

Maritime Security

Questions for a New Era

Abstract

Accelerating globalization and the coincident linking of national economies is creating a system of interdependence never before experienced in history. As has been the case in history, the effectiveness of this system relies almost exclusively on the ability of all nations to freely use the global commons to exchange goods and services. The key difference today is in the wide array of threats – international piracy, smugglers of people and weapons of mass destruction and the possibility of environmental terrorism – to the significant volume of trade that depends solely on the security of the world’s oceans.

The current global security environment is driving an examination of roles and missions of our nation’s armed forces. In today’s world, the traditional functions of conventional armed forces may no longer be singly appropriate to meet the array of challenges presented by an evolving and ethereal adversary. The new strategic environment may require a change in the shape and focus of our maritime forces, as well as an expansion of responsibility to include organizations not normally associated with the maritime domain. This necessary change will drive a new balance – one between traditional combat capability required to assure, deter, dissuade and defeat conventional threats, and the forces and operations required to ensure domain awareness, defeat terrorism at sea and secure the American homeland.

As a maritime nation, the United States needs to think beyond the functions of the Navy and Marine Corps and begin to develop organizational architectures and responsibilities to ensure the continued growth of the American economy in an increasingly dangerous and competitive environment. Stability of global markets, unfettered access to critical resources and reliable, secure transportation of goods provides the mechanism necessary to ensure a stable socio-economic and political environment that will permit the spread of freedom and democracy.

This essay briefly examines the evolution of maritime strategy from the 14th century to the present day, and poses questions that if answered, may lead the way to a comprehensive and coherent maritime security strategy for the 21st century. Challenges and opportunities are highlighted and placed in context to help shape a debate that will lead to an integrated plan that includes all branches of government, the Joint force and coalition partners.

Maritime Security

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Since the end of the Cold War, the lack of a clearly defined adversary has somewhat dampened America's enthusiasm for maintaining a robust maritime capability. More recently, counter-insurgency efforts in support of the broader war on terror have drawn our attention to combat operations ashore, and placed demands on our maritime capabilities that are different from those experienced during the Cold War. Early sea-based operations against targets far inland during *Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom* may foreshadow some future mission requirements for the maritime services. Plans and programs to evaluate and, if warranted, broaden this access-assuring capability are part of the current analytic agenda. However, the nature of warfare is changing, and continued focus on traditional roles and missions of the Navy and Marine Corps may not fully meet America's needs in a challenging and rapidly evolving security environment – ashore or in the maritime domain. We should take the opportunity provided by this operational interlude to rethink our commitment to the nation's maritime capability and answer the following questions:

- Why do we need a Navy and Marine Corps?
- What will be their future roles and missions?
- What should our national maritime strategy look like? Who are the players in its execution, and how must they be organized?
- What is (or should be) the nation's level of fiscal commitment to

maintaining this key national security capability?

To gain insight into the future and help answer the above questions, this paper will first examine the past, looking briefly at the evolution of western maritime strategy and the employment of maritime forces. It will then offer some questions for consideration as the nation works to redefine its maritime capabilities, organization and relationships to better meet future security challenges. The first western maritime strategy examined is that of the British Royal Navy between 1350 and 1800.

The Royal Navy – 1350 to 1800

Between 1350 and 1800 British naval power ebbed and flowed in response to occasional shifts in national priorities. Through the mid-fourteenth century, England had no standing Navy. National requirements revolved primarily around the transport and sustainment of troops operating in frequent conflicts on the European mainland and periodic internecine warfare in the British Isles. The territorial focus of war was such that virtually any ship, regardless of armament or combat capability, was suitable for service in this limited logistical role. Borrowed merchant vessels and private ships were assembled for the task at hand, and then returned to their previous employment upon completion of the mission. Extensive land operations in Europe drained the national treasury and precluded development of any significant naval capability, driving England to form coalitions and alliances with other nations to ensure the security of her maritime approaches.¹

By 1500 increasing stability in government allowed England to shift focus from internal

issues to broader, more international concerns. Visions of empire were born, based upon exploitation of newly established colonies abroad and the important resources they could provide. King Henry VIII realized that the first step in building an empire would be to guarantee the security of the homeland – attained by establishing and then expanding England’s influence on the European continent. To this end, Henry borrowed an idea developed by Scotland’s James IV and began to construct a power-projection Navy. Warships fitted with an early form of sea-based artillery and supported by a large infrastructure of building yards and maintenance facilities extended the nation’s reach and influence at sea. A seven-fold increase in fleet size ensued, freeing England from her reliance on friends and coalitions for defense against invasion. The increase in national power also provided the means for broader expeditionary operations (military and exploratory) outside home waters.² This newfound operational independence and increased maritime capacity allowed English leadership to think further about a broadened future for Britain and her expanding role in the world.

Further definition of the envisioned British Empire – and the role of the Royal Navy – emerged in the late 16th century. Elizabeth I took advantage of Henry’s capable Navy (and fortuitous weather) to defeat the approaching Spanish Armada in 1588. This victory, while not changing Spanish foreign policy, prevented the planned invasion and significantly increased England’s international stature, particularly at sea. New trading companies were formed to support Britain’s expanding commercial empire, increasing the requirement for merchant vessels and armed escort ships.³ Several newly-recognized security issues, including rampant international piracy and

encroachment of foreign vessels into national fisheries, added to the existing coastal defense challenge and compounded the necessity for capable and available naval forces. The shift in strategic thinking from supporting land combat in Europe to ensuring the protection of economic and far-flung trade resources brought the Royal Navy to the forefront of overseas power projection and presence and would influence the British Navy for over two hundred years.

Nearly constant conflict on the European continent held England at perpetual risk. Because the army was too weak to defeat a large European invasion force, a key element of English strategy was to control approaches to the home island and destroy the enemy at sea, as had been done against the Spanish Armada. As Britain’s primary defense, the Royal Navy conducted periodic expeditions and raids in the Mediterranean to harass adversary merchant shipping, disrupt logistics and divert enemy resources from the perceived main objective – the invasion of England.⁴ Superiority of English naval tactics and firepower bred success in this diversionary role, allowing the British to influence enemy decision timelines and create uncertainty in the minds of opposing leadership. While not a completely infallible deterrent (the French mounted an unsuccessful invasion attempt in 1692), the Royal Navy began to effectively influence events through maritime operations at distances far from home waters. To further reduce the risk of invasion by foreign armies, the navy began to conduct maritime interdiction operations in the western Atlantic and Caribbean Sea, intercepting important resources en route Europe from colonies in the Americas. This effort deprived Spain and other continental powers of raw materials and treasure needed to support further adventures against Britain, and was an early example of a truly global

security strategy dependent upon the operations of naval forces.⁵

Advancing capabilities of the Royal Navy enabled adventurism and pursuit of empire. Security at sea and popular support at home fueled massive expansion of overseas trade and shipping in the late 1500s. Continued economic development and protection of flourishing colonial resources became the central focus of British naval operations. Anti-piracy patrols both in home waters and far abroad were common, and secured the ability to exploit riches found and developed in new territorial possessions. English ships engaged in offensive operations and blockades to capture or destroy pirates in their Mediterranean bases, further protecting shipping and trade. Parliament passed the Navigation Acts in 1650-51, adding law enforcement to the responsibilities of the Royal Navy including blockade and interdiction of economic contraband aboard foreign merchant ships. This early form of visit, board, search and seizure was a weapon wielded in response to growing Dutch economic hegemony, transforming the English Channel into a controlled chokepoint with largely negative impact on the Dutch economy (and hence, reduced ability to wage war against the English).⁶

Operational failure drove the development of a new strategic concept during the last ten years of the 17th century. The idea of the fleet as a direct deterrent was set forth by Admiral Arthur Herbert (Lord Torrington) in 1690. His premise was that the mere presence of a “fleet in being” would discourage offensive operations in the English Channel or against Britain herself, and that this standing navy would ensure the future security of England. The “fleet in being” concept shaped the Royal Navy for over 200 years, and provided the rationale supporting the maintenance of a ready

standing navy.⁷ Development of the fleet in being provided force structure necessary to control expansion by continental powers, as well as ensure the continued growth of the British Empire and her economy. By the early 1700s, the Royal Navy was the linchpin of England’s economic security, ensuring the safety of trade routes by interdicting pirates, defending against privateers and protecting overseas possessions. Additionally, the navy was the key agent in a strategy of containment. Through establishment of an operating base in Gibraltar, the Royal Navy significantly magnified Europe’s strategic challenges. Flanking the continent and controlling the English Channel, Britain was able to enhance homeland security by dividing the attention of European leadership and preventing the massing of invasion forces against England.

By 1750 the Royal Navy was a well-established and capable force, focused primarily on guaranteeing the security of world-wide trade routes and ensuring access to critical resources in and around North America. The navy assumed a role as “global policeman”, permitting the free conduct of commerce by neutral nations in regions where several countries had colonial interests. The British government had begun to view the navy not only as a shield ensuring the protection of England, but also as a strategic instrument key to policy enforcement and global economic security. The navy had demonstrated that it could contain or break an existing empire (Spain), and prevent the rise of another (France) by disrupting trade, severing logistics connections and denying access to resources needed to fund additional imperial expeditions.⁸

The late 1700’s saw increased law enforcement responsibilities for the Royal

Navy, particularly against merchants from colonial America. The Sugar Act of 1764 was a British attempt to control the illegal smuggling of rum and molasses from the Caribbean, and forty frigates were assigned customs enforcement duties along the coast of North America.⁹ This large investment in forward presence was in addition to operations ensuring the security of strategic possessions in the Mediterranean as well as continuing to provide protection for the British Isles.

During the American Revolution, Royal Navy operations continued to support the stability of trade routes as well as interdiction of war supplies to the colonies. However, simultaneous hostilities against France and Spain limited the Navy's role in the North American conflict, and by 1800, a new American maritime power was beginning to take shape across the Atlantic.

The Continental and United States Navy

American maritime strategy has been influenced by both domestic and international situations, but has remained largely consistent over the past 225 years. To examine the evolution of these strategies, it is convenient to classify important phases in national history and then briefly discuss the factors that influenced maritime strategy within the period.

Nation Building (1776 – 1800)

From its humble beginnings, the Continental Navy was conceived as a tool with which to harass and annoy Britain, as well as contribute in joint operations with the Continental Army. Interdiction of English merchant shipping far abroad would interrupt the flow of critical war materiel – men, ammunition and food – making the

British position untenable and hastening the successful conclusion of the American Revolution. Coastal expertise would provide the Continental Army with a measured maneuver warfare capability, and reduce English ability to dictate location and pace of ground-based combat operations. While the fledgling United States had to rely on France for much of the naval capability used against England, occasional American forays into British waters – though not tactically significant – greatly increased morale and confidence within the population and planted the conceptual seeds of fighting what we now term the “away game.”

Immediately after the War of Independence, Americans realized that survival of their newly-formed nation was dependent upon maintaining trade relationships that had been established during the colonial period. By 1785, American merchants no longer protected by the Royal Navy were frequent targets of pirates operating from bases in North Africa.¹⁰ Americans soon realized that this critical weakness would directly impact the nation's ability to develop and maintain economic growth in an era of rapidly increasing interdependence. Foreign Secretary John Jay summed up the internal debate raging over the formation and fate of an American Navy with the question: “Whether it would be more wise in the United States to withdraw their attention from the sea, and permit foreigners to fetch and carry for them; or to persevere in concerting and pushing such measures as may conduce to render them a maritime power?”¹¹ To ensure the protection of American trade overseas, Congress authorized the construction of six frigates to serve as escorts for merchants operating in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. Sailing independently, these ships represented the first commitment of U.S. Navy ships to operations in a “strategic hub” where they

were tasked with showing the flag, protecting American assets and deterring acts of piracy.

Domestic Expansion and the Monroe Doctrine (1800 – 1860)

After gaining independence and before the War of 1812, broad differences in opinion created an uneven approach to American maritime strategy and naval policy. Throughout the Jefferson and Madison administrations, anti-Federalists argued that supporting a Navy to protect overseas trade would cost the nation more than the value of American commerce in the Mediterranean, and would foil efforts to eliminate national debt. Beyond the issue of expense, anti-Federalists worried that deploying a Navy to protect American merchant vessels would provoke hostile responses from European powers. Warfighting limitations of the large vessels deployed against the Barbary pirates resulted in a reactionary shipbuilding program that delivered inexpensive but unseaworthy gunboats. To reduce costs, American maritime policy shifted from large ships operating abroad to coastal defense, relying on shore-based guns, floating batteries and the new gunboats. In 1809, President Madison's Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton suggested that the existing gunboat policy severely limited the United States' ability to act – either in defense of American merchant shipping or as a mechanism of national policy enforcement.¹² The gunboat policy was rejected in the face of rising tensions with Great Britain, and debate began anew regarding the necessity of power-projecting naval forces.

Except for the Jefferson Administration's failed gunboat policy, the first century of U.S. maritime strategy roughly paralleled that employed by imperial Britain. U.S.

Navy ships were used to promote and protect trade against pirates and privateers, engender international respect through diplomacy and presence, enforce national policy through blockade, and push defense as far from domestic shores as possible. Diplomatic expeditions to the Far East reinforced established trade relationships and introduced Japan as an important U.S. trading partner. In a watershed event, President Millard Fillmore used the navy to negotiate an agreement with previously insular Japan that would protect shipwrecked American mariners and establish Japan as a trading partner. Captain Matthew C. Perry led a diplomatic mission into Tokyo Bay and arranged an agreement that opened Japanese ports and gave the United States the right to establish a consulate. An agreement signed two years later completed Japan's entry into the global economy.¹³ Additionally, the navy was charged with law enforcement responsibility, including the interdiction of slave traders from West Africa en route the Americas. During the War of 1812 and Mexican-American War, the navy supported operations ashore by moving troops and supplies, and then providing fire support and sustainment to ground forces.

Civil War and Isolation (1861 – 1890)

The War Between the States drove a shift in maritime focus from protection of foreign trade to denying Confederate use of the sea. A weak Confederate States Navy ensured control of local coastal waters and surrounding seas by the Union Navy. With this dominance, American maritime strategy became one of closing ports and intercepting merchants, preventing the trade of Southern goods for materials needed to fight the war. Riverine operations in the west gained control of the Mississippi River, splitting the

Confederacy and restoring the key trade route from America's midlands to the sea.¹⁴

Insulated by vast stretches of ocean, the post-war nation focused on internal reconstruction and development of new opportunities in the west. Investment in American maritime capability was largely ignored as the Civil War had decimated American merchant shipping, reducing the need for escorts. In addition to the 110,000 tons of shipping lost to Confederate commerce raiders, another 800,000 tons was sold or shifted to foreign registry.¹⁵ A navy that had gained important experience in operations forward in support of diplomacy and possessed proficiency in tactics, gunnery, ship design and maintenance was left largely to atrophy. What remained of the Navy worked to reestablish limited American forward presence, practiced diplomacy, promoted trade and protected the shrunken merchant fleet.

Manifest Destiny - Revisited, Enforcing the Monroe Doctrine and World War (1890 – 1945)

A period of reconstruction in the 1890s began to restore some of the navy's lost capability, returning the fleet to a point where it was of some political usefulness. The turn of the century ushered in an era of economic imperialism and witnessed major changes in American maritime thinking. Alfred Thayer Mahan reiterated past English theory that foreign trade was key to national prosperity, and that profitable international commerce was made possible by control of the seas. Mahan argued that control of the seas, as well as defense of ports and access to foreign markets, depended upon American ability to defeat the enemy on the high seas. His influence resulted in the expansion of the navy's blue water capability, mainly through the steam-

powered battleship. Americans also used the navy as an instrument of national expansion, seizing territory and islands across the Pacific during the Spanish-American War. Admiral Dewey's victory in Manila Bay gained a U.S. foothold in the Far East and established a basis for naval power projection that would shape the early 20th century. Coaling stations in Guam and Hawaii enabled continuous American naval presence in the western Pacific that helped guarantee fair trade with China. In the years preceding World War II, American warships afforded assurance to friendly nations, as well as providing a stabilizing influence in the face of increasing Japanese adventurism.

The nation's maritime strategy was dramatically altered by the advent of World War II. Geography and the robust nature of the threat presented the most significant operational challenge in the history of the United States. Diplomacy and maintenance of trade routes was quickly replaced by war at sea and support of forces ashore. Rebounding from disaster at Pearl Harbor, the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard supported President Roosevelt's strategy of "Europe first" by ensuring the steady flow of men and materials to sustain the British war effort. Convoy escort and anti-submarine patrols permitted critical logistical support while amphibious capabilities demonstrated in both France and the Mediterranean built tactical advantage that led to the defeat Germany and Italy. In the Pacific, a series of early blue water operations helped regain sea control from the Japanese Navy, paving the way for the island-hopping campaign that followed. Sea control was key to permitting maneuver warfare in the Pacific, and allowed the United States to systematically isolate and defeat Japanese forces.

The Cold War (1945 – 1980)

After World War II, the United States emerged as the world's dominant power – economically and militarily. The decline of British seapower left a void that many, including President Truman's Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, felt must be filled by the United States.¹⁶ With no significant naval threat, the navy became an effective tool for preserving international stability and world order, fulfilling that role during the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. Operations in the Mediterranean providing a counter-balance to Soviet designs on Greece and Turkey, security patrols in and around Lebanon and the 1962 blockade of Cuba were hallmark stability operations that aided attainment of U.S. foreign policy objectives and protected national interests. Importantly, the navy provided one leg of the nation's nuclear triad, and became a major component in America's strategic deterrence posture. Reduced investment in maritime capabilities during the Vietnam War created opportunity for the Soviet Navy to close the capability gap with the United States. Even as late as 1976, however, the nation's stated purpose for the navy was to protect the sea lanes of communication between the United States and her NATO allies.¹⁷ In the mid-1980s, America's emerging maritime strategy was clearly linked to broader national security objectives. Founded in basic Mahanian principles, the new maritime strategy was shaped by considering alliances, the effects of globalization and national dependence on foreign oil and mineral resources. The Reagan-era strategy developed by Navy Secretary John Lehman provided the navy with clear guidance and well-defined objectives:

- Broad-spectrum deterrence – conventional, nuclear and against terrorists
- Sea-denial
- Security of sea lanes of communications to support national and global commerce
- Sea control to support military operations ashore

This strategy also provided capability requirements and investment priorities to counter an existing Soviet threat at sea.¹⁸ As a result, a major shipbuilding effort was undertaken to restore U.S. maritime advantage, producing many of the platforms operating in the fleet today. During the 1980s, the Reagan administration exercised this strategy, employing naval power projection capabilities to enforce the Monroe Doctrine, ensure freedom of navigation in contested waters, and protect national interests abroad.

Past as Prologue?

So, what can history's lessons tell us about the future? What challenges face the United States and its allies, and what role does the nation's Navy and Marine Corps play in answering those challenges?

From a broader perspective, today's geopolitical and economic landscape is not all that different than that faced by the world over the last three-hundred years. The challenges confronting Britain, France and Spain before and during the Industrial Revolution, for example, are similar to those facing the United States and her partners in the 21st century. One could argue that cultural and economic globalization began in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, and continues unabated today. The only real difference is the pace at which new connections are established and the speed at

which they influence the global economy when disrupted. Rapidly advancing and affordable technologies in information and transportation have vastly accelerated the mixing and integration of the world's economies and peoples, creating an immense system of global interdependence – for good and bad. The pace of change, increasing competition for resources and deeper economic linkages has made maritime forces more important than ever, especially in their role as protector of the global, sea-based economic system.

However, global terrorism spawned by religious and cultural extremism is changing the nature of national security. Traditional roles of conventional military forces may no longer be appropriate in this new environment, and new technologies, capabilities and relationships are required to ensure social and economic stability. Part of the challenge of a revised security strategy is to identify traditional capabilities that must be maintained, as well as determining new concepts of operations, technologies and tactics that will assure this stability. Our traditional armed forces will never be obsolete, but their current configuration and toolboxes may not be right for the times. Power projection will always be an important piece of our security strategy; but future power projection may not be solely in the form of cruise missiles, strike aircraft and ground troops. Our challenge then, is to figure out what power projection means in the 21st century, and how our conventional forces must change to adapt to new requirements.

Survival of the British Empire and the growing prosperity of the world depended upon the ability of the Royal Navy to ensure freedom of the seas, as well as provide security for the home islands.¹⁹ In response to the Royal Navy's mastery of the world's

oceans, Britain's competitors raised asymmetric challenges somewhat similar to those facing the United States and her allies today. Anti-access capabilities in the form of coastal guns and other fortifications drove changes in British naval weaponry and tactics. Today, the conventional challenge lies in the proliferation of land-based anti-ship cruise missiles, quiet and capable diesel-electric submarines, theater ballistic missiles and advanced-technology mines. How will the U.S. Navy respond, and what roles will new operating concepts and technology play?

In addition to capabilities pointed directly at the Navy, Britain faced challenges to her economic growth and stability. As the main engine in the machinery of 18th century trade, the continued health of Britain's economy was critical to international stability, particularly in Europe. Law enforcement operations to eradicate piracy and smuggling occupied Royal Navy ships to great extent, and were important missions even during times of armed conflict between nations.²⁰ As reported by the International Maritime Bureau, the past several years have witnessed significant increases in the incidence of piracy and smuggling, particularly in Southeast Asia and the Horn of Africa. While in the past piracy and smuggling were carried out largely by individuals in search of personal gain, these crimes today may support broader political agendas. Besides impeding globalization through the disruption of international trade and the flow of energy resources from producing regions to the rest of the world, they may also support the possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction for potential use in terror campaigns.

Deepening economic interdependence has been periodically interrupted by conflict, both large scale war and smaller, more

localized hostilities. What these episodes tell us is that while nations need to address the day-to-day issues that affect international economic stability and freedom, they also must maintain a capability to deter threats that might otherwise drag the U.S. or her Allies into broad, expensive and destructive conflicts.

Maritime dominance has always been essential to American well-being, and with today's globalized, interconnected and interdependent economies, freedom of the seas has never been more important. Economics and national trade policy have been primary factors shaping past maritime strategies. External challenges to these and other policies have contributed to periodic armed conflict between nations. Maritime dominance, properly exercised, is key to ensuring international economic security, and consequently, political stability. The world economy continues to depend almost exclusively on seaborne commerce. According to London-based International Financial Services, over 95% of all international trade is transported by merchant shipping.²¹ Additionally, access to energy sources and raw materials is essential, and the ability to reliably deliver those resources to both developed as well as developing countries is dependent upon the products of maritime dominance, namely secure ports, prevention of piracy and freedom of navigation.²² The presence of capable maritime forces – law enforcement and military – is a key ingredient in promoting international stability by deterring and dissuading groups or individuals that would attempt to disrupt the seaborne supply chain driving the international economy.

Today, economic relationships and competitions are being shaped by individuals as well as nations enabled by

global connectivity and free communication of concepts and ideas. Some have suggested that integration of the global economy will likely reduce the near-term likelihood of large scale, traditional armed conflict between nations caused by trade or financial disagreement. However, one need only look back to the period just before World War I when an earlier form of globalization was taking place. Germany's status as Great Britain's second largest trading partner did not prevent armed conflict founded in political disagreement. Additionally, ideological and ethnic issues will likely continue as potential drivers for conflict, promoted by broad access to information and fears of cultural hegemony.

There has always been a dominant maritime power. In the thirteenth century B.C. Phoenician mariners controlled commerce and spread their culture throughout the central and eastern Mediterranean. Phoenicia was the dominant seagoing nation until the rise of the Greeks in the fifth century B.C. In more modern times, Spain, Holland, France and England each had periods of supremacy at sea, leading to domestic social and economic security. The American period of unsurpassed sea power began in the early twentieth century and continues today. History tells us that new leadership will rise to fill the vacuum left by a declining power. If America does not maintain command of the seas, another nation will ascend to fill the void. Will it be China?

Not unlike the West, China's economic development hinges upon access to foreign oil and raw materials. China must ensure access to these key resources, driving changes in the size, capability and operations of Chinese naval forces. Increased investment in military capabilities coupled with increased operations – both

regionally and abroad – signal Chinese desire to establish control of the seas in the Far East and Southeast Asia. In his annual report to Congress, the Secretary of Defense asserted that Chinese “naval acquisitions...reflect Beijing’s [desire] to protect and advance its maritime interests, including territorial claims, economic interests, and critical sea lines of communication. Over the long-term, improvements in China’s [capabilities] could enable Beijing to identify, target, and track foreign military activities deep into the western Pacific and provide, potentially, hemispheric coverage.”²³

The Current State of Strategy

Given this emerging strategic landscape, what can we say about a national maritime strategy? The Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard have fronted several concepts over the past five to ten years that provide elements of a strategy, but do not complete the picture. SeaPower 21, Marine Corps 21, Deepwater and the Navy’s Fleet Response Plan provide important components of a coherent strategy. However, they do not by themselves clearly define important linkages, or state the relationships and responsibilities that must be forged and shouldered by other agencies. Most importantly, perhaps, these concepts and visions do not provide long-term procurement objectives or an affordable path to the future. The Department of Defense is struggling with transformation as the services attempt to reshape themselves to provide the capabilities required to ensure security in the 21st century. The Navy’s newly-developed “3-1” concept describes the most likely threats that the U.S. will face over the next several decades. This effort illustrates the necessity for a maritime strategy that is effective against both non-state actors threatening civil society and

conventional threats. The issue then, is one of balance – do we prepare for the more likely, persistent irregular conflict or devote resources to maintenance of traditional capabilities focused against the less likely scenario? The answer, of course, is that the National Maritime Strategy and its companion investment plan must answer both challenges, mindful of constraints imposed by uncertain levels of future funding.

But what about relying on our international partners? Some countries are increasing defense expenditures to build or enhance capabilities against asymmetric threats, while others are pursuing modest improvements in traditional naval capabilities.²⁴ With a few exceptions however, America cannot depend upon our most steadfast coalition partners to provide significant war at sea capability against a technologically advanced, multi-dimensional adversary.²⁵ Flat or declining allied investment in military modernization programs, coupled with complicated interoperability issues puts the weight of providing traditional maritime power squarely on the shoulders of the United States. However, as they are ably demonstrating in Operations *Enduring Freedom* and *Iraqi Freedom*, our allies have much to offer in the realm of creating a stable and secure maritime environment. Some examples of where the United States could leverage allied contributions are

- Maritime domain awareness
- Anti-piracy patrol
- Choke point surveillance/interception operations
- Littoral defense
- Logistics and transportation – support of the sea base
- Theater engagement operations

A strong, continuous and coordinated coalition effort in these areas would allow the U.S. and its allies to more efficiently husband resources to maintain or broaden operational advantages over potentially hostile strategic competitors. Clear identification of American and allied responsibilities in the maritime domain would allow each partner to do what it does best, in the most affordable manner, without unnecessarily duplicating capabilities.

Questions for a Maritime Security Strategy

So where do we go from here? We need to consider several issues as we move deeper into the 21st century. Some of these challenges are enduring, but others are relatively new, driven by the effects of the current wave of free trade, globalization, changes to the strategic security environment, the potential of WMD in the hands of individuals, and the threat of unrestricted, asymmetric or irregular warfare. The issues the U.S. Navy and her allies will likely have to deal with in the future are:

- Protection, monitoring and control of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). This requirement is becoming more pressing, especially with the specter of environmental terrorism looming offshore. Thorough maritime domain awareness within the EEZ will be critical to preventing illegal activities such as piracy and smuggling of people, weapons and drugs, as well as protecting the littoral environment.
- Maintenance and security of sea lanes of commerce, particularly in key chokepoints.

- Port and harbor security.
- National Missile Defense. The requirement for a sea-based capability has implications for force structure that must be considered when developing a future investment strategy.
- Stability and capability of the nation's maritime industrial base.

These issues require a coordinated joint and interagency solution that provides an integrated and affordable investment strategy, as well as clearly defined roles and missions for stakeholders in national economic security and homeland defense.

Additionally, we need to consider interagency relationships and joint force roles in defending national interests in the face of an emerging peer competitor. What are our expectations for the Navy and Marine Corps over the next fifty years? What is the level of investment needed to attain proper balance between sea control, sea denial and power projection capabilities? Should we develop a joint investment plan coordinated with our allies and partners that leverages individual strengths and reduces wasteful redundancy? Answering these questions will be an important first step toward redefining America's role in the maritime domain, as well as setting a course for increased international cooperation in ensuring the security and protection of global commerce and the environment. Given the possibilities of tomorrow's strategic landscape, we need to get started.

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- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 139-140.
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- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.
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