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"It is Hardly Possible to Imagine Anything Worse": Soviet Thoughts on the Maritime Strategy

David Alan Rosenberg

In January 1986, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral James Watkins, published an article describing the Navy's new Maritime Strategy in a special supplement to the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*. This public presentation of a strategic initiative which had been under development for more than five years sparked a lively debate among scholars, defense analysts, and pundits in the United States and Europe.¹ One central focus of the debate has been the question of how the Soviet Union might react to, or defend against, the naval actions proposed by the Maritime Strategy. Some Western critics have charged that the strategy is so provocative that it could trigger a strategic nuclear exchange between the superpowers. But despite this concern about possible Soviet reactions, no serious attempt has been made to explore how the Soviet Union perceives the Maritime Strategy and is preparing to counter it. The purpose of this article is to review and interpret Soviet perceptions of the Maritime Strategy within the context of the Soviet understanding of U.S. strategy and national policy.

One problem in preparing an analysis such as this is that comparatively little commentary on the Maritime Strategy has appeared in Soviet open sources since January 1986. This lack of reaction is in itself somewhat puzzling. Other recent Western defense initiatives, such as the development of limited employment options in U.S. nuclear strategy, NATO's planning for "Follow-on-Forces Attack," and the American Strategic Defense Initiative, have provoked abundant Soviet commentary and analysis.² The U.S.S.R.'s military analysts and American experts, however, have failed to accord similar status to the Maritime Strategy. Further, what little that has been published is difficult to interpret. It is often obscure, indirect, and seemingly fails to address many of the points which Western commentators

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see as critical in the Maritime Strategy initiative. A central thrust of this article will be to offer an explanation for this limited and confusing Soviet response.

Before beginning the analysis, it is necessary to have an agreed upon definition of the Maritime Strategy. Western critics have complained vociferously that no such agreement currently exists. One commentator, John Mearsheimer, has stated that "the Navy has not defined the Maritime Strategy clearly and, moreover, has defined it in different ways at different times. The strategy therefore tends to have an amorphous and elastic quality about it."³ Admiral Watkins himself described the strategy as "a dynamic concept" under development over several years and continually subject to reevaluation and enhancement. But the Maritime Strategy is not simply a "moving target" intended to confound adversaries and win friends for the Navy in Washington battles over budget allocations. It includes a number of specific proposals and characteristics which are consistently emphasized in official and semiofficial presentations.⁴ These can be broken down into three categories: assumptions, objectives, and options for military operations.

The first category, the assumptions on which the Maritime Strategy is based, may well be the most critical. How the Soviets understand and respond to the Maritime Strategy will be largely determined by how they perceive, and to what extent they accept, its underlying assumptions regarding the probable nature of general war.

The Maritime Strategy is based on the belief that general war between the Soviet Union and the United States is most likely to begin in Europe, but that any such confrontation must be perceived as a global one. Should war break out in Europe, the United States, and the Navy in particular, must be prepared to operate in defense of all of its allies around the world. The best use of naval air power in such a war would probably not be in central Europe, but in defense of allies on the northern and southern flanks and in the Pacific.

Inherent to the Maritime Strategy is the assumption that general war need not escalate rapidly into an exchange of strategic nuclear weapons between the United States and the Soviet Union. It proposes holding U.S. SLBMs as a strategic reserve, serving a deterrent role, and concentrates on the Navy's ability to wage conventional war at sea and in support of land forces. And it anticipates that a general war with the Soviet Union which remains conventional will become a protracted war. There will be no quick collapse on the central front in Europe during the initial period of combat, and thus a multistage war will ensue.

Further, it identifies three stages of such a war: "Deterrence or Transition to War," "Seizing the Initiative," and "Carrying the Fight to the Enemy." The strategy avoids setting conditions for the transition from stage to stage

in terms of timetable, territorial objectives, military tasks accomplished, or quantitative measures of the balance of forces. Nevertheless, each stage involves increased pressure on the Soviet Union and progress toward accomplishment of U.S. war objectives.

It reaffirms the belief, which emerged in 1945 with the advent of nuclear weapons, that the pace and power of a major war would not permit the United States to engage in a protracted mobilization and build a navy, as was done before and during World Wars I and II. The forces available on the day war begins will determine how the war is fought, and this requires that operative strategies be based on current force levels, not future budgets.

The strategy makes a number of assumptions about Soviet military strategy that can be reduced to four fundamentals.

- Even in a conventional conflict, the nuclear balance between East and West will play a central role for the Soviet Union in determining the outcome of a global war. That balance will be "constantly monitored and evaluated in anticipation of nuclear escalation," and changes in the correlation of forces will affect Soviet calculations concerning victory or defeat.⁵

- While the nuclear correlation of forces is of paramount importance, it is unlikely that the Soviets would be moved to initiate use of nuclear weapons solely in response to American offensive naval operations, even if those operations were directed against the Soviet SSBN force. Rather, Soviet calculations on nuclear escalation would be tied to developments in the ground war in Europe.

- The preferred Soviet strategy in a general war with the West would center on a single theater combined-arms attack with hopes for a quick and decisive victory. Allied ability and demonstrated intent to deny such a victory, particularly actions aimed at widening the war to theaters beyond Europe, would be a powerful deterrent against a Soviet decision to go to war in the first place, and if war could not be deterred, would make an important contribution toward convincing the Soviets to terminate the war without achieving their war aims.

- Soviet naval strategy in the event of war would focus on two primary tasks, namely, protecting Soviet ballistic missile submarines deployed chiefly in waters close to the Soviet homeland, and protecting the sea approaches to the Soviet Union itself. While it is anticipated that the U.S.S.R. attaches great importance to anti-SSBN operations, their capability to locate and attack deployed U.S. SSBNs will remain negligible over the foreseeable future. Other naval courses of action, including attacks on sea lines of communications (SLOCs), will be secondary through the initial period of a war.

In terms of objectives, the Maritime Strategy is largely a reaffirmation of the Navy's traditional understanding of its role in national defense. It

is a global, flexible, forward strategy for peacetime presence, crisis response, and general war. Its stated objectives are first, the protection of American national interests overseas in an era of "violent peace" characterized by widespread local conflicts and crises; second, the deterrence of global war with the Soviet Union through the maintenance of naval forces capable of responding to Soviet actions across the conflict spectrum, from surveillance and show of force in peacetime, through crisis response, up to and including global conventional war, theater nuclear war, and strategic nuclear war; and finally, the successful prosecution of global war should deterrence fail. The specific war-fighting aims under this last objective include denying the Soviets their preferred scenario of a short, single-theater war; the maintenance of U.S. control of the seas; using the capabilities of maritime power to influence the course of the land battle; and achieving war termination on terms acceptable to America and its allies.

With regard to the third category, options for military operations, the Maritime Strategy is more innovative. While many of the courses of action it proposes follow patterns established in American naval strategy since the 1940s, others appear to depart from what had previously been disclosed or assumed regarding the Navy's approach to wartime operations. It is these apparent departures which have attracted the most attention in public debates over the strategy. The military options may be summarized as follows:

- The forward deployment of naval forces early in a crisis and offensive use of those forces early in a conflict to bottle up and destroy the Soviet Navy and hit Soviet air forces before they could be deployed effectively to challenge the West for control of the sea. Such offensive operations might include attacks on Soviet naval forces in homewaters and strikes at Soviet homeland naval and air bases.

- The use of naval and amphibious forces to affect the land battle in Europe. Traditionally this would be understood to mean keeping the searlanes open to ensure reinforcement and resupply of Allied forces in combat on the Continent. The Maritime Strategy proposes, in addition, the mounting of offensive operations on the European flanks and around the periphery of the U.S.S.R. aimed at limiting the Soviet Union's ability to redeploy ground troops, as well as direct application of carrier air and amphibious power to the central European ground battle.

- Using naval power to contribute to successful war termination by attempting to change the nuclear correlation of forces through strategic antisubmarine warfare operations against the Soviet strategic ballistic missile submarine force and threatening direct attacks on high-value targets in the Soviet homeland.

Many of the objectives and military options in the Maritime Strategy had been publicly discussed by the military and civilian leadership of the Navy

Department in speeches, statements to the press, and Congressional testimony between 1981 and 1985. It was not until the January 1986 supplement to the *Proceedings* was published, however, that the full range of strategic assumptions was identified and made available for analysis.

Initial Soviet responses to publication of the Maritime Strategy were predictably propagandistic. In a two-part article published in *Izvestiya* on 23 and 24 January 1986, Valentin Falin, political analyst and director of the Soviet Union's overseas news and propaganda distribution service, Novosti Press, described the new initiative at length, using extensive quotations and vituperative commentary. He characterized the strategy as a reckless return to "Stone Age" concepts of uncontrolled aggression designed to forward the imperialistic ambitions of the United States, inflame conflicts in the Third World, and engage in "pre-nuclear adventurism" at the expense of the Soviet Union. The United States, he charged, is preparing to provoke war under the guise of deterrence, then escalate to conventional attacks on the Soviet Union and its nuclear forces, taking advantage of the Soviet pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. "It is hardly possible," he observed, "to imagine anything worse."⁶

Falin missed, chose to ignore, or seriously distorted many of the key elements of the Maritime Strategy. He gave no credence to any of its stated objectives. He characterized the defense of U.S. global interests in an era of violent peace as mere piracy. He ignored the objective of deterrence, admitting no aggressive intent on the part of the Soviet Union. He referred in passing to several of the war-fighting objectives, but only as evidence of U.S. belligerence. Falin treated the options for military action with less vituperation, often presenting them by the use of direct quotations, but made no effort to place them in context. He noted some of the assumptions underlying the strategy, quoting statements to the effect that the United States expected war to originate in Europe, and that it was designed to deny the Soviets their presumed objective of a short, decisive, localized conflict. His discussion, however, provided no clues as to Soviet views on such a scenario. He named the three phases of war identified in the Maritime Strategy and used them to organize his discussion, but his intent was only to document U.S. plans for escalation, not to comment on the possibility of an extended confrontation.

Falin thus refused to treat the Maritime Strategy on its own ground. He described it as merely "a component of the general national strategy" of the United States, which aimed primarily at "improving its own nuclear position." He mentioned explicitly the projected use of U.S. naval forces to alter the nuclear equation through the destruction of Soviet SSBNs and the threat of using U.S. sea-based missiles against targets in the Soviet homeland as a coercive measure. He thus tended to confirm one assumption

behind the strategy: that the Soviet Union is extremely concerned with the nuclear balance of forces and views even a conventional war largely from that perspective.

If Falin failed to discuss the prospect of prolonged conventional war, he also stopped short of predicting that the Maritime Strategy will lead to nuclear war. U.S. critics have had no qualms about suggesting that attacks on the Soviet SSBN force might prompt nuclear retaliation. Falin even quotes one such critic, B. Pouzen (Professor Barry Posen, now at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), as calling the strategy "excessively provocative" and "fraught with the 'greatest likelihood' of unleashing nuclear war."⁷ Yet Falin does not spell out the details of Posen's argument, nor refer even indirectly to the possibility that the Soviet Union would respond to U.S. naval pressure by using nuclear weapons. In this respect, his criticism of the Maritime Strategy is notably constrained. Conjuring up the spectre of nuclear war might rally opposition to the U.S. strategy, but it also would call into question the Soviet pledge against first use.

Falin's commentary was followed not by more reasoned analysis, but by extended silence on the part of both political and military spokesmen and analysts. In July 1986, Fleet Admiral Vladimir Chernavin, who had taken over as commander in chief of the Soviet Navy in late 1985, published a Navy Day message, the theme of which was "heightening combat readiness." He noted that the "process of development and perfection of the Soviet Navy [was] a natural phenomenon and a retaliatory step caused by the buildup of U.S. naval capabilities" to 600 ships. But despite a recounting of new-construction ships in the fiscal year 1987 U.S. budget, he did not mention, directly or indirectly, the recently published American strategic concept for the possible use of those ships.⁸

In October 1986 and again in January 1987, Fleet Admiral Chernavin published other articles stressing the importance of combat readiness in the Soviet Navy. American imperialism and "neoglobalism," including the American naval buildup and "progressively larger" U.S. and NATO exercises, were cited as reasons for maintaining combat readiness "to defend the achievements of socialism."⁹ Again, the Maritime Strategy was not mentioned. Similarly, the fourth edition of the Soviet English language booklet, "Whence the Threat to Peace?" prepared during 1986 and available by early 1987, did not discuss the strategy, although it commented at length on U.S. defense programs, preparations, and exercises.¹⁰ Since this series is a major vehicle for the dissemination of propaganda abroad, the omission of any mention of the strategy is especially puzzling.

Lack of discussion of the Maritime Strategy did not mean that overall U.S. military strategy was neglected in Soviet military writings in 1986. Articles on nuclear issues abounded, particularly with respect to military aspects of the ongoing START and INF negotiations, as well as the Strategic

Defense Initiative. NATO strategy was the subject of commentary as well, as was the issue of conventional warfare between East and West.

At least three articles addressed this topic, a key assumption behind the Maritime Strategy. In a review of concepts behind U.S. national security policy, Colonel B. Putilin acknowledged the spectrum of warfare that Admiral Watkins had mentioned in the Maritime Strategy, but without direct attribution. Following Soviet categorization of military thought, he labeled it a "general theory of conflict" developed by U.S. military theoreticians. Putilin noted that "in recent years . . . a policy has been implemented toward ensuring the capability for waging a protracted general nuclear and conventional war," but emphasized the nuclear aspects of conflict. While plans to build a 600-ship navy were acknowledged, Putilin paid more attention to ground forces doctrine, particularly the 1982 edition of the *Army Operations Field Manual FM-100-5*, which was seen as emphasizing tactical mobility and maneuvers.¹¹

A two-article series in *Krasnaya zvezda* [Red Star] in October on "Conventional Wars and Ways of Waging Them" described changes in military doctrine "in the staffs and armies of the Imperialist States," and detailed naval operations in support of a European conventional war. The "main tasks" of those operations were stated to be: ". . . to gain supremacy in the most important areas of the Atlantic and in the Norwegian and Barents Seas, on which the achievement of the aims of the strategic operation in the theater depends; to defend the 'Atlantic Bridge,' across which in a 'crisis period' and during military operations troops from the strategic reserve, arms, and so forth would be transferred from America and Canada to Europe; to provide support for assault landings and participate in the defense of its own seaboard against assault landings; and to provide direct air and Naval support for the [NATO] Bloc's ground forces in the North and Central European theaters."¹²

A strike fleet of "3-4 multipurpose aircraft carriers" was seen as a key component in implementing these operations, and the importance of the recent "Northern Wedding" exercise in rehearsing the tasks was acknowledged. While the operations and exercises identified were similar to those spelled out in the Maritime Strategy, no mention of the initiative was made.

The final Soviet comment on conventional warfare strategic planning came from General of the Army Vitaly Shabanov, the U.S.S.R.'s Deputy Defense Minister in charge of armaments, later that month. Shabanov traced NATO preparations for a general conventional war back to the late 1970s and described them as an attempt to find a way out of the "nuclear stalemate" between East and West. The Pentagon, he declared, "is drawing up plans for 'global non-nuclear warfare,' a 'major non-nuclear conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union' and a 'full scale global non-nuclear

war.” Admiral Watkins, “in his report on naval strategy,” was cited as saying “that it cannot be predicted where the first shot will be fired, but it is almost certain that the conflict will be linked with Europe.”

Shabanov did not elaborate on this point, emphasizing instead the destructive nature of a modern conventional land war. An important passage on the use of conventional forces to conduct “deliberate or accidental attacks on the enemy’s nuclear and chemical weapons,” stressed the inherent dangers of such actions: “the consequences of this could lead to the use of all these weapons of mass destruction, thus upsetting the parity of tactical nuclear weapons and triggering unpredictable nuclear retaliation.” The specific target of this last statement was not the new Maritime Strategy, but rather the “Rogers Plan” for NATO follow-on-forces attack.¹³

These three articles examined at least part of the strategic context and a number of the important options put forward in the Maritime Strategy. Shabanov’s piece even tended to confirm the strategy’s assumptions that Soviet nuclear escalation would be contingent on events in the European land battle rather than actions at sea. But even Shabanov only acknowledged the recent Navy initiative in passing. The bulk of his article treated Soviet proposals to reduce nuclear and conventional forces on the Continent.

In November 1986, *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye* [Foreign Military Review] published an article by Captain 1st Rank V. Chertanov which was the first professional, as opposed to primarily propagandistic, assessment of the Maritime Strategy to appear in Soviet unclassified sources. Although Chertanov entitled his piece “United States’ Maritime Strategy,” he made no reference to Admiral Watkins’ article and blurred distinctions between older Western strategic concepts and the new initiative. Writing for a military audience, he identified three major principles of U.S. naval strategy: “strategic intimidation,” “quick reaction,” and “forward defense.” The first he defined as the goal of maintaining forces superior to those of the enemy and ready to respond to conflict at any level. The second involved deploying naval forces so that they could react quickly to any threat worldwide. The third related to the use of the Navy as the “first line of defense of American interests,” and a “first strike echelon” in case of conflict, either local or global.¹⁴

In seeking to implement these principles, Chertanov declared, “the fundamental assignment of the U.S. Fleet . . . is to be in constant readiness for the sudden onset and protracted prosecution of naval operations.” Those operations included attacks on enemy naval forces and naval bases, defense of the sea lines of communications, defense of forward maritime bases, and support of ground forces. They were summarized in terms of two basic and interdependent functions: “the struggle for maritime superiority and the conduct of strikes from the sea.”

"Considering all these operational-strategic prerequisites," Chertanov continued, "the U.S. Navy leadership has evolved three main directions for use of naval forces in the event of war: strategic nuclear threat (coercion), defense of sea lines of communications (SLOCs) and support of combat actions of ground forces in the main continental TVD [theater of operations]." In addition, the Navy was expected to provide a military presence around the globe and respond to local conflicts worldwide. Defense of the SLOCs, according to Chertanov, would involve achieving superiority in key areas of the world (e.g., the northeast Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Arabian Seas): ". . . through destruction of enemy naval forces at sea and in bases; blockading straits and narrows; creating antisubmarine zones and laying mine fields along the routes of deploying submarines; conducting strike operations by submarines, surface ships, and carrier-based and tactical aviation against deployed enemy naval groups; denying the enemy use of forward bases and allied territory in various regions of the world; creating defensive zones in the key points of the SLOCs at the approaches to the European and Asian continents; actual escorting of convoys and organizing the transit of amphibious assault units under the protection of surface and air escort forces."¹⁵

Ground force combat support would entail the application of carrier aviation on the northern and southern flanks of Europe and in the Far East, naval amphibious operations, and the use of SSBNs in "limited" nuclear warfare in Europe. Chertanov attributed the idea of using SSBNs in a theater role to "material in the foreign press," but the rest of his discussion quite faithfully reflected the military options laid out in the Maritime Strategy, with some interpretation and shift in emphasis.

With regard to "nuclear coercion," Chertanov mentioned only in passing the possible role of SSBNs in "opposing enemy strategic strike forces," although this could be inferred from the Watkins article. He focused instead on the importance of SSBNs in the U.S. strategic triad, citing their numbers and their advantages over land-based systems in "greater combat stability, covert deployment and survivability." He noted that the SSBNs were supplemented by SSNs armed with nuclear weapons and nuclear-capable carrier-based aircraft, but observed that the latter would have a limited role. Because of their "low level of covertness and vulnerability to nuclear weapons," Chertanov remarked, "aircraft carriers, in U.S. defense specialists' opinion, are useful now only in the general purpose forces of the Navy."

In a final section entitled "Prospects for Changing U.S. 'Maritime Strategy'" Chertanov, who in 1983 had written an article on "American Battleships Returning to Service,"¹⁶ concluded: "The fundamental principles of U.S. naval strategy are universally known and have remained constant for many years. Only the qualitative and quantitative structure of the fleet,

which is the result of scientific and technical progress as well as new ideas on how to use the fleet in various regions, . . . is subject to change." Soviet analysts, he seemed to suggest, are not convinced that the new Maritime Strategy is very different from the old, nor that it deserves the attention it has received in the West. What is important is the size and capability of the U.S. Navy, not its publicly stated operational assumptions.

Indeed, Soviet military writing about Western naval developments has tended to stress "scientific and technical progress." Soviet journals such as *Morskoy sbornik* [Naval Digest] and *Zarubeshnoye voyennoye obozreniye* periodically carry articles analyzing the characteristics and capabilities of U.S. Navy ships and weapons systems. It is probably not mere coincidence that during 1986 many of these articles focused on systems highlighted in the Maritime Strategy. Chosen topics included: an assessment of U.S. carrier aviation projected to the year 2000; U.S. Navy ocean surveillance systems; the CAPTOR antisubmarine mine; the new SSN-21 attack submarine program; U.S. nuclear submarine communications; and NATO's strategic Atlantic command.¹⁷ The Maritime Strategy was mentioned only once in any of these pieces, in an article by Captain 2nd Rank A. Kiselev on the SSN-21 in *Krasnaya zvezda* in May 1986. In Kiselev's description of the SSN-21's prospective missions, however, operations against enemy SSBNs are conspicuously omitted, and the strategy itself is not described.¹⁸

In addition to analyzing scientific and technical progress, the U.S.S.R.'s military press continued to pay attention to American naval exercises throughout 1986. U.S. exercises in the North Atlantic and the Norwegian Sea received special attention, as did those in the northern Pacific in cooperation with Japan. The 1985 Ocean Safari exercise generated extensive commentary and analysis into 1986, and Northern Wedding 86 provoked additional discussion and protests that it was escalating "tension" in northern Europe.¹⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda* declared the operations of three SSNs under the Arctic ice in the spring of 1986 as a "provocative show of naval might," designed to "verify the combat readiness of the submarine fleet in Arctic conditions," but made no mention of the Maritime Strategy as a possible rationale for such operations.²⁰

The only mention of the Maritime Strategy in relation to exercises in 1986 came in comments in *Tass* and *Izvestiya* about the U.S.-Japanese exercise Annual Ex 61G in late September and Third Fleet exercise 87-1 in early October.²¹ *Izvestiya* correspondent S. Agafonov quoted U.S. diplomats and the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* that: ". . . the new ocean strategy assumes combat operations against the U.S.S.R. in the areas of the Sea of Okhotsk, Sea of Japan, the East China Sea, the northwestern part of the Pacific Ocean, the North Atlantic and the eastern Mediterranean. According to doctrine, even in a conventional war situation, the American side must make a first strike against Soviet strategic submarines and surround USSR

territory from the sea with carrier task forces and ships equipped with Tomahawk cruise missiles, in order to achieve superiority of American nuclear forces over the Soviet Union. Plans have been worked out in the event it is necessary to conduct assault operations on the Soviet coast and the Kuril Islands. . . . [This strategy] is an integral part of a global foreign policy doctrine oriented on creating two fronts in the event of a conflict with the USSR—in Europe and the Far East. The first strike capability on the European continent is supplemented by a first strike capability in the Asiatic-Pacific Ocean region. The objective? It has remained the same for Washington for decades: to achieve military superiority, destroy strategic parity and place reliance on force.”²² This statement, the most explicit to date on the global operations proposed by the Maritime Strategy, was not an “official” government pronouncement, nor a military analysis. It was provided merely as background to a news story, as if it required no further comment. Through the end of 1986, the only published military commentary on the Maritime Strategy was the less than pointed Chertanov article.

It was not until the spring of 1987 that the first official Soviet military pronouncements appeared commenting on Watkins’ presentation eighteen months before. On 16 May 1987, *Krasnaya zvezda* published an interview with Fleet Admiral N.I. Smirnov, First Deputy Commander in Chief of the Soviet Navy. The interview concerned naval developments in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and primarily afforded Smirnov an opportunity to defend the Soviet buildup in the region, as well as decry U.S. activities there. The last question of the interview was about the “new naval strategy” that the United States had been “intensively rehearsing at naval exercises and maneuvers.”

The essential element of the strategy, Smirnov declared, was that it would “considerably increase the offensive potential of the U.S. Navy” in order to ensure its superiority at sea. The objective was to prepare the Navy “to wage offensive operations against the U.S.S.R. in its own territorial waters and to strike targets located deep within Soviet territory.” This strategy, he continued, was being intensively rehearsed in U.S. and NATO exercises in Europe, the Atlantic, and the Far East. The danger of the strategy was that it further intensified the U.S. Navy’s “aggressiveness,” leading to an “increase in the potential for military conflicts” in various regions of the world. To meet the strategy, the Soviets were forced to take unspecified “appropriate measures to ensure their own security and maintain the military equilibrium.”²³

Many of the same phrases were used the following month in a more detailed article in *Krasnaya zvezda* by Colonel General V. Lobov, a first deputy chief of the U.S.S.R. Armed Forces General Staff, indicating a unified military stance behind Smirnov’s statement. But Lobov, rather than giving the strategy a regional focus, put it instead in a broader context. The “so-

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called 'new naval strategy' was "part and parcel" of the Reagan administration's "direct confrontation" doctrine which was aimed at achieving "total and indisputable U.S. superiority" around the world. The strategy's main provisions were not new to 1986 but had been "formulated in the first half of the eighties and have formed the basis of the development and practical activity of U.S. naval forces since then."²⁴

The main thrust of the new strategy, Lobov declared, was to: ". . . implement 'global and immediate deployment in the front lines' with a view to 'containing the Soviet fleet' in its bases on the eve of a military conflict. To this end, it will be necessary to considerably enhance the USN's offensive potential, ensure its superiority at sea in all 'vitaly important' parts of the world—the North Atlantic, the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and the Norwegian and Mediterranean Seas. U.S. naval forces must be prepared to conduct offensive operations against the Soviet Navy in the USSR's own territorial waters and hit targets located deep within its territory."²⁵

There would be three phases to such a confrontation, he stated: "the transition from deterrence to a show of force at the start of a confrontation, the seizing of the initiative, and, finally the transfer of hostilities to Soviet territory." The first phase would be marked by the deployment of six or seven carrier battle groups to the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean, and another two to six in the western Pacific and northern Indian Ocean. The final phase, that of Navy strikes against Soviet territory, he declared baldly and somewhat cryptically, "will mean the use of nuclear devices." This statement might be read to imply possible Soviet initiation of the use of nuclear weapons, especially since the Maritime Strategy was explicitly concerned with global conventional war. Given the Soviet pledge of no first use, however, which other Soviet writings have consistently emphasized, it is more likely that Lobov was predicting American initiation of nuclear war. The strategy, Lobov concluded, signaled increased aggressiveness on the part of the U.S. Navy, and posed a serious threat to the fragile stability of individual regions and the world itself.

The major part of the article was devoted to a discussion of the U.S. naval buildup, the dangers it posed to world peace, and Soviet initiatives to limit the emerging naval arms race. The Soviet Union, Lobov declared, had repeatedly called for a nuclear-free zone in the Mediterranean and demilitarization of the Indian Ocean. It had proposed negotiations to prevent deployment of nuclear weapons in the south Atlantic, to guarantee secure shipping in critical areas in peacetime, and to limit the deployment of nuclear armed ships in the Pacific. It was prepared to engage in serious negotiations limiting the size of U.S. and Soviet naval forces, including "restrictions on submarine forces and means," and limitations on overseas naval bases. The United States, he observed, had so far ignored, rejected, or impeded every one of these initiatives.

In July, Fleet Admiral Chernavin underlined the central points of this critique. The main thrust of the "new naval strategy," he declared in a Soviet Navy Day interview with a Novosti correspondent for publication in the U.S.S.R. and abroad, was to "considerably increase the offensive potential of the U.S. Navy . . . , ensure its superiority at sea through a quantitative and qualitative increase in strike facilities, and ultimately to establish control by the naval forces of the United States and its partners in all 'vitaly important' regions of the world—the North Atlantic, the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and the Norwegian and Mediterranean Seas."²⁶

Echoing Smirnov, he described the central objective as that of preparing the U.S. Navy to "wage offensive operations against the USSR in its own territorial waters and to strike targets located deep within Soviet territory," although, unlike Lobov, he did not imply that these operations would lead to the use of nuclear weapons. Smirnov had attributed this concept to an unnamed author of the strategy, whom Chernavin identified as former Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, not Admiral Watkins and the Navy's military leadership. Chernavin was further quoted as denouncing the build-up of the U.S. naval presence in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean, where it was rehearsing "frankly aggressive, offensive operations" in its exercises and maneuvers, and the Soviet response in promoting peace initiatives designed to reduce the militarization and potential for conflict in these ocean areas.

The fact that these responses came eighteen months after the Maritime Strategy was publicly presented suggests that the Soviet Union may have had difficulty coming to grips with the American initiative. The mid-1980s have certainly been a time of great change in the Soviet Union, marked by the accession of Mikhail Gorbachev to the post of General Secretary of the Communist Party and his efforts to achieve fundamental "restructuring" of Soviet economic, social, and to a lesser extent, political and military practices. There have been equally profound changes in the Soviet military during this period. The replacement of Nikolai Ogarkov by Sergei Akhromeyev as chief of the Soviet General Staff, and the succession of three defense ministers in the past four years are indicators of change in Soviet military politics and policies. Perhaps most important, Fleet Admiral Vladimir Chernavin took over as commander in chief of the Soviet Navy and Deputy Minister of Defense in December 1985, replacing Sergei Gorshkov who had led the navy for nearly three decades. Publication of the Maritime Strategy so soon afterwards may have caught the naval high command by surprise, or at least unprepared to respond. Faced with the requirements of promoting "combat readiness" as well as "perestroika," Chernavin and his admirals may have chosen to ignore the U.S. initiative to concentrate on the agenda set for the navy by the Gorbachev regime.²⁷

It is also possible that Soviet commentary on the Maritime Strategy has been restricted for propagandistic purposes. The Gorbachev agenda may even include the requirement to ignore Western military initiatives in order to concentrate on presenting the U.S.S.R. in the best possible propagandistic light. Lobov and Chernavin certainly described the Maritime Strategy in such a way as to place the Soviet Union on moral high ground by contrasting the U.S. initiative to Chairman Gorbachev's July and November 1986 proposals to "reduce the activeness of naval fleets—first and foremost ships equipped with nuclear weapons—in the Pacific" and to "demilitarize the Indian Ocean and turn it into a zone of peace."²⁸

The timing, however, could indicate a very different dynamic. Soviet calls for the creation of demilitarized and nuclear-free zones have escalated in recent years, in many cases coinciding with the growth of Soviet interests in areas such as East Asia, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific, where such zones were to be established. Increased U.S. and NATO exercise activity in the 1980s, in seas close to the Soviet Union, brought not just Gorbachev's calls for nuclear-free and demilitarized zones in the east, but also a suggestion by Politburo member and Secretary of the Central Committee Yegor Ligachev during a 1986 visit to Finland that Soviet ballistic missile submarines be removed from the Baltic in exchange for a NATO agreement on a nuclear-free north Europe and curtailment or elimination of large-scale naval exercises from the North, Norwegian, Barents, and Baltic Seas.²⁹

On 27-28 May 1987 the leadership of the Warsaw Pact met in East Berlin and adopted a document entitled "On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Pact States." In contrast to usual communiqués released after Pact meetings, this statement emphasized more than just Pact solidarity and incorporated a whole array of proposals for arms reduction, negotiations, and crisis control measures between East and West. Because it was unexpected, the statement initially caught Western analysts by surprise, but it has generally been regarded primarily as a propaganda ploy and "active measure" designed to aid the Soviets in their peace and arms control efforts.³⁰

One of the principal goals established in this statement is: ". . . the creation, in various regions of Europe and other parts of the world, of zones free of nuclear and chemical weapons, and also of zones of reduced concentration of armaments and increased trust; the implementation of military confidence-building measures in Europe on a mutual basis; and the attainment of accords on such measures in other areas of the world and also on the seas and oceans."³¹ It can hardly be mere coincidence that Lobov's comments in *Krasnaya zvezda* appeared barely one month later. His article was clearly a contribution to this Warsaw Pact arms control offensive, using the American Maritime Strategy as ammunition.

Placing the comments by Lobov and Chernavin in this context casts a new light on the eighteen-month delay between publication of the Maritime

Strategy and the formal Soviet response. It suggests the possibility that the delay was caused less by time-consuming analysis than by political expediency. Failure to react may have reflected not lack of preparation, but lack of motivation. Until the Maritime Strategy provided useful ammunition for larger Kremlin policies, the Soviet high command may have seen no reason to take an "official" military position on it and considered Falin's initial diatribe and Chertanov's assessment later that year all the comment that was necessary.

Since the summer of 1987, the Soviets have continued to press for "zones of peace," and to use the Maritime Strategy as a counterpoint to their initiative. One such effort, presented by Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev at Murmansk on 1 October 1987, established the context for comments into 1988. Gorbachev expanded upon previous Soviet proposals aimed at turning the Arctic and northern Europe into a "zone of peace." He called for consultations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact "on reducing military activity and limiting the scale of the activity of naval and air forces in the waters of the Baltic, Northern [North], Norwegian, and Greenland Seas and that confidence-building measures be extended to them." Possible measures included "an understanding on limiting competition in antisubmarine weapons, informing about major exercises of naval and air forces, and inviting observers from all states participating in the European process to major exercises of these forces." The total "banning [of] naval activity in mutually agreed zones of international straits and on intensive shipping routes" was to be examined as well.³²

In December, Marshal of the Soviet Union Akhromeyev, Chief of Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, published an article that built on both the May statement on Pact military doctrine and Gorbachev's October proposals in Murmansk. Contrasting Western military doctrine with that of the Warsaw Pact, he charged the West with "ignoring reality," and steering their "armed forces primarily toward a global nuclear war against the USSR and other socialist countries and toward the possibility of a limited nuclear war under different variants of conduct." "At the same time," he noted, "increasing attention is being paid to preparation for operations in a prolonged conventional war using new weapons systems. A decisive role is assigned to preparation for a sudden attack and subsequent large-scale combat operations and their simultaneous escalation deep into the heartland of the USSR and its allies." He cited the "latest American and NATO operational strategic concepts" as evidence, including the "air-land operation" [the U.S. Army's Air-Land Battle], "warfare against second echelons" [NATO's Follow-on-Forces Attack], and the "air-sea battle," almost certainly a reference to the Maritime Strategy. Akhromeyev also noted how the everyday operations of NATO forces were becoming more

and more dangerous, particularly “exercises held annually in Europe, the Atlantic, and other strategically important regions.”³³

After expounding at length on the contrasts between Western strategy and the Warsaw Pact’s new doctrine, he concluded with a discussion of Pact proposals aimed at a relaxation of tensions, reduction in opportunities for both sides to conduct a surprise attack, the creation of zones of peace, and the extension of confidence-building measures to those areas. He emphasized in particular Gorbachev’s Murmansk proposals that noted glibly that “NATO has not yet given a reply on these issues.”³⁴

At the end of January 1988, Colonel General Lobov of the General Staff again weighed in on the Maritime Strategy, expanding on his statement of the previous June. Discussing “Stability and Security in Northern Europe” in an interview, he described the area as a “region within which NATO’s military designs are linked,” and emphasized the “enormous nuclear potential . . . concentrated on the NATO countries’ submarines and surface ships cruising the expanses of the northern seas.” “The new naval strategy” of the United States was criticized as an effort “to ensure ‘global forward deployment’ from the outset of war.” He continued: “What do they have in mind? Put simply—ensuring for themselves conditions for delivering a disarming strike against the Soviet Navy before it has time to deploy itself, ‘locking’ it within its own waters or, as Admiral J. Watkins, one of the strategy’s authors, said on this subject, ‘firing at the archer before he can launch his arrows.’ The aggressive nature of the strategy and its link with the military doctrine of U.S. imperialism thus appears absolutely clearly.”³⁵

Lobov went on to link the Maritime Strategy to the Strategic Defense Initiative as “a case of the Pentagon’s desire to achieve military superiority in all spheres: on earth, in space, and on the sea.” He then turned to the strategy’s relationship with northern Europe: “Following the aim of entering into hostilities ‘as far as possible from their own shores,’ the U.S. naval forces are strenuously assimilating the waters washing the northern European shores.” Lobov next denounced past and planned U.S. and NATO operations and exercises on the northern flank, and then launched into a lengthy discussion on the characteristics and implications of Gorbachev’s Murmansk proposals.

Lobov provided additional details on the four-month-old Soviet Northern Europe peace initiative, citing statements of N.I. Ryzhkov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, during his mid-January visit to Norway. Lobov stated that the U.S.S.R. was now prepared to include the Barents Sea in the zone of confidence-building measures and was moving to begin negotiations with non-NATO Nordic countries about the Soviet proposals. The Soviet Union was also prepared to agree on: “. . . restricting the number of large scale naval and air forces exercises in these maritime regions to one exercise every 2 years; on creating in the Northern and Western

Atlantic for the USSR and the United States respectively of agreed regions in which actions by submarine forces and facilities of the military-political alliances should be banned; on renouncing on a reciprocal basis the holding of naval exercises in the regions of the main ocean and marine trade routes of the North Atlantic and in regions of intensive seasonal fishing; on preventing the concentration of naval groupings in international straits and approaches to them and on defining the size limits for these groupings in terms of the number and classes of ships and other specifications; and on including in the limitation zones the Baltic Straits (the Great Belt and Little Belt, the Sund and the Skagerrak), the Denmark Strait, and the English Channel, and the Iceland-Faeroe Islands-Scandinavia Region."³⁶ Lobov concluded his article with a jab at developing Western efforts to compensate for the recent treaty reduction in intermediate range nuclear forces through deploying other missiles at sea, extolling instead the willingness of the U.S.S.R. to serve as the guarantor of a nuclear-free zone in northern Europe.

The comments of Akhromeyev and Lobov may have been primarily designed to promote larger Soviet policy initiatives, but they also suggest increased awareness of the Maritime Strategy as a blueprint for conventional naval operations. This is particularly evident in Akhromeyev's description of the "air-sea battle" as one of the West's operational-strategic concepts designed to improve Western preparations for protracted conventional war. It is also suggested by the way Lobov, in contrast to his earlier comments, no longer linked the Maritime Strategy to the possible initiation of nuclear war, stressing instead the strategy's emphasis on early, forward conventional combat operations.

Underlying such comments was an interpretation of current U.S. Navy operational planning and tactical doctrine, which drew on both the published statements in the Maritime Strategy, and Soviet evaluation of naval capabilities and exercises. This new interpretation was presented in a two-article series on the U.S. approach to the "conduct of combat operations at sea" in *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye* in June and July 1987. Written by Vice Admiral I. Khurs, a member of the editorial board of *Morskoy sbornik*, it summarized and integrated the analysis which had been appearing in Soviet military journals since 1985 regarding the composition and capabilities of the U.S. Fleet and the implications of U.S. and joint naval exercises, as well as recent Soviet articles on the "characteristics of contemporary naval battle" and "law-governed patterns, content and characteristic features of modern naval operations."³⁷ Khurs did not discuss the Maritime Strategy's assumptions, but he did place his arguments within the context of its options for military operations. Signed to press as the campaign to create land and sea demilitarized and nuclear-free zones was accelerating, his pieces were remarkable for their dispassionate tone and broad approach.

Khurs began by observing that the United States, "which plays the role of the main rear supply base of NATO combined armed forces in Europe, and of American armed forces and their satellites in the Western Pacific, has lost the traditional invulnerability of its territory." In response to this change and other changes in "weapons and military equipment," the West was developing new approaches to fleet employment and tactics. The essential thrust of the developing "naval strategy" was an emphasis on "initiative and offensive" operations. "The combat activities of the fleets will attain their highest intensity in the first operations, which will be carried out in forward strategic zones spanning the bodies of water contiguous with the USSR and countries of the socialist fraternity," in order to "compel the Soviet Union to deploy its forces in a defensive posture." The creation of a "so-called 'forward strategic line of defense'" is considered by the United States to be "an absolute prerequisite of unhindered transfer of troops and needed cargo via transoceanic lines of communication, and for protection of American territory and of the northern and southern flanks of NATO against attacks from the sea."³⁸

Khurs characterized U.S. planning as follows: "At the beginning of combat operations (when in the words of Western military specialists a "crisis situation" develops) the NATO leadership foresees conducting a blockade operation on a major scale. It will basically involve combat operations aimed at annihilating the enemy's naval forces at their bases and at sea, seizing part of his territory, protecting friendly nuclear missile submarines at combat positions, supporting troops on NATO's northern flank and supporting marine transport in the region."³⁹ "The U.S. Navy," he added, "is also preparing for operations of precisely the same sort jointly with allied navies in the Pacific."

Having laid this foundation, Khurs built the rest of his assessment around the role the "different naval branches" would have in carrying out "three groups of offensive missions: Actions against a shore, interdiction of marine shipping[,] and operations against naval forces." He highlighted the enhanced fighting capability provided to surface ships by sea-launched antisubmarine, antiship, and land attack cruise missiles; the increased role of multipurpose nuclear submarines; and the "strong first position" of multipurpose aircraft carriers "in relation to other branches of the navy." These flexible forces would be coordinated in complex operations of dispersed formations through the use of a "unified control and communications system." Their initial objective would be to blockade and destroy enemy naval forces. They would then proceed to capture "operationally important enemy territory" to further facilitate their blockade.

"Annihilation of the enemy's naval forces," Khurs commented, "is believed to be 'the fastest and most effective means of establishing control

over vitally important regions of the sea,'” and such sea superiority was considered a prerequisite for carrying out assault landing operations. Combat at sea, under these conditions, was likely to “. . . be characterized by new traits. In distinction from the past, submarine forces will occupy a noticeable place in the operational organization of the forces. The sea battle will consist of the combat activities of separate groups (elements) of the combat formation, since the groupings created for combat missions will necessarily have a dispersed combat formation. The effort to mislead the enemy, to fire the first volley and to make the first strike will have even greater significance in sea battles. Marine [naval] engagements and battles will encompass wider areas than before.”⁴⁰

Khurs drew upon U.S. and NATO exercises; technical data on Western ships, aircraft, and weapons; and the British experience in the Falklands war to illustrate his points. He closed with a discussion of Western planning for the defense of convoys and sea-lanes, and a description of the increased demands placed on Western naval intelligence assets and organizations in providing tactical warning, targeting, and countermeasures against enemy attacks.

Khurs' articles were the most comprehensive yet to address the operational implications of the Maritime Strategy. The most significant aspect of his analysis was the emphasis he placed on U.S. and allied preparations to move very early and decisively to contain and destroy enemy naval forces in the event of a war. He returned to this theme repeatedly within a variety of different contexts. In contrast to earlier analysis of the Maritime Strategy, particularly Chertanov's article in the fall of 1986, Khurs all but ignored nuclear issues, mentioning only briefly and without comment the possible use of U.S. submarines to destroy Soviet SSBNs.

Published Soviet reactions to the Maritime Strategy since January 1986 thus fall into two distinct categories. The first and most prominent has been the use of the strategy for propagandistic purposes to advance the arms control agenda of the Gorbachev regime, particularly Soviet proposals on curtailing military exercises and instituting demilitarized zones. The second category includes assessments of the impact of the Maritime Strategy in tactical and operational terms. All but ignored in the Soviet analysis have been the underlying assumptions of the Maritime Strategy, particularly those concepts about the nature of warfare and the prospective enemy that are in fact *strategic* as opposed to operational or tactical in orientation.

Why have Soviet military analysts chosen not to address the Maritime Strategy on its own terms? Their use of it to inform analysis of U.S. naval tactics can only be described as incidental; it has never formed the centerpiece of such analysis. Furthermore, the strategic implications of the initiative appear to have been totally dismissed or

discounted. There is little in the two streams of commentary described thus far to explain this attitude. In order to understand and evaluate the lack of Soviet response to the strategic aspects of the Maritime Strategy, it is necessary to explore first, the history of Soviet analysis of U.S. military and naval strategy making, and second, Soviet assumptions about the nature of military strategy.

Analysis of U.S. military strategy and capabilities has been an ongoing effort in the Soviet Union for many years. Major trends and patterns are identified and codified by analysts such as those at the Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada, while military experts explore a variety of subjects from their own perspective, often referring back to this framework. Although there is some diversity of views and approaches, the published body of this analysis is remarkably consistent.⁴¹

According to the framework established by Soviet strategic analysts during the 1970s, American military strategy falls into distinct periods based on the dictates of high policy. The Eisenhower years were characterized by the doctrine of "massive retaliation." The Kennedy administration introduced "mutual assured destruction," supplemented by "flexible response." This policy was replaced about 1970 by "realistic deterrence," involving a focus on counterforce targeting and a commitment to matching the growing Soviet nuclear arsenal. Exactly when each of these periods began and ended was the subject of some dispute, but the labels were widely accepted and used.⁴²

By 1983, the Reagan administration had acquired its own label. The policy of "realistic deterrence," according to Soviet analysts, had been replaced by one of "direct confrontation" with the Soviet Union. The objective of this new strategy was identified as that of "establishing and maintaining all-embracing military superiority over the Soviet Armed Forces." This included achieving strategic nuclear superiority and the ability to mount a "disabling" counterforce strike against the Soviet Union, and expanding capabilities for conventional war, looking toward the geographical (horizontal) escalation of local conflicts, and the possibility of protracted global war.⁴³ From about 1983 on, "direct confrontation," with all it implied, was assumed to be the fundamental guiding principle behind all other manifestations of U.S. strategic thinking, at least those that were official enough to be taken seriously.

Soviet analysts also have developed their own model of U.S. naval strategy. Through the 1970s, the dominant force in shaping this analysis was Fleet Admiral of the Soviet Union Gorshkov, longtime commander in chief of the Soviet Navy. A major theme in the writings of Gorshkov and his lieutenants was the concept that the future importance of navies would be largely determined by their strategic nuclear capabilities. "In working out a military strategy and military policy for the seventies," Gorshkov declared

in *The Sea Power of the State*, "the American leadership placed special stress on so-called oceanic strategy as an important constituent of the strategy of 'realistic deterrence.' Its essence is the transfer of the main power of the strategic offensive forces to the expanses of the World Ocean." Although the U.S. Navy was still charged with traditional missions such as the protection of American interests around the world and defense of the SLOCs, these tasks were considered secondary in importance to the projection of strategic striking power. After 1957, Gorshkov noted, "the decisive factor in the development of the [U.S. and NATO] fleets became their ability to solve the strategic task of destroying important land objectives situated deep in the territories of the countries of the socialist community."⁴⁴

This framework gave Soviet analysts a unique perspective on the U.S. Navy in the 1970s. Although the Navy was, in fact, declining in both force levels and influence during the decade, its nuclear strike force was expanding, with MIRVed Poseidon and Trident I warheads being installed on U.S. SLBMs, and the all new Trident submarine force under construction. These developments apparently convinced the Soviets that the United States was increasingly relying on and upgrading naval forces.⁴⁵ There has recently been "a reorientation in the Pentagon toward a new oceanic strategy," wrote Colonel N. Nikitin in 1977, as evidenced by increased reliance on sea-based nuclear weapons and on naval power as an instrument of national policy. The "oceanic strategy," he declared, was a major component of the national strategy of "realistic deterrence," alongside "strategic sufficiency" and "strategic mobility."⁴⁶

In 1979 this analysis of U.S. naval strategy was fleshed out by N. Zhukov. The "ocean strategy," he pointed out, was clearly evident in increased shipbuilding beginning in the early 1970s. Part of the objective was to improve general purpose forces. "The U.S. leadership believes," he observed, "that by having high mobility and the capability to remain at sea for a long while, especially near areas of a probable conflict, the Navy represents the most effective means for conducting power politics." But an even more important objective was to increase the invulnerability and effectiveness of the strategic nuclear striking force. "Primary intention in organizational development of the Navy has been given to offensive forces intended for participation in a nuclear missile attack on the USSR." The Navy had served as an instrument of foreign policy throughout the postwar period. Now it was also being viewed as a strategic force "intended for exerting a decisive influence on the course and outcome of a nuclear missile war. . . ."⁴⁷

In the early 1980s, the established interpretation of U.S. naval policy came under pressure from two directions. One contribution came from Rear Admiral B. Yashin, a former naval attaché to the United States and the

United Kingdom who went on to serve as the principal military analyst of American naval affairs at the Moscow Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada. Yashin believed that greater emphasis should be placed on the conventional capabilities of navies in general, and the U.S. Navy in particular. In a lengthy article in *International Affairs*, the Soviet English language journal intended primarily for Third World Communist audiences, published in early 1982, he cited Secretary of the Navy John Lehman's press conference in March 1981 as evidence that the Reagan administration would soon start to "readjust the military-strategic conceptions behind the construction, modernization, and objectives of the US Navy," with a view to giving it "a still more aggressive and offensive edge." Among its objectives would be to increase its presence in "the waters of Greenland, Iceland and Britain in the Atlantic, secure the flanks of the Western alliance in the Mediterranean and in the Far North; deny the Russians entry into northern Norway and be in a position to threaten to attack the Kola Peninsula in the Arctic where the Soviet Northern Fleet is based." The very extensive naval exercises held in 1981 appeared to confirm that the United States was seeking to create a "military-strategic regime in the World Ocean, that would favour rapid deployment and support of the actions of the Task Forces of the U.S. Navy."⁴⁸

Yashin did not openly challenge accepted wisdom regarding the "ocean strategy." He included in his article a laudatory reference to Gorshkov's maxim on the importance of sea-based strategic weapons, and a standard overview of the history of U.S. naval strategy in the 1970s. But the substantive portion was almost entirely devoted to the more traditional role of navies. The mixed nature of the U.S. Fleet, he warned, and its far-flung system of naval bases, were critical elements in U.S. naval policy. "The basic concept determining the main purpose of the U.S. Navy," he remarked, "is that of 'sea control' which envisages military strategic control by the American Navy, unchallenged by 'anything or anyone,' over the key areas of the World Ocean."⁴⁹

Not long after the appearance of Yashin's elliptical critique, G.M. Sturua, apparently the principal civilian politico-naval specialist at the Institute of U.S.A. and Canada, published an article that echoed some of Yashin's concerns, reemphasized the importance of sea-based strategic systems, and presented a revised official version of the history of the "ocean strategy." Sturua appears to have dug deeper into available data on American military issues than military observers of the U.S. Navy such as Admiral Yashin, and also appears to have been somewhat freer to advance new interpretations. The "ocean strategy," he declared, had emerged in the 1970s not as an *element of existing U.S. military strategy*, but as an *alternative* to it. Its early proponents were motivated by two separate sets of concerns: the desire to reduce the nuclear threat to U.S. territory by moving the strategic striking

force to sea, and the desire to find means of projecting U.S. power around the globe while avoiding any more disastrous quagmires like the land war in Indochina. These strategies were rejected as national policy in the early 1970s, he argued, although some components were realized through increased Navy budgets and the construction of additional SSBNs.

With the advent of the Reagan administration, however, interest in the "ocean strategy" was reawakened. Naval forces were ideally suited, Sturua pointed out, for implementing the newly approved concepts of "protracted conventional war" and "horizontal escalation." They could also make a major contribution to the objective of undermining nuclear parity. The increased accuracy of SLBMs and their continued invulnerability made them ideal weapons for implementing a strategy of "superior counterforce." As of 1980, Sturua estimated, about half of the U.S. strategic nuclear warheads were based at sea, as compared to twenty percent in 1970, and the trend was continuing. It seemed that the traditional "triad" of strategic forces might soon be replaced by a "naval monad." The term "ocean strategy" was no longer in use, Sturua remarked, and resurrection of that "notorious" concept was not necessarily proved by "plans to achieve naval superiority, the efforts to heighten the concentration of U.S. strategic nuclear strength on submarines and the compilation of a gigantic shipbuilding program." But, he concluded, "there is no question . . . that the significance of naval strength is being put on a new level in Washington. This is part of the strategy of the ruling administration, aimed at escalating military confrontation with the socialist world and the national liberation movements."⁵⁰

The revived "ocean strategy" soon acquired its own label: the "new" U.S. naval strategy. In the spring of 1983, Captain 1st Rank V. Strelkov described its basic tenets in *Morskoy sbornik*, setting it firmly in the context of national strategy and emphasizing both strategic nuclear striking power and the "sea-control" mission. The U.S. Navy, he declared, had been assigned an important role in implementing the strategy of "direct confrontation." Its mission was to establish control over areas of the world oceans considered "vitally important" to the United States, including "the Northern and Southern Atlantic, the Caribbean, Norwegian, Barents, and Mediterranean Seas, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and the entire Western Pacific." In order to carry out this mission, the Navy was being upgraded both quantitatively and qualitatively, to achieve "a significant increase in the strike capabilities of both strategic sea-based nuclear missile forces and general-purpose forces." Strelkov reviewed the growth of the U.S. Fleet, and the nature of U.S. and allied naval exercises in the 1980s, with particular emphasis on the North Atlantic. He cited Secretary of the Navy Lehman's much quoted statement setting the goal of being able to "carry out an offensive against the Russians in their territorial waters and

attack targets located deep within Soviet territory.” “The United States openly dreams,” he concluded, “of the possibility of shutting off all outlets to the seas and oceans” for Soviet ships and naval aviation. They would like to “turn the Soviets into an isolated island. The so-called ‘new’ naval strategy of the United States gives the American Navy the missions of delivering surprise strikes against the Soviet fleet even before the hypothetical completion of its deployment at sea.”⁵¹

In June 1983, much the same description of the “new” naval strategy appeared in an article by Rear Admiral A. Rumyantsev in *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye*, with the addition of some very pointed comments on antisubmarine warfare. “Achieving superiority at sea,” he observed, “would be unimaginable without developing the forces and resources of ‘submarine warfare,’ the foundation of which is represented by nuclear multipurpose submarines.” Their primary mission in time of war would be “combatting enemy submarines, primarily missile submarines, in combat patrol areas and during sea crossings; annihilation of enemy surface ships and vessels at sea and on their emergence from bases, straits and narrow passages; antisubmarine defense of carrier groups and formations and of assault landing detachments and convoys; laying minefields; conducting reconnaissance. American nuclear multipurpose submarines,” he added, “are now being introduced into Arctic regions, including the Barents, Greenland and Norwegian Seas, with the purpose of fighting missile and torpedo submarines. Special attention is being devoted to working out the problems of fighting enemy submarines on the antisubmarine line extending from Greenland to Iceland and the coast of Norway, where antisubmarine exercises are conducted each year by combined NATO naval forces with the participation of American nuclear submarines.”⁵²

The basic elements of the “new” naval strategy were further clarified by the ubiquitous naval theoretician and Gorshkov alter ego, Vice Admiral K. Stalbo, in the fall of 1983. Stalbo sought to reaffirm the primacy of strategic nuclear missions and to define the importance of sea control in this context. The Pentagon, he declared, “views naval forces as the most important part of armed forces, the primary purpose of which is to deliver nuclear strikes against targets on the territories of countries of the socialist community.” Next in importance was the mission of antisubmarine warfare, waged “in the interests of antimissile defense of the continent.” Third came that of “conducting local wars and supporting the invasion of the territories of foreign states from the sea,” followed by defense of the sea lines of communication. “Sea supremacy” was a means to ensure that these missions could be carried out successfully. “The present-day American strategic concept of sea supremacy,” he explained, “is above all assurance of the possibility of using sea expanses both for military and economic purposes.” The “new naval strategy” envisioned achieving sea supremacy throughout

the oceans of the world, "isolating countries of the socialist community from the rest of the world and assuring its 'own free hand' for delivering attacks from ocean axes against important targets on the territory of the USSR and its allies."⁵³

Stalbo's analysis was an adaptation of Gorshkov's doctrine to the 1980s, taking into account the issues raised by Yashin. He emphasized both conventional and nuclear missions and sought to clarify the relationship between them. His formulation defining sea control as a precondition for strikes against the Soviet homeland would surface repeatedly, most especially in the formal assessment of the Maritime Strategy presented by Lobov and Chernavin.

One important question still at issue was that of strategic antisubmarine warfare. Stalbo had identified ASW, particularly against Soviet SSBNs, as a high priority of the "new naval strategy." So too did Sturua, who actively promoted the issue in articles published by the Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada. Analysts had been too much concerned, he warned in the spring of 1982, with the growth of U.S. general purpose naval forces and had neglected a disturbing increase in ASW research and capability. The United States, he declared, was set on creating "an effective antisubmarine system directed against Soviet missile-carrying submarines. Since the end of the last decade the sum of 8.5 billion dollars has been spent on these purposes annually, as well as 20 percent of the appropriations for scientific research and development in the Department of the Navy budget." This effort was designed to "bring the United States closer to the acquisition of first ('disarming') strike potential," and should be viewed as a very serious threat.⁵⁴

Sturua repeated these warnings in his overview of the "ocean strategy" in the fall of 1982, and in 1985 published a full-scale study of U.S. policy and efforts on antisubmarine warfare, with particular emphasis on the strategic and philosophical implications of targeting enemy SSBNs. Preparations to attack missile submarines, he suggested, were just as disruptive of the nuclear balance as ABM technology and should possibly be controlled by a similar treaty.⁵⁵

Admiral Yashin, however, continued to press for a de-emphasis on nuclear naval missions, including strategic ASW. In 1984, he published a review of U.S. naval force developments in which only a few paragraphs were devoted to antisubmarine warfare capabilities, and no mention was made of the issue of ASW against SSBNs.⁵⁶ This emphasis was also evident in a more complete review of the techniques, technologies, and command structure of U.S. antisubmarine forces published the same year by Captain 2d Rank V. Khomenskiy. It described U.S. plans for tracking and blockading Soviet submarines, but did not specifically focus on the problem of attacks on the strategic submarine force.⁵⁷ It is interesting to note that the emphasis on

strategic ASW has not surfaced in any Soviet commentary on the Maritime Strategy since January 1986.

Another open question was that of the relationship between naval strategy and national strategy. In January 1986, Admiral Yashin published an article in *Morskoy sbornik* on "The Terminology of U.S. Military Doctrine" which defined a context for evaluating U.S. naval strategy and proposed a new model for understanding the "ocean strategy." Although it appeared almost simultaneously with the publication of Admiral Watkins' treatise, the timing of Yashin's piece appears to have been coincidental. Nevertheless, this new article set the stage for much of the commentary that was to follow. Yashin worked from definitions selectively chosen from a list of terms in the appendix of the thirteen-year-old book, *Grand Strategy: Principles and Practices*, by retired U.S. Army colonel and Congressional Research Service analyst John Collins and from the 1972 edition of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. The purpose of his article, Yashin stated, was to lay the groundwork for "more detailed comprehension of those terms and concepts being used in the United States in the area of organizational development, improvement, operational and tactical purpose, and employment of the Navy."⁵⁸

Yashin presented a rigidly hierarchical model of military strategy making. At the top were "national policies." These he summarized as the intention to acquire "a dominant world position for the United States." "Doctrine" was defined as "the basic precepts by which one must be guided in actions to implement and support national policy." The Reagan administration's "predominant military-political views," or doctrine, are "openly aimed at aggravating relations with the Soviet Union, leading to 'direct confrontation' with it in all areas of international politics, at an open attempt at comprehensive military superiority over the USSR, and at active preparation [for] nuclear war against it."⁵⁹

"Strategy," according to Yashin, usually referred to "the set of operational-strategic and military-technical concepts" defining the requirements placed on the U.S. armed services by national policy and doctrine. It defined, he said, "the requisite quantitative and qualitative make-up; improvement or modernization; general purpose and combat purpose of various forces and resources; as well as the possible forms and methods of their employment during combat actions of varying scale." Strategy could also, he noted, refer to other than military requirements. "Grand strategy" or "national strategy" was defined as the "art and science of using the entire might of a nation under all circumstances" to achieve national objectives. "Military strategy" and "national security strategy" were more narrowly defense related. Taken together, Yashin observed, strategy thus covers "the methods and forms of carrying out all possible functions of U.S. state authority." It is, in other words, "the set of basic

elements of the military art and principles of state management. It implies all basic theoretical and practical provisions serving to justify and implement U.S. global policy as a unified system of military-political views." U.S. strategies, from "massive retaliation" to "direct confrontation," were thus not purely military concepts, but fully integrated "military-political" views.

With regard to naval strategy, Yashin broke with earlier Soviet writings, including his own, and took the position that it is a far less influential component of U.S. national strategy than had previously been believed. Proponents of the U.S. Navy, he argued, "have been persistently proposing since the early 1970s to accept [the 'blue water strategy'] as the name of military strategy as a whole for the U.S. Armed Forces." But, despite the shift toward sea-based strategic weapons, this concept "was not accepted as applied to military strategy for all branches of the Armed Forces," because of unspecified "objections of the U.S. Department of Defense." The Navy, his argument implied, thus plays a subsidiary, not dominant role in U.S. national and military strategy. The term "naval strategy" was defined as referring only to "the set of views on the role and purpose of the U.S. Navy." From a Soviet perspective, such "views" were not part of a unified system, and thus did not qualify as military doctrine.⁶⁰

In his first reference to the Maritime Strategy, Yashin declared that this is a term which "often is encountered in the American press and in verbal statements by representatives of the U.S. military leadership. . . . Judging from the range of issues included in this concept, it conceals the set of views of U.S. ruling circles with respect to ocean areas important to all countries." Its basic thrust is "the establishment of a preeminent U.S. position in use of ocean expanses for navigation and for obtaining its raw materials; unrestricted strengthening of all components of naval power; the deployment of naval groupings in world regions remote from U.S. territory, and so on."⁶¹

In the concluding section of his article, Yashin attempted to "translate into Russian several terms dealing directly with the theory and practice of U.S. naval employment in peace and wartime." Ignoring as he had throughout the article the sea-based strategic nuclear weapons and strikes by the fleet against the shore, he concentrated instead on the terms "sea control," "sea superiority" and "sea supremacy." Sea control was judged to be the basic element of U.S. naval strategy. He defined it as "the use of naval forces with their attached components of ground and air forces to accomplish missions of destroying enemy naval groupings; disrupting enemy maritime transport movements; protecting friendly sea lanes; and establishing local superiority in the areas of naval operations." This operational concept was embodied in "a set of directions and recommendations contained in American regulations and manuals for employment of the U.S. Navy in coordination with other branches of the

Armed Forces under various conditions." "Sea superiority," and "sea supremacy" were seen as terms that defined the degree of sea control, with superiority dealing with "a certain time and within a certain part of the sea," and supremacy being a more general condition denoting one side's ability to conduct operations against the other "without any effective hindrance whatsoever on the part of opposing naval forces."⁶²

Yashin's January 1986 formulation, coming as it did one month after Fleet Admiral Gorshkov's relief as commander in chief of the Soviet Navy, marked a plateau in Soviet military interpretations of the U.S. Navy that has not since been superseded. On the one hand, it treated the Maritime Strategy as a subsidiary expression of the Reagan Doctrine of "direct confrontation." On the other hand, it emphasized the linkage between strategy and capabilities, laying the groundwork for an analysis of U.S. naval strategy that focused almost entirely on forces, weapons systems, and exercises. More important, it laid to rest the time-honored assumption that the so-called "ocean strategy" played a dominant role in U.S. national policy and strategy making. Yashin appeared to believe that the Maritime Strategy was primarily a ploy, a propaganda effort designed to forward the interests of the U.S. Navy within the U.S. Defense Establishment.

In May 1987, *Morskoy sbornik* carried its first and only commentary on the Maritime Strategy, an article by Yashin which confirmed and amplified the view he had presented in January 1986. In it, Yashin used the "notorious" Maritime Strategy as a springboard for an analysis of U.S. ambitions to achieve "military superiority," along the lines of the old imperialist thesis propounded by Mahan: "He who controls the sea controls the world." He did not, however, mention or cite Admiral Watkins' article or address any specific elements of the Maritime Strategy. Instead, he focused his attention on articles that had appeared in the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* between 1984 and 1986, which seemed to relate to the supposed global ambitions and aggressive posture of the U.S. Navy. While a 1984 article by Secretary Lehman was cited, as well as an unspecified "lecture" by Admiral Watkins, Yashin gave most of his attention to articles by individual U.S. naval officers on issues of strategy, geopolitics, and tactical doctrine. Great emphasis, he concluded, is being put on "giving private views and concepts an offensive character; on being ready for a sudden use of weapons, and on the desire to achieve military superiority."⁶³ Despite the abundance of official and unofficial testimony and analyses that had appeared in Western publications about U.S. naval planning and strategy since 1984, Yashin chose to dismiss, discount, or ignore them in order to emphasize the importance of such "private views."

The assumption that private views expressed in the *Proceedings* are orchestrated to promote national policy suggests a degree of "mirror imaging." Soviet analysts have used the *Proceedings* (in the same way

American analysts use *Morskoy sbornik*) as a source of official information, ignoring its real purpose as a forum for the expression of the personal views of naval officers on professional subjects. The fact that the Maritime Strategy was published in the *Proceedings* certainly gave it a degree of official status, but also may have suggested to the Soviets that it was primarily a political statement designed to promote the Navy's role in the Reagan strategy of "direct confrontation." Believing that this role had already been adequately analyzed, Yashin turned to "private views" as a means of exploring the nuances of the Reagan Doctrine, ignoring Watkins' semiofficial presentation.

Vice Admiral Khurs' pieces, published shortly after Yashin's latest commentary, indicate that while there may be confusion with respect to the 'politico-military' legitimacy of the Maritime Strategy, the technical, tactical, and operational aspects of the initiative are more obvious and of much greater concern. There are clearly two separate streams in Soviet analysis of naval developments in the United States, one interpretive and one analytical. The first, represented by the writings of Yashin and Sturua, attempts to divine the underlying political and military significance of naval trends, while the second, represented by Khurs and, among others, Khomenskiy, examines the technical and "scientific" developments in the West.

One reason Soviet analysts may have had trouble developing a cohesive understanding of the Maritime Strategy as strategy is that the Soviet Union would never have produced anything comparable. As developed by the U.S. Navy, the Maritime Strategy is fundamentally a *service* strategic concept designed to provide a framework for the use of U.S. naval forces in peace and war. It is both derivative and original in its conception of American national strategy, building on such statements of national objectives and courses of action as were available, and fleshing them out where omissions and ambiguities existed. Because it goes beyond existing statements of national policy from a particularistic service viewpoint, it is not national strategy in the Soviet sense. Nor is it operational planning. As a strategic concept, it offers a flexible array of options to generate such planning. Its primary utility for the U.S. Navy is internal, both as an approach to integrating the many disparate elements of the Navy budget and as a means of stimulating thought and debate within the naval establishment on the contemporary uses of seapower.⁶⁴

There is no place for such a statement within the Soviet Union's rigid hierarchical military organization and equally rigid philosophy of military science and doctrine.⁶⁵ The closest the Soviet Union has come to this was Admiral Gorshkov's *The Seapower of the State*, but that book was much more philosophical and theoretical in its orientation. In addition, Gorshkov's work

drew on the decades old idea of "naval science" as an independent category within "military science" that had first been established in Stalinist times. But by the late 1970s, the concept of an independent naval science had disappeared; all references to it were deleted from the second edition of Gorshkov's book. As Admiral Chernavin noted in 1982, "there are no particularly well-defined spheres of armed conflict. . . . Victory is achieved by coordinated efforts of [all branches of the armed forces], and this gives rise to the necessity of integrating all knowledge of warfare within the framework and limits of a single unified military science."⁶⁶

All Soviet military strategic planning is organized from the top down, on a unified basis, with the Soviet Navy traditionally at the lowest rung of the ladder. Dominating Soviet strategy and doctrine is national military doctrine, "a system of views adopted in a state for a given period of time on the objectives and character of a possible war, on preparation of the country and the armed forces for war, and on methods of waging the war." Such doctrine "usually determines the enemy who will have to be fought in a possible war; the character and objectives of a war in which a state and its armed forces will have to participate, and their missions; what armed forces are needed for successful conduct of a war and their directions for their development; procedures for preparing the country for war; and methods of waging war."⁶⁷ Military doctrine is based on both military-technical considerations and political ones, such as the nature of the socio-political order and "the country's level of economic, scientific and technological development," and is formulated with "due regard to the conclusions of military science and the views of the probable enemy."⁶⁸

The theoretical application of military doctrine is spelled out in "military art," which is characterized by three levels: strategic, operational, and tactical. "Military strategy" is defined as "the highest realm of military art, encompassing the theory and practice of preparing the armed forces for war, the planning and conduct of war and strategic operations, the utilization of the services of the armed forces, and their leadership."⁶⁹

Below strategy comes "operational art," which encompasses "the theory and practice of preparing for and conducting joint and independent operations by forces of the services of the armed forces." Among the principal tasks of "operational art" are: "a study of the principles, content, and nature of modern operations (combat actions); development of the methods of their preparation and conduct, employment of forces and formations of services of the armed forces, . . . determination of requirements placed on the organization and armament of forces or services of the armed forces and combat arms . . . ; elaboration of the content and methods of operational training of officers and troop control organs; development of recommendations on the operational preparation of theaters

of military operations; and research of views of probable enemies on conducting military actions on an operational scale."⁷⁰

"Tactics" is defined as the application of "operational art" at the unit level. "Naval art" is a subset of "military art," defined as "the theory and practice of preparing and conducting combat operations using naval forces independently and in coordination with the other services of the armed forces."⁷¹ It is also divided into the three components of "strategic employment," "operational art," and "tactics."

The Soviets have tended to write about the Maritime Strategy since the early 1980s as an example of naval art, and more specifically within the framework of operational art, as indicated by their emphasis on capabilities, options for action, and perhaps most significant, the training element of naval exercises. They place it within the context of the Reagan Doctrine of "direct confrontation," as a component rather than as a contribution to national policy. As conceived by the leadership of the U.S. Navy, however, the Maritime Strategy includes elements that clearly belong in the realm of military doctrine. In particular, its stated assumptions about Soviet military strategy and the nature and phasing of a protracted conventional war define an approach to the conduct of general war, developed from a naval perspective, but intended to have a much broader application. It is precisely these aspects of the initiative which have not been adequately analyzed by Soviet commentators, perhaps because they cannot be construed as naval or operational art, and thus are out of place within the hierarchical Soviet model of strategy making.

These issues have not been completely ignored. Falin's initial denunciation of the Maritime Strategy described the projected phases of a prolonged global war, albeit erroneously, in some detail, and, more important, Colonel General Lobov also noted this aspect of the initiative, although without further comment or analysis. The lack of comment, however, is most frustrating, especially given recent Soviet military writings, most prominently by Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, on the problem of waging protracted conventional war against the West.⁷²

The lack of response to the scenarios contained in the Maritime Strategy may also signify a basic lack of resonance. The Soviet Union has devoted a good deal of study to the problem of the periodization of a war "into principal time segments which differ qualitatively from each other." In particular, historical studies of World Wars I and II have shown that those conflicts can be divided into a series of phases, each "characterized by an appropriate duration, a certain inherent content, and forms of military actions. . . ."⁷³ The Maritime Strategy's failure to do much more than name the periods "Transition to War," "Seizing the Initiative" and "Carrying the Fight to the Enemy," as well as its failure to specify the conditions which would mark the transition from phase to phase may make the periodization

appear unsophisticated if not insignificant to the more experienced Soviet military theoreticians.

Moreover, Soviet military analysts have stressed the importance of the "initial period of war" in determining subsequent developments in a conflict. As defined in the *Soviet Military Encyclopedia*, this initial period is "the time during which the belligerent states conducted combat actions with groupings of armed forces deployed before the beginning of the war or to create favorable conditions for commitment of the main forces and the conduct of subsequent operations."⁷⁴ Recent writings stress that the capability of armed forces to "begin combat actions immediately determines the possibility of conducting an intensive armed struggle from the very first hours of a war. The first operations may have a deciding influence on the course of the war as a whole."⁷⁵

The Maritime Strategy recognizes the possibility that such an initial phase might indeed prove decisive. The assumption that there would be no time to mobilize and build a navy, and the requirement for early, forward offensive operations to "seize the initiative" look to preventing the Soviets from achieving initial decisive results. Under the Soviet approach to periodization, however, the first two phases of the Maritime Strategy would, in fact, be characterized as one. In addition, it is difficult to tell from their titles and the actions proposed for them whether phase two, "Seizing the Initiative," is in fact the decisive phase, or phase three, "Carrying the Fight to the Enemy," is the point where the tides of war would change. As such, the major theoretical assumptions of the Maritime Strategy about the nature of a war are out of synchronization if not incompatible with Soviet thinking.

In addition, the assumptions included in the Maritime Strategy have not been generally incorporated into American strategic thinking at the highest level. As the *Armed Forces Journal* editorialized in February 1988, the United States has suffered for many years with no military strategy and now suddenly finds itself with a series of competing ones, including that proposed by the Navy.⁷⁶ This confusion has not been lost on the Soviets. If accepted as the basis of national policy, the Maritime Strategy would at least qualify as a "strategic concept," defined in the *Soviet Military Encyclopedia* as "a system of views on the preparation and conduct of war and on development of the armed forces" used in Western states (but not in the Soviet Union) as a basis for "the development of military doctrine, the theory of military art, and specific plans and preparations for war."⁷⁷ Lacking official standing, however, it appears little more than a concept in embryo, having the potential to influence policy, but no real influence. It is hardly surprising that Soviet military writers have difficulty responding to such an initiative on the conceptual level, especially in view of the richness and depth of Soviet theoretical and historical thinking and writing on the subject of warfare.

In other ways, however, the Maritime Strategy appears to have made its mark. The evolution of Soviet commentary on U.S. naval strategy since 1982 has demonstrated a growing awareness of the critical elements in the U.S. initiative as ultimately presented in January 1986. Soviet writings correctly identified changes in U.S. geopolitical interests as well as options for naval operations in the event of war. The Khurs' articles, in particular, conveyed a certain sense of urgency regarding the need to respond to the operational challenges posed by the Maritime Strategy. In addition, Soviet analysts have begun to downplay the emphasis on sea-based nuclear weapons which had dominated their characterization of the role of the U.S. Navy in the 1970s. The nuclear correlation of forces remains critical in Soviet thinking about general war, but renewed emphasis has also been placed on the traditional sea-control role of Western naval forces. It may be that the formulations of the Maritime Strategy, although they are not given credence as military theory, are contributing in some small way to the reevaluation now going on in the Soviet Union regarding the role of nuclear weapons in national strategy and the possible course of a future war.

The Maritime Strategy has also generated or accelerated at least one serious counter-initiative: Soviet proposals regarding zones of peace. The Soviets have evidently concluded that the current posture of the U.S. Navy poses a potential threat to the achievement of their military objectives should war occur. The zones-of-peace concept, while contributing to Gorbachev's multifaceted foreign policy efforts aimed at projecting the image of the Soviet Union as the chief architect of peace in the 1980s and 1990s, would also, if agreed to by the West, virtually eliminate the U.S. Navy's program of joint and combined exercises. By denying the United States the opportunity to practice the operations envisaged in the Maritime Strategy, the Soviet Union could seriously impair Western capability to conduct those operations under difficult wartime conditions. These Soviet overtures thus must be viewed not as propaganda, but as a serious response to the challenge laid down by the U.S. initiative. This kind of response may be the most significant commentary the Soviet Union could make on the Maritime Strategy.

Notes

1. Admiral James D. Watkins, USN, "The Maritime Strategy," supplement to the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, January 1986, pp. 2-17. The debate on the strategy is summarized in Captain Peter M. Swartz, USN, "Contemporary U.S. Naval Strategy: A Bibliography" in *ibid.*, pp. 41-47; and Swartz, "The Maritime Strategy in Review," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, February 1987, pp. 113-116.

2. For discussions of Soviet reactions to other Western defense initiatives, see, among others, Jonatban Samuel Lockwood, *The Soviet View of U.S. Strategic Doctrine* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1983); Michael J. Sterling, *Soviet Reactions to NATO's Emerging Technologies for Deep Attack* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The Rand Corporation Note N-2294-AF, August 1985); and on the Strategic Defense Initiative, Stephen Meyer, "Soviet Views on SDI," *Survival*, November-December 1986, pp. 274-292; Jacob W.

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Kipp et al., *Soviet Views on Military Operations in Space* (College Station, Tex.: Center for Strategic Technology, The Texas A&M University System, July 1986); and Bruce Parrott, "The Soviet Debate on Missile Defense," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, April 1987, pp. 9-12.

3. John Mearsheimer, "A Strategic Misstep, The Maritime Strategy and Deterrence in Europe," *International Security*, Fall 1986, p. 5.

4. The following discussion of the characteristics of the Maritime Strategy is based on the following four presentations by current and former Navy strategic planners and commanders: Watkins, "The Maritime Strategy" *op. cit.*; U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Seapower and Strategic and Critical Materials, *The 600-Ship Navy and the Maritime Strategy*, Hearing (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1986), 24 June, 5, 6, 10 September 1985; Captain Linton Brooks, USN, "Naval Power and National Security, The Case for the Maritime Strategy," *International Security*, Fall 1986, pp. 58-88; and Captain Roger W. Barnett, USN (Ret.), "U.S. Maritime Strategy: Sound and Safe," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, September 1987, pp. 30-33.

5. Watkins, p. 7.

6. Valentin Falin, "Back to the Stone Age," *Izvestiya*, Part 1, 23 January 1986, morning edition, p. 5, and Part 2, 24 January 1986, morning edition, p. 5, in, respectively, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report, Soviet Union-86-018 and 019* (hereafter *FBIS-SOV*), 28 and 29 January 1986. For other commentary on these articles see Captain William H.J. Manthorpe, USN (Ret.), "The Soviet View," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, April 1986, p. 111.

7. Falin, 23 January 1986, p. 5; Posen's critique was first presented in 1982 in "Inadvertent Nuclear War? Escalation and NATO's Northern Flank," *International Security*, Fall 1982, pp. 28-54. See also his article, "U.S. Maritime Strategy, A Dangerous Game," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, September 1987, pp. 24-28.

8. Admiral of the Fleet Vladimir Chernavin, "Guarding the Homeland's Sea Frontiers," *Soviet Military Review*, July 1986, pp. 4-6.

9. Chernavin, "Teach Them What They Need For War," *Morskoy sbornik*, January 1987 (Signed to Press 5 January 1987), pp. 3-11, in *FBIS USSR Report, Military Affairs* JPRS-UMA-87-020, 27 March 1987 (hereafter cited by JPRS number and date), p. 17; see also Chernavin, "Combat Readiness of Naval Forces—At the Level of Modern Requirements," *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, October 1986, pp. 26-33, in JPRS-UMA-87-001, 2 January 1987, pp. 22-30. This last article was clearly intended to impose "perestroika" on the naval establishment.

10. *Whence the Threat to Peace*, 4th ed., (Moscow: Military Publishing House and Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1987 (editing completed 2 February 1987)), especially pp. 24-26.

11. Colonel B. Putilin, "What is Behind U.S. National Security Policy?" *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye*, July 1986, pp. 7-11, in JPRS-UMA-86-070, 19 December 1986, pp. 7-12.

12. Colonel V. Alekseyev, "In the Staffs and Armies of Imperialist States: 'Conventional' Wars and Ways of Waging Them; Part 2, Air Force and Naval Operations," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 4 October 1986, p. 5, in JPRS-UMA-87-067, 3 December 1986, pp. 23-26. See also Captain William Manthorpe's commentary, "The Soviet View," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, February 1987, p. 117.

13. General of the Army Vitaly Shabanov, "'Conventional' Warfare: New Dangers," *New Times*, 24 November 1986, pp. 7-8.

14. Captain 1st Rank V. Chertanov, "United States 'Maritime Strategy,'" *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye*, November 1986 (Signed to Press 11 November 1986), pp. 49-53; see also Captain William Manthorpe, "The Soviet View," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, November 1987, pp. 144-145.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

16. "American Battleships Returning to Service," *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye*, September 1983, pp. 99-106.

17. The articles published in *Morskoy sbornik* on the U.S. Navy from late 1985 through the end of 1986 included Captain 1st Rank A. Alkhimenko, "The Great Ocean [the Pacific] on the Pentagon's Map," no. 10, 1985, pp. 77-84; Major M. Boytsov, "U.S. Naval Forces are Preparing for Nuclear War," no. 11, 1985, pp. 75-76; Captain 2nd Rank V. Kozhevnikov, "The Trident: A First Strike Weapon," no. 11, 1985, pp. 76-77; Captain 1st Rank A. Partala, "U.S. Shipboard Electronic Warfare Equipment," no. 3, 1986, pp. 70-73; Yu. Nevskiy, "The Destroyer of the Year 2000," (about the U.S.S. *Arleigh Burke*-class DDGs), no. 4, 1986, pp. 73-78; Captain 3rd Rank M. Komarov, "Inclinations to Change the Cruising Range and Endurance of Ships of the U.S. Navy," no. 4, 1984, pp. 71-73; Captain 1st Rank A. Alkhimenko, "The Pentagon's Mediterranean Chart," no. 6, 1986, pp. 73-78; Yu. Vasil'yev, "The U.S. Navy Reserve," no. 8, 1986, pp. 79-83; and Colonel I. Kutsev, "U.S. Carrier-Based Naval Aviation to the Year 2000," no. 12, 1986, pp. 66-73; while *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye* carried the following pieces during the same time frame: Colonel A. Tsvetkov, "The Arctic in U.S. and NATO Plans," October 1985, pp. 7-12; Captain 1st Rank Yu. Galkin, "Convoy Protection in the Atlantic," November 1985, pp. 57-64; Captain 1st Rank V. Afanasev, "Current and Future Developments in NATO Navies," January 1986,

pp. 57-64; Captain 1st Rank V. Kipov, "American OHIO-Class Missile Submarines," January 1986, pp. 64-69; Captain 1st Rank V. Khomenskiy, "NATO's Strategic Atlantic Command," April 1986, pp. 47-54; Senior Lieutenant I. Dalin, "British Nuclear Submarines," April 1986, pp. 54-58; Captain 1st Rank (Reserves) A. Markov, "Improving U.S. Navy Surveillance Systems," July 1986, pp. 43-47; Captain 1st Rank I. Sukhanov, Captain 3rd Rank A. Kolpakov, and Captain Lieutenant P. Yevdokimov, "CAPTOR Antisubmarine Mine," July 1986, pp. 53-55; Captain 1st Rank V. Khomenskiy, "Combat Training of Combined NATO Navies in 1985," August 1986, pp. 45-51; Captain 1st Rank V. Chernov, "American SSBN Basing in the Atlantic," September 1986, pp. 67-73; and Captain 1st Rank V. Khomenskiy, "NATO Joint Exercise NORTHERN WEDDING-86," December 1986, pp. 63-65.

18. Captain 2nd Rank A. Kiselev, "Behind the Scenes in the Arms Race: A New Underwater Monster," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 14 May 1986, p. 3, in JPRS-UMA-86-040, 22 July 1986, pp. 66-67.

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20. *Tass Report*, "Provocative Show," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 27 May 1986, 1st ed., p. 3, in JPRS-UMA-86-049, 2 September 1986.

21. Biryukov, *op. cit.*; and Agafonov, *op. cit.*

22. Agafonov, p. 5.

23. "Evil Intentions and Irrefutable Facts: Answers by Fleet Admiral N.I. Smirnov, First Deputy Commander in Chief of the U.S.S.R. Navy, to *Krasnaya zvezda's* Questions," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 16 May 1987, 1st ed., p. 5, in *FBIS-SOV-87-096*, 13 May 1987, pp. A4-A6; see also Mantborpe, "The Soviet View," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, November 1987, pp. 145-147.

24. Colonel General V. Lobov, "Peace and Stability for the World's Oceans," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 28 June 1987, 1st ed., p. 3, in *FBIS-SOV-87-132*, 10 July 1987, pp. AA1-AA4.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Novosti* interview with Fleet Admiral Chernavin, published in Bulgarian in *Sofia Narodna Armia*, 24 July 1987, pp. 1, 4, in *FBIS-SOV-87-144*, 28 July 1987, pp. V1-V4.

27. See Chernavin, "Combat Readiness of Naval Forces . . ." *op. cit.* for an example. On Gorbachev's initial impact see Commander Dale Herspring, USNR-R, "Gorbachev and the Soviet Military," *Naval Intelligence Quarterly*, vol. VIII, no. 2, pp. 10-25.

28. Lobov, *op. cit.*

29. On the background of this initiative, see Aleksandr Mozgovoy, "For Security on the Sea Routes," *International Affairs*, January 1987, pp. 77-84, 103; and G. Sturua, "Peace to the Ocean Waters," *Soviet Military Review*, November 1982, pp. 51-52.

30. "On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Pact Member States" as published in *Pravda*, 31 May 1987, excerpted in Leon Goure, "The Soviet Strategic View," *Strategic Review*, Summer 1987, pp. 90-92; for comments, see Rear Admiral G. Kostev, "Our Military Doctrine in the Light of New Political Thinking," *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, September 1987, p. 17, as excerpted in Goure, "The Soviet Strategic View," *Strategic Review*, Fall 1987, pp. 85-87; Lev Yudovich, "Warsaw Pact New Military Doctrine: More Velvet Glove, Less Iron Fist," *Armed Forces Journal International*, February 1988, pp. 38-39; and Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika, New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), pp. 201-204.

31. "On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Pact Member States," p. 92.

32. M.S. Gorbachev, speech at Presentation of Order of Lenin and Gold Medal in Murmansk, Moscow Television Service, 1458GMT, 1 October 1987, *FBIS-SOV-87-191*, 2 October 1987, pp. 27-42.

33. Marshal of the Soviet Union S.F. Akhromeyev, "The Doctrine of Preventing War, Defending Peace and Socialism," *Problemy mira i sotsializma*, no. 12, December 1987 (Signed to Press 6 November 1987), pp. 23-28, in *FBIS-SOV-88-001A*, 4 January 1988, pp. 1-6.
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35. Interview with Colonel General V.N. Lobov by unnamed correspondent on "North Europe: Strengthening Stability and Security," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 29 January 1988, 2nd ed., in *FBIS-SOV-88-021*, 2 February 1988, pp. 5-7.
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37. Vice Admiral I. Khurs, "Combat Operations at Sea and the Problems of Early Warning," *Zarubezhnoye voyennoye obozreniye*, Part 1, June 1987 (Signed to Press 4 June 1987), pp. 47-53, in *JPRS-UFM-87-008*, 29 December 1987, pp. 29-34, and Part 2, July 1987 (Signed to Press 6 July 1987), pp. 49-54, in *JPRS-UFM-88-001*, 27 January 1988, pp. 34-38; for earlier writings that discuss naval operations in a similar vein, see Captain 1st Rank V. Alekseyev, "Characteristics of Contemporary Naval Battle," *Morskoy sbornik*, no. 10, 1986, pp. 17-22, and Admiral P. Navoyrsev, "Law-Governed Patterns, Content and Characteristic Features of Modern Naval Operations," *Morskoy sbornik*, no. 7, July 1986, pp. 18-23; see also the articles cited in note 17, *supra*, for articles on U.S. naval subjects that appear to have informed Khurs' analysis.
38. Khurs, "Combat Operations at Sea," Part I, p. 29.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
41. On Soviet analyses, see LTjg William C. Green, USNR-R, "Assessing Discrepancies Between Soviet Military and Academic Writings," *Naval Intelligence Quarterly*, vol. VII, no. 1, pp. 1-8; and Green, "Are There Hawks and Doves in The Soviet Leadership?" *Strategic Review*, Winter 1987, pp. 31-42.
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43. Captain 1st Rank V. Stelkov, "Naval Forces in U.S. 'Direct Confrontation' Strategy," *Morskoy sbornik*, no. 5, 1983, pp. 78-82; see also Trofimenko, pp. 162-175.
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