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THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS  
ON NAVAL STRATEGY

Robert John Branco

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THESIS

THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS  
ON  
NAVAL STRATEGY

by

Robert John Branco

Thesis Advisor:

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The Effects of Environmental Factors  
on  
Naval Strategy

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis treats the need to understand the effects of environmental factors on naval strategy. Studies are made of the navies of the United States and Soviet Union with several examples of how these factors have influenced naval policy in the past. A detailed examination of these factors such as political issues, economics, and Third World nationalism, illustrates how significant these subjective elements of naval strategy are in determining policy judgments.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION-----	8
	A. CURRENT SITUATION-----	8
	B. NEED FOR STUDY-----	8
	C. PURPOSE-----	9
II.	BACKGROUND: UNITED STATES-SOVIET NAVAL INTERACTION-----	10
	A. POSTWAR PERIOD-----	10
	1. Event Summary (1945-1950)-----	10
	2. Post War Naval Programs-----	12
	a. Soviet Fleet Expansion-----	12
	b. Demobilization of the U.S. Navy-----	13
	B. THE COLDWAR ERA-----	13
	1. Event Summary (1950-1962)-----	13
	2. Trends in the Era of Confrontation-----	16
	a. The Soviets Develop Missile Technology-----	16
	b. The U.S. Navy: Intervention Force---	17
	C. THE MISSILE AGE-----	18
	1. Event Summary (1962-1974)-----	18
	2. U.S.-Soviet Naval Competition-----	22
	a. Acknowledgment of a World Naval Power-----	22
	b. Rebuilding an Aging Fleet-----	23
III.	SOVIET NAVAL POLICY-----	25
	A. STALINIST POSTWAR PROGRAMS-----	26
	B. STALIN'S DEATH--A NEW DIRECTION-----	28
	C. COUNTERING THE CARRIER--STRATEGIC NUCLEAR THREAT-----	30



D.	FORWARD DEPLOYMENT-----	34
1.	Building Programs-----	34
2.	Deployed Operations-----	40
IV.	REBUILDING: THE U.S. NAVY IN PEACETIME-----	46
A.	NATIONAL POLICY AND THE MILITARY-----	46
1.	The Nixon Doctrine-----	46
2.	Current Missions of the Navy-----	47
B.	REBUILDING EFFORTS-----	51
1.	Post-Vietnam Assessment-----	51
2.	New Construction Programs-----	53
a.	Shipbuilding-----	54
b.	Aircraft and Missile Development-----	59
C.	PEACETIME OPERATIONS-----	62
1.	Adjusting to Deployed Requirements-----	62
2.	Current Problems-----	65
a.	All Volunteer Navy-----	65
b.	Energy Crisis-----	67
c.	Economy Measures-----	69
(1)	Consolidation/Reduction-----	69
(2)	Other Efforts-----	70
V.	THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON NAVAL STRATEGY-----	73
A.	ACTION/REACTION-----	73
B.	POLITICAL-ECONOMIC FACTORS-----	76
1.	Ideology-----	76
2.	Decision Making-----	78
3.	Defense Budget-----	81
4.	Research and Development-----	83



5. Manpower-----	84
6. NATO/SEATO-----	87
7. Economics-----	88
C. RISK AVOIDANCE NATURE/OPPORTUNISM-----	90
D. THIRD WORLD NATIONALISM-----	92
1. Desire for Independence-----	92
2. Effects on Base Stability-----	95
E. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR ANALYSIS--AN EXAMPLE----	97
BIBLIOGRAPHY-----	100
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST-----	106



## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Many recent analyses have highlighted the comparative strengths of the U.S. and Soviet Navies, emphasizing the importance of naval strategy as an arm of the nation's national policy. In order to understand the policy decisions which are made in implementing this strategy, the effects of the environmental factors on it must be examined by decision-makers, those who carry out the policy, the general public, and those peoples of the world who are affected by it.

Study of these environmental factors serves several purposes. Primarily, it enables one to evaluate the reasons for making the particular decisions. Armed with this insight, the policy planners and operational leaders can improve their understanding of the complex issues that are involved in the decisions they face. Finally, this improved perception of the comprehensive nature of these policies will provide all concerned with an appreciation for the need of a more balanced approach in their definition.

### B. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this research effort is to address this need by providing a background of events and their causes which will enable the reader to gain an understanding of naval strategy and the complex environmental factors that influence it.



## C. METHOD

The framework of this discussion of naval strategy is established by the background presented in Chapter II. Soviet Naval Policy (Chapter III) provides perceptions of the Soviet Navy's emergence from its inferior position after World War II to its acceptance as a world naval power today. While the information from the Soviet Union is incomplete, the detailed data and pronouncements in Chapter IV concerning U.S. naval strategy reveal the effect of similar factors mentioned in the Soviet chronological study. In Chapter V, The Effects of Environmental Factors on Naval Strategy, some of the factors mentioned in the Soviet and U.S. chapters are reiterated, and others are added to expand the scope of coverage. Although a complete list of these factors and an in-depth investigation of their impact is not presented, sufficient examples in the context of recent history and current situations are given to demonstrate the value of this knowledge to those who must evaluate Soviet naval strategy and establish its United States counterpart.

## D. SOURCES

Source material for this subject is extensive. Congressional testimony, national magazines, and professional military periodicals are among the many sources consulted. In addition, analyses conducted by the Rand Corporation, Brookings Institute, and the Center for Naval Analysis are utilized to provide a balanced viewpoint in the discussions. Special attention is paid to Michael McCWire and Robert Herrick, whose invaluable



experience as assistant naval attaches to the Soviet Union has made their detailed analytic efforts essential to a better understanding of the Soviet Navy's recent rise to recognition.

## II. BACKGROUND--UNITED STATES-SOVIET NAVAL INTERACTION

In order to understand the elements of current naval strategy and the factors which affect its determination, it is helpful to review the history of incidents and naval planning trends which formed naval strategy of recent years.

### A. POSTWAR PERIOD

#### 1. Event Summary (1945-1950)

##### a. 1946

In March the U.S.S.R. not only failed to withdraw its troops from Iran in accordance with previous agreements, but also moved reinforcements toward the Iranian and Turkish borders with hopes of gaining control of the Dardanelles. Afterwards, the United States announced an alleged goodwill mission to Turkey by the Battleship Missouri, cruiser Providence, and destroyer Powers. The threat of this naval force convinced the U.S.S.R. to reach a withdrawal agreement while Missouri was enroute to Turkey.

At the same time the Communist dominated left had been strongly rejected in the Greek elections. With the threat of subversive retaliation imminent, the Missouri made a courtesy call to Greece after leaving Istanbul. However, after the American dreadnought left Greece, the Soviets



charged that the proposed referendum on the return of the monarchy threatened peace. This action, plus renewed Soviet demands on Turkey for a share in control of the Dardanelles, convinced U.S. Defense Secretary James Forrestal and President Harry S. Truman that the presence of a stronger squadron was needed in the Mediterranean. A carefully planned news release on 28 August, which made known the visit of a squadron composed of the new aircraft carrier Franklin D. Roosevelt, cruiser Little Rock, and five destroyers, set the stage for the successful September referendum. The result of these early major power confrontations in the Mediterranean was the permanent presence of American naval power in the U.S. Sixth Fleet.

b. 1948

Prior to the Italian national elections in April 1948, the Communist Party had attempted to take control through the intimidation of the populace by riots and demonstrations. During this period Sixth Fleet ships, operating in Italian waters, had increased the frequency of good-will visits. The vigorous Soviet protests of this "gunboat diplomacy" acknowledged the true importance of this stabilizing naval influence.

Thwarted by U.S. determination on several occasions, the U.S.S.R. began the Berlin Blockade in April. The U.S. Navy participated in the famous Berlin Airlift through the logistic efforts of tankers and auxiliaries in conjunction with merchant ships. The transportation of over two million



gallons of aviation gas for airlift planes, as well as tons of food and supplies, contributed to the effort that resulted in the Soviets' lifting the blockade on May 12, 1949.

This series of events encouraged the U.S. and her European allies to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in April 1949. The alliance realized that it was imperative to maintain freedom of ship movement across the Atlantic through sea control by a navy of unchallenged superiority.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Postwar Naval Programs

### a. Soviet Fleet Expansion

The Soviet Union's postwar naval programs were directed at both the continuance of the traditional role of support for the ground forces and defense of the coastal areas, and the beginning of a new mission of interdicting free sea communications between the United States and Europe. The first of these efforts concentrated on expanding the surface fleet with the construction of cruisers and destroyers, while the second emphasized building up the Soviet submarine fleet. Nearly 200 modern attack submarines of the W-class were built in the late 1940's.<sup>2</sup> By late 1950, the Soviet Navy had grown to substantial size. Its forces included 15

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<sup>1</sup>Rear Admiral Ernest McNeill Eller, The Soviet Sea Challenge, (New York: Cowles Book Company, Inc., 1971), pp. 93-96.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas W. Wolfe, Soviet Naval Interaction with the United States and Its Influence on Soviet Naval Development, (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1972), pp. 5-6.



cruisers, 115 destroyer types, 300-350 submarines and 400-500 patrol craft.<sup>3</sup>

b. Demobilization of the U.S. Navy

Postwar fleet reductions were carried out swiftly with the concentration on capital ships. With strong emphasis being placed on the potency of the atomic bomb, American strategists felt that capital ships and the battle-tested amphibious assault were no longer feasible. By June of 1950, 22 of 23 battleships and 13 of 20 carriers had been decommissioned; the VJ day total of 5,000 ships of patrol size or larger had been reduced to 671. Thus in a five year period when the Soviets were rebuilding their naval strength, the United States had cut back its fleet by 85%.<sup>4</sup>

B. THE COLDWAR ERA

1. Event Summary (1950-1962)

a. 1950-1953

The Korean War brought mobilization of some of the mothballed ships that the U.S. Navy required to carry out amphibious landings and gunfire support. The armistice and the recent expulsion of the Nationalist Chinese from mainland China revealed the threat of Communist aggression that existed in Asia as well as in Europe. Thus the Seventh

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<sup>3</sup>Eller, The Soviet Sea Challenge, p. 98.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 99-100.



Fleet, which operated in the Western Pacific, joined the Sixth Fleet as a permanent deterrent to any further major power aggressive acts.

b. 1953-1956

In 1953 selected foreign ports were paid official visits by Soviet naval units. Between 1954 and 1956 two Soviet Black Sea detachments visited three countries.

c. 1956

The Middle East threatened to erupt into world war in July 1956 when Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser seized the Suez Canal. Later, when Israel's forces drove into the Sinai Peninsula, Sixth Fleet units were quickly ordered to evacuate Americans and any other foreign nationals who wished to leave the area of conflict.

d. 1957

In April 1957, a leftist revolution and the collapse of certain governing groups endangered King Hussein's rule in Jordan. President Eisenhower publicly announced the support of the United States and dispatched Sixth Fleet units to the Eastern Mediterranean. Later, in September of that year, a cruiser and destroyer from the U.S.S.R.'s Baltic Fleet visited Yugoslavia and Syria. The stopover in Latakia, Syria, coinciding with an early part of a national crisis, gave the appearance of Soviet support.

e. 1958

Once again, political instability threatened a government in power, this time in Lebanon. In answer to a



request for help, the Sixth Fleet maneuvered seventy warships, including three attack carriers, to the Lebanese coast and landed marines in Beirut. In August the Soviets established their first forward base in the Mediterranean when four W-class submarines and a submarine tender were deployed to Valona, Albania.

f. 1959

Four more submarines and another tender were added to the force at Valona.

g. 1960

A Soviet squadron, on a four week cruise in the Mediterranean took part in a 20 ship exercise with the Valona-based submarines in the Aegean Sea.<sup>5</sup>

h. 1961

As a result of the assassination of President Rafael Trujillo and the subsequent violence in the Dominican Republic that occurred in early 1961, American amphibious ships landed marines in Santo Domingo to protect U.S. citizens and embassy personnel. At the same time, the pro-Communist Pathet-Lao insurgents threatened an overthrow of the Laotian government. President John Kennedy ordered a Seventh Fleet task force to the area in May, and 1,800 marines were landed, remaining until early July. Also in May, the Soviet Union

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<sup>5</sup>Michael MccGwire, "The Mediterranean and Soviet Naval Interests," Soviet Naval Developments: Capability and Context, (Halifax: Centre for Foreign Studies, Department of Political Science, 1972), pp. 311-312.



received a setback when it was forced to leave its base at Valona. Later in December, Admiral Gorshkov, the Soviet Navy's Commander-in-Chief, made his first visit to Egypt.

i. 1962

The discovery of deployed Russian missiles in Cuba by U.S. reconnaissance planes precipitated the first serious nuclear confrontation of the Cold War. President Kennedy demanded that the missiles and launchers be removed from Cuba, and also that all vessels enroute with more of this equipment return to the Soviet Union. These demands were the elements of a quarantine proclamation which took effect on 24 October, and were backed up by the 180 American warships circling the Cuban frontier with 30,000 marines. In November the Soviets backed down and dismantled their missiles.<sup>6</sup>

2. Trends in the Era of Confrontation

a. The Soviets Develop Missile Technology

After Stalin's death in 1953, naval development proceeded in a different direction with many programs in progress at that time being cancelled. Pleased with their advances in missile weaponry, the new leaders were determined to adopt this technology to their fleet units in an effort to counter the threat of the American carrier strike force. The strength and potential capabilities of the U.S. fleet throughout its interventionary role in the 1950's

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<sup>6</sup>Eller, The Soviet Sea Challenge, pp. 131-132.



made the Soviets aware of the need to neutralize this potential strategic nuclear menace. Their large submarine force was their best candidate to meet this challenge, and the Valona-based attack submarines attempted to achieve this in the Mediterranean during the late 1950's. In their ship construction programs in the latter half of the decade, the Soviets placed their hope in the development of a variety of missile systems which could be packaged aboard smaller surface ships, submarines, and long-range aircraft. This modernization plan resulted in the evolution of both surface-to-surface cruise missiles and strategic ballistic missiles.<sup>7</sup>

b. The U.S. Navy: Intervention Force

Throughout this period the United States expressed little concern over the rapid development of the Soviet Navy with the exception of the interdiction threat that her large fleet of submarines posed. After the demobilization of the postwar era, U.S. involvement in the Korean War prompted the beginning of a new building program of large, modern attack carriers. This reaction, which similarly stimulated the build-up of the Strategic Air Command in the early 1950's, resulted in seven new attack carriers being laid down by 1958 and three older ones being extensively modernized. The introduction of long-range nuclear capable aircraft, like the A3-D, extended the operating options of the carrier task forces and increased the threat to the

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<sup>7</sup>Wolfe, Soviet Naval Interaction with the United States and Its Influence on Soviet Naval Development, pp. 12-13.



Soviet Union. This same carrier force also doubled as the strong point of all the amphibious interventions which took place during these twelve tense years.<sup>8</sup>

C. THE MISSILE AGE.

1. Event Summary (1962-1974)

a. 1963

In April the U.S. announced that the Polaris Fleet Ballistic Missile submarine development was complete, and that the first submarine was on patrol in the Eastern Mediterranean. On May 20th the Soviet Union proposed that the Mediterranean should be declared a nuclear-free zone. During 1962 and 1963 Soviet naval hydrographic units performed preliminary surveys to provide open anchorage locations for the initial deployments of surface warships to the Mediterranean.

b. 1964

During the Cyprus crisis a small force of Soviet submarines and surface ships made a sustained deployment to the Eastern Mediterranean. In August two U.S. Navy destroyers were attacked by North Vietnamese PT boats in international waters in the Gulf of Tonkin; this incident caused both houses of the U.S. Congress to initiate resolutions to take all necessary action to protect U.S. forces

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 10



and to assist those nations covered by the Southeast Asia Treaty.

c. 1965

The U.S. Seventh Fleet landed 3,500 marines at Danang, South Vietnam, the first combat troops to enter Vietnam. This action began full scale U.S. naval involvement in Vietnam that was to last until 1973. Naval gunfire support, carrier aircraft strikes, and small boat riverine warfare were the primary operations undertaken by the U.S. Navy during this period.

d. 1966

Between 1964 and 1966, a gradual increase in the deployed numbers of Soviet naval vessels in the Eastern Mediterranean basin was observed. The squadron was usually composed of two to four diesel submarines, three to five destroyers or escorts, a gun cruiser and/or submarine tender, and an occasional surface-to-surface missile capable surface ship. The length of deployment increased each time, but there were periodic absences, especially during the winter months. Soviet warships made three visits to Egypt between September 1965 and August 1966 and two in 1966 to Algerian ports. The Soviet Union also provided naval arms and aircraft to Egypt and Algeria during this period.

e. 1967

In April Communist Party leader Brezhnev declared that no justification existed for the permanent presence of the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and



that it was time to demand its withdrawal. During the Arab-Israeli War in June, Soviet Fleet units shadowed the American carriers. By this time the average number of ships deployed by the Soviet Union totalled 25. For the first time, the rising importance of Soviet naval developments was realized by the West when a Russian-made Styx missile fired from an Egyptian patrol boat sank the Israeli destroyer Eilat in October.

f. 1968

During the year Operation SEVER was held by the Soviet Navy in the North Atlantic and the deployment of naval units to the Mediterranean was increased to an average of 35. This squadron usually consisted of ten to fourteen surface warships and eight to twelve submarines. Usually three to four of these combatants were cruise missile armed units, submarine or surface.<sup>9</sup> Three Soviet warships made a good-will cruise to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf ports.

g. 1970

At the peak of crisis in Jordan in September and October of 1970, over 72 Soviet naval units were present in the Eastern Mediterranean to neutralize the presence of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. Operation OKEAN, a world-wide Soviet command and control exercise, was conducted by naval and maritime units throughout the globe. Late in the year the

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<sup>9</sup>MccGwire, "The Mediterranean and Soviet Naval Interests," pp. 312,313.



U.S. government demanded that facilities being built in the Cuban port of Cienfuegos not be utilized to service Soviet nuclear submarines.<sup>10</sup>

h. 1971

In support of India in the short Indo-Pakistan War, the Soviets ordered several naval combatants into Indian Ocean waters to offset the U.S. carrier force in the area. In October direct negotiations began between naval delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union in an effort to reduce the possibility of tension-producing incidents.

i. 1972

An agreement to prevent incidents at sea was signed on May 25th during President Nixon's summit visit to Moscow.<sup>11</sup> By this time the Soviet Mediterranean squadron averaged 64 deployed vessels. However, a severe setback was suffered in July when Egyptian President Sadat asked the Soviet Union to withdraw from Egypt. Even though port facilities were still available for use, the loss of the airfields used for fleet surveillance and air cover was a severe one.

j. 1973

The October War in the Middle East renewed old rivalries as the Soviets built up concentrations to nearly

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<sup>10</sup>Wolfe, Soviet Naval Interaction with the United States and Its Influence on Soviet Naval Development, pp. 24-25.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 36.



one-hundred vessels, and the U.S. went on a world-wide alert in addition to strengthening the Sixth Fleet. The normal deployment of 20 Soviet warships to the Indian Ocean aroused the concern of U.S. strategists who subsequently planned to expand the Diego Garcia communications station into a base that could support deployed American ships.

k. 1974

At the request of Egypt, the U.S. Government undertook the removal of explosives from the Suez Canal in preparation for its return to full service. The U.S. Navy dispatched ordnance disposal specialty teams to Egypt aboard the USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2) to carry out this work.

## 2. U.S.-Soviet Naval Competition

### a. Acknowledgement of a World Naval Power

Since World War II, the Soviet naval forces had largely been restricted to operations in the home waters of the four territorial fleets: Baltic, Black Sea, Northern, and Pacific. After observing the significant presence and intervention of the U.S. in the 1950's, the Soviet Union felt that it needed to project its power to various strategic parts of the world in the form of naval power. This resulted in a gradual shift to the forward deployment of its naval forces begun during the Arab-Israeli War of 1967. Through the presence of its modern fleet units and the battle test of its cruise missile on the Eilat, the Soviet Navy finally was recognized by the U.S. and other world nations as a serious threat to their naval and merchant marine fleets. This effort



of the Soviet Union to "show the flag" extended, not only into the Mediterranean, but also into the waters of the Caribbean, Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans. In addition to this overt display of missile armed surface ships, a large number of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines have been deployed off American shores in an effort to equalize the threat of U.S. Polaris submarines. From a level of naval mediocrity in 1950, the Soviet Navy has risen to such a point of strength that Raymond Blackman, editor of the 1972-1973 edition of Jane's Fighting Ships, has stated that "it can snap its fingers at all the maritime countries."

b. Rebuilding an Aging Fleet

The intensive commitment of U.S. naval forces in Vietnam from 1965 to 1973 has aged the fleet in two ways. Long deployments with heavy operating schedules prevented most of the vessels from being maintained properly. Due to the high expenditure of defense appropriations in Vietnam during this period, shipbuilding programs were curtailed and few replacements were provided for aging fleet units, many of which were built in World War II. The realization that the Soviet Union had built a modern navy with potent weaponry and significant numbers, presented the United States with a significant challenge to rebuild its fleet. Having just completed construction of 46 units of the Knox ocean escort class, the U.S. is placing high hopes on the success of the new construction programs for the DD-963 class destroyer, Patrol Frigate and SSN-688 high speed attack submarine. These ships are



expected to fill a void created by recent extensive decommissioning of World War II vintages. In addition, modern carrier aircraft and cruise missile development programs are nearing completion. This rebuilding effort to bridge numerical and technological gaps is being combined with plans to homeport fleet units in forward strategic areas such as Greece, Japan, and Guam. If this challenge was not difficult enough, the need to accomplish this task under the scrutiny of a skeptical Congress and under the limitations of an All-Volunteer manpower concept has allowed little room for misjudgment.

The three decades since World War II have been characterized by the rise of the Soviet Navy from an inferior position to its current recognition as a serious threat to the U.S. Navy. During this period the Soviets developed new weapons systems and constructed modern warships while the United States naval effort was concentrated in operating and interventions from Korea to Vietnam. Just how this Soviet naval expansion unfolded in the form of programs and policy is treated next.



### III. SOVIET NAVAL POLICY

One of the reasons that accurate analysis of Soviet naval strategy is difficult is the limited amount of information that is available regarding the justification of policy decisions made in the Soviet Union. Probably even more important is the actuality that since the Soviet Navy was not considered a threat for such a long time, its emergence in the mid 1960's found Western analysts hurrying to find out "what happened" and "why." Robert G. Weinland addresses this issue in a paper he prepared for the Center for Naval Analyses, "The Changing Mission Structure of the Soviet Navy." As a consequence of this sudden emergence he feels that "we are now faced with considerable uncertainty and large gaps in our knowledge of Soviet capabilities and intentions."<sup>12</sup>

Among the various topics which require investigation to bridge these gaps of understanding, the study of shipbuilding programs provides realistic boundary estimates for policy decisions and allows the linking of political, economic and strategic causes to these decisions. Commander Michael MccGwire R.N. (ret.) has contributed a great deal of insight into the determination of Soviet naval policies since 1950. His study of the Soviet Navy has concentrated on shipbuilding

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<sup>12</sup>Robert G. Weinland, "The Changing Mission Structure of The Soviet Navy," in Soviet Naval Developments: Capability and Context, (Halifax: Centre for Foreign Studies, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University, 1972), p. 261.



programs and weapons systems development with emphasis on pinpointing evidence which might assist in evaluating future capabilities and courses of action. In "The Turning Points in Naval Policy Formation" he indicates the advantages of this approach. A primary benefit of this type of investigation is the perspective it can provide when appraising the missions of various classes of ships. With the exception of directional changes resulting from internal economic causes, cancellations or modifications may indicate design characteristics which are considered inadequate and/or irrelevant due to revised operational requirements. In addition, analysis of this sort reveals the knowledge and options available to Soviet policymakers at a given time.<sup>13</sup> In this chapter, the analytic efforts of Michael McGwire and Robert Herrick comprise the nucleus of an attempt to formulate a chronological investigation of Soviet naval policy decisions.

#### A. STALINIST POSTWAR PROGRAMS

In the forty year period following the Russian Revolution in 1917, two schools of thought competed for government support to direct naval strategy in the U.S.S.R. The old school members were either former Tsarist naval officers or officers influenced by the classical command of the sea doctrine of Mahan that this group professed. The capital ships (battleships

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<sup>13</sup>Michael McGwire, "The Turning Point in Naval Policy Formation," in Soviet Naval Development: Capability and Context, (Halifax: Centre for Foreign Studies, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University, 1972), pp. 152-153.



and cruisers) and the influential power gained by their deployment were the basic tenets of their strategy. The young school, on the other hand, was composed of Marxist-Leninist trained officers who asserted that the submarine had replaced the large surface ships of the fleet as the primary striking element. They believed that submarines, aircraft, and light surface craft should be assembled to form the contemporary naval fleet.<sup>14</sup>

In spite of persecution resulting from the anti-Communist inspired Kronshtadt Naval Base mutiny of 1921, the old school strategists finally persuaded Stalin to support the undertaking of a capital ship building and modernization program in 1933. This effort was first hampered by technology problems and later interrupted by the outbreak of World War II. During the war, the Russian fleets in the Baltic and Black Seas were bottled up by German invasions of the North and South, and because of the need for seaward support of the Soviet ground troops, naval strategy was limited to coastal defense roles.

The bitter memories of the ineffective use of naval force in World War II strengthened Stalin's resolve to build the powerful fleet that the war had interfered with. Shortly after the war, the Soviets perceived their primary naval threat to be an amphibious invasion of their Baltic and Black Sea coastal regions. This belief was enhanced by the Western powers' efforts to contain Communism in Eastern Europe and

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<sup>14</sup>Robert Waring Herrick, Soviet Naval Strategy, (Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1968), pp. 21-22.



the Far East. As a deterrent to this menace the original rebuilding program provided for 40 cruisers, 210 destroyers, 180 escorts, and 1,200 submarines to be delivered to the four major fleets by 1965. While the larger surface ships were intended for a primary mission of coastal defense in the postwar era, Stalin had hoped that they would be the nucleus of a prestigious strike force in the future. Over 180 large diesel submarines, however, were to be armed for the strategic delivery of nuclear armed torpedoes. Modification of the submarine programs by 1950 resulted in the design of four new classes, two nuclear and two diesel. The nuclear-powered H-class SSBN and the diesel propelled G-class SSB were to be fitted out with ballistic missiles.<sup>15</sup>

#### B. STALIN'S DEATH--A NEW DIRECTION

When Stalin died in March 1953, his long-frustrated efforts to build an impressive, balanced fleet were about to be realized. At that time at least six Sverdlov light cruisers were completed and six others were in progress. About fifty Skoryi class destroyers were built between 1950 and 1953, and twelve others were in various stages of construction. In addition to the surface ship programs, W-class submarine production had been increased.<sup>16</sup> The change in

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<sup>15</sup>Michael McGwire, "Soviet Naval Programmes," in Soviet Naval Developments, (Halifax: Centre for Foreign Studies, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University, 1973), pp. 218-219.

<sup>16</sup>Herrick, Soviet Naval Strategy, p. 65.



leadership that followed resulted in the abolishment of the independent naval ministry and its subordination to the Soviet Defense Ministry controlled by Army marshalls. Stalin's successors also re-evaluated national defense policy, and the seaborne invasion threat was discounted because of advancements in nuclear weapons and missile development.

Program modifications and cancellations in 1954 indicated a shift in policy back to the young school strategy. The change from capital ship construction to the relatively inexpensive submarines, aircraft, and light, fast surface units allowed resources to be reallocated to the domestic economy for merchant and fishing vessel construction. The other key feature of the 1954 decision was the adoption of long-range cruise missiles (which had yet to be developed), sacrificing tactical flexibility and fleet size. In 1965, Premier Nikita Khrushchev replaced Stalin's naval minister, Admiral Kuznetsov, with 46 year old Admiral Sergei Gorshkov. Gorshkov, who had been Deputy Commander-In-Chief of the Navy in 1955, was a former World War II Flotilla commander, and loyal Party man who was known to have a strong interest in developing missile technology for fleet use. This postwar Black Sea Fleet commander had been selected to implement a totally new operational concept. The new strategic modus operandi was based on engaging opposing forces (carrier strike forces included) within the range of land-based air cover, and envisioned a concurrent missile attack of strike aircraft, diesel submarines, and light cruisers. Some of the building



programs originating from this decision were the Badger C aircraft, Kildin/Krupny/Kynda/Kresta surface ship types, and the W-class Longbin conversion and J-class diesel submarines. The wholesale curtailment of the current and projected naval programs and the shift to the reliance on the long-range surface-to-surface missile (SSM) systems, which required external target location,<sup>17</sup> meant that these main, task-specific elements would become closely tied to main fleet areas and land-based air cover.<sup>18</sup>

### C. COUNTERING THE CARRIER-STRATEGIC NUCLEAR THREAT

By 1957 the U.S.S.R. had come to the realization that development of such American long-range carrier aircraft as the A-3D made it possible for strategic nuclear air strikes to be conducted against Russia's industrial areas from the South Norwegian Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean, outside the range of Soviet shore-based air cover. This reality shattered the basic assumption of their operational concept developed in 1954 and called for at least one major change in their strategic planning. It was also evident to the Soviets that North American anti-submarine warfare (ASW)

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<sup>17</sup>External target location--the range of the weapon often exceeded the range of the sensor (radar) necessary to guide it to the target. Therefore, the missile was either fired to a predetermined geographic location, or it was fired in the general direction of the threat where the aircraft took over guidance to the target.

<sup>18</sup>Material found in sections B and C is based on "Soviet Naval Programmes," "Turning Points in Naval Policy Formation," "Developments in Soviet Naval Policy: 1955-1973," and "The Mediterranean and Soviet Naval Interest," by Michael McGwire, and also Soviet Naval Strategy by Robert Herrick.



advances had rendered their first generation of nuclear ballistic missile submarines, the H-class SSBN, inadequate. In addition to the fact that the ship's propulsion plant was noisy and susceptible to detection, the SS-N-4 missile with 350 nautical mile range was subject to severe rough weather limitations since it had to be launched while on the surface.

This lack of foresight on the part of Soviet naval planners prompted three major decisions in 1957-1958. The first was the cancellation of the new surface and submarine programs established in 1954. Four Kynda-class missile cruisers and six W-class Longbin SSG units were completed due to "pipeline inertia,"<sup>19</sup> while sixteen J-class SSG's were delivered on a delayed basis between 1962 and 1968. The Kresta-class successor to Kynda was revised in design to carry a helicopter aft which could provide target location information with its radar for the ship's long-range SSM system.

The second decision was to give short-term priority to neutralization of the carrier over developing nuclear submarine strategic delivery systems. Thus, nuclear hull/propulsion units planned for ballistic missile submarines were redesigned as the E I and E II-class cruise missile units, making use of missiles developed for the J-class SSG class. These cruise missile submarines had as their primary objective

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<sup>19</sup>Pipeline inertia--a shipbuilding term Michael McGwire coined to describe the combination of economic and operational factors which justify the continued construction of additional units of a class, for a substantial period after the parent program has been cancelled.



the neutralizing of the carrier and other large surface combatants. Even then, these submarines still required launch information from another source for their missile systems. Therefore, as a temporary measure the existing H-class ballistic missile submarine and more than half of the G-class SSB's were retrofitted with the 650 nautical mile, submerged-launch SS-N-5 missile system in an effort to offset Western ASW improvements.

The final decision provided evidence of Khrushchev's reliance on the nuclear submarine as the cornerstone of a deterrence-based defense policy. A new requirement for a threefold increase in nuclear submarine production was levied for the dual purpose of countering the carrier force in remote sea areas, and of providing a strategic nuclear delivery capability in answer to the Polaris program that had begun development in 1957. The V-class SSN and the C-class SSGN were expected to meet the carrier threat, with the C-class submarine to be fitted out with horizon-range submerged-launch missiles. The Y-class SSBN was to be similar to the Polaris submarine with sixteen missiles of a 1300-1500 mile range. All of these classes were scheduled for delivery in 1968. In addition, the development of ballistic missile submarines by the U.S. created a need to extend the coverage of land-based anti-submarine helicopters, especially in the Northern Fleet area. The Moskva-class anti-submarine cruiser was designed to serve as an ASW helicopter platform with the first unit expected to be operational in 1965.



Soviet naval aviation in this period also underwent some changes in tactics and aircraft. In the early 1950's the Soviet Union developed long-range bombers capable of delivering strategic nuclear strikes against the United States. The TU-95 Bear and M-4 Bison heavy bombers reached production in the mid-1950's, and were adapted by the Navy for open-ocean reconnaissance, tanker support, and missile strike roles. During the immediate postwar period Soviet naval fighter aircraft were responsible for intercepting the U.S.'s carrier aircraft. Later in 1959, when the possibility of the U.S.S.R.'s ever developing a carrier of its own dimmed, these land based naval fighters were transferred to the land-based fighter air arm, PVO Strany. Instead of being charged with neutralizing the air strike, the navy was now required to destroy the launch platform. With the Bear assigned to reconnaissance and missile strike missions and the Bison also involved with reconnaissance and tanker support for the Bear, the navy hoped to reduce its ever-growing enemy ship surveillance problem.<sup>20</sup>

In the 1957-1958 decisions the Soviet Navy proceeded farther away from the concept of a well-balanced fleet. Even more important were the subsequent effects on the shipbuilding industry which resulted from the sudden program cancellations. The Soviet shipbuilding industry itself is

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<sup>20</sup>John T. Funkhouser, "Soviet Carrier Strategy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, December 1973, pp. 30-31.



relatively flexible, but its services are in great demand. Merchant marine requirements often compete with the navy for the building ways on an equal basis. Lead Time<sup>21</sup> can vary from three years on initial applications which are very primitive (Kildin SSM conversion) to twelve years on a full application such as the Kresta class which was carefully designed from the keel up. Because of factors such as pipeline inertia and lead time, cancellations can severely delay building programs when delivery and procurement schedules of key equipments are upset. The 1954 and 1957-1958 decisions caused production reverberations until the mid-1960's.

#### D. FORWARD DEPLOYMENT

##### 1. Building Programs

Until 1960 the U.S.S.R. had resigned itself to the fact that geography had limited it to being predominantly a major land-power, using its fleets to protect several widely separated stretches of vulnerable coastline. Narrow straits or chokepoints had historically enabled her enemies to confine her Northern, Baltic, Black Sea, and Pacific fleets in time of war. Control of the Turkish Straits, which provide the only exit from the Black Sea, has long been an urgent Soviet requirement; efforts in 1946 to coerce Turkey to give the U.S.S.R. regulatory powers over the 192 mile passage were condemned by the United Nations. This incident, which

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<sup>21</sup>Another Michael McGwire term defining the period between design decision and delivery of the first of a class or of the first production model of a new weapon system fitted to an operational unit.



prompted the United States to make an interventionary display of support for Turkey, was one of a series of aggressive moves in the postwar period that resulted in the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Another strategic chokepoint is the Swedish-Danish Oresund which severely restricts access to and from the Baltic Sea. The 1400 mile voyage from the Baltic to the open ocean of the Norwegian Sea would present a perilous wartime transit with the threat of minefields and blockade as experienced by the U.S.S.R. in World War II. Even the Barents Sea coast in Northern Russia where the Soviet Northern Fleet is homeported is somewhat restrictive for units transiting to the North Atlantic. The Greenland, Iceland, United Kingdom (GIUK) Gap is geographically oriented to permit an effective submarine barrier of ships, buoys, and aircraft. NATO nations rehearse these tactics in their annual joint fleet exercises. Thus, the Northern Fleet's large submarine force could be hampered in its wartime mission of interdicting ocean supply and communication lines between the U.S. and Europe. In the Pacific the Soviet seaports of Vladivostok and Nakhodka have always been confined in the Sea of Japan. Until the end of World War II Japan had controlled all three straits which served as exits. Soviet occupation of the Kuriles and Sakhalin in the closing days of the war with Japan in 1945 gave them control of Kunashiri Strait now named Proliy Yekateriny (Strait of Catherine).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Lawrence Griswold, "The Chokepoint War," Sea Power July 1973, pp. 12-17.



Because of these strategic geographic weaknesses, and the continued acceleration of weapons development in the missile age, the Soviet Union was forced to consider the extension of its maritime defense zones and forward deployment of its naval forces. There is some disagreement over the actual date and cause of this decision which is considered by many as the most far-reaching policy shift in the history of the Soviet Navy. Michael McGwire believes that this decision was made as early as 1961 when the international climate was tense with incidents such as the U-2 and the Berlin Wall. The Polaris program successes became apparent when the first of these ballistic missile submarines sailed on its first patrol in November 1960. Originally 14 of these vessels had been authorized for construction during the 1958-1960 period, but on January 29, 1961, President John F. Kennedy augmented the force with an authorization to build 27 more units, 15 of which were to commence within six months. In October of that year, the 1500 nautical mile A-2 missile for the program was successfully launched, and the more advanced 2500 nautical mile A-3 was undergoing development. Specific reference to this increased production was mentioned in the 1962 edition of Military Strategy, edited by Soviet Marshall Sokolovskii.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Michael McGwire, "Developments in Soviet Naval Policy: 1955-1973," in Soviet Naval Developments, (Halifax: Centre for Foreign Studies, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University, 1973), p. 46.



Even more important than the deployed Polaris system's coverage of the Soviet Union, was the apparent emphasis on seaborne strategic delivery weapons. Soviet naval leaders perceived that the shift to a "nuclear-missile war" at sea was for the purpose of preserving a ready nuclear reserve force for dictating terms after a nuclear exchange between land-based ICBM's. Since the first Y-class ballistic missile submarines were not to be delivered until 1968, the U.S.S.R. had to balance the capabilities of its fleet in order to move toward a level of mutual deterrence. An additional incentive for action was the eviction of the Soviet submarines from their Albanian base in mid-1961.

In contrast to this analysis, most Western naval experts fix the date of this forward deployment as late as 1962 when the massed elements of the U.S. fleet backed up American demands during the Cuban missile crisis. The inability of the Soviet Navy to protect its maritime interests outside of coastal waters was strongly emphasized in this near nuclear confrontation. McGwire does not discount the impact that the Cuban missile crisis had on Soviet naval policy; however, he feels that the timing of several building programs and conversions proves that the decision was made prior to 1962.

Regardless of the exact date of the origin of forward deployment, the Soviet Navy lacked the overall capabilities and tactical preparations necessary for such a change of policy. As a result, the hiatus in surface ship construction



which had been caused by the 1957-1958 decision, was altered by the urgent requirement for increased numbers of versatile surface units to diversify the composition of the fleet. The preliminary design and long lead time procurement of components for the Krivak class destroyer and Kara class cruiser required a decision to build in the 1961-1962 time frame. In the way of conversions the most immediate need was the attainment of a surface-to-air missile (SAM) capability on more vessels than the Kashin class guided missile destroyer which had begun production. The modification of eight Kotlin class destroyers with SAM systems available from the cancelled Kynda program was authorized in this period with the first being completed in 1962. From the nature of the actions taken, however, Soviet naval leaders seemed to rely on this interim measure until the nuclear submarine production was able to provide the necessary deterrent capability.<sup>24</sup>

In a carefully worded statement in mid-1963 newly-promoted Fleet Admiral Gorshkov continued his campaign for more surface ships:

Modern submarines and missile-carrying aircraft comprise the principal striking forces of the Navy and are the essence of its power. Yet there must be other forces besides the long-range strike forces both for active defense against any enemy within the limits of the defense zone of a maritime theatre and for the comprehensive support of the combat and operational activities of the main striking forces of the Navy. To such forces belong surface missile ships and small craft, warships and aircraft for antisubmarine warfare,

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<sup>24</sup>McCWire, "Soviet Naval Programmes," p. 220.



minesweepers, warships and merchant ships of special (KGB or naval auxiliary) designation, coastal missile units, etc. 25

By the end of 1964 the Soviets had recognized the need to oppose Polaris, which was now deployed to the Eastern Mediterranean as well as the northern areas. Naval leaders realized that besides neutralizing the carrier strike threat with nuclear cruise missile submarines and missile-armed aircraft, a means of denying free access to potential launching areas was imperative. The concept of anti-submarine area defense demanded an increase in ASW surface forces able to deploy to these forward areas. The conversion of existing units and construction of more versatile ones for this ASW role was a long term program compared to the SAM modifications, but the following steps were taken at this time. The Moskva class was limited to two units while a multi-purpose successor was chosen, the Kara class cruiser. The Kresta class was also modified considerably to be effective in the multi-threat environment of forward deployment. The long-range SS-N-3 SSM system was replaced with the middle-range SS-N-10 missile, and the SA-N-1 Goa SAM system was supplanted by the more advanced SA-N-3 weapon. The overall capability of this missile cruiser was further enhanced by the substitution of an ASW helicopter for the target-locating version that had been essential to the long-range SSM. Another conversion emphasizing the policy shift was the altering of several

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<sup>25</sup>Herrick, Soviet Naval Strategy, p. 74



Krupny SSM destroyers to SAM-armed ASW variants renamed the Kanin class.<sup>26</sup> Whether the decision to build the new Kirov class carrier with the angled through deck was made during this period or after the Moskva had operated for a time in the late 1960's is yet to be determined.

## 2. Deployed Operations

The actual deployment of Soviet naval forces was first limited to short cruises to the Eastern Mediterranean in 1964. Oceanographic units had preceded these pilot efforts and had concentrated on surveying anchorages in international waters where afloat units could receive logistic support and make repairs. Originally these anchorages were chosen for their locations out of sight of land because the Soviets feared the imperialistic overtones of a political action which would tie their forces to a foreign base. However, by 1965 the lack of afloat support available to the deployed fleet generated the need for access to base facilities in the operating area. During that year such factors as the announcement of the conversion of U.S. ballistic missile submarines to carry the 3000 nautical mile Poseidon missile, increased American involvement in Vietnam, and the Soviet naval construction increase seemed to convince the U.S.S.R. that it should pursue a more active projection of its military power. Soviet naval forces were to adopt a more assertive power and challenge the West's unrestricted use of the seas, a task

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<sup>26</sup>McGwire, "Soviet Naval Programmes," p. 220.



which would demand more ships on station and continuous deployment. This new direction in strategy, requiring base facilities in forward areas, was probably organized at the Twenty-Third Party Congress in March 1966. In May, Gorshkov visited Egypt allegedly seeking base facilities. According to the 1971-1972 edition of Jane's Fighting Ships, Soviet military aid to Egypt in 1966 included five R-class submarines and twelve Osa class missile boats. By the time the Arab-Israeli War began on June 5, 1967, the Soviet's Mediterranean squadron averaged 25 deployed ships. During the Six Day War these Soviet units concentrated on shadowing the U.S. carriers in the Eastern Mediterranean. On 9 July Soviet warships berthed in Port Said and Alexandria, claiming to provide 'cover' against Israeli air attacks. The U.S.S.R. had finally gained the first important bases necessary for the support of forward deployment.<sup>27</sup>

To this singular success the Soviets added another Egyptian base at Mersa Matruh which included docking facilities and an airfield from which they could fly their TU-16 Badger aircraft. In 1968 and the years that followed, the size of the Soviet Mediterranean squadron grew significantly to at least equal the numbers of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. Besides gaining access to other Mediterranean port facilities at Latakia, Syria and Algeria, Bone, and Mers el-Kebir in

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<sup>27</sup>McCWire, "Developments in Soviet Naval Policy: 1955-1973," pp. 14-15.



Algeria, the Soviets chose anchorage locations with a definite strategic objective in mind. In 1971, then Vice-Admiral Isaac Kidd, the Six Fleet commander, identified these locations as "choke-points" or "ticket gates" where Soviet fleet units conduct surveillance.. These areas are east of Gibraltar, the sea south of Sardinia and Sicily, the Sicilian Channel between Sicily and Tunisia, between the islands of Crete and Rhodes, and in the seas off the Greek islands of Kythera and Antikythera south of Peloponesus.<sup>28</sup>

A key factor in further Soviet expansion of its forward deployment was the 1968 British decision, made by the Labor government of Prime Minister Harold Wilson, to withdraw British forces from the Perisan Gulf states and elsewhere east of Suez by the end of 1971. Several visits were made by Soviet warships to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in 1968. Today, besides being on good terms with top oil producing countries such as Kuwait and Iraq, the Soviets have port facilities available for their use in Hodeida, Southern Yemen, in Mogadishu and Berbera, Somalia, and in the islands of the Malagasy Republic (Madagascar) and Mauritius.

After the recent support of Soviet fleet units during the Indo-Pakistan War when their presence apparently neutralized the American carrier force sent to the area, Soviet naval assistance to India has continued. One of the major Soviet Navy projects has been the construction of

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<sup>28</sup>..Soviet Thrust in the Mediterranean," Time, June 28, 1971, p. 28.



expanded facilities of the East Coast naval base of Vishakhapatnam. Undoubtedly the strongest and most strategic base the U.S.S.R. has in the Indian Ocean is on the island of Socotra at the mouth of the Gulf of Aden. The anchorage facilities at this former British base have been supplemented by a rebuilt airfield and an ammunition depot.<sup>29</sup>

Other areas have been exposed to Soviet naval presence as well as the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean. Since 1969, Soviet warships have periodically cruised the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, and visited Cuban ports. In May 1970 a force of Soviet ships arrived at the southern Cuban port of Cienfuegos. This squadron of ships included a submarine tender and three submarines and was the first step of what appeared to be an attempt to establish a permanent facility for nuclear submarines. American reconnaissance photography in August seemed to confirm the type of construction that would support the intelligence received previously. In September an open expression of concern by the United States emphasized the seriousness of such an undertaking. The obvious increase in on-station time of Y-class ballistic missile submarines, if allowed to operate from the Cienfuegos base, once again made Cuba the focal point of a major power confrontation over nuclear arms. Secret diplomacy

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<sup>29</sup> "Russia Drives East of Suez," Newsweek, January 18, 1971, pp. 27-31.



appeared to have settled the matter by January 1971 when the Soviet tender departed Cienfuegos.<sup>30</sup>

In West Africa, Guinea has been the scene of continuous Russian naval presence for over three years since its President Sekou Toure asked Moscow for help in preventing Portuguese-supported rebels from overthrowing his government. In response to this request the Soviets dispatched a naval combatant to patrol the coast as a show of force, a display of naval power which continues today along with military arms assistance. In addition to Soviet military aid, Guinea also received assistance from Communist China in 1973 in the form of four modern Shanghai class motor gunboats. This rivalry has kept Toure from making any firm base commitments to either power, but he has allowed the staging of TU-95 Bear long-range reconnaissance bombers out of the air field in Conakry, the Guinean capital.<sup>31</sup> This valuable addition to surveillance of the Atlantic lessened somewhat the loss of the air base at Mersa Matruh when Egyptian President Anwar Sadat expelled Soviet military personnel in July 1972.

Throughout the ten years of active Soviet naval deployment, continued efforts at neutralizing Western naval presence have been pursued without confrontation. The

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<sup>30</sup>Kenneth O. Gilmore, "Soviet Submarines: New Challenge from Cuba," Reader's Digest, May 1971, pp. 63-67.

<sup>31</sup>"Soviets Seek West African Naval Base for Patrols of Atlantic Lanes," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 31 January 1974, p. 40.



objective of equalizing the American Polaris threat with deployed Y-class ballistic missile submarines now nears completion, with the promise of further nuclear arms competition arising from the construction of the Soviet D-class and American Trident submarines capable of extended range deliveries. The expected reopening of the Suez Canal in the near future provides the Soviet Navy and merchant marine some hope of relief from the arduous and economically draining voyages around Africa.

The world-wide Soviet naval exercise OKEAN which Gorshkov staged in 1970 served two purposes. The first of these objectives was to convince Soviet leadership that the navy was indeed a viable extension of national military power and worth every bit of the resources that were being expended. Secondly, it was a grand scale test of the command and control apparatus and the operational readiness of the four separate fleets. To the West it also served notice that the Soviet Navy was prepared to face the many faceted scenario of operational challenges perceived by its leadership. Thus, it furnished the confirmation that the Soviet Navy had truly emerged as a world naval power.

Throughout this study of thirty years of Soviet naval strategy, much of the evidence given has been that of the "best guess" variety since accurate, detailed information from the Soviet Union is not available. In spite of this gap of confirmed facts, substantial grounds exist to indicate that there are factors such as economics and foreign policy



which in addition to military issues are significant in determining policy. The review of current U.S. naval strategy which follows treats these factors.

#### IV. REBUILDING: THE U.S. NAVY IN PEACETIME

While the analysis of Soviet naval policy decisions implied that some political and economic elements had a bearing on determining these outcomes, an investigation of contemporary U.S. naval strategy exposes these same factors more explicitly. The difference between the two studies is that the United States presents more complete information in plans, policy, and public pronouncements which can better support the conclusions reached.

##### A. NATIONAL POLICY AND THE MILITARY

###### 1. The Nixon Doctrine

Six months after his inauguration as President in 1969, Richard Nixon introduced a significant change in national policy which was based on the principles of strength, partnerships, and a willingness to negotiate. The key to this new national direction was summed up as follows:

. . . The United States will participate in the defense and development of allies and friends, but that America cannot--and will not--undertake all the defense of the free nations of the world. . . 32

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<sup>32</sup>U.S., Congress, Senate, Statement of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird Before the Senate Armed Services Committee on The FY 1973 Defense Budget and FY 1973-1977 Program, February 15, 1972, p. 21.



This important pronouncement seemed to echo the sentiments of the American public who were rapidly becoming dissatisfied with the extensive involvement in Vietnam. In his January 20, 1972 State of the Union message to Congress, President Nixon further amplified the means which his strategy for peace was to pursue:

- We will maintain a nuclear deterrent adequate to meet any threat to the security of the United States or of our allies.
- We will help other nations develop the capability of defending themselves.
- We will faithfully honor all of our treaty commitments.
- We will act to defend our interests whenever and wherever they are threatened any place in the world.
- But where our interests or our treaty commitments are not involved, our role will be limited.
- We will not intervene militarily.
- But we will use our influence to prevent war.
- If war comes, we will use our influence to try to stop it.
- Once war is over, we will do our share in binding up the wounds of those who have participated in it. 33

## 2. Missions of the Navy

With the Nixon Doctrine as a base, the U.S. embarked on a more realistic concept of defense planning utilizing a comprehensive Total Force approach which considered the integration of the capabilities not only of its own active military forces, but also those of its allies. The Navy's role in this Total Force atmosphere has been defined as a four-part assignment. Because of its balancing effect in the nuclear age, the most important of the four is Strategic Deterrence which involves putting the ballistic missile clout

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<sup>33</sup>..President's State of the Union Address," Commander's Digest, February 3, 1972, p. 2.



underwater, away from the homeland. Sea Control, the second, involves keeping the shipping lanes open and getting supplies through in war or peace in the tradition of America's well-known sea power strategist, Alfred Thayer Mahan. Thirdly, the mission of Projection of Power requires that naval forces be ready to attack across the cleared oceans, carrying planes, marines, soldiers and cargo in active manner, while the fourth function, Naval Presence, pertains to "showing the flag," a suggestive arm of diplomacy.

Sea Control, Projection of Power, and Naval Presence have been the missions of navies for over a century, with the emphasis being determined by factors such as technology, numerical forces and resources, and national interests. In the mid-1960's the development and deployment of the fleet ballistic missile submarine generated the mission of Strategic Deterrence which became a role of the greatest international significance. In a recent article in the Naval War College Review, that institution's president, Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner, USN, discusses the strategy of the U.S. Navy. The remainder of this section is devoted to his analysis of the Navy's missions.<sup>34</sup>

The Navy's role in Strategic Deterrence has four principal objectives. The first is that of providing an assured second strike capability able to inflict unacceptable

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<sup>34</sup>Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner, USN, "Missions of the U.S. Navy," Naval War College Review, March-April 1974, pp.2-17.



damage on any attacker, hopefully persuading the Soviet Union from starting a nuclear war. Controlled response is the concept which places the United States in a flexible position in the event it is subjected to a partial nuclear attack. Our strategic strike forces may change target objectives under this condition. The disparity between any third power's nuclear arsenal and that of the U.S. should also deter them as it has the Soviet Union. Finally this strategic force is also vital to maintaining the balance of power, regardless of temporary appearances of being at a disadvantage to the Soviet Union or any other power. This factor keeps political decisions from being adversely affected by other powers. Presently this mission area of Strategic Deterrence does not overlap with others; however, should enemy ASW improvements make assistance from friendly Sea Control forces vital for survival, this would change.

The traditional control of the sea strategy has undergone marked modification with the advent of the modern nuclear submarines and high performance aircraft with their sophisticated weapons systems. The new term Sea Control now possesses a more realistic connotation of control in limited areas for limited periods of time. In this context sea power includes the assertion of sea control by one nation and denial of that same control to an opponent in order to ensure industrial supplies, to reinforce and resupply military forces engaged overseas, to provide wartime



economic and military support to allies, and to protect naval forces engaged in the Projection of Power Ashore. Means of accomplishment include tactics of blockade or sortie control, chokepoint control, open area search and surveillance, local area engagement, deception, and intimidation. These methods overlap as do the weapons systems and vehicles that utilize them.

While Sea Control deals with what takes place on, beneath, and above the ocean's surface, Projection of Power Ashore deals with impact of naval forces on land forces. This area includes the three warfare categories of amphibious assault, naval gunfire support, and tactical air projection. The latter two initiatives support the amphibious assault or opposed landings on hostile territory by direct assistance to troops engaged in combat and by cutting the enemy's supply lines in the rear. Modified by the Nixon Doctrine, the role of Projection of Power Ashore now consists of an active preparedness rather than the often used interventionary measures of the 1950's and 1960's.

Through preventive deployments in peacetime and reactive ones in time of crisis the mission of naval forces, short of war, is to discourage actions contrary to the best interests of the United States or its allies, and to encourage those measures which are beneficial to these interests. The tactic used to influence or threaten another nation is called Naval Presence, and it may take the form of a potential amphibious assault, air attack, bombardment, or blockade.



Extended reconnaissance and surveillance can also be intimidating factors. The different categories of national perceptions make this Naval Presence mission the most complex, sensitive, and probably least understood of all Navy tasks. When the proper force is applied skillfully in conjunction with diplomatic actions, it can be utilized to achieve political objectives or deter war.

Admiral Turner cautions against misunderstanding "the complex interdependence between naval missions and their elements." He feels that proper awareness of their interrelated nature is vital to optimal allocation of our resources. The key to gaining the best understanding is by keeping an up-to-date picture of the dynamic political and technological factors to be utilized in updating naval capabilities in support of national policy.

## B. REBUILDING EFFORTS

### 1. Post Vietnam Assessment

With the exception of the world-wide alert initiated by President Nixon during the Yom Kippur War in October 1973, the U.S. Navy has passed its first year in a peacetime atmosphere since 1965. Prior to that date, which marked the origin of American involvement in Vietnam, the United States had served as the champion of the West in support of its treaty commitments all over the world. Interventions and displays of force were a regular occurrence from the mid-1950's until 1965 when the Vietnam conflict



in Southeast Asia drew all of the Navy's forces into an active part. In addition to the traditional roles of gunfire support, amphibious assault, and strike aircraft operations, coastal patrol and riverine warfare missions placed new demands for developing equipment and tactics on the naval advisers. This commitment giving Vietnam the highest priority drained resources from the other fleets and upset operating and maintenance schedules.

The results of this all-out effort by the Navy can be evaluated with some precision now that the sole assistance to Vietnam is in the form of economic and military aid. The most serious problem that the Navy faced in 1973 was that of block obsolescence. Responding to the needs of World War II, the U.S. shipbuilding industry had expanded to produce 1,136 vessels from battleships to submarines. During the Korean War no extensive building programs were undertaken because of the large number of ships in service. With the exception of about 70 modern guided missile ships and destroyers authorized in the 1950's, no replacements for the World War II vintage vessels were initiated due to the expensive, high priority Polaris system development. In July 1970 the Navy had over 300 out of 760 World War II ships in active service which were going to have to be retired within the next decade. As early as 1969 the House Armed Services Seapower Subcommittee in a report, The Status of Naval Ships, revealed how acute the problem of obsolescence really was. The investigation



disclosed that 58% of U.S. naval combatants were twenty years old or older, while less than one percent of the Soviet Navy ships were that old. With the average age of U.S. Navy ships being 17½ years, the study concluded that it was imperative for the Navy to commence an immediate well-balanced new construction program.<sup>35</sup> From 1969 to the present this dilemma has been brought more sharply into focus because of the rapid rise of the Soviet Navy. Since the expansion of the modern Soviet fleet units into the oceans of the world, competition for naval superiority has made fleet modernization imperative. The already difficult rebuilding task is further complicated by mounting national feeling to cut the defense spending which had dominated the budget for so long, and concentrate on other national priorities such as unemployment, education, and the environment.

## 2. New Construction Programs

The question is, how does a navy go about rebuilding in the face of an emerging threat to its naval superiority, especially when confronted with obsolescence and manpower difficulties? At the turn of the century the German Navy was emerging to compete with the Royal Navy which had been virtually unchallenged on the high seas for over a century. The British perceived this aggressive

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<sup>35</sup>Arnold M. Kuzmack, Naval Force Levels and Modernization, (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1971), pp.5-6.



competition as a threat to the safety of their colonial empire. As Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet and later as First Sea Lord,<sup>36</sup> Admiral Sir John Fisher recognized the need for reform to improve the readiness and effectiveness of the Royal Navy. His primary concern was a four point plan to reorganize and modernize the fleet. In spite of protests inside the Navy and outside of it, he scrapped over 154 active and 60 reserve vessels which he considered obsolete. He redistributed fleets and squadrons to provide an interlocking system of reinforcement in any threatened area, and he also revamped the reserve fleet, initiating a nucleus crew concept which improved readiness considerably. A new ship design innovation, the Dreadnought class battleship, guaranteed British naval superiority and set the pace for increased capital ship construction by the world's navies. In addition to these materiel advances, conditions of service were improved for personnel in the wardroom and lower decks.<sup>37</sup>

a. Shipbuilding

Since his appointment as Chief of Naval Operations in 1970, Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt has undertaken programs to rebuild the U.S. Navy which have a

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<sup>36</sup>First Sea Lord is the Royal Navy equivalent to the Chief of Naval Operations in the United States Navy.

<sup>37</sup>P. K. Kemp, History of the Royal Navy, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1969), p. 170.



similar pattern to that which Admiral Fisher embarked on some seventy years earlier. In 1967 Navy planners had projected that the 1975 fleet would number 826 ships which would include 20 aircraft carriers, 137 amphibious assault ships, 243 escort ships, and 105 attack submarines (including 69 nuclear boats). By 1970 rising Vietnam military costs had necessitated a revision of this estimate to include a 1975 total of 578 ships, composed of only 15 carriers, 67 amphibious ships, 205 escorts, and 87 attack submarines. This loss of 248 ships or 30% of the originally projected fleet strength in only three years reflected the difficult planning decisions that had to be made. Admiral Zumwalt addressed this situation in Fiscal Year 1973 Navy budget hearings before the House and Senate Armed Services Committees:

The hard choices involve trade-offs between the present and the future--that is, between spending heavily to provide a greater capability today by keeping more older ships in service, or using more funds to procure new ships and aircraft, thereby increasing future capability. . . We are putting an increased proportion of our resources into future capabilities. We are doing more R&D and are buying more new ships and combat aircraft, but with the result that there will be fewer ships and aircraft in the fleet in the next few years. 38

The resultant strategy that has evolved from this decision has been called the "hi-lo" mix principle. It defines a shipbuilding program which combines highly sophisticated ships such as the nuclear frigates and SSN-688 class

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<sup>38</sup>James D. Hessman, "New Ship Programs: Trade-Off Between The Present and the Future," Armed Forces Journal, April 1972, p. 30.



submarines, with the less sophisticated, less expensive systems such as the Patrol Frigates, Sea Control Ships, and Guided Missile Hydrofoils. The Navy will buy 33 of these "high mix" vessels from fiscal years 1970-1975. The average cost of this procurement package which includes mostly DD-963 class destroyers and nuclear frigates is \$104 million per unit. The multi-purpose Spruance class destroyer is an attempt to fill the void created by the decommissioning of numerous World War II vessels, while the nuclear frigates are programmed to escort the CVN's currently under construction. The "lo-mix" group which is to produce 80 ships at \$43 million a unit, continues the effort to bridge the obsolescence gap. The PHM patrol hydrofoil is a cooperative NATO development between the U.S., Italy, and West Germany; the Navy plans to build 30 of these swift gunboats which will be armed with the Harpoon surface-to-surface missile, and use them for coastal patrol to free the larger escorts for open ocean service. The 50 ship Patrol Frigate program will provide austere, missile-armed, gas-turbine vessels in large numbers to augment the modern escort force vital in this era of widely deployed Soviet nuclear submarines.<sup>39</sup> The low-cost Sea Control Ship is another effort advocated by Admiral Zumwalt to meet the critical Sea Control mission of the Navy. The concept of this 14,000 ton, gas turbine-propelled carrier was the subject of recent tests conducted by the USS Guam

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<sup>39</sup>"New Ship Mix Will Test CNO's Bid for New Naval Strategy," Armed Forces Journal, February 1974, p. 14.



(LPH-9), where a mix of aircraft including the AV-8A Harrier and SH-3H ASW helicopter was evaluated. In addition to the ASW mission, the airborne intercept task was attempted by the Harriers with some success. Although the AV-8A Vertical/Short Takeoff and Landing (V/STOL) airframe and the LPH platform were not exact prototypes for the planned program, the basic elements of aircraft performance and the Guam's similar size and lack of catapults and arresting gear provided sufficient justification for the Navy to request appropriations for the first Sea Control Ship in the Fiscal Year 1975 budget.<sup>40</sup>

This "hi-lo" mix initiative has been subjected to a great deal of criticism from Admiral Hyman Rickover and other nuclear power advocates. They feel that nuclear propulsion in ocean-going warships is the only means for surviving in the threat environment presented by the modern, high-speed nuclear submarine fleet of the Soviet Union, especially in view of the potentially crippling effects of the energy crisis on national defense recently revealed during the Arab oil embargo. Zumwalt's supporters argue that the relative effectiveness gained by the speed and fuel savings of nuclear-powered carriers and escorts is not as significant as their high construction costs and the immediate need to provide greater numbers of ships in the fleet

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<sup>40</sup>Clarence A. Robinson, Jr., "Sea Control Ship Tests Advance ASW," Aviation Week & Space Technology, February 11, 1974, pp. 43-48.



as replacements for those being phased out due to old age. A possible solution to this conflict of needs and current cost-limitations may be found upon completion of the research and development of the Surface Effect Ship (SES) prototype. Aerojet-General Corporation and Bell Aerospace Company are currently testing 100 ton designs of this warship of the future with the goal of developing a 2,000 ton SES vessel to assume present destroyer ASW roles in the 1980's. These air cushion test vehicles have already achieved speeds in the 70-80 nautical miles per hour range, and with their reduced size and cost will present quite a formidable foe to the nuclear submarine if their trials continue to be successful.<sup>41</sup>

While general purpose force replacement is vital to the Navy's Mahanian concept of sea power, over one-third of the shipbuilding budget requests (\$3.7 billion average in FY 74 and 75) in the last two years has been designated for the completion of Poseidon missile conversions on fleet ballistic missile submarines and for the construction of the new Trident missile submarines. This addition to U.S. strategic delivery forces is considered essential for two reasons. The first of these is the hedge against the aging of the first ten Polaris submarines which are now over ten years old. The second ground for this development was the

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<sup>41</sup> "Navy Planning Ships That Skim Ocean Surface," Los Angeles Times, 27 May 1973, part 1, pp. 2-6.



need to provide a longer range ballistic missile to complicate the ASW problem for enemy naval forces. The fear is that the present limited missile range would allow the Soviets to concentrate their ASW efforts in a smaller area, from the maximum range of these missiles towards the coastline, and increase their probability of detection of this threat. The Trident missile with its range of over 4,000 nautical miles and its multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle warheads (MIRV) is designed to strengthen the deterrent power by greatly expanding the area of possible launch positions.

Congress opposed the rapid development of this development of this expensive weapons system since most of its members felt that the Poseidon missile conversions with its extended range (3,000 nautical miles) missiles with MIRV warheads were sufficient until the Trident could be developed at a normal pace. However, in late 1973 naval intelligence revealed that not only had the Soviets built D-class submarines with their version of the extended range missile (three are operational), but they were also testing MIRV warheads for use on their ballistic missiles. These occurrences influenced the legislators to accelerate the program which is expected to produce the first Trident submarine in 1978.

b. Aircraft and Missile Development

The need to find a successor for the aging F-4 Phantom which was the fighter-bomber workhorse for the Navy



and the Air Force throughout the Vietnam conflict placed the Navy in the center of another controversy. The Navy has been convinced that the Grumman F-14A Tomcat and its expensive Phoenix missile system are the ideal combination to fill the dual role of protecting the fleet from Soviet long-range supersonic bombers and cruise missiles and of intercepting the high-flying supersonic Soviet MIG-25 Foxbat fighter. The debate centers around the F-14A's \$25.8 million price tag which is considerably higher than the \$13 million cost per unit of the F-4J versions requested in the FY 74 budget. In mid-1973 McDonnell Douglas Corporation tried to sell Navy Secretary John Warner the F-15N, the carrier version of the F-15 which the Air Force had ordered. Although this aircraft was very adequate in the fighter role, the Navy argued that the F-14A with its Phoenix missile (\$292,000 per unit) was vital to fleet defense. After a lengthy debate with top Defense Department officials such as Deputy Secretary William Clements, the Navy has apparently prevailed in its efforts to procure this versatile weapons system.<sup>42</sup>

Even after the Russian-made Styx anti-ship missiles sank the Israeli destroyer Eilat in 1967, the U.S. Navy's efforts were directed at defense against this new capability rather than developing a surface-to-surface missile of its own. In 1971, however, efforts were directed at

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<sup>42</sup>...The Eagle Challenges the Tomcat," Business Week, May 12, 1973, p. 51.



developing the cruise missile as an offensive weapon. The interim measure was the Standard SSM which was originally fitted out on two Asheville class patrol gunboats and is also compatible for launch from Anti-Submarine Rocket (ASROC) launchers found on destroyer-type vessels. In the last two years accelerated development of the Harpoon missile by McDonnell Douglas Corporation has provided the U.S. Navy with a reliable offensive SSM which should begin production in 1975. This medium-range weapon has been successfully tested in firings from surface ship and airborne platforms, and research is being conducted on an encapsulated version capable of launch from a submarine's torpedo tubes. Besides being the main battery for the NATO patrol hydrofoil (PHM), Harpoon was designed for use on existing surface ships utilizing ASROC, Terrier, and Tartar launchers already installed. Approval for pilot production of this missile will depend on the June 1974 decision of the Defense Systems Acquisition Review Council's (DSARC) evaluation of six more fully guided air and surface test firings.<sup>43</sup> Besides the recent sweeping successes of Israel's Gabriel missile against Russian made missile gunboats of the Syrian Navy in the Yom Kippur War, the development of cruise missiles by other Western nations, such as France's Exocet and the American Harpoon, serves greatly to close the Soviet margin of superiority.

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<sup>43</sup>Clarence A. Robinson, Jr., "Navy Plans Fully Guided Harpoon Tests," Aviation Week & Space Technology, February 25, 1974, pp. 32-35.



## C. PEACETIME OPERATIONS

The need to replace aging hardware was only one of the current problems faced by naval planners. The end of the draft and the oil shortage are among the other factors which have required consideration in the changes to peacetime operations.

### 1. Adjusting to Deployed Requirements

In order to meet the commitments necessary to fulfill the Navy's missions after its recent Southeast Asian involvement, adjustments were imperative. With the Navy having been cut by 45% since the peak of the Vietnam war, and with fleet strength at its lowest level since 1937, U.S. naval planners had to consider alternatives to traditional deployment patterns. Besides the reduced numbers available for world-wide assignments, decreased operating and maintenance funds further complicated the problem. Expanded Soviet naval presence in all oceans of the world required the Navy to maintain its deployed naval forces. The practical solution chosen by Admiral Zumwalt was the semi-permanent deployment of ships at overseas bases and the establishment of new bases close to the areas of intended operations.

In the Mediterranean where the Soviets first initiated their policy of formal deployment, Soviet naval ship-operating days had soared from 4,000 in 1965 to an



average of over 18,000 per year in the early 1970's.<sup>44</sup> In early 1972 the United States and Greece reached an agreement on the use of Piraeus as a homeport for a carrier task force of the Sixth Fleet. This measure allows a carrier and destroyer squadron to remain on station for a two year period before rotating back to the United States. Dependents of the ships' personnel are located in the homeport area in an effort to alleviate the family separation problem. Although Congress opposed the move because of the potential adverse effect on the balance of trade, and NATO members were against any initiative that could be construed as aid to the ruling Greek military junta, in late 1973 the House Armed Services Subcommittee in Military Installations and Facilities approved the funds for a five year lease of property needed to establish the support facilities ashore in Greece. The timing of the vote on this measure with the developments of the Yom Kippur War may have had a favorable influence on its passage.<sup>45</sup>

Another Mediterranean base was established in 1972 when the U.S. and Italy agreed on the construction of a base for nuclear-powered submarines at La Maddalena, an island north of Sardinia. The submarine tender Howard W.

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<sup>44</sup>Barry M. Blechman, The Changing Soviet Navy, (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1973), p. 13.

<sup>45</sup>"Navy's Greece Home Port Okayed," Navy Times, 14 November 1973, p. 23.



Gilmore, was directed to its new homeport where it acts as the support vessel for these submarines. This gave the U.S. another nuclear submarine support facility to add to her other European bases of Holy Loch, Scotland, and Rota, Spain. The reasons for the establishment of the new base were similar to those of the Greek homeport: reduction of materiel wear previously caused by transits and the alleviation of family separation.<sup>46</sup>

In the Pacific the realignment continued with the planned homeporting of a carrier and a destroyer squadron in Yokosuka, and support ships in Sasebo. Over the past three years the relocation of these ships to Japan has taken place, culminating with the USS Midway's arrival in October 1973. In March 1974, the Navy announced the transfer of six destroyers currently homeported in Pearl Harbor and San Diego to the naval base at Guam. This reassignment of ships and dependents will be completed by 1976, and will further strengthen the naval posture in the Western Pacific.<sup>47</sup>

Recently the Indian Ocean and the small British-owned island of Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago have become headline news. When the Soviets first began operating their fleet in the Indian Ocean in 1968, their 1,800 ship-operating days were spent in diplomatic and goodwill visits.

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<sup>46</sup>P. Alikov, "Another American Base on Italian Soil," Morskoi Sbornik, No. 3, October 1973, pp. 97-98.

<sup>47</sup>"Navy Announces Ship Transfers," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 30 March 1974, p. 11.



By 1972 their operations in the littoral nations in the area had grown to 8,800 ship-operating days; additionally, the number of port facility usage agreements had increased.<sup>48</sup> The British had left the area by 1971, but they had allowed the U.S. to maintain 200 personnel and a communications station on Diego Garcia. The oil embargo made the Western world, who depended on its oil from the Middle East, aware of the strategic lines of communication from petroleum sources in the Persian Gulf to Western ports. The United States received permission from Great Britain to expand the facilities of Diego Garcia. The Navy has requested \$29 million in appropriations to increase fuel storage capacity, deepen the lagoon to make the anchorage capable of accommodating an aircraft carrier and its escorts, and to lengthen the existing runway at the airfield. Because of the distances U.S. Navy ships have to travel to deploy in the Indian Ocean, it is essential to have at least a very basic logistics support facility.<sup>49</sup> Speculation about the future of naval activity in the Indian Ocean has increased recently, but the outcome is still in doubt.

## 2. Current Problems

### a. All Volunteer Navy

A certain general dissatisfaction with the nature of the lengthy Vietnam War brought an end to the draft in

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<sup>48</sup>Blechman, The Changing Soviet Navy, p. 13.

<sup>49</sup>Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN, "Strategic Importance of Indian Ocean," Armed Forces Journal, April 1974, pp. 28-29.



July 1973. Converting to the All-Volunteer concept at a time when a military career was not a popular choice posed a manpower challenge that was to equal the materiel predicament. In spite of the reduction in naval manpower levels from a high of 765,000 in 1968 to 551,000 in June 1974, the Navy has had to concentrate a considerable amount of its resources in an effort to make the All-Volunteer concept successful. The groundwork for this program to retain and recruit the needed manpower in peacetime was begun when Admiral Zumwalt became CNO in 1970. Many of his personal directives, called Z-grams, were intended to ease the stereotyped rigors of service life and increase retention rates. Conservative elements in the Navy were dissatisfied with these liberal changes, and when racial and disciplinary incidents took place in October and November of 1972 on the carriers Kitty Hawk and Constellation, the House Armed Services Committee conducted an investigation. The subcommittee, headed by Representative Floyd Hicks, reported that "an environment of leniency, appeasement and permissiveness" had been created, and it made sixteen recommendations designed to promote good order and discipline. Admiral Zumwalt disagreed with these findings of the Navy's "problems" and limited his reaction to verbal and written reminders of the leadership responsibilities of all in the chain of command and to a directive to give voluntary general discharges "under honorable conditions" to those evaluated as misfits, malcontents,



and non-producers.<sup>50</sup> He also added new emphasis to drug abuse, race relations, and management improvement programs which were later to be incorporated into the present Human Goals Program.

As the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War drew to a close, the stabilization of personnel policies became a priority item. In addition to better advance planning of individual tour assignments, attempts were made to prevent promotion slowdowns which had resulted from imbalances in grade and rank structure. In spite of attempts by some legislators to reduce retirement, flight pay, commissary, and exchange, and medical benefits, the Navy and the other armed forces have received several basic pay raises in the last few years which have made them more competitive with civilian opportunities in the All-Volunteer environment. Navy manpower costs consume about 43% of the service's budget; but, with the first year without the draft drawing to a close and over 95% of the recruiting goal having been met, it seems that the pay increases will supplement other recruiting incentives and make the costly concept a success.

#### b. The Energy Crisis

The recent revelation of the far reaching effects of the energy crisis affected the Navy in several ways. The Navy had cut back fuel usage in 1973 by seven percent before

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<sup>50</sup>L. Edgar Prina, "Hicks Panel Hits 'Permissiveness,' Lack of Discipline," Sea Power, March 1973, pp. 35-38.



the Arab oil embargo created shortages. The need to reduce operating costs prompted the earlier efforts to conserve fuel, but the embargo situation curtailed fleet steaming days by about 20% and military flying hours by 18%. If this shortage were not enough of a problem, the Saudi Arabian government threatened to cut off oil supplies to all countries who supplied oil products to U.S. military forces overseas. Since the Pacific Fleet has been purchasing up to 95% of its oil supplies from foreign companies, all movements were greatly reduced and large numbers of ships forced to remain in port until substantial fuel supplies were delivered from the U.S. Even though the embargo is presently not in effect, the implications of the incident's importance for future defense planning are far from subtle.<sup>51</sup>

At home military oil supplies have also been in danger in recent months. Not only were there cries for continued reduction of defense petroleum use, but there were extreme pressures applied for the government to release Naval Petroleum Reserves, (NPR)1(Elk Hills, Ca.) and (NPR)4(Alaska), for commercial production to relieve the national shortages. When this effort was delayed in legal and national defense debates, oil companies with drilling rights adjacent to these reserves began drilling in their boundary areas. When claims were made to the effect that

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<sup>51</sup>..Oil Cutoff Means Less Flight, Steaming Time," Navy Times, 28 November 1973, p. 22.



these wells were started in an effort to tap the NPR resources, court injunctions suspended all drilling until the dispute could be settled.

c. Economy Measures

(1) Consolidation/Reduction

On April 17, 1973 Defense Secretary Elliot Richardson announced the details of the consolidation, reduction, realignment, or closure of 274 military installations in the United States and Puerto Rico. With the Navy reduction in fleet size from 917 ships in June 1964 to 523 in June 1974, and naval aircraft being similarly reduced from 5,014 to 3,956, facilities cutbacks were inevitable. After some previous study, the Navy determined that one criteria in this phasing out of certain commands was the requirement for at least two homeports on each coast capable of servicing modern carriers. The Newport/Quonset Point Naval Stations were only able to support the smaller ASW carriers, and the Long Beach Naval Station was also considered inappropriate for the large modern dual role (CV) carriers. These installations plus the Key West, Florida Naval Station and the Boston and Hunter's Point Naval Shipyards were closed, while over twenty other naval facilities underwent reduction or realignment.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>U.S. Congreee, House, Committee on Appropriations, DOD Appropriations 1974, Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, 93rd Congress, 1st session, 1973, 2:293.



As a further extension of this base consolidation and reduction plan, fleet staffs were scrutinized to determine where structure and billet modifications were necessary. A 25% reduction of command/headquarters activities was recommended during FY 73 Budget Hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee. A CNO study group was formed in July 1972 to examine the existing framework of fleet staffs and to recommend reorganizations including vertical eliminations and consolidations necessary to conform to the requested reductions. Missions and functions of all types of fleet staffs were studied with duplication and excessive layering being the targets. On November 14, 1972 the final recommendations were submitted to the CNO Executive Board where decisions were made. The streamlining involved disestablishing approximately 55 staffs of the Commanders of the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets and the U.S. Naval Forces in Europe. Of the original base of 15,816 billets, 3,976 (25.2%) were cut with even distribution of the reductions across the board.<sup>53</sup>

## (2) Other Efforts

In 1971 the Navy was faced with the difficult task of convincing Congress to replace 14 fleet oil tankers at \$100 million a unit. Since other shipbuilding replacement programs had priority, naval leaders decided

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<sup>53</sup>Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OP-100D), "Fy 74 Fleet Staff Reduction and Reorganization," Paper used for briefing, 16 July 1973.



to charter nine privately built tankers for the Military Sealift Command (MSC). MSC's 103 ship fleet, which includes 56 dry cargo vessels, 17 tankers, and 30 special project ships, has recently begun testing of a new coordinated logistics concept. In addition to experimental refuelings with U.S. and NATO warships, two types of barge carriers, the Lash and Seabee, are being developed to replenish the Navy at sea. Critics have argued that it will be more expensive to pay the yearly charter fee over the 20 year period than to pay the lump sum construction costs. However, the urgent requirements to replace aging surface combatants and to construct a nuclear submarine force left no other alternative than to lease these needed tankers from commercial firms for MSC.<sup>54</sup>

Although it may not be considered an economical measure to some, the repair of partially inoperative aircraft and ships overdue for overhaul is a better alternative than buying replacement units. A recent Pentagon report revealed that 5,300 out of 14,900 (35%) Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine tactical aircraft are not fully operational because of shortages in repair parts or overdue maintenance. Moreover, about 40 Navy ships are late in undergoing their regularly scheduled overhaul and this number is rising. Deputy Secretary of Defense William Clements recently

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<sup>54</sup> "MSC Role Growing as Fleet Supplier," Navy Times, 2 May 1973, p. 26.



explained to Congress that much of the maintenance has been delayed repeatedly "because of the tempo of military operations, first in Vietnam and then in connection with the Middle East." The Pentagon budget request for this year includes \$63.6 million to accomplish the needed aircraft maintenance and to build up supplies of spare parts. Additional funds are requested to permit the expansion of ship overhaul programs in order to take advantage of idle space available in shipyards.<sup>55</sup>

Along with these major programs others have been initiated at lower command levels. The increased inport time for ships and reduced flying time for squadrons has been channeled into attempts to increase materiel readiness. Type commands have created additional technical assistance teams to assist squadron and shipboard maintenance personnel and to train them in proper procedures. Combat readiness and flying expertise are also receiving consideration through the increased use of various types of simulators. The aviation community is developing flight simulation centers with realistic features in an effort to keep flight crews proficient. Other weapons systems training aids are being produced to provide facilities for tactical practice now that actual operational time is severely limited.

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<sup>55</sup> "More Than 5,000 Tactical Planes Not 'Ready' Pentagon Says," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 25 March 1974, p. 7.



## V. THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON NAVAL STRATEGY

In the United States it is the opinion of many congressmen that the policy-making function of the military is to analyze military problems and to devise a proposed means of accomplishing the task of national defense, allowing others to determine if political considerations override that assessment. Some military leaders have also stated that their military advice should not include any consideration of political or economic issues. Thus, military analysis has primarily focused on the objectivity of force levels, capabilities, and tactics with little or no emphasis on the intentions of the potential enemy or on the extenuating possibilities of political and economic factors. The analyses of the recent naval strategies of the U.S. and Soviet Navies have indicated that these external and internal factors can greatly influence the strategy and the means used to execute it.

### A. ACTION/REACTION

In an October 1973 Foreign Affairs article, "Toward A Western Philosophy of Coexistence," Marshall D. Shulman relates the U.S.-Soviet relationship after the 1972 Moscow Summit on seven planes: strategic-military competition, conventional military competition, political competition, economic competition and cooperation, ideological conflict, cultural relations, and functional cooperation. The long years of the "cold war"



and aggressive nature of the Communist ideology have understandably influenced U.S. naval planners to analyze the rapid expansion of the Soviet Navy in a cautious, "cover-all-bets" manner. This form of contingency analysis and planning is vital to the overall body of defense policy; however, accurate investigations of current pronouncements and tactics when compared with those of the past can provide valuable insight regarding the intentions of the Soviets. One factor that requires sorting out is the determination of whether an initiative or capability is in the form of an action or a reaction.

Some of the Soviet decisions which can be considered reactionary in nature were the development of the cruise missile to counter the strategic delivery threat of the carrier, the reactive deployments of the Mediterranean Squadron to neutralize Sixth Fleet concentrations during Middle East crises, and the Surface-to-Air missile and ASW surface ship conversions to enhance survival in the forward deployment atmosphere. In early 1969 the Soviet Navy demonstrated a classic example of an action in the form of gunboat diplomacy in order to gain the release of two Soviet fishing trawlers that had been impounded the previous October by Ghana. When strong protests and economic sanctions failed, the Soviet Union acted by dispatching three warships to the Gulf of Guinea off the Ghanian coast and the trawlers were



released.<sup>56</sup> Another action which has been attributed as a reaction by some was the deployment of Soviet naval units to the Indian Ocean from 1968 to the present. When the British decided to withdraw from the areas east of Suez in 1968, the Soviets began a gradual increase of naval presence. Today the presence is construed as a threat to the Middle East oil supply lines to the West. However, the utilization of naval diplomacy to cultivate ties with India culminated in the signing of a 20 year treaty of friendship and cooperation in August 1971. This demonstration of support prior to the outbreak of the Indo-Pakistan War, provided the Soviets with an ally on China's southern border at a time when tensions were heightened by the Sino-Soviet split.

The U.S. Navy has also reacted to the presence and technological developments of the Soviet Union. As a result of the recent oil embargo and the increasing number of Soviet naval facility agreements on the East African coast and in the Persian Gulf, the U.S. Navy has used the need to protect the vital oil supply routes from the Middle East as justification for periodic deployment of carrier forces to the Indian Ocean, and the expansion of the ship and aircraft support capabilities on Diego Garcia. In response to the ever-growing threat of the vast Soviet nuclear submarine fleet, the U.S. has become greatly committed to anti-submarine warfare. From the development of special underwater

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<sup>56</sup>Weinland, "The Changing Mission Structure of the Soviet Navy," p. 270.



surveillance systems such as SOSUS/Caesar (Sonar Surveillance System) and SASS (Suspended Array Subsystem) to new tactics created around such fleet units as the nuclear attack submarine, the dual purpose CV, and the Sea Control and Surface Effect ships of the future, the Navy's reaction to this threat has been a full-scale effort. Even though many U.S. naval experts feel that the Soviet Navy and merchant marine will be the biggest benefactors of the reopening of the Suez Canal, the action of providing U.S. naval demolition experts and equipment to help remove the mines and bombs from the canal, could further serve to weaken the Soviet influence in Egypt and strengthen U.S. diplomatic ties with the Arab states. These examples demonstrate the usefulness of action/reaction considerations in planning and evaluating naval strategy.

## B. POLITICAL--ECONOMIC FACTORS

### 1. Ideology

Since World War II the United States and the Soviet Union have attempted to impose their "totalitarian" and "imperialistic" ideologies on the international system. By utilizing the tactics of intervention or wars of liberation, the self-proclaimed champions of democracy and communism have failed to successfully contain each other. The American trauma of the Vietnam war and the Soviets' preoccupation with their own interests rather than those of international communism, have prompted the United States to establish the Nixon Doctrine and the Soviets to pronounce the shift to an evolutionary doctrine from a revolutionary one. In the light of



recent events, the various agreements in the spirit of detente which were signed at the Moscow summit of 1972 seem to be in jeopardy. The disastrous grain purchase, the confrontation during the Yom Kippur War, and the recent stalemate in the talks for further strategic arms limitation in SALT-2 have revealed the split between the civilian and military leaders that occurred as a result of detente.

While civilian leadership of both governments has been influenced to pursue detente because of the detrimental effects of the escalation of an arms race on the national economy, the military has publicly expressed the dangers of such a policy. In the Soviet Union the Talenskiy-Arbatov school of thought has proposed that military force has lost its political utility in the modern world. Numerous military articles, however, have countered that the best way to achieve peace and maintain it is through a position of strength.<sup>57</sup> Undaunted by the appeasing nature of detente diplomacy, the hawkish Soviet military has proceeded to optimize its lead in throw-weight by testing new or improved ICBM's and attempting to make a breakthrough in the area where the U.S. had an advantage, that of MIRV technology.

Their American military counterparts were also not trusting in the future of the negotiated summit agreements. A recent editorial in the Navy League publication, Seapower,

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<sup>57</sup>Matt Gallagher, "The Military Role in Soviet Decision-Making," in Soviet Naval Developments, (Halifax: Centre for Foreign Studies, Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University, 1973), p. 4.



provided a skeptical assessment of the "sufficiency" tenet of the Nixon Doctrine:

Question: What happens next, when military parity gives way to military sufficiency? The definition of sufficiency, which is one notch below parity, is that you're strong enough to deter an enemy from attacking you directly. But maybe not strong enough to deter him from doing anything else he wants, anywhere else he wants. 58

The added impetus of recent intelligence concerning the Soviets' strategic missile testing efforts and their construction of three D-class submarines (equivalent to the U.S. Trident class), aided the Navy in obtaining appropriations to accelerate the Trident program which was still in the design phase. At this point it seems that these developments and the failure of the SALT-2 talks have clouded the future of detente and have set the stage for a continuation of the arms race.

## 2. Decision-Making

The Soviet Navy has only recently received recognition as an integral part of that nation's defense picture. The Army's marshalls have always dominated the Ministry of Defense of this traditional land power, with the result being that the Navy's major program gains have only occurred when the U.S. has posed a serious naval threat (i.e. the CVA and Polaris). Further complicating the efforts of the Navy to develop a coherent strategy is the fact that many of the Soviet Union's political leaders are World War II army

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58..The Desert and the Sea," Seapower, November 1973, p. 4.



veterans. Due to the nature of the governing body in the Soviet Union, all national decisions are considered and made by a small group of men and are not subject to public debate as in the U.S.

An in-depth look at the forward deployment policy reveals information which implies that the decision was made by the political leaders with little or no consultation with Admiral Gorshkov and naval planners. Michael McGwire addressed this possibility in "Developments in Soviet Naval Policy: 1955-1973" when he inferred that the army-dominated leadership did not realize the resource demands and preparation that such a commitment required. The Soviet Navy which had traditionally been trained and prepared for a coastal defense of the Motherland, was expected to operate in a peacetime status under the same continuous conditions that were usually experienced only in time of war. Additionally, this mission was to be undertaken in ocean areas far from their homeports and dominated by their Western opponents. When the decision was made in 1961 the Soviet fleet was not prepared materiel-wise or tactically; even though Admiral Gorshkov has claimed credit for the ultimate success of the Soviet Navy's emergence, a review of the first years of the concept indicates that it was a poorly planned operation.

From the standpoint of force level considerations a two or three year gap existed from the time the decision was made until the design effort for the first multi-purpose, new construction vessel was completed. Since the Krivak



class destroyer was not due for delivery until 1970, SAM and ASW conversions of selected destroyers were begun in the mid-1960's to protect against the vulnerability of open ocean operations outside the range of land-based air cover. This air cover was also essential to the utilization of the long-range cruise missile system. Without the aircraft for external target data, the innovative SSM was limited to the horizon range of the vessel's radar. The lack of afloat support had proved to be a critical shortcoming throughout the early pilot deployments until 1965. In spite of efforts in 1966 to obtain bases in Egypt, it was not until July of 1967 that Soviet naval ships gained facilities there on a permanent basis. In the following three years numerous agreements for usage of facilities were reached with countries on the North and East African coasts. But agreements can be broken and the Soviets made no effort to construct support vessels other than submarine tenders. In a wartime situation this logistic weakness could combine with the geographic vulnerability of the four isolated fleets to seriously hamper combat effectiveness. Even when the forward deployment concept was expanded to all the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans no evidence of an increase in support vessel construction was observed. If the concept was well planned according to military tradition, open ocean combat training would prepare fleet units to meet their potential threats. However, it was not until February 1963 that Admiral Gorshkov wrote an article expressing the need to develop sea keeping



and all weather combat capabilities. This collection of evidence demonstrates the delays between the decision and significant actions to implement it. It seems that this analysis would lend credence to the hypothesis that the naval "strategy" was conceived by Party leaders, and was not a result of military planning. In the U.S. this manner of naval planning usually takes place only in the event of a crisis and rarely for extended periods of time.

### 3. Defense Budget

In the United States the budget requests of the military services are subjected to intensive review by both Houses of Congress. The varying interests of the diverse constituents represented by these legislators is molded into an approved yearly spending program integrated into the joint service long-range scheme, the Five Year Defense Plan. In the last three fiscal years the U.S. Navy has received several billion dollars more in yearly appropriations than each of the other services. In spite of the increase in funds, inflation, the rising cost of manpower, and a condition of block obsolescence among the vessels of the surface combat fleet have greatly reduced the flexibility of procurement and operation.

The Soviet Navy has also suffered program disruption due to economic priorities. Western analysts have been quick to laud the Soviet concept of smaller ships with greater firepower. However, Soviet surface combatant building capacity has been reduced due to the higher



priority of civilian and submarine construction programs. When the Sverdlov class cruiser was cancelled by the 1954 decision, the building ways were reallocated to merchant marine construction. In recent years two cruiser ways were assigned for the building of the Kiev and the Minsk, the Russian's first carriers. Even this effort has been subject to the skeptical review of the political leadership. A Soviet naval attache recently revealed that the Navy had asked for eight of the V/STOL carriers but was only allowed two.<sup>59</sup> The result of this low priority for surface ships was that the Kara, Kresta, and Kynda class cruisers were constructed in destroyer size building ways. The Krivak class destroyer is in series production in the escort yard at Kalingrad, while the 200 foot, 650 ton Nanuchka class rocket patrol boat is being built in the torpedo boat yard that produced the 123 foot, 200 ton Osa class missile boat. The range, payload, and accuracy of the cruise missile systems installed on these vessels easily offset this size constraint. Limiting factors such as this showed the effects of other priorities on the defense budget.<sup>60</sup> Submarines were generally considered a more cost effective weapon until the expensive ballistic missile submarines went into production. Even though detailed information

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<sup>59</sup>"Russian Navy has Trouble Getting Ships," Los Angeles Times, 1 April 1973, p. 10.

<sup>60</sup>MccGwire, "Soviet Naval Programmes," pp. 222-223.



concerning Soviet defense spending is not available, inferences can be made by investigating the chronology of the various programs.

#### 4. Research and Development

Earlier discussions of naval shipbuilding methods and programs served to explain the pattern of Soviet naval developments in recent years. A continuation of this type of study in the field of research and development reveals further differences between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the applications of new innovations. In his "Turning Point in Naval Policy Formation," Michael McGwire reports the tendency of the Soviets to install and operate major new capabilities in the very early stages of their development. Evidence of this is given in the evolution of their surface-to-surface cruise missile (SSM) program. The earliest version of the SSN-1 cruise missile was placed on four units of the Kotlin class destroyer (now the Kildin class) in a brief three years from design-decision to delivery. Subsequently variants of this system were introduced progressively at different stages of development.

This scheme of technical innovation contrasts the U.S. military practice of extensive research and development and operational test and evaluation before procurement approval is given to produce the operational version. The improvement and modification of the more advanced variants of the system is not unique to the U.S. process, but the more methodical American process is aimed at producing a



reliable system, not just a capability. The urgent need to exploit the advantages of these new systems in their rise from an inferior maritime position was probably the primary reason for this method of systems development. The Soviets have always been technical innovators, and have never been cautious about the application of these new capabilities. Besides the advantages to be gained from operational evaluation of several prototypes, the Russians are aware of the tendency of the West to appraise each new capability on a worst case basis. As a result of over two decades of nuclear confrontation, the U.S. tendency to view the Soviets in this manner is well known to Soviet leaders and has enhanced their ability to bluff successfully. A major factor in this appraisal problem is obvious when comparing the relatively incomplete intelligence information the U.S. has compiled on Russian advanced systems with the detailed scientific reports on the newest American weapons that appear in technical journals such as Aviation Week and Space Technology. The easily accessible information of U.S. advancements when contrasted with Soviet secrecy keeps the U.S. military planners guessing.

#### 5. Manpower

Sea Power magazine contends that in comparison to the highly respected, well-paid Soviet Navy personnel, the men of the U.S. Navy are economically and socially disadvantaged people of low esteem.<sup>61</sup> Other experts on the Soviet

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<sup>61</sup>Norman Polmar, "The Navy and the Nation," Sea Power October 1973, p. 27.



military such as John Erickson, noted professor of defense studies, and Captain Sumner Shapiro, USN, a former assistant U.S. Naval Attache to the U.S.S.R., present a detailed view of the manpower situation in the armed forces of the U.S.S.R. As a result of a revision to the law on military service in 1968, military service required of Russian citizens was reduced from three years to two (except in the Navy) and the grounds for deferment and exemption were expanded. This presented some problems which were similar to those of the All-Volunteer concept in the United States, and these issues filled the Soviet military with some misgivings about combat readiness. Marshall Grechko intended to deal with the shortened term of service by placing more men in the reserves, but the increased turnover rate placed an additional burden on the training programs. Moreover, the current Soviet recruit is better educated than in former years, and is less inclined to believe all the ideology that the political officer preaches.<sup>62</sup> In his Naval Institute Proceedings article, "The Blue Water Soviet Naval Officer," Captain Shapiro relates the complications of the entry of the less mature, better educated recruit on the naval scene. The Navy's command structure with its intervening layers of political officers creates serious leadership problems. Soviet naval officers are expected to exert initiative

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<sup>62</sup> John Erickson, "The Soviet Military, Soviet Policy and Soviet Politics," Strategic Review, 1, (Fall 1973), pp. 32-33.



and imagination in performing their duties, but their control over these younger recruits is diminished by the fact that they share authority over them with the political officer. Because political meetings occupy such a great part of the naval officer's time, his concern for his men is often lacking. Pressured by the need to perform within certain limits in order to succeed, the Soviet naval officer shares similar capabilities and deficiencies with his American counterpart.

Recent studies of Soviet training and readiness by John Erickson have revealed some interesting trends. Presently there are fewer and fewer military officers who have had major operational experience, let alone wartime exposure. Modern warfare situations pose an increased flow of information due to multiple threats from high performance weaponry, the result being less time to make decisions. Analysis of Soviet exercise reports reveals the officer as a thorough tactician, capable of assessing complex situations and formulating correct operational judgments. The factor that he seems to ignore is the cruciality of time in the success of these operations under wartime conditions. Moreover, this trend exists in the performance of officer-cadets undergoing military training. This weakness must be of concern to the senior Soviet command leaders. The fact that many senior military are investigating automation for utilization in the command and control process indicates their awareness of this vulnerability. Professor Erickson reports that the



Soviet Navy has a more marked tendency towards this advanced technology in the decision process in the context of modern naval operations.<sup>63</sup>

#### 6. NATO/SEATO

The NATO alliance has undergone some political changes in recent years. Extensive unilateral negotiations conducted by the United States under the Nixon Doctrine rankled European feelings both at the end of the Vietnam war and throughout the Moscow and Peking summits. Combined with the differences over domestic issues, these unilateral efforts created ill feelings in the alliance that were often made public. The Yom Kippur War support to Israel by the United States added to the criticism of the European countries who were dependent on Middle Eastern oil. The world-wide alert which included 300,000 troops in Europe was perceived as a possible reason for alliance members being added to the list of countries affected by the oil embargo. During the recent Mutual And Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) discussions which began in Geneva on October 1973, the European allies were uneasy that a lessening of U.S. troop strength was being considered. These MBFR talks were also the subject of heated debate in the Congress where some groups pressed for increased participation by members of the alliance. Continued direct pressures such as this have caused European

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<sup>63</sup> John Erickson, "Training, Motivation and Morale: Some Recent Soviet Views," RUSI Journal of the Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies, December 1973, pp. 49-53.



nations to increase their proposed naval construction programs from 24 ships and 52 aircraft FY 1972 to the presently planned 98 ships and 62 aircraft and patrol aircraft as well as the new joint venture, the NATO guided missile hydrofoil. Presently American naval forces comprise approximately 20% of the combined NATO fleet.<sup>64</sup> The recent SALT-2 talks impasse has been considered to be a hopeful stimulus for a return to solidarity in the alliance. However, until some of the domestic dilemmas are stabilized or until a greater threat to Europe presents itself, the European countries will probably pursue independent courses.

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) appears to be headed for reduction from a military grouping to a low key association with socio-economic emphasis. The Phillippines, Australia, and New Zealand have called SEATO "obsolete" and "archaic," demanding a change in the mission of the alliance. With the withdrawal of the military forces from Vietnam, and similar domestic problems existing among the nations of the organization, SEATO seems to be dissolving as a viable defense group.<sup>65</sup>

#### 7. Economic Factors

The Soviet naval presence in the Middle East does seem to be part of an economic plan for future needs.

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<sup>64</sup>U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, DOD Authorizations 1974, Hearings Before the Committee on Armed Services, 93rd Congress, 1st session, 1973, 1:174.

<sup>65</sup>"SEATO to Study Move Away from Military Emphasis," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 28 September 1973, p. 8.



Presently the Soviet Union is self-sufficient in the area of petroleum production. By 1980 it is predicted that the Soviets will rely in imports for a good percentage of their oil supply. When the Black Sea oil fields are exhausted, the oil reserves in central Siberia will be difficult to exploit because of their distance from industrial centers in Russia. Thus, good business dealings with the Arab oil producing nations are essential to insure a plentiful supply of oil until the Siberian potential can be developed.

Singapore and Malaysia are important to the Soviet economy because of the locations they occupy on the trade routes in the eastern Indian Ocean. Moscow has become one of the largest purchasers of Malaysian rubber and is in need of the dock and repair facilities in Singapore, the world's fourth largest port. Even though Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew is a staunch anti-communist, economics requires customers for the large port facilities formerly used by the British Navy. Each year over 500 Russian cargo vessels call at Singapore on their way from Vladivostok around Africa to Odessa on the Black Sea Coast. This seaborne part of the Soviet Union's internal trade network is essential to the transport of bulk cargo to relieve the overburdened Trans-Siberian railway system. With the Suez Canal blocked since the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the extra 9,000 mile transit leg around Africa has driven up shipping costs. The economic savings of the reopening of the canal in the near future will be as vital to the Soviets as the



easing of transit time for their Black Sea fleet to the Indian Ocean.<sup>66</sup>

The United States has similar economic interests in the Middle East, Africa, and the Indian Ocean. In addition to the increasing percentage of petroleum imports from the Middle East, other raw materials from Africa are vital to the industries of the U.S. The Indian Ocean sea routes are imperative for access to strategic minerals in Africa such as beryl, chromium ore, antimony, asbestos, copper, columbium, lead, nickel and uranium. With economic factors such as these exposed, the strategic importance of sea power comes into focus.<sup>67</sup>

### C. RISK AVOIDANCE NATURE/OPPORTUNISM

In his book Gunboat Diplomacy James Cable defines that application of naval force as follows:

. . .the use or threat of limited naval force, otherwise than as an act of war, in order to secure advantage, or to avert loss, either in the furtherance of an international dispute or else against foreign nationals within the territory or the jurisdiction of their own state. <sup>68</sup>

Besides the gunboat diplomacy efforts in Ghana and Guinea which were discussed earlier, a third incident involving a

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<sup>66</sup>Edward Hughes, "Soviet Strategy in the Indian Ocean," Readers Digest, April 1972, pp. 137-140.

<sup>67</sup>Anthony Harrigan, "Security Interests in the Persian Gulf and Western Indian Ocean," Strategic Review, 1(Fall 1973):19.

<sup>68</sup>James Cable, Gunboat Diplomacy, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), p. 21.



West African state took place in May 1971, when a Soviet Kashin class guided missile destroyer made a regular port visit to Freetown, Sierra Leone. Concurrent with the arrival of the warships was the declaration by its President, Siaka Stevens, that Sierra Leone now was a republic. Many were uncertain as to the legitimacy of Stevens' regime, but this naval diplomacy with formalities and protocol exchanges combined with the presence of the Soviet combatant to stabilize the political situation. These political support maneuvers undertaken by the Soviets are far from being aggressive efforts to export Communism. They have been characterized by low key, low military content features, and have been located in areas not considered important to the West at the time. The Soviets seemed to have experimented with these unopposed, small scale interventions or projections of force, and in every case the risk involved was minimal. This risk avoidance nature has recently found the Soviet Union quick to negotiate rather than chance prolonged nuclear confrontation, as in the case of the U.S. alert in the Yom Kippur War, and also during the case of the Iraq-Kuwait border dispute in early 1973. In spite of the fact that the Soviets supported the traditionally hawkish Iraqis and did deploy a few warships to the scene, the course and timing of negotiations and events between the Soviet Union and Iraq have led Western analysts to believe that the Soviets cooled the aggressive fervor of the Iraqis. This adds significant weight to the risk avoidance tendency of recent Soviet Naval strategy since Iran and Saudi Arabis had announced their support



for Kuwait's claim. It was not in the best interests of the Soviets to allow a war to take place in the center of world oil production, especially when they were relying on this supply in future years.<sup>69</sup>

Opportunism is a characteristic often attributed to strategies of the Soviet Union. Several incidents of Soviet naval port visits have been dubiously linked by journalists with political support actions, and later propagandized by the Russians to take advantage of the faulty perception. Recent American efforts to negotiate a peace settlement in the Middle East were also a form of opportunism, and the most recent offer to assist in the clearance of the Suez Canal and to provide \$250 million in aid to Egypt, gave the U.S. a chance to neutralize the remaining threat of the Soviet Navy in Egypt. The utilization of the Iwo Jima with its minesweeping RH-53 Sea Stallion helicopters in project "Nimbus Star," was an attempt by the Navy to gain valuable training in deactivating minefields and serve foreign policy at the same time. The timing of these endeavors is hoped to gain favor from the same Arab nations that voted against them during the oil embargo of 1973-1974.

#### D. THIRD WORLD NATIONALISM AND BASE STABILITY

##### 1. Desire for Independence

Xenophobia is defined as the hatred or dislike of foreigners. This word typifies the nationalistic attitude

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<sup>69</sup>Weinland, "The Changing Mission Structure of the Soviet Navy," pp. 271-272.



of the emerging third world countries which ring the coasts of Africa and the Indian Ocean. Most of these new independent states have been dominated by monarchies or colonial powers for centuries, and have only gained their independence in the last two decades. At the outset of their forward deployment, when they were in need of base facilities to support their Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean operations, the Soviets took advantage of the Sixth Fleet interventions of the 1950's to remind the Arab states of the dangers of associations with the imperialistic and colonial powers. In order to gain acceptance the Soviet Union promised and delivered military and economic aid to these young nations. The establishment and subsequent expansion of forward deployment failed to evolve into the political conversion that the Communists had hoped for.

Among the obstacles that the Soviet Union faced was the unwillingness of the Arab states to surrender any sovereignty to any foreign power regardless of their military or economic assistance. Another barrier was the strong anti-communist sentiment of the Arab nations which was manifested in repressions and harrassments of the Communists in Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, and Libya. The generally accepted superiority of Western technology and organizations over those of the Soviet Union caused the Arab governments to deal with Western firms in spite of the diplomatic difficulties that existed with the Western powers. A final hindrance to Soviet



advances in the Middle East was the preponderance of Western trained and culturally oriented leaders in all disciplines.<sup>70</sup>

These barriers resulted in a series of official agreements which lacked the commitment that treaty organizations carry. Soviet naval presence expanded in the Indian Ocean as well, and as the United States perceived an increasing threat to their interests and balance of power, the U.S. Navy made plans to offset this imbalance. The American plans to expand the support facilities of their base in Diego Garcia triggered protests from the third world nations in the area. India, as one of the primary supporters of a 1971 U.N. General Assembly resolution declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, has joined several other countries in the area to demand that foreign warships be banned. Political realignment of former pro-American countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia has resulted in their protesting the U.S. initiative in Diego Garcia. With all of the foreign aid India has received from the Soviet Union and the friendship treaty too, her nationalistic feelings are well expressed in this editorial comment from the Far Eastern Economic Review:

By all accounts Mrs. Gandhi has been painfully aware of the damage done to India's image by her apparent diplomatic dependence on Moscow. She made frequent public speeches denying the charge of dependence;

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<sup>70</sup>George Lenczowski, Soviet Advances in the Middle East, (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1971), pp. 161-162.



she resisted Soviet pressure to provide base facilities for the Soviet Navy; she tried to improve relations with China by offering to send an ambassador to Peking and by writing at least two letters to Chou En-Lai. 71

## 2. Base Stability

A big question mark for the future of U.S. and Soviet naval strategies is the stability of their overseas bases. Both nations have experienced measurable embarrassment and worry over incidents that have threatened their ability to maintain their forces in certain forward areas. During the Yom Kippur War when deployed strength was at its peak, the United States Sixth Fleet was affected by the oil embargo in several European ports. Normally reliable suppliers in Singapore and the Philippines also cut off deliveries to the Seventh Fleet as a result of the threat levied by Saudi Arabia. In the Middle East where the U.S. Navy had a base in Bahrain, the sheik had set a deadline for the withdrawal of American forces, and later changed his mind after the embargo was removed. Recent overtures to Iceland by Soviets, which were magnified by the "Cod War" between Iceland and Great Britain, have sent tremors through the NATO alliance. The loss of the key link to NATO's submarine defense barrier would be a strategic disaster for the West.

The Soviets have shared these types of problems with their overseas bases. The best example of this is the

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71. "India's Straitjacket," Far Eastern Economic Review, December 10, 1973, p. 5.



expulsion of the Soviets military advisers from Egypt in July 1972. The refusal to give the Sadat regime certain offensive weapons has been labeled the primary reason; however, the less publicized Russian cultural prejudice for the Arabs may have been significant too. Numerous disagreements and altercations between Soviet advisers and Egyptian military units caused the Egyptian military leaders to pressure Sadat for their removal.<sup>72</sup> The refusal of countries like Guinea and India to allow the Soviet naval forces to establish their own bases, emphasizes the nationalistic nature of the countries involved. With the memory of the expulsion from Egypt where they have spent billions of dollars in assistance that probably will not be repaid, the Soviets will undoubtedly be reluctant to become involved or committed again. The United States realized the seriousness of the basing problem when conducting the recent airlift of arms and supplies to Israel during the Yom Kippur War. Of all the NATO allies, only Portugal would allow staging for the round-the-clock logistics flights. In a speech to the Jacksonville, Florida chapter of the Navy League, Admiral Thomas Moorer remarked:

If only one element of deterrence is our ability to respond rapidly to conflict in faraway places, then we must consider the need for forward-basing U.S. air, ground, and sea forces in areas where

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<sup>72</sup>..Egypt: "The Honeymoon is Over," Newsweek, July 31, 1972, pp. 26-28.



our important interests may be altered by military or political compulsions beyond our control. 73

#### E. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR ANALYSIS--AN EXAMPLE

Using the Soviet Navy's forward deployment as an example how might this policy analysis be integrated in currently used analytic procedures? When making assumptions for investigations several questions should be considered.

Is the capability or action being studied, by itself, enough to base an assumption of intentions on? Some considerations in trying to answer this question are the timing of the decision to follow a course of action or develop a capability, and who or what else is related to the maneuver or technological advancement. The timing of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 certainly enhanced the formulation of the Soviet's policy of forward deployment if it did not, in fact, cause it. Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean threatens the oil supply lines to the West, but it also serves to gain the support of nations such as India in the event of a war with China.

What are the possible additional needs that may be the outgrowth of these moves or improvements? In the course of deploying their fleets to all of the world ocean areas, the needs for additional air bases, support facilities, and a mobile logistics capability emerged.

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<sup>73</sup> "Moorer Tells Arab War Lessons," Navy Times, 22 May 1974, p. 34.



Was the occurrence or policy change an independent action or a competitive reaction? Determining this can provide significant understanding of the intentions of another power. The projection of Soviet naval forces into the Eastern Mediterranean in reaction to the intervention potential and strategic nuclear threat of the Sixth Fleet was followed by a similar naval presence in the Indian Ocean to gain an alliance with India to counter the Chinese menace.

What are the consequences of overestimation or underestimation of this strategy? Overestimation of the Soviet Navy's strength in the Mediterranean can provide an effective propaganda base for covering up some of its weaknesses or shortcomings. The ouster of Soviet military and technical advisors from Egypt and the loss of the vitally needed airfields in July 1972 revealed such a weakness. On the other hand, the underestimation of U.S. naval capability in the Mediterranean combined with the overestimation of the Soviet Navy's potential can reduce the confidence or morale of U.S. forces in a real confrontation as well as affect or bias subsequent analyses.

The goal of this comprehensive method of analysis is to gain balance and realism in the United States' appraisals of naval strategy. The need for considering these other factors is being realized today. In recent Naval War College war games, top-level State Department officials who acted as umpires in the games controlled the escalation of



involvement through the injection of politics.<sup>74</sup> This new approach to the training of the Navy's future policy makers and strategists emphasized the demand for more comprehensive analysis of naval strategy.

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<sup>74</sup> "Computers, Movie Projectors Add Realism to War Games," Monterey Peninsula Herald, 28 May 1974, p. 5.



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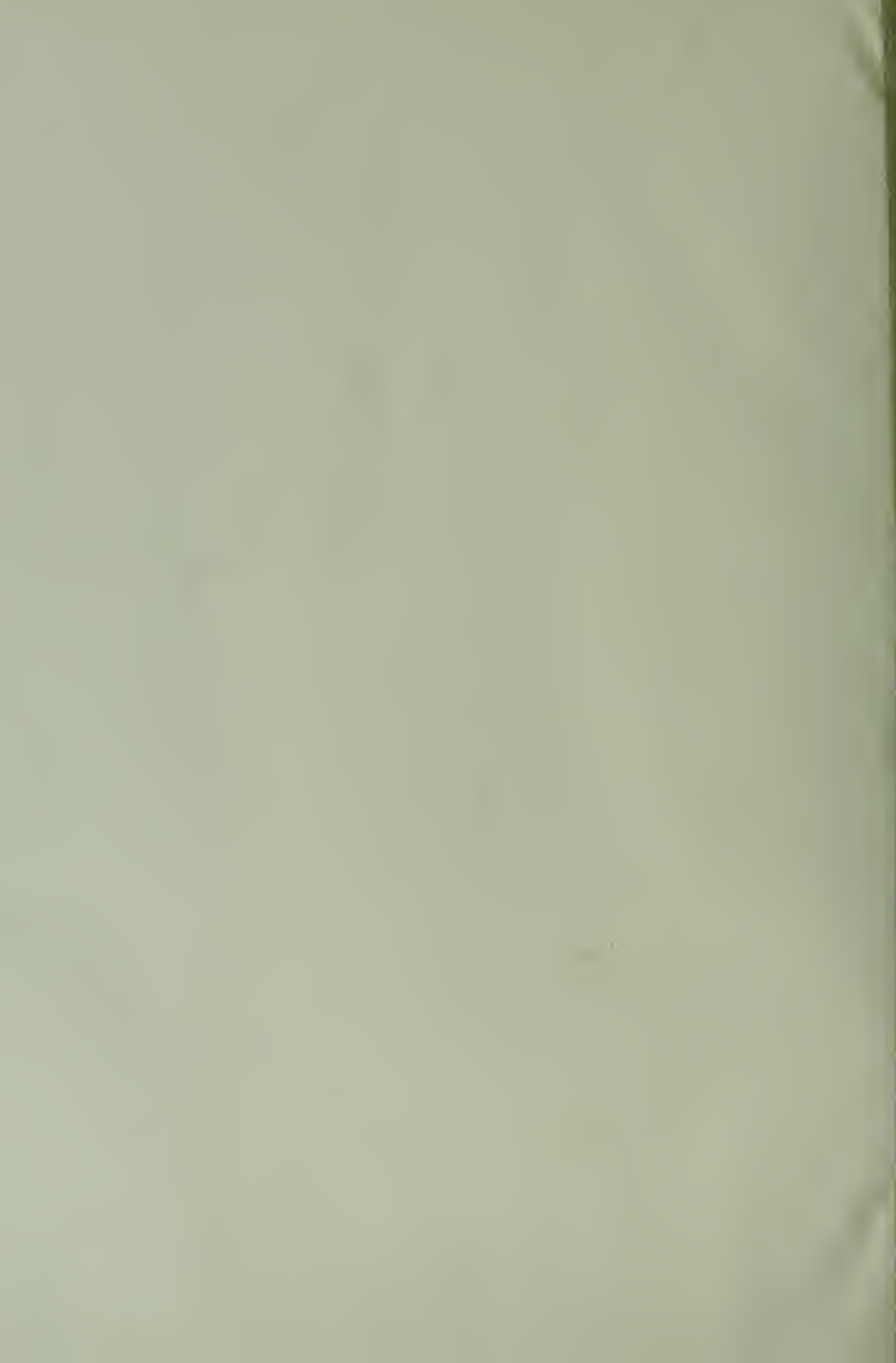


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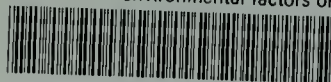
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