

20 May 85

Admiral Eccles:

Sorry to be so slow in getting copies of these letters to you. I went into the hospital shortly after we spoke on the phone and I am only now getting back to work.

Hope your interviews with Stillwell go well.

Best Wishes

John Halliday

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R/S

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DEPUTY CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
(PLANS, POLICY AND OPERATIONS)
WASHINGTON, DC 20350

23 NOV 84

Dear Admiral Service,

As you are well aware, we have created the Navy's Maritime Strategy in just over two years. Already applying and exploiting it in a number of ways, we are now setting out to further refine and extend it.

When one considers the numerous and significant benefits we are realizing versus the bureaucratic impediments one might have expected to block such success, the significance of the achievement becomes all the more notable. Reinforcing that significance is the fact that a coherent strategy has always been perceived as basic and essential to any military service.

Thus it strikes me that we ought to try to understand the environment, circumstances and contributions that led to the strategy. This would be worthwhile, not only in terms of understanding the historical significance of the Maritime Strategy to the Navy, but also to illuminate lessons learned for future such efforts. Further, a study could investigate the larger internal and external influences the strategy has had, or will engender, as well as the counter arguments it has set in motion.

I am writing to you because I understand you have a historian on your staff, Dr. John Hattendorf, who may be particularly well qualified to undertake such an analysis project.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND 02841-5010

SER 2998

26 DEC 1984

Dear Ace,

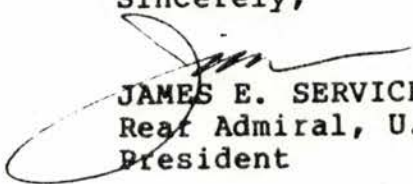
Thank you for your letter of 23 November in which you suggest that Dr. John Hattendorf of my faculty might be able to undertake the writing of a history of the Navy's Maritime Strategy as it emerged over the past few years.

John Hattendorf holds his doctorate from Oxford University; he is a specialist in naval history and currently holds the Ernest J. King Chair of Maritime History. There is no doubt in my mind that he is qualified to undertake the task you propose. There are two ways to proceed. The usual method is to gather the materials and store them in some safe place where a future historian will eventually uncover them and write these events from a more historical perspective. Second, as you suggest, that a history written now might be currently advantageous as we refine and extend the strategy.

Writing history in real time while the actors are alive is difficult, and even more so when most of the players still hold key positions. If the project is to work, it would have to be given a clear support including full access to the key documents and players in order for Hattendorf to obtain the candid, open and lengthy interviews he would need. In addition, I know that as an historian with high professional standards, John will need full freedom in writing and in drawing conclusions, even though the result may be controversial and classified.

This is fraught with too much uncertainty in my view and my personal recommendation is to proceed to gather the information for some historian in the future. However, if the support is clear for this project, then I would be glad to make Hattendorf available. He has a large number of projects previously scheduled, but we could open his schedule from mid March to late April 1985 to undertake the basic research, travel and interviews necessary. This would let him prepare a monograph that might be appropriate to publish later in 1985, or perhaps as one of our classified Newport Papers.

Sincerely,


JAMES E. SERVICE
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
President

Vice Admiral J.A. Lyons, Jr., USN
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations
(Plans, Policy and Operations)
Washington, DC 20350

621P

THE NORTH FLANK MARITIME OFFENSIVE

Foolish Delusion
or
Strategic Necessity?

TO: OSD PA

DATE:
5 FEB 85

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NO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.

[Signature] 013-85
D. A. WENNER, 1STLT, USMC

HEAD, SECURITY SECTION
HEADQUARTERS USMC

H. K. O'DONNELL
Major, USMC
for

Dr. Phillip A. Karber
"Military Problems of NATO"
Georgetown University
19 December 1984

NOTE: The views expressed in this paper are the author's and do not represent the position of the U.S. Marine Corps or Department of the Navy on this subject.

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INTRODUCTION

"I cannot conceive of a NATO war in which we would not be putting not one, but several carrier battle groups into the Norwegian Sea at some point. What we must do is to seek out and destroy the Soviet capacity to interdict our uses of the sea." 1/

- Secretary of the Navy John F. Lehman (1982)

Seldom in the peacetime history of the United States has any Service Secretary overseen a build-up of military power comparable to the 600 ship, 15 carrier battle group Navy of John Lehman. Riding the crest of a populist wave which was clearly alarmed by the decline in perceived U.S. military prowess following the Vietnam war, Lehman has promised the American people a U.S. Navy that will be "strong, flexible, offensive and global - and it will possess unquestioned maritime superiority over any opponent or combination of opponents which might seek to prevent our free use of the seas." 2/

In an attempt to justify the tremendous expense of the U.S. naval build-up, Lehman and others have focused attention on the continuing increase in Soviet naval strength, particularly on the north flank of NATO in the Norwegian/Barents Seas. Here the Soviet Northern Fleet and its huge complex of military installations on the Kola Peninsula pose an imposing and intimidating threat to Alliance defense. In seeking to protect the North Atlantic sea lines of communication (SLOC), Lehman rejects a passive, defensive

1/ John F. Lehman, "Lehman Seeks Superiority (Interview)," International Defense Review, May 1982, p. 547.

2/ John F. Lehman, "Rebirth of a U.S. Naval Strategy," Strategic Review, Summer 1981, p. 14.

strategy centered about the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom (G-I-UK) Gap and has instead spoken repeatedly to the necessity for taking the battle to the Soviets. 3/

Not surprisingly, the north flank offensive has drawn a considerable amount of flak from a variety of sources, and for a number of different reasons. Some argue that a naval foray in the northern latitudes will be suicidal in the face of Soviet naval and air strength 4/; others express concern for the escalatory risks inherent in a direct assault on the Soviet homeland. 5/ A number of distinguished Western strategists believe that an offensive in the north will siphon needed forces away from the all-important Central European front. 6/ Many of Lehman's critics arrive at the conclusion that his naval expansion is an inherently wasteful use of scarce defense dollars which could be better applied to the strengthening of forces for air/land combat and strategic mobility. 7/

3/ Lehman, "Superiority", p. 548.

4/ Prominent among the proponents of the suicidal school are Jeffrey Record, "Jousting With Unreality: Reagan's Military Strategy," International Security, Winter 1983-1984, pp. 3-19; and Stansfield Turner and George Thibault, "Preparing for the Unexpected: The Need for a New Military Strategy," Foreign Affairs, Fall 1982, pp. 125-129. Neither of these articles disputes the need for a maritime build-up, but both take great issue with a naval offensive against the North Flank of NATO.

5/ Barry A. Posen, "Inadvertent Nuclear War?," International Security, Fall 1982, pp. 28-54.

6/ Robert W. Komer, "Maritime Strategy vs. Coalition Defense," Foreign Affairs, Summer 1982, pp. 133-134.

7/ Probably the most comprehensive exposition of the continental case against a build-up of maritime offensive power is contained in Keith A. Dunn and William O. Staudenmaier, Strategic

Given the mood of fiscal restraint which appears to be the hallmark of the Second Reagan Administration, reductions in the rate of increase for defense spending are almost assured. Critics of the 600 ship Navy will focus anew on the questionable utility of American maritime forces in an offensive role against the Soviet foe. Proponents of a stronger Navy will be called upon to more fully explain the conceptual framework underpinning a naval foray into Soviet waters. The outcome of this debate will have far-reaching consequences which may well determine the strategic course for the North Atlantic Alliance into the next century.

What is the strategic advantage to be gained by the occupation of Norway and control of the Norwegian Sea? What is the extant balance of military forces in the region? What are NATO's war-fighting options in the north and how do U.S. naval forces impact on the chances for a termination of hostilities favorable to the Alliance? Is the Navy proposing an immediate push into Soviet waters, or is the concept for a maritime campaign based upon a sequential, coordinated and combined Alliance effort? These and other questions must be examined to the fullest extent possible if we are to reach a satisfactory answer to the naval controversy on NATO's northern flank.

*Problem: No tie-in
to global economics*

Implications of the Continental-Maritime Debate, The Washington Papers No. 107 (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984).
Dunn and Staudenmaier call for a reduction to 12 carrier battle groups and advocate a hefty build-up in strategic mobility and prepositioning programs (pp. 90-94). Komer, "Maritime vs. Coalition," expresses similar misgivings about the cost of the naval expansion at the expense of needed ground programs (pp. 143-144).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NORTH FLANK

Up until the early 1960's, the strategic significance which a NATO planner would attach to the Norway-Sweden-Finland region would not compare favorably with the importance with which he viewed the central region of Europe. The Soviet Union possessed a fledgling navy which was oriented primarily to the defense of the homeland and had no real capability to challenge the maritime superiority of Western navies in the Norwegian Sea. 8/

The military build-up initiated by the Kennedy Administration in 1961 caused the Soviets to reexamine their own warfighting programs and capabilities. The expansion of the Polaris ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) program by the United States caused the Soviets to both accelerate their own SSBN programs and to recognize the need for a forward deployed "blue water" Navy capable of finding and neutralizing the Polaris threat. 9/ ?

The NATO decision to embrace the doctrine of flexible response may have been the cause of another Soviet decision point in 1966. According to Soviet naval expert Michael McGwire, it was at this point that the Soviets determined that their overriding objective was to prevent nuclear devastation of the Soviet homeland. If nuclear war was no longer inevitable and NATO was willing to

8/ See Kenneth R. McGruther, The Evolving Soviet Navy (Newport: Naval War College Press, 1978), pp. 15-24; Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Understanding Soviet Naval Developments, 4th Ed/Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), pp. 3-5; and General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hackley, "The Influence of the Northern Flank upon the Mastery of the Seas," Naval War College Review, May-June 1982, p. 5.

9/ Michael McGwire, Soviet Military Objectives (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, forthcoming), p. 10.

accept a "conventional pause", then the Soviets, in view of their preponderance of conventional strength, would seek to keep the war from escalating by neutralizing NATO's nuclear assets via deep conventional-type strikes. Fundamental to the efficacy of this new Soviet strategy was the maintenance of a secure nuclear "insurance" force in the form of her ballistic missile submarines, protected by concentric layers of surface and submarine assets. 10/

The greatly increased missile ranges provided by Delta and Typhoon class submarines in the 1980s have enabled the Soviets to establish an SSBN "bastion" in the waters of the Arctic Ocean/Barents Sea while maintaining a capability to strike targets on the North American continent. The surface ships, attack submarines, and naval air assets of the Northern Fleet (largest of the four Soviet fleets) provide protection for the bastion from NATO anti-submarine (ASW) efforts. Key to the maintenance of the security of this area has been the construction of a large complex of military facilities on the Kola Peninsula, called by some observers the most concentrated collection of such bases anywhere in the world. 11/

The growth of Soviet naval power in the northern region has clearly forced a reevaluation of the importance of Norway and its contiguous waters to the successful defense of the Alliance. The forward deployment of Soviet naval assets into the Norwegian Sea would not only keep NATO naval forces away from the SSBNs, but

10/ Ibid., pp. 13-15.

11/ Major General Richard C. Bowman, "Soviet Options on NATO's Northern Flank," Armed Forces Journal International, April 1984, p. 88.

would also exert control of the G-I-UK Gap and could directly threaten the North Atlantic SLOC which provides NATO with 90% of its seaborne reinforcement/resupply. 12/

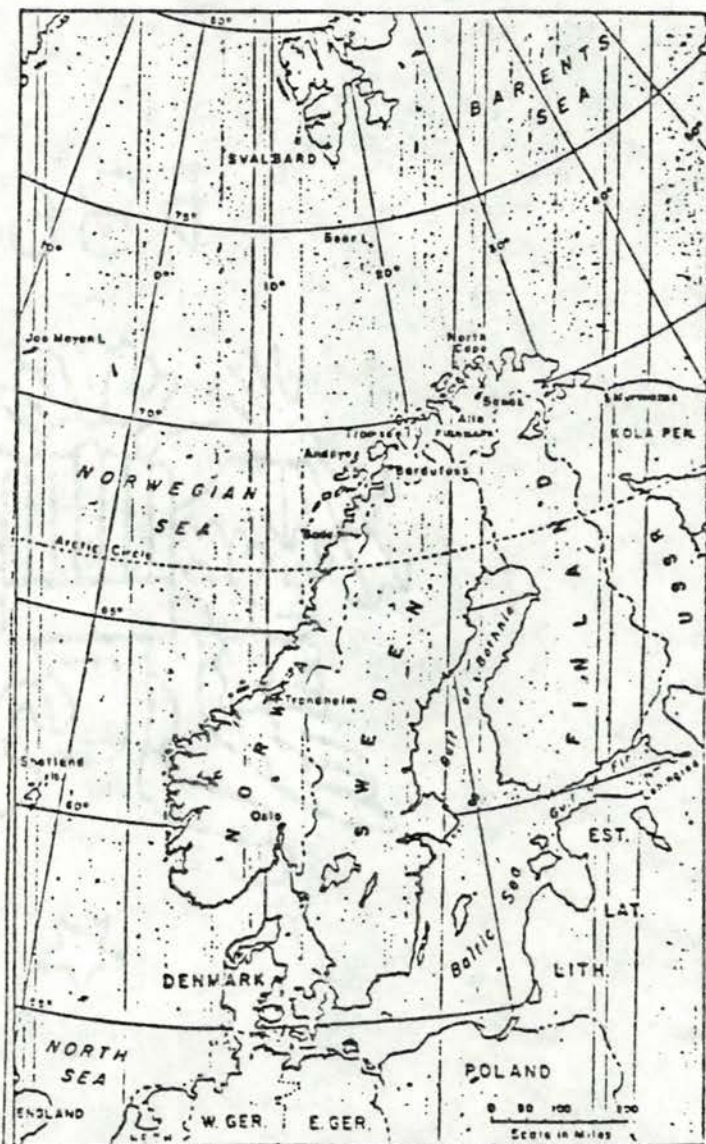
The possession of key airfields in northern Norway is essential for both the Soviets and NATO in the event of global war. Airfields at Banak, Tromsø, Bardufoss, Andøya, Evenes, Bodø, and Vaernes currently allow for the positioning of Allied air assets to control the North Cape and to interdict a Soviet naval push into the Norwegian Sea and beyond. Soviet seizure of these airfields and their associated electronic warfare facilities and listening posts would not only deprive NATO of valuable bases and intelligence on Northern Fleet movements, it would also enable the Soviets to bring the G-I-UK Gap and the Atlantic SLOC within range of their long-range aviation assets (primarily TU-22 Backfire bombers). 13/

Norway's increasing importance to NATO became a matter of prominent discussion in the middle 1970s. The noted Sovietologist John Erickson authored an alarming article in the summer of 1976 on the growth of Soviet military power in the Northern Theater and its possible consequences for the defense of NATO. 14/ As

12/ Colonel Joseph H. Alexander, "The Role of U.S. Marines in the Defense of Northern Norway," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, May 1984, p. 182; and John F. Lehman, "Things That Go Bump in the Sea," Washington Post, 3 April 1984, p. 22.

13/ See Bowman, "Soviets Options," p. 90; Alexander, "U.S. Marines," p. 183; Farrar-Hackley, "Mastery of the Seas," p.8; and Kenneth A. Myers, North Atlantic Security: The Forgotten Flank?, The Washington Papers, No. 62 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979), pp. 34-36.

14/ John Erickson, "The Northern Theatre: Soviet Capabilities and Concepts," Strategic Review, Summer 1976, pp. 67-82. Even after nine years have elapsed, Erickson's piece provides



Source: "The Influence of the Northern Flank upon the Mastery of the Seas," Naval War College Review, May-June 1982, p. 7.

the growing menace of Soviet capability was fully recognized, a great many articles and books were published in the late 1970s which called for greater efforts within the Alliance to meet the threat posed by Soviet naval/land/air assets in the region. ^{15/} It had become increasingly apparent that a Soviet victory in the north would put a chokehold on NATO's lifeline and could well decide the eventual course of the battle for the industrial heart of Central Europe.

THE NORWEGIAN PERSPECTIVE

Norway, though a NATO member since 1949, has been forced to walk a fine line in its relations with the Soviets. In sharing a 122 mile contiguous border with the Soviet Union, Norway has made every attempt to maintain a working, reassuring relationship with its superpower neighbor to the east. By seeking to maintain the "Nordic Balance" along with its neighbors Sweden and Finland, Norway made a conscious decision in 1949 to prohibit the permanent basing of NATO forces on its soil and enacted a similar ban on

one of the best overviews of the Soviet military expansion in the Northwestern TVD.

^{15/} The four year period from 1976-1980 witnessed a ground swell of interest in the defense of Norway. Among the better publications are Christoph Bertram and Johan J. Holst, ed., New Strategic Factors in the North Atlantic (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1977); Marian K. Leighton, The Soviet Threat to NATO's Northern Flank (New York: National Strategy Information Center, 1979); Kenneth A. Myers, North Atlantic Security; and Captain William K. Sullivan, Soviet Strategy and NATO's Northern Flank (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1978).

nuclear weapons in 1960. 16/

Despite these efforts to keep regional tensions under control, the Norwegian relationship with the Soviets has not been an altogether pleasant one. The Russians exert continual pressure on the Norwegian government whenever steps are taken to improve Norway's defensive posture. 17/ Continuing disagreements on the pattern of Soviet activities on Svalbard; squabbles over fishing and mineral rights in the Arctic; and an increasing number of incursions by Soviet surface and submarine forces into northern Norwegian waters have all combined to bring about a state of heightened anxiety and tension among Norway's leaders and her people. 18/

The Norwegians were among the first to bring Western attention to the Soviet power build-up in the Northwestern TVD and have taken a number of positive steps in response. A continuing series of biannual major NATO exercises are held in central and northern Norway, despite Soviet protests. The Norwegian defense budget continues to show real growth that, in comparison, puts some of the more affluent nations in the Alliance to shame. 19/

16/ Kirsten Amundsen, Norway, NATO, and the Forgotten Soviet Challenge (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1981), p. 10.

17/ Robert K. German, "Norway and the Bear," International Security, Fall 1982, pp. 55-82. German provides a detailed accounting of Soviet-Norwegian relations since 1940, with particular emphasis upon political/diplomatic exchanges.

18/ Leighton, Soviet Threat, pp. 25-32; Amundsen, Norway and Soviet Challenge, pp. 13-34; and Myers, Forgotten Flank, pp. 45-60.

19/ The Military Balance 1984-1985 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1984), pp. 31-50. According to IISS, Norway's defense budget grew by 3.3% in 1983, compared

The most visible (and aggravating to the Soviets) response by the Norwegians has been an agreement signed with the United States in 1981 to allow for the prepositioning in central Norway of the equipment for a Marine Amphibious Brigade. 20/

The bitter experiences of invasion and occupation by the Germans during World War II have not left the Norwegian consciousness. Norwegians fully recognize the importance of their geographical positioning to both the Soviets and the Western Alliance. Writing in 1976, General H. F. Zeiner Gundersen (Norway's Chief of Defense) spoke eloquently to the importance of northern Norway:

"North Norway and the northern waters in particular, have been singled out when we talk about the strategic importance of our country. The development as regards sea resources and problems in this connection may cause our security interests and defense priorities to be more marked in our northern areas. A credible Norwegian defense, which is effective in peace as well as war, will be the most important stabilizing factor in years to come." 21/

THE MILITARY BALANCE IN THE FAR NORTH

Soviet

The Soviets have amassed a significant portion of their

with -3% for the Netherlands, 1.3% for West Germany, 2% for Denmark, and 3% for Great Britain. See also Alexander, "U.S. Marines," p. 184; and Lieutenant Colonel Charles H. Ingraham, "Protecting the Northern Flank," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, November 1984, p. 73.

20/ Alexander, "U.S. Marines," pp. 186-190; and Ingraham, "Protecting the Flank," pp. 72. For an interesting account of the Soviet negative reaction to U.S. Marine prepositioning, see German, "Norway and the Bear," pp. 72-75.

21/ General H. F. Zeiner Gundersen, "Soviet Power Build-up Decisive for Us," Norwegian Defense, 1976/1977, p. 9.

military might in the Kola region. Headquartered at Severomorsk on the Kola Peninsula itself, the Soviet Northern Fleet possesses 64% of the most modern Soviet SSBNs (Typhoon, Delta I-III, and Yankee), 75% of its most modern attack submarines, 95 maritime attack aircraft (Badgers and Blinders, capable of being quickly reinforced by 40 Backfires now based in the Baltic), and 66% of the latest (post-1967) combat ships (122 total ships). 22/ These forces have the probable mission of protecting the SSBN fleet in the Barents Sea/Arctic Ocean; preventing a NATO naval deployment forward of the G-I-UK Gap; and, if the opportunity presents itself, undertaking the interdiction of the Atlantic SLOC to Europe. 23/

The Kola is also part of the Arkhangelsk Air Defense District, controlling over 120 interceptors, 16 major airfields, and 30 SAM sites with over 200 launchers (including the latest SA-10 and SA-12). Equipped with the most modern Soviet weaponry, these forces will be assigned the task of intercepting B-52s, carrier-based and forward-based tactical aircraft, and submarine-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs). Primary among the responsibilities of

22/ Tomas Ries, "Defending the Far North." International Defense Review, July 1984, p. 874; The Military Balance, p. 21; Alexander, "U.S. Marines." p.182; and Charles T. Kamps, "NORDKAPP - WW III in the Arctic Circle," Strategy and Tactics Magazine, Fall 1983, p. 16. Ries provides additional insight into the use of the Backfire Regiment assigned to the Baltic Fleet, noting that this unit often deploys to Olgengorsk in the Kola and frequently engages in Northern Fleet exercises in the Norwegian Sea (Ries, Table 3, p. 876).

23/ Erickson, "Northern Theater," pp. 75-76; Alexander, "U.S. Marines," p. 182; Ingraham, "Protecting the Flank," p. 72; Leighton, Soviet Threat, p. 13; and Myers, North Atlantic Security, pp. 35-36.

the PVO in this area will be the denial of airspace over northern waters to NATO ASW aircraft seeking out Soviet SSRNs. 24/

Soviet ground strength in the Northwestern TVD is somewhat more limited than the level of naval and air forces deployed, though still quite formidable. The 45th Motorized Rifle Division (MRD) and the 341st MRD are located in the Kola region at Murmansk/Pechenga and Alakurtti respectively. Both of these divisions are at the highest state of readiness (category A) and are capable of executing an overland, air assault, or amphibious follow-on attack. Seven other divisions in the Leningrad Military District would be capable of rapid deployment to the Kola in the event of hostilities, though most of these divisions are at a lower readiness rating. 25/

Specialized assault units available to the theater commander include the 76th Guards Airborne Division at Pskov. When used in concert with the special operations capability of Spetsnaz units assigned to the theater, this division could well be assigned the mission of seizing key airfields, ports, choke points, and command/control facilities in north Norway. An additional asset of great utility is the 63d Naval Infantry Brigade (Soviet "Marines") assigned to the Northern Fleet and based at Petsamo. Utilizing the 15 amphibious ships assigned to the Northern Fleet, the Naval Infantry would have a similar type mission to the Airborne, seeking to seize key coastal facilities behind the mainline of

24/ Ries, "Defending North," p. 875-876.

25/ Ibid., p. 877; Erickson, "Northern Theater," pp. 70-71; and Kamps, "NORDKAPP," p. 22.

NATO resistance until relieved or reinforced by ground units. 26/

Based purely upon a "bean count" of Soviet military assets, one must conclude that the Soviets have made a substantial commitment to both the defense of the Kola region and to the support of a maritime campaign on NATO's northern flank. If we move from the static world of force balancing into the dynamic realm of military operations, it is not at all hard to discern the glowing opportunities on the north flank which the Soviets might be able to turn to their strategic advantage in a campaign for the control of the European continent.

NATO

Norwegian Forces

The first line of defense in north Norway falls to the Norwegians themselves. Having relied upon mobilization since the era of the Vikings, the Norwegian Army maintains 19,000 personnel on active duty, depending upon 165,000 reserves and a Home Guard of 72,000 to respond in time of war. One active unit - Brigade North - is positioned in the vicinity of Bardufoss, with three infantry battalions, one tank company, one artillery battalion, one antiaircraft battery, and two border garrison battalions under its control. 27/ This force is subdivided so as to protect

26/ Erickson, "Northern Theater," p. 71; and Kamps, "NORDKAPP," pp. 22-24, Erickson goes into specific detail concerning the joint training conducted by the 45th MRD and the Naval Infantry Brigade.

27/ The Military Balance, p. 45; and Kamps, "NORDKAPP," p. 19.

the major airbases at Bodø, Andøya, Bardufoss, and selected fortified coastal zones. 28/ With only one main road (E-6) and a parallel rail line ending at Bodø as the main route of advance for mobilizing reservists, it is easy to see that the provision of adequate and timely warning will be necessary if the Norwegian reinforcement plan is to be effective in blunting a Soviet attack.

The Norwegian Navy and Air Force maintains a higher ratio of personnel for active duty than does the Army. The Navy is primarily a coastal defense type of force, with a limited number of submarines, frigates, corvettes, and fast attack craft on its rolls. Normally, there are only four submarines, one or two frigates, and a fast attack boat squadron deployed in the northern waters at any one time. The remainder of the fleet could take a week or more to mobilize and move north. 29/

The Royal Norwegian Air Force is a modern, well-equipped fighting force possessing a mix of state-of-the-art weapon systems which would make it competitive with Soviet air forces until NATO air reinforcements arrived. Based at Bodø, Andøya, and Bardufoss in the north, the Norwegians cannot only deploy an impressive array of F-16 aircraft, but also have a detachment of P-3B Orion aircraft for ASW operations. If ongoing Norwegian programs for the hardening of these northern air facilities are pursued to their completion, the Norwegian Air Force can be relied upon to provide an initial capability (capable of rapid reinforcement from the south) to oppose a Soviet air operation in the north.

28/ Kamps, "NORDKAPP," p. 19.

29/ Ibid., p. 19.

Allied Forces

Due to Norway's previously mentioned policy regarding the basing of foreign troops on her soil, Allied combat power will be forced to arrive in a reinforcement mode via strategic sea or air assets, at the very time those same ships and planes will be attempting to implement the M+10 reinforcement of the Central European region. Possible reinforcement could come in the form of the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (AMF) deploying by air from Seckenheim, Germany. A light, well-trained, multi-national brigade-sized unit useful mainly as a "show-of-force" deterrent, the AMF could deploy to north Norway in a matter of hours if there were no more urgent requirement on another portion of NATO's front. 30/

The Canadian Air/Sea Transportable (CAST) Brigade Group and the British/Dutch Amphibious Force are also capable of providing highly skilled and professional reinforcement to the north. Possible difficulties with the deployment of these units may offer significant problems - the Canadians could take three to four weeks to arrive via sea, while the British/Dutch unit could take as much as ten days and may be forced to utilize commercial ferries for at least a portion of their transport. 31/

30/ Ibid., pp. 21-22; Ries, "Defending North," p. 879; Alexander, "U.S. Marines," pp. 184-185; General Sir Peter Whiteley, "The Importance of the Northern Flank to NATO," NATO's Fifteen Nations, April-May 1978, pp. 23-24; and Desmond Wetter, "Amphibious Warfare: The Northern Flank," NATO's Fifteen Nations, April-May 1978, p. 33.

31/ Kamps, "NORDKAPP," p. 20-21; and Wetter, "Amphibious Warfare," pp. 31-32. Wetter provides an insightful analysis of the significant problems the British faced when deploying on commercial ferries.

A U.S. Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB) has been designated for the reinforcement of Norway since 1977. The U.S. and Norwegian governments agreed in 1981 to the prepositioning of equipment for this MAB in the vicinity of Trondheim, a considerable distance from the north and a project which is not due for completion until 1989. If forced to deploy via amphibious shipping (approximately 20 amphibious ships would be needed), this MAB would take 12-14 days (or longer) before it could arrive in theater and be ready for the conduct of combat operations. 32/

Given the mountainous and rugged coastline which characterize much of northern Norway, the possibility for a successful defense with designated Norwegian and Allied forces can be viewed with some understandable optimism. Warning time could well be the key factor, however, for a quick "no-notice" attack by the Soviets could allow them to occupy key objectives prior to the arrival of NATO reinforcements.

Naval Forces

NATO's naval presence in the north is generally limited to deployments of the seven to nine ships of the Standing Naval Force Atlantic (StaNavForLant), operating under Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT). Composed primarily of ships from Canada, FRG, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the U.S., this force has a limited capability for antisurface (ASUW), anti-air (AAW), and ASW operations. 33/ Although this force has performed capably in recent exercises in the region, it has

32/ Kamps, "NORDKAPP," p. 20; Ries, "Defending North," p. 879; and Alexander, "U.S. Marines," pp. 186-190.

33/ Ingraham, "Protecting the Flank," p. 75.

responsibilities in all of SACLANT's area of operations and is not solely designated for the Norwegian Sea.

Though no one doubts that in the event of global hostilities with the Soviets a substantial task force would be assigned at least as far north as the G-I-UK Gap, the lack of a permanent surface fleet in the region is a continuing matter of concern and could forfeit initial advantage to the Soviets. 34/

Assessing the Balance

Despite the well documented and widely acknowledged importance of the north to the overall defense of NATO, the balance of forces in the region clearly favors the Soviets, at least in its initial unreinforced state. Soviet ground and amphibious forces are positioned for the seizure of critical objectives in north Norway, well supported by a large number of attack and interceptor aircraft. The naval equation is also weighted heavily to the Soviets, as the Northern Fleet could quickly launch out from its bases in the Kola to seize eventual control of the Norwegian Sea (and beyond), under the protective shield provided by Soviet Naval Aviation flying from recently seized air bases in north Norway.

NATO is placing great reliance upon the holding power of the Norwegians, the reinforcing capabilities of the Allies, and most of all the ability of its naval forces to keep the Soviets at

34/ Ibid., p. 75; Vice Admiral Sir James Jungius, "Maritime Aspects of the Northern Flank," RUSI, December 1978, pp. 18-19; and Anders C. Sjaastad, "Geopolitical Realities and Alliance Maritime Contingencies: The Northern Flank," in NATO: The Next Thirty Years (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), p. 168.

ay while maintaining control of the ports and airfields so critical for the arriving ground reinforcements. There can be no doubt that the effectiveness of NATO naval operations will be critical in determining the winner in this maritime theater, and may very well be decisive in the outcome of the war at large. 35/

WARFIGHTING OPTIONS

Soviet

Observers of the NATO-Soviet strategic scene have postulated a wide variety of possible scenarios which could result in confrontation and eventual armed conflict between the superpowers. For the purposes of this paper, we will assume that, for whatever combination of circumstances, the Soviet Union has made the decision to launch a full-scale conventional attack for the purpose of seizing control of Western Europe. This assumption will automatically relieve us of the necessity to examine a Soviet grab for north Norway in isolation, a very remote possibility at best which runs counter to the Soviet concept of "decisive" war. 36/

In his forthcoming book, Soviet Military Objectives, Michael McCWire examines a possible Soviet "game plan" for the conquest of Europe. 37/ McCWire believes that the subjugation of Central

35/ Jacquelyn K. Davis and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Soviet Theater Strategy: Implications for NATO, USSI Report 78-1 (Washington, D.C.: United States Strategic Institute, 1978), pp. 26-27.

36/ Kamps, "NORDKAPP," p. 18; and Bowman, "Soviet Options," p. 93.

37/ McCWire, "Soviet Military Objectives," Chapter IV-B, pp.

Europe in a quick conventional attack will be the first Soviet objective, thus relegating major commitment of ground forces to the north for the second phase of an extended campaign. He postulates a belief that the Soviets will, nevertheless, utilize their ground/air forces in the Northwestern TVD to seize key objectives in north Norway at the very outset of the campaign. Though he now has doubts that the Soviets would attempt to obtain mastery of the Norwegian Sea in the initial phase, he is absolutely certain that they will actively engage in naval and air operations to deny use of this area to NATO, especially U.S. carrier battlegroups (CVBGs). If the Soviets meet their 10-14 day window for the conquest of the continent, the follow-up seizure of the remainder of Norway will allow for control of the North Atlantic SLOC and the strangulation of the NATO reinforcement flow. 38/

In accepting McGwire's scenario on the macro scale, it is not at all difficult to fill-in the requisite details on the theater level. Soviet naval units would deploy from their Kola bases to establish the protective ring for the SSBN bastion and to position for the sea denial role in the G-I-UK Gap and Norwegian Sea. Air units would attempt to neutralize the Norwegian

1-42. Though I have only seen selected chapters from this work, I am certain that it will fast become a popular standby reference for those who have chosen for themselves the unenviable task of determining Soviet wartime planning.

38/ Erickson believes that the time window for the Northwest TVD to accomplish the conquest of Norway is probably about eight days, with an eventual 'pincer' being formed with the forces from the central front along the Baltic coastline ("Northern Theater," p. 80). He envisions a full effort by the Soviets to conquer Norway in the initial phase, even to the possible detriment of the central front. Given the Soviet focus on seizing the industrial base in Central Europe, I find McGwire's scenario the more persuasive of the two.

Air Force by means of attacks on important air bases. Ground and naval Spetsnaz units would carry out sabotage and advance force operations against Svalbard and possibly Jan Mayen Island, and key Norwegian airfields, equipment stocks, and command/control and intelligence facilities. 39/ The 76th Guards Airborne Division would be employed to seize vital airfields (Bodø and Andøya), while the 63rd Naval Infantry Brigade could be landed at Banak, Alta or even Narvik. The 45th MRD would launch an attack from its base in Pechenga to overwhelm the Norwegian border garrison and advance overland and via airmobile assaults along the coastal road to link-up with the Airborne and Naval Infantry units. A simultaneous assault by the 341st MRD across the "Finnish Wedge" would provide flank protection for the advance of the 45th MRD, ending at Skibotn on the Norwegian coast. Once the airfields and ports were secured, a redeployment of Soviet naval and air assets from the Leningrad Military District into north Norway would be immediately undertaken. 40/ The battle for control of the Norwegian Sea and the North Atlantic will have begun.

NATO

A key element in determining NATO's capability to withstand and repel a Soviet assault in Norway is the amount of warning

39/ For an unclassified, detailed picture of the intelligence installations in Norway, see Owen Wilkes and Nils Petter Gleiditsch, Intelligence Installations in Norway: Their Number, Location, Function, and Legality, PRIO Publication S-4/79 (Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1979).

40/ Kamps, "NORDKAPP," p. 18; Bowman, "Soviet Options," pp. 93-95; and Erickson, "Northern Theater," pp. 79-80.

time which strategic intelligence would be able to provide to NATO's governmental decisionmakers. An unreinforced attack by the Soviets in Europe would be a high risk venture which would have the appeal of hitting NATO before in-place forces could deploy and reinforcements from the United States could arrive. However, if we accept the McCWire scenario and the ultimate Soviet objective of conquering Europe (to include Great Britain) and holding secure significant portions of the North African coast, then it would appear that at least two weeks would be needed for the assemblage of a force sufficient to carry-out this task. Barring another case of optimistic blindness a la Stalin (who steadfastly refused to believe reports of an overwhelming German build-up of forces on the Soviet border in June, 1941) one can reasonably assume that these preparations will be spotted and a ten day period should be available for the Alliance to mobilize and prepare for hostilities. 41/

The key question in the north revolves around what is to be done with whatever warning time NATO is given, and how is the campaign against the Soviet juggernaut to be fought. The timely reinforcement of north Norway with mobilizing Norwegian ground and air units and deploying Allied forces gives rise to hopes that the Soviet ground thrust in the north can be contained, if

41/ One will get varying opinions on the subject of NATO warning time. I believe that ten days is a reasonable figure to use for a major, all-out Soviet assault with continental objectives. According to Tomas Ries, the Norwegians believe that Soviet preparations will take 14 days and that these can be kept secret for only four or five days ("Defending North," p. 879). See also Sjaastad, "Geopolitical Realities," p. 164.

not defeated out right. 42/ The success which an Allied ground defense would enjoy against a quick, "no-notice" Soviet attack is clearly more in doubt.

Regardless of the amount of warning time, the contribution of naval forces to the defense of Norway will be critical. If the reinforcing Allied units are denied entry in Norway because the Norwegian Sea has become a Soviet lake, then the probability that the ground defenders will be eventually overcome grows more likely. A surge of U.S. naval power into the battle for Norway could be the deciding factor and, in subsequent operations could create glittering opportunities for applying direct pressure on the Soviets for war termination.

How then does the Alliance best utilize its naval forces? Should a passive/reactive naval barrier be established across the G-I-UK Gap for the containment of Soviet naval forces and the protection of the Atlantic SLOC and its reinforcing flow to Central Europe? Or should a more aggressive naval posture be adopted which will seek to protect the SLOC by carrying the war into the Norwegian Sea and beyond, thus making an active contribution to the defense of the north flank and the Alliance as a whole? Formulating the answer to this key question constitutes the very essence of the current debate over maritime strategy, its contribution to NATO's defense, and the necessity to program and fund a 600 ship Navy.

42/ General Sir Peter Whiteley, "The Northern Flank of NATO," RUSI, March 1980, p. 13; Bowman, "Soviet Options," pp. 94-95; and Ries, "Defending the North," p. 879. Given sufficient time to mobilize, Ries reports that the Norwegians can hold for three weeks. Both Ries and Bowman highlight the critical role which Allied reinforcements will play in a campaign of any duration.

THE MARITIME STRATEGY

Background

In his address to the Jewish War Veterans on 31 August, 1984, Secretary of the Navy John Lehman decried the passive warfighting policies of previous Administrations. In speaking to the U.S. requirement to support the Alliance, Lehman addressed the use of maritime forces in the following manner:

"Our answer to the Soviet submarine threat to our Atlantic lifelines could not be simply to throw a passive anti-submarine barrier across the G-I-UK gap. The qualitative and quantitative transformation of the Soviet fleet required a wholesale revision of American naval strategy. Such a strategy had to recognize that the U.S. had no margin of safety in merchant marine or sealift assets. The Soviets had built a submarine force and forward deployed it to take advantage of this U.S. weakness. The answer, and the corresponding strategy thus became clear: build-up the fleet to regain the vital supremacy of the seas, develop a forward strategy that would dominate the northern and southern flanks of NATO, and in doing so, throw the Soviets on the defensive." 43/

Lehman has provided some general insight into his concept of a forward strategy. He believes that "the full range of naval capabilities will be necessary to defend those flanks, including amphibious forces and aircraft carriers. All must be able to sail in harm's way." 44/

Unfortunately, for some time there has been no detailed description of the Maritime Strategy available to the public. This allowed for Lehman's opponents to 'fill in the blanks' to their

43/ John F. Lehman, "Be Strong and of Good Courage," Speech to the Jewish War Veterans, Washington, D.C., 31 August 1984.

44/ John F. Lehman, "Nine Principles for the Future of American Maritime Power," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, February 1984, pp. 50-51.

in liking, and to the Navy's detriment. Words such as "in harm's way" were taken to imply an unescorted push into the Norwegian/Barents Sea in order to attack the Soviets, with resultant casualties in aircraft, ships, and men on a catastrophic scale. 45/

For the last two years, the Navy has utilized a Maritime Strategy briefing as the baseline for its efforts in the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS). This briefing has been presented at a classified level to top management in the Department of Defense to better explain the "forward" aspect of the new strategy. With the careful use of some recently written papers for the Center for Naval Analysis, 46/ authoritative articles in the open press, and some interviews with knowledgeable sources on the Navy Staff, it is now possible to construct in an unclassified form the basic tenets of the Maritime Strategy and to relate these principles to our scenario on the north flank of NATO.

Not the only purpose

Full Forward Pressure Strategy

The Maritime Strategy is not an independent entity conceived in isolation from the needs of the Nation as a whole. On the contrary, it is based upon Presidential policy documents from the National Security Council; the Defense Guidance, which is the Secretary of Defense's annual direction on force planning and programming; and pertinent strategy documents emanating from the Joint

45/ Turner and Thibault, "Preparing," pp. 125-129; and Record, "Jousting," pp. 3-19.

46/ Robert S. Wood and John T. Hanley, "The Maritime Role in the North Atlantic," Paper delivered at the Center for Naval Analysis Seapower Symposium, Washington, D.C., 28 November, 1984. Dr. Wood is the Head of the Strategy Department at the Naval War College and is a widely respected authority on maritime affairs.

Chiefs of Staff. The general goals of the Maritime Strategy can be summarized as follows:

- Deter war if at all possible
- If deterrence fails:
 - destroy enemy maritime forces
 - protect Allied SLOCs
 - support the land campaign
 - secure favorable leverage for war termination

The thrust of Soviet strategic thought was fully considered when the Maritime Strategy was formulated - indeed, it is a basic dictum of most strategists that a knowledge of our opponent must be central to all of our strategic efforts. Due note has been taken of the fact that the Soviets believe that a war with the Western Alliance will be decisive in nature. The Soviet focus on ensuring SSBN survival and the defense of the Russian homeland from nuclear destruction translates into a Soviet need for sea control in contiguous waters and sea denial in other key oceanic areas (to include the severing of vital Alliance SLOCs). ^{47/} Strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet Navy have been factored into the Maritime Strategy as well, to include a healthy respect for the large numbers of Soviet submarines, land-based naval aviation, and cruise missile capability. Russian deficiencies in sea-based aviation, some aspects of submarine technology, and amphibious assault have been targeted for exploitation.

Current naval capabilities within the Armed Forces of the U.S. and our Allies form a vital element of the Maritime Strategy. The Joint Navy-Air Force Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) of

^{47/} MccGwire, Soviet Military Objectives, p. 10; and McGruther, Evolving Navy, pp. 47-64.

9 September 1982 goes far toward ensuring that U.S. efforts to conduct AAW, ASUW, and effective command/control and intelligence operations will truly be a team effort. 48/ In a like manner, the significant contributions of Alliance maritime forces are fully recognized and will be relied upon in the prosecution of a combined, multi-nation maritime campaign. 49/

If deterrence fails, the primary national objective in the early stages of a conflict will be to limit its expansion. However, if these efforts are unproductive, then consideration must be given to affecting the scope and duration of the war. 50/ In making the 'strategic difference', maritime superiority can enable the Alliance to limit Soviet advantages and allows for the attack of Soviet assets in areas where they would prefer not to fight. Translated into a NATO context, this strategy will enable NATO to secure the Atlantic SLOC to Europe, defeat Soviet attacks on the northern flank and, if need be, to carry the fight to Soviet operating areas in seeking the best possible leverage for war termination.

Contributing

The Maritime Strategy itself is broken-out into three phases:

- ° Phase 1: Transition to War
- ° Phase 2: Seize the Initiative
- ° Phase 3: Carry the Fight to the Enemy

48/ Lieutenant Colonel Thomas L. Wilkerson, "Two if by Sea," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, November 1983, pp. 35-38.

49/ Lehman, "Rebirth," p. 12; Ingraham, "Protecting the Flank," p. 77; and Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger, Annual Report to the Congress Fiscal Year 1984 (Washington, D.C., 1 February 1983), p. 36 and 139.

50/ Weinberger, Annual Report FY 84, p. 35.

Transition to War

The ideal solution to any crisis or low intensity type of conflict is to control the crisis and/or keep the small war from intensifying and spreading. In a superpower crisis with the potential for global hostilities, one could expect the Soviets to disperse their naval assets in order to limit their initial vulnerability. Surface ships and submarines would deploy to their wartime operating areas and Soviet Naval Aviation elements would be flown to alternate airfields.

On a parallel track, U.S. naval forces would be commencing a forward movement as well. Nuclear attack submarines would be deploying to locations in proximity to enemy forces. Carrier and surface action (SAG) battle groups would be flushed from their homeports for movement to their assigned operating areas. Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) would either put to sea on amphibious shipping or be airlifted to fall-in on prepositioned equipment stocks. Army and Air Force elements would similarly posture themselves for war, to include the possible commencement of rapid reinforcement contingency plans in Europe.

Allied units would also be commencing their preparations for possible global conflict. A key element in this scenario would be the early movement of Allied reinforcements (both ground and air) to the north flank. Allied naval units would likewise occupy their assigned forward operating positions, to include the G-I-UK Gap and Norwegian Sea.

The overriding purpose of the transition phase is to increase readiness; avoid maldeployment of forces; maximize available warning time; and to cede no vital area (e.g., Norwegian Sea) by default.

Seize the Initiative

Should actual hostilities commence between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, then the initial Alliance strategy would be to counter the attack, attrite enemy forces, and seize the initiative. Protection of the Atlantic SLOC would be undertaken as far forward as possible, so as to ensure the security of the reinforcement of Central Europe.

\ Taking full advantage of the U.S. edge in ASW technology, the destruction of the Soviet submarine fleet is one of the central objectives of this phase. Nuclear attack submarines would be conducting ASW operations as far forward as possible, to include the Norwegian/Barents Seas. Allied task groups would be forming an ASW barrier in the G-I-UK Gap and conducting active sweeps in the Norwegian Sea, utilizing surface ships, mine warfare, and maritime patrol aircraft. 51/

Carrier battle groups would also be engaged in active operations, seeking to engage Soviet air assets. The U.S. advantage in aviation technology, seaborne command and control, and pilot training/proficiency should allow for the conduct of decisive air battles at the outer edges of the CVBG's operating area. These long-range engagements will serve the purpose of attriting Soviet air power while minimizing the CVBG's exposure to hostile long-range weapons systems. Land-based tactical air would effectively complement CVBG efforts and would constitute an important asset

51/ Wood and Hanley, "Maritime Role," p. 18; and David B. Rivkin, "No Bastion for the Bear," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, April 1984, p. 43.

52/ Wood and Hanley, "Maritime Role," p. 20.

in the struggle for air supremacy over the Norwegian Sea.

Opportunities for the engagement of Soviet surface ships by Allied forces would likewise be exploited. Particular attention would be paid to the positioning of Soviet carriers, and any opening to destroy these assets should they venture astray would be quickly taken. 53/

Although Phase 2 does not envision utilizing the massed power of CVBGs or amphibious task forces to strike the Soviets far forward, operations in support of the battle for north Norway are not discounted. Air strikes from CVBGs would be of great assistance to Allied defenders attempting to repel a Soviet attack, and the opportunity for an amphibious "end run" with a MAGTF to strike behind Soviet lines on the Norwegian coast would be carefully considered and ruthlessly exploited.

Carry the Fight to the Enemy

The last phase of the Maritime Strategy seeks to build-upon the successes of its predecessors, so that war termination can be achieved on terms favorable to the Western Alliance. Attacks of massed naval forces on the flanks could now be undertaken in the face of a much attrited Soviet naval threat. CVBGs and amphibious task forces would press home the initiative to destroy Soviet forces, regain lost territory, and support the theater land campaign. 54/

In the northern theater of operations, this phase would

53/ Rivkin, "Bastions," p. 42.

54/ Wood and Hanley, "Maritime Role," p. 25.

witness the defeat of the Soviet land campaign in north Norway, the recapturing of Jan Mayen and Svalbard, and the possible initiation of strikes against the Kola military infrastructure so as to cripple the Soviet capability to continue to fight in the Northwestern TVD. Active ASW operations in the Barents Sea and Arctic Ocean would be undertaken by surface, submarine, and air assets to put the SSBN bastion at risk, if not out of business entirely. 55/

With the Soviet attackers in precipitate retreat and NATO naval power predominant in the north, the Western Alliance would be well able to achieve its war aims in seeking the most favorable conditions for an ultimate termination of hostilities.

Uncertainties

There are two major uncertainties worthy of note as one examines the Maritime Strategy. The first unknown to be confronted is the possibility of nuclear conflict. Though the stated NATO policy of flexible response clearly threatens an escalation to the theater nuclear level, one always hopes that the conflict can be successfully waged on a conventional level. Clearly, a resort to use of nuclear weapons by either side would thrust a new element into the conflict which could have dramatic impact. Though Allied navies have defensive measures, offensive systems, and tactics to engage in a nuclear conflict at sea, obviously the effectiveness of such assets has yet to be fully tested. 56/

55/ Rivkin, "Bastions," p. 43.

56/ Captain Linton F. Brooks, "Escalation and Naval Strategy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, August 1984, pp. 37.

The second "wild card" which could impact on the operational flow is the previously mentioned issue of warning time. The Maritime Strategy assumes a somewhat gradual build-up of tensions from the crisis phase to the initiation of actual conflict. A quick Soviet attack from a standing start would complicate the initial deployment of forces and would make seizing the initiative a more difficult undertaking. However, the Maritime Strategy is not a time-phased approach (like the famous German Schlieffen Plan of World War I) - regardless of the warning allotted or the time needed for the conduct of each individual phase, the general approach and underlying principles outlining the conduct of the maritime campaign remain the same.

CONTINENTAL/COALITION CRITIQUE

The critics of the Maritime Strategy and the U.S. naval build-up are representative of a broad expanse of opinion. Indeed, Mr. Lehman's detractors range across the political spectrum, to include the Army War College; serving U.S. naval officers; military reformers; and political theorists of liberal political persuasion. The body of concern with a maritime thrust can be subdivided into three general categories:

- An offensive maritime strategy would be ineffective and suicidal.
- An attack on Soviet naval assets in their operating waters would be escalatory in nature.
- An offensive maritime strategy is conducted at the expense of the efforts of the Western Alliance to defend Central Europe.

Ineffective/Suicidal

Criticisms

The main proponents of the suicidal school have been Stansfield Turner, George Thibault, and Jeffrey Record. 57/ None of these gentlemen quarrels with the need for an increase in our maritime capability; their concerns center about an image of U.S. naval power being aggressively thrust into the very teeth of prepared, effective, and unattrited Soviet defenses. Record attacks the Lehman strategy head-on:

"As for Secretary Lehman's warfighting doctrine, it is no less a recipe for the certain disablement or destruction of the very carrier battle groups for which he has long and effectively lobbied. To venture U.S. carrier battle groups close enough to the Soviet Union to launch air strikes on the Soviet navy's home ports is to venture into the jaws of defeat." 58/

Analysis

The rejoinder to this line of attack is that the Maritime Strategy does not put forward an operational concept which would send Allied battle groups into a waiting ambush of Soviet forces. Much akin to the philosophy behind our doctrine for negating enemy air defenses prior to the conduct of close air missions, the Maritime Strategy entails the progressive attrition, suppression, and eventual destruction of the enemy forces whose potential destructive power Record quite rightly respects. The massed attacks of Soviet forces and bases in the far north would take place in Phase 3, after the submarine and air threats had been negated.

57/ Turner and Thibault, "Preparing," pp. 125-129; and Record, "Jousting," pp. 13-15.

58/ Record, "Jousting," p. 13; and Stephen Van Evera and Barry R. Posen, "Defense Policy and the Reagan Administration: Departure from Containment," International Security, Summer 1983, pp. 29-30.

War is an inherently dangerous undertaking and all ships (both surface and subsurface) have vulnerabilities which make possible their damage or destruction by modern means of attack. In his 1978 book entitled Aircraft Carriers: The Real Choices, John Lehman devotes an entire chapter to a discussion of the possible vulnerabilities and some compensating strengths of the aircraft carrier. ^{59/} Neither Lehman nor any American naval commander wants to emulate the fate of Admiral Nagumo who needlessly lost four Japanese carriers at Midway in less than twelve hours, thus effectively turning the tide of World War II against Japan.

Far from putting forward a reckless recipe for disaster, the Maritime Strategy postulates a well-coordinated, sequential concept of global and theater-level operations which attempts to capitalize on inherent U.S. naval strengths, exploit known Soviet weaknesses, all the while minimizing to the extent possible exposure of capital ships/task forces to direct enemy attack. Seen in this light, the critics of the suicidal school may desire to reconsider their stated concerns, and at the very least address themselves to the tenets of the Maritime Strategy and not the worst case scenarios of their own invention.

Nuclear Escalation

Criticism

Fears of that aggressive NATO naval operations in the north

^{59/} John F. Lehman, Aircraft Carriers: The Real Choices, The Washington Papers No. 52. (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978), pp. 39-44. See other Lehman comments on ship vulnerability in Desmond Wettern, "U.S. Strategy - Problems of Allies and Enemies," NAVY International, August 1984, p. 477.

will cause the Soviets to escalate the conflict to the nuclear level characterize the concerns voiced by the second group of Lehman critics. Prominent spokesman for this line of criticism appears to be Barry Posen (writing at the time as a fellow at the Center for International Affairs at Harvard University), whose article on north flank naval operations entitled "Inadvertent Nuclear War?" appeared in the Fall 1982 issue of International Security. 60/

Posen expressed some degree of concern with the aggressive posturing of Lehman and various Chiefs of Naval Operations in their discussion of possible Navy actions in the event of global conflict with the Soviets. He believed that the Kola/Murmansk area would be a prime focus of the Navy's efforts in taking the war to the enemy. 61/ Additionally, he doubted that a fine distinction would be evident to the respective combatants in determining what actions taken by the opposition were defensive in nature, as distinguished from those that might be perceived as offensive and targeted against strategic forces (i.e., SSBNs). Posen stated that the "fog of war", the inevitable confusion and miscommunication which wars generate among and between all

60/ Posen, "Inadvertent," pp. 28-54. Posen's initial arguments against a north flank naval offensive were also reflected in two subsequent articles which appeared in International Security: Stephen Van Evera and Barry R. Posen, "Defense Policy and the Reagan Administration: Departure from Containment," International Security, Summer 1983, pp. 3-46; and Joshua M. Epstein, "Horizontal Escalation: Sour Notes of a Recurrent Theme," International Security, Winter 1983-1984, pp. 19-32. Judging from the tone, tenor, and source of these articles, it would appear that a core group of security affairs specialists at Harvard are troubled by the Reagan defense program and have chosen the Lehman 600 ship Navy as the focal point for their attacks.

61/ Ibid., p. 34.

participants, would create significant problems for those seeking to control even a conventional conflict. In his view, all of the factors would combine to create an unstable and volatile situation on NATO's northern flank with the potential for nuclear escalation. 62/

Acknowledging the establishment of the SSBN bastion in the Barents Sea and the associated build-up of Russian military infrastructure in the Kola, Posen nonetheless postulated the view that NATO's forces in the north could be seen by the Soviets as an offensive threat, particularly the airbases and electronic intelligence gathering facilities. These assets would make a Soviet invasion of north Norway a necessity in the event of conventional war, not only to defend the homeland, but also to eventually attack the Atlantic SLOC. 63/

Posen went on to discuss three possible north flank scenarios which he attributes to the U.S. Navy: 1) forward ASW operations by NATO attack submarines in the Norwegian/Barents Seas; 2) offensive CVBG operations to attack the Soviet fleet and the Kola Peninsula; 3) CVBG operation to defend north Norway. Simply stated, Posen found all of these options to be inherently dangerous and escalatory in nature. 64/

While acknowledging the advantages NATO would gain by putting the Soviet submarine force on the defensive away from the Atlantic SLOC, Posen nonetheless believed that even the inadvertent sinking

62/ Ibid., p. 35.

63/ Ibid., p. 39.

64/ Ibid., p. 39.

of a few Soviet SSBNs would appear to the Soviets as a deliberate counterforce strike against their strategic nuclear reserve, and could generate from them an escalation from the conventional to the nuclear level. 65/ Posen's escalatory fears even extended to the NATO sinking of Soviet attack subs in the Norwegian Sea because the destruction of this protecting force for the bastion could be viewed by the Soviets as the preparatory stage for an attack on the SSBNs themselves. 66/

The very concept of a CVBG assault on the Kola military bases early in the conflict gave Posen cause for grave concern. The synergistic impact of a CVBG attack with surface, subsurface, and airborne ASW assets could put the Soviet SSBNs at extreme risk. Moreover, successful NATO conventional strikes on the Kola command and control infrastructure could cause paralysis in the Soviet hierarchy and induce a panicked retaliatory strike on the CVBGs with nuclear weapons. As a final blow at the CVBG offensive, Posen expressed misgivings with the idea of an attack on the Soviet homeland at all, believing that Soviet reaction would be predictable in such circumstances and could well generate a nuclear response. 67/

In examining the NATO defense of Norway, Posen found but another situation waiting to escalate to the nuclear level. Once again categorizing the NATO reinforcement of Norway as "offensive" in Soviet eyes, Posen reasserted the likelihood of a Soviet push

65/ Ibid., pp. 39-44.

66/ Ibid., pp. 45-46.

67/ Ibid., pp. 44-47.

into Norway. He put but little faith in the capabilities of the Soviet ground forces to push into the main bases in central Norway, and posited the belief that the Allied defenders of Norway would successfully repulse or contain the Soviet attack. 68/ The U.S. naval operations in support of the Norwegians were the real source of Posen's concern. A great naval battle and Allied victory in the Norwegian Sea would be both troubling to the Soviets and could encourage U.S. Navy commanders to urge a follow-on attack on the Soviet fleet while it streams back to the Kola. 69/

Posen's solutions for the escalatory problem were entirely predictable, given the tone and tenor of his exposition of the "facts." To start with, Posen suggested a civilian audit of military war plans so as to purge them of any escalatory aspects; the procurement of defensive naval systems for sea control, vice offensive ships such as attack carriers; and the halt of all talk by civilian/military naval leaders on the controllability of conventional war. 70/

Orienting his focus on the north flank, Posen proposed reconsideration of any Western naval activity in the Barents Sea or the vicinity of the Kola Peninsula. His mission for U.S. naval forces would entail convoy protection for the Atlantic SLOC, a defensive contribution to NATO's efforts. 71/ As a last suggestion, Posen

68/ Ibid., p. 48.

69/ Ibid., p. 49.

70/ Ibid., p. 52.

71/ Ibid., p. 53. It should come as no surprise that Posen proposes to pay for his new ASW, sea control forces by cancelling the procurement of two new attack carriers.

believed that NATO reinforcement of Norway should be limited to "tactically defensive" forces (ground troops, fighters, light naval forces, air defense assets, and close air support aircraft), keeping the CVBGs and even heavy strike aircraft (e.g., A-6E Intruders) out of the theater so as to reduce the incentives for a Soviet attack. 72/ While finally admitting that NATO does have the right of self-defense against a Soviet attack, Posen asked that any NATO naval counteroffensive be conducted with "vigor and restraint." 73/

Analysis

Posen's detailed and articulately presented criticism of naval operations deserves to be addressed on two levels - first, to the specifics of his argument so that misunderstanding and misstatement of fact can be corrected; secondly, at the macro-level, his conception of national strategy and the interaction of the civilian-military relationship requires some specific addressal as well.

As to the details, there is some element of truth in much of what Posen has written. Lehman has spoken forthrightly on the need for U.S. maritime superiority and the attainment of that capability is the reason why we are building a 600 ship, 15 CVBG Navy. In viewing the hypothetical possibility of a global conflict with the Soviet Union, Lehman has focused on the Norwegian Sea as

72/ Ibid., p. 53. U.S. Marine A-6Es were deleted from the Norway MAB package so as to avoid the very situation Posen described (Alexander, "U.S. Marines," p. 189).

73/ Ibid., p. 53.

a key area of operations and has postulated a fierce struggle between the Alliance and the Soviets for wartime dominance in that area. Posen's concern for the "fog of war" is certainly justified - once conflict actually begins, many finely-tuned operational plans and their underlying assumptions require substantial revision in the dynamic and confusing atmosphere that has been the trademark of modern warfare.

Posen's discussion of possible naval warfighting options is where he starts to "play on the margin." In his criticism of forward operations by U.S. attack submarines, Posen seems oblivious to the fact that Soviet attack subs will be likewise deploying forward so as to protect the SSBN bastion, achieve mastery of the Norwegian Sea, and prepare for a campaign of SLOC interdiction. 74/ Following Posen's recommendation to limit the activity of U.S. submarines would not only be exercising unilateral restraint in an area of undoubted U.S. technological dominance, it would mean ceding the Norwegian Sea to the Soviets by default, thus making the Allied reinforcement of Norway a very dubious proposition.

The prospect of nuclear escalation by the Soviets in response to the U.S. destruction of a portion of the Russian SSBN fleet (whether by design or inadvertently) must be viewed with some skepticism. Michael McGwire postulates a belief that the Soviets can afford to lose a certain number of SSBNs in the initial stages of the war, though there certainly is a level below which they would not want to go. 75/ Indeed, he believes that the prospect

74/ See footnote 23/.

75/ McGwire, Soviet Military Objectives, Chapter IV-B, p. 34. McGwire is no longer sure that the Soviets even regard the

of a Soviet nuclear response to the sinking of an SSBN is extremely remote, especially if viewed in light of the previously stated Soviet desire to keep the conflict conventional as long as possible so as to avoid nuclear destruction to the Soviet homeland. ^{76/}

An immediate attack by U.S. Navy CVBGs on the Kola is clearly not called for in the Maritime Strategy. Posen has chosen to isolate the component parts of a maritime campaign, and has failed to view the process as a step-by-step, coordinated effort to blunt a Soviet attack in the north. After the battle for command of the Norwegian Sea has been won, military and political leaders of the Western Alliance have the option of ordering a subsequent campaign of massed naval assets into the Barents Sea. This would be largely dependent upon conditions in the struggle for Central Europe, and any decision to pursue fleeing Soviet naval forces to the Kola peninsula would be made in consonance with the contribution which such an operation could make to the defense of the continent of Europe. Posen's nightmarish vision of a Kremlin enraged about an attack on the Soviet homeland is less than convincing if one considers the fact that such an event will surely come at some point after Soviet invaders may have laid waste to much of the urban industrial heartland of Western Europe.

concept of an SSBN bastion as being vital any longer - the SS-X-24/25 mobile ICBMs will soon give them a relocatable, secure strategic reserve on land. This could cause the Soviets to reconsider their use of naval forces and may result in a much more aggressive push to control the Norwegian Sea early on.

^{76/} Ibid., p. 51 (footnote 46). If one accepts as genuine the Soviet desire to keep the war conventional and to avoid nuclear devastation to the homeland, then their use of nuclear weapons in response to the destruction of some SSBNs or a portion of the Kola infrastructure would not seem credible.

In his overview of the Norwegian campaign itself, Posen put forward some dubious propositions in support of his case for a restrained Allied response. Not disputing his claim that a Soviet conquest of central Norwegian bases would be a time consuming endeavor, one can only wonder why Posen overlooked the obvious contribution which a quick capture of the north Norwegian airfields and bases would make to the prosecution of the Soviet maritime campaign for control of the Norwegian Sea. Posen's continual fretting that a successful Alliance defense of Norway and the Norwegian Sea to massed Soviet aggression could be upsetting to the Russians and make them feel more insecure is hardly worthy of comment. His concern that wild-eyed U.S. naval commanders will urge a "push to the Kola" after an Allied victory in the Norwegian Sea is a visible indication of the fundamental mistrust of military judgment which permeates his essay.

The Posen solution for the escalatory problem uncovers much of the real agenda behind the "front" which his article provides and leads us into a discussion of his views on military strategy. Posen was evidently unaware that the war plans approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) are responsive to JCS military strategy, which is in turn derived directly from national security policy guidance formulated by the civilian leadership of this Nation. The very idea that a special group of civilians must audit U.S. war plans to ensure that our military leadership is not secretly pushing us to nuclear oblivion is unnecessary (the Secretary of Defense is regularly briefed on military planning in his weekly session with the JCS) and somewhat insulting to the integrity of our uniformed leaders.

Posen has taken Clemenceau's dictum about "war being too important to be left to generals" to a new extreme, perhaps postulating that in this day and age even the conduct of campaigns and battles should be managed and directed by civilians from afar. If Vietnam taught us nothing else, I would hope that we may have learned that military campaigns guided in minute detail from 10,000 miles away can only result in a lack of battlefield responsiveness/efficiency and leads to ultimate military defeat. Policy objectives and guidance set forth by our Nation's leaders will be the very basis for all military planning; the conduct of actual military operations should be left to the professionals whose lifetime has been devoted to the study of war.

The prescription which Posen puts forth to cure our north flank escalation ills is also suspect. In seeking to proscribe the Navy from even having the capability to attack the Kola, Posen called for the removal of attack planes from extant carrier air wings, in favor of ASW and air defense craft. The eventual abolishment of CVBGs and replacement with ASW sea control ships is but a logical conclusion to Posen's call for SLOC defense, vice offensive operations in the Norwegian Sea or beyond. The possibility that the defense of the SLOC could best be accomplished by aggressively engaging the Soviets as far forward as possible never seems to have been seriously considered by Posen. His castration of the Navy's striking power and resultant abandonment of the Norwegian Sea to the Soviets could only result in a Soviet victory in Norway and the eventual closure of the very SLOC which Posen rightly claims to be so vital to Europe's defense.

The issue of inadvertent nuclear war on the north flank was addressed in a recent paper authored by Dr. Robert S. Wood, Head

of the Strategy Department at the Naval War College. 77/ In addressing himself to the strategic issue of inadvertent escalation, Wood went beyond the issue of escalation and also addressed himself to the broader issue of deterrence:

"The Forward Maritime Strategy is first a deterrence strategy. Deterrence -- whether based on mutual destruction, denying opponent objectives, or threatening countervailing interests of the opponent -- relies on increasing the opponent's calculation of risk and cost to the point that compromise on a mutually acceptable state of affairs can be reached. Elements of the forward Maritime Strategy use all three bases for deterrence, both to deter the use of force and to deter the use of nuclear weapons should war begin." 78/

Posen's failure to view the north flank option as a deterrent to Soviet aggression is one of the greater failings in his piece. By having the capability to conduct offensive operations on the north flank, we add an unknown factor into the Soviet plans for the conquest of Europe. Assets which could be better used in other theaters or for other purposes (e.g., SLOC interdiction) must be kept ready to respond to the possibility of a U.S. naval counteroffensive in the Northwestern TVD. 79/ To publicly renounce our intention to conduct such a counterstroke and then to dismantle our capability for the conduct of offensive operations seems to be the height of foolishness. Such actions can only serve to weaken our conventional deterrent posture, thus making the prospect of Soviet aggression (and the possible use of nuclear weapons) in times of

77/ Wood and Hanley, "Maritime Role".

78/ Ibid., pp. 25-26. For a contrary military viewpoint on the likelihood of nuclear escalation, see Captain Linton F. Brooks, "Escalation and Naval Strategy," pp. 36-37. Brooks, like Posen, believes that CVBGs approaching within striking range of the U.S.S.R. will automatically be viewed as nuclear capable forces and will trigger an escalatory Soviet response.

79/ Lehman, "Rebirth," p. 13.

tension more likely.

In considering his shortcomings on the detailed and strategic levels, it is hard to accept the efficacy of the arguments put forward by Posen and his followers. His slanted and inaccurate picture of current naval thinking on warfighting matters does little to undermine the Maritime Strategy and its emphasis upon taking the fight to the enemy. The issue of nuclear escalation is given due consideration in the Maritime Strategy and every effort to keep the conflict at a conventional level will be made. Dr. Wood's thoughts on the escalatory issue are worth pondering as we close our consideration of Posen's views:

"The possibility of the use of nuclear weapons in a conflict of this magnitude certainly remains. But, if our limited objectives are clearly stated and supported by our actions, the chances of Soviet first use of nuclear weapons will be reduced, even if we are winning decisive battles." 80/

European Defense

Criticism

The remaining group of maritime critics orient their attacks on the negative impact which a naval campaign may have for the successful defense of Europe as a whole. Some elements of their argumentation go beyond the scope of this paper and attempt to address the matter of global strategy and associated funding priorities. Where these lines of criticism have relevance to the Maritime Strategy and the north flank controversy, they will be included in our discussion.

Prominent among the advocates of a "continental" approach to

80/ Ibid., p. 26.

NATO defense is former Undersecretary of Defense (Policy) Robert W. Komer. In a Foreign Affairs article published in the summer of 1982, Komer outlines his problems with a maritime strategy. He accuses naval proponents of being "go it alone" unilateralists, who advocate the abandonment of our NATO commitments because of their belief that Europe cannot be successfully defended. 81/ He takes the Navy's view that a war with the Soviets will be global and establishes a negative link to "horizontal escalation", the immediate U.S. initiation of conflicts in theaters which offer the Alliance advantages over the Soviets. 82/

The essence of Komer's argument is that naval supremacy by the Allies didn't defeat Germany in two world wars and won't defeat the Soviets if World War III is thrust upon us. 83/ In his view, the war against a land power like the Soviet Union will be won on the continent of Europe, not in its contiguous waters. Komer believes that resources expended to buy the 600 ship Navy are a fiscal drain on our capability to defend our priority interests in Europe and Southwest Asia (SWA). 84/

Keith A. Dunn and William O. Staudenmaier (both working at the Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute) have recently published a book entitled Strategic Implications of the Continental-Maritime Debate, an attempt to examine the question of national strategic priorities from both the maritime and continental sides

81/ Komer, "Maritime vs. Coalition," pp. 1130-1131.

82/ Ibid., p. 1131.

83/ Ibid., pp. 1133-1134. For a supporting argument, see Record, "Jousting," p. 13.

84/ Ibid., p. 1143.

of the issue. 85/ In addressing the matter of naval strategy, they go a step beyond Komer's broad brush analysis and subdivide maritime proponents into three schools of thought: 1) the "official" John Lehman view of maritime strategy; 2) the manipulative school, which puts forward a belief that by concentrating more of our focus on naval forces we will force our Allies to assume more of the land fighting burden; and 3) the unilateralist school, which examines a brand of neoisolationism in calling for the abandonment of Alliance commitments in Europe in favor of a military posture based on flexible maritime power. 86/

In their discussion of the "official" Navy view, the authors highlight three general principles which, in their view, dominate the Lehman position. First, a war with the Soviets will be global and 600 ships are therefore needed in order to fight the Soviets in all theaters simultaneously. 87/ Second, a global war will require the U.S. to exercise command of the sea, or maritime superiority. This would include the capability to operate in high risk areas such as the Barents Sea or Sea of Okhotsk. 88/ Third, the Navy will actively and automatically engage in horizontal escalation in disparate locations due to the perceived U.S. inability to defeat the Soviets in their theater of choice. This would take advantage of the remaining U.S. superiority in maritime forces and would generate the capability to fight a flexible war

85/ Dunn and Staudenmaier, Strategic Implications.

86/ Ibid., p. 7.

87/ Ibid., p. 9.

88/ Ibid., p. 9-10.

of maneuver with naval forces. 89/

Not surprisingly, Dunn and Staudenmaier express some reservations about what they view as the Lehman version of the maritime strategy. Taking a somewhat similar tack to that adopted by Posen and his compatriots, Dunn and Staudenmaier find the Lehman strategy lacking in suitability because of the possibility of Soviet nuclear escalation inherent in a campaign designed to ensure the "ultimate military defeat of the Soviet Union." 90/ They take an equally dim view of horizontal escalation, believing that the identification of key pressure points in the Soviet strategic realm is a difficult undertaking. Absent a knowledge of Soviet geopolitical sensitivities, any war-widening in a theater outside of the main area of conflict would constitute revenge and not strategy. 91/ Since the war-widening aspects of the Lehman strategy could put our national survival at risk through a possible nuclear exchange, Dunn and Staudenmaier declare it to be unacceptable. 92/

They continue their attack by holding the feasibility of the Navy's strategy in question. Dunn and Staudenmaier are not hesitant in stating their doubts that our Allies will support a horizontal escalation of a war beyond the area bounded by our alliance obligations. 93/

In attacking the supposed flexibility of a maritime oriented

89/ Ibid., pp. 10-12.

90/ Ibid., p. 29.

91/ Ibid., p. 30.

92/ Ibid., p. 33.

93/ Ibid., pp. 36-37.

strategy, they join hands with Komer in stating their belief that a victory over the Soviet Navy by Allied forces will not in and of itself prevent the Soviets from conquering Europe. Going even further, they once again attack the horizontal concept by stating that Allied successes in minor theaters will not necessarily add up to victory in the ones that really count. 94/

The last blow which Dunn and Staudenmaier direct at Lehman addresses the issue of acceptability. Postulating coming years of shrinking budgets for the Department of Defense, they believe that the Nation cannot afford both a continental and maritime strategy - some hard choices will need to be made. In view of major U.S. commitments on the Eurasian land mass, Dunn and Staudenmaier clearly believe that the 600 ship, 15 CVBG Navy of John Lehman is neither strategically sound nor financially affordable. 95/

The solution to our dilemma of national priorities is put forth as a "Strategy for Survival." The maritime portion of this strategy hits hard at Lehman's program by proposing the reduction of three CVBGs (total of 12 CVBGs), yielding a savings of \$35 billion to be applied against the growing need for strategic mobility assets and light ground forces. 96/ The Navy is directed to aim for sea control in the Atlantic and Caribbean, vice naval supremacy. 97/ Being limited to a holding action in the Pacific, the Navy would forego its hopes for fighting simultaneously on

94/ Ibid., p. 43

95/ Ibid., pp. 44-49.

96/ Ibid., pp. 87-88.

97/ Ibid., p. 89.

both major fronts and would instead be required to "swing" needed naval assets from the Pacific to Europe in the event of global war with the Soviets. 98/

Though the "Strategy for Survival" directs some criticisms at Komer's continental viewpoint, the maritime advocacy clearly emerges as the loser in the Dunn and Staudenmaier treatment. Though not specifically addressing the north flank naval option, their criticisms of Lehman's overall programming effort and recommendations for change could not help but have a significant impact on naval warfighting options and demand full addressal.

Analysis

In conducting an analysis of the views by the Continental/Coalition theorists on the maritime strategy, one is tempted to believe that what we have encountered is not a clash of opposing schools of thought, but rather a case of mistaken identity. Much of what the Continentalists have to say about their conception of the Navy's strategic thinking bears little resemblance to the Maritime Strategy which has been used as a programming baseline for the Navy during the past several years.

Komer's contention that the Maritime Strategy advocates abandonment of our Allies and a "go it alone" isolationist mentality is not supported by the facts. The contribution of Allied military forces is given prominent play in the Maritime Strategy as noted by Dr. Robert Wood:

"Alone the U.S. cannot contain the military power of the Soviet Union in Eurasia. Alliance cohesion is required both

98/ Ibid., pp. 89-90.

going into war and for sustaining combat after war termination. 99/

John Lehman has reacted sharply to the contention of the Continentalists that his naval build-up should be viewed as isolationist in nature. Speaking before the Jewish War Veterans only four months ago, Lehman let fly with both barrels at his critics:

"A successful strategy at sea is not, as some armchair strategists suggest, an alternative to a coalition defense of Europe. Nor does it impede a strong, improved and modernized conventional defense of NATO. Instead, our maritime strategy complements these objectives." 100/

The abandonment of our European commitments by maritime strategists is another unsupported charge which Komer levels. Nowhere in his piece does he identify who has proposed such a course of action. A careful review of John Lehman's publicly stated positions reveals no such call for a precipitate retreat from Europe; on the contrary, much of his discussion of strategy in open sources is directed at the very problem of developing an effective European defense. 101/

Dunn and Staudenmaier are more discriminating in their description of the various schools of maritime strategists. They were careful not to ascribe an anti-NATO or isolationist tinge to the Lehman concept of naval strategy, but correctly identified Jeffrey Record as the source of such an approach. 102/

99/ Wood and Hanley, "Maritime Role," p. 13.

100/ Lehman, "Be Strong," p. 5. See also Lehman, "Nine Principles," p. 51., and Lehman, "Superiority," p. 547.

101/ See Lehman, "Superiority," pp. 547-548; and Wetttern, "U.S. Strategy," pp. 475-477.

102/ Dunn and Staudenmaier, Strategic Implications, pp. 14-16.

Both Komer and Dunn and Staudenmaier expend a great deal of energy in attempting to hang the horizontal escalation albatross around the neck of the Maritime Strategy. John Lehman's dictum that an engagement with the Soviets is instantaneously a global war requires some explanation. In utilizing the term global war, Lehman is stating that because a war starts in Europe does not mean that we can empty out the Pacific Ocean to support NATO. The presence of large Soviet naval forces in some proximity to our key Pacific allies and our own coastline requires that we maintain a naval presence on wartime footing in that region, even in the unlikely event that the conflict has not spread in some form to the Pacific. 103/ The "swing" proposal put forward by Dunn and Staudenmaier would not only abandon the defense of our Pacific allies, but could well release Soviet Pacific naval forces for a redeployment to the Arctic/Atlantic region which could be accomplished far more quickly than our own. 104/

If we orient the horizontal escalation clash to our discussion of the north flank of NATO, one is hard put to see the relevance of continental arguments. A naval counteroffensive into the Norwegian Sea would follow in the wake of a Soviet assault on Europe and can hardly be considered either war-widening or escalatory. A

103/ Lehman, "Superiority," p. 547.

104 See J. S. Breemer, "The Soviet High Seas Fleet of the 1990s: Design for a 'Swing Strategy'?" Naval War College Review, March-April 1981, pp. 42-44; and MccGwire, Soviet Military Objectives, Chapter IV-B, p. 38. MccGwire points out that the Soviets are utilizing nuclear-powered icebreakers in an attempt to acquire a year-round capability for redeployments between the Northern and Pacific Fleets. The distance for the Soviets is 3,500 n.m., which should be compared with about 18,000 n.m. from the Aleutians to the Iceland-Faeroes Gap via the Drake Passage, the 600 n.m. stretch of water

scenario discussed by Dunn and Staudenmaier of a possible attack on the Kola by U.S. naval forces in response to a Soviet attack in Iran would indeed be war-widening and inherently dangerous - it is also not the type of operation advocated by Lehman in his Maritime Strategy, which addresses the strategic requirements for a global conventional war with the Soviets.

The concern for the possible escalation of a global conflict to the nuclear level presents us with a revisitation of some of Posen's arguments. When NATO's whole strategy of flexible response is based upon the threat of nuclear warfare after initial conventional defense, one is really hard put to see why a conventional naval counteroffensive should be viewed as particularly destabilizing. The Maritime Strategy is a phased, sequential concept which gives the decision makers of the National Command Authority (NCA) the opportunity to select from a variety of available military options in seeking war termination on favorable terms to the West. 105/ This approach is not an uncontrolled rush into the escalating netherworld, does not advocate the "ultimate military defeat of the Soviet Union", and is undeserving of the accusation that it consciously puts our national survival at risk.

Perhaps the central issue which the continental proponents raise centers about the value of a northern maritime campaign to the defense of Europe. No one will argue that a successful Soviet blitz which overruns Central Europe would probably make a NATO victory in the north relatively inconsequential - the industrial

between Cape Horn and Antarctica which is the most likely route for U.S. CVBGs.

105/ Rivkin, "Bastions," pp. 42-43.

base of Europe is the only goal for which the Soviets would risk a global war and that is where the military focus of their efforts would be centered. On the other hand, it is also worthwhile to consider what kind of a defense NATO could muster in the central region if the Soviets had occupied north Norway, controlled the Norwegian Sea, and were capable of a selective surge interdiction of the Alliance's reinforcing flow through the Atlantic SLOC.

The strategic difference which a victorious maritime campaign on the north flank can render to NATO is self-evident. Not only can the Soviet aim of cutting the SLOC and thus starving NATO of its resupply be frustrated, but an intriguing set of options emerges for the Allied governments to consider in seeking to exert leverage on the Soviets for war termination. Writing on NATO strategy for the next 20 years, Brigadier Kenneth Hunt offered the following thoughts on the importance of the north flank:

"However, it should be noted that there are strong links between deterrence in the Center and the North. Though the two sectors are to some extent militarily compartmented, they are not strategically separate. The North - and North Norway in particular - has importance for the strategy in Europe, but also for the central strategic balance, because of the concentration of Soviet maritime and strategic forces in the region...Norwegian territory is thus very important for NATO naval operations designed to keep open the sea lanes across the Atlantic and for maritime operations in the Eastern Atlantic. In turn, NATO naval strength helps Norway and the stronger the North, the stronger the Center. 106/

STRATEGIC NECESSITY

Clear-cut, definitive solutions to complex strategic problems

106/ Kenneth Hunt, "NATO Strategy and Force Postures for the Next 20 Years," Naval War College Review, September-October 1983, pp. 64-65. See also Myers, Forgotten Flank, pp. 63-64.

are often the product of foolish arrogance and seldom survive the initial clash in a crisis or armed confrontation. However, our examination of the current state of military affairs on NATO's northern flank and the maritime contribution to the defense of that strategically vital area has hopefully given us an insight into some of the more topical and timely defense issues of our day.

The importance of north Norway and the Norwegian Sea to NATO defense is now acknowledged by nearly all serious national security analysts. The geographic positioning of this area adjacent to the vital Atlantic SLOC makes its occupation by the Soviets in time of war an intolerable situation for the effective defense of Europe by the NATO Allies. The build-up of Soviet military power in the Northwestern TVD is indicative of a Russian understanding of Robert Weinland's oft repeated comment, first uttered in 1978: "World War III may not be won on the Northern Flank, but it could definitely be lost there." 107/

NATO's maritime forces will have a large role to play in the struggle for control of these vital northern waters and bases - even the safe arrival of Allied ground reinforcements in Norway is dependent upon NATO's control of the Norwegian Sea. Abdicating control of the seas to the Soviets by adopting a passive posture in the G-I-UK Gap will neither assist in the defense of Norway nor keep the Soviets out of range of NATO's vulnerable Atlantic lifeline. An aggressive, forward maritime presence, willing to actively engage Soviet naval forces and to drive them from the

107/ Robert Weinland, quoted in Alexander, "U.S. Marines," p. 182.

Norwegian Sea, has been shown to be a necessary condition for the defense of the European continent.

I believe that John Lehman's Maritime Strategy presents a coherent and logically constructed concept for the effective employment of naval forces on NATO's northern flank. It is not an impulsive, reckless charge into the waiting defenses of the Northern Fleet, nor is it a recipe for automatic nuclear escalation on the part of the Soviets. It is a badly needed concept for prosecuting a naval campaign of unprecedented ferocity and global scale against a sophisticated and determined enemy whose goals are nothing less than world domination. The Maritime Strategy may not be the total solution to NATO's complex problems in the north, but it is most certainly a positive proposal which is worthy of careful and objective analysis and evaluation.

CHALLENGES AND CHOICES

Challenges

The Navy's failure to adequately present and articulate in an unclassified form the conceptual framework for the Maritime Strategy has been the primary reason for some of the inaccurate attacks which have been previously cited and explored in this paper. Criticism from sources with political or inter-Service axes to grind is certainly to be expected. However, when these same lines of disagreement or concern are expressed by some Alliance members, then we have a clear indication that a major problem of miscommunication has arisen which requires immediate

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rectification. 108/

The Navy has received a significant portion of the resources allocated in the Reagan defense renaissance, and has a clear obligation to the American public and to our Allies to set forth in public forum a concept for the employment of our naval forces. An aggressive campaign to present the Maritime Strategy to any and all available audiences will go far toward taking the initiative away from the Navy's critics, raising public and Alliance confidence in our naval forces, and strengthening our conventional deterrent posture with the Soviets. An open dialogue on the Maritime Strategy will have the added benefit of encouraging a critical self-examination and debate within the Navy, a healthy prospect which can only result in a better-informed and more capable fighting force armed with a refined and evolving warfighting doctrine.

Choices

The pressures for fiscal restraint are already forcing a withering look at the level of defense spending from all quarters of the government. The Continental critics may well be right in stating that the U.S. cannot have the best of both a maritime and a continental strategy and remain still within the bounds of affordability. Some difficult choices may indeed be awaiting us in the coming months and years. Whatever pressures may be levied

108/ Johan J. Holst, "The Pattern of Nordic Security," Daedalus, Spring 1984, pp. 213-214. Holst lays out his concerns for the U.S.-Nordic relationship and the "Nordic Balance" because of the supposed possibility of a U.S.-Soviet confrontation in another region being widened through an American assault on the Kola. For a former State Secretary of the Norwegian Ministry of Defense to mouth the words of the horizontal escalation critics is indicative of the problem which the Navy's lack of an articulated public strategy has caused.

upon our national decision makers, they would do well to remember that support of America's overseas alliances and economic interests requires a credible capability for maritime power projection. And lest we be too hasty in labeling our most likely adversary solely a continental power, we would also do well to reflect upon these words of Admiral Gorshkov as we view the growing might of Soviet naval power:

"The concern of the Communist Party and the Soviet people for the valiant armed forces of the country, including the Navy, serves as a true guarantee of the fact that the Soviet Union will also in the future remain not only one of the strongest continental powers, but also a mighty sea power, a faithful guardian of peace in the world." 109/

109/ Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, Red Star Rising at Sea, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1974), p. 135.