Between Worlds: Europe and the Seas in Arms Control

James L. Lacy

August 1990
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As part of a study entitled "Framework, Concepts, and Analysis for Conventional Arms Control" for the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, RAND has been examining questions and options relating to the possible future inclusion of general purpose naval forces in East-West negotiations. The study has been conducted within the RAND Strategy Assessment Center of the National Defense Research Institute, a federally funded research and development center sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

This Note is concerned with Soviet efforts to link naval limitations to ongoing negotiations in Vienna on conventional forces in Europe. It examines the past and present of these efforts, and explores alternative ways in which naval subjects might be pursued in the Vienna context in the period ahead.

Additional published Notes in the naval study by the author are

- *Within and Beyond Naval Confidence-Building: The Legacy and The Options*, N-3122-USDP, forthcoming.
THE BACKDROP

In March 1989, two new sets of conventional arms control negotiations in Europe were inaugurated in Vienna. By explicit advance agreement, naval forces will not be addressed in the 23-nation bloc-to-bloc negotiation dealing with actual force reductions. The matter has become more controversial (certainly more complicated) in the second set of talks, which deal with confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) in Europe. The CSBM talks, known as CDE, have three distinctive proposals on the table, each coming at naval issues from a different direction.

The CDE negotiations involve all 35 nations participating in the ongoing Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (that is, all of Europe, except Albania, plus the United States and Canada). At the opening CDE session on March 9, 1989, members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) put forth an 11-point proposal dealing specifically with naval CSBMs. This has become known as the East's proposal. Concerned with sea areas around Europe, it calls for notification and observation of naval exercises above a certain size and composition; overall limitations on the size, frequency, and duration of naval exercises; prohibitions of naval exercises in certain sea areas and straits; and a comprehensive multilateral agreement on "prevention of incidents in sea areas and airspace adjoining Europe."

The same day, NATO's CSBM proposal was put forth by Canada. The West's offering does not speak to any of the WTO's proposed naval measures. Indeed, it is entirely silent on naval subjects. In the West's view, naval forces and naval activities should be a part of the CDE discussions only to the limited extent that the naval forces and activities concerned are directly and functionally linked to activities of ground forces in Europe that are covered by CSBMs in the CDE context. By excluding what are known as "independent" naval activities, the West in effect aims to keep nearly all naval operations in Europe off the negotiating table.

The third proposal was offered in July 1989 by the 12 neutral and non-aligned (NNA) participants in CDE. In general terms, the NNA approach is closer to the West's position than to the WTO's, but it nevertheless parts with the West by proposing certain naval CSBMs beyond the strict functional link to land force activities that the West insists upon.
No progress has been made in reconciling the three proposals. The East (most prominently, the Soviet Union) insists that naval matters must be a part of the current round of CDE negotiations. Citing the “functional link requirement,” the United States is equally insistent that naval forces, for all practical purposes, be wholly excluded. The NNA proposal straddles an awkward point partway between the two.

BETWEEN WORLDS

More is at issue than differences over protocol and procedures. Western Europe’s strategic depth lies at sea. The seas not only provide a means for reinforcement and supply in crisis and war, they are a medium from which to launch short- and long-range strikes against enemy targets on land. The East’s argument that it is strategically myopic for East and West to negotiate reductions in and constraints on ground and air forces in Europe while not doing the same about naval forces in nearby waters is not unfounded.

Yet to consider naval dimensions in the Vienna context is necessarily to travel within and between worlds. One of these is the world of conventional arms control in Europe, a world from which many in the West would prefer that naval considerations be excluded entirely, but one which the East insists is incomplete and gravely unbalanced absent a naval component. It is a world laced with alliance politics, heavily dependent on consensus, dominated by fixed geography, set off by recognizable borders, and committed to a strategic tableau whose basic outlines, until very recently, had not changed appreciably in 45 years. It is a world that finds comfort in articulating, preparing for, and largely defining itself in terms of a limited set of “scenarios”—a world in which the seas are the “flanks” and the strategic rear, important to be sure, but seldom the first preoccupation.

The other world is the world of navies. Historically and to a large degree logically, it is a world apart—global in breadth; more embroidered than boundaried; distinctive in its concepts, purposes, rituals, and entangling considerations; more unilateralist in its instincts; and more ad hoc about its rules. In this world, the friends and foes are largely the same as in the first, but there are more of them, and they line up differently. It is a world that cherishes flexibility and fiercely resists definition by “scenario”—a world in which “flank” is an irrelevant concept and “sea lines of communication” is the dominant concern.
The United States has a foot in both worlds. But so does Europe. Naval interests and capabilities diverge within Europe as well as between Europe and the United States. Intra-European differences repose not only in the quantities and kinds of naval forces possessed, but also in the national interests these forces presumably serve and upon which they are rationalized. Much of Europe is without any real naval capability at all. The traditional European sea powers (Britain and France) are considerably less enamored of naval negotiations with the East than are the Scandinavian north, the historical WTO members, and much of Germany. NATO’s Mediterranean members see the world differently as well.

**QUESTIONS OF LINKAGE**

In these circumstances, whether and how the two worlds can and should be linked constitute an important set of questions in the period to come. Up to now, CDE has taken a back seat to the parallel negotiations on force reductions. This is less surely to be the case when looking ahead. The convergence of several factors—unilateral withdrawals of Soviet forces from Europe, pressures for more of the same from several WTO members, the virtual collapse of the WTO as a military alliance in 1989, the prospect that a force reduction agreement will be reached by late 1990, the speed with which German unification has moved in the early months of 1990, and the expected role the 35-nation forum will play in endorsing new arrangements for a unified Germany—is bound to shift the focus to the larger forum.

In this connection, interest in placing naval subjects on the CDE agenda is not limited to the Soviet Union. In January 1989 the European Parliament called upon the European Economic Community foreign ministers to conclude a multilateral agreement to prevent incidents at sea, refrain from conducting large-scale naval exercises near the coasts of countries with which a treaty of alliance has not been signed, and provide for inspection of naval and amphibious maneuvers "so as to gradually create a climate of trust in accordance with the CSCE process." The NNAs are favorably disposed in principle to the idea. At least three NATO members—Iceland, Norway, and Turkey—also favor measures that would cover naval forces.
NAVIGATING AMONG THE POSSIBILITIES

In light of this interest, there appear to be three broad courses open to Western decisionmakers in the period ahead. First, the West may simply try to hold the line in CDE at the "water's edge," by insisting on continued application of the "functional link requirement" as an effective bar to negotiation on nearly all naval subjects. The aim would be an indefinite postponement of any naval negotiations. This is current U.S. policy. A posture that begin and ends with, in effect, "nothing doing" poses some risks, however. NATO does not have a unanimous view on the question of naval exclusion, and such consensus as exists may be more fragile than currently assumed. An open split among the allies on naval negotiating policy would be an unhappy development even if it did not spill over into other areas. Given the pace and course of political events both in Europe and within the USSR since 1989, it does not appear to be in the West's long-term interest to leave Moscow entirely unrequited in its naval concerns or to ignore its general complaints of imbalance and unfairness in the arms control process thus far. With the CSCE/CDE likely to grow in political importance in coming years, too rigid a line on naval subjects may not help in this regard either.

The second option is to find some way to accommodate the differences within CDE. One possibility is for the West to join in endorsement of the NNA naval proposal, which is more palatable to Western tastes than the WTO proposal. The key question is whether this is practicable. For some in the West, the slippery slope in naval negotiations begins at the water's edge. Once the "functional link" is broken, it may be as difficult to draw the line at the NNA mark as at any other place.

A different kind of CDE compromise would be to split the difference in terms of the water areas to be covered in CDE. Of all of Europe's adjoining sea areas, the Mediterranean is sui generis from a strategical and political viewpoint. Here, it would seem, there are three possibilities: (1) the Mediterranean might be exempted entirely from a naval CSBM regime; (2) notification and observation thresholds might be tailored differently for the Mediterranean in order to preserve an element of national flexibility in these waters; or (3) in addition to some number of notified and observed exercises, maneuvers, and naval transfers, an arrangement might be incorporated for some additional number of "no notice" naval movements annually. The attractiveness of such an approach is that it seeks to accommodate regional differences in naval interests and capabilities in Europe while still retaining the concept of a pan-European arrangement
joined in by the CSCE 35. The potential drawback, of course, is the same as in any compromise that reaches beyond water's edge—can it be held to its own terms?

This leaves a final set of options—to by-pass CDE and Vienna with negotiations elsewhere. The least appealing of this set, on nearly all grounds, would be to turn to a still larger forum, such as the United Nations. More appealing, certainly more manageable and more logical, would be either an emphasis on bilateral naval agreements in Europe or movement in the direction of sub-regional agreements (for example, one in the Baltic and northern waters; a different arrangement in the Mediterranean or parts thereof).

BETWEEN WORLDS, BETWEEN TIMES

Much has changed since the CDE was inaugurated in March 1989. Relationships between the United States and the Soviet Union, within Europe, and within the Soviet Union itself have not only altered many of the ground rules, but have shifted the ground itself. Given the rapid but still unpredictable change, it would seem prudent for the West to hold the current line on naval negotiations in the short term. Yet, the very factors that argue for this course in the near term argue against staying on it for very long. "Just saying no" to any and all naval discussions in Europe is less and less sustainable as Europe and the superpowers adjust to new roles. This leaves the second and third broad options above. Politically, the second may be unavoidable. Strategically, the third would seem more desirable. Navigating between worlds in the period to come is likely to require managing the intersection between the second and the third courses.
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GLOSSARY

ATTU  Atlantic-to-the-Urals
ASW  Antisubmarine warfare
CBM  Confidence-building measure
CSBM  Confidence- and security-building measure
CDE  Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe
CFE  Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
CSCE  Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CTOL  Conventional takeoff and landing
FRG  Federal Republic of Germany
GDR  German Democratic Republic
INCSEA  Agreement on Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas
MBFR  Mutual and balanced force reductions
MCM  Mine countermeasures
NAA  North Atlantic Assembly
NNA  Neutral and non-aligned
NWFZ  Nuclear weapon-free zone
SLCM  Sea-launched cruise missile
SLOC  Sea line of communication
SS  Diesel/electric-powered submarine
SSN  Nuclear-powered attack submarine
UNDC  United Nations Disarmament Commission
UNREP  Underway replenishment
V/STOL  Vertical short takeoff and landing
VMF  Voyenna-morsky flot (Soviet Navy)
WTO  Warsaw Treaty Organization
I. INTRODUCTION

It is inadmissible to leave naval forces outside the framework of
negotiations. This is a major global problem, but its resolution can and
must be started at regional levels.

—Soviet Foreign Minister
Eduard Shevardnadze¹

General purpose naval forces remain a significant military and political fact of the
strategic equation in Europe.² Western Europe's strategic depth lies at sea. The seas not
only provide a means for reinforcement and supply in crisis and war, they are also a
medium from which to launch short- and long-range strikes against enemy targets on
land. The argument that it is strategically unbalanced for East and West to negotiate
reductions and constraints on ground and air forces in Europe without doing the same
about naval forces in nearby waters is not unfounded. In the words of the Deputy Chief
of the Soviet General Staff: "NATO has superiority in strike aviation and naval forces.
Elementary fairness and interest in security says that we cannot unilaterally have one set
of imbalances removed and another set not removed."³

The Soviet Union, accordingly, has long urged that naval forces be brought within
the ambit of conventional arms control negotiations in Vienna. To do so, however,
involves bridging two worlds. One is the world of traditional conventional arms control
in Europe, a world from which many in the West would prefer that naval considerations
be excluded entirely. It is a world laced with alliance politics, heavily dependent on
consensus, dominated by fixed geography, set off by recognizable borders, and (until
very recently) committed to a strategic tableau whose basic outlines have not changed
appreciably in 45 years. Its armies and air forces operate out of, and stockpile their
equipment in, known locations; road, rail, and internal waterway networks are familiar to
all parties; major invasion routes have changed little over the course of history. It is a
world that finds comfort in articulating, preparing for, and largely defining itself in terms

¹E. Shevardnadze, address to the United Nations General Assembly Third Special Session
on Disarmament, New York, June 8, 1988.
²By "general purpose" naval forces we mean both conventionally armed and nuclear-capable systems used at sea, sea-based systems targeted against land, and land-based systems that
can be brought to bear at sea. The only things excluded are sea-based strategic nuclear systems:
ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and sea-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).
³Colonel General Makhmud Gareev, quoted in "East's military posture 'depends on NATO
deal,'" Times (London), October 18, 1988, p. 6.
of a limited set of "scenarios"—a world in which the seas are the "flanks" and the strategic rear, important to be sure, but seldom the first preoccupation.

The other world is the world of navies and naval arms control. Historically, and to a large degree logically, it is a world apart: global in breadth; more embroidered than boundaried; distinctive in its concepts, purposes, rituals, and entangling considerations; more unilateralist in its instincts; and more ad hoc about its rules. Friends and foes in this world are largely the same as in the first, but there are more of them, they line up differently, and those that are allied worship less ardently at the altar of consensus. It is a world that cherishes flexibility and fiercely resists definition by "scenario"—a world in which "flank" is an irrelevant concept and "sea lines of communication" (SLOCs) is the dominant concern and all-purpose explanation.

For the most part, each world traditionally has pursued its responsibilities within its own frames of reference, communing across a narrow, hazily mapped isthmus of common strategic purpose. Apart from the specialized area of strategic nuclear systems, each historically has pursued (or resisted, as the case may be) arms control on its own theories, in its own currency, and in terms largely independent of the other. Apart from the realm of central strategic systems, there have been few serious attempts to bring the two worlds under a single arms control umbrella.

THE VIENNA CONNECTION

Few serious attempts, that is, until March 1989. Early that month, two new rounds of negotiations about conventional armed forces in Europe were formally inaugurated in Vienna within the overall framework of the 35-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The "Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe" (CFE) is limited to the 23 member countries of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO), and is concerned primarily with negotiated reductions in the size and structure of the military forces of the two alliances. The "Conference on Confidence-and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe" (CDE) is composed of all 35 CSCE participants (all of Europe except Albania, plus the United States and Canada), and is chiefly concerned with regulating military activities in Europe through the

4On the NATO side, the two worlds not only report to and through their own "supreme allied commanders" (one for Europe, one for the Atlantic), they are also headquartered on different continents. The Supreme Allied Commander-Europe (SACEUR), by tradition always an American army officer, operates out of Mons, Belgium. The Supreme Allied Commander-Atlantic (SACLANT), by tradition an American naval officer, operates from headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia.
negotiation of "confidence- and security-building measures" (CSBMs). The area of coverage for both sets of talks is all of Europe, "from the Atlantic to the Urals."

Naval forces are clearly excluded from the CFE negotiations; the CFE negotiation "mandate" states explicitly that "naval forces . . . will not be addressed." The situation is hazier in the case of CDE. The area of CDE coverage includes waters around Europe. Up to March 1989, however, this did not mean very much. The West insisted, successfully, that by the terms of the so-called Madrid mandate, adopted at an earlier CDE round in 1983, CSBMs are to apply to naval activities only when those activities relate to a covered (notifiable) ground force activity, take place in an adjoining sea and ocean area, and affect European security. This has come to be known as the "functional link requirement."

The Soviet Union has not challenged the exclusion of naval forces from CFE. CDE has been a different matter. Historically, the Soviet Union and members of the WTO (collectively referred to as "the East") pressed for a more expansive interpretation of the Madrid mandate. On March 9, 1989, at the opening session of the present CDE round, the East offered an 11-point proposal dealing specifically with naval CSBMs. The proposal, concerned with sea areas around Europe, calls for notification and observation of naval exercises above a certain size and composition; overall limitations on the size, frequency and duration of naval exercises; prohibitions of naval exercises in fishing and shipping areas and straits of "international significance"; and a comprehensive multilateral agreement on "prevention of incidents in sea areas and airspace adjoining Europe."

The same day, Canada introduced the West’s CSBM proposal. The West’s offering does not speak to any of the WTO’s proposed naval measures. Indeed, it is entirely silent about naval subjects. In the West’s view, naval forces and naval activities should be a part of the CDE discussions only to the limited extent that the forces and activities concerned are directly and functionally linked to activities of ground forces in Europe that are covered by CSBMs in the CDE context. So far as naval subjects are concerned, no progress has been made in reconciling the two proposals—with each other, or with a third proposal offered in July 1989 by the 12 neutral and non-aligned (NNA) participants in CDE. The threshold issue is the appropriateness of introducing naval subjects to CDE at all.

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CSBMs are also known as "confidence-building measures" (CBMs).
THE PERIOD AHEAD

Up to now, CDE has taken a back seat to CFE. Restricted to the two alliances, concerned with actual force reductions, and aimed at a legally binding agreement, CFE was easy to view as the more important—certainly the more urgent and immediately consequential—of the two sets of Vienna negotiations. This is less surely the case when looking ahead. The convergence of several factors—unilateral withdrawals of Soviet forces from Europe, pressures for more of the same from several WTO members, the virtual collapse in 1989 of the WTO as a military alliance, the prospect that a CFE deal will be cut by mid-1990, the speed with which German unification moved in the early months of 1990, and the expected role the 35-nation forum will play in endorsing new arrangements for a unified Germany—is bound to shift the focus to the larger forum. While naval issues are not at present the first priority of CDE or CSCE, it is reasonable to expect that naval CSBMs will receive more attention in the period ahead than they have in the past.

In this connection, interest in getting naval subjects on the CDE agenda is not limited to the East. In January 1989, the European Parliament called upon the EEC (European Economic Community) foreign ministers to conclude a multilateral agreement to prevent incidents at sea, refrain from conducting large-scale naval exercises near the coasts of countries with which a treaty of alliance has not been signed, and provide for inspection of naval and amphibious maneuvers "so as to gradually create a climate of trust in accordance with the CSCE process."6 In principle, the NNAs are favorably disposed to the idea. At least three NATO members—Iceland, Norway, and Turkey—also favor measures that will cover naval forces.7 The view in some NATO political circles is that anything else is not sustainable.

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7For example, in March 1989, Iceland's Ambassador to the CDE negotiations, Hjalmar W. Hannesson, expressed the view that "in the near future we would like to see negotiations on naval confidence-building measures within the CSCE... Future naval confidence-building measures should, as traditional CSBMs do today, help to increase openness, transparency and predictability and to decrease the danger of military conflicts at sea." In May 1989, Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg of Norway stated in response to a parliamentary question that Norway was, in the longer term and following consultations with the NATO allies, interested in analyzing the possibilities for an agreement on observation of naval activities in the CDE, and for a revision of the CDE mandate to cover naval activity explicitly. Ibid. pp. 29–30.
As the East-West arms control process broadens, deepens and eventually yields meaningful results, it will become more and more difficult to exclude naval forces from that process. Indeed, the present NATO position of seeking to rectify asymmetries in the context of the CFE talks... while refusing to include on the arms control agenda certain areas where it possesses advantages—as it does in the maritime sphere—will over time become an unsustainable position.8

THIS NOTE

Yet if this is an abiding, probably intensifying, sentiment, it is not problem-free. The United States and much of Europe differ in their perspectives on the question. Europe itself does not appear to be close to a unanimous view. The “traditional” European sea powers (Britain and France) are considerably less enamored with naval negotiations than are the Scandinavian north, the historical WTO members, and much of Germany. NATO’s Mediterranean members appear to see the world differently as well.

This Note is concerned with these differences, the issues raised, and the options presented. Section II provides background on the Vienna negotiation: the CDE as a forum, its participants, the history of debates over efforts to include naval subjects, the formal introduction of naval matters in 1989, and the competition of naval proposals in the present (through 1992) round. Section III is concerned with the world of navies: the global backdrop, contemporary dimensions of naval power in peace and war, and the complexities of fitting global naval forces with regional arms control regimes. Section IV looks more closely at naval power in and of Europe: Europe’s navies, how sea power traditionally has played in European security, and how some members of the European community have historically employed sea power outside Europe’s boundaries. Against this backdrop, Section V examines the options ahead in navigating between worlds. These include possibilities of compromise within the Vienna setting, but they also include keeping the subject off the table in Vienna entirely, and options to employ alternative forums and mechanisms outside the Vienna talks.

II. PORT CALL, VIENNA

The Vienna mandate[,] . . . based on the Madrid mandate, . . . provides that confidence- and security-building measures must apply not only to Europe but also to the adjacent sea area and the air space above it.

—Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze: Vienna, March 1989

Soviet interest in naval negotiations with the West neither begins nor ends in Vienna. Indeed, much that the Soviet Union has proposed in the naval area since 1986 aims specifically at other parts of the world. In terms of area coverage, virtually every body of water around the Eurasian land mass has been the subject of one or more Soviet naval overtures.2

Apart from Vienna, however, the Soviet Union has been virtually forum-less in the naval sphere. The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) has entertained naval arms control proposals in recent years, but the UNDC is traditionally more a venue for public pronouncements than a forum for specific negotiations. In any case, the United States has elected to not participate in the UNDC’s naval discussions.3 Apart from the inclusion of sea-based nuclear systems in the U.S.-Soviet “Strategic Arms Reduction Talks” (START) in Geneva, and regular navy-to-navy consultations provided by the U.S.-Soviet “Incidents at Sea” (INCSEA) agreement of 1972, there is little place for the East to turn. The last time the United States and the Soviet Union held bilateral discussions about constraints at sea was in 1978—a short-lived and uneventful round on limiting naval presence in the Indian Ocean.

In an earlier (Stockholm, 1986) round of CDE, the Soviet Union tried to get naval limitations on the table but withdrew its proposal in the face of stiff opposition from the West. Few, however, doubted that the subject would return. As the present rounds of negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe began to take form in 1988, Soviet

1E. Shevardnadze, statement to the CSCE meeting, Vienna, March 6, 1989.
2Soviet public diplomacy in naval arms control in the Gorbachev period is examined in a companion Note: Lacy (1990 (a)).
3The United States has generally opposed UN overtures in naval matters. In 1988 and 1989, it went on record in opposition to two UN General Assembly resolutions on naval disarmament.
spokesmen became increasingly explicit about the linkage between naval limitations and European security, and between naval negotiations and the conventional force negotiations.

**BIFURCATED TALKS**

The Vienna negotiations are complicated by the fact that two sets of talks are being conducted in parallel. History has a lot to do with this. Since 1973, conventional arms control measures aimed at regulating military activities in Europe have been kept separate from negotiations about military structures, with different sets of participants and, until the 1989 talks, in different cities. CSBMs—a catch-all shorthand for *operational* measures not directly tied to force reductions—were made the province of the 35-nation CSCE, a pan-European forum (with the United States and Canada as members) inaugurated that year to discuss security and economic issues and human rights, whose early hallmark was the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. In its follow-on “Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament” in Stockholm (January 1984—September 1986), the CSCE reached an important threshold agreement to cover conventional military forces throughout Europe. Concerned only with regulating military activities, the agreement provides for advance notification of large troop movements, the right to observe them, and limited verification measures, including challenge inspections.

*Structural* negotiations involving actual force reductions began in 1973 as the exclusive province of separate NATO-WTO bloc-to-bloc negotiations called “Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions” (MBFR). CSCE was chiefly the inspiration of the East and a longstanding objective of Soviet foreign policy. MBFR was the West’s price for agreeing to convene the CSCE and allowing it to take up security issues. The two talks were not linked in any way. CSCE spoke to military activities in the whole of Europe. MBFR (in which France declined to participate) was confined to forces in a limited stretch of Central Europe consisting of Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, East and West Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.

Proceeding on two fronts was the vehicle of choice for accommodating a host of competing interests. As Richard Darellik characterized the logic in 1987:

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4The authoritative history of MBFR is in Keliber (1980). For further discussions of structural and operational forms of arms control, see Lawrence (1986) and Davis (1988).
MBFR is a bloc-to-bloc negotiation. As such it embodies the well-founded perception that military forces concentrated by the rival alliances in central Europe are of a size and disposition more likely to wreak uncontrollable havoc, should a conflict between them occur, than the forces of neutral or non-aligned states (NNAs). The CSBM agreement, on the other hand, covers a broader area—"all of Europe"—and thus a greater number as well as variety of forces.

MBFR, . . . and the structural approach to arms control that it represents, constitutes a distinctly Western—perhaps even a distinctly American—approach. From the U.S. perspective, MBFR has always been the "real" military negotiation in the sense that it was dealing directly with the possibility of removing the physical accoutrements of military force (Soviet and U.S. personnel in the first instance; other components later) from their area of greatest concentration, central Europe. CSCE, on the other hand, was primarily a political negotiation about the fate of postwar Europe. It had originally been proposed by the USSR as a way of settling that fate, but has since been confined largely to dealing with such outstanding non-military problems as human rights and contacts, economic interchanges and information flows.5

The bifurcation was continued in the West's approach to the current Vienna talks, though now with at least a loose linkage between the two. In its July 1987 proposal, NATO called for two distinct negotiations "within the CSCE framework."6 CDE (technically, the current round is "CDE 1B") is open to all 35 CSCE participants, is a direct follow-up to the Stockholm conference, and has a distinctively operational approach. CFE is an "autonomous negotiation" within the CSCE structure involving only the sixteen NATO and seven WTO countries. The CFE talks are a direct descendant of MBFR (which was formally terminated without agreement on February 1, 1989), and are aimed at eliminating the conventional imbalance in Europe by removing destabilizing disparities and the capability for surprise attack and large-scale offensive operations. Unlike the limited geographical reach of MBFR, CFE, like CDE, encompasses all of Europe "from the Atlantic to the Urals" (ATTU) (Fig. 1).

Still, the distinction is not as sharp (or as inelastic) as this might imply. Participants in the 23-member CFE talks also participate in the 35-nation CDE, and there is both present and potential subject matter overlap (Fig. 2).7 Under the term "related measures," the CFE negotiations may also pursue regulations of the "activities" of forces

---

6Affiliation of CFE with the CSCE process was at French insistence.
7The CFE and CDE talks began in the same city (Vienna), the same building (the Hofberg), and on the same day (March 9, 1989).
CSCE: Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, a 35-nation forum including the United States and Canada, concerned with nonmilitary dimensions of security and cooperation as well as military arms control, under whose auspices both CDE and CFE are conducted.

CDE: Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, involving all 35 CSCE participants, which reached agreement in September 1986 on several CSBMs applying to ground forces in Europe (including advance notification of troop movements and observers at military exercises) and is currently dedicated to expanding upon this CSBM regime.

CFE: Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, successor to MBFR, an "autonomous negotiation" within the CSCE framework concerned with Europe "from the Atlantic to the Urals," limited to the 23 members of NATO and the WTO, whose aims are (1) the establishment of a stable and secure balance of conventional armed forces in Europe and (2) the elimination of disparities prejudicial to stability and security, with priority on eliminating the capability to launch surprise attacks and initiate large-scale offensive operations.

Fig. 1—The framework of negotiations

subject to reductions.\(^8\) Also, the CDE is a process with no predetermined termination point. Although it has always been unlikely that the CDE will venture into force reductions, technically the prospect is not beyond reach.

THE CDE FORUM

Unlike CFE, a freshly constituted negotiation with a prenegotiation mandate specifying what will and will not be addressed (as noted earlier, naval subjects are among the not-to-be-addressed), CDE operates on a mandate that is subject to evolution. In the early 1980s, the 35 participants agreed to "undertake, in stages, new, effective and concrete actions designed to make progress in strengthening confidence and security and in achieving disarmament." The Stockholm conference was "but the first phase of the first stage," which is defined as being "devoted to the negotiation and adoption of a set of mutually complementary [CSBMs] designed to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe."\(^9\)

\(^8\)The West's position paper at CFE of March 6, 1989, for instance, cites the need, "as an integral part of the agreement," for stabilizing measures (including "measures of transparency, notification and constraint applied to the deployment, movement, storage and levels of readiness of conventional armed forces"), verification measures, and non-circumvention provisions.

NEUTRAL/NON-ALIGNED (CDE ONLY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
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</table>

NATO (CDE AND CFE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Country</th>
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<td>Iceland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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WTO (CDE AND CFE)

<table>
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<th>Country</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>East Germany</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2—Participation in the Vienna negotiations

There are three features of note about CDE. First, agreements reached are not legally binding on the parties. Their force is the force of political promises solemnly made by sovereign states in formal, but not ratified, accords. Second, CDE is an integral part of the larger CSCE “Helsinki process,” other parts of which (human rights, for example) have historically been of keen interest to the West. Third, the process is subject to periodic “entire” reviews by the whole of the participants (Fig. 3). The current CDE round takes place between the third review (November 1986–January 1989) and the fourth (scheduled to begin in March 1992). Matters currently on the table, including naval proposals, will need to be addressed, one way or another, before the beginning of the fourth review.

PARTIES IN INTEREST

Among the complicating factors in CDE is the very mixed military identities of the participating countries. In addition to the sixteen NATO and seven WTO members, three are non-aligned (Yugoslavia, Malta, and Cyprus), six are neutral (Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Monaco), and the remaining three (Ireland, San Marino, and the Vatican) are generally characterized as “other.”

---

10 CFE, by comparison, is aimed at a legally binding agreement.
11 The CDE negotiation is the “security basket” of the CSCE. The other three “baskets” are human rights; cooperation in the fields of economics, science and technology, and the environment; and “questions relating to security and cooperation in the Mediterranean.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location/Date</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki/Geneva</td>
<td>Start of CSCE. Result was the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, which recognized Europe's post-1945 borders and made not-legally-binding promises on security and human rights (“Basket One”), economic cooperation (“Basket Two”), and human contacts (“Basket Three”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1973–Aug 1975</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreux, Dec 1978</td>
<td>Meeting on the &quot;peaceful settlement of disputes.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valetta, Feb–Mar 1979</td>
<td>Meeting (called in response to demands by Malta) on Mediterranean cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athens, Mar–Apr 1984</td>
<td>Meeting on peaceful settlement of disputes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bern, Apr–May 1986</td>
<td>Meeting to discuss human contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London, Apr 1989</td>
<td>Forum on freer flow of information between East and West.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia, Oct 1989</td>
<td>Meeting on the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonn, Mar 1990</td>
<td>Meeting on economic cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallorca, Sept 1990</td>
<td>Meeting on the Mediterranean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valetta, Jan 1991</td>
<td>Meeting on peaceful settlement of disputes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cracow, May 1991</td>
<td>Meeting on &quot;cultural heritage.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki, Mar 1992</td>
<td>Start of fourth review of the entire Helsinki process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3—The Helsinki process: 1973–1992
Force sizes (and also orientations and capabilities) vary widely. Several of the CDE participants have either no military forces at all or none to speak of. This includes Iceland and Luxembourg in the West and several of the NNAs (Table 1). The two superpowers maintain global military forces, of which only a portion (although a significant portion) is of immediate relevance to European security. A few of the European NATO countries have political interests outside the continent for which they maintain “out-of-area” military capabilities, either as stand-alone forces or as secondary missions of forces earmarked for NATO defense. Within NATO-Europe, most nations’ forces are wholly stationed within national boundaries; the historical exceptions are the “forward deployed” allies in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG): Belgium, Britain, France, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Two of the Western alliance members, Britain and France, are independently nuclear-capable; several are home to U.S. tactical and/or theater nuclear forces; several others impose strict bans on the placement in or transit through their national areas of nuclear ordnance.

Table 1

MILITARY FORCES OF THE VIENNA PARTICIPANTS
(TOTAL ACTIVE-DUTY MANPOWER, 1989)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WEST</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>92,400</td>
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<td>Britain</td>
<td>311,650</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>89,000</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>31,600</td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>2,124,900</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>France</td>
<td>466,300</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>103,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>494,300</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>34,100</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>117,500</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>91,100</td>
<td>USSR</td>
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<td></td>
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<table>
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<td></td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
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<td>1,500</td>
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<td>3,500</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>Monaco</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Vatican</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>San Marino</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Approximate as of June 1, 1989.
PRIOR ACCORDS

Thus far, there have been two 35-nation conventional force agreements of note within the CSCE/CDE context. The first was the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. The Final Act required notification 21 days in advance of ground force maneuvers exceeding 25,000 troops (and, on a voluntary basis, of troop movements and smaller-scale maneuvers) and observation of notifiable maneuvers. Ground forces, for these purposes, include amphibious assault and airborne troops “on the territory, in Europe, of any participating State as well as, if applicable, in the adjoining sea area and air space,” but that is as close to naval activities as the Final Act ventured.12

The Stockholm agreement of September 22, 1986 went further with respect to ground force activities. It requires notification one year as well as 42 days in advance of exercises and concentrations (a more comprehensive formulation than “maneuvers”) in the field at or over 13,000 troops or 300 tanks, and at or over 3,000 amphibious assault troops (or a parachute drop of 3,000); mandatory observation of exercises and concentrations at or over 17,000 ground troops or 5,000 amphibious or airborne troops; and the right of on-site inspection upon demand. Each state must accept up to three such inspections per year, although not more than one inspection each year by the same country. In addition, notifiable activities exceeding 40,000 troops must be notified two years in advance, and activities exceeding 75,000 troops and 40,000 troops “will not” be carried out unless they have been notified two years and one year in advance, respectively.13

Apart from the provisions regarding amphibious exercises, however, the Stockholm agreement, too, barely touches naval activities in and around Europe. The Stockholm conference was governed by the so-called Madrid mandate, adopted at the earlier CSCE Madrid conference in 1983 (Fig. 3 above). For a naval activity to be considered within the scope of the notification and observation provisions, the mandate required that it be “functionally linked” to a notifiable land activity.14 “Independent” naval and air operations were wholly excluded.

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12For the Final Act’s language on these counts, see Maresca (1987), p. 259.
13The record since the 1986 accord is as follows. In 1987, 1988, and 1989, NATO made 20, 15, and 3 prior notifications, respectively; the WTO made 25, 21, and 10, respectively. The two have been nearly equal in all three years in the numbers of observations: 8/7 (NATO/WTO) in 1987, 8/7 in 1988, 1/3 in 1989.
14“Functionally linked” are amphibious assaults, naval gun fire support, and tactical air strikes ashore connected with a notifiable land force activity.
THE NAVAL PHANTOM

Nevertheless, efforts by the Soviet Union and some of the NNAs to incorporate naval activities in the CSCE CSBM regime have been a recurring event from the beginning. In the negotiations leading up to the Helsinki Final Act, Yugoslavia advanced one such proposal, which would have imposed constraints on warship movements.15 During the first CSCE review in Belgrade in 1977–1978 (Fig. 3), the NNAs and Romania proposed to expand notifiable military activities to naval activities taking place “in the adjoining sea area and air space.”16 Leading up to the Madrid review in 1980–1983, the WTO proposed that, among the measures to be considered in the first stage of a “Conference on Military Detente and Disarmament in Europe,” there should be prior notification of “major naval manoeuvres conducted in close proximity to the territorial waters of other participating States of the all-European Conference.”17

The Madrid review itself, during which the Stockholm and current CDE concept was fashioned, was the occasion for a prolonged debate on the subject. The East argued that CSBMs should apply to “independent” naval activities, not only those directly related to ground force exercises. The West was equally insistent that only naval activities functionally linked to notifiable ground activities should be included. The compromise language finally adopted largely (but not conclusively) embodied the West’s position. CSBMs to be negotiated in the forthcoming Stockholm talks would cover “the whole of Europe as well as the adjoining sea area and air-space” but, in terms of the latter, would be applicable only “whenever these [air and naval] activities affect security in Europe as well as constitute a part of activities taking place within the whole of Europe as referred to above.” At the East’s insistence, however, “sea area” was footnoted to include the phrase “In this context, the notion of adjoining sea area is understood to refer also to ocean areas adjoining Europe.” In Borawski’s phrase, the addition allowed the Soviet Union “to argue for a broad, geographic approach to air and naval activities.”18

Although the West was similarly successful during the Stockholm conference itself in excluding independent naval activities, the issue was again prominently on the

16Ibid. p. 16.
17U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (1982), pp. 176, 750. (I am indebted to Ronald Pulver of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security for calling to my attention this particular proposal.)
table. In May 1985, Bulgaria, Poland, and the Soviet Union introduced a proposal for "Prior Notification of Major Manoeuvres of Naval Forces" to include 30 days’ advance notice of any maneuvers in the "sea (ocean) area and air space adjoining Europe" by "naval forces, amphibious troops and aviation conducted under a common intention and plan independently or in combination (including those conducted in combination with land and air forces) if over 30 combat ships and 100 aircraft are involved."19 The West held fast to the functional link. In its position, in notifying of out-of-garrison land-force activities, mobilization activities, and amphibious activities, states should provide information on "the type of other forces engaged in the activity, including ground-based tactical air forces and naval ship-to-shore combat forces, i.e., those executing amphibious operations, air support of ground troops or ship-to-shore gunnery, if part of a military activity in the zone."20 The outcome was a punt. In the face of Western opposition, and as a gesture to move the Stockholm talks along, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to "defer" the subject to a later round.

Another punt occurred in the negotiations leading up to the present (Vienna) round of CDE. The mandate agreed upon in autumn 1988 (published in the CSCE concluding document of January 15, 1989) sets forth five principal "dispositions":

- That the 1986 Stockholm CSBM agreement "was a politically significant achievement and that its measures are an important step in efforts aimed at reducing the risk of military confrontation in Europe."
- That the full effect of the Stockholm measures will depend on their full implementation, although initial implementation was encouraging.
- That the [1989 round of CDE] will "build upon and expand the results" of Stockholm by adopting "a new set of mutually complementary [CSBMs] designed to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe."
- That these negotiations will take place "in accordance with the 1983 Madrid CSCE follow-up conference concluding document."
- That the next CSCE follow-up conference, to commence in Helsinki in March 1992, "will assess the progress achieved in these negotiations."

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19Ibid. p. 193.
20Quoted, ibid. p. 72 [emphasis added].
This, however, left an opening. The mandate calls for a "new set" of measures, but is silent on what these "new" measures might comprise. In a widely shared assessment,

Problems experienced at the Stockholm Conference over what the Madrid mandate prescribes and proscribes can be expected to be revisited [at CDE in Vienna]. Whereas most NATO countries will argue, for example, that independent air and naval activities are excluded by virtue of the Madrid mandate, the WTO and perhaps several other NATO and neutral and non-aligned nations will press for another interpretation.\(^{21}\)

PRESSING THE ISSUE

It came as a surprise to no one, then, that the East sought again to introduce naval subjects in the current (1989—1992) CDE round. Its messages in advance were unmistakable. In its "Sofia Appeal" in April 1988, the WTO urged extension to the activities of air and naval forces of the CDE's CSBM regime, "including measures to restrict the number and scope of military exercises." In January 1989 the WTO again called for extension of CSBMs in the context of CDE "to cover independent activities of the air forces and navies."\(^{22}\) One week before the Vienna talks were formally inaugurated, Soviet Major General V. Tartamikov told the Soviet press that the talks "are to place chief emphasis on ensuring that confidence-building measures and information on military activity extend to naval and air forces in sea and ocean regions adjacent to Europe and in the airspace."\(^{23}\)

In fact, the preceding August, Tartamikov not only signaled that the East's forthcoming naval proposal would be more ambitious than at Stockholm, he also telegraphed much that would eventually comprise it. It would include, he said,

measures similar to those for military activities on land: to include major air force and navy war games in the annual plans of notified military activities, notification of independent naval and air force exercises and other actions exceeding certain thresholds. Naval and air force activities at sea and in the air space adjoining Europe and the landing of major troops should also be monitored. The plan should include a compulsory notification of troop and military hardware transports to Europe by sea and by air. Finally, the conference should consider the banning of naval exercises in the areas of intensive navigation and fishing; limiting naval forces, especially anti-submarine forces, in areas of international

\(^{21}\)NAA, Political Committee (1989), p. 11.
\(^{22}\)These and other signals are discussed in a companion Note: Lacy (1990 (a)).
importance. It could also discuss other measures dealing with the activity of naval and air forces, including strict control, right up to inspection without the right of refusal.\textsuperscript{24}

The East's 11-point naval proposal at the CDE in March 1989 comes pretty close to this. Section II of the proposal sets forth the general rationale.

Activities of air and naval forces of the participating states in Europe and the adjoining sea (ocean) area and air space can be a source of serious threat to the security of states. The absence of timely information about them and possible misjudgment or misunderstanding may lead to the risk of outbreak of an armed conflict. All this makes it essential, in accordance with the mandate for negotiation, to extend measures of notification, observation and limitation to cover air and naval activities carried out in the zone of application for CSBMs.\textsuperscript{25}

In naval matters, the proposal covers notifications, observations, prohibitions, and prevention of incidents at sea. Specifically, it calls for

- Notification within an agreed period of time of naval exercises involving over 20 combat ships of more than 1,500 tons each, or over 5 ships of which at least one is over 5,000 tons and equipped with cruise missiles or aircraft, or over 80 combat aircraft ("including carrier-based").
- Notification of transfers into and within "the zone of naval groups" of over 10 ships of more than 1,500 tons each, or over 5 ships of which at least one is over 5,000 tons and equipped with cruise missiles or aircraft.
- Notification of marine force transfers (by sea or by air) involving over 3,000 men to the territory of another state.
- Notification of transfers to the territory of another state of 30 or more naval combat aircraft.
- Observations of exercises involving over 25 combat ships of 1,500 tons each or more, or 100 or more combat aircraft.
- Prohibition of exercises of over 50 combat ships.
- Naval exercises to be limited in duration to 10 to 14 days.
- Not more than 6 to 8 notifiable naval exercises by each state annually, including participation in joint exercises.

\textsuperscript{25}The complete proposal, WV.2 (\textit{Wiener Verhandlungen 2}), co-authored by Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Bulgaria, contains 21 measures: 5 land, 5 air, and 11 naval.
- 18 -

- Prohibition of notifiable exercises in “zones of intense shipping and fishing as well as straits of international significance.”
- Inclusion of naval activities in annual calendars of notifiable military activities to the extent determined by the relevant provisions of the Stockholm conference.
- Conclusion of an agreement on prevention of incidents in sea areas and airspace adjoining Europe (Fig. 4).26

Prior Notification (42 Days):
- > 20 combat ships/exercise
- > 5 combat ships enter/transit ATTU Zone
- > 3000 Marines enter/transit ATTU Zone
- > 30 aircraft transfer (to another state)

Observers at:
- > 25 combat ships/exercise
- > 100 combat aircraft/exercise

Limitations/Prohibitions:
- > 50 combat ships/exercise
- 10-14 days exercise duration
- 6-8 naval exercises/year
- no naval activity in shipping, fishing or international straits

Incidents at Sea:
- comprehensive pan-European agreement

Fig. 4—Warsaw Treaty Organization naval CSBM proposal, Vienna, March 1989

COMPETING APPROACHES

The West’s CDE proposal (WV.1), presented by Canada on the same day as the East’s, is silent about naval subjects.27 Its focus is exclusively on land force activity. Expanding on the 1986 Stockholm Agreement, the proposal consists of a three-tiered

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27In theory, the 35 CDE members participate in national capacities only—not as members of blocs or groups. In practice, the NATO/West’s positions are fully coordinated through a High Level Task Force (HLTF) located in Brussels; the East’s positions (certainly through 1989) have been orchestrated through the WTO; the NNAs found it useful in mid-1989 to conjoin around a joint proposal of their own.
approach concentrating on (1) "static" information exchanges covering forces, structures, and weapon systems (and also a "seminar" on military doctrine); (2) notification, observation, and inspection of out-of-garrison military activities; and (3) provisions for contacts among military forces in Europe and general media access to military activities. For the West, the functional link requirement of Madrid should not be open to reconsideration. In the parlance of the United States Navy, so far as CDE is concerned, the "firebreak" should be "at the water's edge."

In June, the West presented an "amplified" form of this proposal, covering within the three tiers a total of twelve measures.\textsuperscript{28} Except for explicitly footnoting that land-based air formations subject to information exchange "include . . . those naval aviation units that operate permanently from land," naval subjects were again completely absent.\textsuperscript{29}

That much was predictable. The potential "wild card" came a few months later. On June 28, 1989, the Swedish delegation proposed expanding the Stockholm amphibious landing notification and observation measures to include not just the landing but a geographical area encompassing "the sea-area from the point where the overseas convoy stops and rearranges to enable landing-ships, smaller crafts, etc., to position themselves into assault-organizations and the supporting ships to carry out their shore bombardment." This area would extend 15 kilometers (km) seaward from land and 30 to 40 km inland, subject to observation by helicopter overflight. According to the Swedish head-of-delegation, Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, "exchange of basic data of military significance should not be limited to land and air forces but should also include naval forces."\textsuperscript{30}

On July 12, 1989, the 12 NNAs (Sweden included) offered their own proposal (WV.5). Like the West's offering, this calls for a detailed information exchange. Unlike the West's proposal, naval force structure and command subordination are explicitly included in the NNA's proposed exchange, which would also cover "aflot" naval force structure in adjacent waters. The NNA proposal expands upon the Stockholm concept of "amphibious activities" seaward to include "amphibious operations." The proposal also

\textsuperscript{28}The "amplified" version of June 9, 1989 was jointly offered by all 16 NATO members.
\textsuperscript{29}The amplified version is included in its entirety in Appendix B in NAA, Political Committee (1989), pp. 52–63.
\textsuperscript{30}Ibid. p. 30.
“encourages” prior notification of innocent passage by warships through territorial seas in the ATTU area (Fig. 5).\textsuperscript{31}

**Information Exchange (Annual):**
- location of main national bases ATTU
- number, type, homeport, and armaments of combat ships
- number and type of ship-based helicopters and aircraft
- command structure and location
- force structure modernization

**Notification (Amphibious Activities):**
- amphibious “phase briefing”
- number & type of ships and landing craft
- ships to provide naval gunfire support
- number of aircraft sorties by mission
- number and type of helicopter

**Observation (Amphibious):**
- observation of major combat units

**Notification (Innocent Passage):**
- prior notification by warships transiting through territorial seas

Fig. 5—Naval CSBM proposal of the NNA, Vienna, July 1989

There, in mid-1990, the matter stands—three proposals, no evident hint of an early reconciliation. In the words of one analysis,

The principal obstacle to progress in Vienna at the CSBM [CDE] negotiations is likely to continue to concern naval CSBMs. This issue appears to present the single greatest obstacle to rapid movement, and seems unlikely to be deferred again as in Stockholm.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{31}A fourth proposal, of minor note, was offered by Romania on March 22 (WV.3). Among other things, it calls for “prohibition of maneuvers and movements of military ships and aircraft carrying nuclear [weapons] in the proximity of the land and maritime borders of other states.” WV.3 notes, however, that “while proposing [these] measures, the Romanian delegation reaffirms its support for the proposals contained in document CSCE/WV.3 of 9 March 1989.”

\textsuperscript{32}NAA, Political Committee, (1989) p. 41.
III. THE WORLD OF NAVIES

The whole principle of naval fighting is to be free to go anywhere with every damned thing the Navy possesses.

—Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher, United Kingdom, 1919

Implicit in the East’s naval proposal in Vienna (and to lesser extent the NNA proposal) is a key assumption: that an arms control concept applicable to ground forces in Europe is logically transferrable to naval forces, at least some parts of which operate considerably beyond Europe. Yet, there is a versatility (the combination of flexibility and global reach) that makes naval forces, in the view of many in the West, inappropriate candidates for inclusion in any regional arms control arrangement, even when, as in Vienna, the region is large (“from the Atlantic to the Urals”) and covers quite a mix of sea and ocean areas. This was the consideration underlying President Ronald Reagan’s statement on the subject in 1988:

As naval and air forces tend to have global, not region-specific, commitments and responsibilities, it would seem inappropriate to regulate their activities in the context of a regional security regime. Moreover, compliance with restrictions on naval/air maneuvers over the high seas would be extremely difficult—indeed, impossible for most countries—to verify.

For these and other reasons, East and West have traditionally agreed to omit naval forces from conventional arms control negotiations in Europe. . . . We continue to believe this is the best course.

THE WORLD’S NAVIES

Among the salient features of the present world of navies (clearly the most durable characteristic over time) is how many navies there are, and how few of them count for very much on the world scene. While the same can be said of armies and air forces, going to sea in a big way has always required a special kind of strategical interest and commitment.

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To be sure, most nations have navies. Very few of these, however, have a reach much beyond inland and territorial waters. The vast majority are "coastal" or "brown-water" forces, "almost exclusively deployed in waters immediately adjacent to a nation's land territory[,] executing traditional naval tasks such as maritime self-defense, protection of sovereign interests in territorial waters, protection of national economic interests in offshore waters, maritime policing and counter-smuggling duties, local search and rescue, etc." Although such navies are not insignificant—they can be matters of great concern to immediate neighbors and also to the larger naval powers, depending upon the strategic value of the waters they ply—they are not in the main major players on the world scene.

Beyond these limited navies, the universe shrinks rapidly. "Blue-water" navies are "normalistically deployed in waters surrounding the state concerned, although often out to a significant distance from shore, and which also possess the capacity to conduct occasional deployments and limited operations in force distant from bases at home." There are about 15 such navies in the world at present, perhaps half of them allied or historically friendly to the United States. Within this number perhaps three can be viewed as "global" in reach: the U.S., Soviet, and French navies.

BY LAND AND SEA

Numbers and types of ships do not, however, convey a complete picture of relative naval power. Before the Second World War, the difference between land war and sea war was still sharp enough (or so it was widely perceived) to think of the two as fundamentally different forms of warfare. The revolution in weaponry and its uses during and after the war changed this. Land-based aircraft contributed to control of the sea and sea-launched planes to the course and conduct of ground warfare. The big capital ship was engaged as often in offshore bombardments and air attacks in support of ground operations as it was in traditional "naval" engagements on the high seas.

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3By a rough count, there are about 360 national navies operating in the world at present.
5Ibid.
6The number is approximate, but close enough for our purposes here.
7There is some disagreement about whether the Soviet Union has yet established a true, global, blue-water navy. See, e.g., Watson (1982).
The result was that there was more (and less) to naval power after 1945 than before. In the face of dramatic advances in the range of aircraft during and after the war, a fleet at sea was much more vulnerable to air (and later missile) attacks launched from land. At the same time, aircraft (later missiles) launched from platforms at sea could now attack a much broader range of targets than the 25 miles provided during the war by battleship batteries or the 250 miles that limited carrier-based aircraft. The U.S. Navy became increasingly linked in the postwar period to attacks against land targets—not only against traditional “naval” targets such as shipyards, submarine pens, and naval airfields, but also against all land targets within the range of navy guns, missiles and aircraft.8

The change in the scope of naval power meant, in turn, that projection of force ashore, and defense from force projected from land, were much more central to naval combat after 1945 than before. Although sea control and sea denial are still among what Michael Mccguire has called the “enabling functions” of naval forces, the adoptions that followed (made by other navies as well) widened both the conception and the reality of contemporary naval forces. Not only do these consist of sea-based systems used at sea, they also embody sea-based systems targeted against land, and land-based systems that can be brought to bear at sea.9

It also meant a certain flattening of differences between major naval powers and marginal naval possessors. Especially in the past decade, a number of coastal states have developed or acquired noteworthy capabilities to defend against power projected from the sea and to project power against forces at sea. Argentina’s use of the sea-skimming Exocet missile against the British armada in the Falklands in 1983, Syria’s shoot-down of U.S. carrier-launched strike aircraft over Lebanon in 1984, and Iraq’s single-aircraft attack on the USS Stark in the Persian Gulf in 1988 are scattered illustrations of a larger reality: a proliferation of naval and other military systems, launched or fired from air and land, that are capable of affecting contests involving offshore naval power.10 Indeed, to some observers, the only real difference left is a numerical one.

8For the postwar history, see Lacy (1983).
10To stunning effect in the Falklands, Argentina demonstrated that such systems need not be plentiful, or expensive, to be fearsomely destructive.
Thanks to technology transfers and prolific arms sales, there are no longer any “low threat areas” where unsophisticated naval forces can prevail. The only difference between Soviet and Third World threats to American naval forces is intensity. The Soviets can mass more numbers than their Third World clients or the customers of European arms dealers, but not significantly greater technologies.11

NAVAL POWER AND NATIONAL PURPOSE

If gunboat diplomacy is riskier in the present and the future than it was in the past, Cromwell’s dictum—that a man-of-war is the best ambassador—remains nevertheless an old and trusted dogma in the West. Although naval forces are designed for war, they are still viewed as important vehicles for law enforcement (writ large) and crisis management. Naval units are often the only enforcement mechanisms for national rights in the sea. Indeed, “the primary aim of most of the naval powers in time of peace has traditionally been to reinforce the ‘freedom of the seas.’”12 For many coastal states, protecting national sovereignty in adjoining waters is the only rationale for maintaining naval capabilities.

The United States has traditionally exercised its legal rights at sea both reactively and proactively. U.S. naval forces have been dispatched from time to time to escort and protect U.S.-flagged commercial and fishery vessels threatened with seizure by coastal states making extended claims over high-seas areas. U.S. policy has also been proactive about standing rights of naval presence and innocent passage as well. Beginning in 1979 (though in practice for decades before), the U.S. Navy has been regularly employed in the exercise of a U.S. “Freedom of Navigation Program”—routinely challenging unacceptable maritime claims of coastal states by sending U.S. warships to exercise rights of presence and transit in disputed waters.

Beyond such legal considerations, a naval force capable of operating far from its home waters offers a significant capacity for involvement in and influence over regional disputes and crises. Unlike land and land-based air forces, naval forces do not require basing and logistical support from countries in the area. Operating in international waters, they present minimal intrusions on local sovereignty and, in this sense, relatively

11Kennedy (1989), p. 22. There are, of course, factors working in the opposite direction. RAND colleague William Schwabe has pointed out that the major naval powers have developed vastly superior ocean surveillance from satellites, retain fleet ballistic missile submarines that no other country can ever safely ignore, and in the case of the United States, have developed significant penetration capabilities in “stealth” aircraft and sophisticated sea-launched land-attack cruise missiles.

modest connotations of military intervention and few, if any, connotations of military occupation. Naval diplomacy has always been a two-sided coin: it can be cooperative (goodwill port visits, the furnishing of humanitarian assistance) or coercive (intended to influence behavior through the threat or imposition of violent sanctions). Coercive naval diplomacy can be as tranquil as the establishment over time of a more or less permanent naval presence in an ocean area or region; it can take the form of quickly massing naval power outside the territorial waters of a state as an expression of interest and resolve; or it can involve still more aggressive measures, from blocking naval traffic, to limited sea-based attacks, to full-scale assaults from the sea.\textsuperscript{13}

Coercive diplomacy by sea has another feature as well. Historically, navies have been the most unilateralist of the military means available to national decisionmakers. Divorced from requirements for regional acceptance, naval intervention also does not normally need the acquiescence of friends and allies outside the region. In the main, the postwar pattern has been to go it alone.

Not all navies, however (in fact, very few), are oriented toward, equipped for, or generally capable of such ambitious national expression. In the West, only the United States and France have sought to maintain a continuous extended presence since the 1960s. Only these two have also maintained into the 1990s a naval power projection capability in the form of fixed-wing conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) aircraft carriers. But the French traditionally practice a more limited game.

The American naval presence since the 1950s has in fact expanded to additional regions of the globe vacated by other Western allies in spite of the declining numbers in the American naval order of battle; the Indian Ocean is a prime example of such a region. The French, on the other hand, have maintained their naval presence in areas where they once had colonies, continuing to exercise an interest in the external security of these now-independent states.\textsuperscript{14}

Far-flung British naval presence is mostly a thing of the past. Although Britain’s experience in the Falklands War in 1983 served to temporarily brake the UK’s postwar pattern of naval decline, it did not arrest it. While Portugal and the Netherlands had maintained a naval presence in the Pacific and Indian Oceans while they had colonies in these regions, colonial dismantling in the 1950s and 1960s meant in these cases too a

\textsuperscript{13}For extended discussions on these counts, see Dismukes and McConnell (1979), Blechman and Kaplan (1978), George, Hall, and Simons (1971), and Young (1968).

\textsuperscript{14}Kennedy et al. (1989), p. 5.
withering of both naval inventories and out-of-area presence and deployments. Steadily over the course of the postwar period, Western multilateral naval responses to crises gave way more and more to a principally American response.

SUPERPOWER NAVAL COMPETITION

Through the 1930s, Britain's Royal Navy was still the *prima donna assoluta* of extended naval presence. It was only in the aftermath of World War II that the U.S. fleet assumed a truly global identity all its own. For the United States the central event was President Truman’s dispatch of the battleship *Missouri* to the Mediterranean in 1946 as a signal of U.S. interest in Soviet intrigues in Greece and Turkey. Within two years, a permanent U.S. Sixth Fleet was operating in the area; a permanent Seventh Fleet in the Pacific followed shortly thereafter. In 1949, a three-ship Middle East Task Force was established in the Indian Ocean and home-ported out of Bahrain.

By the early 1950s, the postwar pattern was essentially in place. Since then, the United States has maintained a regular naval presence in the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific, as well as a capability to rapidly increase its presence and deployments to these and other areas in times of conflict and crisis. Politically, these forward deployments are a tangible manifestation of U.S. interest in regional security affairs; operationally, they facilitate rapid and flexible response to regional crises.

To be sure, the development of this "permanent" overseas presence has not come without some cost in strategic flexibility.

Once these fleets were in place as a visible manifestation of U.S. interest, it was nearly impossible to pull them out lest such action be construed by regional states and potential opponents as a signal of U.S. disinterest. Indeed, by the early 1950s, few thought to question these ongoing deployments at all. While there were periodic calls to pull-out or reduce U.S. ground and air forces from overseas locations, there was barely a mention of the costs or the value of peacetime Navy deployments—even though the costs (in terms of a large rotation base) were not inconsiderable and the value not always self-evident.\(^{15}\)

Yet this was seldom a concern for U.S. decisionmakers. The first thing a U.S. president confronting an overseas crisis was likely to ask was where the carriers were. Indeed, throughout the postwar period the United States Navy (and within the United States Navy, the carrier battle group) has been the dominant instrument of choice for

\(^{15}\text{Lacy (1983), pp. 541–542.}\)
signaling U.S. interest and resolve about developments around the globe—this, in spite of a general decline in U.S. naval inventories during most of the period.

The Soviet navy, Voyenno-morskoy Flot (VMF), is a more recent player in exercising extensive away-from-home naval presence. At the end of World War II the Soviet navy was almost entirely a brown-water force, though with a potent submarine arm (at war's end, the Soviet Union was believed to have 213 attack submarines, more than any of the other wartime allies). The addition of a blue-water surface force began in the early 1960s under the guiding hand of Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet navy beginning in 1956.

Gorshkov's impact on the Soviet navy was twofold. A massive expansion in virtually all classes of ships in the Soviet navy was the immediate result. This can be seen in a Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) comparison of 1966 (the 10-year point in Gorshkov's term) and 1986 (six months after he retired).

Major [Soviet] surface combatants increased in numbers from 1966 to 1986 by 45 percent. Underway replenishment ships increased by 206 percent. Amphibious ships declined by 67 percent. Mine warfare ships remained relatively constant, at +2 percent, while attack submarines declined by six percent. Small combatants, those from 200 to 1,000 tons and those under 200 tons (that is, those useful only in coastal waters or closed seas close to the homeland) declined by 14 percent and 58 percent, respectively. Ballistic missile submarines increased by 108 percent, and special purpose submarines by 371 percent.

In less than a decade, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations Thomas Moorer testified in 1968, the Soviet Union had changed from a maritime nonentity to the world's second-largest sea power; he cited the Soviet Union's first helicopter carrier operation in the Mediterranean as "visible evidence of Russia's announced intention to become a modern offensive sea-power."

The second result was an expansion in the deployment of Soviet forces overseas. The Soviet navy first appeared in force outside its home waters during the 1964 Cyprus crisis, but it was not until 1967, during the Six Day War, that the Soviet force acquired

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16 By one recent count, the U.S. Navy was dispatched to a total of 187 crises and conflicts between 1946 and mid-1989, responding with aircraft carriers in 125 of them. Siegel (1989), p. 10.
17 By the late 1950s, the Soviet attack submarine fleet had grown to over 450 units, and coastal surface forces (surface combatants under 200 tons displacement) to over 1,000. Kennedy (1989), p. 4.
18 Kennedy et al. (1989), p. 4.
international visibility. At its peak, the detachment of the Black Sea fleet in the Mediterranean grew to 70 ships. More importantly, it never left, and became the more or less permanent eskadra, a force varying between 43 and 61 ships, of which a dozen were submarines and 11 to 15 were major surface combatants (the eskadra currently averages some 35 ships of all types).20 Similar patterns occurred elsewhere.21

GLOBAL WAR AT SEA

The VMF’s out-of-area presence peaked around 1986 and appears to be in steady decline since, though the Soviet navy has not fully disengaged from any area.22 For the U.S. Navy, however, war at sea continues to be viewed in global terms. In this view, maintaining effective sea control requires the U.S. Navy to carry the war to the enemy as early as possible. This means bottling up and attacking Soviet submarines and surface vessels before they reach open water, on the theory that once the enemy is in the open sea, his objective of sea denial is vastly less complicated than the U.S. Navy’s mission of sea control.23

One means to do this is “chokepoint control,” engaging the Soviet navy in a geographical bottleneck through which it must pass but which also is notably away from


21Soviet naval combatants first appeared in the Indian Ocean in 1968 (a three-ship task force making port calls); a permanent Indian Ocean presence was established less than a year later; by the early 1970s Soviet naval presence in the area averaged some 20 vessels, divided evenly between combatant and support ships. At the end of the Vietnam War, the VMF filled a vacuum left by the withdrawal of U.S. naval forces in the South China Sea, building from no ships in the area in July 1976 to a total of 16 ships (8 combatants) in 1981 and 19 ships (6 combatants) in 1986. The Soviet Pacific Fleet, begun in the 1960s, increased in size by over 80 percent by the early 1980s. Largest of the four Soviet fleets, by 1986 it totalled 82 major surface combatants, including two or three V/STOL carriers, 15 cruisers, and 35 destroyers and frigates, as well as 77 attack submarines.


23“Denial to enemy forces of access routes to open ocean areas became a major preoccupation of postwar naval strategy.” Admiral William Crowe, USN, quoted in George (1978), p. 22.
the immediate reach of Soviet land-based air power. The other, which emerged most clearly in the U.S. Navy's "Maritime Strategy" of the 1980s, is to carry the war directly to the Soviet homeland, through sea-launched air and missile attacks. Each means a war at sea that would not, could not, be confined to any one region. While the specifics might be (and have been) controversial, the general proposition has not been: naval war with the Soviet Union necessarily will be global.

GLOBAL FORCES, REGIONAL ARMS CONTROL

Given this background, there is an unavoidable tension between "global" naval activities and "regional" arms control constraints. To be sure, not everything that has been proposed and attempted in naval limitations in the past has been regionally based, but this has been the dominant pattern.24 Regional constraints on essentially nonregional forces present two potentially large difficulties.

First, problems of geographical definition are difficult to address. This was among the roadblocks in the short-lived U.S.-Soviet talks on naval limitations in the Indian Ocean in the later 1970s.25 In Europe's case, the WTO has not specified what it envisions in terms of adjoining sea and ocean areas to be covered in CDE, but two items suggest how encompassing this might be. Early in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force (INF) negotiations covering Europe in 1981-1987, the Soviet Union sought inclusion of major parts of the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, and all of the Mediterranean, North, Norwegian, Greenland, Barents, and Black Seas (an area roughly bounded by 40 degrees West and 60-80 degrees East). More recently, in publishing data on naval forces in the European conventional force balance in January 1989, the WTO took in a zone that extended clockwise "through most of the Mediterranean, under the Canaries, out to about 40 degrees W, then up to Iceland, Spitzbergen, Franz Josef Land, and Novaya Zemlya."26

The Soviet delegation to CDE in Vienna has suggested that the range of naval weapons should be taken into account when defining what naval activities "affect security in Europe."27 Given the current range of U.S. and Soviet sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs), this could mean a covered sea area extending as far as 2,500 km from land.

24The history is recounted in a companion Note: Lacy (1990 (a)).
25See, e.g., Haass (1987), p. 239. Haass notes the two sides' inability to agree on just what the Indian Ocean agreement would have covered geographically. The Soviets wanted limits that would extend to U.S. naval assets and facilities in Western Australia; the United States was equally insistent that Australian-based functions be exempted from any regional Indian Ocean arrangement.
27Ibid.
Second, regional military balances are not the same as regional political balances. In the observation of Norway’s former defense minister,

Enjoying freedom of navigation on the high seas [naval forces] cast political shadows before them, particularly onto the shores of the littoral states. However, since the dependence of nations on supplies by sea varies considerably, symmetric limitations on access to particular ocean areas could have asymmetrical political effects.\textsuperscript{28}

The points seem obvious enough, and they are potentially manageable. In Europe’s case, however, the covered land area is bounded by the volatile Mediterranean as well as the more tranquil North Atlantic. Naval activities in the Mediterranean may have something to do with European security. But they are equally as likely at any given time to be more directly focused on regional crises having nothing to do with Europe per se.

**THE WORLD APART**

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that the U.S. Navy in particular has seen little logical connection between arms control in Europe and the operations of major naval forces. In the Navy view, “Western naval forces have global responsibilities, and therefore should not be restricted in a regional arms control regime, such as CSBMs for Europe and adjacent seas.”\textsuperscript{29} In this view, there will continue to be a need for naval capabilities to ensure “a variety of vital U.S. interests which are not directly related to the U.S.-Soviet military balance.”

While the Soviet threat will remain our worst case concern, more probable challenges face us in low intensity conflicts. Regional conflicts in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East, and Latin America, as well as non-state actions, such as international terrorism and drug trafficking, will require U.S. military actions. These low intensity conflict requirements frequently determine the peacetime location and mission of naval forces. These requirements will not disappear simply because the Soviets might reduce their military efforts.\textsuperscript{30}

There are two other aspects as well. Before becoming Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger drew a distinction between two groups:

\textsuperscript{28}Holst (1989), p. 4.
\textsuperscript{29}Larson (1989), p. 18.
\textsuperscript{30}Ibid. pp. 5-6.
Contingency planners . . . [feel] some confidence in our ability to chart in advance successful policies for the unknown future. Their method has been to designate the probable states of the world and to design a system which can deal adequately with each of them. A second group, . . . contingency planners, has tended to emphasize the uncertainties and our limited ability to predict the future. Those who hold this view have consequently stressed the need for sequential decision-making, for improvisation, for hedging, and for adaptability.31

In the strategy debates of the postwar period, the Navy more often than not aligned itself with the second group. In this view, naval arms control involving the Soviets is simply too risky given future uncertainties. In the characterization by U.S. Vice Admiral Larson,

Will [the Soviets] still be talking of "defensive defense" and "reasonable sufficiency" in 20 years? . . . What would be the results for western security if their intentions turn more aggressive, especially if Western capabilities have substantially decreased?32

Second, if navies are different from other military forces, the U.S. Navy has long been especially so.33 Still, there is more to the two worlds, and more to the potential bridge between them, than the superpower navies. Europe lies between two worlds as well.

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33"The Department of the Navy," General David Jones, former Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, once ventured, "is the most strategically independent of the services—it has its own army, navy and air force. It is least dependent on others. It would prefer to be given a mission, retain complete control over all the assets, and be left alone." Jones (1982), p. 73.
IV. EUROPE AND THE SEAS

An armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France, on the occupation forces of any Party in Europe, on the islands under the jurisdiction of any Party in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer or on the vessels or aircraft in this area of the Parties.

—North Atlantic Treaty, Article 6, April 4, 1949

This was the postwar bargain. Concerned that it might otherwise be drawn into European colonial conflicts, the United States insisted upon an explicit geographical limitation of the North Atlantic Treaty to areas north of the Tropic of Cancer. The alliance, in the U.S. view, was to be about East and West in Europe and the North Atlantic, not about North and South, and not about anything else.

For the United States, the primary concern was the Red Army’s massive and continuing occupation of Eastern Europe. In 1950, the Soviets had 30 active divisions in occupied Europe, 100 more to draw from in European Russia alone, and some 6,000 operational aircraft. Against this, the Western allies fielded a mere 14 divisions, few of them fully manned, and less than 1,000 aircraft. To meet the threat on land, NATO ministers concluded in 1952, would require 50 active divisions, another 46 reserve divisions, and some 4,000 aircraft. Although the so-called Lisbon force goal of 1952, like virtually every subsequent force goal that NATO set for itself, never came close to realization, it did focus the priorities on ground forces and land-based air forces in Europe. That NATO should also strengthen its naval arm was not entirely overlooked, but it was not a ranking concern.

That alliance military interests—and, derivatively, alliance naval capabilities—could and should be narrowly defined in terms of immediate European security was a source of recurring disagreement within NATO in subsequent decades. Until the late 1960s, it was the Europeans who sought to engage the United States in matters beyond

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1On January 16, 1963, in recognition of France’s recognition on July 3, 1962 of the independence of Algeria, the North Atlantic Council formally pronounced that references in the treaty to the “Algerian Departments of France” have no longer any bearing.
Europe and the Americans who held back. After that, it was chiefly the United States that sought to increase allied military (and naval) cooperation outside Europe, especially in the Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia, and the European countries that resisted.

Yet if today a number of the Europeans are inclined to view naval power in Atlantic/European waters as essentially a seaborne adjunct to the conventional balance on land—and therefore a logical concomitant to arms control negotiations about forces on land—this is not true in every case. Naval interests and capabilities diverge within Europe as well as between Europe and the United States. Such intra-European differences lie not only in the quantities and kinds of naval assets possessed, but also in the kinds of national interests that these forces presumably serve and upon which they are rationalized.

THE POSTWAR BACKDROP

At the end of World War I, the world's naval powers could be grouped in three categories: major (United States, Britain, Japan), medium (France, Italy), and minor (China, Belgium, the Netherlands). Portugal maintained a small but sufficient naval force to police its colonies. By the late 1930s, Germany ranked somewhere between a medium and a major power. World War II changed the seascape in several immediate ways. Only the United States (and to a lesser extent, Britain) emerged from the war as truly global naval powers. The Japanese, German, and Italian fleets were no more; China's navy was negligible; France (an occupied country for much of the war) had only minimal naval capabilities at war's end.

Still, it was possible in the decade immediately following the war to associate respectable naval capabilities with a few European countries. To be sure, there was considerably less to a number of postwar navies than the various ship tallies of the day implied. The prewar colonial powers were not without postwar colonial interests, however, or the naval assets to go with them. Chief among them was Britain, with an active force in 1946 of 11 fixed-wing carriers and 377 principal surface combatants. To a

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2See, e.g., Kennedy et al. (1989), p. 3: "The decline in Western seapower was obscured through the first two postwar decades because of the large mothballed fleets maintained by the principal Western naval powers, the United States and the United Kingdom. Naval references of the period, most notably Jane's Fighting Ships, described literally hundreds of laid-up major combatants, including both carriers and amphibious ships, as though they were active units in their respective fleets. In reality, these units were unsuited for immediate service and often required major overhauls to be returned to active duty."
lesser (but not dismissable) extent, France, Portugal, and the Netherlands could still be counted among the surviving naval players as well (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Britain</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Portugal</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46 56 66</td>
<td>46 56 66</td>
<td>46 56 66</td>
<td>46 56 66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carrier (fixed wing)</td>
<td>11 12 5</td>
<td>1 3 3</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal surface combatants</td>
<td>377 137 93</td>
<td>56 43 46</td>
<td>11 21 24</td>
<td>13 28 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack Submarine</td>
<td>107 52 43</td>
<td>9 17 17</td>
<td>3 3 3</td>
<td>7 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNREP</td>
<td>83 45 25</td>
<td>12 10 13</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine warfare</td>
<td>533 242 98</td>
<td>83 96 101</td>
<td>1 8 18</td>
<td>35 79 62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Compiled from Kennedy et al. (1989).

* Active forces only.
* Ships over 1,000 tons full-load displacement.
* Underway replenishment auxiliaries.

There were too many mutually reinforcing factors at work, however, to expect this state of affairs to continue indefinitely without important adjustment. Between the late 1940s and the mid-1960s, the prewar colonial systems unraveled. For Europe’s navies, this meant different things at different times.

In the case of the Netherlands, when the colonies went away, the Royal Netherlands Navy followed soon thereafter. For Portugal, the order was essentially reversed, with the Portuguese Navy’s decline preceding the loss of most Portuguese colonies. Then, too, as the sun set on the British Empire, it did likewise on the Royal Navy’s worldwide presence, culminating in the 1968 British decision to withdraw the Royal Navy from its stations east of Suez. . . . The French, on the other hand, have maintained their naval presence in areas where they once had colonies, continuing to exercise an interest in the external security of these now-independent states.³

³Ibid.
What the Soviet Army in occupied Europe did not itself accomplish in focusing Europe's attention on the Soviet threat on land, U.S. policy furnished. In 1949, under a general theory of "collective balanced forces," the U.S. contribution to NATO security was to consist chiefly of strategic airpower and naval forces. By mid-1950, however, several European countries were calling for the permanent stationing of an American garrison in Europe and, implicitly, for an American commitment to fight on the ground as well as from the air and sea. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff had already come out in favor of closer integration of American and European strategies and forces through the establishment of a Supreme Allied Commander (American) for all of NATO. But if Americans were going to fight on the ground in Europe, the United States wanted to be sure that that was where the Europeans were going to focus the bulk of their defense efforts as well. The U.S. Congress supplied an early impetus by requiring fully developed war plans as a condition for military aid to the European allies, to insure that U.S. aid would be allocated to collective defenses and not diverted to purely national purposes.

In the immediate postwar years, it was difficult for Europe to get greatly concerned about an immediate naval threat to European security, and even more difficult for much of Europe to think of it as a major responsibility of Europe's in any case. As early as 1946 the United States Navy had singled out the Soviet submarine as a technological menace and established antisubmarine warfare (ASW) as a top Navy priority. In 1948, the U.S. Navy General Board went further:

The greatest single threat to United States military effectiveness overseas is the possibility of an efficient enemy submarine force using submarines equal to or better than the German Type 21 . . . [It is] imperative that every effort be made to deny enemy submarines access to the open seas immediately upon the outbreak of war. . . . The submarine danger may become so great that the carrier task force initial effort may have to be devoted to destroying submarine bases or sealing submarine exits by atomic bombing or mining.

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4This was the essence of the allied "unified defense plan" adopted in 1949–1950. To complement the U.S. contribution, Britain and France would be primarily responsible for tactical airpower; the continental allies would be the chief suppliers of ground forces. See, in these regards, Lacy (1983), pp. 153–159.

5Tbid. Beginning in the 1960s, the Congress periodically weighed in by threatening reduction of U.S. ground forces in Europe unless the Europeans themselves did more.

Defining the threat and fashioning the requirement in this way, however, suggested to Europeans (with no enthusiasm for the tedium and expense of ASW to begin with) that this was America’s (possibly also Britain’s) preoccupation and concern—not the rest of Europe’s.

Partly on account of slow postwar economic recovery, partly because of the foregoing, and partly owing to the lulling effect of the wartime naval legacy, shipbuilding and fleet modernization languished in a number of cases in the late 1940s and 1950s. With relatively large naval stocks left over from the war, this may have been rational, but the longer-term impact was predictable: “When the readily adaptable, inexpensive stocks of World War II hulls were depleted or reached the end of their useful lives in the 1960s, many Western navies suddenly shrank.”7 There were a few, although largely paradoxical, exceptions.

Only France, West Germany, Japan, and Italy—the first an occupied nation during the war and the others defeated Axis powers—have maintained constant naval shipbuilding programs since the early postwar [years], primarily because they had no residual wartime fleets with which to enter the postwar world (or had only a minimal fleet, in the case of France).8

The United States had little sympathy for Europe’s postwar colonial struggles, lent little aid and support, and in a number of cases overtly undercut European efforts to hang on.9 In 1949, the United States pressured the Netherlands to grant independence to anti-communist nationalists in Indonesia, temporarily suspending Marshall Plan aid to the Dutch until, in August 1949, the Dutch capitulated with a grant of unconditional Indonesian independence. The U.S. refusal to come to France’s aid in Indochina in 1952–1954, its public condemnation of the Anglo-French attack on Suez in 1956, and its sharp rebuff in 1960 of de Gaulle’s proposal to expand the NATO alliance beyond Europe—all these were part of a pattern that would not change significantly until the United States was bogged down in its own postwar quagmire, Vietnam, in the late 1960s.

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7Kennedy et al. (1989), p. 3.
8Ibid.
9As Treverton points out, there was some ambivalence in the U.S. attitude in this regard, but little ambiguity in the result. “On the one hand, the colonial powers were acknowledged as important allies at a time when NATO was building; on the other, the United States had put pressure on them to divest themselves of their colonies and continued to do so.” Treverton (1985), p. 93.
BEYOND EUROPE

De Gaulle's September 1960 proposal, promptly rejected by the Kennedy administration, spoke directly to the issue that, probably more than any other, strained the NATO alliance through much of the postwar period. In de Gaulle's formulation:

We think that, at least among the world powers of the West (France, Britain and the United States), something must be organized, as far as the Alliance is concerned, with regard to the political and occasionally strategic conduct of the Alliance outside Europe, particularly in the Middle East and Africa where those three powers are constantly involved. . . . If there is no agreement among the principal members of the Atlantic Alliance on matters other than Europe, how can the Alliance be indefinitely maintained in Europe? This must be remedied.10

As early as 1952 the Alliance formally recognized that developments outside the North Atlantic Treaty area may pose a threat to European security, but (for the reasons noted above) as an alliance, it has always been hazy about the nature of responses to these developments, especially military responses. In 1956, NATO's "Committee of Three" advanced the view that "NATO should not forget that the influence and interest of its members are not confined to the area covered by the Treaty, and that common interests of the Atlantic Community can be seriously affected by developments outside the treaty area." It urged (cryptically) that the allies should "be concerned with harmonizing their policies in relation to other areas. . . ."11 The noncommittal character of this harmonization was backlit in NATO's Harmel Report of 1967.

The North Atlantic Treaty cannot be treated in isolation from the rest of the world. Crises and conflicts arising outside the area may impair its security either directly or by affecting the global balance. Allied countries contribute individually within the United Nations and other international organizations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the solution of important international problems. In accordance with established usage the Allies, or such of them as wish to do so, will also continue to consult on such problems without commitment and as the case may demand.12

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11This and subsequent NATO formulations on "out-of-area" issues and policies are more fully discussed in Lacy and Laird (1986), pp. 16–20.
12Ibid. p. 17 [emphasis added].
What emerged over time was a cautious balancing, emphasizing the individual nature of out-of-area actions on the one hand and the desirability of alliance-wide "consultations" on the other. In the formulation of NATO's Defense Planning Committee in 1981:

Although the policies which nations adopt outside the NATO area are a matter for national decision, the Allies have recognized that situations outside NATO's boundaries may, whenever peace, international equilibrium and the independence of sovereign nations are affected, threaten the vital interests of the West and therefore have implications for the security of members of the Alliance. . . . It is especially important that . . . consultations should be undertaken when nations in a position to do so are considering out-of-area deployment of forces, in order to deter aggression and to respond to requests from other nations for help in resisting threats to their security or independence.13

THE LEGACY

This was probably as precise as the alliance qua alliance was ever going to get. In 1957, Chancellor Konrad Adenauer of West Germany had pressed for what amounted to a common foreign policy for NATO—an idea that ran counter to U.S. arguments at the time, which emphasized that, unlike the Europeans, the United States had global interests and thus "needed freedom of action to protect them."14 In the aftermath of the Iran and Afghanistan crises two decades later, U.S. arguments were virtually indistinguishable from Adenauer's, but Europe for the most part was by then reluctant to climb on board any train headed beyond Europe in which the United States alone ran the engine.

After the Korean War, Western multilateral naval responses to out-of-area crises steadily declined, devolving to a principally American response, with France and Britain occasionally exerting naval presence and power projection of their own in crises of specific national interest.15 The cumulative effects of the influences noted above, by one account, could be viewed in stages.

13The individual nature of out-of-area operations was again reinforced in a North Atlantic Council communiqué of 1983, which spoke cryptically of facilitative help from other allies: "Allies who are in a position to do so will endeavor to support those sovereign nations who request assistance in countering threats to their security and independence. Those Allies in a position to facilitate the deployments of forces outside the Treaty area may do so, on the basis of national decision." Quoted, ibid. p. 18.
14Treverton (1985), p. 94.
15Though the French navy saw less action out-of-area than the U.S. Navy in the later postwar decades, France, as Treverton points out, actually intervened with military force more often outside Europe than the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s—twice in Zaire's Shaba province, in the Central Africa Republic, and several times in Chad's civil war. Ibid. p. 98.
The first 12 postwar years witnessed many numerically strong allied navies responding to Communist-precipitated and/or colonial crises around the Eurasian/African littoral. . . . The next 15 years were a period of transition in which, one-by-one, the powerful European navies of the past let their orders of battle and worldwide presence decline. . . . Only France and the United States maintained a global presence in the face of the Soviet buildup, with the former reducing slightly its deployed numbers and the latter being forced to spread its diminishing forces more widely to fill vacuums left by its departing allies. The final period was one of continued Western decline in the face of a consistent Soviet buildup through the early 1980s, at which point the American numerical decline was arrested, the British Falklands experience caused them to rethink their naval posture, and the Soviets appeared to temper their global naval presence.16

The one break with the pattern was the West's naval response to the 1987 Persian Gulf crisis. Spurred on by the United States, the Western alliance managed to create the largest multilateral naval response to a crisis since the Korean War.

EUROPE'S NAVIES

To suggest that Europe's navies, like its ground and air forces, are a very mixed lot understates the reality. Several European countries—most of the NNAs, Iceland, and Luxembourg in the West, Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the East—have no naval forces at all. The rest of the NNAs and the WTO have predominantly coastal forces, with some mine warfare (chiefly mine countermeasure) capabilities. In attack submarines and principal surface combatants (ships over 1,000 tons full-load displacement), virtually all of Europe's naval strength resides within NATO (Table 3). While by most accounts there is nevertheless a rough naval balance in Atlantic/European waters (Table 4), this comes mainly from the addition to the equation of the U.S. Atlantic Command (Second and Sixth Fleets) and the Soviet navy (minus the Pacific Fleet and the Caspian Flotilla). Indeed, for the WTO, the Soviet navy is virtually the only real naval capability that the East possesses.

INTERESTS AND CAPABILITIES

Simple statistical counts provide only a part of the picture, however. Differences in naval capabilities mix with differences in national interest. Although the groupings can be drawn only roughly (and in a few cases invariably overlap), sea power for Europe can be seen to coalesce generally along five, partly historical/partly geographical, lines.

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### Table 3
SELECTED SHIP ELEMENTS: EUROPE'S NAVIES, 1989a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Attack Submarines</th>
<th>Principal Surface Combatants</th>
<th>Mine Warfare</th>
<th>Patrol/Coastal</th>
<th>Support/Misc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSN</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Carriers</td>
<td>Mine Layersb</td>
<td>MCMc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-- 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-- 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRG</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>-- 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-- 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-- 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-- 12</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>6 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-- 38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>18 254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-- 33</td>
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<tr>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-- 42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-- 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNA</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Finland</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-- 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


a Approximate as of June 1, 1989. Excludes Soviet Navy.
b Some submarines/frigates have minelaying capability.
c Mine countermeasure ships.

First, the largest group by far (at least numerically) consists of the present and historical nonnaval or marginally naval countries. Among them are nearly all the NNAs, all of the WTO, and some of NATO. Apart from limited coastal and chiefly defensive concerns (in the case of those that are not landlocked to begin with), naval power in Europe's waters lies somewhere between an irrelevancy (judged from a narrow national perspective) and an external threat best subject to some form of regional or international
Table 4
NATO/WTO MARITIME FORCES IN EUROPE/ATLANTIC WATERS, 1989a, b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAVAL FORCES</th>
<th>NATO</th>
<th>WTO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submarines</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carriers</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battleships/Cruisers</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroyers/Frigates</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphibiousc</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAVAL AIR</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bombers</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air defenses/fighter</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASW fixed wing</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASW helicopter</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


a Approximate as of July 1, 1989.
b Source should be consulted for definition/qualifications of entries.
c Above 1,000 tons full-load displacement and over 60 meters overall length.

regulation. Possessing no real naval capabilities of their own, nor out-of-Europe national interests in which naval power might play an important role, the natural inclination of this group is to favor less (and simultaneously more regulated) naval activity in Europe’s waters to go along with other forms of conventional arms control in Europe.17

Second, there are several Western countries which, while politically less enamored of negotiated naval limitations than the first grouping, are nevertheless similar to it in naval interests and capabilities. Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal would need to be counted within this group. Although the Belgians and the Dutch have on occasion participated in naval deployments outside the NATO area, they have no significant military capabilities beyond Europe and have primarily a very defensive naval posture within it. The Federal Republic of Germany is a closer case to call—in part because German unification breaks so radically with familiar patterns and in part because the *Kriegsmarine* boasts a potent, modern diesel-attack submarine capability with a reach

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17This is not to suggest that these countries are indifferent to external developments. Oil, and uninterrupted access to it, is a case in point. But problems attendant to Europe’s oil flow remain distant from Europe’s waters.
beyond the Baltic—but its historical reluctance to become involved with military force outside Europe, coupled with its own Baltic vulnerabilities, suggest that it is strategically closer to this grouping than to any other.

Third, there is the Nordic Region. Its military/strategical concerns are focused almost exclusively on territories and seas close to home. Its principal naval concerns have concentrated on persistent Soviet intrusions in territorial waters on the one hand and, on the other, aggressive strategy statements from the United States (like the U.S. Navy's Maritime Strategy) suggesting that war at and from sea will come promptly to its area in any superpower conflict.18 Its naval forces, while not insignificant in close-in capabilities, are almost exclusively coastal and defensive. Historically, the Nordic area has been in the lead in Europe in favoring both nuclear weapon-free zones (NWFZs) and regional restraints on the naval activities of the superpowers in local waters. Initiatives in favor of a Nordic NWFZ drew tremendous support in Denmark and Norway in the late 1970s and early 1980s; Finland took the lead in putting forward such initiatives as early as 1963; Sweden, while less strongly inclined than Finland, has been committed to NWFZ negotiations since 1983.19 Sentiment for naval CSBMs is longstanding as well among the region's governments. Gorbachev's proposals along these lines in Murmansk in March 1988 were publicly welcomed by Foreign Minister Elleman-Jensen of Denmark, President Koivisto of Finland, and Foreign Minister Andersson of Sweden.

The two "traditional" European naval powers, Britain and France, form a fourth grouping. In Britain's case, to be sure, the capabilities have withered, but the political instinct is not unlike France's. Although Britain's naval decline preceded the east-of-Suez withdrawal in 1968, that decision was nevertheless a signal turning point. In the words of a British White Paper at the time: "Britain's defence effort will in the future be concentrated mainly on Europe and in the North Atlantic area."20 The next major retrenchment came less than a decade later. In deciding to withdraw British naval forces from Singapore, the West Indies, and the Mediterranean, London's announced goal was "progressive reductions of one-seventh in planned numbers of destroyers, frigates and mine countermeasures vessels with consequential reductions in afloat support."21 By 1980, the combined effects of what Chichester and Wilkinson have caustically

18 Soviet intrusions are richly documented in McCormick (1990).
21 SDE 1975, Cmd 5976, Ch. 1, para. 45.
characterized as Britain’s “withdrawal into Europe” were palpable (Table 5), but this was not the end of the matter. Committed to a 1979 NATO-agreed 3 percent annual real growth in defense expenditures through 1986, but hard-pressed to match this with existing programs, the Thatcher government announced in 1981 that Britain’s contribution to NATO’s maritime forces in the East Atlantic would be cut by 15 percent. In competition with London’s ground and air force commitment in Germany, the Royal Navy would simply have to take a greater proportion of cutbacks than the other military services.

Table 5

| BRITISH ROYAL NAVY OUT-OF-AREA SURFACE COMBATANT DISPOSITIONS: 1972, 1980 COMPARED |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Caribbean Sea                        | 2                 | 0                 |
| Norwegian Sea                        | 1                 | 0                 |
| South Atlantic Ocean                 | 4                 | 0                 |
| Mediterranean Sea^                   | 44                | 0                 |
| Persian Gulf                         | 1                 | 2                 |
| Gulf of Oman                         | 0                 | 2                 |
| Indian Ocean                         | 12                | 0                 |
| South China Sea/Malaccan Straits     | 9                 | 0                 |
| Western Pacific Ocean                | 0                 | 5                 |

SOURCE: Kennedy et al. (1989).
^ Excluding Gibraltar.

Post-Falklands “policy adjustments” temporarily arrested further decline, but not by much and not for long. Britain’s Royal Navy is a “NATO navy” (as London is quick to remind, the UK contributes 70 percent of NATO’s maritime forces in the Eastern Atlantic and Channel areas); the United Kingdom’s out-of-area commitments, diminishing but still affirmed, need to be fitted within this reality. Still, while only a shadow of its former self, Britain’s Royal Navy—with two jump-jet carriers, an attack

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23The United Kingdom Defence Programme: The Way Ahead, Cmdn 8288, June 1981, para. 16: “Despite the financial pressures on our defence effort, the Government has decided that this contribution [55,000 troops and a tactical air force in West Germany] is so important to the Alliance’s military posture and its political cohesion that it must be maintained.”
24“We . . . have an additional range of commitments and activities, outside the NATO area, which are of quite a different type. They are not, to begin with, concerned with direct threats to the security of the United Kingdom: the forward defence of the Federal Republic of Germany may be the forward defence of Britain itself, but the forward defence of Hong Kong and Belize is not.” SDE 1987, Vol. 1, p. 22.
submarine force of 16 nuclear- and 11 diesel/electric-powered boats, and a commitment to “about 50” frigates and destroyers—remains among the larger of the world’s present navies. Moreover, its global retrenchment is not without notable exception. In the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman in the late 1970s, it instituted the little-publicized “Armillia Patrol” to protect British shipping interests. By mid-1987, the patrol’s presence had grown to three major surface combatants and a support ship.\(^{25}\)

As noted earlier, France’s aspirations to a distinct role abroad are longstanding, as is its interest in maintaining a quasi-colonial naval presence in areas in which it once had colonies.\(^{26}\) France’s naval forces historically have been oriented to power projection. One manifestation is the current two-carrier French force and the French commitment to proceed with new nuclear-powered CTOL aircraft carriers (the porte-avions nucléaire, or PAN), which “fits comfortably with, and underscores, a continuing French interest in preserving a capability for military operations outside the NATO area—in defense of France’s overseas dependencies (in the Caribbean, the Pacific, the Indian Ocean and the North and South Atlantic) and in support of France’s African allies.”\(^{27}\) The PAN is particularly suited to these operations, providing naval support for a land-based rapid deployment force (an intra-army unit intended for both NATO reinforcement and overseas intervention) along with a major part of the air power.

The fifth and final group comprises the Mediterranean countries of Europe. Here, again, the perspective is different. The Mediterranean is Europe’s southern flank, but it is also the meeting place of Europe, Africa, and Asia, and an area in which naval interventions in pursuit of geographically immediate objectives have long been a dominant fact.\(^{28}\) If, as has been said, France “plays the role of Mediterranean power now more than ever,”\(^{29}\) Italy has developed similar aspirations in recent years. This is evident in a willingness to dispatch Italian forces for overseas missions for the first time

\(^{25}\)According to an “exclusive, declassified chart of Fleet deployments” released by the Royal Navy in February 1990, Britain had a total of 36 surface warships and support vessels with more than 7,000 men on board away from the UK waters that month. “Navy lifts secrecy to reveal its global role,” Times (London), February 14, 1990, p. 24.

\(^{26}\)Notably, before the American and Soviet naval build-ups in the Indian Ocean in the 1970s, France frequently was the largest naval presence there, between a dozen and twenty ships. Treverton (1985), p. 98.

\(^{27}\)Lacy and Laird (1986), p. 34.

\(^{28}\)As Robert Rudney writes: “War—and the struggle for supremacy between wars—has constituted a political reality for the Mediterranean from the very beginning of recorded history. Generally, the power that controlled the sea routes dominated the region.” Rudney (1986), p. 164.

significantly since the end of World War II. An Italian contingent has been serving with UN forces in southern Lebanon since 1979; Italy joined Britain, France, and the United States in the multinational peace-keeping force in Beirut in 1982; in 1984 Italy dispatched a four-vessel contingent to assist in mine-sweeping the Red Sea. It is also manifested in Italy’s “new defense model” (emphasizing sea and air threats from the south in place of Italy’s traditional postwar preoccupation with a land invasion from the north and east), its creation of a rapid intervention force, and its commitment to the *Garibaldi* aircraft carrier—an inadequate platform in a clash with Soviet naval forces, but a capability well-tailored for naval presence and power projection in the Mediterranean Third World.  

Despite financial difficulties, Spain has equipped itself with a core of new ships in recent years: the mini-carrier *Príncipe de Asturias*, the frigates *Descubierta* and *Balares*, and the French submarine *Agosta*. Spain has concerns about political developments in North Africa (and also has two colonial outposts there), and it has aspirations to play a larger role in the western Mediterranean and in control of the Atlantic SLOCs. In the eastern Mediterranean, the situation is somewhat different. The two naval forces of relevance—Greek and Turkish—are primarily concerned with keeping watch over and countering each other.

The sum of all this is a very busy Mediterranean. Routinely, in addition to the U.S. Sixth Fleet and the Soviet *eskadra*, two CTOL carriers (the French *Foch* and *Clemenceau*), two mini-carriers (the Italian *Garibaldi* and the Spanish *Príncipe de Asturias*), three French nuclear attack submarines, approximately 50 diesel-powered submarines, and approximately 50 large surface ships all ply the Mediterranean waters.

**BACK TO SQUARE ONE**

To observe such differences is not to suggest that the prospect of naval negotiations in Vienna is necessarily poor. After all, the CDE 35 are also vastly “unlike” in ground force interests and capabilities but nevertheless have thus far been able to cobble together common CSBM arrangements. Arms control undertaken by the many and the different is not unheard of.  

There is no doubt that a France, Italy, and Sweden, for instance, would find it difficult to agree on certain kinds of naval limitations, but this

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30 In fact, the Italian navy has largely replaced the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the central Mediterranean. Further discussion of these developments can be found in Lacy and Laird (1986), pp. 68–72, and Lesser (1989).

31 The Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, for example, included 26 and 44 nations, respectively.
scarcely means that there is nothing in the naval sphere upon which they could not find common ground.

Still, the foregoing does serve to highlight the unheralded complexity of drawing together around a single table such disparately oriented naval players. More than that, it underscores that differences of interest in Europe run deeper (in time, geography, national strategy, and external national politics) than a mere difference of viewpoint about "functional links" and expanded terms of negotiating reference.
V. NAVIGATING BETWEEN WORLDS

Beating empty air is always a tiresome job.

—Count Munster, German Ambassador to France, upon learning of his selection as Chief German Delegate to the Hague Peace Conference, 1899

Looking ahead, it is certainly possible to envision naval subjects again being effectively shunted to the side in Vienna. Much has changed since the current CDE round opened in March 1989. Relationships between the United States and the Soviet Union, within Europe, and within the Soviet Union itself have not only altered many of the ground rules, they have shifted the ground itself. Issues of German unification and East-West economic/political relations in Europe are bound to preoccupy the CSCE 35. Rather than holding up the process, the absence of ready agreement on naval proposals within CDE may simply mean jettisoning naval topics in order to move along. Although a definite clock (counting down to the 1992 review) runs in CDE, this does not rule out the possibility of a further punt into the indefinite future in the naval area. Such an outcome may occur as a matter of happenstance (the press of other events) or of conscious choice.

It is equally possible, of course, that the subject will not go away—in part, paradoxically, for the same reasons that it might. With an initial CFE agreement probable by mid-1990, and with the Soviet de-occupation of Eastern Europe becoming an increasing reality, pressures from the Soviet Union and a number of the NNAs to make some progress in the last frontier, the naval area, may just as easily intensify. Nor will NATO proceed with a unanimous view on naval arms control in the period ahead, with the Nordic countries in particular likely to keep up the pressure.

In these circumstances there would appear to be three broad options for Western decisionmakers in the period to come. The West may simply hold the line in CDE at the “water’s edge,” by insisting on continued application of the functional link requirement as an effective bar to virtually all naval subjects. This could accomplish what happenstance might not guarantee—an indefinite postponement of any naval

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1Quoted in C. Davis (1962), p. 88.

2The CSCE itself will hold a special summit meeting in late 1990 to, among other things, “discuss the future of our continent, [and] common pan-European structures which would also embrace security.” Genscher (1990), p. 5.
negotiations. It is certainly the course favored by the United States thus far. In the words of U.S. Ambassador Maresca at the CDE meeting of March 22, 1989: "We think the essential confrontation between East and West is a land confrontation in Europe, and that these negotiations should, therefore, concentrate on that central confrontation."\(^3\)

Alternatively, there is the possibility of compromise within CDE. One such compromise, occasionally discussed, would be an embrace of the NNA proposal’s naval provisions, which some within NATO have characterized as “not bad at all.”\(^4\) This would almost certainly have the effect of isolating the East, and more likely, the Soviet Union within the East. A second possibility along these lines, not known to have yet been considered, would be a compromise over waters to be included in a CDE naval CSBM regime—with the Mediterranean either exempted entirely or subject to a different set of notification and observation rules than other sea areas adjoining Europe.

A third alternative would entail essentially by-passing CDE in favor of other forums and arrangements. Among the choices would be a larger, broader-than-Europe forum such as the UNDC; bilateral arrangements between the superpowers or between specific European members affecting naval activities within European waters; and sub-regional arrangements in Europe that might affect naval activities in some European waters but not others, or differently in some than in others.

**“FIREBREAK AT WATER’S EDGE”**

There is no doubt that the majority of NATO governments endorse the continued exclusion of “independent” naval CSBMs from CDE. In their “Comprehensive Concept of Arms Control and Disarmament” on May 29, 1989, the NATO ministers devoted only one of 65 paragraphs to naval subjects, and this (paragraph 30) said only: “Since the Alliance depends on reinforcements from the North American continent, it must be able to keep open sea and air lines of communication between North America and Europe.”\(^5\) A major objection to the East’s CDE naval proposal is its imbalance in impacts. In Ambassador Maresca’s complaint:

\(^3\)Quoted in NAA, Political Committee (1989), p. 35.

\(^4\)Ibid. p. 27.

\(^5\)Quoted, Ibid. p. 28.
Some of these proposals that the Warsaw Pact has put forward are not even-handed in their effect. They are what I have called "advantage-building measures". This is because we are highly dependent on our ability to cross the Atlantic to reinforce Western defense in Europe. To introduce the discussion of naval confidence-building measures would have an uneven, negative effect on the Western ability to defend Europe.\footnote{Quoted, ibid. p. 27. The lopsided implications of the WTO's CDE naval proposal are examined in a companion Note: Lacy (forthcoming).}

Apart from its one-sided formulation, the East's CDE proposal runs into three broad objections in much of NATO. These are the "slippery slope" arguments: First, the Soviet naval arms control agenda is confined neither to Europe nor, within Europe, to the 11 points put on the table at CDE. To agree to negotiate Stockholm-type naval measures, then, would merely open a back door to far more extensive negotiations and constraints on the West's naval forces and naval operations. In the words of the NAA's Political Committee: "Although it is difficult to demonstrate why notifying other states of fleet exercises that are already well-publicized in the West is 'advantage-building,' notification could lead to inspection, to 'keep-out' zones, and so forth."\footnote{NAA, Political Committee (1989), p. 29.} In this view, the line has been properly drawn at "no dice"; Pandora's box should be left alone. To open the box, no matter how slightly, would produce not discrete negotiations but an uncongenial and open-ended grab for Western concessions.

Second, precedents set in CDE could come back to haunt elsewhere. In Vice Admiral Larson's words: "To expand CSBMs to include naval forces would establish an undesirable precedent for their inclusion in other conventional arms control negotiations."\footnote{Larson (1989), p. 19.} Recalling the subject matter overlap between the two Vienna negotiations, the concern in this case is potential spillover into CFE.

Third, there is more at stake than East-West security issues. The United States, France, and others in the West have invested in naval forces, not only with the Soviet threat in view but also with the misbehavior of other states in mind. Naval negotiations in CDE could affect these other interests and requirements directly (as in the Mediterranean) or indirectly (by setting precedents with potentially unhappy consequences elsewhere).

These are not frivolous objections, to be sure. Yet they are not the only pertinent considerations. A posture that begins and ends with, in effect, "nothing doing" is bound to pose risks of its own. Noted earlier, NATO does not have a unanimous view on the
question of exclusion. Indeed, given the seemingly irreversible diminishing of the Soviet threat to Europe, such consensus as exists may be more fragile over time than currently assumed. An open split among the allies on naval negotiating policy would be an unhappy development even if it did not spill over into other areas.

Second, although it is a fool's gamble to speculate on where the Soviet Union will be one year hence, let alone five or ten, it does not appear to be in the West's long-term interest to leave Moscow entirely unreplied in its naval concerns or to disregard its general complaints of imbalance and unfairness. Compared to almost everything else the Soviet Union has proposed in the naval sphere in recent years, the 11-point package in Vienna is strikingly modest.9 Though the Soviet complaint about negative political reactions within the USSR to continued exclusion of naval subjects is probably overstated, it is not easily dismissed. At a minimum, the concern voiced by Marshal Sergei Akromeyev in early 1990 is bound to resonate beyond Soviet borders.

On my part I can say that such policy is unreasonable. If continued by the United States, it will be perceived by the USSR with mistrust. In such a situation it is impossible to convince our people that the United States really intends to put an end to the confrontation between our countries and to build new relations based on mutual cooperation.10

Third, though the CSCE construct has not historically been a high priority for the United States,11 its importance for long-term U.S. interests in Europe is shifting, with U.S. policy almost bound to follow. In light of this, the views and sensitivities of the non-NATO CSCE members are likely to acquire some additional weight as "the United States [looks] at Europe in a different way" in the period to come.12 Too rigid a line on naval subjects may not help in this regard, and may only get in the way.

THE SHAPE OF A COMPROMISE

The second broad option, then, is to find some way to split the difference within CDE. Certainly for NATO, the NNA proposal in Vienna is considerably more palatable than its WTO counterpart. Apart from amphibious operations landing on European territory (and the NNAs' "encouragement" of advance notification of innocent passage of

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9 The rest of the Soviet naval proposals are discussed in two companion Notes: Lacy (1990 (a) and forthcoming).
11 In early March 1990, the United States was reported to still owe close to $2 million to CSCE to cover its share of the costs of the Vienna meeting. "U.S. Extending Hand to European Groups Long Kept at Arm's Length," Washington Post, March 3, 1990, p. A21.
12 Ibid.
warships in European waters), the NNA formulation speaks chiefly to static information exchanges not involving dynamic naval movements. To be sure, the NNA proposal breaks with the "functional link" requirement so far as these informational matters are concerned, but not by much. If the break could be confined to the current terms of the proposal, it would seem manageable. Given the dissolution of the WTO as a cohesive negotiating bloc, a compromise formed around the NNA concept would effectively isolate the Soviet Union. The key potential drawback, of course, concerns the "if" in the proposition. For some in the West, the slippery slope begins at the water's edge. Once the functional link is broken, it may be just as difficult to draw the line at the NNA mark as at any other place. Can the sum of naval discussions be held to the limited NNA proposal terms? Maybe, but maybe not.

A different kind of compromise would be to split the difference in terms of the water areas to be covered in CDE. As noted in earlier sections, the Mediterranean is unique among "Europe's waters" from a strategical and political standpoint. What many in the West might not object to when applied to the Baltic, North, Norwegian, and Greenland Seas, for example, would run into significant opposition in this distinctive body of water. Here, it would seem, there are three possibilities: (1) the Mediterranean might be exempted entirely from a CDE naval CSBM regime; (2) notification and observation thresholds might be tailored differently for the Mediterranean in order to preserve an element of national flexibility in these waters; and (3) in addition to some number of notified and observed exercises, maneuvers, and transfers, an arrangement might be incorporated for some additional number of "no notice" naval movements annually—again in pursuit of maintaining naval flexibility.

The attractiveness of such an approach is that it seeks to accommodate regional differences in naval interests and capabilities in Europe while still retaining the concept of a pan-European arrangement joined into by the CSCE 35. Although precedents may be set, they are a two-sided coin: acknowledging that naval activities should be regulated in certain waters, but explicitly affirming that there are distinctive characteristics of different seas and ocean areas requiring different approaches. The potential drawback, of course, is the same in any compromise that reaches beyond the Madrid mandate: Can it be held there?
BY-PASSING VIENNA

This leaves a third set of alternatives. Assuming that the West is not opposed to
any and all naval negotiations in all circumstances and forums and for all time, are there
more manageable courses outside Vienna?

One option, occasionally suggested, is to acknowledge the inherent drawbacks of
regional approaches to naval limitations and to seek instead a global forum for
negotiations on naval CSBMs. Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze evidently had this
in mind when addressing the UN General Assembly in 1988: "We propose that all these
[naval] questions be discussed in the United Nations at a multilateral meeting of military
experts." At the UNDC in May 1989, Sweden, Finland, and Indonesia suggested that
the Geneva Conference on Disarmament might serve as an appropriate "global" forum for
consideration of naval CSBMs and multilateral INCSEA-type arrangements. Larger
forums, however, introduce a host of complications of their own; not least of these is that
as the stage is enlarged, so too is the cast of relevant players. In this, George Kennan's
dictum—that the failure of any negotiation correlates with the square of the number of
participants—weighs heavily in the equation.

A second course is to pursue naval matters along essentially bilateral lines. This
has been the pattern in INCSEA agreements. In addition to the original arrangement in
1972, the Soviet Union has negotiated bilateral INCSEAs with Britain, France, and the
FRG. Norway evidently is interested in a similar bilateral arrangement with Moscow.
Greece and Turkey signed their own INCSEA-type accord in 1988. The advantage of
such an approach is that it permits progress by countries disposed to make it, without
complicating the process with the participation of others who are not so immediately
inclined or who are inclined in different ways to do different things. The global navies
share more in common with each other in certain naval aspects than they have in common
with anyone else. European countries with concerns limited to coastal defense have
different interests than those with foreign policy interests, for example, in the non-
European reaches of the Mediterranean.

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13The assumption is strongly supported by a close reading of U.S. policy statements, and
also by the U.S.'s own negotiating history in the postwar period. (On this count, see Lacy
(forthcoming).) To judge by its public statements, however, the present U.S. Navy leadership
might well disagree. See, e.g., "Role Unchanged, Navy Chief Insists," Los Angeles Times, March
6, 1990, p. 4.

14E. Shevardnadze, address to the United Nations General Assembly Third Special Session
on Disarmament, New York, June 8, 1988.
A third course is to proceed in terms of sub-regional arrangements in Europe. In the INCSEA area, for example, there is a certain logic to multilateral agreements defined in terms of specific seas and ocean areas. The kinds and densities of naval and air traffic are vastly different in the Baltic and the northern sea areas than they are in the Mediterranean and the English Channel areas.

MANAGING THE POLITICS

Given the profound but unpredictable change in superpower and intra-European political and military relationships in the period ahead, it would seem prudent for the West to hold the current line on naval negotiations in the short term. Yet the very factors that argue for this course in the near term also argue against staying on it for very long. “Just saying no” to any and all naval discussions in Europe is less sustainable as Europe and the superpowers adjust to new roles. U.S. naval operations may still constitute a world apart, but this too is a world that cannot be blind or unthinkingly resistant to the weight of change.15

CDE is scarcely an ideal forum for naval negotiations. Nevertheless, some form of naval accommodation acceptable to the West would still seem to be within reach, either within CDE directly or off to the side. This leaves the second and third options above. Politically, the second may be unavoidable. Strategically, the third would seem more desirable. Navigating between worlds in the period to come is likely to require managing the intersection between these courses.

15 “The Navy has to take another look at its requirements,” Senator Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, told the Chief of Naval Operations in March 1990. “Who are you going to be protecting? This change in Europe has to affect the Navy.” “Role Unchanged,” Los Angeles Times, 1990, p. 4.
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