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The Maritime Strategy in U.S.-Soviet Strategic Relations

Colin S. Gray

The Geopolitical Setting

It is reasonable to assume that Mikhail Gorbachev neither wishes, nor would be permitted, to dismantle the Soviet empire or to reduce radically the “immoderate greatness” of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union functioning in, or in fact as, a one-party state. For reasons very deeply rooted in geography and history—reasons that are worthy of being called cultural rather than matters of policy—the Great Russian Empire that is the U.S.S.R. is a thinly camouflaged war machine more than it is an entity *having* a war machine. Four assumptions about Soviet-American relations provide the political framework for this discussion of strategy.¹

First, the United States and the Soviet Union are antagonists because they are the world's only military super states, not because they find each other's domestic political arrangements to be uniquely distasteful. Similarly, for geopolitical reasons, Russian-American relations were generally friendly in the 19th century, even though the ideological distance between St. Petersburg and Washington was comparable to the geographical distance. Since the only plausible danger to the United States in the last century (apart from that amply provided by secessionists at home) was from the country that commanded the Atlantic Ocean—Great Britain—American statesmen naturally, and correctly, looked benignly on states in Europe and Asia that could trouble Britain. So, just as balance of power considerations rendered Russia an objective ally in the 19th century, they render the Soviet Union an objective antagonist in the late 20th century.

Second, the United States does not choose its friends and enemies according to a scale of ideological compatibility. Although the Soviet State

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would score low in a U.S.-conducted ideologic beauty contest, the U.S.S.R. does not dominate U.S. defense planning and strategy because it is an evil empire. With reference to the balance of power in Eurasia, the Soviet Union is public enemy number one for the American defense planner because of its size, location, and military capabilities—the product of at least 500 years of very distinctive historical experience and response.

Third, the logic of international politics and strategy is permanent, even though the players change sides. Indeed some players are removed from the board forcefully—and weapons change. Since 1917 (at which time the British Empire faced imminent bankruptcy—something of an embarrassment for the banker of the alliance) there has not been a balance of power in Eurasia without active American participation. Soviet-American antagonism is the result of the progressive elimination of all other great-power players. A prominent reason for the heightened visibility and importance of the U.S.-Soviet arms competition since 1945 is the decline of Allied capability as competitive power-players. Born of geopolitics, the Soviet-American rivalry will, in due course, die for that same reason. As Japan, China, and Western Europe increasingly acquire more great-power characteristics, the relatively simple world of the Soviet and U.S. superpowers eventually will be modified and probably transformed by restoration of the old complexities of multiple centers of major power. The cold war, with its simplicities, has been the product of a particular period of history wherein two states—the Rome and Carthage of their day—have attained a lonely, joint preeminence. That period cannot last, but it will not be ushered out precipitately by Gorbachev's reforms. His ambition is to improve the efficiency of the unlovely, insecure empire that is his legacy so that the Soviet Union can compete for power with some prospects for success in a radically different 21st century.² Long-range planners in Moscow need to be concerned about the emergence, on their strategic frontiers, of a superpower China, superpower Japan, and superpower Europe.

Fourth, geopolitically, the grand-strategic mission of the United States is to play its essential role in maintaining the balance of power in Europe and Asia until local states can assume that burden almost entirely by themselves. History is not foreordained, but it is very likely—barring a major strategic derailment “en route”—that much of the U.S. power-balancing burden, *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union, will wither away as East Asia and Europe emerge from underdevelopment and political fragmentation. Although this is not a certainty, it is certain that the United States will be required to balance Soviet power in Eurasia for many years to come.

The Maritime Strategy

The problem addressed here is the need to understand the deterrent influence of Western and, particularly, U.S. sea power upon Soviet minds

and the likely influence of that sea power upon the course, character, and outcome of a war should deterrence fail. The topic of most concern is the impact of contemporary U.S. maritime strategy. There is little that is truly novel and distinctive about the Maritime Strategy of the 1980s.³ Indeed, its great strength has been the easily demonstrated fact that its core ideas have a very long history. The Maritime Strategy seemed to be new (perilous and new to some) to those people whose vision of future war was confined to a two-week clash of armor on the Central Front, and/or to a nuclear exchange (*Apocalypse Now*). If world war III is a brief and bloody passage of arms in Central Europe, followed inexorably by explosive nuclear escalation, then maritime strategy in any shape, manner, or form is, by definition, an irrelevance. In fact, if the superpowers “exchange” nuclear arsenals (as the anodyne phrase has it), then strategy, let alone maritime strategy, is an irrelevance. If the United States and the Soviets were to take 5,000 to 10,000 nuclear “hits” at home, both would cease to function as political entities with interests to be protected by the prudent application of further military power.

Commentators and theorists have great difficulty understanding how the separate pieces of national military power fit together. With few exceptions, the people who aspire to be opinion-leaders on defense policy are truly expert on only pieces of the puzzle: land power, sea power, air power, so-called strategic forces, and space power. Fortunately, or unfortunately, war rarely is confined environmentally. The U.S. goal is to deter and, if need be, to win a war with the Soviet Union—not to deter or win solely at sea or solely on land. The master concept that makes sense of the contributions to deterrence or to success in war provided by sea power, land power, and central nuclear systems is strategic effectiveness.⁴ All kinds of military power generate strategic effectiveness which influences the political will of the enemy and his ability to fight.

Through semantic imperialism, the Air Force captured the term “strategic” for long-range air power, but, properly understood, all sorts of forces have strategic effect. One can, and should, talk of strategic land power and strategic sea power as well as strategic air and missile power. Strategic effect refers to influence on the course and outcome of a war (or, to reiterate, the deterrent influence on the minds of political leaders). Consider how absurd it is to label nuclear-armed long-range missile forces as strategic even though they are mutually neutralized by deterrence, and to deny the label to the Soviet tank armies which might conquer Western Europe.

Truly unified visions of, and judgments on, war remain distressingly rare. Too often, the question that is asked is: What and who really won World War II? (Historically, the issue of whether British sea power or Russian land power was the more important factor in bringing down Napoleon is

still debated.) The absurdity of partial views of the combined arms reality of war is no better illustrated than in the argument over what and who really defeated Hitler's Germany. As a great land power Germany could only be defeated on land, so the decisive instrument of victory had to be the landward fighting instrument of the Grand Alliance. Unfortunately for neat and simple analysis, D day, 6 June 1944 was possible only because the *Luftwaffe* had been shot out of the Reich skies earlier that year by Air Force long-range fighters. To complicate matters further, the fate of the *Luftwaffe* really would not have mattered too much had the Western allies not first won the Battle of the Atlantic in 1943. Lest this seem unduly straightforward, one could really complicate matters by debating the relative strategic effectiveness of Soviet, as opposed to Western-allied, military power in the defeat of Germany—an interesting sub-plot being the contribution made by the Western allies to the Soviet war effort.

The truth of the matter is that the great wars of the 20th century, and many of the great wars of history—ancient, medieval, and modern—have been waged by the combined arms of coalitions. The U.S. Navy could not have beaten Nazi Germany (though it could have beaten Imperial Japan), nor could the U.S. Army or the Army air forces acting in isolation. Had Allied naval power not secured a tolerable degree of command at sea, the U.S. Army would have been restricted to waiting for the arrival of a German expeditionary force in North America.

The origins of the Maritime Strategy may be found, with some specificity, in the writings of Alfred Mahan (a theorist much in need of sympathetic reappraisal), and in the thoughts and plans of Admiral Forrest Sherman in the early postwar years, Admiral Arleigh Burke in the late 1950s, Admirals Holloway and Hayward in the second half of the 1970s, to the present.⁵ What is necessary here is an explanation of the geostrategic context of the Maritime Strategy and recognition of that strategy's purpose as a conceptual guide, and not as an operational document, to thinking about the deterrent and wartime utility of maritime power. Some critics of the strategy mistakenly have regarded it as a detailed master war plan of instruction for commanders.

The geostrategic context of the Maritime Strategy has the following features:

- It is the maritime element in the national military strategy of a very great sea power.
- It is the maritime element in the strategy of an essentially maritime coalition of nations.
- It is the strategy of a country and coalition which must make positive use of the sea—it must exercise and exploit control (or command); it cannot be content simply to deny the use of the sea to an enemy.

- It is the natural and inevitable strategy of a great sea power confronting a great land power.

- Popular historians are fond of citing an analogy between U.S. maritime strategy today and maritime strategy as pursued by Britain for nearly 400 years. The analogy is more true than false, but it must be handled carefully because the continental-sized United States is not a “natural sea power” after the fashion of small, insular Britain. In global strategy the U.S. role must be heavily maritime, but U.S. policymakers and defense planners are the heirs to a distinctly continentalist approach to war. The almost instinctive British strategy in war is to encircle the enemy, probe for weakness on his flanks, and seek military decision only when he is much enfeebled. This has not been the preferred American way of war. The American continentalist way of war is in the tradition of “on to Richmond,” or “on to Berlin”: strike directly at the main strength of the enemy in order to inflict a decisive defeat. Anglo-American arguments over military strategy in 1942-43 reflected this contrast in tradition, in circumstances, in military self-confidence, and even in culture.

- The geostrategic context for the Maritime Strategy today is the same as it was in 1917, in 1941, and with the cold war after 1945. What is more, the operational policy goal which drives U.S. grand and military strategy is the same as that pursued by the British Government for 400 years. In his annual report on the *National Security Strategy of the United States* (January 1988), President Reagan said: “The first historical dimension of our strategy is relatively simple, clear-cut, and immensely sensible. It is the conviction that the United States’ most basic national security interests would be endangered if a hostile state or group of states were to dominate the Eurasian landmass—that area of the globe often referred to as the world’s heartland. We fought two world wars to prevent this from occurring. And, since 1945, we have sought to prevent the Soviet Union from capitalizing on its geostrategic advantage to dominate its neighbors in Western Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, and thereby fundamentally alter the global balance of power to our disadvantage.”⁶

Some critics of the Maritime Strategy have asked the very old question, What use is maritime power against a great continental empire? Drawing upon British experience over the centuries, Admiral Mahan answered this question in 1900 when he wrote about the ways in which maritime coalitions of states, operating on the flanks of Russian land power, could restrain Imperial Russia’s ambitions in Asia.⁷ Critics today pose not only the question of sea power against land power, but ask how maritime strength—which by its nature tends to work slowly as a strategic enabling agent—can be relevant to a future conflict which must see, allegedly, nuclear escalation in a matter of days, or weeks at most.

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Maritime strategy cannot defeat a great continental power. Rather, maritime strategy helps shape the course of a war so that a continental power can be beaten. One should recall that British sea power was critical—but not independently decisive—for the defeat of Napoleonic France and Imperial Germany, just as Anglo-American seapower was critical—again in a combined arms and coalition setting—for the defeat of Nazi Germany. The strategic question at the heart of discussions such as this is how do preeminent land power and preeminent sea power secure a grip on each other's center of strategic gravity in order to achieve a decision? Victorious sea power and victorious land power are in a condition of strategic stalemate; each can win whatever can be won in its own environment, but neither can win the war as a whole.

It is an impressive fact that in modern times, which is to say over the course of 400 years or more, maritime-led coalitions have never lost a great war against continental coalitions. In Soviet phraseology, "it is no accident" that this should be so. With regard to the strategic problem of reach, time after time the state or coalition that has been superior at sea has been better able to translate that maritime superiority into adequate strength on land than has the state or coalition initially advantaged on land been able to turn that advantage to adequate strength at sea. In other words, superior sea power generates superior land power better than superior land power generates superior sea power.⁸ The reason for this persisting pattern is not difficult to discover. A state victorious on land to the water's edge, but then frustrated by its inability to conclude the war with a decisive stroke (e.g., by invading England), looks for other expedients on land—where it believes it can win—and in due course, time after time, overextends and exhausts itself (e.g., as in Spain, Russia), exceeds its "culminating point of victory," and is then ripe for overthrow by a revived hostile coalition.

The U.S. (and NATO) Maritime Strategy of the 1980s embodies time and experience-honored principles concerning the proper uses of sea power. In detail, much of its content may be traced back over the course of 40 years. What does the Maritime Strategy say to a very land-minded Soviet leadership?

- The strategy says that their Western adversary is determined to keep them landlocked, whether they do well or badly on land. Whatever uses the sea lines of communication may prove to be in war, the West will be at very considerable liberty to choose among them.

- The strategy says that contrary to the Allied experiences of 1914 to 1938 and 1939 to 1945, NATO intends to ensure sea control in a future conflict by fighting for a general maritime command at the very outset of a conflict. The determined forward movement of Western naval power should pose a threat of such significance to Soviet assets at sea and on shore that they could be obliged to give battle and, hence, face their Trafalgar.⁹

- The strategy, in common with all sound maritime strategy, is a coalition-supportive strategy. The stakes in war are on the land, not at sea. The West's sea power will sustain its land power in the war for as long as allied governments wish or are able to do so.

- The strategy seeks to have maritime strength make a vital positive difference on the flanks in Europe—to help defend in the Far North and in the Mediterranean, both to protect allies and to defend maritime chokepoints against Soviet endeavors to reach the open sea and outflank NATO-Europe from the ocean.

- The strategy endeavors to tie down, to distract Soviet military power of all kinds on its geographically far-flung frontiers so that Moscow cannot effect the agile transfer of forces from one theater of operations to another.

- With suitable forces—budgets permitting—good judgment, and some luck, the strategy tells Soviet policymakers that the oceans of the world belong to the enemy and that everything that superior maritime power can protect obviously belongs, or strategically could belong, to the enemy also. Though Western Europe certainly is and will remain important, there is relatively less and less to win in Europe as East and South Asia modernize and the Southern Hemisphere industrializes. Not only are the world's bread baskets (in North America and Australia) beyond conquest by Soviet land power, but so is much of the world's industrial strength.

- The strategy says that although the primary focus of the United States would be upon a war in Europe, Washington does not rule out the extension of war in time and geography. Sea power is the engine of global war. Indeed, global strategy is possible only to the state or coalition which enjoys the services of superior sea power. It may be recalled that from 1941 to 1945 the Axis powers, because of their deficiencies at sea, were denied the possibility of a global strategy.

- The Maritime Strategy does not, and cannot, *specify* exactly how and where a war with the Soviet Union would be won. But, and it is a very large but, it can set the stage for strategic success. How? In the words of the most distinguished British historian of the First World War, Professor Cruttwell: "Still, generally speaking, it is true that British influence over continental wars has not been to determine their strategy in the narrower sense, but rather their general course and character. And this is so just because in naval as opposed to military strategy we have maintained our choice and control practically unfettered."¹⁰

The Soviet Problem

It is instructive to turn our minds from Western strategy as it appears to us and instead consider the mixed maritime-continental coalition of the

West as viewed from Moscow.¹¹ The Soviet Union is an insecure, multinational, continental empire. Its traditional military instrument of excellence is its army, not its navy. One must recall the late 18th century to find anything approximating a tradition of victory in the Russian navy. The historical success story of Russia and the Soviet Union is a story of victory on land. Its leaders, political and military, think like landmen and are likely to trust only their landward military instrument. The dominant military experience of the Soviet Union was their victory in a single-front land war against a German enemy whose center of gravity could be reached by Soviet tanks. Russian war experience against first-class sea powers has not been encouraging. They did well against the Swedes and the Turks in the 18th century, but their humiliation at the hands of Britain in the Crimea (and the Baltic) in 1854 through 1856, and Japan in 1904 was not encouraging.

Their Western enemy today is a foe whose center of power in North America they cannot reach—except via the prospectively suicidal option of intercontinental nuclear warfare. Certainly the Maritime Strategy of NATO is profoundly discouraging to Soviet politicians and defense planners. What if a land campaign in Europe is stalemated? How reliable would the East European allies be in the context of a *blitzkrieg* failure? Even if, or perhaps particularly if, the conventional *blitzkrieg* fares well, what about the perils of French, British, and American nuclear escalation? How would the shaky empire of the Soviet czars stand up under nuclear attack?

Let us suppose that a briefing team of bright colonels persuades the Politburo that victory on land against NATO in Europe is as near certain as anything about future war can possibly be. Let us suppose further that the bright Soviet briefers also convince their political masters that NATO either would be unwilling to use nuclear weapons or would use them so lightly and so late that their use would prove ineffective. With this triumphant conclusion to the briefing, the briefers would stand aside and wait to be congratulated. However, at this point Mr. Gorbachev may ask the perennial question that should be posed by continental statesmen to their military experts—Assuming we will win the campaign on land, what will we do next? How will we win the war?

Soviet leaders have shown little inclination for taking high-risk gambles, nor (with the arguable exception of Afghanistan) for exercising a very shortsighted opportunism (the classic German operational sin). The Soviet Union does not need an operational strategy for victory in a European campaign. Rather, it needs a strategy for victory in a war against an enemy that comprises a tri-continental coalition; that is near-certain to own the oceans; that can knit together the entire Soviet-unoccupied portions of the planet by sea power; and that has, or has access to, most of the world's agricultural and scientific-industrial assets.

As victor in Europe, what would be the Soviet Union's inheritance?, an occupied, more or less severely damaged area containing a culturally very alien population superior in numbers to that of the Soviet Union. The Soviets would have suffered considerable military damage in conquering Western Europe. They would be unable to feed the population of their bloated empire and would have lost most of the naval assets necessary to exploit their new strategic geography. The United States still would be, presumably, in the war, undamaged at home and furiously mobilizing. Japan and China, rising super states in East Asia, may or (probably) may not be active combatants. The United States would control the sea-lanes to the periphery of East Asia. It is unlikely that the Soviets would relish the prospect of adding a billion Chinese and 122 million Japanese to an already much too multinational empire.

The argument here is not that the Soviet Union would "do this or do that." But, rather, that the Maritime Strategy—which is simply the intelligent way to think about the utility of sea power for a maritime-dependent coalition—expands the policy options for Western governments in ways profoundly healthy for deterrence.¹² Formally, and quite properly, it is claimed to be NATO strategy to do whatever is required to deny theater victory to Soviet arms. This determination encompasses incredible contingent threats of controlled nuclear use. Incredible though "flexible response" may be judged to be, it is sufficient, on a day-to-day basis, to deter the Soviets. However, NATO's defense problem is not with day-to-day peacetime normalcy: it is that one occasion in fifty years when a desperate Soviet leader turns to his military experts and asks, "Can you solve this political problem for the Russian motherland?" On such an occasion, when deterrence may be very difficult to maintain, it would be vitally important for the NATO allies that Moscow not believe it could win a war in Europe. A desperate Soviet leader might well be persuaded that NATO's nuclear strategy was a bluff, and only subsequent events would determine whether this judgment had been right or wrong.

Of course, NATO should do all that it can to enhance the deterrent value of its local stopping power in Europe. But, such deterrence must always be fragile. Similarly, NATO must encourage Soviet fears of nuclear peril. There is much to be favored in having Soviet leaders believe that they face a no-win situation in Europe, with apprehensions that:

- their *blitzkrieg* would fail, leaving them with a stalemated campaign in the context of a global nonnuclear war against an enemy who enjoys global mobility and agility, and vastly superior mobilization potential; or
- their local *blitzkrieg* would succeed on the ground, to be followed by an intolerable passage of nuclear arms; or

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- their European *blitzkrieg* would succeed as a campaign, leaving them damaged, overextended, stripped of most of their naval and mercantile assets, with an imperial policing burden of historically unprecedented proportions, in the face of an industrially and agriculturally superior enemy who, through his ownership of the oceaous, could both protect his allies and strike his foes.

The Soviets, who are continentally minded, may not recognize this fully, but they have no viable responses to a Western coalition posing a maritime threat to their strategy as described here. What are the broad Soviet choices?

First, the Soviets could seek to knock the “continental sword” from U.S. hands. That is to say, the Soviets could seek to deny the United States the Eurasian continental allies required for a successful grand strategy. This could be attempted, as at present, by political action or, forcefully, by continental conquest. The conquest option, particularly if it embraced East Asia as well as Europe, would create the historically familiar imperial overextension which has ruined frustrated land powers in the past.

Second, the Soviets could endeavor to challenge the United States directly in *its* realm of military excellence—the sea. However, as Mahan observed, a country with landward military problems and the distractions they must impose, cannot sustain a maritime challenge against an insular sea power.¹³ The Soviets might well turn in desperation to their Navy, as did the Germans to their U-boats in 1917 and 1941 to 1943, if they were failing on land. But, Moscow lacks the geography, the naval tradition, and the combat excellence of the U.S. Navy, and their initiative would probably fail.

Third, the Soviets might recognize that they could win a campaign in Europe, but not a war; and they might reason, correctly, that their prospects for success at sea, even after a land victory, would be none too encouraging. Consequently, they might conclude that their only option would be to reach the United States at home with nuclear strikes. This third “option” is no option at all, provided the United States maintains a robust nuclear retaliatory capability.

The time has come to pose the inescapable question: How would the West wage war against the Soviet Union? Further, what is the operative theory of war termination? The primary object must be to deter war; if deterrence fails, the proximate object would be to bring Soviet leaders to realize that an immediate peace, or armistice, on terms acceptable to the West, is their superior choice. Nonetheless, it is interesting, and very relevant for deterrence, to ask the question, How would the West wage the war? There are three possible answers (theoretically possible, that is), but only one that would be remotely practicable and attractive to policymakers.

- The continentalist theory of war says that the West should be prepared to wage a conflict of massive attrition and, hopefully, of some daring

operational maneuver for the purpose of beating the Soviet Army. Presumably the road to victory would be the road via Smolensk to Moscow. Both Clausewitz and Mahan said that this would not work against the territorially consolidated mass of the Russian Empire—and Napoleon and later Hitler could attest to the wisdom of their advice. The idea of NATO staging a successful replay of 1812 and 1941 is simply ridiculous.

- Next, NATO is assumed to be able to achieve its defensive war aims by taking the nuclear initiative. Why the West would win a competition in nuclear risk-taking, let alone a thoroughly military nuclear campaign, is, to be polite, obscure.

- The third and only viable theory of war for the Western alliance is one which is quintessentially maritime in structure. To be specific, NATO should do its best to stalemate Soviet land power in Europe and strongly hold Soviet military attention in that region. Since the Soviet empire cannot be invaded and conquered and cannot prudently be coerced by nuclear strikes, its defeat in war must be produced by the domestic unraveling occasioned by the strains of a (possibly) lengthy and unsuccessful conflict. The Soviet empire should be assailed from whatever quarters yield the West some comparative local advantage; its forces should be attrited; and its entire political fabric should be weakened by recognition that the central authority had embarked on war without end. Obviously, it would be desirable if the Soviets would “cry uncle” after a few weeks of unsuccessful combat. However, it is prudent to assume that the Soviet Union, which would not choose lightly to go to war, would need considerable persuasion to acknowledge failure. The strategic encirclement which could be accomplished and exploited by flexible Western sea power may, perhaps should, convince Moscow at a relatively early stage that it had embarked on a no-win enterprise.

Historically speaking, superior sea power has set the stage whereon continental tyrants have wrought their own ruination. Even in this nuclear age, because of mutual fears of destruction and the impracticality of conventional continental victory for the West, global maritime agility again provides the key to the frustration and self-destruction of over-mighty land power. That prospect is not a prospect for war, but a prospect for successful deterrence.

Notes

1. For a full-scale treatment of the strategic relationship, see Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of Super Power* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1988).

2. See The Commission On Integrated Long-Term Strategy, *Discriminate Deterrence Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., January 1988), chap. 1. On the problems of Soviet empire, see Henry S. Rowen and Charles Wolf, Jr., eds., *The Future of the Soviet Empire* (New York: St. Martin's, 1987).

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3. This is not to deny that there is some novelty, by the standards of recent times, in proclaiming that one has an *explicit* maritime strategy. See Norman Friedman, *The U.S. Maritime Strategy* (London: Jane's 1988), chap. 1.

4. See the discussion by Allan R. Millett, et al., "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations," in Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray, eds., *Military Effectiveness: Vol. I, The First World War* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1988), particularly pp. 6-12.

5. This argument is developed in detail in Roger W. Barnett, "The Origins of the Maritime Strategy," paper prepared for the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif., 10 October 1987. Also relevant is Roger W. Barnett and Jeffrey Barlow, "The Maritime Strategy of the U.S. Navy," in Roger W. Barnett, et al., eds., *Strategy and Sea Power* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, forthcoming), chap. 13. For the detailed genesis of The Maritime Strategy, see John B. Hatendorf, "The Evolution of the Maritime Strategy: 1977 to 1987," *Naval War College Review*, Summer 1988, pp. 7-28.

6. U.S. President, Annual Report, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, January 1988), p. 1.

7. Alfred T. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia and Its Effect Upon International Policies* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1905), particularly pp. 24-26, 62-65, 181. The centerpiece of Mahan's reasoning is as follows: ". . . the Russian centre cannot be broken. It is upon, and from, the flanks of this great line [the Russian thrusts into Asia to the South and to the East] that restraint, if needed, must come" (p. 26); and "[u]pon one flank of the Russian line lies the army of Japan; upon the other, five thousand miles away, that of Germany. . . . The two extremes of the Russian line, thus open to attack, are most inadequately connected by rail. . . ." (pp. 64-65). The words quoted were written in March and April 1900. Mahan envisaged a great coalition of the United States, Britain, Germany, and Japan "restraining" Russia in Asia through the application of pressure upon the European and Asian flanks of the Russian Empire, and particularly through the provision of support for the then-disintegrating empire of the Manchus in China.

8. The strategic relationship between sea power and land power is treated historically and theoretically in Colin S. Gray, *Sea Power in War* (New York: Free Press, forthcoming).

9. In 1902, Admiral Alfred T. Mahan wrote of ". . . the fundamental principles of all naval war, namely that defense is insured only by offense, and that the one decisive objective of the offensive is the enemy's organized force, his battle-fleet." "Considerations Governing the Disposition of Navies," in Mahan, *Retrospect and Prospect: Studies in International Relations, Naval and Political* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston and Co., 1902), p. 168.

10. C.R.M.F. Crutwell, *The Role of British Strategy in the Great War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1936), p. 3.

11. See James T. Westwood, "Soviet Reaction to the U.S. Maritime Strategy," *Naval War College Review*, Summer 1988, pp. 62-68; and David Alan Rosenberg, "'It is Hardly Possible to Imagine Anything Worse': Soviet Thoughts on the Maritime Strategy," *Naval War College Review*, Summer 1988, pp. 69-105.

12. See D.J. Pay, "The U.S. Navy and the Defence of Europe," *Naval Forces*, no. 1, 1988, pp. 28-35, for an excellent analysis of the value of the Maritime Strategy.

13. Mahan, "Considerations Governing the Disposition of Navies," p. 169.

This article is adapted from a presentation made to the Secretary of the Navy's Current Strategy Forum at the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., 16 June 1988.

