"A COOPERATIVE STRATEGY FOR 21ST CENTURY SEAPOWER"

A View from Outside

Geoffrey Till

Navies everywhere are grappling with the security issues they confront in the post-9/11 world. This is a difficult task, because they face issues that seem so much more complicated than we remember them to have been during the Cold War. Partly because of the ending of that conflict, for the moment at least, but mainly because of the impact of globalization, the concept of security has expanded from notions that are mainly military to encompass the dimensions of political security, economic security, societal security, and environmental security. All of these may apply at the level of the individual citizen, groups in the national population, the nation, the region, or the world. Moreover, these dimensions and levels are intimately connected with one another, vertically and horizontally, so that a response to a discerned threat at one of these intersections is likely to have a range of effects, both good and bad, everywhere else.

Moreover, there is a temporal dimension to all this: what a country does now, in response to a clear and immediate danger, may have untold implications for its ability to respond to other challenges farther up the line. Such issues require a "comprehensive approach," in which military action is carefully integrated with political and economic approaches in order to produce desired effects. To make their full contribution, military forces will need to think about their traditional tasks in new ways and to accept new ones. The searing experience of Iraq and Afghanistan adds urgency to the call—or so, at least, the argument goes.

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Other analysts, however, wonder how real, how new, or how permanent this development actually is. They argue that the Cold War really did not seem so simple at the time and that while the major focus may have been on the potentially deadly confrontation between East and West over the established battle lines of Europe, many quite important things were going on elsewhere that called upon Western forces to respond in a variety of ways far removed from the brutal simplicities of the Central Front. Moreover, Colin Gray is not alone in writing of "another bloody century," in which many new threats may seem much less dominant when compared to the possible recurrence of traditional state-on-state wars.[1] These potential wars continue to call for a set of approaches, military disciplines, and capabilities that seem really quite familiar. Therefore, goes the alternative view, what we have is at most a difference of degree, and it is far too early to conclude that the elements of change, to the extent that they exist, constitute a permanent trend to which military forces need to adapt, rather than a temporary blip that they need to absorb.

These two approaches have been labeled, respectively, the "postmodern," or "nontraditional," way of thinking about the role and character of military forces, and the "modern," or "traditional." When it comes to sizing and shaping the fleet, there are obvious tensions between these two approaches. Many navies around the world are thinking through their own answers to this set of conundrums, and there has been a great deal of interest in how the U.S. Navy would seek to square this particular circle. How will its strategic thinking develop? How will it structure the fleet? How will it operate? How should everyone else respond? Accordingly, the rest of the world has awaited "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower" with, if not bated breath, at least real interest in both the process and the outcome of the debate.

SO WHAT'S NEW?

The U.S. Navy's approach to strategy making was certainly intended to be novel. The former Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Mike Mullen, launched the campaign for a new strategy in June 2006. "When I initiated the discussion of what it should be," he said, "my view was that we needed one. We hadn't had one in 20-plus years and you need a strategy which is going to underpin how we operate, what our concepts were, and literally how we invest." The scope and scale of new threats, the complexity of globalization, and the staggering rate of change seemed to make a major rethinking necessary. The task was handed over to Vice Admiral John Morgan, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information, Plans and Strategy.

Rather as the British had done a decade earlier with their Strategic Defence Review of 1997, the U.S. Navy decided to make the process as inclusive of all

major stakeholders as possible. "One of the things I [Mullen] said when I came in as CNO [was that] I am not going to move ahead on major decisions without doing this with my other four stars. So the U.S. Marine Corps and Coastguard were in the process from the start. The Navy also decided to hold a series of 'conversations with America.'"[2] In some ways, the process was as important as the product, since if successful it would yield not only a strategy but also a constituency of opinion that might be expected to help with its implementation later on. Finally, foreign engagement was sought in aspects of the strategy, through the International Seapower Symposiums of 2005 and 2007, a variety of naval staff talks, and academic engagements abroad. The new CNO, Admiral Gary Roughead, argues that "this was an approach that was very different than in the past when we engaged more than just a very small cell of Navy thinkers. We heard from other leaders in our country about the use of maritime power."[3]

The problem with this, paradoxically, was that the degree of prior involvement in the process and the extent to which developing concepts, such as the "thousand-ship navy"/Global Maritime Partnership, were telegraphed in advance combined to make the new strategy appear less than wholly new when it finally appeared. Moreover, at least some of the ideas it contained had appeared before in earlier formulations. Recognizing the tectonic shifts in strategy caused by the end of the Cold War, another doctrinal formulation, ". . . From the Sea," had in 1992 already shifted the emphasis away from power *at* sea and toward power *from* the sea. This closer coordination of the Navy and the Marine Corps was symbolized by the equal positioning of their service logos on the front cover of the document. The shock of 9/11 caused another such shift, leading to a new emphasis on counterterrorism and asymmetric operations. Such thoughts had also been illuminated and advanced in the four broad naval mission areas identified by the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review process:

- Conducting an active and layered defense against aggression from forward locations not dependent on the land bases of other nations
- Ensuring the access of joint forces to contested areas where adversaries seek to exclude U.S. presence
- Enabling the success of joint forces ashore through the provision of firepower, mobility, intelligence, and logistics support
- Defending the seaward approaches to the American homeland against an array of conventional and unconventional threats.[4]

Even the equal treatment given winning and preventing wars can be seen as less than novel given the great stress on deterrence in the Cold War era, which was after all about *preventing* war. However, what does seem to be different is the

much wider conception of what deterrence actually means and actually requires these days. The coercive approach of demonstrating denial capabilities against, or promising punishment for, prospective wrongdoers has been absorbed into a much wider concept of working against the social, environmental, and economic conditions that make wrongdoing more likely. These postmodern conceptions of seapower had, however, been signaled in parts of the "Naval Operations Concept" and the "Navy Strategic Plan" of 2006.

These conceptions are, nevertheless, key to the novelty, and indeed the attractiveness, of the strategy. It is much more comprehensive in its approach and seems much more aware of the implications and consequences of the broader, earlier concepts of security. The same might be said when it comes to the document's implementation. The extent of the stress on cooperation and mutual dependence between the three maritime services is new: it solidifies the emerging partnership between the Marine Corps and the Navy, on the one hand, and between the Navy and the Coast Guard, on the other. It underlines the thinking behind the "National Fleet" concept of and, to some extent at least operationalizes the objectives contained in, the White House's 2005 *National Strategy for Maritime Security*. The admittedly brief discussion of distributed and disaggregated command decision making may suggest something of a shift in naval thinking away from task force–centric operations characteristic of the Navy to the tactical platform-centric approach of the Coast Guard. The extent to which the Navy may be signaling a willingness to engage in what would elsewhere be regarded as constabulary operations is significant too. But note, there are a lot of "may be's" here.

The specific importance attached to humanitarian aid and disaster relief is, however, quite novel. Instead of being something of bonus when the need arises and assets are available because there is no decent war to fight elsewhere, the task is accepted as part of one of the six strategic imperatives, and the ability to do it has apparently been elevated to equal standing with more traditional core capabilities like forward presence and sea control.

But perhaps the most striking departure of all is the consolidation of the Global Maritime Partnership initiative, which becomes one of the six strategic imperatives and which is clearly crucial to two of the six core capabilities, namely maritime security and humanitarian assistance and disaster response. Since this initiative has grown out of Admiral Mullen's earlier concept of a "thousand-ship navy," this is not entirely new, of course.[5] But the retitling of the concept is more than merely cosmetic. It suggests a significant move away from the traditional "modern" thinking that probably explains the label originally given to the concept. Zippy as it was, the "thousand-ship navy" was profoundly misleading, since it seemed to exclude coast guard forces, had clear hierarchical

connotations that inevitably sparked unwelcome questions as to "who's in charge," and raised equally unfortunate suspicions that the Navy's hidden aspirations were to re-create on a grander scale the "six-hundred-ship navy" of the Ronald Reagan years. Hence, in Admiral Morgan's words, "We are beginning to distance ourselves from that moniker."[6] Many people will therefore welcome the complete disappearance of the term from the document as the passing of a distraction from what is otherwise a persuasive concept. It is noticeable also that the Global Maritime Partnership would benefit significantly from all three of the document's implementation priorities.

It seems fair to conclude, therefore, that there are indeed new, postmodern elements to the new strategy that go alongside the old and that, in Loren Thompson's words, "it is hard to argue with such a reasonable approach to global security."[7]

CRITICISMS

Nonetheless, there have been criticisms—in fact, quite a few.[8] To a large extent this is inevitable, as the document seeks to cover a vast subject in comparatively few words, no doubt on the assumption that no one would actually read anything longer. In less than four thousand words it reviews extraordinarily complicated changes in the world scene and seeks to lay down a strategy that defines in doctrinal, operational, and procurement terms the objectives, methods, and supporting implementation plans for the world's biggest navy, marine corps, and coast guard. Moreover, it was produced through a process of consultation with the widest range of maritime stakeholders imaginable. The new statement of strategy is essentially a compromise in length, in overall posture, and in detailed substance. Given the level of compression and the complexity of the subject, a measure of superficiality and (possibly constructive) ambiguity is perhaps inevitable.

Each of the major stakeholders consulted in the process could, however, argue with some justification that their respective particular interests have not been given due weight. The "kinetic" community, preoccupied by the possible recurrence of interstate war with a strategic competitor in twenty or thirty years' time or by the possibility of a conflict with a country like Iran or North Korea in the nearer term, might well feel that the pendulum has swung much too far from "hard" to "soft" maritime power. The absence of reference to strike operations and amphibious assault in the discussion of power projection has already been noted. According to some observers, earlier drafts of the document had even less reference to the sources of kinetic effect. In the final text, references to theater ballistic missile defense are hidden away rather uncomfortably in the discussion on deterrence, for example. This partly explains the emphasis on the need to stick with "the Mahanian insistence on U.S. Navy maritime dominance" given

by Secretary of the Navy Donald Winter. "Let there be no mistake," he said. "We are not walking away from, diminishing, or retreating in any way from those elements of hard power that win wars—or deter them from ever breaking out in the first place. . . . The strength of a nation's navy remains an essential measure of a great power's status and role in the world."[9]

Attitudes on where the balance in doctrine and force structure is to be struck in the document between hard and soft power may well partly depend on where the observer "sits," in terms of geography and maritime discipline. Aviators may well tend toward a more kinetic approach, especially if they operate in areas where local conflict against middle powers seems a quite possible contingency. The attention of submariners and those in the antisubmarine community will be fixated on the need to respond to the growing reach and sophistication of possible competitors like China or of middle powers with access to new and improved attack submarines, whether conventional or nuclear powered, and consequently may feel that still more could have been said about the future importance of their crafts. Operators in regions such as Africa, Europe, or South America will tend, simply by virtue of their operational priorities, to be more interested in softer capacities like riverine or patrol operations or civil-military affairs; they too may feel, though, that their concerns could have been given greater emphasis.

Against this, the coast guard community might think that its side of the strategy has been played down in the document. It might well feel that the document uses "seapower" as a synonym for naval power rather than as an alternative to "maritime power" and that the default understanding of the former term will lessen attention to the contribution made by the U.S. Coast Guard. The constabulary role and law enforcement are crucial aspects of maritime security in its newer and wider sense but seem rather glossed over, at least in the sense that there are no specific references to the fact that in the United States such activities are the domain of the Coast Guard rather than the Navy. Given the evident importance attributed by the document to wider engagement with other countries, where primary concerns in maritime security tend to be things like the protection of fisheries and the interception of drugs, arms, and people smugglers, this apparent neglect would seem particularly unfortunate. It would be no very great step from this perspective to suspicion that the Navy is using this wider concept of maritime security to help justify a building program of ships that are by no means appropriate to its enforcement.

Merchant-ship building and operating and the marine industrial complex represent another constituency in the maritime community that might feel neglected. Such interests also have a contribution to make, objections and dissents to table, and strategic needs to be met. That the U.S. Navy's construction program has been relatively stable for the last two years is in important part a

response to industry's requirements for reliable planning baselines. Electoral as well as national considerations mean that members of Congress have a huge—and, some suspect, determining—political stake in such outcomes. For all these reasons, these concerns might have been more directly addressed.

Aside from criticisms proceeding from particular constituencies and stakeholders who feel that their particular angles on the issue should have been given more weight, a second set focuses on the document as a statement of strategy. Current events in Iraq and Afghanistan suggest that the United States and its allies have encountered real difficulty in coming up with connected, seamless guidance as to how broad policy objectives at the grand-strategic end of the scale should be implemented at the other (operational and tactical) end, now and in the plannable future. The contention is that they have a set of visionary statements and detailed force structure plans but that the two often do not match up.

As a result, according to this view, the allies went to war in Iraq and Afghanistan with a broad sense of what needed to be done but without the resources or sometimes the institutional framework needed to do it. In consequence, there is a great focus on satisfying the tyrannical demands of the immediate commitment. In consequence, the future is being mortgaged to the present. This is not a criticism of the new maritime strategy so much as a comment that it is by no means clear where the document fits into the family of policy statements that the United States—or any other country, for that matter—needs in order to translate policy into successful action.[10]

Relatedly, more specific questions can be raised about the connections between this document and force structure, particularly but not exclusively in the U.S. Navy. One angle, as already noted, is to argue that this document is actually an attempt to justify a set of building plans already established in the 2006 Navy Strategic Plan, already referred to, which was introduced by Admiral Mullen in order to provide stability in the Navy's shipbuilding program. Some are quite clear about what they see as

> the Navy's latest attempt to articulate the role of maritime forces, and to provide a sensible justification for its plan to increase the current 278-ship fleet to 313 during the next three decades. Navy officials worry that fleet expansion efforts could be wrecked if the Defense Department cuts naval budgets to pay for the addition of thousands of troops to the Army and Marine Corps over the next four years.[11]

Indeed, Secretary Winter made the point that "our 30-year ship-building program remains unchanged; our aircraft purchasing schedule remains on track; and our end strength targets will not change as a result of this new strategy." If this was indeed the intention, things were, arguably, taken up in the

wrong order: the building plan should be derived from an open examination of need, not the latter crafted to suit the former.

Another line of attack on the relationship between the document and the building plan, however, is to argue the exact opposite. Some make the point that this is not a "strategy" at all, in the sense that it does not relate ways and means in a manner that would offer much guidance to force planners in any of the three maritime services. The document is more of an overall "vision" that seeks to establish general things that need to be done but avoids discussion about what is needed to get those things done. A "former senior officer" reportedly complains, "There's nothing in there about force planning. Do I build capital ships for major wars that don't occur often, or do I build for general purpose, lower-end ships for the kinds of events we encounter far more regularly?"[12] Nor does it give much clue about relative priorities between modern and postmodern maritime approaches, priorities that in an age of budgetary constraint must compete to some extent. According to some, "by not including or even alluding to a recapitalization plan in the strategy, the Navy missed a golden opportunity to link its strategy and equipment needs in a single clear case for lawmakers."[13]

But perhaps, some wonder, there is a new accompanying, classified annex that does articulate and justify Navy building plans and that supports the aspiration to a 313-ship navy, if not more.[14] Vice Admiral Morgan offers a more subtle explanation. He has spoken of his hope that "the new strategy will 'lead strategic thinking' in the formation of future budgets. The intention is for the strategy to be 'refreshed' every two years, right before long-term budget plans are finalized."[15] In other words, the strategy is intended to provide continuing on-course guidance for the existing programs, which it therefore accompanies, rather than precedes or follows.

Moreover, the timing of the debate is interesting, seeming as it does to imply readiness on the part of the maritime services to get people thinking about American defense needs *after* Iraq and Afghanistan, by which time the political complexions of White House and Congress may be rather different.

For all that, it is clear that there is no pleasing everybody; the very nature of the document required major compromise by all the participants. The Navy could hardly have made a more specific claim to more ambitious force structure, in general or in particular naval-discipline terms, in an abbreviated document that it was producing jointly with the other two maritime services. Nor could they have done so themselves. The maritime services, in this collective bid to draw national attention to the importance of the physical environment in and across which they all operate, also needed to be mindful of the fact that this was not a statement of *national* policy. The subject area this document sought to address is vast—geographically, substantively, and temporally; its treatment

required massive compression. Accordingly the statement could hardly have had the crisp exactitude and the articulated performance indicators of, for example, the Maritime Strategy of the 1980s. For all these reasons a final verdict on the importance and impact of this document will need to wait upon events. The proof of the pudding will be in the eating.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

If the new strategy is to convince observers that it really is the significant departure from the norm that it is claimed to be, its progenitors will need to convince skeptics by what they do now that it has been introduced. A serious and sustained campaign of strategic communication among the stakeholders themselves, among them and the rest of the country, and among the United States and other countries seems called for as a first step. The (mis)apprehensions noted above will need to be addressed.

In particular, this is an ideal time for the United States to progress a campaign of (re)engagement with the rest of the world, given the strains induced by the Iraq war. Here the problem is exemplified by global worries that the United States is not only too powerful but also inclined to often self-defeating unilateralism. It is against this background that the debate about ratification by the United States of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)—significantly, represented by its American adversaries as "LOST" (i.e., the Law of the Sea Treaty)—is being followed by the outside world. Critics of the proposal to ratify clearly argue from a rigorous set of traditional, modern conceptions of U.S. sovereignty and national interest.[16]

White House and Navy proponents, however, believe that UNCLOS provides an indispensable legal framework for most activities in support of maritime security. Some would admit that the UN generally lends authority for more ambitious acts of system defense. The perception, whether true or not, that the United States and its allies are "acting outside the law" undermines their prospects of success. Accordingly, ratification of the convention would indeed seem to imply acceptance by the United States of the notion that its maritime security is best provided in concert with everyone else's.

With this we approach the most postmodern aspect of American maritime thinking in this document, the continual references to its "collaborative" nature. Although most countries find the notion of a Global Maritime Partnership attractive, there are residual suspicions about whether the United States really means it.[17] This unease is manifested by Africa's hesitations about the new U.S. Africa Command—Africa, the locals say, is not about to be commanded by the United States. A real partnership will need to acknowledge this, to accept that in many cases local alliances will provide the first responses to local troubles and

that local priorities in the maintenance of good order at sea are not necessarily the same as those of the United States. Americans tend to put "international terrorism" at the top of the list of threats; other countries are much more concerned about illegal fishing or people smuggling. Even Europeans often do not put counterterrorism at the head of their priority lists.[18]

Certainly, with its emphasis on building the trust that cannot be surged, in the strategy document—and, indeed, in the public statements of regional commanders around the world—there is at least declaratory acceptance of the need to accommodate such differences of view. As Admiral Mullen said, "The changed strategic landscape offers new opportunities for maritime forces to work together—sometimes with the U.S. Navy, but oftentimes without. In fact, a greater number of today's emerging missions won't involve the U.S. Navy. And that's fine with me."[19]

Putting the concept of partnership into effect, however, will require practical steps. These may include a concerted effort to make "maritime domain awareness" work, by moving from an information culture based on "need to know" to one based on "need to share," and by openhanded provision of skills and equipment in a sophisticated capability-building campaign for countries that need it. "Sophisticated," in this case, means two things. First, it connotes practical appreciation of the need fully to integrate naval efforts with coast guards, both foreign and domestic, in a manner that gives the latter full credit for their particular strengths in this area. Second, it will require particular awareness of the political and cultural sensitivities of regions in question. The current emphasis on language training and cultural awareness, together with the creation of a "Civil Affairs Command" of Foreign Area Officers, is an encouraging step in this direction. So also were the demonstrations of intent evident in the recent cruises of the hospital ships *Mercy* and *Comfort*, when viewed alongside effective reactions of the U.S. Navy toward natural disasters like the 2004 tsunami. Actions, after all, speak louder than words, and these are the kinds of things likely to make a reality of the concept of "global fleet stations" and to persuade others that the maritime services really mean what they say in this document.[20] All of this seems to presage a move away from the techno-centric thinking that seems to have characterized U.S. defense policy over the past few years.

But, as already remarked, the rest of the world is not the only constituency of concern that needs to be addressed in a continuing campaign of justification. Different justifications may need to be given to domestic stakeholders, and some of these may well compete with the messages that need to be transmitted to foreigners. For instance, the kinetic community will need to be assured that its "modern" but perfectly legitimate concerns about the need to continue to prepare for the prospect of interstate war are addressed.[21] Getting the right balance

between hard and soft maritime power is particularly problematic when naval budgets are tight, partly because of the inevitable political concentration on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and on a building program mired in controversy. Such concentration exacerbates the concerns of people who, like Robert Kaplan, argue that the U.S. Navy is moving too far away from traditional naval threats from first- and second-class adversaries now and in the more distant future.[22] Instead, they argue, it should focus its efforts on such "modern" preoccupations as the acquisition of more sophisticated antisubmarine systems, supercarriers, and sea-based ballistic- and cruise-missile defense, the *Zumwalt*-class destroyers, and the CG(X) cruiser.

These, of course, are expensive and encourage the trend toward smaller fleets, whereas having fewer builds makes safe, incremental modernization of the fleet more difficult. That in turn forces the Navy into specifying "transformational" leaps in platform specification, as evidenced in the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), the *Zumwalt*s, and CG(X), programs that are inherently riskier and costlier to fix than their predecessors when things go wrong. Although the new maritime strategy does not go into this issue (because it does not address relative priorities, as remarked earlier), questions will have to be asked and answered about the balance that should be struck in the "high/low" mix.

The LCS program is particularly important from this point of view, and its current difficulties are therefore especially unfortunate. But even within the program, there are those who argue that something cheaper and less capable but more numerous would provide a better solution. Lower-intensity postmodern operations would seem to many to call for still greater expansion of riverine capabilities, significant reentry into the small-patrol-craft area, and something of a deemphasis on the mainly Mahanian aspects of the current shipbuilding program. William Lind complains, "The U.S. Navy is building a fleet perfectly designed to fight the navy of imperial Japan. If someone wants to contest control of the Pacific Ocean in a war between aircraft carrier task forces, we are ready." Lind recalls a former deputy assistant secretary of defense, Jim Thomas, saying (as cited by Robert Kaplan), "The Navy is not primarily about low-level raiding, piracy patrols, and riverine warfare. If we delude ourselves into thinking that it is, we're finished as a great power." On the contrary, Lind argues, in today's postmodern, fourth-generation world that is precisely what naval power is all about—or ought to be.[23]

Getting these budgetary and force structure balances right and giving real effect to the ideas sketched out in "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower" call for the open debate it is already getting but also for a clear sense of *national* strategy, one in which the place of maritime forces in the overall response to a complex present and future world is seriously addressed. Such an

overall, joined-up strategy should do two things. First, it should seriously address the task of deterring or winning today's conflicts while being able to secure the "peace" that would follow. Second, it should define and balance the needs of today's conflicts with those of tomorrow's. Easier said than done, perhaps—these issues are unlikely to be resolved quickly or easily, but they are essential all the same, and their difficulty points to the need for the continued dialogue that preconditions ultimate agreement.

LIKELY FOREIGN REACTIONS

It is not easy to gauge likely foreign reactions to the new strategy. Inevitably, some will be responses to the process that produced and now follows production of the document rather than to what it actually says. In the course of this, some outsiders are bound to hear things that confirm existing suspicions about U.S. intentions. Statements intended to assuage the concerns of hard-power advocates in Congress, for example, will unnecessarily alarm those for whom American maritime dominance can be seen as a prospective threat and dismay those who instead wish to see a real global maritime partnership against common threats and challenges—hence the need for a strategic information campaign that explains what is actually, rather than apparently, going on.

Moreover, foreign navies are conducting their own strategic reviews of how they should react to contemporary challenges. In many cases their debates about the balance to be struck between hard and soft power and between fewer high-quality platforms or more lower-quality ones follow similar lines to the U.S. debate; foreign equivalents of all the interests and constituencies in the U.S. debate can also be seen. Accordingly, their views about the new U.S. strategy will tend to reflect their own preoccupations and emerging conclusions, which in turn will tend to determine what parts of the American process and the product they focus and comment on.

For this reason, a campaign of strategic communication would probably fall on receptive ears, at least among the closer allies of the United States, since many of them are facing identical problems. The United Kingdom, for example, has yet to develop a national strategy in which the resources available to defense match the political objectives set for it and in which future needs are secured against the immediate demands of an urgent present. Because of the focus on the "here and now," the Royal Navy is facing acute difficulties in achieving a modern/postmodern balance it is happy with.[24] Here too the aim is to get people thinking about the world *after* Iraq. Inevitably, high/low-mix issues dominate fleet-structure questions. Having secured its future carriers, how many other top-class surface combatants does the Royal Navy need and can it afford? When considering the Future Surface Combatant program, what should be the ratio

between the (relatively) cheap and cheerful C3 variants and the more ambitious C1s? This is in large measure a matter of resources, but getting the resources needed seems very much to be a question of getting the message across to a public, a media, and a political establishment largely focused on present land and air, rather than future air and naval, needs.[25]

In a more general way, opinions differ on the extent to which it is safe and appropriate for the Royal Navy to get involved in the lower reaches of the spectrum of maritime security. Many of these issues apply to the other European navies as well. They all face growing gaps between the resources apparently available and the range of possible commitments they may be expected to fulfil. Their fleets are shrinking numerically but comprise individual units that are ever more powerful.

To a degree, all these force-structure preoccupations reflect widespread acceptance in Europe of an expeditionary impulse, which seems to flow naturally from the global security concerns that dominate their conceptions of necessary defense. Accordingly, they will tend to be broadly sympathetic to the aims and methods outlined in the strategy. Other European countries take more geographically local views of their security priorities and, while not unsympathetic, will not see much that is directly relevant for them. Caveated support of this kind will be much more common in the developing world, where residual suspicions of U.S. foreign policy remain strong, although many such countries are fully aware of the objective need for enhanced maritime security, broadly defined. A few other countries, such as Iran and North Korea, can be expected to take a dim view of a strategy much of which, they will think, rightly or wrongly, is essentially aimed at them. It will be especially interesting to see the emerging reaction of China, and perhaps of Mr. Putin's Russia, too.

Evidently, in the problems it is having in its quest to adapt to the difficult conditions of the twenty-first century the U.S. Navy is not alone. Current uncertainties and differences of opinion are understandable, even inevitable. But the fact that even the U.S. Navy seems unable to square the circle on its own suggests that perhaps a *cooperative* strategy is indeed the way to go.

NOTES

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3. "Strategy Lacks Specifics, Covers Familiar Ground," *Navy Times,* 29 October 2007.
4. Loren Thompson, *QDR 2005 Issues Facing the Navy* (Washington, D.C.: Lexington Institute, 2005), p. 7.
5. Admiral Mike Mullen formally launched this concept at the 17th International Seapower Symposium in September 2005. See John Hattendorf, ed., Report of the Proceedings 19–23 September 2005 (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College, 2006), pp. 3–8.
6. Vice Admiral John G. Morgan, USN, quoted in "Maritime Strategy to Be Unveiled Next Month," *Navy Times,* 26 September 2007.
7. Loren B Thompson, "New Maritime Strategy: Three Cheers, and Three Complaints," *Issue Brief* 3 (Washington, D.C.: Lexington Institute, 23 October 2007).
8. The ideas that follow grew out of discussions with a range of colleagues in Washington and the United Kingdom. It is impossible to list them all, but they will know who they are and will, I hope, take this as evidence of my gratitude for their help.
9. Speech at 18th International Seapower Symposium, Naval War College, Newport, R.I.
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15. Cavas, "New US Maritime Strategy Is Incomplete."
16. William P. Clark and Edwin Meese, "Another UN Power Grab," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 October 2007.
17. See, for example, "Charting the Course: World Navy Chiefs Look to the Future," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* 2 May 2007, pp. 23–50.
18. Esther Brimmer, *Seeing Blue: American Visions of the European Union,* Chaillot Paper 105 (Paris: Institute of Security Studies, September 2007), p. 15.
19. Admiral Mullen at the 17th International Seapower Symposium; see note 5 above.
20. "Global Fleet Stations" may be another term that needs further examination. To some observers it implies something more akin to a floating naval base for (possibly) offensive action than a means of alleviating local distress.
21. This clearly lay behind Secretary Winter's assurances at the 18th International Seapower Symposium.
22. Robert D. Kaplan, "America's Elegant Decline," *Atlantic Monthly* (3 October 2007).
23. William S. Lind, "A 'Little Ship' Navy," United Press International, 29 October 2007.
24. Vice Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackham and Gwyn Prins, "Storm Warning for the Royal Navy," U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* (October 2007).
25. Admiral Sir Jonathan Band, "The Strategic Vision for Navies," *RUSI Journal* (February 2007). The Future Surface Combatant (FSC) is a wide-ranging program to replace the Type 23 frigates currently serving in the Royal Navy and to supplement the larger and more expensive Type 45 *Daring* class of destroyers. Perhaps two dozen of these FSCs are expected to be delivered, but there is much debate about the mix of variants needed.