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# The Asia-Pacific rebalance: impact on U.S. naval strategy

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**NAVAL  
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SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**THE ASIA-PACIFIC REBALANCE: IMPACT ON U.S.  
NAVAL STRATEGY**

by

Michael A. Schelcher

March 2014

Thesis Advisor:

Daniel J. Moran

Second Reader:

Michael S. Malley

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**THE ASIA-PACIFIC REBALANCE: IMPACT ON U.S. NAVAL STRATEGY**

Michael A. Schelcher  
Lieutenant, United States  
B.S., U.S. Naval Academy, 2008

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
(FAR EAST, SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis analyzes the development of the Asia-Pacific rebalance and its possible effects on United States naval strategy over the next several decades. The goal is to develop a better understanding of the Asian rebalance in order to improve future strategic choices governing the employment of the United States Navy in Asia. It argues that the Asia-Pacific rebalance and its effects continue to emphasize the importance of the U.S. Navy due to the increasing importance of U.S. economic, political and security interests regionally. In conjunction with increasing regional threats from China and North Korea, as well as non-traditional threats such as climate change or terrorism, the importance of U.S. naval presence and its interaction regionally will continue to be pivotal to future U.S. policy in the region.

To accomplish this analysis it is necessary to describe the development of modern U.S. naval strategy, the historic involvement and role of the United States Navy in the Asia-Pacific and what the Navy has done substantively to integrate with the new strategy and how current policy choices can affect future U.S. naval objectives. Examining several different future scenarios and U.S. security policy goals in the Asia-Pacific, it will briefly look at costs and benefits of each situation with specific focus on the naval missions of conventional deterrence and the prevention of regional conflict as well as its impact on regional confidence building measures and the Navy's ability to assist in humanitarian disaster-relief operations.

It concludes that the United States Navy can continue to adapt to the desired policy goals as set forth by the Asia-Pacific rebalance. It can achieve success through an increased prioritization of resources to the Asia-Pacific, increased political sustainability of U.S. naval forward presence in the region, and to develop a new U.S. maritime strategy that reflects new geo-strategic realities.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

*U.S. economic and security interests are inextricably linked to developments in the arc extending from the Western Pacific and East Asia into the Indian Ocean region and South Asia, creating a mix of evolving challenges and opportunities. Accordingly, while the U.S. military will continue to contribute to security globally, we will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region.*

—Defense Strategic Guidance,  
*Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, January 2012

This thesis analyzes the development of the Asia-Pacific rebalance and its possible effects on U.S. naval strategy over the next several decades. The goal is to better understand the Asian rebalance and U.S. policy goals in an effort to improve future strategic choices governing the employment of the United States Navy in Asia.

The Asia-Pacific rebalance has had a significant impact on recent U.S. maritime strategy. How that rebalance will affect the future use of the U.S. Navy in diplomatic efforts is unclear, especially given financial concerns overshadowing the Navy's presence in Asia. Regardless, the importance of the U.S. Navy in the Asia-Pacific region grows relative to the increasing size of regional navies and will remain a pivotal issue to U.S. foreign policy in Asia.

This thesis will analyze what the Navy has done substantively to adapt to and implement the new strategy, and how current policy can affect future U.S. naval objectives. It will look at the costs and benefits of several future scenarios and U.S. security policy goals in the Asia-Pacific, focusing on conventional deterrence, regional confidence-building measures, and the Navy's ability to assist in humanitarian disaster relief.

### A. THE ASIA-PACIFIC REBALANCE AND THE U.S. NAVY

Navies are well suited to further the diplomatic aims of their governments. John Stuart Mill, the British political theorist stated, "Our diplomacy stands for nothing when

we have not a fleet to back it,”<sup>1</sup> and this was shown through the role the British Navy played throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Navy has continued this tradition since the United States became the premier hegemonic power after World War II. Since then, it has repeatedly used its naval forces to strengthen its diplomatic endeavors globally.<sup>3</sup> Examples of the use of the U.S. Navy in Asia over the past 75 years abound. Besides its use during the Korean and Vietnam wars, it has also been utilized to further various diplomatic aims throughout the region, such as the enforcement of Taiwanese independence, or to support regional allies or regimes through presence operations, exercises, or port visits.

The rebalance began in the fall of 2011 when the Obama administration issued a series of announcements and took several steps to expand the focus of the United States in the Asia-Pacific. The declared rebalance identifies the Asia-Pacific as a geostrategic priority for the United States; thus, the administration made the attempt to demonstrate this reality with a shift in U.S. policy to the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>4</sup> It goes without saying that the rebalance is not a re-engagement in a heretofore neglected region, but merely represents an increasing level of emphasis and priority that builds on pre-existing relationships, in the pursuit of established national interests.

The Obama administration’s rebalance has undergone two distinct phases. When the policy was first rolled out in 2011, much of the emphasis was placed on military initiatives in the region. China saw these initiatives negatively and took aggressive steps to show its disapproval in forums throughout Asia as well as through various maritime disputes with U.S. allies. In 2012, the administration modified its approach downplaying its military initiatives, emphasizing instead economic and diplomatic elements while calling for closer engagement with China. They changed the new initiative from a “pivot”

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Till, *Seapower, A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, (London: Frank Cass, 2004), 271.

<sup>2</sup> James Cable, *Political Influence of Naval Force in History*, (London, Macmillan Press, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Till, *Seapower*, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Robert G. Sutter, Michael E. Brown, and Timothy J. A. Adamson, *Balancing Acts: The U.S. Rebalance and Asia-Pacific Stability*, (Washington, DC: Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University, August 2013), 3–5.

to a “rebalance” of U.S. policy emphasizing its increasing engagement in the region.<sup>5</sup> This evolution is important because this shows that the policy is not static, but continues to evolve to reflect changing geopolitical realities both domestically and abroad.

The past decade witnessed maritime disputes surrounding sovereignty over natural resources and various islands in both the South China Sea and the East China Sea, which have defined the security dialogue in the region.<sup>6</sup> Figure 1 below shows some of the regional flashpoints that exist throughout the Asia-Pacific. The role that the United States Navy will play in addressing these disputes and maintaining regional stability throughout the Asia-Pacific within the framework of the new policy has yet to be thoroughly analyzed. Whatever political form the rebalance may take, however, the main effort in the military sphere will almost certainly fall on the Navy rather than the other service branches. This is due to navies’ ability to provide sustained forward presence and their wide versatility to engage in various situations while the army’s and air forces’ need for basing requires significant fixed infrastructure, thus, also needing constant host nation diplomatic support, which is not consistently available in the Asia-Pacific region due to geopolitical constraints.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 6–7.

<sup>6</sup> Michael A. McDevitt and Catherine K. Lea, *CNA Maritime Asia Project: Naval Developments in Asia* (Washington D.C: Center for Naval Analysis, 2012), accessed 26 August 2013. [http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/22412/cna\\_maritime\\_asia\\_project\\_workshop\\_two.html](http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/22412/cna_maritime_asia_project_workshop_two.html).

<sup>7</sup> James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy 1919-1991*, (New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 14.



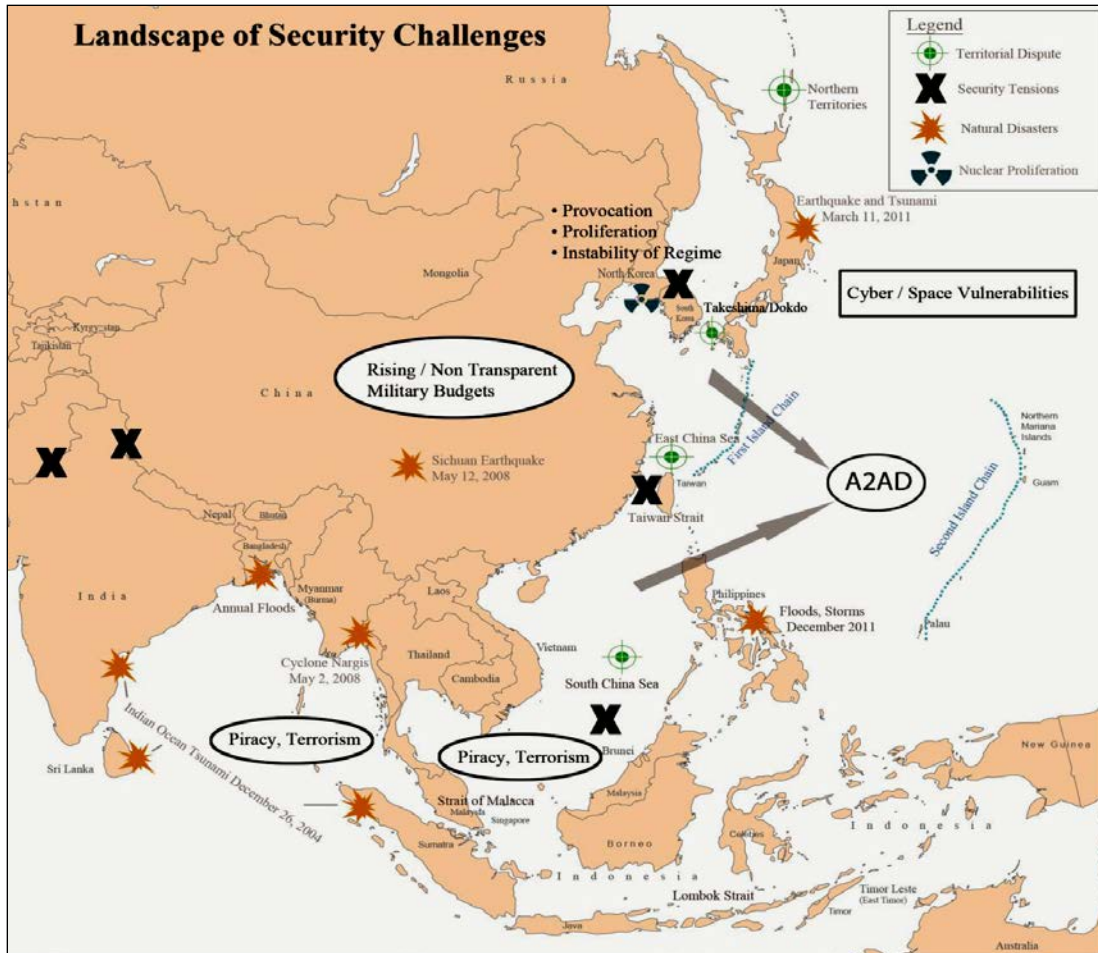


Figure 1. Asia-Pacific Security Challenges<sup>8</sup>

The U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific appears to be reassuring to our allies in the region but worrisome to other countries, which take our shift in strategy as a mask for a policy aimed at the containment of China, an approach that has the potential to cause friction and eventual conflict.<sup>9</sup> This is a simplistic explanation. The rebalance has been driven not by a security dilemma that China represents, but broad strategic, economic and political circumstances. The United States is thus refocusing its attention on an area that it has been perceived as neglecting over the past several decades due to its

<sup>8</sup> Figure is a representation of regional flashpoints throughout the Asia Pacific. Figure taken from: *U.S. Force Posture Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region: An Independent Assessment*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 2012), accessed 26 August, 2013, 14. <http://csis.org/publication/pacom-force-posture-review>.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

unprecedented and protracted commitment in the Middle East. As the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have ended, it is important for the U.S. to place additional emphasis on the Asia-Pacific because it represents a huge block of growing economic and strategic importance for the foreseeable future.<sup>10</sup> Such a move is a rebalance in the precise sense that it restores an equilibrium that had once been taken for granted.

This is not to say that China is not a primary concern for the United States' policy. As the most populace country in the world with the largest military and the second largest economy, which continues to grow much more rapidly than its more developed counterparts, it does cause significant unease not only for the United States but for all of the countries throughout the Asia-Pacific. The rebalance can then be seen as reassurance for regional partners in the face of a stronger and more aggressive China. In addition, it has the dual effect of affirming, through policy decisions and the shift of economic, diplomatic and military resources to the region, that the U.S. is not retreating from the area, despite having fought exhaustive and expensive wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and despite difficult economic and political issues domestically.

In summary, the goal of the U.S. is to increase its economic, security and political engagement in the Asia-Pacific with regional countries and institutions such as ASEAN, the EAS and the Shangri-La Dialogue while improving ties to its traditional allies and partners such as Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Australia including new powers such as China and India as well as smaller regional players such as Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam among others.<sup>11</sup>

The lack of recent scholarship on the use of U.S. naval diplomacy for regional engagement in the Asia-Pacific is glaring, despite rising expenditure by regional states on their navies. As the U.S. Navy responds to the shift in strategic focus, its ability to effect and secure continued regional stability is of the utmost importance. Any possible aggravation of tensions in the region could lead to conflict that will disrupt economies

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<sup>10</sup> Sutter, Brown and Adamson, *Balancing Acts*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 4–5.

worldwide.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the geographical area that is encompassed by the rebalance, from Japan in the east, to India in the west, is maritime in nature and includes over half of mankind. That is reason enough to make the region a focus of US naval strategic interest.

## **B. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES**

The question facing the United States Navy is how the Asia rebalance may shape or change the U.S. naval forces role in the region, strategically and diplomatically. Since the establishment of the Asian rebalance, the Navy has made little substantive effort to establish or publish a new strategy in the Asia-Pacific theater that reflects the new policy. The U.S. Navy has developed and issued various force movements to align itself with the rebalance, but has not said how these forces will be used.

This thesis will analyze the development of the Asia rebalance and its possible effects on U.S. naval strategy over the next several decades. In order to do so, an overview and an in-depth analysis of naval diplomacy must be established to have a context for current events. By pulling together U.S. government documents before and after the establishment of the rebalance, we will make a comparative approach of the Navy toward the Asia-Pacific theater, reflecting several different alternative strategies and their impact on the region. Finally, recent analysis and studies by various think tanks will be utilized to show possible and recommended reactions by the Navy to the rebalance and what the Navy has to do to tailor its strategy respectively to achieve its goals in each scenario.

The conclusions drawn from the analysis of naval diplomacy, the current and possible responses to the rebalance and its effect on naval policy and strategy then will be combined to make observations and recommendations reflecting budgetary and geopolitical realities in the Asia-Pacific Region.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

### **C. SCOPE, DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

The future of the United States Navy in the Asia-Pacific and its essential role in stabilizing the region is the foundation of this paper. The specific scope of this thesis is not to question the overall policy of the Asia-Pacific rebalance but to explain its goals and its effects. It also will present ideas on how the Navy needs to adapt itself to achieve an effective end-state. This thesis will focus on United States naval strategy as effected by the rebalance and will limit the discussion of potential regional flashpoints. While the potential for violent conflict is obviously important in appraising the role of the Navy regionally, it is easy for what are, in fact, worst-case scenarios to distort the discussion of strategic alternatives, whose starting point should be the most likely range of relevant conditions. That is our intention here.

This thesis does not make use of classified information. Although such material might add depth to the analysis of specific issues, its overall impact on the analysis and findings of this paper would be minimal. The focus specifically on unclassified policy statements and security scholarship has a much broader impact on current and future factors that will shape U.S. policy and maritime strategy interests in the region.

It is important to note several key terms that will be utilized throughout this thesis and to define their use and context which will also be expanded upon in the next chapter: Naval diplomacy, sea control and sea denial. Naval diplomacy is the use of navies in operations short of war in order to achieve a policy objective. Its role in conventional deterrence has the dual ability to prevent any possible conflict while also giving the United States the ability to continually conduct confidence-building measures in the region in order to build defense cooperation and improve military to military regional relations.

Sea control and sea denial are two interrelated terms used exclusively in the context of maritime strategy. Sea control is the ability of a nation to utilize a maritime region despite the desires of a possible adversary. Directly related, sea denial is the perception, the threat or the act of preventing a nation from utilizing the maritime domain. Basically, sea control is defensive while sea denial is offensive in nature. In the

end, sea control is meant to ensure maritime trade, both your own as well as allies, partners and neutrals while the latter is for a set amount of time, to deny others access. Both of these are foundations of current and future U.S. maritime strategy.<sup>13</sup>

#### **D. THESIS ORGANIZATION**

Chapter I of this thesis provides the basic framework for further examination of issues regarding the development of naval strategy and the Asian rebalance. This section focused on background information on the Asian rebalance, sources, methodology, organization and definitions of important terms. In the chapters that follow, this thesis examines the role of U.S. maritime strategy and in the Asia rebalance.

In Chapter II, a look at the development of modern naval strategy is provided. First, the foundation of modern naval strategy will be looked at defining the importance of Mahan and Corbett on current naval strategists. Second, the development of naval strategy with a focus on modern naval diplomacy will be analyzed. In addition, two capstone naval strategic documents, the 1986 Maritime Strategy and the 2007 *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* will be compared to show the recent evolution of U.S. maritime strategy as a point of departure for the Asia-Pacific rebalance and its effects.

Following the turn toward U.S. naval strategy in the Asia-Pacific region, Chapter III contains a brief overview of historic U.S. naval involvement throughout the region and its past and current basing structure. This is needed form a better understanding of the past and current involvement of the United States Navy throughout the Asia-Pacific and its continuing importance to the stability and security of the region.

Chapter IV outlines the strategic rationale for the rebalance, its scope, breadth and goals utilizing the idea of U.S. strategic rationale, the security elements that it proposes focusing on the regions maritime aspects and finally, how it directly affects the future of U.S. basing structure and strategy in the region.

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<sup>13</sup> Till, *Seapower*, 155–61.

Finally, Chapter V provides several different strategic scenarios and strategies that could be employed by the U.S. Navy in the future and their possible effects on the region. Finally, the Conclusion will compile the findings from Chapters I to V and make policy recommendations for future changes not only in strategy but significant substantive changes as well which directly reflect U.S. policy goals in the region in response to the rebalance.

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## II. MARITIME STRATEGY

This chapter surveys the development of modern maritime strategy, beginning with the seminal works of Mahan and Corbett. Particular emphasis falls on the development of American naval strategy leading up to the 2007 *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, the last U.S. maritime strategic document prior to the announcement of the Asian pivot.

### A. FOUNDATION OF NAVAL STRATEGY AND SEA POWER

#### 1. Mahan

Maritime strategy is the pursuit of sea power, or the ability to utilize the oceans for military or commercial uses and or to prevent an adversary from doing the same. In the words of Alfred Thayer Mahan, “The first and most obvious light in which the sea presents itself from the political and social point of view is that of a great highway.”<sup>14</sup> Mahan wrote at the end of the 19th century, and focused mainly on the use of navies to prosecute large scale wars and the tactics necessary to do so. Mahan identified six important factors directly contributing to the effectiveness of a nation to attain maritime power thus forming the basis of a maritime strategy: geopolitical position, physical conformation, including natural production and climate; extent of territory; population; culture; and finally the nature of its government and its inherent institutions.<sup>15</sup> Mahan’s writings cite Great Britain as the supreme practitioner of maritime strategy, and he continually emphasized the importance of a powerful navy in world affairs. “Control of the sea by maritime commerce and naval supremacy means predominant influence in the world ... and is the chief among the merely material elements in the power and prosperity of nations.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1600–1783*, (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, 1890), 25.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 28–29.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.



Mahan's notion of sea power, however, is now seen as excessively narrow in its application to Great Britain and is difficult to apply toward a general theory or maritime strategy. Traditional usage of the term sea power applied to a nation is one in which has a maritime focus and strategic outlook and depends primarily upon maritime trade and commerce for its economic well-being. He and other contemporaries argued that these factors required a maritime strategy to achieve sea control to protect its national security and their global interests, especially trade and commerce. His largest achievement for the purpose of this thesis is not his emphasis on naval diplomacy, about which he wrote very little, but his influence on future naval strategists, specifically, how the navy is an additional arm of the government it serves. This is also linked to his British contemporary naval historian and strategist Corbett's analysis of the strength of navies in foreign policy in the early 20th century.

## 2. Corbett

Julian Corbett's *Principles on Maritime Strategy* emphasized that strategy needs to be consciously related to a government's foreign policy, and that war was a political act. In addition, the primary purpose of the navy was to support or obstruct diplomatic efforts. Corbett, in contrast to Mahan, placed greater emphasis also focused on limited maritime wars, in which the political shaping function of the navy is plain. Unlike Mahan, he argued that since maritime warfare is about sea control, an enemy fleet blockaded in its own ports is just as effective as one in which a decisive battle is fought and it is destroyed. Most importantly, Corbett believed that navies allowed a government to weigh the costs and benefits of any operation prior to and during the length of their commitment. Maritime operations were more controllable in the sense of being less prone to ruinous escalation; they were often particularly cost effective when compared with ordinary, messy land operations.<sup>17</sup> Corbett argued that naval strategy has to be seen not as a separate entity but as a part of the conduct of a greater war.

Due to the changing global environment since the end of the Cold War, Corbett has become much more prevalent in strategic circles. The economic globalization,

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<sup>17</sup> Till, *Seapower*, 47.

political uncertainty, and the prevalence of small wars and local conflict between regional countries give much more credence to his version of maritime strategy and power than the large fleet engagements and competition envisioned by Mahan, which was more readily applicable to the large fleets maintained by the Soviet Union and the United States. Corbett's tenets that can be most applied most easily to today are: Use maritime forces to increase strategic flexibility; understand the limits of naval diplomacy, specifically, complete sea control and the ability to project military power around the world is not automatically politically useful; and command of the sea is a means, not an end in itself.<sup>18</sup> Corbett stated, "Since men live upon the land and not upon the sea, great issues between nations at war have always been decided—except in the rarest of cases—either by what your army can do against your enemy's territory and national life or else by the fear of what the fleet makes it possible for your army to do."<sup>19</sup> His arguments pressing for a much more global and diplomatic use of the navy can apply directly to modern geopolitical situations where the likelihood of even small scale engagement in between fleets is highly unlikely due to the importance of globalization and trade to any maritime nation. The situation in the Asia-Pacific specifically lends great credence to his belief that the role of the navy and its conduct and training must be tempered by the political realities and it must be recognized that the navy and its use, whether in large scale use or by its very presence, cannot achieve an end state, but must be a part of a larger political, economic or military strategy to achieve long term stability and success.

### **3. Impact on Modern Strategy**

Mahan and Corbett both shaped maritime strategists over the proceeding generations and continue to have immense influence on maritime strategy today. Mahan's lectures and books established sea power and maritime strategy as fundamental instruments of national power, and continue to influence current thought both for the U.S. and for other navies around the world, particularly China. Corbett's relevance today can

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<sup>18</sup> Geoffrey Till, "Sir Julian Corbett: Ten Maritime Commandments," in *The Changing Face of Maritime Power*, eds., Andrew Dorman, Mike Lawrence Smith and Mathew R. H. Uttley (London: Macmillan Press, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> J. S. Corbett, *England in the Seven Years War*, vol.1, (London: Longmans Green, 1907), 67.

clearly be seen through his emphasis on naval diplomacy and the role that navies have in grander political and strategic endgames. He recognized that the role that the Navy has as an element of a political arm, while mirroring ideas put forth by the 19th century military strategist Clausewitz on land warfare, were revolutionary to maritime strategy at the time. These two strategists were the primary shapers of global maritime strategy over the next 50 years through the end of World War II. This can be seen through the massive naval deployments and the importance of naval engagements in both World Wars, exemplified in the Pacific theater during World War II where massive fleets engaged each other to achieve sea control and eventual global dominance. It isn't until the development of modern maritime strategy during the Cold War that their ideas were continually refined and expanded upon to reflect modern geopolitical realities such as globalization and the use of naval diplomacy short of war.

## **B. MODERN NAVAL STRATEGISTS**

The end of World War II signaled an abrupt end to large-scale maritime warfare as envisioned by Mahan. Maritime strategists of this time period thus had to dramatically shape and change their perception of navies and their use in naval diplomatic efforts around the periphery due to their sudden importance during the Cold War. Since the end of the Cold War as well, these peripheral operations in global maritime strategy continue to adjust themselves to modern geopolitical realities and the decreased emphasis on direct large-scale maritime conflict. The naval strategists of this time period that were the most prolific and important were Stansfield Turner, Edward Luttwak, Ken Booth, James Cable and Geoffrey Till. This section will discuss their contribution to maritime strategy and diplomacy since the end of World War II.

The rapid growth and rise of the Soviet Navy and its resulting capability to challenge the United States Navy during the Cold War caused a strategic dilemma for the United States. Admiral Stansfield Turner voiced a much needed strategic shift, and through his direct efforts, successfully incorporated it into U.S. naval doctrine. His efforts in implementing the idea of the naval presence mission as the embodiment of gunboat diplomacy has had a lasting impact, and it continues to be a central mission for the U.S.

Navy. Specifically, he believed that the naval presence mission is the use of naval forces short of war to achieve political objectives through its ability to deter actions or to encourage actions that are against or for the interests of the United States. He continually cites the Soviet Union as the main focus of naval presence missions and how through its efforts, the Navy is able to manage the Soviet Union's actions globally. Although his focus is purely on the operations of the United States Navy, his forceful statement of the ability of the Navy to achieve political aims is central to current naval strategy.<sup>20</sup>

Additional contributors to naval strategy are Luttwak's *The Political Uses of Sea Power*, published in 1974, and Ken Booth's *Navies and Foreign Policy*, published in 1979. Luttwak discusses several different roles of naval strategy focusing on the use of deployments in naval diplomacy. They are naval suasion through latent, routine undirected deployments and active deployments by conscious design in order to shape the actions of regional actors. These actions are designed to promote allies, deter opponents or to compel them to modify their policy to suit the needs of their government. However, he does not cite specific examples of these deployments or what these forces should contain in order to successfully shape diplomacy.<sup>21</sup> Booth does cite that the composition, locality, readiness and activity of deployed naval forces, naval aid (help in training and arms supply), operational calls and specific goodwill visits as the tools of naval diplomacy but it was his belief that only strong navies have the ability to influence foreign policy.<sup>22</sup>

James Cable's contribution to naval strategy is his focus on the act of utilizing naval force in history. His analysis is historically based, and he utilized examples from Greek times through the Cold War to illustrate its usefulness in achieving political ends. His main arguments focus on the use of limited force for purposes short of war. He distinguishes between four forms by which such force can be used: definitive force, used

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<sup>20</sup> Stansfield Turner, "Missions of the U.S. Navy," *Naval War College Review* 26, no. 5 (March–April 1974), 2–17.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Luttwak, *The Political Uses of Sea Power*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

<sup>22</sup> Ken Booth, *Navies and Foreign Policy*, (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979).

to produce an exact goal; purposeful force, to persuade other nations to change their policy; catalytic force, intended to influence events in some unspecified but presumptively beneficial manner; and expressive force, when navies are utilized to emphasize political will or support general diplomatic initiatives. Unfortunately, he is missing any actual applicable guidance on naval strategy and how it should be adapted to multilateral situations. His analysis focused mainly on bilateral relationships while his strengths are the importance of navies in the future, the impact of technology and their supreme adaptability.<sup>23</sup>

As the most recent published on naval strategy, Geoffrey Till's *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, attempts to summarize, briefly, what the others discussed. In addition he attempts to address recent phenomena such as the importance of maritime resources, trade and globalization. In addition, he also emphasizes in his writings that all navies have the ability to impact foreign policy, despite their size, even so far as to state that navies can make said policy instead of actually serving it if its use results in things exceed its original mandate (i.e., the German U-Boat campaign or the USS VINCENNES). He expands the definition of what encompasses naval diplomacy into areas not specifically mentioned before into areas such as expeditionary operations, humanitarian operations, picture building and coalition building.<sup>24</sup>

### **C. GLOBALIZATION AND MODERN MARITIME STRATEGY**

The end of the Cold War signaled the elimination of a clear threat to the United States. In fact, in distinct contrast to the Soviet Union, crises, either humanitarian disaster response or small conflicts can happen around the globe simultaneously. The United States now needed the flexibility and versatility to deter war if possible while projecting U.S. influence abroad sustainably. Deterrence specifically requires constant U.S. forces that can loiter in a possible crisis zone indefinitely yet withdraw with little loss of influence in the area. All of these reasons have contributed to the growth in importance of the United States naval diplomacy and its associated maritime strategy.

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<sup>23</sup> James Cable, *Political Influence of Naval Force in History*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1998).

<sup>24</sup> Till, *Seapower*, 34.

This section will explore the overall changes to maritime strategy since the end of the Cold War by discussing globalization and its implications. In addition, it will contrast the Cold War mentality represented by the 1986 Maritime Strategy discussed in the last section with the *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, which represents the United States post-Cold War maritime strategy which has continued to be emphasized in more recent United States policy documents and actions. This will show the changing attitudes of maritime strategists and their recognition that they now must incorporate many new factors outside of fleet on fleet engagement of sea control to ensure modern relevance reflecting new political realities.

## **1. Globalization**

Globalization is one of the most important factors of the 21st century strategic environment. The importance of global trading networks to economic prosperity is a prime determinant for a country's security policy. The resulting importance of maritime trade also continues to cause an expansion of sea power to protect a country's overseas interests. This can be seen recently in the expansion of maritime operating areas for navies of industrialized countries such as China, Japan and Western Europe. This is all due to the inherent need of globalization to depend on maritime trade and system integration for success.<sup>25</sup>

The integration of the global economic system, however, has distinct disadvantages as far as security concerns are associated. Due to the emergence of an extremely efficient global supply and demand system, it is increasingly vulnerable to disruption which can have global consequences. Finally, new transnational threats such as terrorism, human and drug trafficking and other forms of maritime crime all point the central role that maritime strategy and sea power have in the protection of the system.<sup>26</sup>

The defense of the system requires a maritime strategy and capability which encompasses the entire range of military operations from presence and security

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<sup>25</sup> Geoffrey Till, *Globalization: Implications of and for the Modern/Post-modern Navies of the Asia-Pacific* (Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2007), 2–5.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

cooperation or training all the way to large scale conflict. To conduct operations in this integrated environment navies have been forced to incorporate the traditional missions of Cold War of sea control and expeditionary operations with the more recent inclusion of good order at sea and the insurance of stability in the maritime status quo.<sup>27</sup>

The mission of sea control has changed since its original foundation with the increased importance of the littoral regions and the advent of expanding threats from new technology such as missiles or swarming attacks from fast attack craft. In addition, it is less important to secure the great commons for a country's own use and more so to ensure its access for everyone but the immediate entities of the system. In other words, freedom of navigation is now a central tenement of maintaining the system along with expeditionary operations.<sup>28</sup>

Expeditionary operations have also taken on a much more systemic role in the maintenance and insurance of stability across the globe. This is similar to the Corbett emphasis on the effects of the navy ashore, but even more specific in their scope, aim and duration in order to accomplish limited political goals. Basically, it is the belief that if a crisis is not curtailed or combatted somehow it can have global consequences thus impacting the entire globalized system. These threats can be rogue or failed states, humanitarian disasters, inter or intra-state conflict or the threat of non-state actors. In other words, most of the threats to the system now come from land based occurrences vice sea borne ones as espoused by Mahan.<sup>29</sup>

Good order at sea and the maintenance of a maritime consensus are the two missions that have grown dramatically in importance since the advent of intense integration and globalization since the end of the Cold War. Good order at sea centers on maritime domain awareness and basic legal actions in accordance with international law to ensure the legal use of the oceans by all parties and to prevent their use by illegal non-state actors or criminal organizations. Maintaining the maritime status quo is not a new

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<sup>27</sup> Till, *Globalization: Implications*, 7.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 9–11.

mission for the United States Navy because the Cold War forced the U.S. to assume stewardship of the entire western economic system which included ensuring the protection of the maritime commons. In fact, several studies have shown that the United States Navy's forward presence produces increased economic benefit not only to the United States but other industrialized countries around Further increasing globalization and market integration will only increase this positive effect.<sup>30</sup> Recently however, the new model now encompasses all maritime nations able to contribute to the security of the system, not just the United States and its primary allies. This also encompasses naval diplomacy operations as well as global security cooperation which are essential to maintaining and growing the system with new and effective members.

These new efforts now being widely recognized as a cornerstone of future United States maritime strategy were originally encompassed by such ideas of the "1000 ship Navy" and the "global maritime partnership" pushed for by the United States in 2006 and 2007, respectively, and it was included in the *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*. They can also be seen in more recent policy documents such as the *2010 Quadrennial Defense Review* and the *2012 National Security Strategy* which was one of the initial cornerstones of the Asia-Pacific pivot. The following section discusses the Cooperative Strategy and its recent espousal of modern maritime strategy and diplomacy as compared to the earlier 1986 Maritime Strategy at the height of the Cold War.

## **2. Cooperative Strategy**

*A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* is a clear representation of the changing role that the Navy has taken on since the end of the Cold War. The 1986 Maritime Strategy had a clear goal in mind of deterring or defeating Soviet aggression and the document focused on traditional Mahanian sea control and power projection missions to engage in a multi-theater war. The lack of a rival global maritime power in the near future on the level of the Soviet Union represented by its global 1975 OKEAN exercises is an isolated possibility. This idea, included with the prevalence and the

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<sup>30</sup> Robert E. Looney, "Market Effects of Naval Presence in a Globalized World: A Research Summary," *Globalization and Maritime Power*, ed., Sam J. Tangredi (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2002) 103–130.



importance of globalization to the global political, economic and security environment has forced the Navy to adjust its former wartime priorities.

The small possibility of large scale naval strife and the importance of the global commons to the linked national interests of all modernizing nations give credence to Julian Corbett's argument that an uncontrolled sea is the normal state of affairs and the possibility of overwhelming long term control of the oceans as Mahan envisioned in today's geopolitical and fiscal environment is impossible. Corbett stated that the key to protecting world-wide shipping is to concentrate your forces for sea control at vital points around the globe.<sup>31</sup> Admiral Mike Mullen's 2006 "Global Maritime Partnership" and the subsequent maritime strategy was an attempt to recognize this fact and was the only way strategically possible to apply sufficient resources to cover vital global waters.<sup>32</sup> The strategy was a departure from former documents in other ways as well, such as its open development within easy access of publicity while even including inputs from various public forums called, "Conversations with the Country."

One of the most contrasting elements with the 1986 strategy is the lack of distinct security threat outlined in the 2007 document. While in development the strategy's writers distinctly chose to avoid any direct mention of China or any other nation-state level threat. This has a dual purpose of opening the possibility of future courtship of bilateral and multi-lateral agreements with more aggressive regional powers with the hope of incorporating them into a security cooperation framework. Throughout the document the interconnecting nature of globalization is specifically mentioned and the importance of continued global stability and growth which contrasts with the western focus of the 1986 strategy.

The authors' emphasis on the defense of the global wide system is a clear indication of the incorporation of more global centric and cooperative strategies than

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<sup>31</sup> Julian S. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, 1911; ed. Eric J. Grove (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988), 91–94.

<sup>32</sup> Geoff Fine, "Global Maritime Partnership; Gaining Steam at Home and with International Navies," *Defense Daily*, October 25, 2006, accessed December 8, 2013. [http://www.navy.mil/navydata/cno/mullen/DEFENSE\\_DAILY\\_25OCT06\\_Global\\_Maritime\\_Partnership\\_Gaining\\_Steam\\_At\\_Home\\_And\\_With\\_International\\_Navies.pdf](http://www.navy.mil/navydata/cno/mullen/DEFENSE_DAILY_25OCT06_Global_Maritime_Partnership_Gaining_Steam_At_Home_And_With_International_Navies.pdf).

those espoused during the Cold War. The role of providing maritime security is one that has fallen to the United States since the end of World War II thus legitimizing its maritime hegemony. While channeling Mahan and the importance of commerce to the United States its incorporation of the system at large is a drastic departure, “The Security, prosperity, and vital interests of the United States are increasingly coupled to those of other nations...and are best served by fostering a peaceful global system comprised of interdependent networks of trade, finance, information, law, people and governance.”<sup>33</sup>

The lack of emphasis on wars or conflicts is also a direct departure from former strategies. Although mentioned in the document, they are portrayed as a disruption of the all-important system, not as a direct national security threat to the United States. In fact, war in general is only included in a short list of other threats which also encompasses natural disasters and inequality driven by economic liberalization among other occurrences that are not necessarily triggered through the actions of another state. The strategy also discussed global efforts to combat the second or third tier effects of these contingencies which emphasize the variety of roles that the United States might play.

The final portion of the strategy outlines the maritime services six strategic capabilities consisting of forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection ashore, maritime security and humanitarian assistance and disaster response. To achieve these ends the document states that the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard must all improve interoperability with foreign nations, bolster maritime domain awareness, surveillance, and reconnaissance capacity while training their service members to be capable of operating in these multilateral security environments.

A major critique, ironically, of the 2007 maritime strategy is that it is so unlike the 1984 version and that it is not inherently a strategy and more of a strategic concept. The argument is that a strategy while consisting of goals and core capabilities must also outline a path for how these goals might be achieved. The defeat of the Soviet Union in the 1984 document is clearly outlined with the specific force structure needed as well as

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<sup>33</sup> United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, and United States Coast Guard, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2007), accessed August 28, 2013. <http://www.navy.mil/maritime/Maritimestrategy.pdf>.

general guidance for allocated resources and missions to achieve the strategic end-state. This is something that the 2007 strategy is completely missing.<sup>34</sup> However, considering the global audience intended for this audience in order to convince other nations to sign up for other multi-lateral security initiatives the lack of these specifics is purposeful.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This chapter analyzed the development of the current maritime strategy of the United States. Mahan and Corbett and their effect on more recent naval strategists and their continued relevance were discussed. Secondly, we outlined the development of U.S. maritime strategy ending with the most recent maritime strategy espoused by the United States prior to the Asian rebalance, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* was analyzed in order to set up the effects of the new U.S. policy.

In order to successfully address the modern use of the U.S. Navy and the effect of the rebalance, an overview of historic and current U.S. naval involvement in the region is necessary in order to emphasize any modification due to the new policy. Chapter III contains a brief overview of historic U.S. naval involvement throughout the Asia-Pacific and its past and current basing structure in the region. This is needed to lay the foundation for and as a point of departure for the Asian rebalance in Chapter IV.

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<sup>34</sup> Robert O. Work and Jan van Tol, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower: An Assessment* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2008), 1–4.

### **III. THE U.S. NAVY AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC**

This chapter contains a brief overview of historic U.S. naval involvement throughout the region and its past and current basing structure. This is needed form a better understanding of the past and current involvement of the United States Navy throughout the Asia-Pacific and its past and current importance to the stability and security of the region.

#### **A. HISTORIC U.S. NAVAL INVOLVEMENT IN ASIA**

An analysis of new strategic trends cannot be undertaken without understanding the past involvement and impact of the U.S. Navy on Asia. As a maritime nation relying on trade since its founding, the United States Navy has only been focused on Asia since the 1850s with its desire to protect its commercial interests in the area. Over the course of the next 150 years, its involvement deepened to become the main security provider in the region.

The establishment of the United States and its growth as a maritime trading nation existed since its founding. Its Navy's interest in the Pacific initially revolved around the protection of its whaling, fishing and merchant fleets which were then opening new markets in Japan and China.<sup>35</sup> The first use of American Gunboat Diplomacy in the Pacific was by Commodore Matthew Perry with the opening of isolationist Japan then ruled by the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1854 and continued with the Boxer Rebellion in 1890 when U.S. Navy gunboats and marines joined an international force to rescue diplomats besieged in their legations in Beijing.<sup>36</sup> This gunboat diplomacy directly tied to commercial interests which expanded to imperialistic and expansionist ambitions near the turn of the 19th century with the creation of various U.S. sovereign interests in the Pacific to assist the United States Navy in projecting its power into Asia to match its peers in Europe. This was also driven in part by the teaching of Alfred Thayer Mahan whose

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<sup>35</sup>Arthur P. Dudden, "The American Pacific: Where the West Was Also Won," *Studies in the Economic History of the Pacific Rim*, eds., Sally M. Miller, A.J.H. Latham and Dennis O. Flynn, (London: Routledge, 1998), 94–103.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

offensive battle-fleet and sea control concepts became a cornerstone of American foreign policy for the next 50 years.<sup>37</sup>

The teachings of Mahan were directly linked to the push by the Navy and the United States government in making Hawaii a principal American naval base and coaling station in 1887 followed by its annexation in 1898. At the turn of the 20th century desires for overseas markets and to increase its standing among peer countries in Europe the U.S. expanded its influence in Asia through war with Spain in 1898.<sup>38</sup>

The U.S. Navy's Asiatic squadron, under Commodore George Dewey, was the primary instrument in the defeat of the Spanish and its fleet in the Philippines. The succession of the Philippines to the United States in 1899 was quickly followed that same year by a treaty negotiated with Great Britain and Germany to obtain sovereignty over the six eastern Samoan Islands. These islands and their associated access to commercial interests in the rest of Asia then began to clash with Japan, the rising regional power. The United States began to view Japan as a peer competitor not only economically but militarily with their defeat of the Chinese in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and the Russians in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905 with decisive naval victories resulting in their rise to regional hegemon in direct competition with Western Powers in the Pacific.<sup>39</sup>

Competition with Japan in the Pacific defined the strategy of the United States government and its Navy from 1905 through World War II.<sup>40</sup> As the most probable foe, the Navy spent the next 35 years attempting to develop and implement a strategy called War Plan Orange that would temper Japanese aggression while providing a way for a decisive defeat in an event of war. The Washington Naval Treaty was an effort to assuage both U.S. and Japanese fears and the 5:5:3 tonnage ratio and lack of American fortification of its Pacific holdings established by the agreement allowed for a stable situation. If the U.S. did not build up to its treaty limits and Japan did, as happened at the

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<sup>37</sup>George W. Baer, *One Hundred Years of Sea Power: The U.S. Navy, 1890–1990*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993) 2.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

beginning of WWII, they would face an extreme force disadvantage in the Western Pacific until new construction could offset the discrepancy.<sup>41</sup> The end of WWII and the imposition of American authority and dominance over the world's oceans proceeded to cause a strategic dilemma for U.S. naval strategy in Asia due to a lack of a plausible foe.<sup>42</sup> This changed with the beginning of the Cold War.

The end of World War II and the immediate post-war years saw not only massive demobilization, but a huge public affairs push by both the air force and the army to absorb naval aviation and the marines into their fold in order to unify command authority. Navy manning dropped from more than 3,000,000 in 1945 to 390,000, and decreased from a high of more than 6,700 ships to 634 by the start of the Korean War in 1950.<sup>43</sup> The threat of the Soviet Union resulting in the strategic imperative of containment and an aversion to full scale war which could result in mutually assured destruction led to the strategic niche that the Navy searched for to justify its importance in national strategy. Wherever the United States lacked bases, the Navy could operate, and its advantages of mobility, readiness, versatility and a seaborne force with land-projection capabilities that was supremely flexible in its use gave policymakers an ability to respond that is more variable and less provocative than the air force and army.<sup>44</sup>

The United States Navy's missions during the Cold War remained entrenched in the global strategy of Containment. Through Sea Control, support would be given to our allies and to our forces overseas in order to hold the line against Communism. In addition, the Navy and Marine Corps team would utilize its amphibious operations and its carrier strike capabilities to assist in both the Korean and Vietnam wars. In total, over 95% of the supplies in both Korea and Vietnam were transported by sea and the supply lines had to be maintained through a 7,000 mile long logistic chain through the Pacific back to the United States. The Seventh Fleet based out of Japan was essential for all of these missions, and their Asia-Pacific wide reach was critical for supporting the

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<sup>41</sup> Baer, *One Hundred Years*, 100–101.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 3–4.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 278.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

American regional allies of Japan, South Korea, South Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan and Pakistan as well as the assurance of sea control against the threat of Soviet strategic submarines from the Korean War all the way through the Vietnam War.<sup>45</sup> However, the massive Soviet maritime rearmament program in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in a reassessment of the U.S. Navy's strategy in the Pacific.

The Cuban Missile crises in 1962 showed the Soviet Union that it needed a naval force capable to project limited sea control against the U.S. Navy and to support their interventionist policies around the world. Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, the Chief of the Soviet Navy throughout this period, desired the additional flexibility in policy acquired by maintaining a global maritime force instead of their blind reliance on strategic nuclear parity with the west. By 1971 the Soviet Navy had more nuclear submarines in service and under construction than the U.S. and in addition began to utilize their significant maritime force in overseas missions thus presenting the U.S. Navy with its first Sea Control dilemma since World War II.<sup>46</sup>

In combination with the post-Vietnam War naval draw down bringing U.S. ship numbers to their lowest since before World War II, the Soviets in the 1970s also built up their Pacific Fleet to an unprecedented level. By the 1980s, over 30 percent of their total forces were on the Pacific Coast to include 23 SSBN's and 125 attack submarines as well as 90 major surface combatants, a force totaling more than the Soviet Northern Fleet. In addition, they also expanded their support bases around Vladivostok, Petropavlovsk and Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam for patrol in the South China Sea, Southern Pacific and the Indian Ocean region. All evidence led to the idea that the soviets were preparing for significant action in the Pacific.<sup>47</sup>

The 1980s saw a large increase in expenditures for the United States Navy and a new strategy in the Asia-Pacific. From the naval diplomacy and Third World interventionist ideas of Admiral Elmo Zumwalt based around a defensive-oriented Navy

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<sup>45</sup> Baer, *One Hundred Years*, 392.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 398.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 424.

came Admiral Thomas Hayward's vision of an offensive action based around the pre-existing fleet assets to include newly re-commissioned battleships, large attack carriers, attack submarines and amphibious forces all based out of fleet concentration areas to include the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet in the Pacific. By the end of the 1980s this strategy remained a purely naval oriented strategy with little to no tie in with a national strategy or policy despite the large expenditures to make it possible. This investment and focus on offensive warfare operations ended with the Cold War. The collapse of the U.S. Navy's only competitor saw a return to the strategic dilemma maintaining an expansive and powerful Navy capable of global maritime dominance.<sup>48</sup>

Post-Cold War the Navy in the Pacific continues to have difficulty defining its role. Since the 1980s the focus of U.S. foreign policy remained on the Middle East beginning with the collapse of Iran and continuing with the Iran Hostage Crises, the Iran-Iraq War, Operation Desert Storm, 9/11, Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom. This section's brief overview of the United States Navy's involvement in the Asia-Pacific shows the traditional emphasis and importance that the Navy has placed on its role in the region.

## **B. U.S. NAVAL BASING IN ASIA**

Maritime basing throughout the Asia-Pacific is an important aspect of U.S. maritime strategy that needs to be discussed in order to understand any long term effects of the rebalance. This section will outline the history of U.S. naval basing and its current structure as a foundation for any changes the Asian rebalance will have on the U.S. maritime strategy.

### **1. HISTORY OF U.S. NAVAL BASES**

Current global basing structures can be traced back to Great Britain, which maintained the first truly global military basing network in order to support its empire. In order to maintain its trading dominance and protect its commerce it had to maintain forward garrisons around the world. In order to achieve this they built a network of bases

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<sup>48</sup> Baer, *One Hundred Years*, 419–22, 443–444.



that commanded most of the strategic waterways important to their commerce. The United States naval basing network can now be seen as an outgrowth and a continuation of British global dominance.<sup>49</sup> However, unlike Britain who had built their basing network beginning in the 18th century, the United States did not begin to expand outside of the continental United States until the turn on the 20th century.

The first overseas bases were established as coaling stations in the Pacific beginning in 1857 with the acquisition of Jarvis, Baker, and Howland Islands followed by Midway in 1867. Shortly thereafter, the Navy and the United States government pressed in making Hawaii a principal American naval base and coaling station in 1887 followed by its annexation in 1898 after the Spanish American War.<sup>50</sup> The succession of the Philippines to the United States in 1899 was quickly followed that same year by a treaty negotiated with Great Britain and Germany to obtain sovereignty over the six eastern Samoan Islands as well as Wake Island.<sup>51</sup>

In between World War I and World War II there was little to no expansion of the United States basing presence throughout Asia. The onset of World War II changed this dramatically. In 1942, only a year after Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt and the war department created proposals for a global network of bases that would be established once the war was over. It was Roosevelt's belief that these bases could have a stabilizing effect on global politics and economic growth as well as becoming beneficial for American interests.<sup>52</sup> The war also assisted the U.S. in the creation of these bases, as could be seen in the island hopping campaign in the Pacific which necessitated their creation for logistical support for the thousands of ships and aircraft and the millions of U.S. personnel in theater. These bases were particularly expanded and strengthened in the Pacific on islands such as Guam, Okinawa and Hawaii. At wars end, more than 44 percent of all U.S. overseas facilities were in Asia. This network only increased with the

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<sup>49</sup> Baer, *One Hundred Years*, 9–13.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Kent Calder, *Embattled Garrisons: Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 13.

acquisition and creation of bases in Korea and Japan as well as all overseas Japanese holdings.<sup>53</sup> The United States basing structure in Asia and the American role in the security, economic and political environment throughout the region continued to be expanded during the Cold War.

The Cold War and the primacy of the United States in international institutions that supported the West economically, politically and militarily continued to give credence to the basing network in Asia. The weakness of Great Britain, the former global hegemon, and the reversal of Chinese government to Communism also contributed greatly to increased U.S. presence regionally. The U.S. became the guarantor of security and stability around the globe to include Asia, and it realized that it needed widespread bases to not only defend critical strategic points, but also to support any potential logistical needs of itself or its allies and partners.<sup>54</sup>

Permanent American preeminence was justified in Asia with the outbreak of the Korean War, creating the impetus for the signing of NSC-68, a massive expansion of U.S. Defense expenditure and global presence, as well as the completion of the San Francisco Treaty with Japan ensuring large scale and indefinite access to numerous U.S. Bases in Japan and Okinawa. This treaty was later used as a framework for defense treaties with South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand which also expanded U.S. basing and access in those countries as well. These agreements created the initial framework for U.S. Cold War presence in Asia, parts of which remain until today.<sup>55</sup>

It is important to note that outside of the permanent U.S. naval bases established throughout Asia with the completion of various bi-lateral defense treaties, the most important being the naval bases in Yokosuka and Sasebo, Japan, as well as Subic Bay, Philippines, there were also additional logistic and support bases established to support both the Korean War and the Vietnam War which were later abandoned or given to host

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<sup>53</sup> Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 14.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–32.

nations upon the completion of hostilities. A prime example of this in Cam Ranh Bay Naval Base in Vietnam, as well as numerous air fields established in Thailand during the Vietnam conflict.<sup>56</sup>

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 led to ever-increasing pressure for the downsizing of the Cold War era overseas basing structure. The most important example of this is the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Philippines in 1992 due to political pressure both from the Philippine government as well as domestically in conjunction with the destruction caused from the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. The United States also saw continued forward presence as indispensable for continued regional economic and political stability so many primary U.S. security hubs remained. The U.S. naval bases in Hawaii, Guam, and Japan hosted new capabilities and missions, in part to replicate the reduced forward presence caused by the withdrawal from the Philippines. These bases continue to act as facilities for the support of global logistics, transportation, communications, strategic deterrence, and for the support of resource security.<sup>57</sup> In addition, conflicts such as the two wars in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan, or new security threats such as China, North Korea and especially with the advent of 9-11, Anti-Terrorism has also become a justification for expanding or strengthening additional naval access around Asia.<sup>58</sup>

## **2. CURRENT NAVAL BASING STRUCTURE IN ASIA**

This section describes and analyzes the current naval basing strategies in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, it will describe the current agreements that the U.S. has with various countries around Asia in order to establish the layout of United States Naval basing strategy in the region as a point of future departure.

The operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and the ever changing and shifting international system have highlighted the complexities and the uncertainties of basing

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<sup>56</sup> Carnes Lord, ed., *Reposturing the Force: U.S. Overseas Presence in the Twenty-First Century*, (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2006), accessed November 12, 2013, 17.  
<http://www.usnwc.edu/Publications/Naval-War-College-Press/Newport-Papers/Documents/26-pdf.aspx>.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 38–39.

<sup>58</sup> Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 39–41.

access around the world. Throughout the last 12 years, questions of access to include overhead transit rights for various nations have caused numerous issues in supporting various operations around the globe. The crucial importance now and in the future of American basing access at a time of changing alliances and possible threats as well as the current issues of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and piracy all contribute to the need for assured access. The current security environment in Asia continues to be ambiguous. In place of the threat of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, there is now a multifaceted and fluid threat environment. The primary stabilizing force remains the United States Navy and essential to this presence are its overseas bases.

The United States has been changing its Asian presence to combat new threats emanating from new sources regionally. Its current basing structure in Asia can be categorized into several distinct types of facilities, main-operating bases, forward operating sites and cooperative security locations. Main operating bases involve significant infrastructure, personnel, and support presence to include command and control structures and family support facilities.<sup>59</sup> The naval facilities in the Asia-Pacific that meet this requirement are the various air and naval bases on Guam and Hawaii, Yokosuka and Sasebo naval bases as well as Misawa naval air station in Japan and the naval and air bases on Diego Garcia. It is important to note that Guam, Diego Garcia and Hawaii are all immune to internal political pressure for the removal of U.S. forces due to their unique political aspects. Guam, as a U.S. Territory, and Hawaii, as part of the United States are immune to foreign basing issues and Diego Garcia, as a small British Territory with no native populace and a joint operating agreement also is quite immune to political dissent.

The second type of base that is typical in the Asia-Pacific theater is a forward operating site. This is a facility that is kept in readiness condition with few personnel and could also contain prepositioned equipment. In addition, these sites can also play host to rotational forces which can be used for multi-lateral training opportunities.<sup>60</sup> Examples

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<sup>59</sup> Lord, *Reposturing the Force*, 16.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

around the Asia-Pacific include the Sembawang port facility in Singapore, Utapao in Thailand, and Naval Air Station Atsugi in Japan.

The final type of United States base that is located in the Asia-Pacific is known as a Cooperative Security Location. These have almost no American presence during normal operation and are maintained using host country or contracting support and remain in a host country's possession and control. These provide distinct contingency access and serve as gathering and forward logistical supply points for regional security cooperation activities.<sup>61</sup> These bases, with minimal U.S. presence can provide forward operating locations and can act as deterrence to regional conflict because they are also reinforced by significant political and security agreements. Some examples in the Asia-Pacific are the new rotational marine forces to be located in Darwin Australia, and the security agreements with the Philippines to utilize Subic Bay Naval Base.

### **C. SUMMARY**

This section outlined the past involvement of the United States Navy in the Asia-Pacific. In addition, it discussed the past and current basing structure of the United States Navy in the Asia-Pacific as a point of departure for the Asian rebalance. This was important to truly understand the depth and breadth of U.S. involvement in the region and its importance to the security and stability of countries around the region.

Chapter IV begins the discussion of the Asian rebalance and outlines its rationale, its goals, and the security elements that it entails which will impact the Navy into the future.

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 20.

## **IV. THE ASIAN REBALANCE**

In 2011 and early 2012 the Obama administration put forth an important change to United States foreign policy: The rebalancing of its political, economic and security interests toward Asia. The administration took the stance that the United States had become embroiled in the Middle East and had moved itself away from its true strategic interests in Asia and was in need of a recalibration back toward a traditional emphasis on the Asia-Pacific. However, what the rebalance is actually shifting back toward, and what it entails, continues to be the subject of continuous debate despite over two years passing since its implementation. This is especially important considering the maritime dimension of the theater and the significant political and security challenges faced within the region.

This chapter will outline the strategic rationale for the rebalance, its scope, breadth and goals utilizing the idea of U.S. strategic rationale, the security elements that it proposes focusing on the regions maritime aspects and finally, how it directly affects the future of U.S. basing structure and strategy in the region.

### **A. THE ASIAN REBALANCE**

#### **1. Strategic Rationale**

The Asian Rebalance began in the fall of 2011 when the Obama administration announced an expansion and intensification of its role in the Asia-Pacific Region. Along with several other steps, the administration signaled that it was placing a higher level of priority to the region shifting U.S. foreign policy away from its focus on the Middle East. Despite a strong perception among regional observers in China that the rebalance is aligned to contain China this is only a small portion of the overall strategic rationale involved in making this policy change.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Joseph Nye, "Our Pacific Predicament," *The American Interest Online*, (February 12, 2013), accessed December 12, 2013. <http://www.the-american-interest.com/articles/2013/02/12/our-pacific-predicament/>.

While the United States government and policy advisors are keenly aware of the military, economic and political rise of China, the rebalance has in fact been driven by many broader considerations as well. Following over a decade of war and crises in the Middle East the administration made the strategic decision to place more emphasis on the area of the world that will be of continuing economic and strategic importance over the next several decades. The policy is based on the perceived desire by many Asia-Pacific countries for continued strategic reassurance in the face of a rising and increasingly assertive and aggressive China.<sup>63</sup> The rebalance has a goal of not only reassuring U.S. allies and partners regionally but other regional countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam and regional powers such as India that the United States has not become withdrawn or strategically exhausted after the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; and provide support to develop multilateral regional norms that continue to create a stable environment.

The stable economic, political and security environment continues to be essential to United States interests and will continue to be defined by future events throughout Asia. The region is already the primary destination for exports from the United States and the growing Asian economies continue to be some of the most important markets for United States exports and investment.<sup>64</sup> In addition, over a million jobs in the United States are linked to the Asian portion of the exporting sector in the U.S. economy with 39 U.S. states sending at least a quarter of their exports to Asia.<sup>65</sup> In addition, Asian investment into the United States and U.S. investment regionally have doubled over the last decade.<sup>66</sup> Maintaining these economic links and regional stability has been driven by the leadership of the United States with the support of regional allies and partners. These economic imperatives are also linked to the threat from various regional flashpoints which could threaten regional and thus U.S. prosperity.

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<sup>63</sup> Tomas Christensen, "The Advantages of an Assertive China: Responding to Beijing's Abrasive Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2, (March/April 2011), 54–7.

<sup>64</sup> "Asia Matters for America/America Matters for Asia," East-West Center, accessed January 8, 2014. <http://www.asiamattersforamerica.org/overview>.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

The largest strategic threats to continued regional stability are an increasingly aggressive China, the continued instability and aggressive nature of North Korea and other nontraditional security threats such as natural disasters, piracy, human and drug trafficking, and terrorism.<sup>67</sup> The administration found it necessary to thus mitigate the likelihood and effect of these various threats and continue to promote regional growth and prosperity by shifting the focus of its foreign policy to the Asia-Pacific.

## **2. Strategic Geography**

The rebalance to the Asia-Pacific continues to be a confusing endeavor in part due to the vague and unclear language used to define the administrations perception of America's strategic geography. The questions that this section answers are why strategic geography is important and how does it apply to Asia-Pacific?

Strategic geographies are important in defining the linkages between a country's interests, requirements, vulnerabilities and its capabilities in relation to the physical environment. When developed, a correct strategic geography would help policy makers clarify the scope of their interests and their implications. In addition, the defined geography also can help to coordinate their interests both internally and externally among allies and partners as well as to communicate these commitments to potential adversaries. However, when defined incorrectly, they can lead to gross over or under extension. This can be seen during the interwar years in between World War I and World War II when the U.S. became isolationist by defining its strategic geography as the Western Hemisphere when in fact due to the economic, political, security and cultural linkages established throughout the twentieth century made these assumptions completely shortsighted and left the U.S. unprepared. In addition, an example of overextension can be seen through the widely used "War on Terror" which directly contributed to U.S. involvement in a decade of war and conflict in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Middle East at large. Thus defining the strategic geography of the new rebalance policy is important in

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<sup>67</sup> Jonathan W. Greenert, "Sailing into the 21st Century: Operating Forward, Strengthening Partnerships," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 65, (Second Quarter, 2012), 68–74.



order to properly focus and align U.S. efforts in an era of a growing importance throughout Asia.<sup>68</sup>

In 2011 as one of the first elaborations of the policy, then Secretary of State Clinton in an essay in *Foreign Policy* remarked that the policy would focus on the Asia-Pacific, but that India and South Asia were perceived to be part of the region.<sup>69</sup> This was further emphasized when in June 2012 in a speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue, then-Secretary of Defense Panetta also defined the Asia-Pacific as including India.<sup>70</sup> The reasoning behind including India and all of South Asia in the Asia-Pacific is multifaceted. First, China and India's economic growth and resultant political and military strength have turned them into regional powers and competitors which is major shift in regional security dynamics. Secondly, India's 'Look East Policy' and its strong economic, security and political ties to its neighbors in Southeast Asia since economic liberalization in the early 1990's have made it a primary stakeholder in regional forums such as the East Asian Summit, ASEAN, and the ASEAN Regional Forum as well as various bi-lateral and multi-lateral free trade and security agreements.<sup>71</sup> Finally, the rising economic expansion of both East and Southeast Asia depend upon a continual flow of resources from the Middle East, Africa, and Western Australia and this has led regional countries such as China and Japan to expand their influence and presence in the Indian Ocean and the South Asian region.<sup>72</sup>

The growing importance of these sea lines of communications linking the Asian economies through the Indian Ocean make the stability of the former U.S. strategic backwater much more prevalent to U.S. policymakers. Analysts continually cite figures

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<sup>68</sup> Nick Bisley and Andrew Phillips, "Rebalance to Where?: U.S. Strategic Geography in Asia," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 55, no. 5, (2013), 95–114.

<sup>69</sup> Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, (November 2011), accessed January 12, 2014. [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas\\_pacific\\_century](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century).

<sup>70</sup> Leon Panetta, "The US Rebalance towards the Asia-Pacific," IISS Shangri-La Dialogue, (June 2 2012), accessed January 12, 2014. <http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri%20la%20dialogue/archive/sld12-43d9/first-plenary-session-2749/leon-panetta-d67b>.

<sup>71</sup> C. Raja Mohan, "India and the Balance of Power," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 4, (July–August 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, "Center Stage for the Twenty-First Century: Power Plays in the Indian Ocean," *Foreign Affairs* 88, no.2 (March/April 2009), 16–29.

that between half and two-thirds of the world's oil shipments, half of containerized cargo and around one-third of bulk goods shipments travel across the Indian Ocean, most of them traveling through the Straits of Malacca.<sup>73</sup> This economic thoroughfare increasingly link and merge the formerly separate areas of the Indian Ocean region and the rest of the Asia-Pacific. However, what does this mean for the rebalance and for U.S. maritime strategy in the Asia-Pacific?

The idea of the Indo-Pacific<sup>74</sup> vice Asia-Pacific is not a novel idea from the perspective of the most important U.S. entities responsible for the region to include United States Pacific Command and Seventh Fleet. Much of the Indian Ocean and its littoral states have traditionally been within their Area of Responsibility and as such, they already have the necessary personnel and experts and plans in place to react to a regional crisis. However, many other departments and groups still entail the area as a completely separate entity and thus treat the entire Asia-Pacific as two distinct groups for the purposes of foreign policy—East Asia and South Asia. The United States Navy is a very mobile and versatile and within one deployment can operate in East Asia, the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf utilizing forward bases to respond to most eventualities quickly. They must continue to perceive the two areas as linked which will allow the United States Navy to unify its efforts without compromising strategic versatility.

### **3. Maritime Security Elements of the Rebalance**

The maritime security elements of the rebalance are some of the most visible and controversial aspects of the new policy. What physical changes the policy has or will enact over the next decade will directly affect the naval strategy of the United States and how it interacts in the region and as such, this section will outline what changes the U.S. military is likely to witness in the Asia-Pacific focusing on the maritime theater.

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<sup>73</sup> Walter C. Ladwig III, "A Neo-Nixon Doctrine for the Indian Ocean: Helping States Help Themselves," *Strategic Analysis* 36, no. 3, (May–June 2012), 385.

<sup>74</sup> Panetta, "The US Rebalance."

The goal of the rebalance as demonstrated earlier is to ensure proper priority is given by the administration and the department of defense to the Asia-Pacific region upon the drawdown from Iraq and Afghanistan. The planned security portion of the policy signals that the U.S. is determined to maintain and even increase its force levels throughout the Asia-Pacific region despite significant defense budget cuts. As such, the administration has taken steps to create a more dispersed presence of U.S. forces by increasing the basing and deployment arrangements also signaling the rising importance of the Indian Ocean region, South Asia, and Southeast-Asia along with the U.S.’s traditional focus on Northeast-Asia. Figure 2 provides an overview of the planned troop and ship deployments as modified by the Asia-Pacific rebalance which will be elaborated on.

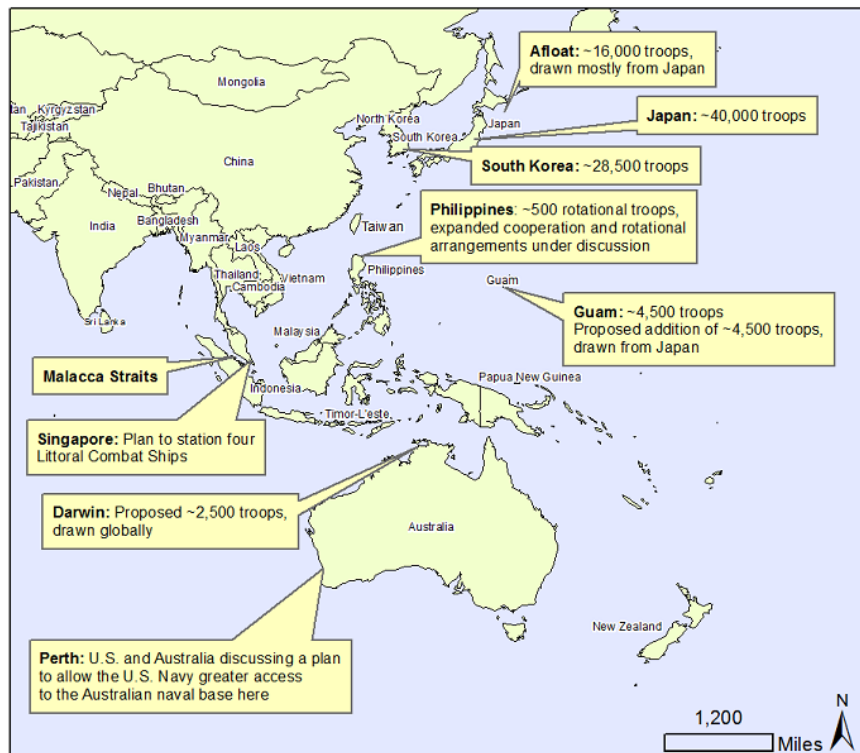


Figure 2. Selected U.S. Troop Deployments and Plans as Modified by the Asia-Pacific Rebalance<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Mark E. Manyin et al., *Pivot to the Pacific? The Obama Administration’s ‘Rebalancing’ Toward Asia*, CRS Report RL42448 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, March 28, 2012).

The Asia-Pacific rebalance involves a significant increase of military connections and cooperation with Australia, Singapore and the Philippines. In Australia, an agreement was signed to allow 2,500 Marines (a full Marine Air Ground Task Force) to rotationally deploy to Darwin for six months to conduct regional training with Australia and other partners. In addition, the two administrations are discussing the possibility for greater U.S. naval access to Australia's Indian Ocean naval bases.<sup>76</sup> Finally, an Australian ship, USS PERTH recently deployed with the George Washington Carrier Strike Group in the Western Pacific during routine operations for several months, one of only two times an allied warship operated in company with a U.S. strike group since World War II for extended operations.<sup>77</sup> In Singapore, an agreement was signed to allow the forward deployment of four Littoral Combat Ships the first of which recently completed its first deployment to the region.<sup>78</sup> In the Philippines, the United States is currently negotiating new military cooperation options to include a rotation of maritime surveillance aircraft, sending more U.S. Naval ships through Subic Bay, and to conduct more frequent joint exercises.<sup>79</sup>

Specific steps announced by the United States Department of Defense and Administration leaders for the Navy include shifting aircraft carriers, intelligence and surveillance capabilities and unmanned aerial vehicles, from the Middle East supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>80</sup> In addition, they intend over the next several years to modify the global deployment of naval assets in order to locate 60 percent of their forces in the Asia-Pacific theater instead of the formerly 50-50 split between the Atlantic and Pacific. This will involve an increase of 1 carrier, seven

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 15–19.

<sup>77</sup> Kirk Spitzer, "Australia Chooses Sides—And It's not with China," *Time Magazine*, (May 6, 2013), accessed 21 January, 2014. <http://nation.time.com/2013/05/06/aussies-choose-sides-and-its-not-with-china/>.

<sup>78</sup> "USS Freedom set to complete its Maiden Deployment," U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs, accessed January 13, 2013. <http://www.public.navy.mil/surfor/lcs1/Pages/USSFreedomSettoCompleteMaidenDeployment.aspx#.UuIW sPldWSo>.

<sup>79</sup> Manyin, *Pivot to the Pacific*, 5.

<sup>80</sup> For specific security elements enacted through the rebalance see: Manyin's *Pivot to the Pacific?* and *Balancing Acts: The U.S. Rebalance and Asia-Pacific Stability*.

Aegis ships such as cruisers and destroyers, 10 Littoral Combat Ships and two submarines. Finally, the deployments of the ships in theater will be modified as well.

In the future, U.S. deployments to the Asia-Pacific will be smaller and more versatile in nature. In contrast to their former reliance on large Cold War style bases in Japan, U.S. naval forces in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean region will rely on rotational deployments while increasing the number and availability of access agreements, expanded training exercises, and military to military exchange with other countries. This includes continued partners in the region such as Australia, Japan, the Philippines and South Korea and Singapore, as well as new regional partners such as India, New Zealand, Vietnam and Indonesia. Examples of this can be seen through new defense cooperation agreements, increased defense dialogue, and joint military exercises.<sup>81</sup> The possibilities of many of these changes are called into question however due to the fiscal constraints to be imposed over the next several years.

The outlook on many of the changes enacted as a result of the rebalance is perceived as slim by many due to the potential fiscal constraints to be imposed on the Defense Department over the next several years. Secretary Hagel and other U.S. leaders however, have emphasized that reductions in defense outlays will not come at the expense of the Asia-Pacific rebalance. President Obama and U.S. military leaders in the Department of Defense's January 2012, "Strategic Guidance," pledge in addition to minimize cuts to the Navy, thus showing the importance of the maritime aspect of the entire theater and reflecting changing priorities.<sup>82</sup>

## **B. NAVAL BASING AGREEMENTS AND THE REBALANCE**

Current U.S. policy aims to achieve distributed force throughout the Asia-Pacific in response to the regional security, economic and political environment. To maximize the ability of the Navy to remain present in the Asia-Pacific and act as a stabilizing force in the region it is imperative to have bases from which to operate in the area. Considering

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<sup>81</sup> Sutter, Brown and Adamson, *Balancing Acts*, 12.

<sup>82</sup> Ashton Carter, "The U.S. Defense Rebalance to Asia," Speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, (Washington, DC: April 8, 2013) <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1765>.

the nature of large scale main operating bases throughout Asia and the rising political and nationalistic sentiment which create significant issues surrounding possible infringement upon host nation sovereignty future access to this type of facility is questionable.

The keys for future access in the Asia-Pacific will continue to be alliance and security assistance relationships, economic assistance relationships from the U.S. to the host country and regional support for U.S. policies such as ensuring regional stability, WMD anti-proliferation, anti-piracy and antiterrorism, the lack of which can produce significant anti-American sentiment. The purpose of this section is to discuss future basing strategies in the region to ensure U.S. naval presence in the future. Efforts to improve presence and access agreements include Singapore, Australia, and the Philippines considering their strategic importance and their political support for U.S. policy in the region. The other options in the area which will briefly be explored are logistic, training and access support from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. In addition, the importance of Diego Garcia and Guam will also be discussed as key U.S. military hubs.

Singapore continues to be central to the forward presence of the United States in the Asia-Pacific. Since the early 1990s a SOFA agreement was established in between the two countries that would facilitate numerous contingency scenarios and a possible increase of U.S. forces depending on a future crisis regionally. These agreements were built off of the U.S. appearing to be indispensable to Singapore affairs both regionally and around the globe. Specifically, the stabilizing effect politically, economically and militarily that the U.S. has in areas that Singapore perceives as critical to its continued prosperity is central to their relationship.<sup>83</sup> The “Singapore model,” as Calder calls it, represents an important cornerstone of future U.S. basing agreements throughout the Asia-Pacific. This model consists of preexisting legal agreements combined with logistical and infrastructure support, intelligence and government coordination, prepositioned equipment, repair and dry-dock facilities and a critical but minimal

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<sup>83</sup> See Seng Tan, “America the Indispensable: Singapore’s View of the United States’ Engagement in the Asia-Pacific,” *Asia Affairs: An American Review*, no. 38 (2011) 156–171.

presence of U.S. personnel to ensure its operation.<sup>84</sup> This is also coordinated through a significant number of joint exercises and training to ensure positive and efficient mil-mil and mil-local government cooperation which also contributed to trust in between the two countries. In conjunction with hardened U.S. force projection facilities in Guam, Diego Garcia and Hawaii, future contingency access agreements, with allowances for infrastructure or political differences, should be applied to other countries in the future if the U.S. desires to continue with significant forward presence operations. These access agreements need to rely on contingency operations such as training, security cooperation, and humanitarian assistance or disaster response scenarios as well as limiting the footprint of U.S. forces to ensure the least amount of political resistance abroad.

Australia continues to have an enduring security alliance with the United States, but they continue to be wary of allowing significant U.S. forces which could be perceived as infringing on their sovereignty and independence, especially in light of their dependence on China for economic growth and investment. The recent agreement to rotationally deploy up to 2,500 U.S. marines to Darwin for training purposes is in partnership with Australian forces and not supported by American-only bases. In addition, the policy makers and the public in Australia continue to associate the U.S. military with costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in which they were also leading contributors.<sup>85</sup> The future of U.S. basing in Australia will continue to be joint basing agreements. Access to naval bases both in Darwin and Perth will continue, but there is significant pressure to prevent any permanent presence. It remains imperative that any future agreements with the Australia be based around political and security issues that the Australians can agree with, which include security cooperation on piracy, WMD proliferation and regional stability.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 60–62.

<sup>85</sup> Andrew Davies and Benjamin Schreer, “Whither US Forces? US military presence in the Asia-Pacific and the implications for Australia,” Australian Strategic Policy Institute, (September, 2011), accessed October 22, 2013. <https://www.aspi.org.au/publications/whither-us-forces-us-military-presence-in-the-asia-pacific-and-the-implications-for-australia-by-andrew-davies-and-benjamin-schreer>.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 6–7.

The Philippines represent another key area that has an opportunity for continued growth. The shift to the Asia-Pacific and the importance of the South China Sea and its surrounding countries to the economic and political interests of the United States places increased emphasis on forward presence in the area and the Philippines is a prime candidate for future access. The Philippines, specifically Subic Bay, offers unique advantages over other regional options for expanded basing agreements. First, Subic Bay operated as the largest U.S. overseas military base for decades during the Cold War and much of the infrastructure still exists. Secondly, there are several recent developments that will ease such an agreement. The continued successful cooperation between U.S. Special Forces and the Philippine government in the Southern Islands to combat terrorism has allowed for increased trust in between the two countries. In addition, the increased hostilities and the threat of China infringing on Philippine sovereignty continues to be central to regional political and security relationships. However, the new basing agreement will need to be a joint U.S.-Philippine venture to expand local infrastructure and, like the agreement with Singapore, consist of a very small footprint mainly focused on logistics support and repair.<sup>87</sup>

Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam all have significant political and infrastructure issues which prevent further expansion of U.S. basing agreements in the near future. However, in order to increase the possibility of an eventual Singapore style contingency agreement for continued and assured access, significant steps and investments must be made to build confidence and trust in between the countries to ensure political sustainability. The United States can achieve this through efforts in three distinct areas to improve the perception of the United States within these countries' governments, security establishment and their populace. The specific initiatives that need to be undertaken are: increasing bilateral military and defense partnerships with each nation; building comprehensive bilateral relationships to include political and economic ties; and advancing U.S. regional strategy through multilateral cooperation in accepted

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<sup>87</sup> Thomas J. Garcia, "The Potential Role of the Philippines in U.S. Naval Forward Presence," (Master's Thesis, United States Naval Post Graduate School, December 2001), accessed November 18, 2013. [http://edocs.nps.edu/npspubs/scholarly/theses/2001/Dec/01Dec\\_GarciaT.pdf](http://edocs.nps.edu/npspubs/scholarly/theses/2001/Dec/01Dec_GarciaT.pdf).



regional forums such as ASEAN, ARF, and the EAS.<sup>88</sup> Over time, these initiatives will improve the possibility that other regional countries will cause increased cooperation and access to the U.S. Navy in the event of regional crises. Until this is accomplished, anything other than basic training and access agreements is unlikely.

Future access agreements as well as significant basing and logistic support throughout the region must be matched with significant, non-politically sensitive and hardened U.S. military bases in areas which the United States has complete control. These forward-operating hubs illustrate the trade-offs between political reliability and military utility that occur due to the inherent uncertainty in future scenarios in which local support for continued U.S. presence might not be assured. Guam and Diego Garcia can play host to significant prepositioned ordnance stores as well as permanent air and naval stations which are critical to contingency operations throughout the Indo-Pacific region. As a result of these strategic assets, in conjunction with other regional access agreements, the U.S. can maintain immense flexibility in response to future crises with a less provocative and less visible permanent presence within regional host-nations.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Ely Ratner, *Resident Power: Building a Politically Sustainable U.S. Military Presence in Southeast Asia and Australia*, (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, October 2013), accessed November 13, 2013. [http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS\\_ResidentPower\\_Ratner.pdf](http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_ResidentPower_Ratner.pdf).

<sup>89</sup> Andrew S. Erickson, Ladwig C. Walter and Justin D. Mikolay, "Diego Garcia and the United States' Emerging Indian Ocean Strategy," *Asian Security* 6, no. 3, (2010), 214–237, accessed 21 October 2013. <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fasi20>.

## V. FUTURE OF U.S. ASIA-PACIFIC MARITIME STRATEGY

### A. SCENARIOS FOR FUTURE U.S. MARITIME STRATEGY

This section describes options for future force posture scenarios which reflect an array of potential variations for future U.S. maritime strategy. Utilizing the current security policy and goals of the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific region by looking at current DOD and naval strategy documents already discussed throughout this thesis, it outlines the costs and benefits of several different future force posture scenarios with specific focus on their effects on the naval strategy goals of: conventional deterrence as well as their impact on regional confidence building measures and the Navy's ability to assist in humanitarian disaster relief operations.

The three force posture strategic scenarios that will be analyzed for the purposes of this paper are: 1) A steady policy and resource approach to U.S. Naval forces in the region assuming current changes enacted since the rebalance remain in place, 2) Further increase in U.S. naval resources in order to maintain local maritime dominance despite China's naval procurement and growth, and 3) Limited and decreasing U.S. naval resources as a direct result of the fiscal constraints being levied against the DOD despite the emphasis on the rebalance. The strategic effects which will be discussed under the heading of each scenario will be conventional deterrence, impact on confidence building measures and the impact on U.S. response to humanitarian disaster relief operations. Each scenario's feasibility will also be briefly analyzed.

#### 1. Steady State

##### a. *Summary of Approach*

The steady state approach is the intent to follow through with current and planned engagement in the region. The administration continues to generate more widely dispersed naval forces with their associated support and logistic structure throughout the Asia-Pacific. This includes various basing and access agreements to additional locations in Southeast Asia and Oceania while strengthening its current deployments to Singapore, our current logistics hub in the area.

The U.S. rebalance involves additional access and support agreements with Australia, Singapore and the Philippines. The current trend in Australia is to more closely align the two navies and they have pressed forward with plans for additional access for U.S. naval forces to Australia's Indian Ocean naval bases.<sup>90</sup> In Singapore, the Navy will continue to deploy an intended four Littoral Combat Ships with the first one having completed its first deployment to the area in December 2013.<sup>91</sup> The Philippines and the United States are currently discussing additional military cooperation and access options to include the rotation of naval surveillance aircraft as well as additional access and logistic support agreement for U.S. naval vessels operating in the Asia-Pacific as well as staging additional joint exercises.<sup>92</sup>

The U.S. Navy also intends to shift air and naval capabilities to include additional aircraft carriers and their associated supporting surface ships, intelligence and surveillance capabilities from other theaters to the region. It also plans on deploying 60 percent of its total surface forces to the Asia-Pacific instead of its traditional 50 percent split in between the Pacific and Atlantic regions. This overall will include an aircraft carrier, seven destroyers, ten LCSs and four additional submarines.<sup>93</sup> In addition, most of the Navy's ballistic missile defense capable Aegis cruisers and destroyers will also be shifted to Yokosuka, Japan or Pearl Harbor, HI.

To support the improved presence operations in the region the Navy will also modify its deployments to focus away from their reliance on traditional U.S. bases in Japan and will rotationally deploy to the South China Sea region. This will be accomplished through a drastically expanded number of naval access agreements, training exercises with other countries as well as additional engagement with regional

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<sup>90</sup> Sutter, Brown and Adamson, *Balancing Acts*, 11–12.

<sup>91</sup> Matt Burke, "Littoral Combat Ship's Maiden Deployment marked by highs, lows," *Stars and Stripes*, (December 11, 2013), accessed 15 December 2013. <http://www.stripes.com/littoral-combat-ship-s-maiden-deployment-marked-by-highs-lows-1.256985>.

<sup>92</sup> Manyin, *Pivot to the Pacific?*, 9–11.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 12–14.

navies.<sup>94</sup> Overall, the new approach seeks to avoid the political and fiscal difficulties that large scale U.S. infrastructure creates in host-nations.

***b. Effects on U.S. Naval Strategy and Missions***

Conventional deterrence in the region would be enhanced by current plans to diversify and disperse access agreements in the region.

The increased number of forces and access as well as training agreements in the area will improve the ability of the U.S. Navy and the Marine Corps to improve both the quality and number of confidence building measures throughout the Asia-Pacific. The Marine Corps units in Darwin will be used almost exclusively for this very purpose as long as regional contingencies do not cause their operational use. In addition, the low technology and flexible nature of the LCS as well as their forward deployments to the area will also improve the number of opportunities for improved maritime security training.

Finally, the impact on humanitarian disaster relief operations over the long term will also be drastically increased capability. The addition of the MAGTF to Darwin and contingency access agreements around the region will improve the ability for U.S. forces to respond. However, in addition to the above mentioned troops, additional pre-positioned stocks of wartime as well as aid supplies should be placed with regional partners in key positions around the area to also ensure adequate logistics support in case of a humanitarian disaster.

***c. Feasibility***

The long term feasibility of this possibility is positive. A majority of the rebalance involves significant distribution of already existing or planned forces with most investment in facilities and movements undertaken by the host nations. In addition, an observer would also have to take into the costs of not having the extra deterrence in theater or the additional capabilities which could drive up long-term costs due to delayed responses to regional crises assuming that, in the end, our willingness to engage in crisis

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<sup>94</sup> *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense*, 12–13.

response does not also change. In addition, the widely distributed nature of this concept also allows it to be much more politically feasible due to negligible permanent U.S. presence in each host nation. Finally, the increased engagement in theater would lead to improved strategic dialogue throughout the Asia-Pacific with the U.S. involving new defense partners such as Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia and India in future multi-lateral HA/DR, maritime awareness and maritime security agreements.<sup>95</sup> Finally, the Obama administration and the Department of Defense have continued to emphasize that defense cuts will not jeopardize the Asia-Pacific rebalance and unlike many other domestic and foreign policy areas, it enjoys broad bi-partisan support in congress.<sup>96</sup>

## **2. Increase of U.S. Naval Resources as a Result of Increased Regional Threat**

### ***a. Summary of Approach***

Increasing the planned naval resources in the Asia-Pacific over those currently planned is unlikely due to the current budgetary environment. In this section however, we make the assumption that there are increased threat dynamics in the region which could lead to increased budgetary outlays for increased regional capability. This is not out of the realm of possibility in the near future due to recent regional maritime sovereignty and resource disputes between numerous states as well as North Korean unpredictability and WMD procurement. This approach takes the Asia-Pacific rebalance for the Navy with its emphasis on presence, distributed force posture and regional engagement and dramatically increases it using various methods.

Future access agreements as well as significant basing and logistic support throughout the region must be matched with significant, non-politically sensitive and hardened U.S. military bases in areas which the United States has complete control. These forward-operating hubs illustrate the trade-offs between political reliability and

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<sup>95</sup> Patrick M. Cronin, "Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee: Achieving Strategic Rebalance in the Asia-Pacific Region," Center for A New American Security, (July 24, 2013).

<sup>96</sup> Sutter, Brown and Adamson, *Balancing Acts*, 11–12; see also Ronald O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities: Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report RL33153 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, September 30, 2013).

military utility that occur due to the inherent uncertainty in future scenarios in which local support for continued U.S. presence might not be assured. Guam and Diego Garcia can play host to significant prepositioned ordnance stores as well as permanent hardened air and naval stations which are critical to contingency operations throughout the Indo-Pacific region. As a result of these strategic assets, in conjunction with other regional access agreements, the U.S. can maintain immense flexibility in response to future crises with a less provocative and less visible permanent presence within regional host-nations.<sup>97</sup> These increased capabilities will put require significant infrastructure improvements on both islands.

Secondly, an increased number of submarines and several Surface Action Groups consisting of several Aegis capable destroyers and cruisers as well as an Amphibious Readiness Group with its amphibious lift capability should be forward station in Guam. This would provide an immense improvement in presence operations, deterrence and regional interaction by decreasing the number of transit days per ship to a homeport from three weeks to a mere four days to arrive in possible crisis zones. In addition, with the subsequent movement of a MAGTF from Okinawa to Guam, it would also provide immediate amphibious transport capability for any regional contingency ranging from HA/DR to a large scale conflict in between belligerents.

Finally, the aforementioned maritime logistics and access agreements to countries in theater should be expanded to ensure a small footprint of widely dispersed maritime prepositioned stocks. These stocks should however be focused on HA/DR equipment and supplies to ensure host nation support for their placement due to their non-conflicting nature. Additional “Singapore Model” basing and access agreements should also continue to be secured in order to achieve long term strategic parity. The “Singapore model,” as Calder calls it, represents an important cornerstone of future U.S. basing agreements throughout the Asia-Pacific. This model consists of preexisting legal agreements combined with logistical and infrastructure support, intelligence and government coordination, prepositioned equipment, repair and dry-dock facilities and a critical but

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<sup>97</sup> Lord, ed., *Reposturing the Force*; Erickson, Walter and Mikolay, “Diego Garcia and the United States.”

minimal presence of U.S. personnel to ensure its operation.<sup>98</sup> This is also coordinated through a significant number of joint exercises and training to ensure positive and efficient mil-mil and mil-local government cooperation which also contributed to trust in between the two countries. In conjunction with hardened U.S. force projection facilities in Guam, Diego Garcia and Hawaii, future Singapore model agreements, with allowances for infrastructure or political differences, should be applied to other countries in the future if the U.S desires to continue with significant forward presence operations.

***b. Effects on U.S. Naval Strategy and Missions***

Conventional deterrence in the region would be enhanced by increasing the available naval assets both forward deployed and station in region through the expansion of Guam as well as an increased number of contingency access agreements for training or regional disaster response to include the positioning of various pre-positioned supplies while minimizing footprint to achieve long term political sustainability.

The increased number of forces and access as well as training agreements in the area will improve the ability of the U.S. Navy and the Marine Corps to improve both the quality and number of confidence building measures throughout the Asia-Pacific over current plans for the Asia-Pacific rebalance. The increased ARG capability and other maritime assets in theater will add much more capability for transporting assets around the theater for bilateral or multilateral training and exercises.

Finally, the impact on humanitarian disaster relief operations over the long term will also be additional increased capability. The addition of the ARG to Guam in addition to a more widely dispersed range of prepositioned HA/DR supplies will drastically improve response time to these crises.

***c. Feasibility***

As stated in the introduction to this strategic scenario, the criteria for meeting the resource needs to achieve these outcomes would need an increased budget resulting from a perceived group of threats. Chinese military modernization poses increased risks in

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<sup>98</sup> Calder, *Embattled Garrisons*, 60–62.

terms of area denial and anti-access but Chinese intentions, although rather opaque, are not at present perceived as a threat to the U.S. or its allies. Should China or North Korea, which in itself continues to be completely unpredictable, move to threaten the interest of the United States or its allies in significant ways the current equilibrium would cause the U.S. to execute and expand into some of these contingencies to counter either threat. However, until then, current budgetary realities will not allow for the execution of this plan.

### **3. Limited or Decreasing Naval Resources**

#### ***a. Summary of Approach***

The Department of Defense has been forced to face the stark reality of budget cuts proposed by both the Simpson Bowles act of 2011 and implemented by sequestration; however, it is important to note that this matches historic trends of post-war draw down, for example, the 1990s with the end of the Cold War resulted in a large decrease in Department of Defense outlays. In the end, massive government security spending is unlikely to be sustained indefinitely due to the growth of other concerns such as economic recovery. The effect on the Asia-Pacific rebalance, although staunchly argued as negligible by both the Department of Defense and the Obama Administration, will be significantly decreased global posture and flexibility.

This section will outline possible impacts that significantly decreased resources will have on the Navy's Asia-Pacific strategy. It will also argue for additional structural and strategic changes to U.S. naval strategy to minimize its negative impacts through additional cost savings such as modified deployments, forward basing and a reduction in force structure in order to reserve the overall goals of the U.S. maritime strategy.<sup>99</sup>

Despite the increased emphasis on naval operations in the Asia-Pacific in the future, any changes in resources toward the Navy are modest at best due to the budgetary limits imposed by congress over the past several years. Despite decreased procurement over the last decade and limited numbers projected into the future, the Navy has been

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<sup>99</sup> Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Healing the Wounded Giant: Maintaining Military Preeminence While Cutting The Defense Budget*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013).



able to maintain global presence with its current 286 major warships including 11 aircraft carriers, 11 large deck amphibious warships, over 50 nuclear submarines and 70-80 high-technology Aegis cruisers and destroyers. However, the fleet is almost half the size of Reagan Era levels with new global commitments despite the implosion of the Soviet Union and its global maritime threat. for presence operations and conventional deterrence, global engagement through bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises and training, maintenance of sustained combat ability for a large scale war while being able to operate in two smaller contingency operations, maintain a steady nuclear deterrent and ballistic missile defense capability, and the capacity to launch large scale HA/DR operations around the globe.<sup>100</sup>

Despite all of these requirements and a declining amount of resources the Navy is maintaining 15 percent more overseas deployment time than it did a decade ago.<sup>101</sup> Due to increased emphasis on these missions in the Asia-Pacific with the rebalance the overall likelihood of conducting the rebalance in an effective and efficient manner as planned with future budget constraints is unlikely. The following are recommendations which should be instituted to ensure that the primary goals of current U.S. maritime strategy in the Asia-Pacific are not compromised in the future.

In recent DOD documents the goal of maintaining continuous deployments to the Mediterranean, Persian Gulf with increased presence operations and engagement in the Asia-Pacific is unlikely without significant changes in deployment structure.<sup>102</sup> Similar to current patrol craft and mine-sweep forward deployments as well as intended LCS deployments, Aegis cruisers and destroyers should be stationed forward for longer periods of time and crew swaps should be instituted in order to improve their presence in theater. This would improve the current four-six month of on station time every two years by cutting out several months of transitioning time from home ports in the continental U.S. multiplied by the number of ships that are forward stationed to the area. It is

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<sup>100</sup> *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 4–10.

<sup>101</sup> O’Hanlon, *Healing the Wounded Giant*, 39–40.

<sup>102</sup> For current goals for U.S. naval strategy, see: 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report; Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*; and “Defense Budget Priorities and Choices Fiscal Year 2014.”

projected that this would improve on station time by up to forty percent.<sup>103</sup> However, significant challenges would need to be overcome in order to make this logistically but these are not insurmountable and in addition, the benefits outweigh any short-term costs while restructuring.

In addition, as mentioned in earlier sections, expanding forward U.S. naval facilities and supporting infrastructure in Guam while negotiating and instituting additional “Singapore model” access agreements around with regional allies and partners would also allow for significant improvements and efficiencies in transit times and logistics support.<sup>104</sup> These improved efficiencies would also allow for long-term cost savings despite initial infrastructure costs of around \$2-3 billion dollars a year while improving forward presence and strategic flexibility. If necessary, the Navy could also continue to operate at current or slightly increased levels while decreasing the number of its forces slightly also increasing cost savings.<sup>105</sup>

***b. Effects on U.S. Naval Strategy and Missions***

Overall effect of this strategic scenario would be similar to the increased resources section but would sacrifice global presence and flexibility to achieve the rebalancing goals in the Asia-Pacific.

***c. Feasibility***

The long term feasibility of this possibility is positive. Current and future budget realities, absent a drastic change in strategic threat, will ensure that decreased overall resources will be available for the Navy despite the rebalance. A majority of this scenario involves currently planned regional deployments but incorporates the current long term trend of decreasing budgets and a push for overall savings and efficiencies. Politically, this is also the most feasible due to the positive nature of executing the rebalance with a more long-term oriented and realistic budgetary environment. Finally, due to continued

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<sup>103</sup> O’Hanlon, *Healing the Wounded Giant*, 39–40.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 41–46.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 41–46.

broad bi-partisan support in congress that the rebalance receives, the initial political hurdles needed for infrastructure improvement in Guam with long-term savings in mind should be relatively easy to achieve.

## **B. SUMMARY**

The Asia-Pacific will continue to remain important to the economic prosperity and national security interests of the United States. It is home to some of the world's most important countries, which play host to extremely dynamic economies and militaries. In addition, significant reserves or natural resources as well as emerging security and stability crises will continue to drive future interactions in the region. The United States Navy, with its mobile and versatile nature and its ability to operate in international waters with little permanent regional footprint can help prevent, stabilize, or combat these future issues while maintaining U.S. presence in the region.

This section analyzed several different possible scenarios focusing on current U.S. maritime strategic policy goals in the Asia-Pacific. Utilizing the current security policy of the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific region by looking at current DOD and naval strategy documents it outlined the costs and benefits of several different future scenarios with specific focus on their effects on naval strategy goals of: conventional deterrence as well as their impact on regional confidence building measures and the Navy's ability to assist in humanitarian disaster relief operations. With additional focus on partnerships and innovative ways to ensure forward presence and deterrence, including new capabilities and additional home-porting or deployment options, the Navy can continue to rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific in the future and continue to have a stabilizing effect on the region despite decreasing available resources. The goal of which is to sustain the influence and credibility of the United States throughout the Asia-Pacific region while preventing conflict, ensuring freedom of access to maritime resources and to protect the national security interests of the United States while safeguarding the global economy.

## **VI. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **A. SUMMARY**

The way ahead for the United States Navy in the Asia-Pacific is difficult to predict or understand without a firm foundation of knowledge of numerous aspects of not only the recent Asia-Pacific rebalance policy, but also the history of U.S. naval involvement and U.S. maritime strategy in the Asia-Pacific Theater. This thesis utilized all of these areas to paint a more detailed picture of the new policy and its effects on U.S. maritime strategy. It also projected several future choices that the United States Navy can make in order to meet its stated strategic goals in the Asia-Pacific region.

The thesis began with the foundation of United States maritime strategy and the importance of modern naval diplomacy in shaping a country's interactions around the globe were outlined to better comprehend the impact that the rebalance has on the United States Navy. Following the turn toward U.S. naval strategy in the Asia-Pacific region, we next analyzed the historic maritime involvement of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region. This was to show and emphasize the depth of involvement and the importance that the United States Navy has had historically and will continue to have on regional stability and prosperity.

We next looked at the rebalance itself and its security and strategic elements which impacts U.S. naval strategy. Chapter IV provided several different strategic scenarios and strategic rationales that could be employed by the U.S. Navy and their effects on naval diplomacy. The importance of these two sections of the thesis was to project the current aspects of national strategy and the Asia-Pacific rebalance into the future.

This thesis will now draw implications and policy recommendations from the previous sections consisting of substantive changes which directly reflect U.S. policy goals in the region in response to the rebalance.

## **B. IMPLICATIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The implications of the Asia-Pacific rebalance and its large maritime dimension continues to shape United States naval strategy. The rebalance is a multi-dimensional concept, but considering the increased importance that the Navy plays in regional political and economic stability through naval diplomacy, how the Navy shapes its current and future policies will continue to be central to any discussion. As shown throughout this thesis the United States Navy needs to continue its historic stabilizing role in the region to prevent a growth in inter-regional competition which could have negative global implications.

The United States Navy can continue to enhance its presence and impact in the Asia-Pacific through several other avenues than previously discussed in order to meet the policy goals of the rebalance. These policy recommendations are to improve the political sustainability of U.S. naval forward presence, and to develop a new United States maritime strategy which reflects new geo-strategic realities.

### **1. Maintain a Politically Sustainable U.S. Naval Presence**

The United States Navy in the future cannot rely on its own resources in order to achieve its stated goals of maintaining or improving the political, economic and security situation in the Asia-Pacific region. Due to stark budget and force structure reduction realities the United States Navy needs to rely more on regional partners to contribute to strengthening U.S. military and defense partnerships and to advance U.S. regional strategy through multilateral cooperation. This includes not only military operations and interactions such as training exercises or foreign military sales, but also includes additional multilateral diplomatic and economic ties.

The current policy of the United States aims to have a more geographically distributed force posture in Asia while improving overall regional capacity in response to the ever evolving geo-political and security environment. These efforts include additional access agreements as well improving efforts aimed at political sustainability. The importance of long-term political support not only from governments but from the

populace of partner nations is fundamental to the U.S. regional goals.<sup>106</sup> Below are specific steps that should be addressed for enhancing the political sustainability of the Navy throughout the Asia-Pacific.

The United States Navy needs to ensure that that any new force posture initiatives receives the support of host nations while addressing its public's perceptions to ensure that the agreements are shown to be mutually beneficial by pursuing a steady state approach that minimizes large scale initiatives which could be perceived as infringing on national sovereignty thus creating nationalistic tension or conflict. While pursuing these initiatives the U.S. will have to demonstrate a willingness to address key security concerns of regional allies and partners. This should include internal as well as external threats as well as nontraditional security challenges such as natural disasters or terrorism. If the U.S. demonstrates that they are filling and diminishing key capability gaps in these areas it would go a long way toward improving the regional perception that the U.S. primarily utilizes unilateral action and planning to accomplish its goals. This includes highlighting shared responsibility, improved partner capability and the importance of shared facilities and activities which improve the host nation without the perception that the United States is acting primarily for its own interests.<sup>107</sup>

Improving bilateral and multilateral security relationships are also only part of the larger and perhaps more important comprehensive relationship to include diplomatic and economic ties. Increased regional exercises and force posture must be accompanied by additional increases in diplomatic and economic investments on the local as well as national level in order to improve overall regional perceptions. U.S. security policy decisions to include overall regional force posture need to be viewed in the context of active diplomacy and alliance management.<sup>108</sup> The State Department should take more of a leadership role in the development of these security ties because they understand the large political and diplomatic context of any relationship. For example, the establishment

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<sup>106</sup> Ratner, *Resident Power*, 5–6.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 17–18.

<sup>108</sup> Kurt Campbell and Celeste Ward, “New Battle Stations?” *Foreign Affairs*, (September–October 2003) 95–103.

of the 2+2 dialogue and mechanism with the Philippines has helped to improve the quality of force structure discussions which have led to significant breakthroughs on the potential for shared facilities.<sup>109</sup>

Finally, ensuring that the U.S. maintains or increases its participation in pre-existing multilateral frameworks such as the various ASEAN forums will act as reassurance to regional allies and partners that its commitment to the region is strong and enduring. In order to accomplish this goal as well as to improve intra-region cooperation and capacity, consistent engagement cannot be overstated, the lack of which can cause the impression of a self-interested and opportunistic United States which can be seen in the regional perception of the insufficient U.S. support for the Philippines during the Scarborough Reef crisis as compared to Chinese challenges to Japan or Taiwan.<sup>110</sup> Some recommendations to improve regional perceptions would be to articulate a baseline set of regional forums and activities in which the U.S. would participate at the highest levels consistent with regional partner's participation. For example, the U.S. could include attendance of the U.S. Secretary of Defense to every Shangri-La Dialogue and the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus as well as the participation of the President for the annual East Asian Summit. Participation in these forums will also contribute to the acceptance and overall positive reception of U.S. naval presence throughout the region by improving the ability of U.S. officials to explain U.S. policy and intentions in public and private settings.<sup>111</sup>

## **2. Develop a New U.S. Maritime Strategy**

The importance of a maritime strategy and the central role it plays to the prosperity of a maritime nation such as the United States was shown in Chapter II. It also analyzed the recent evolution of maritime strategy in the United States utilizing the most recent United States naval strategy, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*. The strategy however is lacking in many specific aspects and some would argue that it

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<sup>109</sup> Campbell, "New Battle Stations," 98.

<sup>110</sup> Ratner, *Resident Power*, 24.

<sup>111</sup> Ratner, *Resident Power*, 30.

cannot even be considered an actual maritime strategy. This must be resolved if the United States Navy is to adapt itself as an organization to modern geo-political realities and national policy goals.<sup>112</sup>

Joint Publication 1-02, the *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, defines strategy as, “a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives.”<sup>113</sup> In addition, it must also directly correlate with and contribute to the National Strategy. Unfortunately, the “Cooperative Strategy” although discussing the strategic goals of the maritime services and their associate core capabilities, lacks any substantive discussion on the means required for their accomplishment or how specific resources, specifically budget, manpower, or force structure, will be aimed toward its varying priorities. In other words, without this information, it is much less a strategy than an overall strategic concept that is lacking any of the needed specifics needed to be complete. The Asia-Pacific rebalance and the current economic environment are a perfect opportunity to address these shortcomings by developing a new maritime strategy which addressed these issues within the context of the new environment.

A new maritime strategy has been in development since 2011 among the higher echelons of the Pentagon and should be released over the coming months.<sup>114</sup> Within various policy circles the new maritime strategy is seen as a much more forceful document than the previous 2007 strategy with its emphasis on cooperation and mutual security partnerships around the world while specifically avoiding mention of specific threats. The new maritime strategy contains an emphasis on possible threats to U.S. national security to include the growing anti-access and area denial capability around the globe as well as other nontraditional threats such as terrorism and climate change. In

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<sup>112</sup> Work and van Tol, *A Cooperative Strategy*, 1–4.

<sup>113</sup> Joint Pub 1–02, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, accessed 19 January, 2014. [www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new\\_pubs/jp1\\_02.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf).

<sup>114</sup> Bryan McGrath, “What Should the New U.S. Maritime Strategy Look Like?” *The National Interest*, January 7, 2014. <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/what-should-new-us-maritime-strategy-look-9670>.



addition, it does begin to develop its response to these threats utilizing new war concepts such as Air-Sea Battle.<sup>115</sup> Finally, it also addresses new fiscal realities which will affect the strategic force posture of the Navy while addressing how its force structure and resources should be distributed in the future to reflect future budget reductions.<sup>116</sup> Pending its actual release, it seems to address many of the critiques leveled against its predecessor. Considering the close nature of the release date the possibility of debate is limited, however, offered below are some additional factors that need to be incorporated into the new maritime strategy in order for it to meet the goals enacted by the Asia-Pacific rebalance.

The new maritime strategy needs to prioritize among the many desirable policy goals; specifically, it needs to focus attention and resources on a few priorities which would accurately reflect the overall national strategy, in this case, the Asia-Pacific rebalance. The new maritime strategy needs to make specific choices in the pursuit of these objectives with the outlaying of resources directly connected to these goals. In other words, the strategy would lay out a future strategic outlook of the future and strive to provide resources and support to meet a realistic and achievable end-state. As a part of this the Navy needs to shape its force structure in the future to reflect these realistic goals and priorities. An example of modifying force structure to meet the goals of the Asia-Pacific rebalance can be seen through the discussion surround the various strategic scenarios in chapter IV.

Partnerships also need to continue to play a major role in the maritime strategy despite the new emphasis on specific threats around the globe. In the end, the goal of the U.S. Navy is to prevent large scale conflict by providing deterrence through its forward presence operations. A major part of these forward presence operations and its resulting deterrence value revolves around enduring security partnerships around the globe. This continued emphasis on increasing partnership capacity, specifically in the Asia-Pacific,

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<sup>115</sup> McGrath, “What Should the New U.S. Maritime Strategy.”

<sup>116</sup> Christine H. Fox, “Remarks on the Current Affairs of the U.S. Navy,” 2014 AFCEA WEST Conference, San Diego, California, February 11, 2014.  
<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=5369>.

needs to also ensure a politically sustainable U.S. military presence to meet the goals of the Asia-Pacific rebalance into the future as discussed earlier in this section.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

The United States' foreign policy rebalance into the Asia-Pacific continues to have a dramatic impact on the United States Navy. Over the next several decades the importance of the Asia-Pacific and the central role that the Navy will continue to play in this essentially maritime oriented theater will continue to be a cornerstone of national strategy. Recent regional friction points persist: the rise of China, the instability of North Korea, maritime disputes in the South China Sea and the East China Sea, climate change, natural disasters, piracy and drug and human trafficking all compete for U.S. naval resources. In addition, growing economic integration in this evolving region will continue to emphasize the critical role that stability in maritime trade, commerce, and resources as well as the continued prosperity and security of regional U.S. allies and partners are essential U.S. interests. To deal with these factors and goals, the United States Navy needs to adapt itself to ever changing circumstances which reflects the new focus of American interests and foreign policy.

The information compiled in this paper can facilitate future regional United States maritime interactions, and, more generally, its future policy and strategic decisions in this pivotal region. Understanding the current nature of the United States Navy's role and how it fits into the new policy can help to recalibrate the Navy's goals and strategy in the future. The key will be to find ways to continue the high level of U.S. naval presence throughout the Asia-Pacific while continuing to grow regional capacity through cooperation and security assistance and training through various bi-lateral and multi-lateral forums. To foster this successful growth and the role that the United States Navy will continue to play in the region adherence to the principles mentioned in this thesis will greatly increase the chances of success. The factors are: developing a new maritime strategy clearly delineating the nation's policy goals and providing the specific resources necessary for their accomplishment, improving regional support and political sustainability, and increasing or modifying regional U.S. naval force structure in addition

to increasing the breadth and degree of access agreements and partnerships throughout the Asia-Pacific all will be mutually beneficial to the United States Navy in its adaptation to the new policy.

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