# CHANGING NAVAL OPERATIONS

# AND MILITARY INTERVENTION

### Michael MccGwire

Navies have long been a means of bringing military force to bear in distant parts of the world, and the purpose of this paper is to consider the impact of contemporary developments on this traditional instrument of great power policy.

In a naval context, military intervention can include a cocktail party in Mombasa, a show of force in the Caribbean, naval interposition off Iceland, carrier airstrikes on Hanoi, or the landing of marines in the Persian Gulf. I have chosen to concentrate on the application of force as opposed to the display cf force, for two reasons. First, our understanding of the processes underlying political influence building is still unclear,[1] and becomes even more so when we introduce the diffuse concept of "a naval presence."[2] And second, to the extent that a naval presence *does* have any political influence, this must stem from the ultimate possibility that the forces involved will actually be used.

This discussion of military intervention both at sea and by sea stops short at the beachhead, and military activity on land is only addressed to the extent that it is relevant to maritime operations. Similarly, although I touch on the political costs of naval intervention, the more general question of the political utility of military force is not addressed because of limitations of space.

However, so many assumptions about the contemporary role of force at sea stem from centuries past, that it is worth spending a moment on the relevant changes in the international environment. Mahan, who chose the term "seapower" for its evocative ring

rather than its usefulness as an analytical term, saw it as one of three interlocking circles, the other two being colonies and commerce. His theories about seapower and command of the sea derived from an historical analysis of the years 1660-1783, the height of mercantilism and monopoly trade, and were thought to have been validated by what G.S. Graham terms "The Illusion of Pax Britannica" in the 19th century.[3] But British naval power was not the sole or even the most important reason for the Pax Britannica, which resulted from a combination of various factors. Of these, the most important was "Britain's industrial supremacy, which made possible a phenomenal commercial development."[4] The period of the industrial revolution provided both the means and the stimulus for Western nations to establish more or less effective dominion over a world which seemed to lack viable political entities. The process was accompanied by the spread of a Western administrative infrastructure (part government, part commercial), throughout much of the world, and was supported by a belief in "la mission civilatrice" and "the white man's burden," and Victorian ideas about child rearing and colonial government. Among the most important were the will to empire, the readiness of the imperial authorities to use force, and the knowledge of their subject people that resistance would lead to certain retribution, even if delayed. God was white and to spare the rod, spoiled the child.

Navies were prime instruments of such imperial retribution, and in those days of coal-fired ships and manually operated gun mountings, sizable bodies of well-armed men could be landed at short notice, while the warship lay virtually invulnerable offshore. As recently as the Boer War, it was still practical to dismount naval guns and drag them by oxcart to the battlefront. By World War I, attitudes toward

empire were already changing, and the Western imperial tide had begun to recede. But even in the thirties it was thought unexceptionable to bomb villagers in the Aden Protectorate as a form of collective punishment, and on the shores of the Malaysian Archipelago and the China Seas, villages were razed as a discouragement to piracy.

Since the last war, attitudes and circumstances have changed radically. Of the latter, the most significant would seem to be the proliferation of nation-states and their membership in the United Nations. The corollary of this has been the progressive dismantling of the infrastructure of colonial occupation, which played such an important role in bringing imperial retribution to bear. There has also been a change in general attitudes towards the acceptability of coercive force. The circumstances in which long-range intervention is likely to be acceptable have been progressively circumscribed, and in the last 30 years, large-scale coercive intervention by major powers has been successful only within their respective contiguous national security zones, where power gradients and political commitment are both high. Effective intervention overseas now requires an initial favorable balance of political forces in the "host" country, as well as sufficient weight of sustained response. But even if attitudes had not changed, warships would no longer be able to serve as the autonomous wielders of graduated retribution. The specialized demands of modern warfare mean that naval units now lack the military flexibility of the prewar general purpose cruiser, with its numerous guns and comfortably large ship's company. Meanwhile, the proliferation of sophisticated weapon systems means that no longer are warships necessarily invulnerable when lying offshore. Sensors may have to be manned continuously with weapons ready at standby alert, and it may be hard to spare a landing party

without hazarding one's ship. The modern equivalent of the cruiser with its landing party is the carrier task force and its marine battalion landing team. But while the political effect that each could achieve may be comparable, the political stake is obviously very different.

None of this means that military intervention by sea is no longer likely or possible. But it has placed constraints on the almost casual use of force which used to be the norm. And it does mean that the economic and political costs are likely to be very much higher, and that the chances of a successful outcome are far less. However, while the utility of coercive force is increasingly in question, the threat of such force remains a powerful diplomatic weapon. Irrespective of whether it ultimately achieves its goals, coercive intervention is an unpleasant experience for the target country, and a credible threat is likely to introduce some element of deterrence to its political considerations.

There are two separate calculations involved in assessing the level of capability required for a successful intervention overseas. First, there is the level and type of force which is to be brought to bear on the target ashore, whether it be naval bombardment, carrier airstrike, or men and tanks. And second, there is the capability required to get such a force to the target area by sea, and to sustain offshore operations as necessary. Our concern is with the second category, which includes the possibility that passage may be deliberately obstructed, and may require the use of force to secure such passage. The policymaker will want to know the political costs of such ancillary operations, and how they compare with the political benefits that the major intervention is supposed to achieve.

Maritime intervention is a complex subject, and I therefore begin by developing a discussion framework which allows us to consider the level of capabilities and the types of cost involved. I then look at the major operational developments and their likely effect on military intervention by sea, before turning to review the different types of intervention and why they could occur. Finally, I consider certain differences between the Soviet and the U.S. approaches to overseas intervention.

**The Use of the Sea—A Theoretical Framework.** The sea's strategic quality derives from the access it provides to nonadjacent areas. Maritime strategy is therefore about the use of the sea; using it for one's own advantage and preventing its use to one's disadvantage, in peacetime as in war. This navigational use of the sea breaks down into two main categories: (1) the conveyance of goods and people, and (2) the projection of military force against targets ashore.

The first category of use covers seaborne trade, which in a strategic context spells maritime communications. It also covers the movement of military cargoes in merchant ships, although this shades into the second category, particularly when a war is actually in progress. The shading is inevitable, since the military and commercial uses of the sea form a continuum. While we can identify what is purely military, there are few commercial cargoes which have no military value. For analytical purposes, therefore, it is impractical to distinguish between military and nonmilitary uses of the sea, except in the broadest terms, whereas the projection of force, and the conveyance of goods and people are functionally distinct.

The second category has two forms: the traditional one of bringing military force (actual or latent) to bear on coastal states; and the deterrent form of targeting distant land areas with nuclear weapons. We are here only concerned with the traditional form. This may involve the landing of troops or may be

limited to standing offshore and striking targets with shipborne weapons such as guns, missiles or aircraft.

There is also a third, instrumental category: (3) the deployment of naval forces in order either (a) to *prevent*, or (b) to *secure* the two main categories of use. We all know that certain types of naval units also embody the capability for projecting force ashore, but the analytical distinction between categories (2) and (3) is worth preserving. It serves to emphasize that maritime strategy is wholly about the *use of the sea* and only incidentally about the *use of force* at sea. Naval forces are only necessary to the use of the sea if attempts are being made to prevent it.　　–

The ease with which use can be prevented depends on maritime geography and the type of use involved. A waterway (defined as any stretch of sea used for passage) can be described in terms of its geographic characteristics, lying somewhere on the continuum between narrow, shallow waters and the deep ocean. Narrow waterways, where ships must pass close to shore-based weapons, are relatively easy to obstruct, particularly if they are shallow and hence minable. It is much harder to prevent passage across an ocean waterway, out of range of land and with opportunities for evasive routing. By the same token, different types of use involve different capabilities and lengths of time at risk. It is usually easier to interrupt a flow of merchant shipping, than to prevent the passage of a naval task force.

As a general rule, it is also easier to prevent the use of the sea than it is to secure such use. This is partly because the means of *preventing* use are not limited to naval forces, and in narrow waters they include the simple block-ship, the mine and a whole range of shore-based weapons. Naval forces are more important on the ocean waterways, the submarine being the most universal long-range weapon, but even

here the task of preventing use can be shared by land-based strike aircraft and supported by satellite and shore-based surveillance systems.

However, *securing* the use of the sea against opposition remains a predominantly naval task, at least the military means are primarily naval. There are, of course, other ways of securing use, including diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions.

We are now in a position to draw a box diagram, plotting the type of waterway against the type of use, and in each box we can show the minimum capability needed to *prevent* the use of the sea in such circumstances. We are not able to show the level of capability needed to *secure* the use of the sea, since this will also depend on the type and scale of opposition, which will vary between cases. However, we can show the *type* of costs which will be incurred in using military force to secure the use of the sea against opposition.

These costs can be economic, in the sense of increased demands on the domestic economy for defense expenditure; or they can be political in the sense of adversely affecting relations with other states. The type of cost is determined by the strategic quality of the waterway. In the case of narrow waters, it is geopolitical, in the sense that it stems from a combination of geographical configuration and the political control of the adjacent coasts. A military response to an attempt to prevent passage through narrow waters therefore cannot avoid political costs and these will tend to be heavy, because it will usually require attacks on national territory.

The strategic quality of ocean waterways is primarily military, and stems from the reach and geographical distribution of maritime forces, and their relative capabilities in the encounter zone. The costs of the military response to an attempt to prevent passage across the ocean are primarily economic and,

in the international context, the response can usually be contained politically, unless it becomes essential to attack shore-based support facilities.

Between these two extremes lie those waterways which traverse open seas within range of land-based weapon and surveillance systems, where the strategic quality will be some mix of military and geopolitical, and the costs part economic and part political.

In the same context of securing use, there is a distinction to be made between the "terminal" and "passage" legs of a waterway. Obviously, the terminal of one voyage can be the passage of another, and the distinction will lie in the mind of the user. But it is somewhat akin to the distinction between ends and means and, depending on which applies, it influences the relative ease with which use can be prevented, the range of options open to the user, the costs of securing use, and the levels of political commitment.

The point of immediate interest is that very rarely is the passage leg the only route between two terminals. It is therefore usually possible to divert

round obstructions to narrow waterways, and although ocean waterways are more difficult (because the obstructions are mobile) some form of evasive routing is often practicable. This means that there is usually an alternative to insisting on passage, and consideration can be given to the relative costs.

The extra distance involved in accepting diversion can be expressed in time and money, and this also will translate into economic and political costs. But in this case, the political costs will reflect lost opportunities to influence events, or the inability to meet an important commitment. Political costs of this type will only be incurred when timeliness is an issue, as, for example, if it involves the deployment of military force in response to a sudden crisis, or the supply of a distant battlefront by sea at the outbreak of a war.

Our diagram is now complete. The boxes for Trade in the Terminal area have been left blank to show that in most cases the coastal state will be concerned to secure rather than prevent such use of the sea. Where local conflict prevents such use, Trade and

## MINIMUM CAPABILITY NEEDED TO PREVENT USE:
## COST OF SECURING USE

| Types of Waterway | | Types of Use | The Conveyance of Goods and People | | The Projection of Military Force | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Trade | Military Supply | Stand Off Strike | Land Ashore |
| Passage | Ocean | | II : | e | I | : e |
| | Narrow | | VI : | p | IV | : p |
| | Diversion | | e | e/p* | | e/p* |
| Terminal | Open | | - | V | III | IV |
| | Narrow | | - | VI | IV | V |

*Political costs are only incurred when timeliness is a critical factor.
Legend:   Level of Capability—I (high) to VI (low)
Cost:  e - economic, p - political

Military Supply would have the same indexes. The political costs of securing use in Terminal areas are not shown, since they cannot be separated from the larger costs of the military intervention.

The diagram shows the *minimum* level of military capability needed to prevent use in the different situations. The assessment is intuitive, and I have arbitrarily divided military capability into six levels, reflecting both the range to which violence can be projected, and the degree. Level I (the highest) implies the capability for sustained attack on naval forces in midocean, and is possessed only by the United States and, in certain sea areas, by the Soviet Union. Level II implies a lesser capability which could attack a strong naval force, but not sustain an engagement. Britain has this capability in much of the Atlantic, and China is moving towards this in the Asian-Pacific. Moving to the bottom end of the scale, Level VI implies the ability to prevent the passage of merchant ships through narrow shallow waters, perhaps using contact mines laid by junks or dhows and protecting them from being swept with field artillery. Level V would be able to prevent passage through less constricted waters and might include torpedo and gun-armed coastal patrol craft. Levels IV and III lie in between these two pairs. Level IV could cover broader, deep-water straits and would include missile-armed craft and coastal installations, and a measure of shore-based air support. Level III implies a greater offshore capability, either including submarines or else reasonably effective surface forces, backed by shore-based airstrike.

These descriptions are deliberately vague, because military forces tend to be unbalanced and do not lie tidily along a smooth continuum of capability. The levels do however give some idea of the leverage provided by maritime geography, and the extent to which passage can now be controlled by coastal states in general, and straits states in particular.

Operational Developments. Turning to the operational factors affecting maritime intervention, there have been significant developments in four main areas: advances in weapons technology, the dispersion of weapon systems among nonindustrialized states, the Soviet Navy's shift to forward deployment, and international attitudes towards the rights of maritime passage. The last of these is of a different kind to the other three, and will be disposed of first.

(1) Erosion of Rights of Passage. Since the first two U.N. Conferences on the Law of the Sea in 1958 and 1960, there has been a remarkable shift in world opinion concerning the balance between exclusive and inclusive use of the sea. In 1958, the "traditional maritime powers" were still fighting for a 3-mile territorial limit, and the South Americans claim for 200 miles was seen as preposterous. In 1960, the compromise proposal for a 6-mile Territorial Sea, with an additional 6-mile Exclusive Fishing Zone failed by one vote to get the necessary two-thirds majority. And yet by 1974, most nations, including the major maritime powers, had come to accept the much broader concepts of a 12-mile Territorial Sea and a 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone, and argument focused on the scope of national jurisdiction within that zone. This tendency has been reinforced by claims that archipelagic seas should be considered as internal waters, and that marine pollution could threaten the security of a coastal state. The dominating principle of "freedom of the seas" has now been seriously eroded, and specific claims have undermined both the concept and the right of "innocent passage" through territorial waters.

A new regime of "transit passage" may yet emerge, but the net effect of these developments has been to make it more likely that in the future, coastal states will challenge or even deny the right of passage to certain categories of ships through waters coming within their various jurisdictions. It is also likely that such action will be seen as legitimate by many other countries, including perhaps the hundred or so members of the Group of 77. Passage through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran were denied to Israel in the past, and would serve as a precedent in the future.

(2) Advances in Weapons Technology. Such challenges to passage will be all the more threatening because of advances in weapons technology and the dispersion of sophisticated systems among coastal states. The former have enabled quantum jumps in such fundamental weapon characteristics as range, accuracy, payload and systems reliability. These have been matched by an exponential increase in the capabilities of sensor and surveillance systems.

By depriving the seas of their capacity for concealment, the improved surveillance systems have simplified the problems of ocean interception by warships.\ They can also provide the target location data which allow long-range weapon systems to be brought to bear. Tactical systems with ranges from 300 miles (cruise missiles) to 1,500 miles (aircraft) have been in service since the end of the fifties, but the emerging capability to strike moving targets with ballistic missiles at intercontinental ranges is introducing a new dimension to maritime warfare. As long ago as 1972, the Soviet Union claimed that "naval groupings" were targeted by the Strategic Rocket Forces,[5] and we know that they are developing a homing re-entry vehicle for a medium-range ballistic missile.[6] We are now moving into an era where maritime warfare will

be fought as much by land- as sea-based weapon and sensor systems, and it is becoming necessary to distinguish between the "reach" of different systems and to think in terms of "global" and (for want of a better term) "local" systems. In the middle ranges, such distinction will be somewhat arbitrary, but it becomes clearer if we allow that "reach" covers response time as well as range. Thus an IRBM would come within global systems, while a medium-range bomber would be at the high end of the local systems. Perhaps more important is the concept that "global" systems are of a kind that can be launched from national territory (or from a strategically located submarine), to strike like a bolt from the blue at maritime targets in distant sea areas, across intervening seas or territory, whereas "local" system implies a more direct relationship between adversaries. Global systems will be extremely sophisticated and expensive, and in the main they are likely to be limited to the superpowers. Several components for such systems are already in service, and it seems clear that the Soviet Union (at least) intends to adopt an integrated "all arms" approach to maritime warfare.

While the global systems introduce a new dimension, improvements in local systems have been equally dramatic. The main instrument has been the terminally guided cruise missile, which allows a patrol craft to pack the punch of a battleship, and can be fitted to aircraft, surface ship, submarine or coastal defense installation. As important as the accuracy and payload of this weapon, is its range. This not only extends a coastal state's reach seaward, but the greater the range, the smaller the number of weapon platforms needed to cover a given sea area or stretch of coast.

The homing cruise missile can be a deadly weapon against an undefended or unalerted target. But once the threat was properly assessed, it was

appreciated that in many ways the cruise missile simplified the defense problem. Early missiles were transsonic, and provided a reasonably homogeneous target which, within the existing state of the art, could be shot down or seduced. In many ways this compared favorably with the previous situation, where the weapon was a torpedo, shell or bomb, whose flight could not be arrested. Effective defense was therefore predicated on the destruction of the weapon platforms (submarine, surface ship or aircraft) prior to weapon launch, which was a very demanding requirement. The weakness of these systems had been their inaccuracy, but in the case of bombs and shells, this can now be overcome by the use of precision-guided munitions (PGM), which home on the designated target. Of course, the terminally guided cruise missile remains a serious threat, and later generations are supersonic, harder to detect and more difficult to decoy or shoot down.

So far, only strike systems have been referred to, but there have also been considerable advances in counterstrike or "protect" systems. These include electronic countermeasures (ECM), image masking and so forth, as well as weapons designed primarily for shipboard self-defense. We have here the classic contest between attack and defense, and up to now it has been fairly evenly matched. But the advent of the tactical ballistic missile and the prospect that it may be mounted in surface ship, submarine and ashore for use against maritime targets, raises the requirements for shipboard self-protection to new levels which will be hard to achieve. These ballistic strike systems will be expensive and therefore reserved for high-value targets, but it does prompt the question of whether traditional surface warships will be able, in the future, to survive in a hostile maritime environment.

(3) **Dispersion of Weapon Systems Among Coastal States.** These high

technology developments relate mainly to confrontations between the two superpowers in the context of general war. But since 1955, the industrialized powers have provided a steady supply of sophisticated weapons to emerging nations. Whatever the motives behind this supply, the effect has been to increase the ability of these nations to defend themselves against external intervention and, in several cases, to prevent the use of their coastal seas. As an indicator of the latter capability, by 1976 about 23 nonindustrialized states had been supplied with missile-armed surface units (or missile systems for retrofitting), 10 by the Soviet Union and 13 by the West; 14 such states had been supplied with submarines, 4 by the Soviet Union and 10 by the West, 6 of the latter being in South America.[7] These are by no means the only type of weapon which can be used to prevent the use of the sea, and besides other naval forces like torpedo boats and gun-armed surface units, there is the whole range of shore-based systems such as aircraft, missiles and coastal batteries, and fixed obstructions such as mines. And all these weapons are being progressively upgraded. In the case of supplies from the West, this is largely for commercial reasons. In the case of Russia, this is a byproduct of her economic system, which allocates a fixed share of resources to weapons procurement, resulting in the periodic replacement of all equipment by improved versions. In this context, the Soviet SS-N-3 300-mile surface-to-surface antishipping cruise missile will be superseded by the end of the seventies, and may become available for selective supply to client states for coast defense purposes.

The supply of weapons is one thing, their effective use is another, and this is why maritime geography plays such an important role in determining a coastal state's ability to prevent the use of its waters. It requires an experienced

submarine commander to bring a diesel boat within torpedo range of a target in open waters. And while range is not so great a problem to missile-armed patrol craft, they are very exposed to counter-attack when away from the cover of land, and the state of the sea affects their operational performance. Mines are a cheap and simple way of preventing use, but they can only be laid in relatively shallow depths, and are only effective if they cannot be circumvented or swept, factors which depend largely on the breadth of the waters.

There is also the complex matter of what is needed for a nation to maintain and operate the weapons it possesses. We have the example of the buildup and decline of Indonesia's Navy, and the limited effectiveness of the Egyptian force, even though both nations have a seafaring tradition. The rapid deterioration of the Indonesian Navy was mainly a failure of maintenance, the lack of spare parts being a subsequent cause, and this underlines the problems of keeping complex equipment operational, particularly in hot and humid climates. When this is coupled with such evidence as the apparent superiority of Israeli pilots over their Egyptian opponents, one begins to ask whether a country requires some minimal technological base in order to make effective use of the latest weapons. On the other hand, North Vietnamese air defense units inflicted heavy casualties on the latest American aircraft, which suggests that perhaps it is as much a matter of priorities and commitment, as of innate capability. Meanwhile, the trend in weapon design appears to be towards increasing internal sophistication, matched by a greater simplicity in operation and maintenance, and this may come to compensate for the technological constraints.

(4) **The Soviet Navy's Shift to Forward Deployment.** The fourth major development has been the Soviet Navy's shift to forward deployment. Although this has received the most publicity, in practical terms it seems to have had little real effect on either the capability or the willingness of the West to use their navies in support of military intervention overseas. If anything, the last 10 years has seen an increase in such activity. The presence of Soviet naval units in distant sea areas must obviously introduce a complicating factor to U.S. plans and impose costs in terms of higher states of readiness and increased surveillance requirements. But it has certainly not prevented America from active naval intervention, as we saw in the Jordanian crisis in 1970, the Indian Ocean deployments in 1971 and 1973, both Arab-Israeli conflicts and throughout the war in Vietnam. Commentators who insist to the contrary tend to disregard the rise of nationalism, the Western withdrawal from empire, and the diminishing utility of coercive intervention, and they ascribe the results of these historical trends to the presence of a few Soviet warships. Given the opportunities, Soviet gains have been remarkably few.

It is now generally accepted that the primary determinant of the Soviet decision that their navy should shift to forward deployment, was the sharp acceleration in strategic weapons procurement, ordered by President Kennedy on taking office, and the marked increase in the emphasis on sea-based systems. This generated a Soviet requirement to deploy a counter against this threat to Russia from the "maritime axes," and resulted in the radical restructuring of the Soviet Navy.

The carrier threat, which had been the Soviet Navy's primary concern since 1955, yielded precedence to the threat from Polaris, and since 1961, anti-submarine warfare (ASW) has received top priority in research and development and in warship design. Between 1957-1967, naval new construction entering service was heavily oriented

towards the antisurface role, with SSM as the primary weapon. Since 1967, the emphasis has swung sharply to ASW, with additional priority being given to self-protection weapon systems on the larger surface ships. Except for one class of four ships (the rump of a cancelled program), all new construction major surface units which have entered service since 1962 are now designated by the Russians as large antisubmarine ships, the *Moskva* and *Kiev* classes being called antisubmarine cruisers. Two older classes of SSM-armed surface ships have undergone major conversion and have been redesignated as large antisubmarine ships. U.S. officials now refer to both *Moskva* and *Kiev* as "ASW carriers," and they have also acknowledged that the missile launcher tubes in *Kara* (called a cruiser in the West) carry antisubmarine weapons and not SSM, as had previously been thought. I assess that this also applies to the other three classes of new construction large antisubmarine ships, which have entered service since 1966.[8]

Despite the shift to forward deployment, the Soviets are still building a navy for a narrowly defined, defensive mission, tailored for general war. If anything, this tendency is likely to increase as they continue striving to develop an effective counter to Polaris, Poseidon and then Trident. The construction of distant-water surface warships proceeds at a modest pace—about two cruiser-size and two destroyer-size large antisubmarine ships a year, and an ASW carrier every two—and one has the impression of an interim expedient, while the final answer to the problem is being developed. Submarines are a different matter and nuclear construction proceeds remorselessly at 10 units a year, while a new diesel program is also underway. The Soviet submarine force now comprises the primary antisurface capability and SSM-armed submarines operate in company with Soviet surface forces. This makes a powerful team, but its capabilities lie at the high end

of the spectrum of force and it lacks any projection capability.

Although the presence of Soviet naval forces in distant sea areas increases the possibility of their use to hamper Western military intervention, the past 10 years provide evidence of Soviet caution on this score. Of greater significance is the future role of the new global weapon systems, and their potential as a deterrent to such operations.

The overall effect of these developments in the law of the sea, advances in weapon technology and proliferation of sophisticated weapon systems, has been to make the sea a much more complex and potentially hostile operating environment. Attempts to prevent use have become more likely, and the capability to do so is much more widespread. The near monopoly of naval power enjoyed by the West during the first two postwar decades has been steadily eroded. The reach of coastal states is being progressively extended and regional navies are beginning to emerge in such areas as the Arabian and China Seas, and the western South Atlantic. These developments do not imply that the U.S. Navy will lack the capability to project military power in distant parts of the world, or to secure the use of the sea for such purposes. Its ships were designed for war with Russia and should be able to operate in the face of Soviet hand-me-downs and suboptimal Western systems. But it does mean that the deployment of naval forces will need to be less of an instinctive reaction and will have to take more factors into account, including the possibility of losses. It also means that self-protection systems will need to be given higher priority in each ship's weapons outfit.

The Costs of Military Intervention by Sea. Military intervention can be coercive or supportive.[9] The distinction is not entirely clear-cut, since in the case of supportive intervention, the other

party can claim he is being coerced (e.g., North Vietnam), and in a coercive intervention, a third party may be supported indirectly (e.g., Pakistan in the 1971 Bangladesh war). The distinction is, however, useful, because of the different levels of capability required for the different types of intervention, both on land and at sea.

The proximate aim of maritime intervention is either to secure the use of the sea, or to prevent its use. *Preventing* use is a relatively simple concept and we have as examples the U.S. blockade of Cuba in 1962, the mining of Hanoi in 1972, and Britain's Beira patrol aimed at Rhodesia. These were all coercive. A supportive intervention of this type is the Guinea Patrol, established by the Soviet Navy in November 1970, to discourage further seaborne attacks on Conakry. Except for the Cuban blockade, all these interventions were by nonadjacent powers.

(1) The Terminal Area. The concept of *securing* the use of the sea is more complex, raising the question of "use for what?" and sending us back to the categories in our box diagram. Focusing first on the projection of force ashore in the terminal area, we need to distinguish between coercive and supportive intervention, and to know whether or not ground forces are involved. In the case of *coercive* intervention, the maritime environment will be hostile and where troops have to be landed and kept supplied by sea, it will be necessary for the Navy to secure command of the offshore zone and to be responsible for air superiority, until airfields are established ashore. In constricted waters, the need to cauterize possible threats and forestall a surprise attack, will inevitably incur additonal political costs, particularly if other states are close set, as for example in the Persian Gulf. However, if coercive intervention is limited to "punishment" by strikes from ships lying offshore, effective force defense

systems may be all that is necessary, unless faced by a strong opponent and unfavorable geography.

*Supportive* intervention is a very different matter, involving much lower risks and costs, even when ground forces are engaged. The presence of a friendly coastline and the availability of shore facilities for coastal surveillance systems and air support are important assets. When ground forces are not involved, the Navy's role is to bring prepackaged firepower to bear on the area of conflict. At the present time, this mainly involves airborne systems, and these can be used in various ways ranging from air defense to reconnaissance and close ground support, with the carrier serving as an offshore airfield. But the advent of precision-guided weapons and rocket-aided shells may mean that gunfire support from surface ships will gain a new lease of life.

Involvement by three or more parties in the terminal area is becoming increasingly likely. When support is being given to one side of a local conflict, the temptation for the other side to attack the intervenor is very strong. Whether this temptation is kept in check will depend on the other side's capability for effective action, its fear of the consequences, and any external political constraints which may exist. Western "sanctuary" theory has never been very persuasive and the spread of potent weapons, the existence of leaders like Qdaffi and Amin, and, where submarines and missiles are concerned, the difficulties of pinning down responsibility, all combine to make it unwise for major powers to assume that smaller nations whose interests are threatened, will not dare to retaliate. Outside powers who are not parties to the local dispute may also become involved. For example, the emerging regional powers may react against external intrusion into an area where they themselves are competing for influence. But the more interesting case is involvement by other

superpowers, and the prospects for this type of confrontation and its consequences are discussed in the following section.

So much for the terminal area. But to intervene, one must first get there in time to achieve one's purpose, and then if necessary sustain the operation by sea. This brings us to the question of securing passage.

(2) Securing Passage. Narrow waters or straits offer the best opportunities for obstructing passage, and ignoring the question of plausibility for the moment, we can consider what ought to be done to secure use, should that happen. Ideally, the answer should stem from a comparison of the political costs and benefits of the possible courses of action. We start with the political *gains* that are supposed to accrue from the main military intervention in the terminal area. Against this we set the political *costs* of insisting on passage through the narrow waterway against the wishes of the littoral state(s), which may involve a subsidiary military intervention. And if there is an alternative way of getting to the terminal area, we assess the political and economic *costs* of accepting such a diversion.

The political costs of forcing passage must depend on the particular circumstances, but to some extent it will reflect the bloodiness of the battle. This will stem from military factors such as relative capabilities, distance from land, length of time within range of attack, capacity for point defense, depth of water, the likelihood of third-party intervention and the type of land-based weapons available to the littoral state. There is also the type of use. It is one thing to burst through deepwater straits with a carrier group; it is another to laboriously sweep a passage through mined waters within artillery range of land; and to secure a continuous flow of shipping through hostile narrow waters is very hard to achieve, and probably

requires that key points on the coast be occupied. One can postulate a general relationship between the costs of forcing a passage in peacetime, and the depth and width of the waterway and the time in transit. To force a long passage through narrow, shallow waters is likely to have high political costs, which stem mainly from the need to take action against the national territory of the littoral states.

(3) Accepting Diversion. Setting aside questions of "prestige" and "precedent," the costs of accepting diversion will depend on the extra distances involved. This can be expressed in time and money, and will translate into economic and political costs. In most cases, the costs will be predominantly economic (although these may have domestic implications), but external political costs will be incurred in a time-urgent situation. Russia would be faced with such a situation in the event of war with China, since she would almost certainly have to supply her Far Eastern front by sea. The length of the delay before the regular flow of supplies began to arrive in the Far East would be directly related to the length of passage, and Russia has a vital interest in ensuring that the shortest route (Suez Canal and Malacca Strait) is not obstructed. The next shortest route (via Panama) is half as long again. In the case of the United States, it is more likely to involve the reactive deployment of a carrier force from the Pacific into the Indian Ocean, in circumstances where the fate of a client regime depends on support arriving within a limited period of time. But in this example, the political costs can be translated into economic costs in the longer run. If it were essential to be able to intervene in both the Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific, extra carriers could be procured and deployed on both sides of the archipelagic barrier.

In all other circumstances, time and

distance can usually be translated into dollars and cents straightaway. In pre-planned military interventions, the extra distance can be covered by looking ahead and sailing earlier. Cyclical deployments like Polaris patrols can be handled by increasing the number of units, reducing time in rest and maintenance, or changing crews in the forward area. Continuous flow operations like logistic support and military supply can be met by placing additional bottoms in the shipping pipeline.

We cannot rule on the comparative cost-benefit balance without knowing the particular circumstances. But it would seem that when timeliness is not a problem and when an alternative route exists, even if it is twice as long, the costs of accepting a diversion while negotiating the use of a waterway, are likely to be considerably less than those incurred in forcing passage. Even when time is critical the costs must be weighed carefully against the benefits to be achieved at the far end.

For the same general reasons, the denial of passage to commercial shipping will rarely justify the costs of military intervention. Not only can the merchant ships usually be diverted, but it is also possible to send the goods by other means such as pipeline, rail or road. Where shipping continues to be used, it is the *relative* increase in distance which is important and its effect on shipping costs as a share of the final price of the product. It is hard to generalize about this, because although there is a direct relationship between the length of passage and the cost of providing shipping services, the extent to which the price of shipping actually reflects these costs varies between trades. However, shipping represents a comparatively small proportion of the total cost of imports, and as a general rule, the effect of making a major diversion is likely to be no greater than the effect of normal fluctuations in commodity prices and charter rates. For

example, if we postulate that all the straits through the Indonesian Archipelago are closed, and all shipping from the Indian Ocean has to pass south about Australia, and then make the worst case assumptions about freight rates, this would only raise the cost of living in Japan by under 1 percent.[10] And yet 40 percent of Japan's imports normally pass through these straits, including 80 percent of her oil. There would, of course, be some dislocation of supplies while the first ships steamed the longer routes, but there are numerous examples of how rapidly international trade adapts to new circumstances, and dislocations are likely to be temporary.

(4) Obstructions to Passage. How likely is it that littoral states would seek to prevent the use of narrow waterways? In most cases, they have a vested interest in the continuous flow of trade and shipping through these waters, and their economies would be damaged by a prolonged diversion. The closest precedent is the blocking of the Suez Canal by Egypt in 1956, but this was in response to an Anglo-French assault. Littoral states may wish to use their monopoly power to extract rent from a geographical asset, and might threaten various restrictions if their demands were not met. But so far their position in this regard has been moderate, reflecting reasonable concerns for the dangers inherent in the passage of very large crude carriers and comparable ships through narrow waters, and the devastation it could cause to their shores. In this they can expect a fair amount of international support. But there would be little for a general toll on all types of cargo, because most countries now have a vested interest in lower shipping costs. An unprovoked attempt to hoid the international community to ransom by preventing use of such waterways would be bound to leave the littoral states worse off

than when they started, and undoubtedly they appreciate this.

Provocation is another matter. National sovereignty is such a sensitive attribute among newly emergent nations that its infringement would be accepted as due cause by many of the less developed countries, even if their consequential actions damaged their immediate interests. For this reason, the passage of warships, amphibious forces and military supplies falls into a different category to normal trade, particularly when the forces are intended for use against some friend of the littoral state, or in support of some enemy. We have seen the use of the oil weapon to bring pressure on Western nations during the Arab-Israeli war, which had tactical as well as strategic consequences. Denial of passage through strategic waterways could be used in the same way. Whether it would is another matter. Turning off the oil did no damage to the supplying countries; rather the reverse. But a littoral state which sought to prevent the passage of U.S. forces would have to assume that its territory would be attacked. While it is true that not all states speak the language of interest, and that when international passions are roused, reactions tend to be unpredictable, that would still be a heavy price to pay in support of a distant state and the diffuse aims of a loose ideological bloc.

The degree of political commitment is central to the use of force, which is why attempts to prevent the passage of military supplies are more likely in the terminal area. The absence of such attempts in the past probably reflects a lack of capability rather than the will to make the attempt. And in the case of Vietnam, it seems likely that the Soviet Union did not wish to jeopardize her maritime supply line to Haiphong, lest Hanoi be forced to rely on overland support from China. However, the U.S. mining of Haiphong has now "legitimized" a whole new range of actions in the terminal area, and in future conflicts

the client state may be provided with the means to interfere with the shipment of military supplies.

This leads to the question of whether military intervention is likely against the ocean waterways. To start with the more general case of international trade, it is sometimes argued that because the West is so dependent on the shipment of oil from the Middle East, therefore the Soviet Union will be tempted to attack the line of supply; this is a modern variant of the more venerable bogey that because Europe depends heavily on imports, therefore it would be in Russia's interests to initiate submarine commerce war in the North Atlantic. This is a classic example of the fallacy that what hurts oneself must help one's enemy, and can be shown to be implausible for a whole range of reasons. Outside the circumstances of world war, it is near impossible to identify circumstances in which it would be in the Soviet Union's interests to initiate commerce war, least of all in the Arabian Sea. The reasons range from comparative military capability to political and economic costs and alternative instruments of policy, and include Russia's own interest in maritime stability and freedom of the seas, which still remain largely within the gift of the West.[11] In general, the diffuse nature of international seaborne trade is its own best protection, since most nations have an interest in the principle of safe passage for merchant ships in peacetime. Meanwhile, as the number of national merchant fleets grows, so too does the extent to which all ships are in hostage to each other.

The shipment of military supplies is a different matter. So far, the convention has been observed that attacks on the lines of supply have been limited to the territory and coastal waters of the primary belligerents or client states. With the growing number of states possessing submarines, it is not certain that this convention will hold. The United States

went close to breaching it during the Cuban missile crisis, but this could be justified by the nature of the Soviet initiative, and on the grounds that Cuba was within the American national security zone. But the latter justification can be claimed by China in its adjacent sea areas, and it now has a force of more than 70 submarines. While the midocean interdiction of military supply lines remains unlikely, the probability is therefore increasing that they will be liable to attack or other forms of interference as they near the terminal areas.

Maritime Intervention and the Superpowers.

(1) The United States. Russia and America have somewhat -different approaches to overseas intervention, both in their historical experience and in their current assessments. I will not dwell on the American case except to note that she was both the offspring and the inheritor of Western attitudes, experience and tradition in this area, to which she then added her own. Since the end of the 19th century, the U.S. Navy has been an important instrument of policy, an instrument whose potential was vastly increased by its development during World War II. America ended the war as the world's paramount power, with a Navy second to none and soon found herself at the head of a Western maritime coalition which had a virtual monopoly of seapower, and this was used to some effect in the following decades. The U.S. Navy includes an organic Air Force which for a long time was the third largest in the world (after the USAF and the Soviet force), and a Marine Corps which is larger and better armed than most national armies. The "peacetime" employment of naval forces has been a dominant consideration and has generated its own substantial force requirements. During the past 30 years there has probably been

a greater use of navies in this way than at any comparable period.

(2) The Soviet Union. Russian naval history goes back to before America gained her independence. But traditionally, the navy has been seen as an expensive necessity, rather than as an instrument of worldwide policy. From the first half of the 19th century, Russia's naval policy was increasingly dominated by the requirement to defend four widely separated fleet areas against maritime powers who could concentrate their forces at will. This same attitude persists in the present-day Soviet Union, where the defense establishment is dominated by ground force officers and where there appear to be considerable doubts about the value of military intervention overseas. This is reflected in the shape of the Soviet Navy, which lacks a distant-water intervention capability and is structured for the war-related task of posing a permanent counter to the West's seaborne strategic delivery systems. The primary maritime instrument of foreign policy is the merchant fleet, which carries trade, aid and arms supplies to client states and other countries, and whose well-disciplined crews project the Soviet presence ashore.[12]

(3) The Overseas Role of a Soviet Military Presence. It would, however, seem that between 1969 and 1973, there was a sustained debate within the Soviet Union concerning the use of armed forces in support of international goals.[13] The causes and the results of this debate are still obscure, but it appears that in 1969, under pressure of the rapidly deteriorating situation in Egypt, the political leadership agreed to commit Soviet armed forces overseas, thus taking the first step down the road of a traditional Western-style policy towards the projection of military power. This major policy decision was followed by the deployment of Soviet

air defense systems to Egypt in the spring of 1970. It would appear, however, that as events unfolded and as the costs and implications of such involvement became clearer, the arguments of those who opposed the original shift in policy were strengthened, until they were able to reverse the deployment decision. However, the final policy on the role of a "Soviet military presence" had yet to be agreed, and it seems that the debate continued for a further 12-15 months until a compromise was reached. By May 1973, it appears to have been decided that direct Soviet involvement overseas would be limited to the provision of advisers, weapons and strategic logistic support, the combat role being delegated to the Soviet-equipped forces of "revolutionary" states such as North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba.

The outcome appears to be a policy which ensures the Soviet Union the best of both worlds; namely, being able to affect the outcome of an overseas conflict with direct battlefield support, while ensuring that political commitment and liability remain strictly limited. This is achieved by (a) facilitating the arrangements and providing the lift to bring cobelligerent forces to the zone of conflict; (b) ensuring that the client state or regime receives adequate military supplies in the course of the battle; and (c) remaining silent about Soviet involvement until success is assured. Of course, a corollary of such a policy is that it only allows the supportive use of Soviet military force; the coercive use must be achieved through proxies.

In terms of force projection, the major instruments of this policy appear to be the merchant fleet and the military and civil air transport fleets. The Soviet Navy has made some contribution, as for example the sealift of Moroccan troops by landing ship to Syria in April and July 1973, the use of landing ships to ferry military supplies

from the Black Sea to Syria during the October 1973 war, and the use of the landing ships based on Berbera to move supporters of the Dhofari rebellion to Oman. This naval contribution is marginal by comparison with men and supplies shipped by other means, and the emphasis on the peacetime employment of Soviet naval forces is in other directions.

(4) The Navy's Peacetime Role. The 1967 Arab-Israeli war, which gave the Soviet Navy its much-needed access to Egyptian shore facilities, also marked the start of the second and more distant phase of the shift to forward deployment, as Soviet naval forces moved out into the Caribbean, off the west coast of Africa and into the northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean. Thereafter, political exploitation of the presence of Soviet warships in distant sea areas steadily increased. In 1970 there was a marked change in the trend, with naval detachments being deployed specifically for peacetime (as opposed to war-related) tasks, but this activity leveled off in 1972-73. Soviet pronouncements refer to the navy's peacetime role in general terms as "defending (or securing) state interests," a nebulous formulation, whose scope has yet to be systematically researched. While not losing sight of the all-encompassing scope of this phrase, it is useful to discuss Soviet naval activity in terms of four major categories: establishing a strategic infrastructure; countering imperialist aggression; increasing prestige and influence; and protecting Soviet lives and property.

The first and most important category covers the task of establishing the physical, political and operational infrastructure required to support two quite distinct war-related tasks, namely: posing a permanent counter in peacetime to Western sea-based strategic delivery systems; and securing the safe and timely arrival of military supplies to

the Far Eastern front, in the event of war with China.[14]

The geographical extent of the first requirement can be seen by drawing 1,500 n.m. and 2,500 n.m. circles centered on Moscow, which show the arcs of threat from the Polaris A-2 and A-3 missiles. The smaller circle takes in the South Norwegian Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean and explains the heavy pressure brought on Egypt from 1961 onwards, to provide base facilities to support the Soviet Navy's forward deployment.[15] The larger circle takes in the eastern half of the Atlantic and much of the Arabian Sea, running from the tip of Greenland to cut the west coast of Africa abreast the Cape Verde Islands, and crossing the Indian Ocean between the Horn of Africa and Bombay. This explains the Soviet Union's persistent interest in the politically insignificant West African states, and her initial move into Somalia in 1969, despite the latter's talent for acquiring political enemies both in Africa and on the Arabian peninsula.[16] Meanwhile, Cuba gives access to the departure ports on the east coast of the United States, and (with West Africa) covers the sea lines of communication with the Mediterranean.

The second strategic requirement, to secure the sea lines of communication with the Far East front, explains the increased involvement in Somalia which followed after Marshal Grechko's visit in February 1972. Concern about the Chinese threat in the Far East began to crystallize after the 9th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in April 1969; this saw the emergence of what the Soviets perceived as a military-bureaucratic elite which was basically antagonistic to Russia. Following the series of incidents on the Ussuri River, the Soviet Union increased the buildup of its forces in the border region of China, and presumably this would have prompted a review of the arrangements for logistic support in the event of war.

Reliance could not be placed on the Trans-Siberian Railway and supplies would have to be shipped by sea. The reasons for shifting the Soviet focus from Egypt to Somalia are likely to be similar to those which prompted the British to start constructing a major base in Kenya in the late 1940's, as an alternative to the existing one in the Canal Zone. The decision to build up the Somalian facilities was taken at least 6 months before the withdrawal from Egypt, and it seems likely that Sadat's request suited the Soviet's purposes.[17]

Turning to the second category of "countering imperialist aggression," we should note that in the Soviet lexicon "imperialist aggression" includes the deployment of U.S. sea-based systems within range of Russia. Because of the very different type of political commitment involved, it is important to distinguish between the war-related task of posing a permanent counter to such systems, and the peacetime task of opposing/challenging Western military intervention against "progressive states" and "national liberation movements." In areas such as the Eastern Mediterranean, where additional naval forces were deployed during the 1967, 1970 and 1973 crises, this peacetime task is upstaged by the more important war-related task of countering the U.S. carriers nuclear strike potential and, until the dangers of escalation were past, Soviet naval units unmistakably had this as their only priority during the first two crises. During the 1973 crisis, in addition to the carriers, they targeted the Sixth Fleet's amphibious forces,[18] and this may have been intended to deter the United States from committing ground forces to the battle ashore. There is, however, an equally plausible war-related explanation. The Soviets plan to seize the Black Sea exits at the outbreak of a major conflict, and their Mediterranean squadron has the additional task of preventing the Sixth Fleet from reinforcing the defense of

the Turkish straits.[19] The primary mission during the 1973 crisis therefore remains uncertain.

The first clear example of the peacetime task of "countering imperialist aggression" was the establishment of the "Guinea Patrol" in December 1970, apparently to deter further Portuguese-supported seaborne attacks on Conakry. The next example was the dispatch of Soviet naval detachments to the Indian Ocean in December 1971, in reaction to the deployment of British and U.S. carrier task forces prior to and during the Indo-Pakistan war. The most recent example was during the Angolan affair, when a *Kresta* class large antisubmarine ship was deployed south of Guinea and on past practice, one would assume that it had SSM-armed submarines in company. This placed the detachment in a blocking position between Angola and U.S. naval forces in the North Atlantic.

The other two categories are of lesser interest to this discussion. The task of "increasing Soviet prestige and, influence" assumed a new dimension in 1972, when the Soviet Navy undertook port clearing operations in Bangladesh, and it was also used to sweep the southern approaches to Suez in 1974. The navy's role in "protecting Soviet lives and property overseas" is best exemplified by the landing ships which take up station off Syria and Egypt when war breaks out with Israel, and off Angola in the 1976 conflict, and it appears that their task is to evacuate Soviet personnel if defeat is imminent. The only other example is the deployment of three warships to Ghanaian waters in 1969, which may have helped effect the release of two Soviet trawlers that had been held for over 4 months on conspiracy charges.

Any particular operation may further the objectives of more than one of these four peacetime tasks. The continuation of the Guinea Patrol after the Portuguese threat evaporated in 1974, suggests that its primary justification may in fact have been to "establish the geostrategic infrastructure" by securing access to base facilities on the west coast of Africa. The same general objective may also have prompted the Ghanaian episode in 1969 and the politically timed visit to Sierra Leone in 1971.[20]

(5) Political Commitment to Peacetime Tasks. It can be seen that the Soviet Navy's war-related task and its three main peacetime tasks are all intended to promote the two primary objectives of Soviet foreign policy. In order of priority, these are (1) to ensure the security of the Soviet Union, and (2) to increase the Soviet Union's share of world power and influence. It is useful to distinguish the peacetime employments of Soviet naval forces in this manner, because it clarifies the level of political commitment behind different types of interest and operation.

It is quite evident from their pronouncements, from the output of their defense production programs, and from the pattern of naval operations, that the Soviet Union gives high priority to the task of countering Western sea-based strategic delivery systems. To support this task they have been willing in the past to accept new political costs and commitments. Many of the paradoxes in the Soviet-Egyptian relationship since 1961 can be explained by allowing that the Soviet Union had a near vital interest in gaining access to shore facilities whereby to support her counterforce naval deployment in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is possible that there may now be somewhat less willingness to accept large political costs on this score: partly because of SALT-generated changes in Soviet perceptions of the threat of nuclear war; partly because war with China is now the more likely contingency; and perhaps partly because the new global all-arms weapon systems will soon be entering service and will relieve the dependence on shore support

in the forward operating areas. But the task still stands, and since it contributes to the security of the Soviet Union, the level of political commitment to securing the necessary geostrategic infrastructure will be of a different order to other types of overseas involvement.

"Countering imperialist aggression" is a different matter, and the level of political commitment to this task has never been very clear. Certainly it is not worth risking war with America, which would violate the first priority objective of ensuring the security of the Soviet Union. But Soviet perceptions of the dangers of escalation may have been modified by the SALT negotiations, increasing their readiness to risk confrontation at sea, in pursuit of overseas goals. And this brings us back to the possibility and risks of involvement by the second superpower, in a military intervention initiated by the first. The later stages of the Angolan affair provide an example of one kind of situation. This was an overt, supportive intervention, initiated by the Soviet Union using proxy forces and shipping a large volume of military supplies by sea. The U.S. Navy certainly had the capability to impose a stop-and-search blockade on Angola in order to prevent this flow of supplies, but in fact took no action. Presumably to discourage any such interference, the Soviets deployed a *Kresta* and one or more cruise-missile-armed submarines in a blocking position. Certain points can be made. First, the nature of Soviet interests in Angola were not such as to justify the sinking of a U.S. warship on the high seas, particularly not a carrier, and a blockading force could have sailed through the Soviet patrol line with impunity. Second, the long-term political costs to the United States of imposing such a blockade would have been very high. It would have demonstrated to the Soviet leadership that Gorshkov was right when he argued that a powerful general-purpose fleet was the essential foundation of an independent overseas policy; it would have encouraged a shift in the allocation of resources in favor of increased naval building programs, and the construction of a large, balanced surface fleet, including aircraft carriers. Such costs could hardly be justified by the U.S. interests at stake. And third, in order to shape the Soviet Union's future expectations, what the United States could have done was to have dispatched a force of ships to sail through the Soviet patrol line, reverse course and return home, thereby showing that the U.S. Navy was not intimidated. As it happens, the Atlantic Fleet was engaged in other operations and was instructed to ignore the Soviet deployment; this was the next best thing, but still a long way short of optimal.

(6) Soviet-U.S. Confrontation at Sea. But besides political commitment, there is also the question of effective military capability. The deployment of a U.S. carrier task force to the Indian Ocean in December 1971 during the Indo-Pakistan war may have been counterproductive in political terms, but at least the force had a demonstrable military capability, which could be used if so wished. Not so in the Soviet case, despite the missile armament of their surface ships and submarines. Under what circumstances would these units have been ordered to attack the carrier? As soon as it readied its aircraft for takeoff to an unknown destination with an unknown weapon load? Or perhaps only *after* the aircraft had struck some target ashore? Perhaps the Soviet Union could claim they got some political mileage out of this operation, although they certainly risked being exposed as paper tigers. But their next deployment, in response to the mining of Haiphong was both militarily and politically pointless; a fairly substantial force of surface ships and submarines sailed to the South China Sea, hung around for a few days, and then returned home. There was

nothing effective that they could do.

I am not persuaded by the suggestion that there now exists a set of tacit "rules" for the peacetime employment of naval force, which apply equally to the Soviet Union and the United States.[21] The two powers have different levels of naval capability and very different interests and types of commitment. Special account must be taken of Soviet interests in those areas of geostrategic importance to the security of the Russian homeland. But in most other circumstances, I consider that Soviet action at sea is largely conditioned by their estimate of U.S. reactions, and as a general rule, the low level of Soviet commitment to "countering imperialist aggression" does not justify risking confrontation.

The Soviet impulse to "counter imperialist aggression" is a longstanding one, as can be seen by the pattern of Soviet arms supply in the 1950's and 1960's. So too is the Western impulse to react against the emergence of left wing regimes. And for many years, the situation could be described crudely in terms of the West conducting a dogged rearguard action against change, while the Soviet Union was the natural ally of historical trends. But we are now 30 years down the road, there are few colonial territories left, and whatever their political complexion, the newly independent states have national interests and wills of their own. The old ideological reasons for military intervention by the two superpowers have largely evaporated, and it now becomes a question of picking sides in a traditional civil or interstate war. Given the transitory nature of political alignments, this would seem hardly worth the risks and costs involved. In the future, we may find that the main role of superpower intervention is to protect smaller states from the hegemonic tendencies of the emerging regional powers.

There remains, however, the problem of Southern Africa. Although the West is unhappy with the dominant white regimes, kith-and-kin and cultural factors constrain the type of support it is willing to afford the movement towards Black liberation, an ambivalence which provides excellent opportunities for Soviet influence-building. The possibilities for their involvement are manifold, ranging from the supply of arms, to mounting a naval blockade to enforce a United Nations resolution on mandatory sanctions. Given that the area is remote from both Russia and the United States, and allowing that the Soviet Union may have downgraded the risks of escalation to general war, the pressures for an assertive policy will be strong, increasing the possibility of serious East/West confrontation.

Overview. The maritime aspects of military intervention is too diffuse a subject to draw together in a few well chosen words, and to have discussed the problem without having addressed the prior question of the utility of military force, is like describing the mechanics of a religion without referring to its God. Certain points can, however, be made.

The most obvious is that we now have a situation which is infinitely more complicated than that facing Palmerston in the heyday of gunboat diplomacy. For a start, the maritime environment is much more complex. We have the diffusion of sophisticated weapon systems; the increased "reach" of coastal states; a change in international attitudes towards the rights of passage and the ownership of the sea; and the appearance of new "global" weapons for tactical use.

The political environment is also much more complex. We have just passed through 30 years of radical change, which saw the dismantling of the Western colonial empires and an ideological competition for the favor of the newly emerging nations. We are now faced with an international system whose structure is hard to discern, with

a change in the nature of usable power and its distribution, and with a range of threats to human survival which are altering national and international priorities and goals. Attitudes toward the use of coercive force by Great Powers have altered fundamentally, and new states do not "respond" to the threat of violence in the formerly accepted fashion.

Missiles do not know their mums, and the proliferation of modern weapons means that an increasing number of coastal states has some capability to prevent the use of their seas by both superpowers; narrow, shallow waterways are particularly vulnerable. The change in political attitudes means that maritime powers can no longer count on being able to use the seas unhindered for maritime intervention, and the terminal leg of the sea lines of supply are now liable to attack. Meanwhile the political costs of forcing a passage through narrow waterways are likely to be so high that it is usually better to take an alternative route, where one exists, except when major interests are engaged and timeliness an issue. The economic costs of such diversion are generally less than would be expected.

The utility of *coercive* intervention is increasingly in doubt, except for short, sharp, small-scale, rectifying operations, and possibly at the other end of the spectrum of violence, where the scale of operations changes "intervention" into "overseas war." *Supportive* intervention has a better record, but the increasing costs and risks raise the question of whether navies are necessarily the most effective instrument for such purposes. Aircraft carriers have an unmatched capability for bringing flexible firepower to bear in distant areas, but their high political symbolism and their need for sea room, place constraints on their unfettered use. Meanwhile the Russians have shown what can be done with merchant ships and airlift, making use of facilities in the host country.

Many of the attributes which in former times were the monopoly of naval forces, and gave them their special value as instruments of foreign policy, have now been dissipated or are shared by other instruments. The international news media and satellite surveillance mean that knowledge of warship movements is no longer in the flag state's control, to be released (or not) as circumstances dictate. Naval units can no longer deploy the graduated range of violence that used to be at their disposal, and the level of force needed to achieve comparable results is very much higher. Violence (punishment) at the high end of the spectrum can now be inflicted on nonadjacent areas by aircraft and missiles, as well as by ship. In fact the air is often a viable, alternative means of gaining access to distant areas, and the response time is of quite a different order. Modern communications allow heads of state and other ministers to communicate their concerns, interests and intentions to their opponents in carefully chosen language, which compares favorably with the crude signaling of naval deployments. And this explicit language can now be backed by latent force emplaced ashore.

The latter is perhaps one of the more interesting possibilities which lie ahead. The advent of global systems which can deliver tactical weapons, opens up new ways of preventing the use of the sea or of providing direct support in distant parts of the world. In practical terms, there is not much difference between sinking a carrier with a salvo of torpedoes, a 300-mile SSM or a 3,000-mile terminally guided ballistic missile. It is illogical to be concerned about two of these possibilities and to ignore the third; the difficulty of countering the ballistic missile makes it the much more potent threat.

Despite these constraints and complexities, in the foreseeable future there will continue to be situations where the sea will be the most appropriate means

of bringing traditional military force to bear in distant areas of the world. Changing circumstances will encourage progressive developments in the size and characteristics of naval units employed in this capacity, with particular emphasis on reducing the vulnerability and political salience of individual units. While making it less likely that such units will be disabled, this will reduce the political costs if they are, and hence increase the general usefulness of this instrument.

These changes in hardware will probably be easier to achieve than the even more necessary changes in traditional attitudes towards the role of naval force as an instrument of peacetime foreign policy. "Send a Gunboat" can now do as much harm as good and the advantages of timeliness have to be weighed against the political costs inherent in forward deployment. The Soviet presence in distant sea areas such as the Indian Ocean demands a careful evaluation of the costs and benefits of matching such deployments, compared with those of doing nothing and using the Soviet presence as a stick in the psychological competition for world influence. There is an urgent need for more selectivity in the type of naval force deployed and the occasions on which it is deployed. Carriers, which will continue to be operational through the turn of the century at least, are likely to be reserved for use in major planned interventions, involving substantial forces and political commitment. Their more general role will be to contribute to the worldwide naval balance as a capability in being.

Military intervention by sea will persist as an instrument of Great Power policy, but there are likely to be considerable changes both in its character and in its relative importance.

## NOTES

1. The difficulties are immense, as can be seen from A. Rubinstein, *Soviet and Chinese Influence in the Third World* (New York: Praeger, 1975), which represents a concerted attempt to address the problem of political influence building. See particularly Rubinstein's "Assessing Influence as a Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis." See also his "The Soviet-Egyptian Relationship Since the June 1967 War" in MccGwire et al., ed., *Soviet Naval Policy: Objectives and Constraints* (New York: Praeger, 1975).

2. What seems likely to be the most substantial work in this field for some time to come is Ken Booth's *Navies and Foreign Policy* (London: Croom-Helm, forthcoming). Edward Luttwak addresses the question in *The Political Uses of Seapower* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), although the context is rather restricted. For a pioneering, but not entirely successful attempt, see James Cable's *Gunboat Diplomacy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971).

3. G.S. Graham, *The Politics of Naval Supremacy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975). This is the title of the final Chapter IV, pp. 96-125. This compact book, subtitled "Studies in British Maritime Ascendancy," contains much wisdom about the role and influence of navies.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

5. A.A. Grechko, "A Socialist, Multinational Army," *Krasnaya zvezda,* 17 December 1972.

6. SS-NX-13—a submarine launched ballistic missile with a range of 750 km. with midcourse guidance and terminal homing. N. Polmar, "Thinking about Soviet Naval ASW," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings,* May 1976, p. 126. For a full discussion of current Soviet naval weapon developments, see "Soviet Naval Programmes" in MccGwire & McDonnell, eds., *Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions* (New York: Praeger, forthcoming 1977).

7. These figures are extracted from the tables in "Non-Superpower Sea Denial Capability," a paper prepared by H.S. Eldredge for the Conference on "Implications of the Military Build-up in Non-Industrial States," Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 6-9 May 1976. Eldredge concentrated on presenting a global picture of the distribution of submarine torpedoes and surface-to-surface missiles fitted in surface ships.

8. "Soviet Naval Programmes," *ibid.*

9. There could also be a third category, "mediatory," but this is subsumed under "supportive."

10. For a summary description of the factors underlying these assertions see "The Geopolitical Importance of the Strategic Waterways of the Asian-Pacific Region," *Orbis,* Fall 1975, pp. 1058-1077.

11. For a summary statement of this argument see "The Submarine Threat to Western Europe" in J.L. Moulton, *British Maritime Strategy in the 1970s,* (London: Royal United Service Institution, 1968), which was based on a longer unpublished study.

12. For a discussion of the various maritime instruments of foreign policy, see "The Navy and Soviet Oceans Policy" in *Soviet Naval Influence.*

13. See "The Overseas Role of a Soviet Military Presence," *ibid.*

14. See "The Soviet Navy in the Seventies," *ibid.*

15. See G.S. Dragnich "The Soviet Union's Quest for Access to Naval Facilities in Egypt prior to the June War of 1967," *Soviet Naval Policy,* pp. 237-277. After gaining access to these facilities, year-round deployment was achieved for the first time, the number of combatants on station rose by a factor of 2-3, and air support became available.

16. For the evidence underlying this geostrategic argument, see Annex A of "The Soviet Navy in the Seventies."

17. See "The Overseas Role of a Soviet Military Presence."

18. R.G. Weinland, unpublished manuscript.

19. This task prompted the basing of Soviet submarines on Valona in Albania from 1958 until they were ejected in August 1961. The present Soviet squadron, when not trailing Western units, spends most of its time at anchorages covering the Mediterranean approaches to the Aegean and Dardanelles.

20. See "The Evolution of Soviet Naval Policy" in *Soviet Naval Policy,* pp. 525, 528 and notes 55, 63-66.

21. J. McConnell and A. Kelly, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy in the Indo-Pakistan Crisis," *Soviet Naval Developments: Context and Capability* (New York: Praeger, 1973), pp. 449-451. This article provides an excellent analysis of the 1971 deployments, but in going on to postulate the emergence of certain "rules of the game," I consider that McConnell makes the error of crediting the Soviet Union with interests which are comparable to the United States and makes insufficient allowance for the marked disparity in worldwide capability.

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