THE EFFECT OF THE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS ACT OF 1986 ON NAVAL STRATEGY, 1987–1994

Steven Wills

In late 1990, veteran U.S. Navy strategist Captain Peter M. Swartz was preparing to return to the United States after a three-year joint assignment at the U.S. mission to NATO in Brussels, Belgium. Swartz desired to return to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) and to the business of naval strategy in which he had been so engaged during the previous decade. Swartz was advised strongly by his mentor in Brussels, Admiral Jim Hogg, the U.S. military representative to NATO's Military Committee, to take instead a position as a special assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Colin Powell, U.S. Army. Swartz reiterated that he was not interested in yet another joint job but instead desired to return to the business of creating and disseminating naval strategy. He checked, however, with various Navy colleagues and friends. He was surprised at how many old Navy friends told him the job working for General Powell was "a plum assignment"; they unanimously urged him to take it. One front-running naval officer went so far as to suggest that if Swartz did not want it, he should let that officer know immediately, so he could bid for it. Admiral Hogg grew impatient and gave Swartz one more day to make up his mind. He accepted the position.

Swartz plunged immediately into his new job, which involved a very close and positive working relationship with General Powell—just when Saddam Hussein was wreaking havoc on Kuwait and threatening Saudi Arabia. As Swartz found his way around the Pentagon again, he noticed a very high level of Navy talent on the Joint Staff—talent that had never been assigned there by the Navy in all his previous experience in the Pentagon during the 1970s and 1980s. In contrast,

when he returned to visit his old haunts and reestablish his Washington Navy network, he was nonplussed by the decline in the experience base and educational background in some OPNAV shops.

Swartz had an occasion in September 1990 to visit the Joint Staff J8 office to get input on a project he was working on for General Powell. While there, he spoke to Commander Joe Sestak, whom he knew by reputation and whose Harvard doctoral dissertation on the Seventh Fleet Swartz had previously read and exploited. Swartz commented to Sestak that he found the disparity of talent between OPNAV and the Joint Staff both new and disconcerting; he feared for the future intellectual prowess of those in OPNAV and other key Navy institutions. This was a particular concern for Swartz since he had participated in and fostered that prowess during his years in OPNAV in the 1980s as an author of and advocate for the Maritime Strategy. Sestak responded, "Captain, you've been away. Goldwater-Nichols happened while you were gone, don't you remember? Do you remember how hard you and your colleagues fought against it? Do you remember that you lost?"[1]

INITIAL IMPACT

Sestak's short response encapsulated a significant period of change for the Navy from 1989 to early 1994. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 significantly changed the way the nation, and particularly the U.S. Navy, approached the business of strategy. Alterations to the military chain of command that the legislation brought about had officially separated the leaders of the Navy from the service's operational forces as regional, combatant commander–based strategy replaced that of centralized, service-based global leadership. The physical domains of those regional commanders also increasingly cut across traditional naval geographic command boundaries. In addition to removing the responsibility for strategy from the Navy's leadership, the Goldwater-Nichols Act effectively dispersed the naval service's informal but highly effective cohort of strategic experts who had been responsible for decades of naval strategy, removed them from naval control, and scattered them in assignments on the Joint Staff and the regional and functional commanders' (CINC) staffs. The personnel changes the legislation brought about forced many strategy experts like Swartz into joint jobs instead of their traditional billets on the OPNAV staff.

This initially had a very positive effect: seasoned, knowledgeable, and experienced naval strategists were now populating influential joint staffs, where their capabilities and concepts ensured that the nation continued to deploy and use its naval power sensibly. OPNAV office OP-06, the professional home of naval strategic concepts during the Cold War, still had a reasonably positive reputation and attracted some of the Navy's brightest officers at the end of the 1980s.

However, as young officers sought important jobs in Washington, they increasingly recoiled from assignment to OPNAV, instead embracing joint strategy duty as an essential ticket on the way to flag rank. Many continued to look for joint assignments for their next tour in Washington, while others sought billets in those OPNAV offices with strong connections to their warfare communities. Thus, after Goldwater-Nichols the "bench" at OP-06 began to weaken, and entering the 1990s its strength continued to slide.

This combination of change in command structure, alteration of traditional naval concepts of the battle space, and migration of Navy strategy experts from OPNAV to the Joint Staff altered the Navy's concept of strategy. The Navy's most senior officers no longer controlled the forces they built, trained, and equipped. The concepts of naval strategy that remained in the wake of Goldwater-Nichols were regional rather than global in character. Finally, the legislation's joint personnel requirements effectively served to disband the Navy's carefully constructed cohort of strategic experts, dispersing them throughout the joint force. While perhaps useful in the first decade after the end of the Cold War, these changes would have significant impacts in the first decade of the twenty-first century as the Navy sought new strategic solutions to a dwindling budget and an aging, contracting force structure.

GENESIS OF THE LEGISLATION

The Goldwater-Nichols Act was the most significant shake-up in the Department of Defense since its creation in 1949.[2] The failure to achieve desired results during the Vietnam War may have been the early catalyst for the defense reform movement of the late 1970s, but events that followed provided further impetus for change. A series of military disasters since the end of the Vietnam War—including the failure to rescue hostages in the SS *Mayaguez* and Iran hostage crises of 1973 and 1979–81, respectively, and problems with interservice planning and communication during the 1983 Lebanon peacekeeping mission and invasion of Grenada—provided significant impetus for reform.[3] The impression of excessive defense spending resulting from soaring Reagan administration military budgets caught the eye of some members of Congress and helped generate additional legislative-branch interest in defense reform.[4]

The reform movement had strong support within Congress and from some key Reagan administration officials and the defense intellectual community. Congressional supporters such as cosponsors Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) and Representative Bill Nichols (D-Ga.), Senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), and Representatives Ike Skelton (D-Mo.) and Les Aspin (D-Wis.) felt that greater centralization of power in the CJCS office would improve the quality of advice available to the nation's civilian leadership. Goldwater called the legislation "the only

goddamn thing I have ever done in the Senate that was worth a damn."[5] Reagan administration members such as National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane supported reform efforts, as did former Deputy Defense Secretary David Packard, whom President Reagan appointed chairman of a presidential blue-ribbon commission on defense reform. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger was not in favor of reform at first, but later shifted his position—for practical reasons, rather than due to an actual change in his beliefs.[6]

The Navy and Marine Corps leadership, including Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral James D. Watkins and Marine Corps Commandant General P. X. Kelley, were generally opposed to the legislation, as they believed it restricted their traditional freedom of action and gave other services uninformed control over shipbuilding and naval and marine operations. Navy Secretary John Lehman offered the most vocal criticisms of the proposed legislation and quickly became the effective leader of the opposition. He stated that the proposed legislation would create inefficient bureaucracy in the Defense Department and reduce the quality of military advice offered to the president. Lehman also opposed concentrating so much power in the office of the CJCS, which would restrict advice flowing to the president to "the opinion and decision of one man, the chairman himself, and his general staff bureaucracy."[7] Lehman's opposition campaign was so well organized and effective that Senator Goldwater wrote directly to Defense Secretary Weinberger and President Reagan to complain that the efforts of Lehman's staff were illegal.[8]

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Despite opposition, and reinforced by findings from Packard's Blue Ribbon Commission on Defense Management, the legislation passed Congress by a significant bipartisan majority in both the House of Representatives (383–27) and Senate (95–0).[9]

Although hailed as a great triumph for the defense reform movement, the Goldwater-Nichols Act was more of an incomplete armistice than a "victory on the Potomac," as the act's author James Locher contended in his 2002 book. In fact, defense reformers had a considerably more radical plan to change fundamentally the structure of senior military leadership and the armed forces' organization for combat. The Senate Armed Services Committee Staff study entitled *Defense Organization: The Need for Change,* authored by Locher, contained ninety-one specific recommendations. It specifically suggested the disestablishment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) in favor of a Joint Military Advisory Council independent of all service functions; a reorganization of the military along

mission, rather than service, lines; and removal from the chain of command of service component commanders located within the unified commands.[10]

Locher has officially dismissed these proposals as diversionary "bullet traps" designed to divert antireform opponents from more-moderate goals.[11] Yet similar recommendations appear in the memoirs of Senator Goldwater as well as those of Senator John Tower.[12] There had also been strong arguments from analysts influenced by the policies of Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara for reorganization of the Defense Department around joint missions rather than geographic or service constructs ever since the Symington Commission of 1961, which recommended the abolition of the separate civilian military departments, the replacement of the JCS with a group of senior officers separated from their respective service affiliations, and the reduction in authority of the individual service chiefs to mere administrative and logistics duties.[13] This evidence suggests that pro-reform advocates had a much longer list of objectives that were not met in the Goldwater-Nichols legislation. The inability of the reform camp to implement fully the more comprehensive reforms suggests that Secretary Lehman's opposition movement was highly effective in preventing significant alteration to U.S. defense organization. The partial reform that was implemented made for an uncertain climate as the military services grappled with the problem of creating strategy in the post–Cold War era.

SUBSTANCE AND EFFECTS OF THE ACT

The legislation had three significant effects on the creation of military strategy within the services and in the Department of Defense at large. It elevated the CJCS to the position of principal military adviser to the president. It gave each regional combatant commander greater power over his or her organization and regional strategy at the expense of service chiefs. These first two changes further restricted service leaders' abilities to influence the development of strategy and formulation of the defense budget, as well as the roles and force structure of the services. Finally, the Goldwater-Nichols Act had the effect of diverting talented officers from their traditional roles on service staffs to the heretofore less-desirable joint and CINC staffs. The services' own abilities to create and advocate new comprehensive, global, strategic concepts withered in this new environment.

As the 1980s came to a close it became evident the Navy would need to implement the provisions of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation in an environment in which "senior four-star officers no longer had control of the fleet."[14] While the service chiefs had been organizationally removed from the military chain of command in 1958 as part of the Eisenhower reform package, they retained significant influence over operational forces. This influence was apparent in the production and evolution of the 1980s-era Maritime Strategy. While anchored in the Navy's

traditional responsibility to provide naval force through the six-hundred-ship Navy concept, the Maritime Strategy also served as a "contingent warfighting doctrine" describing how the U.S. Navy proposed to combat the Soviet Union across the multiple regional commands.[15]

The Maritime Strategy was the latest in a series of naval strategic documents from the late 1940s to the 1980s that sought to articulate the Navy's place in Cold War national strategy. These documents generally had been produced at the behest and under the guidance of the CNO and the Secretary of the Navy. Some regional combatant commanders resisted this influence at the time. They, not the CNO, were responsible for the employment of combat units against the enemy. Future CJCS, then–Pacific commander Admiral William Crowe responded to a 1984 presentation of the Maritime Strategy, saying, "I'm not sure why the CNO needs a maritime strategy; I need one, but he doesn't."[16] This was an ironic statement, since Admiral Crowe, while serving on the OPNAV staff (OP-06; Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Strategy, Plans, and Policy) during the mid-1970s, had been responsible for creating the OPNAV staff office specifically charged with strategy creation (OP-603) and filling it with strategy experts.[17] Dividing up the fleet into theaters subject to the individual war-fighting concepts of individual CINCs, not to mention the CINCs' reluctance to deploy their own ships across CINC boundaries, hamstrung the Navy's attempts to organize, train, and equip its forces to deter or confront the Soviet Union.

The Goldwater-Nichols Act seemed, at the time, to settle this argument in favor of the primacy of the CJCS and combatant commanders over the service chiefs. The legislation elevated the chairman from a position of first among equals to that of principal military assistant to the president and gave the chairman the authority to convene, set the agenda for, and preside over the meetings of the JCS.[18] While individual members of the JCS were not prohibited from offering separate advice to the president on their own initiative, the chairman's own advice took priority in presidential review over that offered by other service chiefs.[19] The chairman was also given significant authority over the strategic planning and assessment functions of the JCS, with responsibility for providing strategic direction and preparing strategic, logistics, and mobility plans for the armed forces.[20] The Goldwater-Nichols legislation did not make the chairman a "supreme commander of the military services," as some reformers proposed, but it did demand that combatant commanders communicate with the Defense Secretary and president through the CJCS officeholder, thus making the chairman a "de facto" supreme commander in the eyes of some.[21] The service chiefs retained their authority to train, equip, and provide forces to the combatant commanders, but responsibility for strategy appeared, at that time, to reside firmly in joint hands. These provisions would make comprehensive, global, service-based

strategic concepts much more difficult to create and implement in the post-Goldwater-Nichols era.

EFFECTS ON PLANNING

The effects of the legislation soon manifested themselves in the first post-Goldwater-Nichols Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan in early 1987. Intelligence reporting at that time indicated that a Soviet attack would be evident at least two weeks before it started, thus giving planners time to reinforce Western forces on the Central European front.[22] This appraisal led to some planning reassessments regarding where to focus primary U.S. efforts early in a global conflict. Believing that constrained resources might force decision makers to choose between preparing for a global and preparing for a regional war, Joint Staff planners in 1987 had attempted to incorporate greater emphasis on regional planning in the National Military Strategy Document (NMSD) for fiscal years 1990–94.[23] The continued reduction of the Soviet threat, particularly the Soviets' decreasing ability to project power rapidly into Central Europe and the Persian Gulf, allowed Joint Staff planners to focus more on regional strategies. The director of the Joint Staff Planning Office (J5) in 1989, Major General George Lee Butler, made the projection of increased warning time a justification for greater focus on regional planning.[24]

The impending end of the Cold War and expected drawdown in defense spending occupied the efforts of other Joint Staff offices. The new office of the Force Structure, Resource, and Assessments Directorate (J8), a direct product of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, conducted a review of several force-reduction strategies entitled the "Quiet Study." However, the departing chairman, Admiral Crowe, did not want to recommend force reductions in the absence of a new presidential strategy.[25] But J8 conducted a second Quiet Study that further focused on regional instead of global conflicts.

The study's conclusions were embraced by the new chairman, whose own assumptions on the change to regional strategy were closely aligned with the language of the Quiet Study 2 report. The appointment of General Colin Powell to the chairmanship by President George H. W. Bush in 1989 significantly aided in the transformation from global to regional-based strategy. General Powell embraced the new authority granted him under Goldwater-Nichols "with alacrity" and used it to advance a post–Cold War agenda of change.[26] General Powell expanded the J5 and J8 projects into a combined effort that eventually recommended a 25 percent cut in overall military strength in conjunction with the change to a regional strategic focus. A briefing entitled "A View to the 90s" was produced that encapsulated the views of the chairman as well as Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, who largely agreed with Powell's assessment. These

changes also were incorporated into the president's National Security Strategy and the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG), which were both products of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation.

THE BATTLE IS JOINED

General Powell's full presentation of these changes at a 26 February 1990 meeting of the Joint Chiefs and regional commanders was the services' first chance to oppose or propose changes to the chairman's concept. The Navy, under the leadership of CNO Admiral Carlisle Trost, disagreed with the naval force structure outlined in "A View to the 90s." Admiral Trost believed the Soviet Union still posed a global naval threat, and he had two specific complaints about the proposed force structure—which related directly to the effects of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. First, and most important, "the Navy had not been a part of the development of the force before it was 'laid on the table' with the strategy, and thus was not privy to the analysis that validated its size and capabilities."[27] Second, due to this lack of naval participation, the proposed naval force was too small to be effective in the rotational forward presence mission it was intended to fill.[28]

Admiral Trost was fighting an uphill battle. Before his planned testimony on force posture in April 1990, Senate Armed Services Committee members Senators Sam Nunn and John Warner (R-Va.) both said that the "Chiefs needed 'to come up here with a different story this year, it's time to reduce.'"[29] It was passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act that enabled Powell to create naval force structure recommendations without input from the Navy's service chief, and made possible congressional favoring of Powell's proposal over the objections of the responsible service chief. As one chief noted, "[T]he planning for the defense build-down was a case of someone determining in advance what was needed, and then seeing that the result was produced."[30]

General Powell further strengthened the hand of joint versus service-based planning in the research, planning, and implementation of the first national military strategy (NMS) associated with the new NMSD and DPG. There was broad agreement that a change in focus from global to regional-based strategies was in order, although some global plans against residual Soviet action persisted.[31] These concepts formed the basis of the 1991 Contingency Planning Guidance (CPG) document, which "established a new framework for operational planning based upon both the changes that had taken place in the strategic environment and expected force reductions."[32] The CPG in turn was the basis for the Joint Strategic Contingency Planning document that was the basis for the new, 1991 NMS that was adopted on 27 January 1992.[33] The latter document directed the regional commanders in chief to "prepare operational plans that focused on regional threats."[34] The service chiefs all objected to the new strategy, to a degree,

but when confronted with President Bush's demand to reduce the defense budget owing to the end of the Cold War, they quickly assented and moved to protect their respective budgets.[35] The results of the Gulf War also appeared to "validate the conceptual underpinnings of the new military strategy," discouraging further argument over its scope and implementation.[36]

These changes were especially hard on the Navy. It struggled to adjust to a new national military strategy, a new force structure determined by outsiders, and a fundamental shift in the service's own maritime strategy concepts. Admiral Frank Kelso II, who replaced Admiral Trost as CNO in 1990, had planned to write a comprehensive naval plan on a logical reduction of naval forces for the postwar world, but could not gain the concurrence of the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of Defense fast enough to get ahead of General Powell's efforts.[37] The results of Kelso's efforts later appeared in the Naval Institute *Proceedings* in April 1991. Kelso said, "I never got approval to publish the article in time for it to have the effect I desired. It was finally published after General Powell came up with a 450-ship Navy that he called a base force. The article had absolutely zero effect or impact, because it was not a 'put your step forward.' It was 'Okay, you've been drug down ship by ship now.' In other words, it came after the fact that the reductions had started."[38]

Not only was the senior naval leadership no longer in command of the fleet, those leaders' opinions on naval strategy and force structure were rejected in favor of those of an army general. While defense cuts were inevitable in the wake of the Cold War, as they had been after the Second World War, in this case the CJCS rather than the CNO or even the Secretary of the Navy made the recommendation to Congress and the president about what naval forces would be retained. The Navy's inability to exert influence on its own size, composition, and missions would negatively impact the ability of naval leadership to create strategy from 1991 onward.

THE NEW PERSPECTIVE

The chairman's new powers also extended to the strategic orientation of the services. Before 1986, naval officers involved in strategic and operational planning had been accustomed to think of broad ocean areas as single conceptual units, and the older naval organization of the Atlantic and Pacific commands had reinforced that way of thinking.[39] The chairman's new powers, however, included the right periodically to review and adjust the missions, responsibilities, geographic boundaries, and force structure of each combatant command.[40]

The Navy had historically seen the whole of the world's oceans as a unitary theater of action uniquely suited to naval control. The service had not, however, fully articulated this concept on paper until the creation of the first version of

the Maritime Strategy in October 1982.[41] Naval leaders had also been loath to give land-based commanders any control over ocean areas, owing to their belief in a unitary global ocean battle space.[42] But while a global Cold War supported the Navy's view, its end allowed for the development of a number of regional strategies.

General Powell's "A View to the 90s" briefing was based on his vision that the disintegration of the Soviet empire called for new regional strategies that should assume the United States would remain a superpower because of its military capabilities, forces, and alliance relationships.[43] His solution to this challenge involved reshaping not only the force structure but the geographically defined battle space in which that force operated. Naval historian John Hattendorf described the effect of this change on the Navy as one of "structural change in command authority" that "had the intended effect of increasing joint strategic and operational planning in specific geographical locations," but "also had the unintended effect of making it more difficult to implement coordinated concepts for oceans—the natural geographical unit of maritime space."[44]

This process had begun even before Powell was appointed chairman. The 1987 review of combatant command (COCOM) boundaries required by the Goldwater-Nichols Act generated several disputes between the services. The Army attempted to revive a previous plan for a subordinate unified Northeast Asia Command centered on the Korean Peninsula, but this requirement was rejected in the course of the Joint Chiefs' review.[45] Of more concern was an appraisal of whether U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) should assume responsibility for the eastern Mediterranean water space directly adjacent to the "confrontational" states of Israel, Syria, and Lebanon.[46] CNO Admiral Trost counterproposed that both the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf be reassigned to U.S. Pacific Command, arguing that "USCINCCENT could not carry out his mission without command of the seas stretching all the way back to the California coast, which was USCINCPAC's responsibility." In the end, the JCS review made only a moderate change—it assigned limited areas of the Gulfs of Oman and Aden to USCENTCOM —and even so Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger had to intervene personally to settle the situation.[47] The Navy's objections to the proposed changes to COCOM oceanic boundaries demonstrated the service's concept of a unified ocean area of responsibility within which the inherent maneuverability, reach, power, and flexibility of naval forces could be optimally deployed and redeployed to meet the nation's challenges.

The Navy had mixed success in retaining its traditional maritime responsibilities during General Powell's 1991 COCOM review. The new Strategic Command and U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) had force structures favorable to naval leadership, but USACOM acquired maritime geographic responsibilities over the

objections of the Navy and Marine Corps leadership. General Powell in particular desired that the Navy gunnery range in Vieques, Puerto Rico, be available for joint exercises.[48]

CHANGES THROUGH THE '90s

These adjustments to COCOM boundaries and areas of responsibility were minor in comparison with changes in the late 1990s. But it was the chairman's greater Goldwater-Nichols-mandated authority that made them possible, and they supported the continued shift from a global to a regional-based strategy in the aftermath of the Cold War.

The 1992 presidential DPG read, "We can shift our defense planning from a focus on the global threat posed by the Warsaw Pact to focus on the less-demanding regional threats and challenges we are more likely to face in the future."[49] This document further identified four elements of the regional defense concept: planning for uncertainty, shaping the future security environment, maintenance of "strategic depth," and continued U.S. leadership to maintain security and prevent the rise of a successor to the Soviet Union.[50]

Although the CINC positions were originally designed as regional commanders for a global conflict with the Soviet Union, they took on new prominence after 1991 as the active facilitators of a new world order friendly to U.S. interests. This new role was stated in a 16 April 1992 memo by Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Paul Wolfowitz on the contents of the 1992 DPG: "The perceived ability of the U.S. to act independently, if necessary, is thus an important factor, even in the cases where we do not actually do so." Wolfowitz continued:

> Our forward presence helps to shape the evolving security environment. We will continue to rely on forward presence of U.S. forces to show U.S. commitment and lend credibility to our alliances, to deter aggression, enhance regional stability, promote U.S. influence and access, and, when necessary, provide an initial crisis-response capability. Forward presence is vital to the maintenance of the system of collective defense by which the United States has been able to work with our friends and allies to protect our security interests, while minimizing the burden of defense spending and of unnecessary arms competition.[51]

While the new post–Cold War national strategy and national military strategy were the original products of the civilian presidential administration and defense secretariat, the principal military inputs came from the office of the chairman and the Joint Staff. The services provided only limited input, confined to a defense of their spending programs. In comparison with the environment in which the Navy had produced the Maritime Strategy, it had now lost control of the argument about the size and composition of its force and how and where it would fight.

THE NAVY'S LEGACY OF STRATEGISTS

This change in the Navy's fortunes was not due to a deficiency in qualified strategic thinkers. The service had cultivated a cadre of experts since the days of War Plan ORANGE, when Navy strategists such as Charles "Savvy" Cooke and Richmond K. Turner accurately anticipated the maritime strategy and course of the future Pacific war of 1941–45.[52]

This tradition continued throughout the Cold War, with the service mentoring and sustaining a number of experts in naval strategy. While these officers were assigned operational, fleet-related billets in the course of their regular career paths, they were also rotated through a small number of strategic planning offices on the CNO's staff. They often worked in concert with civilian academics at the Naval War College, the traditional home of naval strategic thought and culture since the days of Alfred Thayer Mahan in the late nineteenth century.

These officers were the product of what naval historian John Hattendorf called "[a] resurgence of strategic thinking in the U.S. Navy" in response to the tenure of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara (1961–68), during which long-range planning had been reduced to a series of five-year planning cycles.[53] CNO Admiral Elmo Zumwalt first sought to create a new cadre of strategists through the Naval War College. This effort was not entirely successful. The overall curriculum of the War College improved thanks to the efforts of then-President Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner, but the school did not attract enough of the Navy's best to create a new strategic culture rapidly.[54] Zumwalt's other focus, however—on strategic problems in the Pacific and Indian Oceans—did create the desired strategic culture through the CNO office staffs that worked on these issues.

The CNO OP-06 and the newly created OP-00K (CNO Executive Panel) offices in particular were a veritable breeding ground for naval strategic thinkers over the course of the 1970s and early 1980s. These officers worked in close cooperation with the Office of Naval Intelligence and the Center for Naval Analyses, and did much of the planning and staff work that led to and included the Maritime Strategy of the 1980s. The Navy did have a strategy subspecialty code that officers could acquire through appropriate military or civilian education, but this cadre of strategic experts was informally organized. This was especially true in the case of the strategy experts assigned to the CNO's staff. Captain William Spencer Johnson, who served multiple assignments in the OP-06 office in the 1970s and 1980s, recalled that the executive assistant to the flag officer in charge of OP-06 kept a wooden box in his office with file cards detailing those who had served in OP-06. This simple filing system recorded their current service billets and when they would again be available for service on the OP-06 staff. The admiral in charge of OP-06 essentially had unofficial detailing authority over these

officers, and with the support of Naval Personnel Command could order their return when requested.[55]

The officers who headed the OP-06 office included a number of former fleet commanders, such as Admirals James "Ace" Lyons, Henry "Hank" Mustin, and Charles Larson, as well as future CJCS Admiral William Crowe. Staff members such as Captains Swartz and Johnson completed multiple tours within the OP-06 organization over the course of their careers.[56] Multiple assignments within OP-06 produced a strong but unofficial strategic community of talented men and women within the larger CNO staff.

The efforts of Under Secretary of the Navy Bob Murray stimulated the CNO, Admiral Hayward, to create the CNO's Strategic Studies Group (SSG) in the summer of 1981. The group was convened under Murray's leadership and mentorship, assisted by Commander Kenneth McGruther, Naval Reserve Commander John Hanley, and others. The initial purpose of the group, according to Commander McGruther, was to "reinforce in the Soviet mind the perception that it could not win a war with the United States, both *before* a war, to enhance deterrence, and at all phases of the war should it occur."[57]

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The first SSG became very influential in determining how elements of the new Maritime Strategy would eventually be employed. Murray desired that the group work on problems of strategy that would be broad enough to be useful, but narrow enough in scope to be reasonably accomplished. The SSG could not accomplish these goals in isolation and would need to travel globally and discuss its proposals with multiple senior officers and staffs.[58] The SSG continued operating over the course of the 1980s and supported further improvements in the emerging maritime strategy.

The other important product coming from both the OPNAV strategy offices and the SSG was the officers themselves, those who gained great professional expertise from their assignments to these groups.[59] They constituted an expanding cadre of strategic-minded officers trained both to create strategy and to anticipate responses to that strategy from opponents. The interaction of the OPNAV strategy offices such as OP-603, the SSG, and naval intelligence experts channeled the inspiration for a new naval strategy to confront the Soviet Union into plans and war-fighting doctrine useful to operational commanders. This group's combination of operational, academic, and cooperative experience was well suited to the rapid and effective production and updating of strategy-related materials.

The changes wrought by the Goldwater-Nichols legislation would eventually transform this group over time from an officially constituted forum to an ad hoc assembly maintained by the members themselves. This alteration occurred through modification of both missions and personnel composition of these cooperative strategic entities.

One of the most contested aspects of the legislation was the establishment of a rigorous qualification, assignment, and management program for joint-duty officers. Owing to a perceived predilection in the services to assign less-qualified officers to the Joint Staff, Congress required the Secretary of Defense to submit an annual Joint Officer Management report to the legislative branch. This document was to report joint-duty officers' number, promotion rate, and promotion rate in comparison with non-joint-qualified officers, and to which billets each service assigned such officers. This focus on joint assignments caused a significant shift in where the talented officers of each service were assigned.

The OP-06 office had risen to prominence during the 1980s in the course of its work with the Maritime Strategy. CNOs Hayward and Watkins as well as Secretary Lehman valued its inputs and contributions (along with those of the 00K office) to the creation of the NMS and its communication to a wider audience. The emphasis demanded by Goldwater-Nichols on joint versus service-centric activities, however, helped bring about a significant reorganization in the OPNAV office structure that weakened the influence of OP-06 on both naval and wider strategic concerns.

Over the period of 1992–93, CNO Kelso conducted a major reorganization of the OPNAV staff structure in response to the Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions; it was conceptualized and implemented by Vice Admiral Bill Owens, one of the members of the first SSG. OP codes became N-coded offices that mirrored the Joint Staff. A new and powerful N8 office (Integration of Capabilities and Resources) was constructed from the warfare "baron" offices of OP-02, -03, and -05 (Deputy CNOs for submarine, surface, and air warfare, respectively); Owens was the first to head the new office.[60] N8 was considerably more powerful than the old OP-06 in a new world in which Goldwater-Nichols had determined that services only built, trained, and equipped forces, but did not conduct strategic planning for their use. OP-06 itself became N3/N5 and lost influence, as OPNAV had considerably less influence on the Joint Staff now that it worked for the CJCS alone and not the collective Joint Chiefs.[61]

The SSG also changed in form and content, but perhaps less directly than the offices of the OPNAV staff. The SSG moved from being a Cold War naval strategy and operations think tank to being a wider DIME (i.e., diplomacy, information, military, economics) effort.[62] It acquired its first members outside the Navy and Marine Corps in 1993 and its focus became a global search for places where naval

forces would be relevant. Much of this change was precipitated by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, but some was in response to the activities of the empowered office of the CJCS. The chairman, rather than Navy flag officers, now made force-structure recommendations.

BUDGET AND OTHER CHALLENGES

Admiral Kelso had replaced Admiral Trost as CNO in June 1990 and was immediately confronted by a host of direct and indirect challenges to the maintenance of a robust naval force structure. Kelso acknowledged in his Senate confirmation hearing that the Maritime Strategy was "on the shelf," and that the six-hundred-ship Navy concept should be replaced by a more flexible number.[63] The end of the Maritime Strategy and change of CNO leadership created a power struggle in the OPNAV staff as competing offices sought to present new strategic visions to the CNO. This struggle produced a general document known as "The Way Ahead."[64]

Budget estimates, however, continued to stymie the CNO's efforts to support his vision functionally. Kelso had hoped to kick off the 1991 budget season with a positive and influential Total Force Assessment briefing to accompany the Navy's budget proposals. Instead, he got a sobering and dismal appraisal of what force the Navy might field in the post–Cold War era. Captain Richard Diamond, the OP-603 branch chief who gave the brief, recalled that Kelso responded to its contents with a "barrage of scatological invectives and expletives." One particular slide, entitled "The Coming USN Budget Train Wreck," predicted that the Navy "was about to face a major budget crisis that made a new strategic rationale mandatory"; it caused the CNO to "go into overdrive" in his negative response.[65] The slide "flipper" for that brief, Commander Paul Giarra, USN (Ret.), said, "The CNO left the room without providing any guidance to the assembled three-star officers present for the brief," and for a time this caused great uncertainty.[66]

Even so, if the challenges had been limited to dramatically shrinking budgets, Admiral Kelso might have had greater influence on controlling the Navy's response to the empowered CJCS, but his immediate focus was on troubling service-specific issues. He was, in particular, distracted by negative publicity about the USS *Iowa* B-turret explosion, the Tailhook scandal, and the crash/death of F-14 pilot Lieutenant Kara Hultgreen, USN. In such an environment, Admiral Kelso could not concentrate on strategy as well as he needed to.[67]

EFFECT ON THE STRATEGY COHORT

The legislation affected not only the Navy offices that created strategy but also the careers of individual naval officers engaged in that effort. The new emphasis on joint, vice service, offices that the Goldwater-Nichols provisions demanded created a significant impact on officers in the ranks of O-4 (lieutenant commander)

to O-6 (captain) who would normally have been recruited to serve in OP-06 (now N3/N5) and other purely service staff positions. Those officers were now drawn to joint positions to meet the new requirements that demanded joint service as a precursor to consideration for flag rank. The service solution was to "shorten some assignments and eliminate others" so that joint assignments could be fitted into the same nominal twenty-year career plan demanded by the 1980 Defense Officer Personnel Management Act.[68]

The addition of joint assignments was further complicated by an overall manpower reduction at the end of the Cold War. The number of Navy joint billets for officers in the ranks of O-4 to O-6 increased by 10 percent over the period 1989–99 in spite of a nearly 15 percent overall postwar decline in the number of officers in those ranks.[69] These changes also seem to have affected the overall amount of service-based expertise that the average naval officer acquired over the course of his or her career. A 2001 analysis suggested, "[t]he prescribed tour lengths in Goldwater-Nichols tend to deepen officers' joint opportunities but may limit the breadth of experience."[70]

The Navy had historically seen the whole of the world's oceans as a unitary theater of action uniquely suited to naval control.

The experience of the strategy cadre of OP-06 would not initially seem to support this assumption. The individuals who spearheaded the drive to create the NMS in the 1980s found continued employment in the strategy business during the 1990s. As noted at the outset, Captain Swartz, after some initial misgivings about having two consecutive joint assignments, became one of General Colin Powell's special assistants. Captain Diamond became OP-603 (the Strategic Concepts office of OP-06) in February 1990 and exerted significant influence on the development and coordination of the follow-on strategic concept to the NMS known as ". . . From the Sea."[71] Commander Sestak contributed what Diamond referred to as "the bumper sticker" for the new strategy in the phrase, "The Navy/Marine Corps Team is the Enabling Force for Follow-on Joint Operations."[72] Diamond, along with Swartz and other OP-60, OP-00K, and SSG alumni, founded a regular naval strategy discussion group that first began meeting in 1988.[73]

Yet while these officers continued their strategic vocation in both Navy and later joint offices involved in producing strategic work, their shoes were not being filled by a new generation of Navy-created strategy experts. The provisions of the Goldwater-Nichols Act appear to be the direct cause of this change, in the eyes of some of these experts. Captain R. Robinson "Robby" Harris, a former member of the SSG and 00K, has suggested that the OPNAV staff in general is "a shadow of what it was twenty years ago in both quantity and background" owing to the changes caused by the legislation's joint-officer requirements.[74] The new

requirements for joint assignment appeared to have harmed the ability of the Navy to send officers to multiple tours within OPNAV strategy offices. Captain Johnson believes that the joint requirements prevented the Navy from sending officers to multiple assignments in OP-06 where they would have acquired further strategic competence and maintained corporate memory in naval strategic planning.[75] Before Goldwater-Nichols, Johnson asserts, it was commonplace for strategy-coded officers to have multiple OPNAV tours in strategic planning offices.[76] Now there is barely time for one such assignment if an officer is also to meet the joint requirements necessary for eligibility for flag rank. This lack of repeat experience in OPNAV has further weakened the Navy's ability to create strategy on its own. Secretary Lehman says the joint requirements have created excessively large staffs that draw too many officers from experience-generating operational billets.[77] Together, these changes have meant a Navy with fewer strategic planners and possibly less operational experience, and have forced it to fill a much larger staff pool, thus leaving it bereft of its own strategic veterans.

THE PRICE PAID

Of course the armed forces of the United States were going to face significant cuts in the wake of the Cold War. A new strategy would have emerged in response to this sea change in international affairs alone. The Goldwater-Nichols legislation, however, significantly complicated that process for the U.S. Navy.

The Navy had been the most significant source of organized opposition to the legislation, and its senior officers, at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s, remained antagonistic to the law's tenets as it struggled to adjust to a new international situation and a new internal Defense Department organization. The legislation did not have the same impact on Navy strategy as the end of the Cold War, but the empowered CJCS, new concepts in combatant commander area of responsibility, and the personnel changes demanded made the process of creating new strategies for the naval service, especially those involving a global responsibility, more challenging in the years after 1992. The Goldwater-Nichols Act gave the CJCS the decisive voice in determining naval force structure and how maritime geographic areas of responsibility were divided.

Further, the legislation altered the career paths of naval officers by mandating joint assignments as a precursor to flag rank. This action caused a practical migration of talented, career-minded officers out of service offices such as OP-06, where they had been carefully trained, mentored, and subsequently assigned important Navy follow-on assignments, into joint billets in which the Navy could no longer make direct use of their talents. These officers continued to contribute to the process of strategy creation in the 1990s, but there was no longer a strong service staff organization to mentor and aid them in their development.

These changes caused by the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 fundamentally altered the process by which the U.S. Navy developed both strategy and the people involved in that creative process. While these changes did not have a significant negative impact in the first decade after the end of the Cold War, they later affected the Navy's ability to emulate the Maritime Strategy experience and again produce war-winning global strategic concepts in response to regional threats that can no longer be contained by regional planning alone—concepts that effectively employ the inherent mobility, flexibility, and power of a globally deployable, free-ranging, offensively oriented fleet.

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Steven Wills is a retired surface warfare officer with master's degrees from the Naval War College and Ohio University. He is a doctoral candidate in military history at Ohio University with a focus in Cold War naval strategy. His forthcoming dissertation is entitled "Replacing the Maritime Strategy: The Change in U.S. Naval Strategy from 1989 to 1994."

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