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THE SUBMARINE'S ROLE IN FUTURE NAVAL WARFARE

by
JAMES J. TRITTEN

MAY 12, 1992

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The Submarine's Role in Future Naval Warfare

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1.0 Introduction¹

President George Bush's speech at the Aspen Institute in August 1990 ushered in a new era for national security and national military planning that has profound repercussions on navy and submarine program planning for the future.² The days of the submarine force being important as the center of an aggressive, offensive, high-seas, warfighting maritime strategy are over.

Instead, roles for the armed forces of the United States are being recast into a more benign international security environment that will change service and combat arms roles and missions as well as influence our worldwide command and control structure. Today's panel, and my own paper, will talk about how the new international security and equally new fiscal environments will affect the submarine's role in future naval warfare. These new environments will result in both diminished roles as well as new opportunities to exercise submarines to their full potential.

There are a few general approaches to arguments which justify maintaining a submarine force. One approach is to concentrate on the deployed and emerging technologies and argue for the most capable submarine that can be built. Another approach is to concentrate on stated requirements. In the past decade, or so, there was a symbiotic relationship between available technologies

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and mission requirements. This is no longer the case. This paper, like the new regionally-focused defense strategy, will take a decidedly top-down approach.

2.0 Strategic Planning

Generic strategic planning starts with one of three possible inputs: (1) the threat, (2) goals, or (3) resources available. Where to start planning depends upon the type of planning being conducted; program planning versus operational planning, declaratory UNCLASSIFIED planning versus classified actual planning. What has occurred since even before the President's Aspen speech is a revolution in the threat assumptions facing program and operational planners, a realization that defense resources would shift significantly, and a conclusion that goals therefore should and will change. Planners today are faced with the unenviable task of attempting to adjust to near-simultaneous changes in all three elements that drive strategy. This strategic planning construct drives the roles and missions of the future fleet.

Our new regional defense strategy is very much top-down and driven by budgets and the breakup of the Soviet empire. The 1990 budget summit's 25% reduction over five years was due to Congress watching the old threat crumble and the perceived need to reallocate resources from defense to other sectors of the budget. The President's new strategic concept was developed in response to the budget agreement rather than as a result of a long-term formal, bottom-up study involving the inputs of the Commanders-

in-Chief (CinCs) and services that focused on goals, objectives, or available technologies.

Since Aspen, the CinCs and services have participated more fully in the strategic planning process that will implement the President's visions. The major constraint, however, is that defense resources were not adjusted. The Base Force, therefore, was designed to support the new national security strategy which was developed to fit within the agreed 25% budget reduction. The new regionally-focused defense strategy does not ask the armed forces to perform missions which the Base Force cannot handle. Scenarios associated with the new regional defense strategy call for programmed responses that can be met by forces that do not exceed the Base Force. The submarine force's future programming roles and missions, therefore, derive from budget assumptions rather than serve as an input to them.

Submarine program planning, therefore, revolves around an appreciation for a changed threat perception, a new regionally-focused defense strategy, and the resource limits of the Base Force. This paper will now discuss each of these in turn.

3.0 Military Threats

Rather than recite the numbers and quality of the myriad of potential military threats facing the United States over the next ten years, this paper will instead take a more macro-level approach. The direct military threat to Western Europe that drove

program planning for years has simply gone away. The old theater-strategic offensive operation with Soviet tank armies on the move from the inter-German border to the Pyrenees, and the associated actions on the high seas, is a threat that our programmed active (AC) and reserve component (RC) forces no longer have to deal with. Similarly, a world with two nuclear superpowers and tens of thousands of warheads pointed at each other is likewise a world that does not need to be planned for with programmed forces.

On the other hand, there obviously are existing Russian and other former Soviet republics' nuclear and conventional capabilities still facing the United States and its allies and which far exceed those necessary for self-defense. Existing allied and American forces meet that challenge and interim plans will govern their use during the transition period from the confrontational world of the 1980s to the programmed world of 1995 and beyond. This paper, and indeed this symposium, is largely focused on the programming world of 1995 and beyond, not the residual threats facing current forces today.

3.1 Resurgent/Emergent Global Threat

Leaks of the administration's planning scenarios in the February 17, 1992 New York Times indicate that the Pentagon may be using the phrase "resurgent/emergent global threat" (REGT) to describe a generic (non-Russian/Soviet) threat which requires a U.S. global war fighting capability similar to that of our mili-

tary force structure of the 1980s.³ These press accounts originated from a leak of a yet unapproved draft of the annual classified Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) and associated planning scenarios. Additional press reporting of this REGT threat is found in the February 20, 1992 Washington Post.⁴ According to this report, a REGT is described as:

"...an 'authoritarian and strongly anti-democratic' government [developing] over about three years, beginning in 1994. After four or five years of military expansion, the REGT is ready to begin 'a second Cold War' by the year 2001, or launch a major global war that could last for years."

Within the new strategy construct, programmed forces for a global war, and perhaps even a major regional war, are put into the category of reconstitution; i.e. wholly new forces that are developed once strategic warning is recognized and appropriate decisions are made. The assumed warning time for a global war shifted first from the traditional few weeks to, according to the President's concepts at Aspen, a few years. According to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (VJCS), "...we can now expect **eight-to-ten years' warning** [emphasis added] time, in which to reconstitute larger forces."⁵

The point to all this is that for programming purposes, the strategy does not require the military to develop active or even reserve forces to meet the challenge of the old European-centered global war. The new missions for the AC and RC programmed force are, instead, strategic deterrence and defense, forward presence, and crisis response.

3.2 Regional Threats

Threats less than that of a global war, generally assumed in the past to be handled by forces procured to globally fight the former Soviet Union, now occupy the mainstream of programming warfighting contingencies. A series of conventional conflict scenarios used by the Joint Chiefs of Staff were contained in the 1991 Joint Military Net Assessment (JMNA).⁶ These threats range from generic counterinsurgency (COIN) and counter-narcotics (CN), to lesser regional contingencies (LRC), to major regional contingencies (MRC). A major regional contingency might, if not properly handled, escalate into a regional war. Regional war is not viewed as a smaller version of the old global war.

The mid-February 1992 DPG leaks in The New York Times and the Washington Post also contained the specific locations of the programming regional threat scenarios under our new national military strategy. Although these scenarios were neither approved nor predictive, they nevertheless provide a glimpse as to what the administration is considering to discuss with the Congress. They are, therefore, useful in developing other scenarios which will lead to roles and missions for the fleet and the submarine force and have been used by this panel for the purpose of discussion.

The leaked scenario for a regional war escalating from a major European crisis involved Russia invading portions of Lithuania and Poland with help from Belarus. This was the most

military demanding DPG scenario, according to press reports. The threat only involved some 24 divisions and a ground advance on one theater axis. The numbers of divisions associated with the old European-centered global war with the USSR were **much** higher.⁷

The August 1991 National Security Strategy of the United States speaks of a "potential threat to a single flank or region" and a "limited, conventional threat to Europe."⁸ The point is that current discussions of wars or crises in Europe do **not** begin to approach the magnitude of what NATO thought it faced a few years ago. They also do **not** contain any discussion of responses that shift the conflict to a new theater or sub-theater as geographic escalation, or escalation over time.

The leaked MRC in Korea was an attack from the North on the South. The MRC in Southwest Asia (SWA) involved Iraq invading Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The Joint Chiefs apparently also were interested in exploring simultaneous major regional contingencies. While the U.S. is occupied in SWA, North Korea invades the South. All of these MRCs, including the European contingency and war, present threats at the operational-level of warfare--below the strategic-level of warfare.⁹

In the category of LRCs, the news reports listed a coup in Panama (roughly 2,000 n.m. from the U.S.) and one in the Philippines (roughly 6,000 n.m. from the U.S.). LRCs required the evacuation of U.S. nationals and limited response in one country.

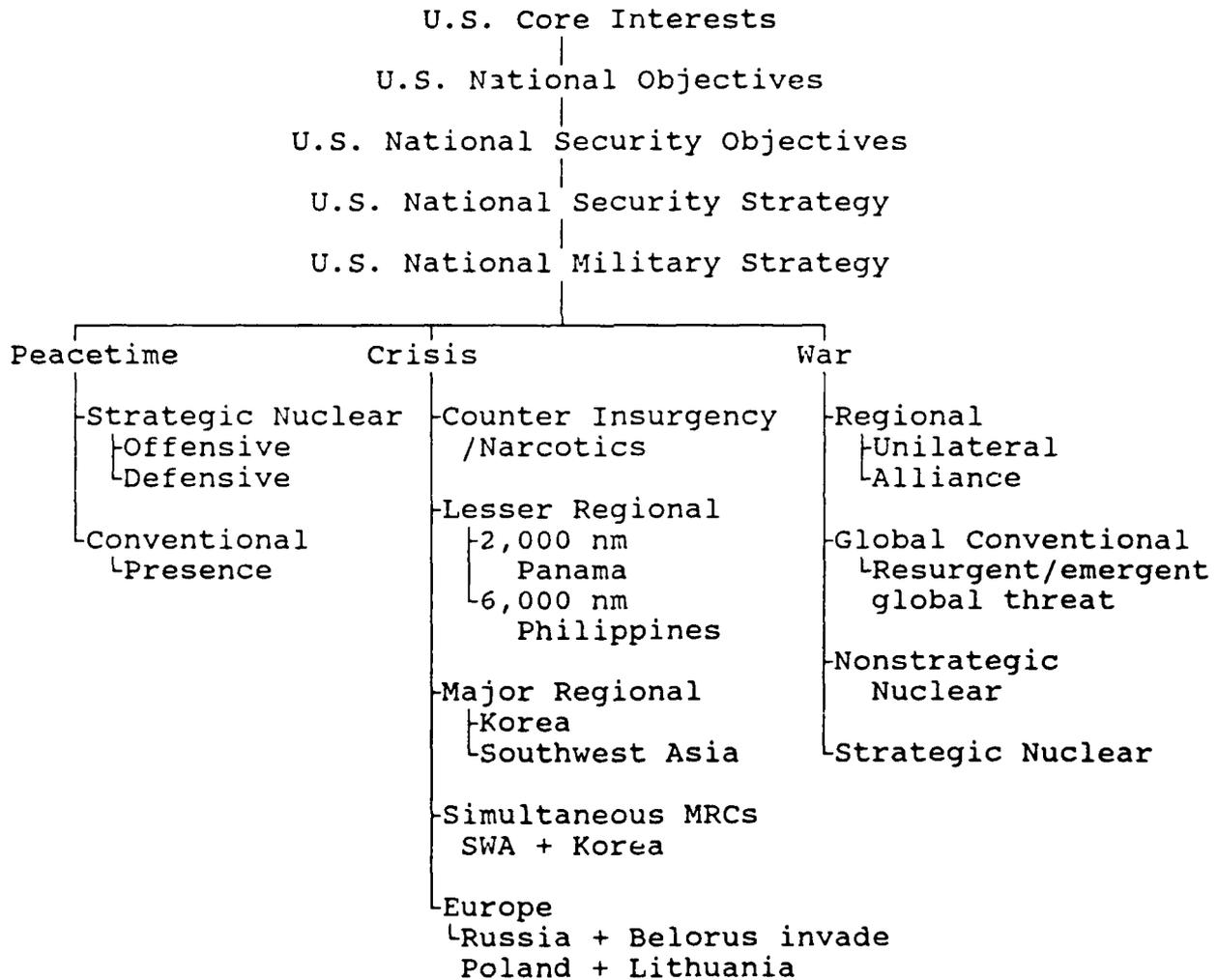
These threat scenarios are at the tactical-level of warfare, not the operational-level of warfare.

3.3 Threat Schematic

A complete schematic of programming military threats based upon administration sources and the leaked scenarios is contained in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

U.S. MILITARY PLANNING SCHEMATIC 1992



Source: The author

The Navy and the submarine force must be able to explain how its traditional operations and missions support scenarios such as these in the programming world of today. The inability of the submarine force to do this will make it more difficult to obtain the support of the Chairman of the JCS or the Secretary of Defense when they testify to the Congress.

4.0 Planning Goals and Objectives

The new regionally-focused defense strategy has four elements: (1) strategic deterrence and defense, (2) forward presence, (3) crisis response, and (4) reconstitution. Although the first three of these appear to be terms with which we are well familiar, a careful reading of the administration's words on these subjects reveals significant differences that will impact on fleet and submarine programming.

4.1 Strategic Deterrence and Defense

The cornerstone of American defense strategy will remain deterrence of aggression and coercion against the U.S., its allies, and friends. Deterrence is achieved by convincing a potential adversary that the cost of aggression, at any level, exceeds any possibility of gain. Should deterrence fail, the strategy calls on the U.S. armed forces to defend the nation's vital interests against any potential foe.

To achieve this goal, the U.S. will continue its modernization of strategic nuclear offensive forces and associated com-

mand, control, and communications capabilities. The U.S. is also committed to improving its strategic nuclear defensive capabilities. The U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy will remain committed to fostering nuclear stability, an environment in which no nation perceives a compelling advantage in using nuclear weapons in a first-strike.

The Washington Post broke a story, in early January 1992, that reported on the depth of thinking about new changes to American nuclear war plans. According to the press report, it was suggested by a Blue-ribbon panel that the U.S. should prepare contingency targeting packages against "every reasonable adversary" in the world and substitute five separate targeting plans for the current Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP). New limited nuclear options (LNOs) of 1-10 warheads should be developed and the U.S. "...should rethink its 1979 pledge not to use nuclear arms against Third World countries..."¹⁰

The press report further stated that the U.S. should develop a Nuclear Expeditionary Force and that it should retain a nuclear strategic reserve which could be used against industrial targets in the former USSR or against other nations if the U.S. and Russia were to ever engage in nuclear warfighting.

About a month after this story appeared in the press, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) that the U.S. was prepared to: "...no

longer need to hold at risk what future Russian leaders hold dear." Cheney went on to say that:¹¹

"This would require unambiguous evidence of a fundamental reorientation of the Russian government: institutionalization of democracy, positive ties to the West, compliance with existing arms reduction agreements, possession of a nuclear force that is non-threatening to the West (with low numbers of weapons, non-MIRVed [multi-independently targetable reentry vehicles], and not on high alert status), and possession of conventional capabilities nonthreatening to neighbors."

One new area for strategic nuclear warfare will be to respond flexibly to lower levels of aggression. Strategic defenses can be effective in countering the growing threat of ballistic missiles from nations other than the former USSR. Indeed, Secretary Cheney used the term "extended protection" instead of "extended deterrence" in his 1992 Congressional testimony when he referred to the role of deterrent forces providing coverage for American friends and allies.

4.2 Forward Presence

According to Secretary Cheney's February 1991 Congressional testimony, the U.S. will also devise a dynamic "peacetime engagement" strategy to deter low intensity conflict and support international stability. The August 1991 National Security Strategy of the United States says that the U.S. "...cannot be the world's policeman with responsibility for solving all the world's security problems."¹² Indeed, America's presence and crisis response role under the new national security strategy should not be akin to that of a policeman but rather a fireman. The U.S. armed

forces will participate in that strategy largely in the form of overseas presence.

In his Aspen speech, the President alluded to maintaining a forward presence by exercises. Chairman of the JCS General Colin L. Powell, U.S. Army, stated in December 1990 that forward presence includes military assistance programs. In his February 1991 testimony to Congress, General Powell expanded his definition of presence to include, but not be limited to: stationed forces, rotational deployments, access and storage agreements, combined exercises, security and humanitarian assistance, port visits, and military-to-military relations.

The 1991 JMNA adds combined planning, nation-assistance, peacekeeping efforts, logistic arrangements, supporting lift, and exchanges to the list of forms of military presence. The August 1991 National Security Strategy of the United States includes training missions and prepositioned equipment. The National Military Strategy included countering terrorism, protecting American citizens, and the war on drugs. Other pronouncements include forces afloat and intelligence sharing and cooperation.

These expanded definitions should be viewed as attempts by the administration to ensure that all planned future activities will satisfy the requirement to maintain an overseas presence with a smaller force, the Base Force. Simply put under the new grammar, presence no longer primarily conjures up the image of forward-deployed combat-capable forces.

Generally, the submarine force has been excluded from American discussions on presence and naval diplomacy. Foreign government, however, have not always turned a blind eye to our including submarines in foreign exercises or in port visits. Dr. Jan Breemer's paper suggests that this should not be the case in the future.¹³ This argument will not be accepted easily by other parts of the Navy or even other services or the Departments of Defense or State. Presence as a mission for the submarine force will not be a force builder and will not drive the problem unless it is tied to an effective concurrent role in crisis response.

4.3 Crisis Response

There is a risk that the end of the Cold War may bring an increased risk of regional conflicts and greater unpredictability in the international security environment. Today's crises are extremely dangerous due to the proliferation of advanced weaponry and weapons of mass destruction and the demonstrated willingness of Third World nations to use them. High technology weapons in the hands of Third World nations include: ballistic missiles, air defenses, tactical air forces, cruise missiles, and modern diesel attack submarines.

U.S. crisis response forces will provide presence and the ability to reinforce with adequate forces to prevent a potentially major crisis from escalating or to resolve favorably less demanding regional conflicts. The U.S. crisis response strategy

focuses on the use of decisive force to limit vertical and horizontal escalation as well as escalation over time; i.e. swift termination and containing the conflict to the theater of origin. Obviously, actions outside the affected theater will be considered if they are necessary to ensure success for a military operation, but these actions will be considered the exception rather than the rule.

The JCS recognize that not all crises will evolve in the same manner. The 1991 JMNA outlines four possible types of crises: (1) a slow-building crisis; (2) a fast-rising crisis; (3) imminent conflict; and (4) conflict. The length and intensity of combat, for planning purposes, is assumed to be 450 days for COIN/CN, 90 days of low-mid intensity for LRC, 120 days of mid-high intensity for MRCs, and more than 50 days of mid-high intensity for a war escalating from a European crisis.

Responses to these contingencies are contained in a series of measured response options. Responses could include a flexible minimal force deterrent response, a major deterrent response (Operation DESERT SHIELD), and more "worst-case" responses where combat begins soon after or simultaneously with the insertion of troops. This program of contingency types and measured responses appears to be a building-block and force sequencing approach to crisis management.

Naval crisis response goals have been described as using its peacetime presence forces to respond to a crisis area within

seven days.¹⁴ Forward-deployed and surge forces are expected to combine into "Expeditionary Strike Fleets" within thirty days. If the crisis is not contained by these efforts, the combined air, land, and sea forces would be organized within sixty days.

The submarine force must explain how its traditional operations and missions support contingency operations such as these in the programming world of today. The inability of the submarine force to do this will make it more difficult to obtain the support of the Chairman of the JCS or the Secretary of Defense when they testify to the Congress.

4.4 Reconstitution

A fundamental component of the President's new national security strategy is that, assuming a significant warning of a Europe-centered global war, the U.S. can generate wholly new forces--rebuild or "reconstitute" them if necessary--in order to **deter** aggression. It includes mobilizing manpower; forming, training, and fielding combat units; reactivating the defense industrial base; and building completely new forces. Reconstitution is considered as the ability to provide a **deterrent** against a REGT, not necessarily a 1980s global **warfighting** capability.

Reconstitution is not the same thing as mobilization or regeneration--it is more like what the United Kingdom had planned during the interwar years, when it assumed, as we now appear to do, that up to ten years of strategic warning would be available. New defense manufacturing capability and new forces and military

will be built essentially from the ground up. Preserving this capability means protecting our infrastructure and the defense industrial base, preserving our lead in critical technologies, and stockpiling critical materials. This will be an extremely challenging task under the current fiscal climate.

4.5 Changes in Military Art

Another element in the new national security strategy is an emphasis on technological breakthroughs that will change military art. Secretary Cheney first addressed this in his February 1991 remarks to the SASC. Changes in military art occurred during the inter-war years with the development of *blitzkrieg*, carrier-based strike naval air, and amphibious warfare capabilities. The Soviet military has long discussed the "Revolution in Military Affairs" that occurred after World War II and the advent of nuclear weapons and long-range means of delivery. Senior Soviet military officers have been warning of another "revolution" in the near future. After the splendid performance of U.S. weapons during Operation DESERT STORM, it appears that their worst fears were justified. The coming revolution will present enormous challenges and opportunities in doctrinal and strategy development as well as opportunities for the attentive submarine force.

5.0 The Base Force

The Base Force, or the new force structure advocated by the General Powell, will be organized into four basic military components: Strategic nuclear offensive and defensive; Atlantic; Pacific; and a Contingency Force; and four supporting capabilities: Transportation, Space, Reconstitution, and Research and Development (R&D). What constitutes those forces is already being debated and will continue to be debated throughout the next year.

5.1 The Strategic Force

The Strategic Force will initially include those offensive forces that result from the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) Treaty, assuming that it finally enters force on all sides. Previously, goals for the next round of talks had been identified as low as 3,000 warheads. After unilateral actions taken by President George Bush in September 1991 and following his 1992 State of the Union Address, 3,000 warheads may be on the high side of where we are heading.

In his September 27, 1991 television address to the nation, Bush announced that he had ordered the immediate stand-down of alert bombers and 450 *MINUTEMAN* II ICBMs previously scheduled for a phased deactivation under START, as well as a number of reductions in tactical, including naval, nuclear weapons. These actions placed immediate greater reliance upon the sea-based leg of the triad. In his January 28, 1992 State of the Union Address,

President Bush announced the cancellation of some land-based and air-breathing programs and the end of the production of a new warhead for sea-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), the W-88 warhead for the *TRIDENT II*.

Bush also offered additional reductions if the former Soviet Union agreed to eliminate all intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) with MIRVs. Specifically, Bush stated that the U.S. would: (1) do away with all its *PEACEKEEPER* (MX) missiles, (2) de-MIRV its existing *MINUTEMAN* ICBM force, (3) reduce its SLBM warheads by 1/3, and (4) convert most strategic bombers to a conventional role.

According to the START Treaty, and under President Bush's 1992 State of the Union proposal, the U.S. will deploy ten *OHIO*-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) with the *TRIDENT II* (D-5) missile and the first eight *OHIO* class with the older *TRIDENT I* (C-4) SLBM. All of these actions are consistent with a direction in favor of relying primarily on SSBNs with a survivable, non-prompt, countervalue targeting strategy.

Reducing the offensive threat dramatically to lower numbers suggests revisiting the suitability of strategic defenses. In his February 1991 testimony to Congress and subsequent written report to Congress, Secretary Cheney outlined a reorientation of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) to a system of Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS) providing protection from limited ballistic missile strikes against the U.S., its

forces overseas, and friends and allies--indicating that it would be space, ground, and **sea-based**. There is no reason that the submarine force cannot be a major contributor to the sea-based component of GPALS.

5.2 The Atlantic Force

The Atlantic Force will include residual forces in Europe, those forward-deployed to Europe and Southwest Asia (SWA), and the continental U.S.-based reinforcing force (including heavy ground forces). This force would be responsible for Europe, the Middle East, and SWA.

To set the Atlantic Force into the context of the missions outlined in the new regional defense strategy, we find the following military forces recommended by the administration in early 1992:

Presence -- One corps with two divisions, slightly more than three Air Force fighter wing equivalents (FWEs), one carrier battle group (CVBG), a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), and prepositioned material in Europe; one carrier battle group (CVBG), a MEU, some air defense batteries, and prepositioned material in SWA. Presumably the Navy's current Middle East Force is also included.

Crisis Response -- three AC roundup divisions, 6 RC divisions, 2 AC FWEs, 6 RC FWEs, 4 CVBGs, and 1 Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF).

Reconstitution -- 2 RC cadre divisions, 1 training carrier, 32 frigates, and probably the Marine Corps Reserve component.

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The Atlantic Force would be responsible for the most demanding DPG scenario--that of an European crisis escalating into a regional war. According to the Washington Post report, in this scenario, the U.S. would spearhead a NATO counterattack with a minimal force of 7 1/3 heavy Army divisions, a MEF, 49 Air Force squadrons, and 6 CVBGs. After 89 days of combat, including 21 days of very high intensity counterattack, NATO was expected to win.

The Europe crisis was characterized as involving an out-of-area response by NATO to Poland and Lithuania essentially involved a force equal to the entire AC and RC Atlantic Force. If the U.S. were to take a force equal to the size of entire Atlantic Force and devote it to a single contingency operation, would we swing forces from other areas? We cannot mass even close to a full MEF worth of amphibious ships unless we swing forces. Would swung forces arrive in time? Submarines with a high speed of advance (SOA) and no open-ocean opposition are a credible swing force, as the Canadian Navy once explained to its government as a rationale for nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs).

Six aircraft carriers were supposedly dedicated to this Polish-Lithuanian contingency operation. Are these carriers to be used in the Baltic? If the carriers are to not operate in the Baltic, will they operate under the principles of the old Maritime Strategy and engage Russia in another theater or sub-theater? Does the submarine force operate under the old Maritime Strategy for this post-Cold War contingency response? Are such

actions in conformance with the administration's current guidelines to limit crises to the theater of origin?

With the publication of the Secretary of Defense's 1992 Annual Report to the President and the Congress, we find that Atlantic Force transportation goals have been significantly revised downward from even 1991.¹⁴ The new lift goals for a contingency response in Europe are now only two divisions (instead of four), two MEBs (instead of one), and associated tactical fighter squadrons in about 15 days (instead of 10). Prepositioning goals for Europe were likewise reduced from six Army divisions and the Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) slated for deployment, with prepositioned equipment, in Norway to only two Army divisions and the MEB.

Atlantic Force responses need to also be understood in the context of NATO's new Strategic Concept. In summary format, Figure 2 explains where it appears that NATO is heading for their new military missions of presence and crisis response.

Figure 2New NATO Defense StructureI. Reaction Forces

- A. Immediate Reaction Force (IRF), multinational brigade-sized patterned on Allied Command Europe (ACE) Mobile Brigade with about 5,000 personnel available within 72 hrs
- B. Rapid Reaction Force (RRF)
 - 1. ACE Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), multinational corps (4-5 divisions) available within 6-10 days
 - 2. Naval Reaction Forces, to be determined
 - 3. Air Reaction Forces, to be determined

II. Main Defense Forces

- A. Active Covering Force
 - 1. Ready Maneuver Forces, 7 Central European national & multinational corps
- B. Reserves, 3 months to activate

III. Augmentation Forces 20+ divisions from North America

Source: The author

The initial guidelines for a response by Rapid Reaction Forces were within 5-7 days. Those have now been extended to 6-10 days, calling into serious question whether the U.S. needs to keep an AC ground forces combat capability in-theater. The U.S. Army and Air Force should be able to return four, instead of two, divisions to Europe within 10 days if lift and prepositioning receive sufficient priority.

Additional Rapid Reaction Forces will probably be created for maritime and air units. For example, there is no reason that submarines should not and cannot be added to the Supreme Allied

Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) multinational Standing Naval Forces Atlantic (STANAVFORLANT) or the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) Standing Naval Forces Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED)--both elements of NATO's reaction forces. If not a part of these standing forces, plans should include submarines being integrated into NATO reaction task groups, task forces, or expanded task forces.

The Atlantic Force would also be responsible for an MRC in SWA. The U.S. is to participate in a coalition response and send 4 2/3 Army divisions, a MEF, 19 Air Force squadrons, and 3 CVBGs. Coalition forces are projected to win after 54 days of combat including 7 days of very high intensity counterattack. The major regional contingency in SWA seems to be less ambitious than that in Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM.

5.3 The Pacific Force

To set the Pacific Force into the context of the missions outlined in the new national security strategy, we find the following military forces recommended by the administration in early 1992:

Presence -- Slightly less than one division and one FWE in Korea; slightly more than one FWE and one home-based CVBG in Japan; a MEF headquarters and a MEB on Japanese territory; and a forward-deployed at-sea MEU.

Crisis Response -- one AC light division, 1 reduced capability RC division, 1 AC FWE, 5 CVBGs, and 1 MEB.

Reconstitution -- no forces dedicated to this theater.

The Pacific Force will be responsible for the MRC in Korea. The U.S. response included 5 Army divisions, 2 MEFs, 20 Air Force squadrons, and 5 CVBGs. U.S. and Korean forces are expected to win after 91 days of combat, including 28 days of very high intensity counterattack.

The Korean contingency involved more Army and Air Force forces than are contained in the Pacific Force, clearly indicating that forces can and must be swung between theaters. Since U.S. transportation goals for Army divisions in non-European contingencies are lengthy, it implies that this scenario makes certain assumptions that might be troublesome to some; i.e. either the American promise to return with significant fighting power is not backed up with the prompt lift required or foreign charter is definitely counted on.

5.4 Simultaneous Major Regional Contingencies

Two simultaneous scenarios were apparently included in the draft DPG, according to the press leaks in February 1992. Multiple regional crises are included in the National Military Strategy and discussed in the testimony of numerous officials.¹⁵ Multiple crises do not, however, have to have the same level of response, even if they are simultaneous. The DPG scenarios, however, call for two simultaneous MRCs with a sequential response.

According to the planning scenario, while the U.S. is occupied in SWA, North Korea invades the South. The Washington Post reported that under these conditions, it took 70 days of combat to prevail in SWA and 157 days in Korea. The forces assigned to the simultaneous MRCs in Korea and SWA were not specified in the DPG leaks. The force structure may, or may not, be more demanding than the European crisis that leads to a war.

From the leaked DPG discussion of the simultaneous crises involving SWA and Korea, it appears that the U.S. can plan to primarily respond in one area and respond with a smaller holding force in another area. Such an assumption would allow the dual-use of lift and certain combat assets first for the one crisis and then later for the second. Dual contingency responses conceptually offers the submarine force an opportunity to provide rapid reaction and a presence at the second MRC in the absence of more traditional surface and naval aviation forces.

Although the military will probably be criticized for devising a two-crisis scenario, this is exactly what the armed forces faced and handled during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. The second crisis was not another MRC, however. The second crises were the evacuation of American nationals from Liberia (Operation SHARP EDGE June 1990 - January 1991) and Somalia (Operation EASTERN EXIT January 1991).

5.5 Contingency Force

Perhaps the most dramatic innovation of the Chairman's recommended force structure is the idea of a Contingency Force based in the continental U.S. (CONUS). For the present, existing CinCs will still retain their own forward-stationed and deployed forces for immediate contingency response. CONUS-based contingency forces will be available, as a quick-response force, to assist CinCs as well as to provide significant conventional capabilities for those areas of the world not covered by the Atlantic or Pacific Forces; i.e. South America, Sub-Saharan Africa, island nations, and possibly South Asia.

According to General Powell's Congressional testimony in September 1991, the Army will commit 5 divisions and Air Force 7 wings to the Contingency Force. A MEF, most of the rapid response sealift and intertheater airlift will also be available to the Contingency Force. The Navy will apparently provide dual-committed forces from the Atlantic and Pacific Forces. Special operations forces (SOF) appear to have a role both with the Contingency Force and the CinCs. The 1991 JMNA additionally included the following in their definition of the Contingency Force: Army airborne, air assault, light, and highly mobile heavy divisions, Air Force long-range conventional bombers, and Navy attack submarines.

In the category of LRCs, the DPG scenarios apparently included tactical-level operations in Panama and the Philippines.

Both cases involved significantly smaller levels of forces--no more than an Army division, a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), SOF, a squadron of Air Force aircraft, and 1-2 CVBGs--and without the active collaboration of allies or host nation support. The crises are expected to be resolved after 7-8 days of mid- or low-mid intensity conflict. The LRCs appear to be handled by primarily AC forces available to the CinCs on a day-to-day basis.

It appears that the forward-deployed Atlantic and Pacific forces will perform tactical-level crisis response while the reinforcing units assigned to these forces and the Contingency Force are primarily dedicated to the operational-level of warfare. Most of these forward deployed crisis response forces will probably remain maritime forces and there is no reason to ignore the capabilities that the submarine force can bring to bear. The sea services should, however, be prepared to participate in joint crisis response operations with light Army divisions, Air Force composite wings, and SOF.

The strength of the sea service's response is that they can be the first force on the scene with a sustainable capability. We should expect to see plans for a sequencing of forces with Army and Air Force units perhaps responding first and Navy and air-delivered Marine Corps units both enabling or enhancing those forces. We should also expect to see plans for forward-deployed MEU-sized Marine Corps and limited Navy units arriving first with Army and Air Force units next on the scene with complementary capabilities.

With their advantage of speed and endurance, forward-deployed submarine forces might well be the first maritime forces on the scene. John Benedict further develops the use of submarine forces in crisis response in his paper.¹⁷

5.6 Net Assessment of Ability to Meet Goals

After assessing the military threats and the recommended defense program, the 1991 JMNA concludes that "...the Defense Program provides minimum capability to accomplish national security objectives." The 1992 JMNA had not yet been published at the time of writing this paper, but Chairman Powell referred to its conclusions in his March 20, 1992 testimony to the SASC. Powell reported that the JMNA will again conclude that the programmed force "...will be capable of dealing with the challenges of an uncertain world." Specifically, the minimum capability forces recommended by the administration can "accomplish national security objectives with low to moderate risk."¹⁸

The Chairman states that there are challenges to our world leadership in most areas of technology development; i.e. process technologies and new product development, that might have an impact on our ability to reconstitute. General Powell sees our planned offensive strategic deterrence forces continuing to support peace and stability with the prospect for deterrence at far lower levels.

Regarding crisis response, the JCS will apparently conclude that programmed forces will be adequate provided that specific deficiencies in mobility are eliminated. Finally, regarding presence to support peacetime engagement, the JCS will apparently conclude that further reductions, other than those recommended by the administration, in forward basing and access rights give cause for concern. The Base Force is that minimum defense programming force structure necessary to meet America's enduring needs. It is to revisions to this programmed force that we will now turn.

5.7 Base Force Revisions

The concept of the Base Force precedes that of the DPG associated scenarios. It should be no surprise, therefore, that the sizes of the military responses associated with each of the scenarios do not exceed that contained in the overall Base Force. If the Base Force is dependent upon a strategy that is largely budget driven, then the existing scenarios are subject to considerable fluctuation if the 25% budget agreement fails to hold.

Despite the best efforts of the administration to hold the line at the Base Force, there have already been public discussions of possible revisions to the composition of the Base Force. The administration has already said that the number of attack submarines will not remain at 80. An on-going JCS submarine requirements study will report out with some number less than 80.

Navy flag officers have recently hinted at numbers like 50-65, while recent Congressional debate seems to center between 20-50.

A failure of the 25% budget to hold and an additional significant cut in the defense budget should result in asymmetrical reductions, in favor of the sea services, rather than an equal portion for each service. After all, the Navy can provide the bulk, if not all, of our nuclear deterrent forces as well as the bulk of the combat forces to be assigned presence and crisis response missions. Given the track record of absorbing such cuts, the prospect of asymmetrical cutbacks actually happening is uncertain and we should assume that the other services will be assigned a major role in crisis response even if their forward deployed combat presence is significantly reduced.

Instead of actually cutting existing AC or RC, the Pentagon might cut the promise to build reconstituted forces for the REGT since warning time has apparently now been extended to 8-10 years. Even if this were the preferred path to handle a reduced Base Force, it is unlikely that reconstitution program funds alone can yield the resources necessary to absorb another major defense cut. Reductions in reconstitution programs might hurt the submarine force if arguments for the industrial base, *SEA-WOLF*, and *CENTURION* are too closely tied to them.

Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Frank B. Kelso II, U.S. Navy, told Congress, in February 1991, that a Base Force, 451-ship Navy, deploying about 30 percent of the available fleet,

could provide an immediate response to a crisis anywhere in the world within 7 days. This response would comprise 1 Amphibious Strike Task Force, consisting of 1 CVBG and 1 Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) with an embarked MEU. A second CVBG could be available within 15 days. A full MEB could arrive within 30 days.¹⁷ If this was the best that the Navy could do with the first version of the Base Force, what will we be able to offer if there are additional cuts? Are there opportunities for the submarine force to substitute for the CVBG?

In this election year, it appears that the administration is attempting to hold the line at the 25% budget cut by daring Congress to take the actions that might put more ex-servicemen and defense contractors on the street and in the unemployment lines. One might conclude that no matter who wins the elections in November 1992, the military will be cut again. Either Congress will take the initiative in order to fund domestic programs which it views with a higher priority, or the re-elected or a new administration will recommend cuts again. The Base Force, which was originally viewed as the ceiling for the new force structure, has become a temporary floor. At best, it will survive until the elections of 1992.

The challenge for industry is not to make submarines more capable and quieter but rather to find ways to reduce prices without sacrificing our technological edge. This is not a minor challenge and will take our best and the brightest.

6.0 Exercising the Submarine Force to its Fullest Potential

The submarine force of the future must consider a new international security environment, a major change in overall roles and missions for the armed forces, and a greatly constrained fiscal environment. It must also be designed in line with the new emphasis on jointness. At the end of 1991, the JCS published a new document, Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces, giving their view of the preferred conduct of future wars.²⁰ It is to the force of the future that this paper will now turn for its conclusions.

6.1 Submarine Forces for Strategic Deterrence and Defense

The mission of day-to-day deterrence is gradually being assumed more by the submarine force. The new U.S. Strategic Command will involve Navy assets. Opportunities for joint duty by submarine officers have been increased many times now that the Navy will make a major contribution to its staff.²¹

The submarine force will have a continued important role to play in the verification of arms control agreements and the unilateral measures being taken in our great "disarmament race." All too often, non-specialists equate national technical means (NTMs) of verification solely to unmanned overhead systems without a recognition of the key role played by the undersea service.

6.1.1 Offensive Forces

The U.S. has not yet announced a basic shift in nuclear targeting, but clearly such a shift must be contemplated. As we reduce in overall warheads, our strategic nuclear forces will be unable to "service" all the military, leadership, and other targets associated with our "countervailing strategy" and we will be forced to consider a shift to countervalue targeting. If the U.S. shifts to countervalue, non-time-urgent targeting, there will be no reason to retain a land-based or air-breathing nuclear force--nuclear deterrence can and should be totally accomplished by the sea-based force.

As we reduce the overall numbers of strategic nuclear warheads, and if we simultaneously place more emphasis on our sea-based forces, there will be those that again raise the issue of the few numbers of SSBNs being magnets for attack since the payoff could be so high. In the new international security environment, the burden of proof is on detractors who need to demonstrate that an at-sea threat exists to the *OHIO*-class SSBN. It surely does not exist today. We will need to monitor, however, the evolving technologies of foreign nations and take the obvious prudent steps necessary to ensure that our deterrent forces at sea remain invulnerable.

6.1.2 Defensive Forces

The President's restructuring of SDI into a mobile GPALS is probably not a viable program if one assumes an even more austere

fiscal climate. Submarines carrying mobile theater or strategic ballistic defenses are but one possibility for the future. Submarines deployed well-forward offer the opportunity to catch a ballistic missile in its relatively vulnerable boost phase where an interception would net all warheads and not just one. Related missions could include submarine-launched satellites as attrition fillers or the use of submarines for anti-satellite attack.

Conventional military forces often are used to enhance the performance or survival of nuclear forces. For example, the bulk of the former Soviet Navy was expected, during a war, to deploy in bastions where they would have defended SSBNs from attacks by Western antisubmarine warfare (ASW) forces--including attack submarines. As the numbers of nuclear delivery vehicles are reduced, due to arms control agreements, the importance of defending and attacking conventional military forces will increase since the value of each nuclear warhead target will be relatively greater.

The dispersal of Russian SSBNs, and other nuclear offensive forces, from known peacetime locations can be used by the Russian government or Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) during a crisis to send a message of political resolve. Dispersal areas are often more easily accessible to ASW or SOF. With fewer nuclear warheads expected in the Russian arsenal in the future, the U.S. must consider strategic ASW more seriously than when each side had over 10,000 warheads to manage.

One can make a strong case that strategic ASW as a declaratory programming mission should be dropped. The only real programming threat that requires attacks against enemy SSBNs is the REGT. A reconstitution strategy does not require the reinstatement of 1980s warfighting forces--it calls for the rebuilding of forces to deter a global war. There will be many options other than forces required for strategic ASW. I make this recommendation in full recognition that despite our programmed threats and programmed response, if a global war were to actually occur, our submarine force would and should be tasked with the conduct of strategic ASW.

There is also the possibility, albeit remote, that Russia will forego deployment of SSBNs if its overall numbers of warheads drops to levels such as 1,000 or even 500. This is certainly not the recommendation coming from the Russian Navy nor Ministry of Defense, but neither of these institutions will make the decision to retain SSBNs or shift to a dyad or monad.

One should also consider how high in priority strategic ASW is in the programming crisis/contingency scenarios developed previously. The issue is one of priorities: do we approach the problem from the perspective of what submarines are currently optimized for, or do we deal with the threat, strategy, and fiscal resources that we have been given. Professor Jim Wirtz deals with the issue of strategic ASW in his paper.²²

6.2 Submarine Forces for Forward Presence

Submarines have always performed significant, intelligence-related, forward presence missions that have been of interest to the national command authority (NCA). Most of this mission has been deliberately hidden from public view for reasons that were sound but are now counterproductive. The forward presence intelligence mission is one that must be sanitized for sensitivity and declassified in order to justify numbers of units that are required on routine patrol.

Admiral Kelso's 1991 annual report talked in terms of fourteen SSNs on forward deployment with a Base Force of 450 ships. If the total numbers of ships or simply the total numbers of submarines is reduced, it will be difficult to sustain such high numbers on forward presence. We have seen suggestions for Blue/Gold crews to help keep the deployed numbers high.²³

The obvious other alternative is a high/low mix. The French Navy has maintained a forward presence for years in the South Pacific and used low-capability units to accomplish this mission. This option will need to be considered for the fleet, in full recognition that these forces will have little or no combat capability for crises or in war.

The issue here is the new, less robust, words that the administration has associated with the phrase presence and whether the submarine force wishes to participate under those terms. The risk, of course, is that the submarine required will have

only a marginal military capability. The benefit is that the numbers of units will be greater with a high/low mix.

The U.S. maintains a strategic nuclear deterrent and shore bombardment presence in the world that is significant and often overlooked. Are there opportunities to make the submarine force more visible and will help reassure allies? Are there opportunities for standing regional naval forces, outside of NATO, in our new regionally-focused defense strategy?

6.3 Submarine Forces for Crisis Response

Crisis response, in an era of no significant opposition on the high seas, means that the fleet can assume an essentially unopposed transit to the area of conflict and shift its emphasis to power projection ashore. The locus for naval warfare's battle space has shifted to the littoral. This power projection will be at the operational and tactical levels of warfare and set into the context of a joint response--not the old "Navy/Marine Corps Team." The submarine force must now become an integral part of the "AirLand Battle" as well as battle group defense.

Forward-deployed submarines can arrive in a crisis area rapidly and be positioned to launch unmanned surveillance systems and deliver shore bombardment prior to the arrival of the Air Force composite wing or the Navy CVBG. It is the best platform for the rapid search and location of foreign submarines that must be identified prior to the introduction of an amphibious ready

group. Simply put, the submarine can accomplish the limited sea superiority that will be required for LRCs or even initially in an MRC.

The Air Force tells us that air superiority is needed prior to other aviation missions being performed or a ground offensive/counter-offensive being launched. Is that true at sea? Have we studied the maritime operational-level of warfare sufficiently to understand if the Navy's contributions can be made in the absence of air superiority? What are the technological options that we already have that have traditionally not been emphasized?

If enemy air defenses can be suppressed at the outset of a campaign, as they were in DESERT STORM, then the numbers of highly capable manned aircraft that are used for follow-on interdiction and strategic bombardment simply do not need to be as high as in the past. There is a role for invulnerable submarine platforms in the suppression of enemy air defenses.

The Navy should not attempt to compete with the Air Force over the development of manned stealthy aircraft. It has the opportunity to leapfrog deployed technologies and develop unmanned systems that could place the submarine force at the cutting edge of combat during a contingency response.

Submarines have been generally underrated for their contribution to presence and crisis response. The submarine force will need to fund the studies that will correct that perception. Rather than just focus on the ability to respond, however, naval

officers should also obtain the historical short-term and long-term political effect of the commitment of various types of armed forces before they have the President asking "where are the submarines?" instead of "where are the carriers?" The submarine force must also explain the historical role that it has played in successfully **resolving** past crises--not just responding to them.

Years ago, the Navy reclassified the names of some of our traditional surface combatants in order to help justify the force. Perhaps this is the time to reconsider the designation of some attack submarines as strike submarines, patrol submarines, or other terms that will break up the category into missions not associated with ASW. If we want the President to ask "where are the submarines?," then the submarine force should consider providing him with the name of a package of forces whose missions clearly identify it as a part of our contingency response effort.

6.4 Submarine Forces for Reconstitution

Perhaps the most controversial aspect for the future submarine force will be its role in reconstitution. With a lengthening of the warning time for a REGT to 8-10 years and the lack of a high seas threat over the next decade that cannot be handled by the improved *LOS ANGELES* class submarine, keeping the existing industrial base intact will be extremely difficult. Industry and the submarine force will need to present new alternatives for keeping critical skills honed and our deployed technology ahead of any potential competitor.

The intelligence community will need enter into areas that it has traditionally circumvented--economic intelligence. The submarine community will need to cooperate with industry and intelligence to monitor technologies and economic potential in foreign nations that would indicate a desire to compete in deployed undersea combat systems.

The whole subject of decision-making and reconstitution is one that I have addressed elsewhere and does not bode well for actual responses to an REGT.²⁴ The armed forces should develop contingency plans for an response to an REGT that does not include courageous decision-making by democratic governments and the need to provide a rapid deterrent response. At-sea strategic and tactical nuclear weapons are one such option. A reconstituted conventional force is another.

7.0 Traditional Roles and Missions

This paper has largely been cast in terms that are new to most submarine officers. That has been done by design. The old Cold War logic of warfare has changed. We must now change the grammar as well. The final paper of this session is by Captain Arne Johnson.²⁵ This paper is as fine a job as I have seen in trying to bridge the gap between the new concepts of warfare and the traditional roles and missions that you are familiar with. It is only fitting that his be the closing paper to this session.

The submarine force appears to be a key element in our overall new national security strategy. It has a premiere role in deterrence that most of us both understand and can foretell. The submarine force also has major roles to play in presence and crisis response. We will now examine those roles in detail.

8.0 References

(1) The views expressed by the author are his alone and do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. government, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Navy. This chapter draws upon, but significantly deepens, the discussion of the Navy found in my forthcoming book: Our New National Security Strategy: America Promises to Come Back, New York, New York: Praeger, 1992.

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