. The book is filled with vignettes of memorable figures from the past—Ptolemy, Columbus, Freud, Darwin, among others. The work is divided into four broad categories—time, the earth and the seas, nature, and society. Boorstin, presently the Librarian of Congress, is a distinguished scholar and Pulitzer Prize-winning historian.

Buckley, Tom. *Violent Neighbors: El Salvador, Central America, and the United States*. New York: Times Books, 1984. 358pp. \$17.95

Why have US initiatives in Central America, a region of undoubted strategic importance, failed so miserably? This is the question that Buckley discusses in his book, *Violent Neighbors*. In it he traces the political history of the region from the time of Columbus to the present day. He explains how the different political and economic systems presently function and includes detailed portraits of the major political figures. Buckley believes that US policies have been unsuccessful because they are based on misconceptions about internal operations and anxieties about security and communism.

Burns, James MacGregor. *The Power to Lead: the Crisis of the American Presidency*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984. 288pp. \$16.95

Contending that the US presidency is experiencing deep structural problems, Burns surveys the state of the office through examination of the tenures of Presidents Kennedy, Carter, and Reagan. Two factors are seen to have weakened the effectiveness of the government: the declining strength of political parties and the tendency of the checks and balances system to create deadlocks. In light of these concerns, he makes several recommendations to revitalize political parties, stabilize the presidency, and create a more representative government. These include broadening the impeachment authority of Congress; reorganizing the electoral process; and authorizing the president to choose half of his cabinet from seated, partisan legislators.

Chopra, Maharaj K. *India and the Indian Ocean: New Horizons*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1982. 234pp. \$15.00

Chopra has written a historical survey of India's relationship with the Indian Ocean  
Published by U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons, 1985

from ancient times to the present. Before gaining independence from Great Britain in 1947, India's economic concerns were focused on the internal development of the country, since India had been dominated by European powers for four centuries. Coinciding with India's independence was "a veritable explosion of interest in the World Ocean on the part of the entire international community." This new awareness of the importance of the world's oceans was triggered by the thrust of advanced technology and the basic need for more food and minerals. The discovery of valuable ocean resources and the obvious strategic importance of the seas has resulted in the establishment of a new ocean regime.

Churchill, Robin R. and Lowe, Alan V. *The Law of the Sea*. Dover, NH: Manchester University Press, 1983. 321pp. \$25.00

The international law of the sea is a comprehensive agreement for governing the uses of the oceans and its resources. Churchill and Lowe do not attempt a detailed or precise analysis, but a single source introduction and overview of the law as it stood at the end of 1982. They explain the rules presently applicable to each of the major recognized maritime zones and also provide separate surveys on the many rules of international law relating to the various uses of the sea. These functional surveys cover such topics as pollution, navigation, fishing, and military uses. Provided at the end of each chapter is a select listing of recommended books and articles for further research.

Compton-Hall, Richard. *Submarine Boats; the Beginnings of Underwater Warfare*. New York: Arco, 1983. 192pp. \$19.95

This history of the origin and development of the submarine was written to commemorate the recovery and salvage of the Royal Navy's first submarine from the English Channel in 1982. Compton-Hall, director of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, has used many rare old photographs and sketches from museum archives to illustrate the text. Drawing upon numerous manuscripts, he reconstructs the experiences of the intrepid Edwardian and Victorian underwater mariners who pioneered submarine boats from the mid-19th century through the close of World War I. Emphasis is given to the accomplishments of John T. Holland, father of the modern submarine, but, perhaps more importantly, the achievements of some little-known inventors are also brought to light in this lively narrative.

Cooper, John Milton, Jr. *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1983. 442pp. \$20.00

*The Warrior and the Priest* is a political biography and comparative analysis of the personalities, policies, and administrations of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. Political and intellectual rivals, they both were exceptional presidents who made significant contributions in shaping the political ideology of the twentieth century. Their confrontations, which were principally concerned with domestic reform and foreign policy, resulted in a series of philosophically rich debates about the purposes and directions of American and world politics. The title is a comparison to the clash of Friedrich Nietzsche's embodiments of the Will-to-Power, the Warrior and the Priest. Roosevelt, the Warrior, is strong, virile, a powerful personality; Wilson, the Priest, is virtuous, intellectual, quiet, but also a persuasive personality.

Dalgleish, D. Douglas and Schweikart, Larry. *Trident*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984. 512pp. \$32.50

Is the Trident the finest, most survivable, and most effective submarine in the world, or is the Trident program a giant boondoggle? Through close analysis of numerous published reports and interviews related to the building of the weapon, Dalgleish and Schweikart provide a historical perspective on the modern bureaucratic, legislative, and defense contracting process. They explore a number of issues surrounding the design and development of the Trident, including the problems of achieving continuity in and financial support for large defense programs in an open society, the nature of the media coverage given the Trident, its strategic role in relation to Nato and US defenses as a whole, and the political and military considerations affecting weapons procurement in democracies.

DeGrasse, Robert W., Jr. *Military Expansion, Economic Decline: the Impact of Military Spending on US Economic Performance*. Armonk, NY: Sharpe, 1983. 248pp. \$25.00

This comprehensive analysis examines the net economic impact of military spending and includes an assessment of the costs as well as the benefits associated with Pentagon programs. In the author's opinion, the US government relies too heavily on military spending as a mechanism for stimulating the economy. Overemphasis on military-related spending diverts capital and skilled labor from emerging civilian industries and results in serious decreases in our export potential. DeGrasse proposes a return to investment in the private sector which will strengthen the nation's ability to meet the challenges of unemployment, foreign market losses, and diminishing technological leadership. This analysis is an expanded version of a study originally issued by the Council on Economic Priorities in 1983.

Downs, Frederick. *Aftermath: a Soldier's Return from Vietnam*. New York: Norton, 1984. 222pp. \$12.95.

*Aftermath*, the sequel to *The Killing Zone: My Life in the Vietnam War*, begins on 11 January 1968, when Second Lieutenant Downs stepped on a "Bouncing Betty" land mine. It severed one arm, maimed the other, and lacerated his legs and hips. The days and weeks of recovery are graphically described in this first-person narrative, which traces his six-month journey from the field hospital in Chu Lai through the chain of veterans' hospitals leading to home. Using strong, colorful language, it vividly depicts the wounded soldier's struggle with both the physical and psychological pain of rehabilitation at the end of an unpopular war. Downs, who received eight awards for valor in Vietnam, is currently director of the Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service for the Veterans Administration in Washington.

Dyson, Freeman. *Weapons and Hope*. New York: Harper & Row, 1984. 348pp. \$17.95

Dyson, professor of physics at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study, employs a humanistic perspective in this exploration of some of the questions surrounding the possession of nuclear weapons. It consists of an examination of the historical roots of nuclear weapons development as well as consideration of the nature of the weapons themselves; the public's perceptions of them; relevant national cultural patterns; and several alternative strategic doctrines. Contending that human cultural patterns are more durable than weapons technologies, he suggests that nuclear weapons are

controllable through moral, political, and technological means. A strategy recommended for avoiding future dependence on nuclear arms is treated in some detail.

Ethell, Jeffrey and Price, Alfred. *Air War South Atlantic*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1983. 260pp. \$17.95

This account of the air war in the Falklands is unique in that the viewpoints of both sides are presented only a year after the war's conclusion. Air-to-air and air-to-surface actions are described, including both the successful and unsuccessful Exocet missile attacks. The authors differ from official sources over the number of confirmed "kills" credited to British surface-to-air weapons and include their own findings. The discussion considers the effect of sophisticated weapons of modern air operations.

Fergusson, Thomas G. *British Military Intelligence, 1870-1914*. Frederick, Md.: University Publications of America, 1984. 280pp. \$25.00

Fergusson discusses the development of British military intelligence during the period from 1870 to 1914. While the strength and size of the Empire were conducive to intelligence gathering development, the military conducted a casual arrangement until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Modern military managers might find it of interest that, by 1914, British military intelligence had developed many of the characteristics of present day systems on both the tactical and strategic levels.

Fernandez-Armesto, Felipe. *Sadat and His Statecraft*. 2d ed. Windsor Forest, Berkshire: Kensal Press, 1983. 185pp. \$15.95

A critical study of an important world leader, *Sadat and His Statecraft* is, in the author's words, "an attempt at an interim assessment of Sadat's achievements, an anatomy of his statecraft, and a search for an explanation of the spiritual and intellectual sources of his approach to politics." Thus we have here a short but comprehensive study of the Egyptian leader's work and his political style as well as an evaluation of the nature and extent of his impact on world events. The author, a historian and journalist, relies heavily on Sadat's memoirs, *In Search of Identity*. Of particular interest is the chapter on the assassination and its causes.

Fisk, Robert. *In Time of War: Ireland, Ulster and the Price of Neutrality*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1983. 565pp. \$25.00

On the eve of World War II, England returned to the Republic of Ireland the three Atlantic Treaty ports of Cobh, Berehaven, and Lough Swilly, which had been occupied by the Royal Navy since 1922. The loss of those bases cost the allies hundreds of lives from German U-boat attacks and so strained relations between the two countries that London considered invasion. The author explores the relationship between Churchill, de Valera, Roosevelt, and Hitler and utilizes previously unpublished documents to examine the degree to which decisionmaking in Belfast, Dublin, and London was influenced by Irish history and mutual distrust.

Gabriel, Richard A. *The Antagonists*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984. 208pp. \$29.95

Gabriel offers this comparative assessment of the Soviet and American armies based, not on hardware or budgets, but rather on the performance of individual soldiers and small units. He faults both the Soviet method of conscription and the US all-volunteer force as the sources of various ills in their respective services. The analysis considers officers and enlisted men of all levels and takes into account such factors as discipline, morale, and unit cohesion. Among other conclusions, the author contends that Russian stress on ideology and American infatuation with "entrepreneurial utility as the basis for military cohesion" are continuing to have a detrimental effect upon the proficiency of their armies.

Gardner, Lloyd C. *A Covenant with Power: America and World Order from Wilson to Reagan*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984. 251pp. \$22.95

The principal themes of this work are the liberal state, its supporters, and the use of power. Woodrow Wilson is considered the pivotal figure in the search for advancing a liberal ideology throughout the world, during the time when the United States assumed the role as leader in the preservation of world order. A time when worldwide intervention was considered necessary to serve the cause of liberty and freedom. Gardner's examination of American foreign policy initiatives includes Wilson's search for a League of Nations, Roosevelt's use of power politics in an age of depression and totalitarianism, the Cold War, the Korean War, Vietnam, Carter's human rights campaign, and the world recession.

Haines, Gregory. *Destroyers at War*. Runcy, England: Allen, 1982. 128pp. \$9.95

The British and Dominion destroyers that saw action on the many fronts in the Second World War are the subject of this book. Conceived about a hundred years ago as torpedo boat destroyers, the concept of the destroyer in its original form reached its culmination in World War II. Rather than a formal history, the author describes selected actions supplemented with eyewitness accounts. There are many illustrations to complement the text and an appendix listing the ships by name in each class.

Heggoy, Alf A. and Haar, John M. *The Military in Imperial History; the French Connection*. New York: Garland, 1984. 302pp. \$50.00

France's overseas expansion had its origins in the first crusade (1097). At various times since then, France has controlled over 70 different territories, colonies, protectorates, or condominiums worldwide. This bibliography consists of regional surveys of French overseas military activities with separate chapters on the French Foreign Legion, French colonialization and imperialism, and French military organization and theory. Each of the 20 chapters begins with a brief essay on the sources followed by a bibliography. Although subject indexing is not provided, this guide includes an author index, a chronology of selected events in French imperial history, and a brief introductory essay that summarizes French military activities overseas during the last thousand years.



Hodges, Tony. *Western Sahara: the Roots of a Desert War*. Westport, Conn.: Lawrence Hill, 1983. 388pp. \$19.95; paper \$14.95

A detailed and comprehensive study of the origins of the war in Northern Africa, this monograph traces the history of the Saharawis (the territory's indigenous inhabitants) back a thousand years, describing their nomadic way of life, their relations with their neighbors, and their early contacts with Europeans. Essentially a chronological study, the book delves deeply into the major events of the twentieth century, including Spain's colonization of the region, the Saharawi revolt of 1957 and 1958, and Spain's sudden decision to abandon the Western Sahara in the mid-1970s. Other areas of concern include the rise of the modern nationalist movement, the origin and evolution of the territorial claims of Morocco and Mauritania, and the broad regional and international implications of the struggle. Finally, the war itself is treated in some depth.

Howarth, Stephen. *The Fighting Ships of the Rising Sun: the Drama of the Imperial Japanese Navy 1895-1945*. New York: Atheneum, 1983. 398pp. \$19.95

As a fighting force, the Imperial Japanese Navy existed for only 50 years, from 1895 to 1945. Yet, in its first decade of existence, this navy defeated those of two of the world's oldest and largest empires, China and Russia; at its pinnacle of power, it possessed the two largest and most powerful battleships ever made; and, in its final decade, passed from command of some 6,000 miles of the world's oceans to virtual extinction. Howarth has drawn his material from diaries, new archival material, and interviews with those who served both for and against the Imperial Navy. First person accounts lend a certain intimacy to the narrative and are valuable for understanding the phenomenal rise and fall of the navy once called the third greatest in the world.

Karsten, Peter et al. *Military Threats; a Systematic Historical Analysis of the Determinants of Success*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984. 166pp. \$29.95

In this scholarly monograph, authors Peter Karsten, Peter D. Howell, and Artis F. Allen focus on the reasons some military threats succeed while others fail. Although some of their findings refute the conventional wisdom, the methodology used was designed to be verifiable and statistically significant. The hypotheses were tested against 77 historical case studies, and the findings were then applied to six new cases. Some of the major areas of concern included the general characteristics of direct military threats, some determinants of success or failure, the effect of nuclear weapons on military threats, and their long-term consequences. Ranging from 431 B.C. to the present, the cases chosen for analysis were evaluated in light of numerous variables and represent military threats that have been made around the world.

Kozaczuk, Wladyslaw. *Enigma*. Frederick, Md.: University Publications of America, 1984. 348pp. \$24.00

This is the story of the Polish cryptologists who were not only the first to break German Enigma cipher, but also developed many of the techniques later used successfully in the British Ultra program. Since the Enigma cipher was used by German military intelligence and political organizations, the ability to read it was a

major contribution to the Allied war effort. The author contends that present knowledge of the "Ultra secret" will necessitate a major reevaluation of World War II history and that German refusal to consider decryptment of Enigma possibly offers a valuable lesson on the illusion of security.

Nixon, Richard M. *Real Peace*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1984. 107pp. \$12.95

Nixon says that the weapons of modern war, conventional and nuclear, would make a conflict between the superpowers too costly to the victor to justify any conceivable benefit. Yet he also warns that disarmament, peace-through-trade, and various other schemes are misleading "myths of peace." Instead, we must pursue a policy of détente and deterrence that will curb Soviet aggression and reduce the chance of war. The ex-president discusses arms control, the Western alliance, Central America, and the Third World; he also offers a foreign policy program he believes will establish a lasting peace.

O'Neill, Gerard K. *The Technology Edge: Opportunities for America in World Competition*.

New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983. 299pp. \$16.95

This is an age of revolutionary new technologies with great potential benefit to society. How successful American competition will be in the decade ahead depends upon the decisions we make today. O'Neill evaluates the status of high technology industries in the United States and predicts where they are headed. Part I is an in-depth look at Japan, our most formidable industrial competitor. Part II explores six major technological opportunities of our time. Part III is an investigation of uniquely American developments that are already remarkably successful and productive.

Porter, Bernard. *Britain, Europe and the World 1850-1982: Delusions of Grandeur*. Boston:

Allen & Unwin, 1983. 173pp. \$19.50

Porter begins with the questions, What did it mean for Britain to be a great power in the nineteenth century? and, Could anything have prevented her decline? His theme is that Great Britain's decline as a world power was inevitable; neither the various leaders nor the political parties determined the course of her fortune as much as certain built-in contradictions in the nature of her nineteenth-century economy and society. The book traces British history and diplomacy and underscores some common myths of her past as a world power—myths that the author believes are still used to justify political actions.

Salisbury, Harrison. *China: 100 Years of Revolution*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983. 256pp. \$35.00

Chinese revolutionary movements can be traced back to the anti-Manchu anti-opium frustrations in the last century. The movements began about the mid-nineteenth century and continued down to the present era, the Cultural Revolution being the latest example. Salisbury discusses these revolutionary movements, starting with Hung Hsiu-chuan in the 1850s and continuing up to Mao Tse-tung and the Gang of Four in the 1970s. The account of interplay between the Soviets, Chinese Communists, and the Kuomintang before and after World War II is of particular

Schultz, Richard H. and Godson, Roy. *Dezinformatsia; Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*.

Washington: Pergamon-Brassey, 1984. 216pp. \$19.95; paper \$12.95

A systematic study of how Moscow employs overt and covert propaganda and political manipulation as instruments of foreign policy and strategy. Using content analysis of Soviet publications and examination of Soviet manipulation of international front organizations, the authors document the ways in which Moscow uses propaganda and political influence techniques together in pursuit of foreign policy goals. Two former Soviet bloc intelligence officers are also interviewed. A focus of the book concerns Soviet use of misinformation to weaken the Nato alliance. The concepts, the doctrine, and the organizational structure created to conduct these activities are delineated; various types of covert political techniques are described; and the policy implications of the findings are considered.

Shen, James. *The U.S. & Free China: How the U.S. Sold Out Its Ally*. Washington:

Acropolis Books, 1983. 310pp. \$14.95

For many years a servant of his government, James Shen had the misfortune to be serving as the Republic of China's ambassador to the United States when President Nixon initiated the steps leading to the formal recognition of the Peking government. As the diplomat on the scene, he was both witness and actor in the ensuing events. America, he contends, lost much credibility in the world by failing to alert her friends to the changed course in her policy. With admitted feeling, Mr. Shen gives his assessment of the realpolitik of Messrs. Nixon, Carter, Kissinger, and Brzezinski. An epilogue updates relations between the Nationalist Chinese and the Reagan administration.

Tsipis, Kosta. *Arsenal: Understanding Weapons in the Nuclear Age*. New York: Simon &

Schuster, 1983. 342pp. \$16.95

Intended for the layperson, this concise guide to nuclear weapons outlines their development, design, and effects; it describes their delivery systems; and it examines possible means of verifying arms control agreements. The introductory section, which deals with the history of the fission bomb, the physics of a nuclear explosion, and the physical effects of a nuclear blast, is of particular interest. Other sections cover nuclear war, weapons systems, and defenses. Some of the more technical aspects of the nuclear arsenal are treated in the lengthy appendix section. Using a factual and objective approach, Tsipis (a physicist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) provides a summary of information needed by readers who wish to intelligently address the issues of nuclear weapons and nuclear war.

Villar, Roger. *Merchant Ships at War: the Falklands Experience*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval

Institute Press, 1984. 192pp. \$14.95

Operation Corporate was the Royal Navy's plan for retaking the Falkland Islands after Argentina's invasion on 2 April 1982. Included in that plan was the selection and modification of merchant vessels in direct support of the navy. This is the story of the vital contribution of those merchant ships in the winning of the Falklands War. It describes the design modifications made to the ships and their subsequent activities under wartime emergency conditions. The exercise clearly demonstrated the capability of the merchant fleet to support the navy in an operation of this nature.

## NAVAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

The History Department of the United States Naval Academy will sponsor its seventh Naval History Symposium on 26-27 September 1985. The Symposium is seeking papers on all topics relating to naval and maritime history. Proposals should be sent to Associate Professor Kenneth J. Hagan, History Department, US Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD 21402, not later than 1 April 1985.