

1972

The Barometer

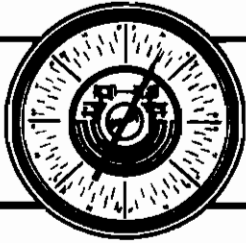
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Recommended Citation

Johnson, W. Spencer (1972) "The Barometer," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 25 : No. 7 , Article 8.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol25/iss7/8>

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THE BAROMETER

Lieutenant Commander Wyttenbach and Lieutenant Commander Strasser are certainly to be commended for having undertaken the Herculean task of surveying the future of the international political scene in their laudable article "The Future Course of World Politics, 1972-1987," appearing in the May issue of the *Review*. They have dealt with a highly subjective topic in a most objective way, and their thoughts certainly provide food for discussion amongst all interested in or concerned with world affairs.

Since the art of crystal-ball gazing is a highly speculative one, perhaps some further thoughts will give a slightly different tint to the international canvas that Lieutenant Commanders Wyttenbach and Strasser have already colored so well.

One could contend that within the period of the next 15 years there will be five superpowers as opposed to the three—United States, Soviet Union, and China—that the authors project. A nuclear Japan, ably forecast in the article, and Western Europe might well be the other two.

In Europe, an already strong integrated economy within the EEC is soon to be strengthened even further by the addition of Ireland, Britain, Norway, and Denmark. The fact that economic integration has to date proven so successful has practically compelled the British and others to join the Common Market. The existence and functioning of the Eurogroup in the councils of NATO, the recent agreements with regard to currency stabilization within the

EEC designed to work gradually toward a common currency for all Community members, the willingness of the strong currency members (West Germany, the Netherlands, France) to help Britain and Italy meet their obligations under present currency stabilization accords, the recent accord to build complementary arms industries and markets within a pan-European context, and the frequent meetings of EEC foreign ministers to attempt a common approach to foreign problems of mutual interest all presage a more integrated Europe in terms of economic capacity, defense, and foreign policy. Every effort will be made within Western Europe to provide a closely integrated regional structure based on a Bonn-London-Paris axis, with Rome playing a greater role than today if Italy achieves greater governmental stability. As is noted, national identities will be retained, but Europe as a whole will become a force more and more to be reckoned with and equal to the superpowers in every measure of strength (political, armed, and economic). The process will take time, but it seems highly likely to succeed.

True, Germany will likely remain divided, but the prospect of an independent nuclear Germany does not appear to be in the cards. Nothing would prove more destructive of the carefully built milieu of *détente* in Europe than a nuclear armed Germany. Neither the Soviet Union nor the powers in Western Europe would welcome a Germany independently possessing nuclear weapons or a Germany pursuing a foreign policy largely out of tune with the rest of the

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alliance. Either eventuality would prove greatly destabilizing, and the Germans as well as others recognize this fact. German reunification can only be achieved after a long period of negotiation and accommodation in an environment of greatly decreased tension between East and West. We may be on the threshold of just such an era when every effort will be bent toward the creation of genuine *détente*. For the present, Bonn appears temporarily to have shelved the prospect of a reunified Germany in the near future by ratifying of the Berlin accord and the Soviet and Polish treaties. Nevertheless, German reunification will remain a long-term goal for the leaders in Bonn. A nuclear armed Germany would only destroy this first attempt at an East-West *modus vivendi*. Although it is not too difficult to envision a greater German voice in nuclear affairs within NATO and within a growingly unified Western Europe, the prospect of an independently nuclear armed West Germany seems dim at best.

Similarly in the Far East, Japan will come to play an increasingly powerful role. The recent Sino-American rapprochement and the strictures placed on imports from Japan by the United States coupled with the forced revaluation of the yen have cast a new light on Japanese-American relations. Japanese reliance on the United States as both a protective shield in defense matters and a guide to foreign policy seems to have suffered a severe blow. Thus, despite the continuing aversion of some sectors of the Japanese public to an increased defense establishment, a nuclear armed Japan seems a certainty in the next 15 years as the authors point out. Extensive Japanese economic interests abroad and most particularly those in Southeast Asia will ensure that Tokyo will play an ever greater role overseas. A new South-east Asian security arrangement comprising Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore

may well replace the current SEATO alliance. The pace of U.S. withdrawal in the Pacific and the perception of U.S. determination to play a strong and consistent role in that part of the world, however, will largely determine the future evolution of power relationship in the Pacific.

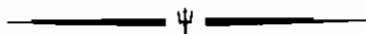
The trend of global economic and trade relationships is also of paramount importance in the shaping of international relationships in the near- and long-term future. The prospect of strong economic competition between Europe, Japan, the Soviet bloc, and the United States for markets in the world is a problem requiring the utmost attention and the greatest of economic and diplomatic skills. Future efforts to reorganize the structure of currencies and trade barriers is of prime importance to future political relationships that will have spill-over effects in defense policies. For example, a high EEC tariff barrier to U.S. trade may well prove far more influential in spurring U.S. military withdrawal from the European scene than any actions taken by the Soviet Union or Eastern European countries. If strong economic powers resort to a high degree of economic protectionism resulting in "beggar my neighbor" policies on a grand scale, instability will surely result. Economic policies giving economic competitors the freest possible access to markets combined with realistic international monetary policies are necessary for the future.

The future of world politics, in this writer's view, seems to be incorporated in the concept of five great powers, the United States, the U.S.S.R., China, Japan, and Western Europe (acting within the NATO context and with a large degree of harmony in world political, economic, and defense affairs) acting jointly to preserve the peace and stability of nations in the nuclear age where *force majeure* will to a far lesser degree be the final arbiter of present and future relationships. Wisdom in

statecraft combined with strong conventional and nuclear deterrent powers at the disposal of each of the five major actors will hopefully give the degree of

stability and balance necessary to build a peaceful world.

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If the skill of a general is one of the surest elements of victory, it will readily be seen that the judicious selection of generals is one of the most delicate points in the science of government and one of the most essential parts of the military policy of a state. Unfortunately, this choice is influenced by so many petty passions that chance, rank, age, favor, part spirit, or jealousy will have as much to do with it as the public interest and justice.

Jomini: Précis de l'Art de la Guerre, 1838