

1969

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Olva B. Butler

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Recommended Citation

Butler, Olva B. (1969) "A Committee Report of the Strategic Planning Study on U.S. Alternatives for an Indian Ocean Area Policy," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 22 : No. 6 , Article 13.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol22/iss6/13>

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A COMMITTEE REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING STUDY ON U.S. ALTERNATIVES FOR AN INDIAN OCEAN AREA POLICY

(The following, a committee report, is a product of a Naval Warfare group effort in the regular curriculum study of strategic planning. The committee was directed to concentrate on a study of the "military alternatives" for the area indicated. Naturally, the committee found itself unable to confine its considerations to strictly military matters, and the report as submitted contains excursions into political and economic matters as well. It is published as a matter of substantive interest and as an illustration of one of the educational methodologies employed by the Naval War College. The report represents a collective view of the subject committee, is not necessarily endorsed by the War College, nor does every participant of the committee necessarily subscribe to every recommendation or position argued therein. It should be noted that an addendum has been appended to the regular report. This addendum points out additional considerations raised in a critique of the report following its formal presentation to the student body of the School of Naval Warfare.)

In recent years U.S. military leaders, particularly those in the Navy, have expressed increasing concern and interest in the Indian Ocean region. Their concern has resulted basically from the announced withdrawal of British forces east of the Suez in 1971 and the power vacuum resulting from the diminution of free world forces and power presence in the region. They view this power void as presenting to other powers an opportunity to expand and gain influence in the littoral states. The presence of Soviet naval vessels in the Indian Ocean during 1968 has given additional meaning to this concern, as have reputed Soviet discussions with Indian leaders on the subject of base and facility privileges for Russian ships.

The Indian Ocean region is a vast expanse of ocean waters and diversified

littoral states. It contains approximately one-third of the world's population and is rimmed by states that are both politically and ethnically divided. The ocean itself is the world's third largest, covering some 28.4 million square miles and extending from the Tropic of Cancer in the north to 30° S. (in fact, it actually extends to Antarctica though the area for discussion purposes may be held to terminate far north of there). From east to west the distance is approximately 6,000 miles, stretching from 40° E. on the western side to 120° E. on the eastern side. Included within the ocean are six major bays or bights; the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, Bay of Bengal, Gulf of Aden, and the Gulf or Straits of Malacca.

Littoral states extend from the Union of South Africa along the eastern

periphery of the African Continent, into Saudi Arabia, then into the Asian subcontinent, finally ending with major island groups in the Indonesian and Australian landmasses. There are also important islands in the oceanic expanse. Key ones are Madagascar (the Malagasy Republic), Ceylon, Socotra, Zanzibar, the Seychelles, and Mauritius. Also the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, near the western shores of Burma, and Bahrein in the Persian Gulf, renowned for its oil reserves, are of significant—though different—strategic importance. Despite the numerous bays in the Indian ocean, a scarcity of natural harbors exists. The most important of those in the north, in Asia proper, are Aden, Bombay, Colombo, Calcutta, and Rangoon. Others are Perth, in Australia; Mombasa, in Kenya; Dar es Salam, in Tanzania; and Durban, in South Africa.

Access to and egress from the Indian Ocean can be controlled at four strategically located places. These are the Cape of Good Hope, the Suez Canal, the Indonesian Straits and the Tasmanian Sea south of Australia. Two additional chokepoints exist—the Gulf of Aden and the Gulf of Oman, respectively closing off the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. During periods of limited or general war, adequate naval power could effectively deny the freedom to transit these key geographical points or areas.

Some Asian strategists believe that the nation controlling the Indian Ocean thereby secures the landmass of the Asian subcontinent. The ocean is the easiest and most accessible entry to the region. Although complete domination of the ocean areas would be most difficult to achieve, except by controlling the strategic chokepoints, political and economic inroads can be made through the projection of military presence. Land routes into the area, particularly in the Asian subcontinent, are difficult because of the mountain ranges which form natural obstacles to land armies and ground transportation.

The Indian Ocean littoral states are representative of the emerging or “Third World” nations. They do represent a significant voting bloc within the United Nations and could be either influential or obstructive to the aims of Western nations. There is a strong resentment to any form of colonialism since they have been subjected to this form of external control for centuries. Their independence is very young, having been achieved, for the most part, after World War II. By natural consequence, any threat to that independence by superpowers, as perceived by the affected nations, will be met with animosity and non-cooperation. Thus, a cautious, prudent approach must be undertaken to guard against complete denial of Western presence in the region.

The Soviets have achieved remarkable success in the Middle East by a change of tactics over the past years. Initially, they hoped to gain entry into the Middle East by military presence and subversion. This proved unsuccessful. Eventually their aims were realized through a politically oriented program using the military as an assisting agency. It is conceivable the same tactics may be used to influence the important states of the Indian Ocean.

The era since World War II has seen an emergence of changing political and social patterns in the states on the Indian Ocean littoral. Encouraged by the U.S. philosophy of self-determination, nationalism has forced the decolonization process in the Asian subcontinent and the insular states of the Indian Ocean expanse. For over 100 years these countries were subject to the mercantile colonial system of Western Europe. After World War II independence was demanded and attained. Unfortunately, most of the states involved were not ready for independence and were not capable of ensuring their own survival. Decolonization brought political fragmentation, the like of which is unprecedented in history. It also

brought political and economic instability and violence of extraordinary ferocity. Although sovereignty was recognized, there was still a basic reliance on the metropole or other world powers for economic and military assistance. This relatively weak posture of the "Third World" countries has made them most vulnerable to subversion and domination. After almost two decades, the countries bordering the Indian Ocean are still ripe targets for political, economic, and military penetration. As of now, however, none has yet succumbed to the ideologies and pressures of communism. The majority have maintained a policy of nonalignment, accepting aid and assistance from both Communist and free world sources. The residual influence and presence of former colonial powers may have impeded and shielded external pressures by ambitious foreign powers. Once all residual presence is removed, however, any undeveloped region will almost automatically become more susceptible to external influences and pressures. The Indian Ocean region contains no world power in the sense of today's definition. The one country possessing the potential of a world power is India.

There are subregions within the Indian Ocean region. The entire area is divided racially, religiously, and politically. Consequently, it is doubtful that unity and collective economic and military organizations will emerge in the near future as a defense mechanism to external aggression. This diversity creates not only a condition vulnerable to external aggression, but also intra-regional disputes. Irrespective of the course of diplomatic jostling and minor skirmishes, the key to control of the Indian Ocean landmass is the ocean itself. The torturous topographic landforms of northern Pakistan, India, and Burma tend to inhibit the southward flow of power and influence. The water routes of the Indian Ocean offer the easiest access to the littoral states. Ex-

ternal powers can operate maritime fleets from bases on the periphery of the region, but can be limited in their freedom of action by an effective indigenous maritime force within the ocean region. Also, denial of bases in the region to external powers can make sustained naval operations very difficult.

INDIA		
ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE
900,000 Men	17,000 Men	60,000 Men
22 Divisions	1 CVA	500 A/C
800 Tanks	2 Subs	60 MIG 21
2,500 Arty.	2 CA	60 MYSTERE
800 APC	3 DD	111 Helos
	11 Frigates	45 CANBERRA
PAKISTAN		
300,000 Men	9,000 Men	14,000 Men
13 Divisions	1 Sub	240 A/C
4 Tank Brig.	2 DD	40 F104
900 Arty.	3 DE	20 B57
	2 Frigates	8 IL28
		80 MIG19
IRAN		
164,000 Men	6,000 Men	10,000 Men
8 Divisions	1 DD	166 A/C
1 Tank Brig.	3 Frigates	75 F86
		75 F5
INDONESIA		
290,000 Men	40,000 Men	22,000 Men
17 Brigades	12 Subs	550 AC
4 Tank Bns.	7 DD	60 MIG
Misc. Arty.	11 Frigates	25 TU16
	2 M.C. Brig.	
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND		
49,000 Men	19,500 Men	24,000 Men
12 Bns.	1 CVS	237 A/C
1 Tank Regt.	1 Sub	80 MIRAGE
	5 DD	52 CANBERRA
	4 DE	20 VAMPIRE
	5 Frigates	

Fig. 1-Indigenous Forces

From a military standpoint, the Indian Ocean region is a mixed picture. The majority of states are very weak militarily, corresponding to their political and economic posture. There are some, on the other hand, which are potentially strong if they can solve their

internal problems. India, in all probability, could be the most powerful nation in the area. She is the most nonaligned nation and has a large population—second only to that of Communist China—but most of her people know only poverty. Of all the nations in this region, however, India is probably advancing most rapidly. The British left behind a sound administrative base constructed during their colonial rule. Economically and militarily, India has a basic Western orientation. She possesses the strongest of all the regional armed forces. Her army is the fourth largest in the world, well trained and well equipped. Participation by the Indian Armed Forces in either a regional collective defense force or a multilateral defense force with Western presence would enhance the free world capability of maintaining a balance of power in what is becoming now, apparently, a power vacuum. Diametrically opposed to the Indian military power potential, however, is her political orientation of non-alignment and noninvolvement with the superpowers. India is therefore a stumbling block to any strategic alternatives for U.S. military power in the Indian Ocean region.

In contrast to India's modern equipment and 1 million men in service, Pakistan has an army of only 300,000 organized into four armor brigades and 13 infantry divisions. Its navy is inferior to that of the Indians as is its air force. The navy has 9,000 men and operates a varied small force of ships. The air force is manned at a strength of 14,000 and has about 240 modern jet aircraft.

Indonesia has an army of 290,000 formed into 16 infantry brigades. The navy is of significant strength—40,000 including two marine brigades. Naval ships include one heavy cruiser, 12 submarines, seven destroyers, 11 frigates, and other assorted ships and landing craft. Air force elements comprise 22,000 men with 550 aircraft of more than 30 types. Approximately 200 of

these aircraft are available for combat operations and include modern jet fighters and bombers. Indonesian military strength exceeds that of Pakistan, and this nation can be considered one of the more capable nations from a military standpoint. Its internal problems are, however, occupying more of its attention at this time than external threats to its security.

The United States has contributed military aid to Iran for over 20 years. The Iranians have a substantial force, but it is numerically inferior to three of the other Indian Ocean states. The Iranian Army of 164,000 is constituted in seven infantry divisions and one armor division.

Air defense is provided by a *Hawk* battalion acquired through U.S. military aid. Compared to other Asian nations, the navy is relatively weak, consisting of only 6,000 personnel and coastal patrol-type ships. The Air force is also inferior, consisting of only 10,000 personnel and about 166 jet aircraft. Despite its limited military capability, however, Iran still constitutes a shield against any Communist aggression in the northern tier of the Middle East.

The only European-origin population and military force contiguous to the region and currently available to the free world are those of Australia. (South Africa, of tremendous strategic importance, is for other reasons out of the picture, and there is no foreseeable possibility of this changing soon.) Australian Armed Forces, small but well-trained, frequently operate in conjunction with New Zealand forces and are capable of expansion during crises. The population base does not, however, permit of a sizable military force when compared to other Anglo-American, West European, or East European power bases. The Australian Army has a strength of 43,300 in eight infantry battalions, one tank regiment, and an airborne regiment. The Navy has 16,500 personnel and operates an antisub-

marine warfare (ASW) carrier, a submarine, five destroyers, four destroyer escorts, and an all-weather fighter squadron plus an ASW squadron. Although small in size, it is one of the more formidable naval forces in the area. The air force with 20,500 men operates 200 combat aircraft which include jet fighters, helicopters, and transports and a surface-to-air missile squadron.

New Zealand has the smallest force of all the militarily important countries in the vicinity, though it should be recognized that it is not strictly an Indian Ocean nation. The army has only 5,600, the navy 2,900 and the air force 4,300 personnel. Her military equipment is limited but relatively modern. While New Zealand is small, her spirit of entering into alliances to ensure not only her security, but that of the world, is remarkable.

The foregoing discussion addresses only those countries with military power which might be used against other states in the region. Others--such as Yemen, Ethiopia, Burma, Malaysia, and the east African states--have little military capability at this time for external military adventure. They cannot be discarded from an evaluation of military potential, since some do possess sufficient forces to suppress internal uprisings and, upon occasion, to foment uprisings in neighboring states.

The Indian Ocean region possesses a wealth of resources. None, however, is essential or strategically important to the United States. Sufficient oil, chromite, rubber, mica, tungsten, and uranium are available to the United States from either domestic or other international sources. The fact that America does not rely on the Indian Ocean region for these resources, however, does not negate the fact that many of our allies are dependent on their access and availability. For example, oil from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf area is vitally important to our West

European and Japanese allies. This source also provides a primary base to support U.S. operations in Vietnam.

From an investment viewpoint, the United States has been a major participant in the aid and development of the region. There is a substantial Government investment in the form of military and economic aid. India alone has received over \$7 billion in economic aid. American private oil investments in the Middle East approximate \$2.85 billion. Private oil company operations, as a result of this investment, reaped some \$1.1 billion in revenues during 1966.

What then are the interests and objectives the United States may have in the Indian Ocean region? If, perchance, this region were to become subjugated to a nation or combination of nations hostile to the United States and the free world, a definite threat to the security of America would very likely be posed. A hostile power capable of capitalizing on the tremendous population base and resources would have a significant power base from which to expand to other global areas. Thus, one interest the United States has in this region, as in many other world regions, is the prevention of domination by a power or powers inimical to our security.

A corollary interest is the assured access and availability to the world of resources in the region. Although these resources are not vital to U.S. existence, they are to some of our allies. The question might then be posed, "Why don't they then undertake to protect those resources so vital to them?" Basically, it can be answered, they do not possess today the economic and military power unilaterally or collectively to support the policies which would be necessary. The British withdrawal from the Indian Ocean region is an excellent example of economic and military atrophy which affects them all. Therefore, to ensure the availability of vital resources to our allies, the United States must be a major participant in the

protection of not only our own, but of free world interests. For as the security of our allies is endangered, so is that of the United States.

A third interest the United States maintains is one of regional stability as a contributory asset to world peace. Because of the nature of the emerging nations and their generally weak political and social characteristics, their vulnerability to revolutionary and external pressures is high. Although we would like to see such nations develop through an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary process, the United States must not attempt to interfere, however well-intentioned its objectives, with methods which the indigenous peoples normally term imperialistic. The majority of these nations fervently desire to be a part of the 20th century, but they are still fighting problems of the 13th. They want to accomplish in a matter of a half century what it has taken the United States, starting from a superior position, more than 300 years, as a European colony in an uninhabited, astonishingly rich land.

There is a diversity of opinion concerning the threat posed to the littoral states of the Indian Ocean. Many factions believe there is no threat and that a power vacuum has existed for years in the region. On the other hand, there are those who perceive a threat of influence by nations hostile to the interests of the United States and the free world. Coupled with this threat is its magnification as the British gradually phase out their political and military presence.

There are two reasons why there has been no major foreign power penetration or domination of Indian Ocean countries since World War II. One, the maritime capabilities of the most potent contenders, the Soviet Union and Communist China, have been minimal. The limited capability each has had has been needed to sustain and defend the economy and security of the respective homelands. Within the past 10 years

Russia has, however, made great strides in maritime power. Additionally, both Russia and China have oriented themselves to economic and technical assistance tactics in the states bordering the Indian Ocean. India has received considerable aid from the Soviet Union, and this has been the opening wedge to further political intrusion and military presence.

The second possible reason why encroachment has so far been limited is the residual presence of Great Britain. There are, however, arguments pro and con as to the true effectiveness of that presence since World War II. Some experts argue that since British power could not halt Japanese excursions into the area prior to the war, by definition a power vacuum existed at that time which Japan filled in 1942. On the other hand, it can be argued that presence of the British, even though their power was diminishing, was at least symbolic and therefore was a countervailing force to other foreign pressure. It is further contended that the planned withdrawal of the British will create a power vacuum into which will flow Communist influence and presence. Finally, it is entirely true that other (naval) powers do exist in the area, but all are already heavily engaged with their own problems. On balance, regardless of which line of reasoning one chooses to adopt, the fact remains that there either is, or will be, a major power void in the Indian Ocean region.

For over a century British political and military presence was evidenced from South Africa around the littoral to Singapore and onward to Australia and New Zealand. There were British bases in East Africa, the Persian Gulf, Aden, Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Malaya, and Singapore plus many of the island groups. The retrenchment from these bases began to become evident in the early 1950's as British power diminished from the strains of World War II. The continued dwindling of power became

explicit and acknowledged with the White Paper of July 1967 which announced a planned withdrawal of all military forces from the area east of the Suez by 1975. Originally the ground forces were to withdraw by 1970, with the air and naval forces remaining another 5 years. These dates have been advanced, and all forces will be out of the area by 1971. In December 1967 British forces were removed from Aden, a strategic control point at the confluence of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Indications are that the Soviets may have already begun to fill this gap.

The British military outback will be extensive in the Indian Ocean region. Approximately 80,000 troops and considerable naval and air force strength have been already or will be redeployed, theoretically to bolster NATO commitments. This includes two aircraft carriers, one commando ship, and support sea and air units, support ships, and air units consisting of eight bomber squadrons, reconnaissance aircraft, air defense squadrons, and ground-attack and medium-range support aircraft. All that will remain of Western presence in the Indian Ocean will be two U.S. destroyers on rotating assignment and a flagship permanently home ported.

For centuries the West has believed the Soviets have had designs on the Middle East and perhaps the Asian subcontinent as well. Today these aims have apparently been partially realized. With the invitation to enter the Middle East having been extended by Egypt in 1955, Soviet expansion and influence have been on the increase. Their political and economic tactics have been advantageously used in building an infrastructure that could give them control of the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea. Facilities are now available to the Soviets in Egypt, Yemen, Sudan, and Somalia. Since the water routes of the Indian Ocean offer the easiest and freest paths to the littoral states, it can be assumed that expanding Soviet commer-

cial and naval maritime power will be used in these waters to further Russian political strategy.

Both the Soviet Black Sea and Pacific Ocean fleets pose a threat of presence in the Indian Ocean. The present closure of the Suez Canal operates to a disadvantage for the Soviets. This has required the Black Sea ships to transit the circuitous South African water route. Reopening the Suez would be most desirable from the Russian view and could immediately bring forth a large, sustained naval presence in the Indian Ocean. The Pacific Ocean fleet has deepwater capabilities and is equipped and trained to exercise influence not only in the western and northern Pacific but in the Indian Ocean as well. The West must be aware of the possibility that the Soviets may obtain naval base rights in both the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

A recent study by the American Security Council for the House Armed Services Committee alludes to Admiral Gorshkov's visit to India in February 1968 as an indication of the Soviet seapower design east of Suez. Russia and India, it states, are completing military ties and the admiral used the occasion of his visit to seek refueling and repair rights for Russian naval ships in Indian ports. The Soviets have already given four submarines to the Indian Navy. Russian naval presence in the Indian Ocean was first demonstrated in 1968. There are definite indications continued presence will be maintained.

The report goes on to point out that the Indian Ocean presents a broad spectrum of opportunities for the use of naval power to achieve political goals. Many of the countries bordering the ocean are in ferment, particularly the East African ones, and are vulnerable to Soviet politico-military pressures. If the Soviets deploy a strong naval squadron in the Indian Ocean, including helicopter carriers and naval infantry, the options available to them will multiply

unless there is a free world counterforce. There is also an indication that the Soviets are using massive military aid to India as a wedge to obtain naval bases in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. These islands are within easy striking distance of Malaysia and Indonesia and are of high strategic value.

A writer for the *Indian Express* of Bombay recently noted that the "arrival of the Soviet Navy means for the first time since Vasco da Gama, Western naval supremacy is faced with a serious challenge." He added, "on the western flank of India, the Soviet Navy's appearance will have an incalculable effect on the Persian Gulf. Already, the Russians have made it plain that after British withdrawal from the area, they do not want the American Navy to take over." Clearly, while the Soviets have made only a small beginning, they have achieved a considerable gain in psychological terms. South Asians view the Soviet Navy as an important factor in their future.

China also poses a potential threat to the Indian Ocean region. Primarily, this threat is focused on the states bordering Red China: Pakistan, India, Burma, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. Although China has a limited number of submarines, her maritime forces are basically of a coastal defense type. The most important threat to these countries is from the army via overland routes. Border clashes between China and India occurred in 1962, and some 140,000 Chinese troops still remain in the proximity of the disputed territory. Additionally, a growing nuclear threat is being developed by the Communist Chinese. Since the Communist Chinese have always regarded the subcontinent as fertile territory for their domination, the spillover of China into the neighboring states is within the realm of possibility.

By 1947 the United States had developed a worldwide strategy of containing Communist aggression. The in-

ternational sorties of the Soviets, our former ally, and the demise of a free China opened American eyes to the threat of Communist ideology and objectives. The Truman Doctrine of 1947 initiated American diplomatic and military strategy that was to bind the United States in bilateral and multilateral commitments on a global basis. A military strategy of forward deployment was adopted. In Europe the NATO structure was fashioned to provide a bulwark to Russian aggression. In the Middle East the U.S. 6th Fleet, the Truman and Eisenhower Doctrines, and U.S. encouragement and support in the formation of the CENTO alliance have attempted to counter Soviet ambitions. In the Far East the line of forward strategy was drawn initially with military presence in Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines. The invasion of South Korea by the North Koreans in 1950, the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1954-55, and the Geneva Accords of 1954 on Vietnam changed our concept and strategic line. As a result of these events, our line was advanced to Korea and Taiwan and extended through Southeast Asia. SEATO was formed in 1954 without, however, the participation of neutralist India.

The Asian subcontinent has not received the strategic consideration that other world areas have, despite the fact that the United States has provided great amounts of economic and military aid to countries in that area. As part and parcel of this policy of aid, the United States has looked to Great Britain as the free world guarantor in the region east of Suez. This was only natural because of the longstanding interest and presence Britain had maintained in the Indian Ocean region.

It can be argued that the United States has no definite military strategy at this time for the Indian Ocean region; likewise, it is clear that a NATO-type arrangement is not suitable here. The U.S. Strike Command at MacDill,

Florida, is responsible for that portion of the Indian Ocean land from India to the westward. The Pacific Command is responsible for that portion eastward from Burma. Although there is a token U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean, two destroyers and a flagship, this force is insignificant insofar as its ability to respond to crises requiring military force is concerned. This symbolic force does contribute to maintaining U.S. influence by its presence, and it can provide command and control for forces sent in augmentation. Except for forces currently engaged in Southeast Asia, there are no other U.S. military forces capable of projecting power, either as a show of force or an emergency force, within a reasonable distance of the region.

As previously stated, there are varying alternative military strategies which could be undertaken in an attempt to underwrite American interests and objectives in the Indian Ocean. However, before considering the alternatives, it might be significant to note some of the forces operating to the disadvantage of the United States.

In considering a military strategy for the region, it is important to understand that the bordering states prize their independence and are not averse to taking foreign policy positions at variance with the West. Nearly all of the nations involved were at one time European colonies. Most of them have gained their independence since World War II. Memories of colonial rule have resulted in their adoption of a policy of non-alignment. Some took their lead from India and have refrained from bloc alignment or military alliance with any of the major powers. Others, such as Pakistan and Indonesia, have sided with one major power or another according to their perceptions of their own interests.

Another consideration presented by these states is the power vacuum debate. In their view there is no power vacuum.

It is a myth, something created by major powers to deny access to other powers. The nonaligned states believe that the appearance of nonindigenous powers, and most particularly the two superpowers, in an area complicates regional problems. They insist that so-called vacuums must be filled from within through the process of local national development.

Aside from the large number of nonaligned states, there are three participants in SEATO and two members of CENTO. A serious difficulty arises in these troubled partnerships from the fact that Pakistan, a member of both organizations, has widely divergent interests from those of the United States concerning the security of South Asia. Pakistan also regards India as a major adversary; there are serious disputes between the two on territorial matters, resulting in Pakistan even seeking support from the Chinese Peoples Republic.

Australia, who views the threat posed by Russia and China in the same light as the United States, is most concerned for her national security. She also has a vital concern for the potential threat that a heavily populated, nonaligned Indonesia presents. In his book, *U.S. Policy and the Security of Asia*, Fred Greene sees the likelihood that additional demands will be placed on the United States to provide guarantees against any future Communist threat from Indonesia in return for continued and increased Australian support.

Lastly, with regard to problems of commitments in terms of bases or multilateral forces, it appears unlikely that any SEATO member will believe it can afford the burden of additional commitments along the East Coast of Africa, or vice versa. On a recent trip to Malaya, Australia, and New Zealand, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressed willingness to enter into economic and social cooperation with members of the Commonwealth, but completely discouraged any possibilities of entering

into defense organizations, even if they could be kept separate from any cold war involvement.

One military strategy the United States could adopt is that of noninvolvement in the Indian Ocean region. This strategy does not require the commitment of American resources. In a military strategy of this type the United States would play a very low key role, if any role at all. Doing so, the United States would not stir the latent anti-Western feelings and anti-imperialistic attitudes of the countries in the area. The major advantages and disadvantages of this strategy alternative can be summed up as follows:

I--NONINVOLVEMENT

PRO

1. Low key role for United States.
2. Does not evoke anti-West feelings by nations.
3. Conserves scarce U.S. military resources.
4. Avoids binding commitments by United States.
5. Assists in U.S. balance of payments.
6. Does not create "irritant" effect in eyes of nonaligned states.

CON

1. Opens area to power play by Communist powers.
2. U.S. inability to respond to crises.
3. Inhibits U.S. intelligence gathering.
4. Limits military options.
5. Limits contact and influence between United States and indigenous military leaders.
6. Does not protect past U.S. governmental and private investments.
7. Does not foster development of potential interests.

A second alternative strategy the United States could pursue is that of fostering a regional collective defense organization composed entirely of Indian Ocean bordering states. Under this concept the United States would not become a member of any of the defense organizations, but would be a silent partner. In a silent partner role it would be incumbent upon the United States to provide maximum support from both an

economic and military standpoint. There are many advantages in this concept; but from a regional aspect as pertains to the Indian Ocean region, there are underlying issues that do not give credence or feasibility to the alternative. The salient aspects affecting adoption are:

II--REGIONAL COLLECTIVE DEFENSE ORGANIZATION

PRO

1. Fosters intraregional cooperation.
2. Forces regional states to assume responsibilities.
3. Conserves scarce U.S. military forces.
4. Promotes neutralization.
5. Does not project "imperialism." Keeps U.S. support in a low key role.
6. Provides regional defense and an organization for concurrent economic development.

CON

1. Political and ethnic diversity of region.
2. Conflicting interests and objectives of different states.
3. Alliances of this nature are generally weak.
4. Problem of equality of support.
5. Alliance is of questionable utility if power problem is not same for all.
6. Because of nonalignment, difficult for United States to postulate a definite threat to affected states.
7. From U.S. view, would not inhibit Communist influence and presence.

The third alternative strategy is predicated on aid and limited U.S. military participation and provides the maximum of flexibility. It would permit expanded application to other alternative strategies for the long-range future. The United States would provide both economic and military support, and in both cases adequate technical assistance would be required. Under the Military Assistance Program, small but effective MAAG's would be created to contribute to the development of indigenous forces for defensive purposes according to the desires of the countries involved. This alternative would use the full spectrum of national, political, economic, and

military resources, to attain the specific U.S. objective of regional stability and development. Concurrent with the implementation of this strategic alternative, the necessity to achieve friendly relations and deep bonds of trust with the regional states would be realized. The limited military presence of the United States must be geared to the development of trust and friendship within the Indian Ocean region. As obstacles to our military presence are overcome, the military force could be increased as determined necessary for the protection of the American interests and the threats posed. By reliance on a political and military endeavor, the United States could gradually acquire base privileges in the ocean islands and on the mainland of the littoral states. These privileges are necessary to support any naval force of consequence in the region. The major advantages and disadvantages of this alternative are:

III-U.S. AID AND LIMITED MILITARY PRESENCE

PRO

1. Maximum flexibility for use of all U.S. resources.
2. Provides for acquisition of base rights.
3. Provides an intelligence base.
4. Establishes U.S. military presence in region.
5. Permits capability for nuclear missile subs to operate in "back door" of Russia and China.
6. Develops regional states economically and militarily.
7. Immediate response capability by United States.
8. Permits conduct of training exercises between United States and indigenous forces.

CON

1. Increases U.S. global military commitments.
2. Inhibits development of regional acceptance of responsibility by relying on U.S. military force.
3. Aid programs are expensive to United States.

4. Nonaligned states may voice strong objection and consider imperialistic.
5. Increases possibility of confrontation between United States and other powers.

A fourth alternative strategy is a multilateral defense alliance between the United States and the major states in the Indian Ocean region. Presently, the United States is involved in the SEATO agreement which is a rather weak military alliance. The type of alliance needed is a strong one in which member states contribute military forces of adequate size to counter effectively any external threat. There are states in the Indian Ocean region with a military potential, the most significant being India, Australia, Indonesia, and Iran. Recently, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore concluded an agreement to fill the void resulting from departure of the British from Singapore. Ideally, Indonesia should be included in this arrangement, once her internal economic problems have been corrected. Such an agreement would provide a very effective protective capability in the eastern portion of the Indian Ocean and the Malacca Straits in particular. The western portion of the ocean could be brought under a shield in which the United States would be a major participant. Along with the United States, Iran and Ethiopia are desirable members; but they would require considerable military aid to increase their force posture, especially naval forces which are considered to be of utmost importance. A multilateral alliance binding all these nations into one effective force, although intra-regionally oriented, would go far in countering Soviet or Chinese influence. India would also have to be brought into this alliance thus requiring, as a prerequisite, a reorientation of her foreign policy. Today, the likelihood of this is utopian. Significant advantages and disadvantages of the strategy are:

IV--MULTILATERAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATION

PRO

1. Provides an "in-being" force to stimulate mutual interest and solidarity.
2. Protects free world interests and investments in region.
3. Could influence some states in alignment.
4. Provides free world balance of power.
5. Requires minimal U.S. military forces.
6. Requires Soviets to increase their efforts to counter.
7. Requires minimal force contribution by states.
8. Provides entree for bases.
9. A strong force, essentially indigenous to the area, which will markedly increase in effectiveness if and as it works together.

CON

1. Diversity of nations in area.
2. Need for military aid by United States.
3. Indian policy of nonalignment. Ditto for Indonesia.
4. Pakistan not likely to participate.
5. Current political views toward revival of imperialism.
6. Unexpected changes in political views of a state or states could affect defense organization.

The fifth alternative is at the extreme end of the spectrum from "do nothing." This strategy would require the creation of a U.S. Indian Ocean Fleet. The fleet would be a composite of naval units of sufficient size to counter opposing ground and naval forces. It would include, as a minimum, attack carrier task forces, antisubmarine forces, submarine forces, amphibious forces with embarked Marine troops, patrol and riverine craft, and support ships. The deployment of a U.S. force of this size could not be accomplished within the immediate future because of the need for additional ships and personnel and lack of a suitable base. Most importantly, the force would be disproportionate to the U.S. interest in the region. Present naval force commitments in the Mediterranean and in the Tonkin Gulf plus NATO requirements would not permit the withdrawal of selected forces in

order to constitute an Indian Ocean Fleet. Therefore, while the alternative is possibly a desirable strategy to ensure protection of U.S. interests, it is not militarily feasible at this time. Advantages and disadvantages of this alternative include:

V--U.S. INDIAN OCEAN FLEET

PRO

1. Provides strong force to counter Communist aggression
2. Provides the most responsive force to regional crises.
3. Permits deployment of U.S. nuclear deterrent.
4. Provides U.S. umbrella and allows regional states to pursue internal development.
5. Maximum protection of U.S. interests.
6. Maximizes military options in region.
7. Provides an incentive for revitalization of U.S. shipbuilding.

CON

1. High visibility presence of United States may irritate other states.
2. Adversely affects balance of payments.
3. Regional states may rely too heavily on U.S. force.
4. Will probably require some reorientation of CENTO and SEATO.
5. Reduces U.S. naval flexibility by imposing another fixed commitment.
6. Expensive in terms of men, money, and materiel.
7. Lack of a naval base in the region. (Development of Diego Garcia beyond its contemplated aviation capability may satisfy this need at some expense.)
8. Justification to Congress and U.S. public would be difficult.

Conclusions and Recommendations.

The United States does have interests in the Indian Ocean region. Mainly these are secondary level interests not vital to the American national security. There is an indirect relationship, however, since any domination of the region by a power or powers hostile to the United States or the free world might ultimately threaten the security of the United States. The American interests are orderly development of the region in peace and harmony, access to the area,

and the availability of the resources for the overall benefit of mankind and especially for the nations and peoples of the region.

There are indications of a threat to the region. The Soviets have desired access to it for many years. Now, for the first time in their history, they have the capability through maritime strength to project their influence. Because of the fundamental political and economic problems facing the states in this region, their vulnerability to more revolutionary penetration is greater than normal. All of the states and their populations desire rapid progress as a sign of their independence. They are not satisfied with the evolutionary processes. Thus, promises of rapid change meet with greater acceptability. The Soviets and the Communist Chinese have specially oriented their approach to the "Third World" states in a political and economic fashion to encourage precisely such unrest. Recent naval excursions into the region enhance Soviet influence and use the military arm as an extension of political subterfuge.

Significant, however, to the entire Soviet effort is the fact that it has been totally accomplished, to date, within the accepted limits of the law of nations. By consequence, whatever "response" may be considered, it must also fall within these limits. The Russians, in fact, are doing nothing for which they have not a very good precedent in the past history of the West—the only difference being that the world as a whole has progressed toward a higher ideal since that time, and the leaders of the modern movement toward freedom and self-determination are those same one-time colonial powers of the West. It is fundamental to the dilemma of the West and the free world that a variation of Gresham's famous law must operate among nations: that high ideals are driven out of circulation by low ideals. The West, which would like to believe there were

no problems, must recognize that the nations of the Western World must select from among the available choices that course of action which not only lies closest to their developed ideals but also gives promise of addressing the problem in the most effective way, within the constraints of the practicable limits of national power. (End of Committee Report)

ADDENDUM

The foregoing report was presented to students of the School of Naval Warfare on 26 March 1969. During the critique following, several points were raised from the floor:

1. It was noted that the report does not consider South Africa as a potential contributor to any strategic alternative developed by the committee; and this nation was, indeed, hardly mentioned. An examination of the internal and international political situation of South Africa offers a logical explanation for this omission. Although strategically located at one end of the Indian Ocean, covering one of the main trade routes and constituting highly useful ports of call midway on that route, it is highly unlikely that South Africa will be able to exert a favorable influence on any of the countries in the Indian Ocean area for the foreseeable future, or that she would wish to involve herself. Ultimately, it can be hoped, this situation may be resolved to the advantage of the area.

2. Another member from the floor questioned the committee's assumption that there, in fact, exists a "power vacuum" in the Indian Ocean area. He contended that neither of the superpowers had any major military capability in the area and was convinced that any effort by either the United States or the Soviet Union to establish themselves would be met by strong resentment of the nations concerned and, thus, would be counterproductive. As an extension

of this theme, another member questioned the concern for a limited Soviet naval capability in the area of the Persian Gulf, especially in the case of Iran in view of its extensive common border with the Soviets. He suggested that the power vacuum, like beauty, rests in the eyes of the beholder. If the nations on the Indian Ocean littoral were not overly concerned, why should the United States be?

3. Another participant from the floor asked the committee if it had taken the mood of the U.S. Congress and the people into consideration in developing its several strategies. He believed that neither Congress nor the American people would look favorably upon a new commitment of any significance unless a *real* vital interest was at stake.

4. A final point was raised from the floor concerning an alternative of broader scope than those presented in the report. The basic purpose of the committee had been to examine alternative military strategies for the United States in the Indian Ocean region. Although it is true that alternative III considers economic factors, attention was naturally focused primarily on the military policy aspect rather than on the political or economic possibilities.

The identified strategic alternatives, however, offer a point of departure for developing a broader U.S. overall strategy which integrates the politico-economic-military resources available not only to the United States, but also to other interested free world nations and to Indian Ocean powers. It would be designed on a multinational rather than a unilateral approach. It would portray the United States as a partner with other nations on a cost-sharing basis. It would therefore have the appeal of being more acceptable on a national basis at home as well as being more politically acceptable from an international viewpoint overseas.

The basis for this strategy would be the formation of an Indian Ocean Area

Military and Economic Aid Consortium (IOMEC). Under this concept the United States, as a member of the consortium, would give low-visibility support to responsible economic and military assistance to countries of the area designed to help in their development and support the peace and stability of the area. Such nonindigenous nations as West Germany, Japan, Canada, and the Netherlands might be partners in such a consortium.

The IOMEC concept is political, economic, and military in thrust. It is recognized today that the Soviets and Communist China are carrying out a substantial military and economic aid program, offering it to not only India and Pakistan but to Iraq, Iran, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Ceylon, Mauritius, and other nations of the area. This concept of IOMEC would give Indian Ocean states an option to receive free world aid and assistance, rather than aid from Russia and Communist China, and thus avoid the attendant "strings" which the Communists invariably attach.

To complement the free world aid option described, the concept also calls for the establishment of a free world naval force in the Indian Ocean--as a counter to the burgeoning Soviet naval presence in the area. This would be a multinational force. In the first phase it conceivably might be initiated by the establishment of a United States-Australian-New Zealand--an ANZUS--force. In the second phase, recognizing that the primary goal/objective is peace and stability of the entire area, participation in the force would be open ended. Any country of the area, with forces available, would be welcome to participate. The force would operate more in the spirit of article 52 of the United Nations Charter--a regional peacekeeping force--rather than in support of any military treaty organization. Of indigenous nations in the area--Ethiopia and Iran, as

well as India and Pakistan, have some naval forces which might support their participation. Conceivably the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, with their major economic interests in the area, might participate in this peace-keeping force.

Advantages and disadvantages of the IOMEC strategy might be summarized as follows:

PRO

1. Provides free world counter to overall Soviet/CHICOM challenge to gain dominance in area.
2. Helps develop regional states economically and militarily, under free world vice Soviet/CHICOM influence.
3. Provides a free world "in-being" naval force to assist in maintaining peace and stability of the area; provides uncommitted nations with an option free from Soviet "strings."
4. Helps protect free world interests and investments in the area.
5. Requires modest U.S. military forces.
6. Permits cooperative training of Western free world and indigenous military forces.
7. Cost-sharing basis allows achievement of goals with minimum U.S. economic expenditure.
8. Requires only modest force contribution by individual states.
9. Partnership approach would probably be most palatable to Congress and U.S. public.

10. Free world multinational approach (with U.S. participation) would be better received in Indian Ocean area than a unilateral U.S. approach.

CON

1. Diversity of interests and objectives of nations involved would present problems in implementation.
2. Possibility that regional states would view United States/European free world participation as revival of colonialism.
3. Limitations on U.S. influence over conduct of affairs due to large number of participating states.
4. United States would have to share in command and control of Indian Ocean multinational naval force.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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