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Diplomacy and Defense Planning

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The Nixon Doctrine, first articulated in the summer of 1969, provides the opportunity for a new era in American foreign policy—one based on multipolarity, flexibility, and, perhaps most important, paradoxical support of both détente and military strength. In providing opportunities for diplomacy, however, the doctrine presents an interesting challenge to the defense decisionmaker who must deal with the uncertainties of manpower, weapons, and force levels needed to meet the variety of potential commitments.

DIPLOMACY AND DEFENSE PLANNING

An article prepared
by

Lieutenant Commander John G. Kost, U.S. Navy

INTRODUCTION

When the Nixon Doctrine was first announced on Guam in the summer of 1969, few perceived its impact beyond the immediate problem of Vietnam. The events of the 1970's, however, have presented dramatic evidence that the Nixon Doctrine is indeed a fundamental departure from American post-World War II foreign policy and the beginning of a new era of international relations.

The doctrine, some critics argue, is vague and contradictory, but what the critic may perceive as vagueness and contradiction is, in fact, a carefully designed pattern of paradoxes essential to a flexible, creative foreign policy which seeks to go beyond the exhausted, simplistic remedies of the past. In the opening chapter of his 1961 book *The Necessity for Choice*, Henry Kissinger, the Nixon Doctrine's architect, provides an illuminating view on the crucial importance of paradox:

We must be willing to face the paradox that we must be dedicated both to military strength and to arms control, to security as well as to negotiation, to assisting the new nations towards freedom and self-respect without accepting their interpretation of all issues. If we cannot do all these things, we will not be able to do any of them. Our ability to master the seeming paradoxes will test even more than our ability to survive; it will be the measure of our worthiness to survive.¹

A NEW ERA

Writing in 1961, Kissinger warned that America must give up its illusions of omnipotence and invulnerability, two of the cornerstones of a foreign policy that went bankrupt after 25 years. He criticized foreign policy for having been overly partisan and critically analyzed

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international environment, Hahn targets his attack on the implementation of the declared goals. Though the classical balance of power system may have been displaced by the concept of a "stable structure," as stated in the doctrine, Hahn maintains that the guiding principles of realpolitik still obtain. "... so long as the United States maintains the requisite strength, we can play by the rules of Realpolitik... indeed... Realpolitik appears to be the regulating mechanism of the multipolar balance envisaged by the Nixon Doctrine."¹⁵

A critique by Earl Ravenal, writing in *Foreign Affairs*, expressed a similar idea in more harsh and apocalyptic terms. Both writers were concerned in the main with the implementation of the doctrine—whether the requisite military strength would or could be maintained to assure America's ability to meet the doctrine's professed goals and commitments. He challenged the statement from the initial foreign policy report that claimed the NSC review of national strategies was bringing foreign policy objectives and defense budgets into balance, arguing instead that the Nixon Doctrine represented a severe imbalance.

Essentially we are to support the same level of potential involvement with smaller conventional forces. The specter of intervention will remain, but the risk of defeat or stalemate will be greater; or the nuclear threshold will be lower. The fundamental issues of interests, commitments and alliances are not resolved.¹⁶

This is essentially the most frequent criticism of the Nixon Doctrine, the perceived imbalance between global commitments and the generally observed decline in United States general purpose force capabilities. In a later article, also written in the Asian context and before the President's visit to Peking, Earl Ravenal further developed his critique of what he referred to as the

"President's protean doctrine."¹⁷ Reflecting on the term "stability," commonly used in the language of the doctrine, Ravenal interpreted its use as no more than a "neutral and sophisticated euphemism for 'containment.'"¹⁸ Extending this interpretation, he postulated that Vietnamization "may have finally succeeded in endowing South Vietnam with the ability to keep the United States perpetually involved in Southeast Asia."¹⁹ With this view of the Nixon Doctrine as a disguised continuum of the postwar containment policy, Ravenal concluded that without either a retrenchment of commitments or an adequate general purpose force to meet the commitments, the danger of the United States resorting to tactical and strategic nuclear weapons is greatly enhanced.²⁰ In closing, Ravenal became philosophical, analogizing the Nixon era with Byzantium:

The coming age could be neo-imperial, or it could be post-imperial. And the transition could be grudging, baleful retreat, or it could be a tolerant concession to the condition of America's prospective long haul: the abandonment of the principle that this nation has a privileged purpose that it must impress on the rest of the world.²¹

Both the Hahn and Ravenal critiques apparently expect immediate and decisive effects from the Nixon Doctrine. The only immediate effect, in my view, has been the cessation of direct American military involvement in Vietnam. The language of the doctrine abounds with gerunds—building, emerging, shaping, growing, balancing. The reader of the annual foreign policy reports is constantly reminded that the Nixon Doctrine is keyed to the future, providing thematic guidance during the complex transition of international relations from that of a bipolar world to a multipolar world. Putting aside the role of guarantor of the free world is a

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long-range goal of the Nixon Doctrine and not an instant objective. Though more than 600,000 men have been withdrawn from Asia, they were largely in a direct or indirect supportive role of Vietnam, and, to a degree, Asian forces have been restructured and augmented with the homeporting of a carrier task force in Japan and the delivery of increasingly more modern weapons to the Vietnamese and Koreans. Substantial forces have not been withdrawn from Europe, despite increased congressional pressure. Détente with the Soviet Union and rapprochement with the People's Republic of China are still more in the category of process than fact, reconstitution of the Atlantic Alliance is hardly beyond the "squabbling" stage referred to by Henry Kissinger in 1961, economic equilibrium among the United States-Japan-Western Europe triangle remains dangerously fragile, and the world is coming off the second Middle East war in less than a decade under the continued threat of Arab oil embargoes. In my judgment, the Nixon Doctrine is still very much in its formative years, though the framework, which is a fundamental departure from past policy, has been sufficiently established to be adopted by the succeeding administration. The Nixon Doctrine is not in the same definitive style of the Monroe, Truman, or Eisenhower doctrines. Without being amorphous, it has been loosely structured to accommodate the opportunities for creative diplomacy. To understand *containment* is a far simpler intellectual challenge than to understand the *fluid nature of the new multilateral diplomacy*.

Seeming to acknowledge this difficulty, Henry Kissinger wrote in 1969: "In the years ahead, the most profound challenge to American policy will be philosophical: to develop some concept of order in a world which is bipolar militarily but multipolar politically."²

The Nixon Doctrine faces that challenge head on, yet in my view retains the

flexibility to maneuver diplomatically and militarily. For the Nixon Doctrine to succeed, however, the defense side of the defense and diplomacy equation will have to make critical adjustments, both in philosophy and in hardware.

THE CENTRAL PARADOX: A LARGER ROLE FOR DEFENSE

Thus we maintain strong military power even as we seek mutual limitation and reduction of arms. We do not mistake climate for substance. We base our policies on the actions and capabilities of others, not just on estimates of their intentions.²³

Understanding the Paradox. Building on the fundamental themes of partnership, strength, and a willingness to negotiate, the Nixon Doctrine prescribes two patterns of diplomacy for the conduct of American foreign policy. First, maintain all treaty commitments in a genuine bilateral arrangement, sharing with our allies the responsibility for their defense. Second, seek the new opportunities for creative diplomacy presented by the changing international system. Both patterns, developed independently or concurrently, add a broad new dimension to defense planning.

The pledge to keep all present treaty commitments is not a mere continuum of the postwar containment policy. American economic and military assistance to countries threatened by aggression will continue, but in the future America "will look to others for a greater share in the definition of policy as well as in bearing the costs of the programs."²⁴ Those countries most directly threatened will have to assume the primary responsibility for providing manpower. Moreover, in keeping commitments, America will also look for a demonstrated spirit of regional responsibility. As the doctrine states, "without the foundations of self-help and regional

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help, American help will not succeed."²⁵ There is no express indication that an ally's current inability to assume a greater share of the defense responsibility will vitiate the present level of American commitment, but, at the same time, the doctrine is clear in that the United States considers commitment maintenance as a dynamic process in which the levels of military and economic contributions are subject to changing conditions.

Such flexibility gives little comfort to the American defense planner. He must now deal with the variables of manpower, weapons systems, and operational force levels to meet whatever commitments the foreign policy decisionmakers may require at any given moment. Always compounding his problem are fiscal constraints and the budgetary requirement for projecting needs in 5-year increments. In past years the American commitment to the various alliances was very nearly stable at some fixed level of men, ships, aircraft, missiles, and other equipment. It was costly, but predictable. Now the defense planner must make some extraordinarily critical judgments, the foremost of which must be the viability of the burdensharing concept itself. Though the judgments will not be unlike those made by defense planners in implementing Vietnamization, the conditions will be far less ideal, for in Vietnam costs were not a serious constraint, and it was deemed that the United States had a vital, vested interest.

While the Nixon Doctrine is careful to confirm existing commitments, it states forthrightly that new commitments will be concluded only after very "rigorous yardsticks" are applied:

What precisely is our national concern? What precisely is the threat? What would be the efficacy of our involvement? . . . We are not involved in the world because we have commitments; we have commitments because we

are involved. Our interests must shape our commitments, rather than the other way around.²⁶

Below the rhetorical surface, the language seems to say that the simpler measure of "containment" will no longer suffice.

The most familiar slogan of the Nixon Doctrine has been its professed goal to move from an era of confrontation to an era of negotiation. The instrument for attaining that goal lies in the opportunities for creative diplomacy made possible by "an increasingly heterogeneous and complex world" transitioning from a rigid condition of bipolarity to a more flexible condition of multipolarity.²⁷ Particularly important contributors to this transitional condition have been the schism between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, the reemergence of Japan as a world power, Western Europe's economic and political revival, and the attainment of strategic parity with the United States by the Soviet Union. In an unprecedented series of diplomatic initiatives, the President, within the 12-month period between January 1972 and January 1973, conversed with Chinese leaders in Peking, conducted a summit meeting with the leadership of the Soviet Union, concluded a Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement with the Soviet Union, and signed a Vietnam truce settlement.

As an instrument of this creative diplomacy, defense forces are measured primarily by their political utility in the diplomacy of commitment maintenance. A principal objective, in the context of the Nixon Doctrine, is to achieve a "durable peace" whereby the skeletal structure of commitment maintenance can become a reality. Skeletal structure refers to an allied economic and military partnership which minimizes the role of the United States in both the "definition of policy" and in "bearing the costs of the programs."²⁸

The political utility of military forces 4

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can be examined from various perspectives. In both Korea and Vietnam, U.S. military forces exercised political as well as military utility, but in the context of this paper the political utility of military force is defined as influence on the attainment of a diplomatic objective rather than a military combat objective. Useful recent examples of political utility can be found in the decisions to acquire an antiballistic missile system, accelerate construction of the Trident submarine, and the retention of a substantial number of U.S. troops in Western Europe. Each of these had a profound effect on related negotiations, giving the United States a much stronger bargaining position.

The winter 1973 Middle East crisis provides a poignant example of the political utility of military forces. Almost immediately following the outbreak of fighting between the Arabs and the Israelis, the United States and the Soviet Union commenced incremental diplomatic maneuvers, reinforced by history's biggest airlift of military arms to their respective allies.²⁹ The United States deployed a carrier task force to the western Indian Ocean, augmented the standing 6th Fleet forces in the Mediterranean, and, as the diplomatic exchanges became more direct, the strategic air force was put on full alert. At home, concern was being expressed whether the United States had sufficient on-scene and reserve military power to influence the diplomatic initiatives. Senator Jackson used the opportunity to reveal, in his judgment, the weakened position of the U.S. Fleet in the Mediterranean. In an interview before NBC's "Meet the Press," he noted that the Soviets had augmented their Mediterranean Fleet by 25 percent and outnumbered the U.S. 6th Fleet 95 vessels to 60. He also stressed an important qualitative trend in the Soviet capability: "For the first time in the long imperial history of Russia they have naval infantry aboard the ships in the

Mediterranean; probably equivalent to a battalion, with landing craft offshore at this very hour."³⁰ Similarly, Howard K. Smith warned on ABC news that "before long, we'll have to back down," not only in the Middle East where the U.S. fleet was "outnumbered and outgunned," but elsewhere in the world if U.S. defense forces continued to decline in the face of the growing Soviet capabilities.³¹

The United States, in the Middle East, had run the full range of military capabilities, from airlift to the inherent threat of a full strategic alert, in order to support the ongoing diplomatic battle. Though the United States employed no direct military force against the Soviets or Arabs, a significant show of force was obviously considered necessary to influence the diplomatic objective. Already the Defense Department is assessing where the capabilities were deficient, how significant a drawdown of military equipment was caused by the resupply of Israel, the price tag, and, most importantly, what the implications are for meeting the future demands of creative diplomacy. In the Mediterranean a substantial U.S. force was present as part of the NATO commitment, but no such forces, inadequate as they may have been, according to critics such as Senator Jackson and Howard K. Smith, are so conveniently prepositioned elsewhere to provide the required diplomatic support.

During the closing months of the Vietnam war, a combined air and sea armada, unmatched in size or capability since World War II, was launched against North Vietnam, no longer to achieve a military objective, but rather to emphasize the American position on the negotiations which had temporarily been suspended. Even following the agreement, a multicarrier task force was kept combat ready in the Tonkin Gulf as a powerful signal to the North Vietnamese Government of our diplomatic resolve.

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The concept of a central paradox, as I have attempted to develop, should not be considered as a variation on the theme of the Hahn/Ravenal critique. On the contrary, I maintain that the Nixon Doctrine is not a mere rhetorical disguise but that it makes a genuine effort to balance American commitments with military, economic, and psychological realities. Moreover, the message of the Nixon Doctrine, as it has evolved through the President's annual foreign policy reports, supports military strength and fully acknowledges that negotiation paradoxically requires a larger military role than confrontation. As was pointed out in the Ravenal critique, our present force levels are indeed overcommitted, and few, including administration officials, would argue that the balance can ever be determined exactly. The practical exigencies of executing the Vietnam drawdown have no doubt exerted an extraordinarily disruptive influence on the military planning process which, at any rate, lags behind political adjustments. Hopefully, the war-related disruptions are only temporary, and the onus remains squarely on the defense planners to adapt to the thesis of the Nixon Doctrine and produce forces sufficient to the purpose of both patterns of diplomacy.

An Era of Austerity. Following a particularly strenuous budget review session in the Pentagon, Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, serving as the Chief of Naval Operations, was heard advising his Navy planners to adjust for a move from a four-room house into a three-room house. This analogy presents a discerning awareness of the intellectual adjustment required of the Department of Defense by the economic and political imperatives of the 1970's. Two principal forces compel the Defense Department to move into that three-room house. They are the change in domestic attitudes and the astronomical

increase of weapons acquisition and personnel costs.

In the late 1960's, disillusioned and frustrated by the Vietnam war, a growing segment of the American population began to criticize both military intervention abroad and expanding military expenditures. In large part, the Nixon Doctrine was developed in response to this attitude. Public opinion polls conducted from 1945 to 1960 reported consistent majorities of at least 60 percent who favored either maintaining or increasing the defense budget, but by 1968, 53 percent thought the defense budget was too large. Analyzing these statistics for an article on "Domestic Change and National Security Policy," Leslie Gelb concluded that "to the extent . . . these changed attitudes on defense spending reflect or shape attitudes on foreign policy and the use of force generally, a new dimension has been added to politics."³²

The President's third annual foreign policy report articulated the acute implications of the military budget and presents a stark warning for the 1970's:

Personnel costs now absorb over half of the defense budget; by the middle of the decade these costs may rise to well over 60 percent. At the same time, the costs of new weapons systems have generally been two to three times the costs of those they replace, largely due to increasing complexity. The combination of these two effects may by the mid-1970's seriously limit our ability to meet our anticipated security requirements.³³

Fortune magazine reported that 56 percent of the 1972 military budget went to pay and related costs, whereas 42 percent was so allocated in 1961. The *Fortune* article concluded: "The result is that while the forces are being paid better and on a standard that is the envy of the world's armies, they have less capital for investment in the military

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technologies that alone can make their diminished numbers count for more."³⁴

It is patently obvious that the dramatic increase in personnel costs is attributable to All-Volunteer Force incentives. Yet recruit quotas are still not being met, particularly by the Army, and further monetary incentives are being considered. Comparing the defense budget in current billions, the 1974 budget totaled \$79 billion and the 1954 budget only \$43.6 billion. Yet, when measured in constant (1958) billions, the 1974 budget is less than 80 percent of the 1954 budget.³⁵ An excellent summary of recent defense budget history was provided in the same *Fortune* article cited above:

In current dollars, total U.S. military spending has increased by half since 1964, and has been steady in the \$75-billion to \$79-billion range for the past five years. However, military spending has been a diminishing force in the national economy (1968=6.8% GNP and in 1973=6.4% GNP)... What is more significant, by reason of its long-term effects, is the continuous decline, both in current and in constant dollars..., of the funds for military investment... In constant 1958 dollars, the \$22.9 billion currently budgeted for these activities comes down to \$16.6 billion, and provides \$5 billion less in purchasing power than Congress authorized ten years ago. Plainly, increases in personnel costs have caused much of the rise in military spending.³⁶

It is within this increasingly severe fiscal environment that the Defense Department is obliged to produce forces in support of the Nixon Doctrine. The difficult solution may not rest in simply more forces of every type but rather in a new style of forces—usable, mobile, economically manned, and decisively armed.

THE HARD CHOICE

... it would be unwise to make further unilateral cuts in deployments or significant reductions in overall force levels in the foreseeable future... The limitations of our current force levels were illustrated by the strain placed on our forces as a whole by our effort last year to help counter the invasion of South Vietnam by a small nation with practically no navy or air force.³⁷

Force Planning Alternatives. A grave concern over the lack of a relevant strategic doctrine and a coherent military policy is evidenced in Henry Kissinger's writings. In 1969 he stated:

No foreseeable force level—not even fullscale ballistic missile defenses—can prevent levels of damage eclipsing those of the two world wars. In these conditions, the major problem is to discipline power so that it bears a rational relationship to the objectives likely to be in dispute. The paradox of contemporary military strength is that a gargantuan increase in power has eroded its relationship to policy.³⁸

This concern is unmistakably reflected by the revitalized NSC system. The newly established Defense Program Review Committee, mentioned earlier in this paper, is attempting to assist the NSC balance policy and defense. In a significant departure from past procedures, the President now issues strategic and fiscal guidance, based on the corporate advice of the NSC, to the Secretary of Defense in sufficient time for it to be used as the basis of the annual force planning and budgeting exercise.

Secretary Laird, in presenting the Nixon administration's first comprehensive 5-Year Defense Program to the Congress, introduced the strategy of

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realistic deterrence to meet the objectives of the Nixon Doctrine:

The Strategy of Realistic Deterrence is new. Those who would dismiss it as a mere continuation of past policies in new packaging would be quite mistaken. Past policy was responsive and reactive. Our new Strategy is positive and active. Past policy focused on containment and accommodation. The new Strategy emphasizes measured, meaningful involvement and vigorous negotiation from a position of strength.³⁹

In the same report a careful guideline for defense planning was presented:

I believe that in terms of force levels and expenditures, we can make the transition from war to lasting peace and expanding freedom with an efficient and modernized U.S. military force that, in peacetime, would require no more than seven percent of Gross National Product or less and be made up of no more than 2.5 million men and women who are volunteers. Combined with adequate strength, true partnership and constructive negotiations, such a force is designed to deter war.⁴⁰

The heavy reliance on the language of deterrence is unsettling to many national security analysts. This, coupled with the actual observed decline of general purpose forces, rekindles memories of the Eisenhower defense policy which relied on deterrence rather than conventional combat capability and resulted in the doctrine of massive retaliation, so poignantly criticized by Kissinger in his statement above. This is precisely the root of the danger perceived by Earl Ravenal—a situation where a weak conventional force placed in combat could prompt the premature release of tactical nuclear weapons. Jerome Kahan, commenting on future

U.S. security objectives, made the following judgment:

The safest course for the United States in the seventies would thus be to avoid increasing—and, if possible, to reduce—its reliance on strategic nuclear forces and to keep them as far as possible in the background, as the ultimate deterrent to nuclear attack. This approach should be reflected in U.S. declaratory policy, strategic doctrine, and overall defense posture. This clearly implies a need for complementing strategic nuclear forces with adequate conventional forces, which will set some limits to the cuts that can be made in our non nuclear capabilities.⁴¹

No doubt, some analysts would argue that conditions are propitious for a return to the Kennedy administration's strategy of flexible and controlled response.⁴²

However, beyond the complexities of paradox, austerity, and strategy discussed briefly in the preceding paragraphs, defense planners are confronted by yet another constraint: interservice competition. Wholly unlike the traditional gridiron rivalries or evening boastings in the officer clubs, this is serious competition among professionals for favorable decisions on proposed weapons systems, strategies, political-military alternatives, and missions. Each military service carefully develops what it considers the optimum budget to ensure the national security and support American foreign policy. Earl Ravenal, in his critical essay on the political-military gap of the Nixon Doctrine, made a concise observation of this phenomenon:

Quite naturally, the reaction of the services to a new national security policy is to accommodate to it by gravitating to where the "action" is—as they all adapted to the unconventional warfare vogue of the 1960's (even the Navy was

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operating in commando units far behind enemy lines). The services are again competing innovatively, this time to adapt their traditional arms to the aseptic connotations of the Nixon Doctrine. The Navy—so far the principal beneficiary—promotes its normal “over-the-horizon” posture (the presumably non-provocative, stand-off readiness to deliver overwhelming force) and its comprehensive “blue-water” strategy (the quiet world-wide reach). The Air Force insists, characteristically, on the centrality of strategic attack (the attempted destruction of the enemy’s will). The Army abstracts a new mythology of remote engagement (the automated electronic battlefield and the prompt, precise, lethal reaction).⁴³

A goal of the Program Planning and Budgeting System (PPBS) introduced by former Secretary of Defense McNamara was to control this phenomenon of service competition. Alain Enthoven and Wayne Smith, biographers of the PPBS, reported the condition of the Defense Department in 1961 when the McNamara regime assumed office: “Arbitrary budget ceilings and the extrapolation of existing Service fractions year after year led the services to develop an extensive arsenal of tactics for attempts to increase their share of the total defense budget.”⁴⁴ Burton Sapin, another watchman of the Pentagon machinery, has concluded:

The point is that the inability of the three services to reach clear-cut agreement on the allocation of roles and missions, the control of particular weapons systems, the division of military budgets, and the shape of a national military strategy not only accelerated the centralizing trend in the making of major military decisions, but also put that decisionmaking power increasingly into the hands

of the Secretary of Defense.⁴⁵

By wielding the very facile, new technique of systems analysis, the McNamara regime was able to come to grips with the behemothian defense budget and its complex of issues. At first the services were overwhelmed by the revolutionary management technique that threatened their previously unchallenged rationales, but the services have reacted by developing their own system analysis capabilities which now equal, if not surpass, those of the Secretary’s office. Hence, the bureaucratic tug and pull of the budget season persists. Few would argue that such an exercise is not salutary. On the contrary, the innovative proposals from each service on how best to adapt strategies to foreign policies, though they may be contradictory and competitive, are an essential input to policy formation. In his excellent summary of SALT I negotiations, John Newhouse identified a serious risk in the alternative, a Joint Chiefs of Staff approach to problem solving:

The Joint Chiefs of Staff operate both as military heads of their services and as an institution. In the latter role, they normally speak with one voice, an achievement that requires a good deal of internal compromise. The process of compromise often denies the President a clear impression of the real position of each service on an issue.⁴⁶

Similarly, Enthoven and Smith concluded:

Of course, the JCS is supposed to integrate these interdependent Service parts. But history has repeatedly shown that a committee like the JCS does not act this way. If not forced to make hard choices between Service interests, the JCS staples together Service requests. If forced to make hard choices, the JCS tries to negotiate a compromise—one that often

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bears little relationship to the best mix of forces from a national or a military point of view. If the joint Chiefs fail to agree, they hand the problem back to the Secretary of Defense.⁴⁷

The Secretary, therefore, must maintain a clear understanding of the paradox of the doctrine, balance all programs against the established strategy, and control service bias without submerging it in consensus. Ideally, the size of the budget will be a Presidential decision made on the advice of the National Security Council in which the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are included. As discussed earlier, it seems unlikely that the size of the budget will enjoy any significant growth. This was clearly stated in Secretary Laird's guideline for defense planning which set the budget threshold at 7 percent of GNP, and, in large part, the Nixon Doctrine itself flowed from the public's unwillingness to support a growing defense budget. The President's second foreign policy report confirmed the doctrine's objective to stabilize military spending: "Our current level of security expenditures is adequate to provide the forces necessary to protect our vital interests. It must be kept that way."⁴⁸

Determining the shape of a fiscally constrained budget to support the Nixon Doctrine's commitment to allies and promise of vigorous diplomatic initiatives will require perhaps harder choices than during wartime when missions are most clearly understood and resources most plentifully available. The Secretary of Defense must first understand the central paradox of the Nixon Doctrine, that a larger role has been demanded of defense. The automatic reaction of many defense planners would be to understand a larger role only in terms of larger forces. The Secretary must diminish that tendency and encourage his analysts to concentrate on optimizing the separate

budget submissions of the services and more on optimizing the whole, as Enthoven and Smith concluded above but which has never been attained. Defense analysts, concentrating on individual service submissions, effect budget reductions and efficiencies by making incremental choices rather than the hard choice; that is, they delay procurement programs and reduce total numbers of units to be purchased or retained within a class rather than eliminate programs entirely. The individual services have already performed the analysis to optimize their programs in the context of their perceived requirements. It is for the Secretary to take the maximum management view and balance all programs of all services against the established strategy in support of the operative foreign policy and within the economic constraints of the budget. Service bias must not be invulnerable nor should it be submerged in consensus.

Hard choice analysis may open a crack for an eventual breakthrough toward the development of new military strategies which are not only sufficient, but best suited to the support of a fluid foreign policy as expressed by the Nixon Doctrine. Broad alternatives which might present themselves would be strategies which:

- Stress a qualitative adjustment of force levels rather than quantitative, i.e., more of one type of weapons system of capability and none of another rather than more of both.
- Support the creative development of regional armies, air forces, and navies, heavily endowed with U.S. equipment and training.
- Exercise the "total force" (regulars, reserves, allies) regularly.
- Emphasize a central strategy supported by lesser capable, low-cost strategies, i.e., strong navy, weaker air force and army.

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The above list does not purport to be either exhaustive or novel, and for reasons of simplicity it avoids directly addressing the problem of strategic forces.

Conclusions. The world political environment has changed since 1948, and after years of stagnation American policy has decided to accept these changes. In fact, perhaps the greatest contribution that the Nixon Doctrine has as yet made is that it recognizes reality. The wornout assumption that the United States operated in a bipolar world faced with monolithic communism has been discarded in favor of a fluid policy based on multilateralism. Likewise, the doctrine has taken stock of the diminished public support for overseas commitment, accepted the accompanying demand for fiscal reduction, and has rejected the myth that American military force can or should protect anticommunism everywhere.

A new era has most certainly dawned on the foreign policy of the United States, but the exact nature and direction of that era is yet to be seen. The

Nixon Doctrine presents opportunities for future policymakers, not a clear-cut outline of steps to follow. Success or failure is not intrinsic to its structure but depends wholly on the wisdom of future decisionmakers and their ability to understand the changing paradoxical world system on which it is based.

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Lt. Comdr. John G. Kost, U.S. Navy, did his undergraduate work at the University of Notre Dame and is a graduate of the Destroyer School at Newport, R.I. He has served as Operations Officer of U.S.S.

Harwood (DD-861) and Commanding Officer of U.S.S. *Defiance* (PG-95)—the first patrol gunboat to operate in the Mediterranean. Lieutenant Commander Kost has had duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09C), and from 1972 to 1973 was the Administrative Assistant and Aide to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations; he is currently a student at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

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24. Nixon, *Building for Peace*, pp. 10-11.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.
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32. Leslie H. Gelb, "Domestic Change and National Security Policy," Henry Owen, ed., *The Next Phase in Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1973), p. 251.
33. U.S. Presidents, 1969-(Nixon), *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: the Emerging Structure for Peace*, A Report to the Congress by Richard Nixon, President of the United States, 9 February 1972 (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1972), p. 167.
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35. "The Pentagon's Goal-Line Stand," *Time*, 8 October 1973, p. 35.
36. Murphy, p. 144.
37. Nixon, *Shaping a Durable Peace*, p. 189.
38. Kissinger, *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays*, p. 59.
39. Melvin R. Laird, *Toward a National Security Strategy of Realistic Deterrence*, Statement of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird Before the House Armed Services Committee on the FY 1972-1976 Defense Program and the 1972 Defense Budget, 9 March 1971 (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971), p. 2.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
41. Jerome H. Kahan, "Strategic Armaments," Henry Owen, ed., *The Next Phase in Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1973), p. 237.
42. Leslie H. Gelb and Arnold M. Kuzmack, "General Purpose Forces," Henry Owen, ed., *The Next Phase in Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1973), p. 213. "As of this writing, the Nixon administration has neither explicitly reaffirmed nor replaced this policy. In response to pressures to reduce the defense budget it has . . . taken moves that affect overall conventional combat readiness." Secretary of Defense Schlesinger's defense budget for 1975, however, indicates an intention to deliberately pursue a more flexible strategic doctrine.
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44. Alain C. Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, *How Much Is Enough? Shaping the Defense Program, 1961-1969* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 17.
45. Burton M. Sapin, *The Making of United States Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1966), p. 146.
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