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Naval power continues to offer flexibility, mobility, universality, and public acceptance to policymakers but the ordering function of military force has become less certain, perhaps less appropriate, as international conditions grow more complex. Some factors affecting the future use of naval power are discussed herein.

THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF AMERICAN SEAPOWER

by

James A. Nathan and James K. Oliver

The "Expansion of Force." Among the more important of the new complexities confronting both analysis and policy are those surrounding the use of force. For almost 300 years prior to the end of World War II, the pursuit of "security" by nation-states has been the central dynamic of international politics. The correlative of this condition has been an expansion of the capacity of the nation-state to deploy and use military power. During the last 150 years of this "expansionist phase"[1] of the role of military power in international politics an important paradox emerged: the use of military power could result in enormous disorder but, under certain circumstances, order as well. Maximizing the potentialities for order became the preoccupation of that essential prescription for prudential behavior in an international politics based on the inevitability of war—the balance of power. As one of the most careful students of the balance of power notes: it "... is not a formula for perfect peace, but rather for reasonable stability and order with no more than moderate use of violent techniques by the states involved in the system."[2]

The 20th century seems to many to have demonstrated the futility of power. Three decades of international disorder culminated in the skies over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in what many regarded as the ultimate expansion of force. How, it might be asked, could this most immoderate of military instrumentalities be "used" to foster order in an international system characterized by deep Soviet-American hostility and conflict?

To post-World War II American realists, the period of expanding force in international relations has been seen as coming to a conclusion. It was, they believed, replaced by what Robert Osgood termed a "regulatory" phase in

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world politics. In this new period, the threat of war replaced the use of military power as an ordering process.[3] At the same time, however, realists argued that the national interests of the United States in a bipolar world required the threat and under some circumstances, the use of force including nuclear weapons—if Soviet power was to be contained. "[W]ith as much conjecture as hope" as Osgood put it,[4] American policymakers sought to reconstruct world order and manage the security dilemma through the "uses of military power short of war"[5]—or, at a minimum, short of nuclear war.

Some Policy Implications . . . and Consequences. A great testing of these doctrines of controlled threat and violence came in the waters off Cuba and in the inhospitable terrain of Vietnam. The Cuban Missile Crisis suggested the realist contention that the threat of nuclear war could be manipulated so as to achieve American ends and, in time, to stimulate the superpowers to pursue a more regulated strategy. Vietnam, however, now stands with more ambiguous portent. It revealed that the application of enormous amounts of conventional force was not in itself adequate or appropriate to that war. Moreover, among the consequences of the effort was a serious erosion of popular support not only for the immediate conflict but the larger policy of containment if it was dependent upon the controlled use of conventional violence.

Simultaneously, the many "new forces"[6] of international political economics moved to the top of American policymakers agendas. Food, energy, oceans policy, environmental concerns, "neomercantilism," international monetary stability, the multinational corporation and the many other manifestations of what had been traditionally regarded as "low politics," were now viewed as central issues. Indeed, the whole notion of interdependence challenged the relevance of the realist's balance of power images and metaphors. Complicating matters further, of course, was the fact that the older concerns were clearly not irrelevant. Today's crises of political economic interdependence had not displaced such "traditional" concerns as strategic arms control, proliferation, the NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation in central Europe, or the multiple crises that pervaded the Mediterranean basin. Rather, both "tracks" of American postwar foreign policy now vied for attention.[7] They were no longer separable into distinct bureaucratic niches and, most frustrating of all, the policy instruments developed since the 1940s—"liberal capitalist" international economics and institutions on the one hand and the modalities of strategic deterrence, limited war, and the threat of force on the other—no longer seemed comprehensively applicable. And, when these approaches were applied, policymakers could no longer assume that the limits of public permissibility were sufficiently broad and pliant to allow for what Henry Kissinger referred to as "the modicum of ambiguity" necessary for the conduct of foreign relations.[8]

Policy Change and Naval Power. We now stand somewhere beyond, but nearer the beginning than the end of, the effort to develop concepts and fashion policy instruments appropriate to new international conditions. By the early 1970s naval power seemed to have emerged somewhat better thought of than other instruments of military power. Whereas the portions of the defense budget claimed by the Army and the Air Force had declined or at best remained constant, the Navy's had grown.[9] Undoubtedly much of this budgetary growth can be related to the challenge posed by expanding Soviet naval power as well as the modernization program launched by the Navy in the wake of its decision to retire the obsolete portion of the fleet. Neverthe-

less, the commitment of substantial resources to the Navy also represents an important part of the Nixon-Kissinger response to the new international and domestic political realities of the 1970s. Part of the Nixon-Kissinger response to a changing international reality was a marginal reduction of the American Military Establishment outside Europe and the Mediterranean. Significantly, however, the Nixon Doctrine did not involve elimination of an American presence in these areas. Indeed, to the extent that the Nixon Doctrine required continued American access in support of regional surrogates responsible for the maintenance of local balances of power, responsive global American military assets remained essential. However, domestic political constraints were such that the deployment and use of these military forces had to minimize the risks of involvement in sustained, intense conventional ground combat while maximizing American combat support capacity and symbolic presence. Given these circumstances and the persistence of support assumptions concerning the European contingency, a "renaissance" of naval power took place during the early 1970s.

Because of the insistence of Nixon and Carter that the global range of our interests remains undiminished and because a European war seems relatively unlikely, the most pervasive mission for the Navy under present and likely future international and domestic conditions is that of presence.[10] To be sure, the last two Chiefs of Naval Operations have defined sea control and projection of power as the fundamental missions of the surface fleet of the U.S. Navy. And force structure and individual ship design remain predicated on the carrying out of "nonpeaceful" missions. Nonetheless, international political, economic, and strategic conditions in which the appearance and display of potential strategic and conventional power is at least as important as the use of that power, make the mission of presence or peacetime deterrence crucial. Then too, if, owing to the fear of domestic political consequences or the fear of escalation to nuclear war, the use of naval power must be restricted to low-risk and low-cost operations, the likelihood of "nonpeaceful" use diminishes and the capacity or limitations of naval power as an instrument of political influence assumes greater importance.

The Utility of Naval Force in an Era of Discounted Forces. Naval power would certainly seem to have a number of attributes that make it an appropriate military instrument in a world in which the availability and even forward positioning of potential military power is deemed necessary, but domestic as well as international political circumstances complicate and constrain its ultimate use. As Hedley Bull has noted:

> As an instrument of diplomacy, sea power has long been thought to possess certain classical advantages *vis-a-vis* land power and, more recently, air power. The first of these advantages is flexibility: a naval force can be sent and withdrawn, and its size and activities varied, with a higher expectation that it will remain subject to control than is possible when ground forces are committed. The second is visibility: by being seen on the high seas or in foreign ports a navy can convey threats, provide reassurances or earn prestige in a way that troops or aircraft in their home bases cannot do. The third is its universality or pervasiveness: the fact that the seas, by contrast with the land and the air, are an international medium allows naval vessels to reach distant countries independently or nearby bases . . . .[11]

Bull might also have added that modern navies are technology intensive, which is not without its domestic political benefits in a society that prides itself on and takes much of its identity from its technological prowess. Moreover, and perhaps most important, the political and economic appeal of such forces is all but irresistable for a people and their politicians who have recently experienced for a second time in less than 20 years the agony of tens of thousands of their sons dying and being maimed on unpronounceable battlefields on the other side of the world.

None of this was lost on the framers of the Nixon Doctrine or, one suspects, their successors either. Thus, apart from what the Soviets might have done, it seems likely that naval power would have assumed its current salience in post-Vietnam American national security policy. Of course any expansion of the Soviet Fleet would complicate the task of a military force that now finds itself the primary "forward" presence throughout much of the world and, in addition, responsible for the support of American interests in the Mediterranean and the maintenance of sea lines of communication to and protecting the flanks of NATO in the event of war in Europe. A larger Soviet naval presence raises fears of declining or neutralized credibility for the American naval presence and, to the extent that the expanded Soviet Navy can carry out sea denial, dangerous complications for the Navy to carry out its sea control and power projection missions. Predictably, therefore, the missions and role of naval power have assumed, along with the ongoing problems of strategic stability, the central position in current discussions and analysis of American defense policy.

Yet analysis focused on the use of naval power is regarded by many observers as underdeveloped. Adm. Stansfield Turner, among others, has lamented: "Despite the Navy's increasingly important role in peacetime deterrence, there is no body of doctrine or writing on how to accomplish this deterrent mission."[12] More recently, Admiral Turner, then serving as Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe observed:

> I believe that the essence of the deterrent peacetime function is to have many different types of ships, capable of orchestrating the right kind of action in many different places. But do we know enough about orchestrating? . . . Further, I think that we who exercise naval presence do not know enough about how to fit the action to the situation: how to be sure that the force we bring to bear when told to help in some situation is in fact the one most appropriate to the circumstances. I would also suggest that in an era of detente we are likely to see much more competition between the Soviet and free-world navies in the field of presence.[13]

To the extent that there is a body of literature and doctrine directed at the problem outlined by Admiral Turner, it concludes that the combination of the international environment and the attributes of naval power are such as to, in Professor Luttwak's words, ". . . render it [naval power] peculiarly useful as an instrument of policy even in the absence of hostilities."[14] A central question, of course, is whether future international politics will be so benign or permissive. In addition, there is the question, seldom if ever discussed, of whether domestic political conditions will impinge significantly on the efficacy of naval power in the future.

Constraints in the Future Environment of U.S. Naval Power. Apart from the question of the general structure and dynamics of future international society to which we return in our

conclusion, there are at least four sets of more specific factors that seem likely to affect perceptions of and the actual efficacy of American naval force in the future:

1. the transformation of the international legal regime of the oceans;
2. changes in military technology that seem, on balance, to enhance the capacity of the defense;
3. the Soviet Navy; and
4. perhaps the most indeterminant of factors, American domestic politics.

If the attributes of mobility, political and military flexibility, and the universality of geographic reach, as well as its domestic political acceptability are all characteristics of naval power that have moved it to the forefront of American national security policy, then clearly environmental factors constraining these attributes deserve close scrutiny.

Closure of the "Great Commons." A crucial assumption of claims for the uniqueness of naval power is the idea that naval force operates in an "international" and "free" medium. The legal regime applicable to the oceans has been for the most part quite permissive; indeed, it has been based on the legitimacy of minimal constraints on the high seas. It is likely, however, that we are now moving away from these doctrines of *mare liberum* towards an uneven and incrementally established legal regime of modified *mare clausum*. Important elements of this system will include 12-mile territorial seas and some form of fairly extensive—probably 200 mile—economic zones in which coastal states exercise some measure of sovereign control beyond that now commonly in force, and, perhaps "demilitarized" oceans as well.

Complicating this situation even further is that the process whereby this extension of coastal state sovereignty occurs is unlikely to have the neatness of a judicial or even legislative proceeding. The present lumbering Law of the Sea Conference aside, the effect and working of the legal regime is likely to take quite some time to emerge as coastal states develop the technological or economic bases for exploiting and managing their extended maritime sovereignty. In addition, it is likely that much of this activity will be undertaken through commercial arrangements with private entrepeneurs who will require, indeed, demand, a degree of policing to secure their operations. In the absence of the provision of such services by the coastal states, it is possible that the coming decades will witness the development of "private" maritime policing capability.

We are not positing exotic scenarios of "private navies" interfering with the projection of American naval power. Nevertheless, the extension of coastal state economic activity scores and perhaps hundreds of miles offshore will probably introduce greater complexity into a formerly simple and permissive maritime environment. Indeed, the unilateral extension of offshore sovereignty is already well underway. Moreover, the process of extension has thus far not proceeded strictly within the confines of international negotiation. Hence, more diffuse and uneven mechanisms of "normal" politics are likely to define ocean space—at least in the short run. The net effect is, therefore, likely to be even greater ambiguity and uncertainty where formerly there was confidence in the benign nature of the medium in which naval power operated. Elizabeth Young summarizes the problem:

> The great navies will find their traditional roaming of the open seas, "showing the flag" in their interest, constrained, psychologically where not physically, by the multitude of new jurisdictional boundaries. The rights of foreign naval vessels within boundaries of quite unfamiliar texture . . . will need establishing not only by

theoretical definition, in terms of international convention, but also by subjection to all the normative pressures of practise and experience.[15]

The openness of the "great common" is of course the basis of the purported uniqueness of naval power; for it is now one of the necessary conditions for conceiving and undertaking all naval missions. If, however, a naval force no longer operates in an "international" medium and needs to be very concerned with transgressing often ill-defined "sovereign" territory, or international or commercial arrangements, is not one of the elements that makes naval force so appropriate to the conditions of contemporary world politics radically handicapped, if not eliminated?

In addition, the fact that the United States has now joined the movement towards the establishment of a 200-mile economic zone will probably complicate the domestic budgetary and bureaucratic politics of the U.S. Navy. Insofar as policing this expanded zone leads to increased requests for U.S. Coast Guard assets, one might speculate that some potentially nasty budgetary confrontations might result if these two seagoing forces confront one another in Congress. One can expect an increase in the Coast Guard's budget as offshore commercial operations by American companies increase. Moreover, as some traditional coastal security questions seem to move to greater significance, e.g., problems of immigration and drug control, the occasions for competition for resources and definition of mission responsibility will be exacerbated. With constrained budgets it is not unreasonable to expect that some of this increase might come at the expense of the Navy.* Alternatively, of course, the Navy might be asked to assume a portion of the coastal policing role—a new mission for a force structured around global policing.

Changes in Military Technology. If the new international legal regime exists only on paper, it is unlikely to inhibit significantly the use of American naval power. Coastal states must be able to enforce their claims; otherwise very little will have changed. Under present conditions naval missions would seem, therefore, to maintain their viability. But the proliferation of new military technology could in time change decisively this situation and thereby compromise the use of naval force both in and short of war. Laurence Martin, for example, has recently predicted a possible increase in military conflict at sea as jurisdictional claims and disputes proliferate and as coastal states increase their capacity to enforce their claims to this newest dimension of their sovereignty, through the acquisition of precision-guided munitions (PGMs) and modern patrol craft. It is likely that these conflicts will remain regionally contained, confined to the level of conventional weapons, and directed by coastal states at each other. It is unlikely, however, that the U.S. Navy can escape the broader implications of this situation if American policy requires that it intervene in these disputes.

Though most analysis and speculation on the effect of PGMs have concentrated on land warfare, the potential proliferation of precision-guided weapons to "lesser" powers does not seem to favor the expressive use of naval power, especially if that use presupposes the classic, vastly asymmetric circumstances wherein a powerful state attempts to coerce a state with a relatively primitive military establishment.

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*Yet another possibility for "rationalizing" this potential bureaucratic tangle would be absorption of the Coast Guard into the U.S. Navy. One suspects, however, that "rationalization" of this sort would involve a bureaucratic struggle of some magnitude.

The problem presented is a good deal more complex than a question of tactics to be employed by the U.S. Navy in dealing with a coastal state possessing a modest arsenal of PGMs. It is reasonable to expect that American technological superiority should be such that an American naval force could overwhelm whatever defensive measures could be arrayed against it. The more problematic issue concerns the cost of such a "successful" projection of American naval power. Recent analysis and events suggest that the costs would not necessarily be minor.[16] Not all or even most coastal states will be able to employ PGMs at the extremity of their coastal zones but ". . . the advent of the surface-to-surface missiles has given the coastal states the ability to inflict serious damage on destroyer or cruiser-size ships within twenty miles or so of the coast."[17] Moreover, a proliferation of PGM-armed patrol craft implies a seaward extension of this potential defensive perimeter. Similarly, the projection of tactical airpower, though devastating for the target, is unlikely to be cost free if the Vietnam experience is indicative. Likewise, the military valor and technological superiority of the U.S. Marine Corps might lead ultimately to a successful opposed landing, but not without cost.

Nor is it sufficient to count such costs as militarily "acceptable," for the ultimate accounting must be political. That is to say, the most important calculations in the future may be those undertaken by a political leadership concerned by the political costs represented by scores or perhaps hundreds of marines dead, missing, or wounded; pilots captured, or major warships damaged. The decision may indeed be to pay the price; but with PGMs involved the "price" may prove higher and more politically potent than heretofore reckoned. Thus, if what Luttwak has termed "active suasion" becomes fraught with higher risk, even the activities associated with "latent suasion" or "peacetime deterrence" must be undertaken with a degree of preparation and care that cannot be counted as "routine." And if the purported "flexibility" of naval power is thereby constrained, then its political use is in some measure reduced, the ultimate capacity of American naval power to prevail in a test of arms notwithstanding.

Precision-guided munitions seem, therefore, likely to erode and complicate the potential for a diplomacy predicated on the easy deployment of naval power. On land, PGMs may place a premium on dispersion and concealment. But on sea, dispersion and concealment are the very antithesis of the traditional presence and show of force missions. The ships that loom so awesome and impressive in their traditional role—carriers or cruisers in the case of the United States and *Kara*-class cruisers in that of the Soviet Union—may find it difficult to operate in a PGM threat area. The advent of PGMs makes unopposed landings less plausible and therefore less credible as a deterrent. Furthermore, PGMs may also escalate the level or intensity of combat activity—a blurring of the distinction between low and high intensity operations.[18] Thus the advent of PGMs may, in short, attenuate the theoretical and practical attempt to marry force and diplomacy.[19]

Finally, PGM induced changes may also vitiate another centerpiece of naval strategy—sea control—which in Admiral Holloway's view is ". . . the fundamental mission of the U.S. Navy" and ". . . is a prerequisite of all other naval tasks and most sustained overseas operations by the general purpose forces of the other services."[20] However, "sustained overseas operations by the general purpose forces of the other services" seems to be a diminishing probability apart from the European Mediterranean contingencies. Moreover, the increasingly common prognosti-

cation that future conflict in Europe is most likely to be brief and intense does not augur well for a sea control mission.

Even if one grants the necessity for some sea control capacity in support of a resupply effort, however, the problem remains of what kind of force structure would be most appropriate against attack submarines or PGM-armed enemy surface ships and aircraft. One answer may be a sea control force structure built around some combination of submersible and large numbers of conventionally powered surface patrol craft, and perhaps a much more modest aircraft carrier. Such concepts are not new, of course, but significantly they have encountered a good deal of opposition within the Navy and in Congress. Moreover, a sea control capacity of the sort described here does not bristle with awesome power projection capacity and is, therefore, less useful for the latter mission and the closely related task of global presence.

Thus, technological change will not make any easier the Navy's adaptation to the future. In fact, technological change may be bringing submerged inconsistent foreign policy assumptions to the fore, assumptions that must now be resolved. As long as the U.S. Navy remained superior to almost any combination of forces that could be brought to bear against it, it was perhaps possible to maintain that it could carry out virtually any set of missions with a force structure built around the large aircraft carrier. Now, however, impending changes in technology underscore important intrinsic incompatibilities within a comprehensive set of missions in the service of worldwide interests. In the absence of external pressures, it has been easy for the U.S. Navy and the American foreign policy community that it has served to assume that it could do virtually anything. Thus, at crucial moments over the last 30 years naval power has been called on and it has always "worked." But in most instances U.S. naval superiority could be assumed. Now, however, technological change—long the servant of American supremacy—makes that superiority situationally problematic.

The Soviet Navy. There seems little benefit in recapitulating in great detail the current debate concerning the growth of the Soviet Navy. An outline of the contending positions should suffice.[21] On the one hand, a substantial body of official and academic opinion holds that the expansion of the Soviet Navy during the last 10 to 15 years has brought the Soviet Navy to parity and in some respects, superiority over the U.S. Navy. The upshot of this situation, it is held, is that the Soviet Union is now in a position to establish overall supremacy over the United States in the near future. In contrast, other observers discount the alarm and pessimism of the first group. While not denying Soviet expansion, this latter group would suggest that the new Soviet naval presence is best understood as a logical extension of its historic preoccupation with the defensive uses of naval power. Thus from an essentially coastal defense navy, the Soviets have moved to establish a surface navy capable of contesting and if possible denying sea control to the U.S. Navy in those areas deemed most vital to Soviet defense, e.g., the eastern Mediterranean, the northern Atlantic and perhaps the northwestern portion of the Pacific. Of course, any Soviet Fleet expansion extends its capacity to engage in some forward deployment of its own. Nevertheless, it is argued, the lack of Soviet capacity for sustained resupply, lack of significant air cover once away from coastal areas, and at best, replacement levels of surface ship construction, all suggest the conclusion reached by Barry Blechman: ". . . Generally, and with the exception of strategic submarines, the Soviet Navy does not appear to be designed to project the Soviet Union's power into distant oceans."[22]

Perhaps more important than detailed and ultimately inconclusive comparisons of force structure are the asymmetries in the mission profiles of the two superpower navies. The U.S. surface navy has been, is now, and will continue to be (given current construction projections) a navy built around the missions of sea control and projection on a sustained forward deployed basis, all of which has given the U.S. Navy substantial presence capability. In contrast, the Soviet Union has built and seems likely to maintain a surface and subsurface navy, the primary mission of which will be close-to-home sea denial mission. A power projection or presence mission will be, at best, a residual capacity. The Soviet surface navy is designed for high intensity, perhaps preemptive, but not sustained, war at sea* against a U.S. Navy designed for a much broader range of contingencies. Thus force structure comparisons that do not account in some way for these mission asymmetries are almost invariably inconclusive. But those that have tried to compare the two navies generally agree with former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger's assessment:

> . . . once one removes the mission asymmetry and measures the balance, it becomes clear that the naval forces of the Soviet Union and its allies are not generally superior to those of the United States and its allies, and that this should be perceived by well-informed observers. . . .[23]

Yet if the Soviet Union has not achieved naval superiority it may have achieved something of nearly equal importance. All observers, no matter which side of the debate on Soviet expansion they may stand, agree that the Soviet Union has probably achieved the capacity to inflict significant losses on American naval task forces wherever they might come into contact. Moreover, it seems unlikely that Soviet-American naval combat could be isolated at sea. The apparently limited Soviet reload capacity[24] and the lack of seaborne air cover for their fleet increase the likelihood that any naval combat between the United States and the Soviet Union could quickly escalate encompassing not only contending naval forces but shore installations as well.

In short, the Soviets have probably achieved the capacity to carry virtually any naval contact with the United States beyond the threshold of limited or conventional war. In developing the capacity to take any naval contact to the level of strategic confrontation the Soviet Union has achieved at sea what it accomplished in the realm of strategic weapons in the mid and late 1960s: at least as much as and probably a good deal more than "finite deterrence." American policymakers will likely find it as difficult to "use" or even plan for the use of American naval power when confronted with Soviet naval forces as their predecessors did in the 1960s when they were compelled by the inevitable growth of Soviet strategic power to downgrade planning for limited nuclear war.

Leaving aside, therefore, the question of whether the Soviet Navy has or will achieve superiority over the U.S. Navy, a very important circumstance remains. The Soviet Navy now has the capacity to enlarge any contact with the U.S. Navy to at least the level of strategic confrontation or at worst, nuclear war. That capacity may have existed in theory or marginally in the past, but now it would appear to be an ongoing reality of contemporary world politics. In this respect, the loss of unequivocal superiority and adjustment of the naval

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*Soviet attack submarines undoubtedly have as their missions interdiction of allied shipping as well as a strike role against the American surface fleet. But most analysts agree with the conclusion of former Secretary of Defense Schlesinger that such an effort would ultimately fail.

balance of forces to one of what might be termed "challenged American superiority," implies a decline of American policy initiative when it concerns the use of naval power. In other words, American policymakers can no longer be sure that they can manage the tempo of politicomilitary engagement when the Soviet Navy is involved. Control over and the flexibility of the naval instrumentalities are not thereby completely surrendered. But new rigidities are present. Hence, the efficacy of naval power may decline simply because its use can no longer remain at the same level of relatively low risk.

Domestic Constraints. The effect of perceptions on American policymakers is even more pronounced with respect to the last of the factors to be considered. Public opinion and the interaction of American domestic political institutions have passed through a period of considerable stress. How the American public and political institutions respond will be of considerable importance for future users of naval power. Indeed, to the extent that American domestic politics have proven to be even more dangerous than international issues for American policymakers, at least passing attention to the nature of these factors seems in order.

Two sets of factors have attracted the most attention in recent years: the dynamics of American public opinion within internationalist to neoisolationist policy limits and the effects of Vietnam and Watergate on the balance of institutional power within the executive-legislative relationship. The two are, of course, closely related in that the executive-legislative policymaking nexus is invariably conditioned by the perceptions held by those who operate within it concerning the limits of permissibility roughly defined by American public opinion. Policy initiative remains, therefore, within the executive-legislative interaction and nothing that has happened in the past decade has changed the *ex post facto* nature of public rewards and deprivations. What may have changed, however, is the content and hence the potential effect of public and elite expectations concerning America's global involvement.

It seems fairly clear, based on the considerable volume of public opinion polling conducted within the last few years, that the American public is in general less internationalist/interventionist in its propensities than a decade or two decades ago. However, it is important to recognize that American belief systems concerning foreign policy can no longer easily be circumscribed by internationalist-isolationist indexes. Such characterizations of American public opinion are, in the light of the latest Potomac Associates poll and recent testimony of the nation's leading public opinion experts,[25] gross oversimplifications of the state of the American people's thinking about American foreign policy.

What seems to be emerging is ambivalence towards but resigned acceptance of American activism in the international system. At the same time, however, there is a rejection of activism if this is translated by policymakers to mean military intervention. Herein lies perhaps the most important legacy of the Vietnam war that, despite all the exhortations of American policymakers, apparently remains the central element of people's perceptions of America's future world role. Despite crosscutting judgments concerning the extent to which Vietnam was a "special case" from which no valid generalizations can be drawn, Watts and Free report: "the closest thing to a consensus that emerges is a warning to avoid commitments, and potentially bloody involvements, where the security interests are not clear."[26]

Furthermore, there is evidence that the American people have moved toward greater sophistication con-

cerning the degree of success being experienced by American policy as well as lower expectations concerning the responsiveness of international problems to American remedies. Simultaneously, there has been a decline in the importance placed on foreign policy questions *vis-à-vis* other issue areas and at best a marginal restoration of confidence in how well American political institutions work in the foreign policy area. In short, Americans are concerned about the international image of the United States and its security as it relates to the other major international powers, but they are not prepared to accept policies for the advancement of American interests that entail a price to be paid in blood.

Perhaps most important, however, this general mood of ambivalence concerning America's international affairs becomes more clearly skeptical and even less accepting of traditional internationalist/interventionist policies among those normally associated with political elites in American society. Hence, the most recent poll data on higher income, college educated, professionals supports earlier analyses that found a rejection of American dominance in the world and dependence upon military instruments of policy.[27] That is to say, those groups from which the American foreign policy elite traditionally has been drawn now appear more skeptical concerning the past course of American foreign policy than any other group in American society. Four years ago, William P. Bundy told an American college audience:

> The makers of American policy from 1950 right through the present time were members of a generation of Americans—men ranging from their mid-eighties to their fifties—who had lived through a period of extreme rejection of force. . . . And those policies of rejecting force and rejecting American involvement in the world seemed . . . to contribute . . . to . . . the most ghastly human phenomena . . . of history. To the men who made the Vietnam decisions . . . all the men . . . Kennedy, Johnson, Rusk, my brother, myself, McNamara—all of us had participated . . . in the greatest debate over American entry in World War II on the side of intervention. We were interventionists at a time when you could assemble an interventionist meeting . . . and get 25 people . . . and in the end, after the intervention succeeded, it had universal support. . . . The interventionist point of view was vindicated . . . . It could prevent vast evil and open the way to progress. . . . War was viewed . . . not as "Catch 22" or "M.A.S.H." or even "Patton" . . . but as the only way to deal with world order.[28]

The last decade may represent for the political elites of today and tomorrow a learning experience no less dramatic than that which the decade of Munich represented for their parents.

Institutionally, the evidence concerning this generationally based policy change remains quite mixed. Thus generational turnover in the House of Representatives during the last decade seems to have contributed to some increased liberalism in that body. At the same time, however, a combination of ambivalence and caution on the part of newer members and the persistence in positions of institutional power of men of an older generation, has worked to soften somewhat the effects of Congress stirring from its 35-year slumber. In the Senate, for example, opponents of an anticipated shift in American policy away from its pre-Vietnam and pre-détente essentials are still able to provide a new President with some very bad moments when he seeks to place in the official foreign policy community, men who have come to doubt the future relevance of the old course. Further-

more, in both Houses recent defense budgets have, if anything, been expanded.

The more specific dangers that this ambivalence within the executive-legislative relationship could hold for the Navy have become manifest in the last 2 years. Whereas throughout most of the 1970s Navy budget requests, particularly for high cost, high capability combat vessels, were treated supportively by most of the Congress and the executive, objections have now been mobilized in both quarters. Skepticism concerning the pace and costs of the Navy's modernization program, especially its nuclear components,[29] has apparently gathered effective support in the White House and the Department of Defense during the last 2 years. Consequently, the future of the aircraft carrier, at least in its nuclear-powered incarnation, and the Navy's desired new class of nuclear-powered cruisers are now in some doubt and with them, the 600-ship fleet proposal of 2 years ago. If a similar lead concerning the *use* of naval power emerges from the new White House, we could see a crystallization of heretofore ambivalent opinion. The precedents are contradictory—e.g., *Mayaguez* and Angola—and offer little basis for confident prediction. Perhaps in the long run this combination of generational change and a general air of indeterminateness will in itself serve as a constraint although initiative would remain in the hands of the White House.

Summary and Conclusions. It is important to emphasize in closing this survey of likely factors that will affect the future use of naval power by the U.S. Government, that we have been talking about constraints and not factors that will preclude its use. As noted in our introductory remarks concerning the transformation now apparently underway in the international system, the role of force as both an instrumentality of international order and of narrower state interests has become increasingly constrained. This is not to say that it has not been used. Indeed, as Robert McNamara used to point out, the post-World War II era is characterized by its extraordinarily high frequency of war.[30] Nevertheless, recent American experience has led to the conclusion among millions of Americans and many within the policy community that its utility as an ordering instrumentality has declined and its future use is increasingly problematic although preparation for its use must continue. In such a complex and difficult policy environment, naval power seems to offer a number of advantages in terms of its flexibility, mobility, universality, and public acceptability. At the same time, however, modern naval power is increasingly susceptible to many of the forces that have impinged on and constrained other forms of military power. Moreover, its very flexibility may undermine the use of naval presence to signal commitment and political will.[31]

The outcome of this interplay of forces is, of course, extremely important for the United States, for it has staked a great deal on the continuing utility and flexibility of naval power. A wager on naval power, however, like a bet on any form of military power ultimately confronts the reality of what Edward L. Morse has called the "great transformation" of foreign policy.[32] The "modernization of international society," Morse and others have pointed out, means that force is a necessarily discounted instrument of policy. The source of our international "problems" is becoming less the zero-sum Soviet-American competition and more diffuse in origin. And as politics thus becomes "systemic" or "globalized," policy remedies become less apparent.

This does not mean that international military conflict or the use of naval power is about to disappear. It does mean that the ordering function of force for those who possess it—naval or

otherwise—is less certain and, perhaps, less relevant. A world plagued by economic stagnation, rising demands on governmental structures, the emergence of fissiparous nationalisms and subnationalisms, and nuclear proliferation will probably not be amenable to much order no matter how flexible the instrument, steadfast the will or great the firepower. And when, in the end, only the quantity of firepower is certain, the future of the regulatory phase of international history and the role of American naval power in it, remains clouded.

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARIES

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NOTES

1. The term is Robert Osgood's and this section relies heavily on Osgood's discussion in Robert Osgood and Robert Tucker, *Force, Order and Justice* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967).
2. Inis Claude, *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 88.
3. Osgood and Tucker.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
5. *Ibid.*
6. See Seyom Brown, *New Forces in World Politics* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1974).
7. Richard N. Cooper, "Trade Policy in Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1972-1973, pp. 18-36.
8. Text of a background briefing in New Orleans, 14 August 1970, p. 16, cited by David Landau, *Kissinger: The Uses of Power* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), p. 128.
9. Lawrence J. Korb, "The Defense Budget and Detente: Present Status, Assumptions and Future Possibilities," *Naval War College Review*, Summer 1975, pp. 19-27.
10. See the discussion by Stansfield Turner in "Designing a Modern Navy: A Workshop Discussion," in *Power at Sea: Part II: Super-powers and Navies*, Adelphi Papers, no. 123 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976), p. 28.
11. Hedley Bull, "Sea Power and Political Influence," in *Power at Sea: Part I: The New Environment*, Adelphi Papers, no. 122 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976), p. 6. Any analysis of the future environment of the international system as it relates to the future of the U.S. Navy can profit from this important essay; the present attempt is no exception.
12. Stansfield Turner, "Educational Innovation at the Naval War College, 1972-1974: A Case Study," *Naval War College Second Annual Report of the President*, 9 August 1974, p. 70.
13. Turner, "Designing a Modern Navy," p. 28.
14. Edward N. Luttwak, *The Political Uses of Sea Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 1.
15. Elizabeth Young, "New Law for Old Navies: Military Implications of the Law of the Sea," *Survival*, November-December 1974, p. 265.
16. See for example, International Institute for Strategic Studies, "New Naval Weapons Technologies," *Strategic Survey 1975* (London: 1976), p. 25.
17. Linton Wells, "Comments" in *Perspective on Ocean Policy*, Report of Conference on Conflict and Order in Ocean Relations, 21-24 October 1974, Airlie, Virginia, prepared for National Science Foundation under Grant No. GI 39643 by Ocean Policy Project, Johns Hopkins University.

18. See James Digby, *Precision-Guided Weapons,* Adelphi Papers, no. 118 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1975) and Richard Burt, *New Weapons Technologies: Debate and Directions,* Adelphi Papers, no. 126 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976) for a discussion of these and other issues related to the development of PGMs.

19. An additional consideration related to the likely proliferation of PGMs in the future is the role of terrorism as it relates to the exercise of naval power. This question has received little detailed analysis in the now large literature on terrorism. Perhaps the greatest "potential" would be in the area of terrorist attacks on commercial operations at sea, but one suspects that potential permutations run beyond disruption of commercial shipping.

20. James L. Holloway III, "The U.S. Navy: A Bicentennial Appraisal," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings,* July 1976, p. 19.

21. See Norman Polmar, *Soviet Naval Power: Challenge for the 1970s* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1974) and Michael MccGwire, et al., eds., *Soviet Naval Policy: Objectives and Constraints* (New York: Praeger Special Studies, 1975) for a rough approximation of the spectrum of opinion. In addition: MccGwire, ed., *Soviet Naval Developments: Capability and Context* (New York: Praeger, 1973); MccGwire, "Western and Soviet Naval Building Programmes 1965-1976," *Survival,* September/October 1976, pp. 204-209; George E. Hudson, "Soviet Naval Doctrine and Soviet Politics, 1953-1975," *World Politics,* October 1976, pp. 90-113; Barry Blechman, The Changing Soviet Navy (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1973); and Robert W. Herrick, *Soviet Naval Strategy: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1968).

22. Blechman, p. 36.

23. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1976,* Hearings (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1975), pt. 1, p. 64. Schlesinger did add, however, "Nonetheless, U.S. naval power has suffered a serious decline and must be resuscitated."

24. See John J. Holst, "The Navies of the Super-Powers: Motives, Forces, Prospects," in *Power at Sea: Part II,* pp. 1-14 and in the same collection, MccGwire's, "Maritime Strategy and the Super-Powers," pp. 15-24.

25. William Watts and Lloyd A. Free, "Nationalism, Not Isolationism," *Foreign Policy,* Fall 1976, pp. 3-26 and U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Foreign Policy Choices for the Seventies and Eighties* Hearings (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1975-1976), v. 1, pp. 1-130.

26. Watts and Free, p. 9.

27. Bruce M. Russett and Betty C. Hanson, "How Corporate Executives See America's Role in the World," *Fortune,* May 1974, p. 165 and Russett, "America's Retreat from World Power," mimeo, n.d., pp. 4-9.

28. William P. Bundy, Transcript of Remarks, 16 October 1973, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.

29. See James K. Oliver, "Congress and the Future of American Seapower: An Analysis of United States Navy Budget Requests in the 1970s," a paper prepared for delivery at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, The Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, 2-5 September 1976. See also, Senator John Stennis' speech before the Senate on "U.S. Naval Power," *Congressional Record,* 19 September 1974, pp. S17132-34.

30. On the frequency and general effectiveness of the use of threat of force by the United States, see Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *The Use of Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington: Advanced Research Projects Agency, 1976).

31. *Ibid.*

32. Edward L. Morse, *Modernization and the Transformation of International Relations* (New York: Free Press, 1976).

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