The U.S. Maritime Strategy in the Asia-Pacific in Response to the Rise of a Seafaring China*

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The achievement of a century of "Mahanism" was the Pax Americana *that prevailed by the early 1990s. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the United States has sought to sustain the* Pax Americana *by practicing the "thousand-ship navy" strategy, or "Mullenism," and to expand its command of the sea to the rivers, harbors, and shorelines of other coastal states. Once the idea of the "thousand-ship navy"—now called the Global Maritime Partnership—was embedded at the heart of the 2007 Maritime Strategy (the "Cooperative Strategy"), Mullenism became more acceptable and persuasive. Faced with the rise of a seafaring China, the United States is now consolidating its maritime strategy. Established to realize the landward push of command of the sea, the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) is the core operational mechanism of the United States Pacific Command (PACOM) programs Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel, both of which are incarnations of the Cooperative Strategy. The future of the Cooperative Strategy, or Mullenism, is likely to consist of NECC complexes for shaping the security environment in peacetime, and for the com-*

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plete obliteration of the enemy from the sea in times of crisis. The United States enjoys a big lead over China in terms of hard power and soft power, and "smart power," which is a combination of the two, enables the U.S. Navy to dexterously insinuate the NECC into regional coastal states to advance Mullenism and pave the way for AirSea Battle, designed to launch a blinding campaign against the battle networks of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. This will ensure that the U.S. Navy has operational freedom of maneuver and command of the waters surrounding China. The United States has quietly started engineering a "NATO at sea" and is confident that it can bring together rival countries such as China, India, and Japan under the single umbrella of a global maritime partnership and maintain peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific. In the future, the United States will continue to adopt a hedging strategy toward China. The Pax Americana *may well continue as long as the present incarnation of the Cooperative Strategy or Mullenism stays afloat.*

KEYWORDS: Mahanism; Mullenism; thousand-ship navy (TSN); global maritime partnerships (GMP); Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC).

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Considering that seaborne trade accounts for an increasing proportion of China's gross domestic product (GDP), that overseas trade has become the lifeblood of the Chinese economy, and that sea lines of communication (SLOCs) are vital to the country's economic development, China is very likely to adopt an offensive and realist maritime strategy. This will have a considerable impact on the United States, which achieved the *Pax Americana* by the early 1990s and is considered to be a maritime hegemon. According to the theory of hegemonic war, the United States may well take action to delay or even prevent the rise of China so as to sustain U.S. hegemony. The U.S. military believes that of all the major and emerging powers, China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States.[1] The U.S. Department of Defense further argued in 2011 that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy appeared to be primarily focused on contingencies within the first and second island chains,

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[1]Office of Secretary of Defense, ed., *Quadrennial Defense Review Report 2006* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2006), 41.

with emphasis on a potential conflict with U.S. forces over Taiwan or a territorial dispute.[2] Recently, U.S. decision makers have repeatedly stated that U.S. forces will be reoriented toward the Asia-Pacific.[3] The Pentagon has also developed an "AirSea Battle" concept which is a significant milestone in the development of a new Cold War-style approach to China.[4] U.S.-dominated bilateral and multilateral military exchanges and joint exercises are increasing in the region.

These developments highlight the fact that seapower competition and cooperation between the United States and China have become the central themes of international politics since the beginning of the twenty-first century, and that the center stage of international politics stretches from the Western Pacific all the way down to the Indian Ocean, with the Asia-Pacific as the focus.[5] Compared to the large volume of works exploring the development of China's maritime/naval strategy in the past two decades, very few studies have been dedicated to advances in U.S. maritime/naval strategy in the region. Maritime strategy refers to the use of sea power to influence actions and activities at sea and ashore.[6] This paper explores how the U.S. Navy is consolidating its deployment in the Asia-Pacific with the aim of sustaining the *Pax Americana* in the post-Cold War era. Specific research objectives include:

1. To explore the agendas, practices, and advances of the United States' contemporary maritime/naval strategy in the Asia-Pacific

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[2] Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2011* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2011), 23.

[3] Secretary of Defense, ed., *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2012), 2, 4.

[4] Bill Gertz, "Pentagon Battle Concept Has Cold War Posture on China," *Washington Times*, November 9, 2011.

[5] This view is echoed in the latest U.S. defense strategy; see Secretary of Defense, ed., *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 2.

[6] Office of Commandant of the Marine Corps, Office of Chief of Naval Operations, and Office of Commandant of the Coast Guard, eds., *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Coast Guard, 2007), 8.

2. To compare the critical ability of the United States and China in their competition for command of the sea in the region

3. To explore the implications of the fulfillment of U.S. maritime/naval strategy in terms of regional security

The Rise of a Seafaring China and Its Contested Expansion

In December 1978, the Chinese Communist Party voted to shift its focus from class struggle to economic reform and opening-up.[7] Nearly three decades later, in April 2006, President Hu Jintao (　　　) of China indicated during a visit to Yale University that since the beginning of the reform, China had pursued a course of peaceful economic and social development at home and was committed to an independent and peaceful foreign policy. Reviewing a naval parade in April 2009, Hu reaffirmed that China would stick to the path of peaceful development. "Peaceful development" can therefore be regarded as China's grand strategy since 1978. As peaceful development and economic reform and opening-up have led to a boom in China's overseas trade, the issue of the security of SLOCs has necessitated a shift in strategic thinking from land power to sea power since the 1980s.

Accordingly, in 1985, Admiral Liu Huaqing (　　　) proposed that the PLA Navy's strategy should be changed from one of coastal defense to one of offshore active defense. Liu marked out two strategic maritime areas that the navy must control. The first of these is the first island chain, which connects the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, and the Philippines. The near seas are not strictly bounded by the first island chain but include a buffer to the east of the islands, particularly Taiwan. This area involves vital national interests such as territorial claims, natural resources, and coastal de-

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[7]Deng Xiaoping, "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and the Development of Marxism in China," http://www.puk.de/de/nhp/puk-downloads/socialism-xxi-english/35-socialism -with-chinese-characteristics-and-the-development-of-marxism-in-china.html (accessed September 12, 2010).

fense. The PLA Navy was supposed to have established control of this area by 2000. The second maritime area is delineated by the second island chain which connects the Kuriles, Japan, the Bonins, Palau, Indonesia, the East China Sea, and Guam. The PLA Navy is supposed to secure control of this vast area or at least to achieve area-denial through active defense by 2020. According to Bernard Cole, there should also be a phase three of Liu's maritime strategy in which the PLA Navy would become a global force by 2050.[8]

Rapid economic growth and military advancement are inevitably linked together. Despite increasing economic interdependence between China and its neighbors, a number of significant events and the intervention of outside powers have compounded the challenges to China's maritime security; hence, China's maritime strategy includes a pledge to safeguard strategic channels and resolutely defend its maritime interests.[9] The concept of a "national interest frontier" was mentioned for the first time in a January 2009 article by Huang Kunlun (　　　) that appeared in the Chinese military-backed *PLA Daily*. Huang argued that PLA operations should be extended to wherever China has interests—an argument similar to that put forward by Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, commander-in-chief of the Soviet navy, who said that his navy would fly the flag in every corner of every continent and ocean on earth, as they all fell within the range of Soviet interests. Huang's idea of a "national interest frontier" suggests that the PLA Navy is to become a global blue-water maritime force.[10]

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[8]Liu Huaqing, *Liu Huaqing huiyilu* (Memoirs of Liu Huaqing) (Beijing: PLA Press, 2004), 437; Bernard Cole, *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy Enters the 21st Century* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 166-67. No specific time frame is mentioned in Admiral Liu's memoirs; Bernard Cole repeats the interpretations of other experts.

[9]"'Zhongguo haiyang fazhan baogao 2010' neirong jianjie" (An introduction to "China Maritime Development Report 2010"), China Institute for Marine Affairs, http://a185802577 .oinsite.cn/_d270570118.htm (accessed August 14, 2010).

[10]Andrei Chang, "PLA Navy to Guard China's Global Interests," *UPI Asia*, February 20, http://www.upiasia.com/Security/2009/02/20/pla_navy_to_guard_chinas_global_interests/ 1570/ (accessed September 13, 2010). There are no clear definitions of or distinctions between blue-water, green-water, and brown-water navies. Generally speaking, "blue water" refers to the deep waters of the open oceans and "brown water" is the more confined and often shallower waters of littoral regions, estuaries, and rivers; see "British Maritime Doctrine BR1806: Chapter 2—The Maritime Environment and the Nature of Maritime Power,"

This kind of offensive stance serves to aggravate the general concern about China's military buildup. The PLA's failure to clarify the intentions behind this buildup further exacerbates regional misgivings about China's ambitions. As China celebrated sixty years of communist rule with a military parade in 2009, Vice-Admiral John Bird of the U.S. Navy was audacious enough to remark that China's ultimate aim was to displace the United States in the Pacific.[11] In July 2010, China defined its "core interest areas" to include Taiwan, Xinjiang, Tibet, and also the Yellow Sea and the South China Sea.[12] On July 25 that year, the first day of a joint military exercise between the United States and South Korea, the PLA test fired PHL03 multiple launch rockets with a maximum firing range of 100-150 km in the Yellow Sea, tantamount to warning the U.S. aircraft carrier strike group not to enter the first island chain. The next day, the three fleets of the PLA Navy conducted a large-scale live-shell joint exercise in the South China Sea, seemingly in protest at Washington's recent intervention in regional affairs. According to Japan's *East Asian Strategic Review 2010*, China envisages conducting its operations between the first and the second island chains.[13] Some analysts argue that China's active defense strategy has expansionist aims.[14]

Whether China's maritime/naval strategy is expansionist or not is debatable. Perhaps China will content itself with supremacy in the China seas while accepting that it cannot challenge the United States outside of

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Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, http://www.da.mod.uk/colleges/jscsc/courses/RND/bmd (accessed March 2, 2012). Hence, the term "blue-water navy" refers to a maritime force capable of operating across open oceans and a "brown-water navy" is a force that patrols harbors and rivers. "Green water" refers to the region between the brown water and the end of the continental shelf, and a "green-water navy" is one that operates in that region.

[11]Peter Hartcher, "China Sets Its Sights on US Navy, Admiral Warns," *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 2, 2009, http://www.smh.com.au/world/china-sets-its-sights-on-us-navy-admiral-warns-20091001-geq5.html (accessed October 7, 2009).

[12]Lee Jeong-hoon, "Living Target," *Donga.com*, July 7, 2010, http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2010070748478 (accessed July 13, 2010).

[13]National Institute for Defense Studies, ed., *East Asian Strategic Review 2010* (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, 2010), 127.

[14]For example, see Jim Thomas, "China's Active Defense Strategy and Its Regional Implications," *CFR Testimony*, January 27, 2011, 2, 3, 4, 5.

maritime Asia. Or perhaps the ultimate goal of the PLA's buildup is to exert military influence equivalent to that of the United States. However, as long as the United States feels that the foundation of the *Pax Americana* is being undermined, Washington will take precautions against any likely challenge.

Advances in U.S. Maritime/Naval Strategy

To understand the ethos of the upper echelons of the naval, or even political, administration of the United States, it is necessary to start with Mahanism.

Mahanian Precepts

The views of Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914) on the subject of naval-maritime power were distinctive enough for them to be termed "Mahanism."[15] Although Mahan's theories were wide-ranging, his central concern was naval-maritime power as a national attribute in the international system.[16] He argued that a great power needed to dominate the seas and obtain overseas markets. No nation could become or remain a great power without control of the seas; great nations must have great navies and great navies are the hallmark of great nations.[17] More specifically, Mahan's book, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, contains the first theory of sea power that defines competition for superiority of capital ships, the annihilation of enemy fleets, and command of the seas as the primary goals of naval actions. Mahan argued that the true mission of the navy was to

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[15]Editorial, "Mahanism," *The Advocate of Peace (1894-1920)* 63, no. 1 (January 1901): 3.

[16]Michael Pugh, "Is Mahan Still Alive? State Naval Power in the International System," *Journal of Conflict Studies* 16, no. 2 (Fall 1996), http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/JCS/bin/get.cgi?directory=J97/articles/&filename=pugh1.htm (accessed March 2, 2012).

[17]Editorial, "Mahanism," 3-4; Michael A. Barnhart, "Review of Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887-1941 by David C. Evans and Mark R. Peattie," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 25, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 211-12; James Boutilier, "Ships, SLOCs, and Security at Sea," in *Canadians and Asia-Pacific Security*, ed. Brian MacDonald (Ottawa: Conference of Defence Association Institute, 2008), 61.

acquire command of the sea through the destruction of the enemy fleet, and to do this it was necessary to have a superior battle fleet to that of the enemy. These typical sea power arguments are termed "Mahanism" in this paper. Mahan's definition of "command of the sea" has had particular resonance:

> It is the possession of that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it, or allows it to appear only as a fugitive; and which, by controlling the great common, closes the highways by which commerce moves to and from the enemy's shores.[18]

Clearly, Mahan considered "command of the sea" to be so absolute as to shut out the enemy altogether. This is termed "absolute command of the sea" and it is the core of Mahanism. Mahan repeatedly argued in many of his writings that by controlling harbors, straits, and maritime traffic, a sea power could control the sea, dominate the wealth of the world, and as a result, would always be economically stronger than a land power; moreover, this economic superiority would naturally lead to political leadership.[19] As Mahan put it, "control of the sea . . . means predominant influence in the world." As hegemony means political leadership or dominance, Mahanism contains the essence of hegemonism. The United States' rise to hegemony is a corollary of its practice of Mahanism.

The Rise of the United States in the Twentieth Century through Mahanian "Command of the Sea"

Inspired by Mahanian precepts, Great Britain, the United States, Germany, and Japan were the four sea powers that competed for command of the sea after 1900. After nearly half a century of struggle, the U.S. Navy had defeated its rivals.[20] During the Cold War, the U.S. Navy used a strate-

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[18]Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660~1783*, 12 ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1890), 132.

[19]Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future* (1897), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15749/15749-h/15749-h.htm (accessed October 23, 2007).

[20]Kenneth J. Hagan, *This People's Navy: The Making of American Sea Power* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 229-32.

gy of global presence and shows of force to deter the Soviet Union[21] and achieve global openness. Andrew J. Bacevich argues that global openness is the backbone of Washington's hegemony and that the United States has an ambition to dominate the world.[22] In fact, it is "command of the sea" that is most critical for realizing global openness, and it is "forward presence" that enables "command of the sea." In response to the worldwide disposition of the Soviet Union, Admiral James D. Watkins, then chief of naval operations, asserted in 1986 that the basic strategy of the United States supported by its maritime strategy was deterrence; through worldwide forward presence, the United States would be able to deny the Soviets the ability to attempt to block U.S. SLOCs. If deterrence failed, forward defense and allied cooperation would limit the enemy's ability to concentrate its forces and would help terminate a war on terms favorable to the United States and its allies.[23] The forward presence strategy indicated that the U.S. Navy had secured control of the major chokepoints of the global sea lanes and oceans. Meanwhile, the secretary of the navy, John F. Lehman, and Admiral Watkins both reiterated the importance of aircraft carrier battle groups in forward presence. These developments were all reminiscent of Mahan's precepts.

With the collapse of Leninism, Stalinism, and Maoism, the United States' perception of its traditional values was reinforced, as was its confidence in their universal validity.[24] When the third wave of democratization

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[21]Ronald O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress" (CRS Report for Congress, August 9, 2012), 41.

[22]Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 88; Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 52, 115.

[23]James D. Watkins, "The Maritime Strategy," in *The Maritime Strategy*, ed. US Naval War College (Annapolis, Md.: U.S. Naval Institute, 1986), 9-10, 16-17. For the Soviet disposition, see John B. Hattendorf and Peter M. Swartz, eds., *The Maritime Strategy: Global Maritime Elements for US National Strategy, 1985* (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College Press, 2008), 150.

[24]Michel Oksenberg, "Taiwan, Tibet and Hong Kong in Sino-American Relations," in *Living with China: U.S./China Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Ezra F. Vogel (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 60.

swept across the continents, Washington began to set out an agenda for the globalization of U.S. values. In 1993, Anthony Lake, national security advisor to President Bill Clinton, advocated a policy which would "strengthen the community of major market democracies" to help Washington's policy of enlargement.[25] Since the time of the Clinton administration, the U.S. government has always emphasized the enhancement of national security, the bolstering of economic prosperity, and the promotion of democracy abroad as its three national objectives.[26]

The shift in U.S. national policies facilitated the transformation of U.S. naval strategy. The United States no longer had any enemy fleets to engage after the collapse of the Soviet Union, so to win support for naval buildup, in 1992, in the wake of the first Gulf War, the U.S. Navy issued the document ". . . *From the Sea*" which set out a novel conception for its naval strategy. ". . . *From the Sea*" signaled a fundamental change in the strategic landscape—the U.S. Navy would no longer dedicate itself to dealing with a global maritime threat; instead, it would seek to project U.S. power across the seas and influence events ashore in response to challenges posed by regional powers. In 1994, now that the promotion of democracy abroad had become a national goal, the U.S. Navy published another document entitled "*Forward . . . From the Sea*" which stated that "the primary purpose of forward-deployed naval forces is to project American power from the sea to influence events ashore in the littoral regions of the world" with the objectives of preventing conflicts and controlling crises.[27] This signified that the United States was pushing its command of the sea to the littoral regions. It is noteworthy that, for the U.S. Navy, the

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[25]Anthony Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement" (remarks at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, September 21, 1993), http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html (accessed June 23, 2007).

[26]White House, ed., *A National Security Strategy for the New Century* (Washington, D.C.: White House, 1998), 5-6, http://clinton2.nara.gov/WH/EOP/NSC/html/documents/nssr.pdf.

[27]Office of Chief of Naval Operations, "Forward . . . From the Sea—The Navy Operational Concept," http://www.navy.mil/navydata/policy/fromsea/ffseanoc.html (accessed September 23, 2007).

term "littoral" "includes that portion of the world's *land masses adjacent to the oceans within direct control of and vulnerable to the striking power of sea-based forces.*"[28]

In 1995, the Department of Defense indicated that there were three components to its national military strategy: peacetime engagement, deterrence and conflict prevention, and fighting and winning.[29] Accordingly, the forward-deployed naval forces were tasked with providing on-scene capabilities for executing all three components of the strategy simultaneously without infringing on any nation's sovereignty.[30] In addition, the navy's role in peacetime engagement was to project U.S. influence and power abroad so as to shape the security environment, promote regional economic and political stability, and foster democracies which might cooperate with the United States.[31]

These top-down, consistent adjustments to the national security strategy and the naval strategy helped enhance the United States' ability to shape the global security environment. Moreover, Washington's developing foreign agenda was seemingly aimed at leveraging the sweeping tide of globalization in order to expand U.S. geostrategic interests, create a new world order based upon unified values, and push the *Pax Americana* to a new height; the United States became more reliant on its forward presence, which has become more diversified since that time, to fulfill this agenda. Forces stationed overseas and afloat, periodic and rotational deployments, access and storage agreements, port visits, and foreign community support are just a few of the forward presence activities.[32] The British naval historian Sir Julian Corbett (1854-1922) argued that command of the sea is

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[28]*Naval Doctrine Publication 1—Naval Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Navy, 1994), 6. Emphasis is my own.

[29]Joint Chiefs of Staff, ed., *National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1995), 4.

[30]Office of Chief of Naval Operations, "Forward . . . From the Sea."

[31]Ibid.

[32]Joint Chiefs of Staff, ed., "Military Operations Other than War," in *Joint Doctrine Joint Force Employment Briefing Modules* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997), 7.

normally in dispute,[33] and in this he differed from Mahan. However, the fact that the U.S. Navy has had no adversary fleets to engage since the conclusion of the Cold War suggests that it has persistently practiced Mahanism with overbearing power over vast expanses of water through increasingly diversified forward presence activities.

The Dawn of the Twenty-first Century—Pushing "Command of the Sea" Landwards

The United States has huge direct investments all over the world, so its international peace and security interests must encompass the stability of other governments and their capacity to maintain the law and order necessary for conducting market-orientated commerce. Global commercial interests and naval dominance have given the United States the incentive and the power to enforce an international *Pax Americana*.[34]

In response to non-traditional security threats in the era of globalization, the maritime strategy of the United States has undergone a revolutionary transformation. After 9/11, the United States recognized that it was necessary to gain firm control of the global oceanic and riverine environment so as to safeguard its global commercial interests and homeland security, as "countering these [non-traditional] threats far from our nation's shores protects the American homeland."[35] In 2004, President George W. Bush issued National Security Presidential Directive NSPD-41/Homeland Security Presidential Directive HSPD-13 under the title of Maritime Security Policy. The theme of this document was the enhancement of national security through the protection of U.S. maritime interests. On the eve of the promulgation of the National Strategy for Maritime Security, the chief of naval operations, Admiral Michael Mullen, proposed the formation of a

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[33]Julian Stafford Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy* (New York: Dover, 2004), 87, 211.

[34]Seyom Brown, *The Illusion of Control: Force and Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2003), 75-76.

[35]Department of the Navy, ed., *Highlights of the Department of the Navy FY 2012 Budget* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Navy, 2011), 1-6; Ronald O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations: Background and Issues for Congress" (CRS Report for Congress, August 10, 2011), 12.

"thousand-ship navy" (TSN), a term describing the combination of efforts on a global scale to deal with traditional and non-traditional security threats on the high seas.[36]

Admiral Mullen repeatedly asserted that the TSN is a "fleet-in-being,"[37] one that would influence the enemy's actions without even engaging in battle. Julian Corbett argued that a weak navy could employ this concept when confronting a superior enemy fleet.[38] Although the concept of a "fleet-in-being" is generally regarded as a defensive operational strategy, Corbett argued that its value lies in its ability to be extended to "defense against any kind of maritime attack, whether against territory or sea communications." In his view, the full significance of the idea is that for a maritime power, naval defense means "keeping the fleet actively in being—not merely in existence, but in active and vigorous life." This is the true concept of the "fleet-in-being" adopted by the British in the era of the *Pax Britannica*.[39] orbett's "fleet-in-being" seems to be a weak navy's means of disputing command of the sea; however, a "fleet-in-being" can also be used by a strong sea power as an aggressive means of counter attack or to achieve the complete obliteration of the enemy from the sea.

With its occupation of almost all strategic chokepoints and its command of the sea in all oceans, the United States made widespread use of "forward presence" throughout the Cold War to deter adversaries, reassure its allies, and ensure a prompt response to crises. Roger W. Barnett has thus argued that "forward presence," as adopted by the United States for the purpose of expansion, can be regarded as a different form of "fleet-in-being."[40] Mullen was apparently echoing Barnett's views. Corbett's ar-

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[36]Michael G. Mullen, "Remarks as Delivered by Adm. Mike Mullen" (remarks at the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., September 21, 2005), http://www.navy.mil/navydata/cno/speeches/mullen050831.txt (accessed October 15, 2007).

[37]Michael G. Mullen, "Remarks as Delivered for the 17th International Seapower Symposium" (remarks at the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., August 31, 2005), http://www.navy.mil/navydata/cno/mullen/speeches/mullen050921.txt (accessed December 5, 2007).

[38]Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy*, 167, 211.

[39]Ibid., 214-15.

[40]Roger W. Barnett, "Naval Power for a New American Century," in *Naval Power in the*

gument was best exemplified by Mullen in this passage where he reveals his true intentions in promoting the TSN:

> We must go forward to the very reaches of the sea, operating effectively in every part of *the littoral and beyond.* Think of the vast areas of the world covered by shallow water—those connected to the oceans by *rivers*, and *harbors*, and rugged *shorelines.* These are the decisive strips of sea that make all the difference. And *we need to be there*.[41]

The fleet-in-being TSN greatly enhances U.S. maritime capabilities, including response time, agility, and adaptability.[42] This belief in the necessity of a "landward push"[43] of command of the sea toward the rivers, harbors, and shorelines of coastal states to empower the navy to operate beyond the littoral is termed "Mullenism" in this paper.[44] Mullenism is the essence of the TSN. Jon Sumida likened the TSN to the global use of sea power advocated by Mahan and regarded it as "nothing more than a re-statement of Mahan's strategy."[45] Yet, it is necessary to draw a distinction between Mahanism and Mullenism. The former seeks to acquire global command of the seas, while the latter is aimed at achieving "supremacy on the land" which would require "a real revolution in naval thought and operations" as indicated by Samuel P. Huntington.[46] In this sense, the latter represents a great leap forward and is much more adventurous than the former. Mahanism aims to win a major war at sea, while Mullenism places stress on shaping the environment in order to prevent traditional conflict in a strategic environment with multiple centers of power.

The term TSN was quickly dropped as it conjured up visions of a U.S.-controlled naval fleet attempting to dominate the global maritime

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Twenty-First Century: A Naval War College Review Reader, ed. Peter Dombrowski (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College Press, 2005), 196.

[41]Mullen, "Remarks as Delivered by Adm. Mike Mullen." Emphasis is my own.

[42]O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 12.

[43]Michael F. Galli et al., *Riverine Sustainment 2012* (Monterey, Calif.: Naval Postgraduate School, 2007), xix, 1, 3.

[44]The term "Mullenism" has been coined by the author of this paper.

[45]Art Pine, "Laying the Keel for a New Maritime Strategy," *Proceedings* 132, no. 12 (December 2006): 33-34.

[46]Ibid.

domain.[47] Instead, to reduce resistance and widen participation, the U.S. Navy substituted the term "Global Maritime Partnership" (GMP) in mid-2007.[48] After Admiral Michael Mullen was promoted to chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1, 2007, the heads of the navy, marine corps, and coast guard issued "*A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*" (Cooperative Strategy hereafter), the first of its kind in U.S. history. As the second official U.S. maritime strategy, this unprecedented document advocated the formation of a GMP with six core capabilities—forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security, and humanitarian assistance and disaster response.[49] Despite the difference in terminology, these ideas are the same as those of the TSN, namely, a maritime security coalition that can "address national and multi-national security, forming habits of association and information-sharing and cultivating collaborative mechanisms that serve collective interests."[50] Although the TSN idea best reflects the essence of the United States' latest maritime/naval strategy and is convenient shorthand for the global maritime security alliance, the term has fallen out of favor since Admiral Mullen used it. Interestingly, once the TSN idea had been incorporated into the 2007 Maritime Strategy (the Cooperative Strategy) as the "Global Maritime Partnership," Mullenism became more acceptable and persuasive than ever. By fathering the 2007 Maritime Strategy, Admiral Mullen has left a valuable legacy for his successors. As a maritime strategy involves

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[47]Robert D. Kaplan, "Center Stage for the 21st Century Power Plays in the Indian Ocean," *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 2 (March-April 2009): 28. Yet Rahman believes that the term TSN has persisted in policy documents; see Chris Rahman, *The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative Implications for the Royal Australian Navy* (Canberra: Australia, Department of Defense, 2008), 1. An expert from the US Center for Naval Analysis told the author of this paper that TSN continues to be used within the U.S. Navy.

[48]Rahman, *The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative*, 1; Office of Chief of Naval Operations, "Global Maritime Partnerships . . . Thousand Ship Navy," http://www.deftechforum.com//ppt/Cotton.ppt (accessed June 14, 2007).

[49]Office of Commandant of the Marine Corps et al., eds., *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, 8, 11, 16.

[50]Jonathan D. Pollack, "US Navy Strategy in Transition: Implications for Maritime Security Cooperation" (paper presented at the 1st Berlin Conference on Asian Security, Berlin, September 14-15, 2006), 8.

the use of sea power[51] and control of the sea remains at the heart of maritime strategy,[52] Mullenism resides at the core of the 2007 Maritime Strategy. For purposes of accuracy and convenience, this paper will use the term "Cooperative Strategy," rather than TSN, to represent Mullenism hereafter.

To sum up, one can conclude that from 1890 to 1991, the United States practiced Mahanism, attained a firm control of the seas, and created the *Pax Americana*. In the following ten years, the U.S. Navy extended its command of the sea into the littoral zone. Standing on the shoulders of Mahanism, Mullenism attempts to push command of the sea landward to sustain the *Pax Americana* in the twenty-first century.

Positioning U.S. Maritime Strategy in the Asia-Pacific

There is good reason why the Asia-Pacific should be the focus of concern for the Cooperative Strategy, which advocates maritime security cooperation. On the one hand, China, Russia, India, and Japan are becoming key players in a new multipolar power constellation. Historical animosity, competition for energy and resources, a struggle to control SLOCs, and contests for power will become the major areas of conflict. To deal with traditional threats to maritime security such as these, a new mechanism of cooperation that can shape the architecture of regional governance is required. On the other hand, a variety of non-traditional threats to maritime security make the Cooperative Strategy very appealing. These traditional and non-traditional threats enable the U.S. Navy to take the moral high ground by promoting the Cooperative Strategy.

The Core Elements, Doctrine, and Agenda of Mullenism

The major U.S. combatants produced in the Cold War era were designed to compete for command of the sea in blue and green water. In order

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[51]Office of Commandant of the Marine Corps et al., eds., *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, 8.

[52]Geoffrey Till, "New Directions in Maritime Strategy? Implications for the US Navy," *Naval War College Review* 60, no. 4 (Autumn 2007): 31.

to make a push landward, the U.S. Navy needs innovative hardware and software. The core elements of the Cooperative Strategy in practice include riverine forces, global fleet stations (GFSs), maritime security and safety information systems (MSSIS), and littoral combat ships (LCSs).

Riverine forces will conduct maritime security operations (MSO) and theater security cooperation (TSC) in riparian areas of operations or other suitable areas. MSO entails policing the maritime domain, while TSC requires exercises with other navies and the provision of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR); these riverine forces will be able to carry out MSO and TSC missions worldwide within ninety-six hours.[53] The riverine forces are intended to supplement the riverine capabilities of the U.S. Navy's Sea, Air, and Land Teams (Navy SEALS) and to conduct brown-water training and partnership activities to meet the needs of combatant commanders.[54]

GFSs are the navy's sea base initiative (steady-state forward presence basing). Among the future total of 310-316 ships, there will be 32 amphibious warfare ships (a maritime prepositioning force consisting of amphibious transport docks, dock landing ships, and amphibious assault ships) and 55 LCSs.[55] These 87 warships will be the primary station/command ships of the GFS. They will maintain robust joint C^4I (command, control, communication, computer, and information) capabilities, be equipped with information fusion cells which can handle the fusion of open source information (such as MSSIS, to be addressed below) as well as tactical and operational intelligence, and will be able to accommodate riverine forces. The purpose of the GFS is to establish a persistent sea base

[53]Galli et al., *Riverine Sustainment 2012*, xix, xx.

[54]O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 15.

[55]O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans," 2, 9, 12, 13. In February 2006, the U.S. Navy told Congress that its goal was to maintain a fleet of 313 ships; see Robert O. Work, *The US Navy: Charting a Course for Tomorrow's Fleet* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2008), 16. In March 2012, the Department of Defense submitted an FY2013 thirty-year shipbuilding plan that includes a fleet of 310-316 ships; the navy now refers to this as a goal for a navy of around three hundred ships; see O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans," 1.

of operations within a regional area of interest; its missions focus primarily on phase 0/shaping and stability operations, exercises with other navies, maritime domain awareness, and counter-terrorist operations.[56] In particular, forces of the GFS could support special operations teams of Navy SEALs and conventional joint forces operating ashore.[57] The U.S. Navy announced plans in 2008 for establishing a minimum of seven GFSs in the following regions: the Caribbean and the east coast of South America, the west coast of Africa, the east coast of Africa, Southwest/South Asia (Bahrain and Oman), Southeast Asia (Singapore), East Asia (Peleliu), and the Western Pacific/Oceania (Guam).[58]

In his original speech advocating the idea of a TSN, Admiral Mullen envisioned "an ocean with no dark corner." In the subsequent document on the subject, the U.S. Navy strongly recommended that the Maritime Safety and Security Information System (MSSIS) be adopted as a communication platform to enhance interoperability among partner states. MSSIS helps make activities at sea transparent, enables regional partners to share risks and commercial interests, and achieves theater security cooperation.[59] SSIS is seemingly the trademark of the TSN or Cooperative Strategy.

The U.S. Navy believes that the littoral combat ship is the foundation of solutions to all littoral problems. As one of the primary station/command ships of the GFS, the LCS can accommodate riverine forces and will very likely be equipped with MSSIS and advanced composeable FORCEnet systems. As a system of collaborative battle networks that shares data from across the force to form common operational pictures and uses internet protocol-based systems to enable interactive combat planning, targeting, and execution, FORCEnet can integrate today's platform-centric

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[56]Martin N. Murphy, *Littoral Combat Ship: An Examination of Its Possible Concepts of Operation* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2010), 41; Galli et al., *Riverine Sustainment 2012*, 18, 179-80.

[57]Work, *The US Navy*, 54-55.

[58]Ibid., xiii, 64.

[59]Office of Chief of Naval Operations, "Global Maritime Partnerships."

combat systems with tomorrow's off-board manned and unmanned sensors and systems, exerting network-centric warfare capabilities.[60] With a speed of up to 48/50 knots and modularity architecture, the LCS can conduct primary inherent missions, littoral anti-submarine warfare (ASW), mine counter, and small boat prosecution missions; it can be quickly employed in response to traditional/non-traditional maritime security threats. Among its long list of possible missions, the LCS plays a key role in protecting the navy's main battle force tasked to destroy the land-based elements of the enemy's anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) capabilities.[61] Conse-quently, the LCS enables the seamless extension of naval capabilities to the rivers, harbors, and shorelines of coastal states. The U.S. Navy's fifty-five LCSs will account for 17.5-17.7 percent of its total force in the future,[62] an indication that the navy really does mean to push its command of the sea landward.

The riverine forces, global fleet stations, MSSIS, and the LCS all have their own roles to play in a wide range of irregular warfare, including riverine warfare, maritime security operations, security force assistance operations, disaster relief operations, counter-piracy operations, and the development of maritime partner capability and capacity.[63] The Navy Ex-peditionary Combat Command (NECC) was formally established by Ad-miral Mullen in early 2006 to integrate elements such as the riverine forces, global fleet stations, MSSIS, and the LCS and facilitate their expansion around the world. The purpose of this was to realize the landward push of

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[60]Work, *The US Navy*, xi, 11; Robert J. White, "Globalization of Navy Shipbuilding a Key to Affordability for a New Maritime Strategy," *Naval War College Review* 60, no. 4 (Autumn 2007): 66.

[61]Murphy, *Littoral Combat Ship*, 4, 30-34.

[62]This does not mean that the LCS program has gone entirely smoothly. Current issues for Congress concerning the LCS program include the program's mission modules, the combat survivability of the LCS, hull cracking and engine problems on LCS-1, corrosion on LCS-2, and acquisition costs; see Ronald O'Rourke, "Navy Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Program: Background, Issues, and Options for Congress" (CRS Report to Congress, Au-gust 10, 2012), 16-42.

[63]O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 1-3. Despite the shift in terminology from irregular warfare to confronting irregular challenges (CIC), O'Rourke's report continues to use the term irregular warfare. So does this paper.

sea command in the name of conducting irregular warfare.[64] The NECC is not a standalone or combat force, but a combat service force of mission specialists that fills the gaps in the joint battle space and complements joint and coalition capabilities.[65] A Riverine Sustainment Team was formed and tasked with defining, analyzing, and recommending alternatives for supply, repair, and force protection that would increase the sustainability of the riverine force.[66] The end product, *Riverine Sustainment 2012*, helps the U.S. Navy assert overbearing power in the riparian environment. Consequently, the NECC is integral to the execution of the six core capabilities of maritime strategy. It also plays a key role in the integration of naval capabilities from blue water into green and brown water, and it directs support of the joint force ashore.[67] The NECC seems to be the core operational mechanism of the Cooperative Strategy.

Ensuring firm command of the sea in open oceans so as to win victory in decisive sea battles lies at one end of the spectrum of U.S. naval missions, while securing command of the rivers, harbors, and shorelines of coastal states in order to deal with non-traditional security threats lies at the other. It takes the big arm-like aircraft carrier strike group (CSG) to achieve the former; to fulfill the latter, the finger-tip nerves of the NECC are necessary. As the NECC is designed to facilitate the expansion of riverine forces, GFSs, MSSIS, and LCSs around the world, the Cooperative Strategy embraces such critical agendas as the globalization of U.S. weapons systems, the U.S. maritime intelligence-collection system, and the U.S. network-centric warfare system. The U.S. sea services may not want to command the inland waters of other nations, but a few instances, such as control of the Shatt al-Arab waterway which marks the Iran-Iraq border, suggest that the U.S. military has the resources and capabilities to do so when necessary, at least on a temporary basis.

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[64]Galli et al., *Riverine Sustainment 2012*, xix, 1, 3; O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 10.

[65]O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 10-11.

[66]Galli et al., *Riverine Sustainment 2012*, xx.

[67]O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 10-11.

Global Practice of Mullenism: Partnership Stations, CTFs, and CE2

The U.S. Navy is painting a grand picture of maritime security cooperation in order to solicit the support of coastal states for the Cooperative Strategy. If successful, the Cooperative Strategy will help the U.S. Navy cope with concentrated and diffused threats from a range of sources, from major international competitors to individual terrorists.[68] As the finger-tip nerves of the navy, the NECC forces support a variety of missions and exercises around the world.[69] The Southern Partnership Station (SPS) and the African Partnership Station (APS) are the embodiment of the Cooperative Strategy in the Caribbean and in waters off Africa respectively.[70] NECC forces have been deeply enmeshed in the SPS and APS for missions such as curbing transnational crime.

The United States has expanded the operations of combined task forces (CTFs) in the Indian Ocean. After 9/11, CTF-150, CTF-151, CTF-152, and CTF-158 were established in line with United Nations (UN) Security Council resolutions or with the agreement of countries in the region. The mission of CTF-150 is to undertake counter-terrorism operations at sea as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). CTF-151 is designed to disrupt piracy and armed robbery at sea. CTF-152's mission is to coordinate theater security cooperation activities with regional partners and conduct maritime security operations in the Arabian Gulf. CTF-158 was established in the wake of Operation Iraqi Freedom to protect Iraqi waters and oil infrastructure and to provide international maritime security in the Northern Persian Gulf. Despite an arrangement for rotating commanders, these CTFs are actually led by the United States and tasked with engaging in operations against non-traditional security threats in waters around

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[68]Christopher P. Cavas, "The Thousand-Ship Navy," *Armed Forces Journal*, December 2006, http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/12/2336959 (accessed October 5, 2007).

[69]Information about the NECC's forward presence and engagement worldwide in 2009 is available on the internet; see Chris Paul, "Navy Expeditionary Combat Command Panel Discussion: Achieving the Right Capability Balance," http://www.dtic.mil/ndia/2009expedition/RDMLChrisPaul.pdf (accessed April 17, 2012).

[70]O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 12.

the Arabian Sea. The NECC riverine forces are commonly used in these CTFs to conduct maritime security operations and theater security cooperation with marines, soldiers, coalition forces, the Iraqi army, and the Iraqi police.[71]

With regard to the most vital Asia-Pacific region, the U.S. Pacific Command's (PACOM) implementation of the Combatant Command and Engagement (CE2) program illustrates how the U.S. Navy runs its partnerships. In the changing maritime security environment, PACOM uses its engagement programs, such as Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel, to mobilize its amphibious warships for missions that include community relations projects, engineering and infrastructural repairs, medical care for local patients, and civic action projects.[72] These warships are actually assuming the role of primary station/command ships of the global fleet station, and are carrying out typical NECC activities such as phase 0/ shaping and stability operations, maritime security operations (maritime domain awareness), and theater security cooperation (exercises with other navies and the enhancement of partner nations' HA/DR capabilities), so as to establish a persistent sea base of operations in the region. With the help of the Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel programs, the NECC is effectively creating a favorable operational environment for the U.S. Navy. The navy's assignment in 2010 of two LCSs to HA/DR missions in the Pacific Rim area provides a good example of this kind of effort.

Mullenism: Progress and Prospects

The establishment of the Southern Partnership and African Partnership stations, the combined task forces, and Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel—all of which are incarnations of the Cooperative Strategy—is part of the expansion of the NECC. In particular, Pacific Partnership and Paci-

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[71]For example, U.S. riverine forces have worked closely with the Iraqi Navy to safeguard Iraqi infrastructure and provide maritime security in key waterways; see ibid., 8, 9.

[72]Senate Armed Services Committee, ed., "Statement of Admiral Robert F. Willard, US Navy Commander, US Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Appropriations on US Pacific Command Posture" (statement to Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington, D.C., February 28, 2012), 21-22.

fic Angel are considered high payoff engagements.[73] The advances that have taken place in these partnerships suggest that the U.S. Navy has obtained binding security arrangements, such as basing and access agreements, logistics support, and intelligence collaboration, from its partners, thus enabling the NECC to deliver maritime security operations and theater security cooperation more effectively.

The expansion of MSSIS has been especially successful. As of mid-June 2009, fifty-six states were participating in MSSIS, including most of the countries around the Malacca Strait, and another fifteen states had systems under construction or memberships pending.[74] These countries help the United States collect intelligence, enable deterrence strikes at the source of the trouble, consolidate control of the oceanic and riparian environment, and strengthen battlefield management. Most of them could be said to be participating in the TSN or Cooperative Strategy without knowing it.

In order to promote the TSN, some within the U.S. government sense the value of producing large numbers of patrol craft and selling them at near or below cost to foreign navies so that the allies of the United States have sufficient ships to establish a maritime security system.[75] For example, Saudi Arabia has been considering the purchase of about twelve such vessels.[76] Due to overlapping claims to maritime borders, the countries of the Asia-Pacific are expected to spend over US$175 billion in the years up to 2030 on new ships and equipment optimized for security missions within their exclusive economic zones or suitable for surface warfare, anti-

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[73]Ibid.

[74]National Maritime Domain Awareness Coordination Office, "GMSA Update-2009," http://www.gmsa.gov/twiki/bin/view/Main/GmsaUpdate (accessed April 9, 2011); Robert M. Clark, "Maritime Security Safety Information System (MSSIS)," http://www.harvard-rgp.org/files/Brief%20-%20Civil%20Protection%20in%20Black%20Sea.pdf (accessed December 3, 2008).

[75]John Morgan and Charles Martoglio, "The 1,000 Ship Navy: Global Maritime Network," *Proceedings* 132, no. 233 (November 2005): 16.

[76]Christopher P. Cavas, "Saudi Arabia Mulling BMD-Capable Destroyers," *Defense News*, June 13, 2011, http://www.defensenews.com/article/20110613/DEFSECT03/106130314/Saudi-Arabia-Mulling-BMD-Capable-Destroyers (accessed March 12, 2012).

submarine warfare, or air defense warfare.[77] The requirement estimate indicates a strong demand for LCS-level warships among regional allies and partners. The United States' promotion of the LCS as a good tool for dealing with maritime security threats, traditional and non-traditional alike, further adds to the desirability of the warship. As the U.S. Navy proceeds with its LCS procurement commitment,[78] more overseas buyers may place their orders. Eventually, sales of LCSs and other patrol craft will help the U.S. Navy advance interoperability with coastal partners and achieve better battlefield management.

In the future, as the projected thirty-two amphibious warfare ships and fifty-five LCSs—both of them fit to be GFS primary station/command ships—join the order of battle one after the other, the navy's philanthropic activities will increase remarkably. This will be the case in the crisis-prone Asia-Pacific in particular, and such activities will consolidate the NECC's foothold in coastal states and fulfill agendas such as the globalization of U.S. weapons systems, the maritime intelligence-collection system, and the network-centric warfare system, which will all contribute to the landward push of command of the sea. Skeptics may argue that the TSN idea has been dropped since Admiral Mullen ended his tenure as chief of naval operations. Yet, advances in the core elements of Mullenism suggest that it is still guiding the development of U.S. maritime/naval strategy, and this was still the case after Mullen retired as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in late 2011.

To sum up the positioning of U.S. maritime strategy in response to the changing Asia-Pacific maritime security environment, one can think of the Cooperative Strategy (or Mullenism) as consisting of NECC complexes, or

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[77]AMI International, "IMDEX Asia 2011—Regional Market Overview," in *AMI International—Hot News*, 19-20; AMI International, "Updated Asia-Pacific Market Overview," *AMI International—Hot News*, http://www.amiinter.com/imdex/IMDEX%202011%20 AMI%20Updated%20Asia-Pacific%20Market%20 Overview--Feb%202011%20Hot% 20News.pdf (accessed May 29, 2012).

[78]For details of the U.S. Navy's LCS procurement plan, see Ronald O'Rourke, "Navy Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Program: Background, Issues, and Options for Congress" (CRS Report to Congress, May 12, 2011), 2.

as a loose, interlocking defensive fleet-in-being throughout the region. It will remain active and vigorous in shaping the security environment in peacetime, but could nevertheless become aggressive and launch a counter attack or completely obliterate the enemy from the sea in a time of crisis.

Comparison of Sea Command Capabilities and Its Implications

In the vast Pacific and Indian Oceans, sea power is undoubtedly the key factor in geopolitics. As mentioned earlier, maritime strategy refers to the use of sea power, and sea control remains at the heart of maritime strategy, while control or command of the sea has always been the nucleus of sea power.[79] A rough comparison of the sea command capabilities of the United States and China will help us predict future trends in regional security.

Hard Power at Different Levels

The naval capabilities of the United States and China are sometimes compared by counting numbers on each side. The three fleets of the PLA Navy have a total of 269 warships, and 203 of these belong to the East and South Sea Fleets.[80] In comparison, the U.S. Navy has 279 warships at present. Although Robert Work, the vice president of strategic studies at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments,[81] has estimated that the United States will need 499 ships by 2028, the official target is between 310 and 316. Yet numerical comparison is highly problematic as a means of assessing relative capabilities.[82] In this respect, the United States' determina-

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[79]The author does not differentiate between sea control and sea command. Mahan uses sea command, sea control, sea reign, and sea dominance interchangeably in his *The Influence of Seapower upon History*.

[80]Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2012* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2012), 28.

[81]Work, *The US Navy*, 81. The projected total count of 489 is the result of a miscalculation.

[82]For the reasons, see O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans," 33.

tion to hedge against China's expansion in the Asia-Pacific deserves more attention. The 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* states that the U.S. Navy plans to adjust its force posture and basing to station at least six nuclear powered aircraft carriers (CVNs) and 60 percent of its submarines in the Pacific to support engagement, presence, and deterrence; it will also accelerate the procurement of LCSs to provide power projection capabilities in littoral waters.[83] The navy had plans for a transient berth in Guam to support an aircraft carrier for visits of up to three weeks no more than three times a year.[84] In March 2012, the Pentagon added that in the coming years, 60 percent of all U.S. naval ships (or 186-190 vessels) will be in the Pacific, up from 52 percent now.[85] Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta confirmed during the 2012 Shangri-La Dialogue that by 2020 about 60 percent of the U.S. fleet would be deployed there.[86] In addition, the U.S. Navy is using diplomatic maneuvering and shifting alliances with other major naval powers to serve "the ultimate purpose of ensuring that in terms of massed fleets the USN [is] second to none."[87] The United States maintains formal defense alliances with Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, and the Philippines; it is also actively promoting defense partnerships with many other countries in the region, such as India, Vietnam, and Malaysia.

As freedom of navigation is defined as a vital interest,[88] it is possible that the United States could clash with China over freedom of navigation alone. Yet it is more likely that the United States will get involved in a con-

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[83]Office of Secretary of Defense, ed., *Quadrennial Defense Review Report 2006*, 47, 48.

[84]Shirley A. Kan, "Guam: U.S. Defense Deployments" (CRS Report for Congress, March 29, 2012), 2.

[85]Jim Wolf, "Pentagon Says Aims to Keep Asia Power Balance," *Reuters*, March 8, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/08/us-china-usa-pivot-idUSBRE82710N 20120308 (accessed March 13, 2012). Earlier, the navy projected that 181 of its planned 313 ships, or 58 percent (including six CVNs), would be assigned to the Pacific Fleet; see Ronald O'Rourke, "China Naval Modernization: Implications for US Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress" (CRS Report for Congress, July 17, 2009), 27.

[86]Jonathan Marcus, "Leon Panetta: US to Deploy 60% of Navy Fleet to Pacific," *BBC*, June 2, 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-18305750 (accessed June 3, 2012).

[87]Hagan, *This People's Navy*, xii.

[88]Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, no. 189 (November 2011): 56-63.

flict with China as a result of a war between China and one of its neighbors. As a balancer, the U.S. Navy would fight alongside any of its allies; accordingly, the U.S. camp stands a very good chance of continuing to enjoy both qualitative and quantitative advantages.

With regard to more specific challenges, the PLA has made remarkable progress in recent years. Examples of its modernization programs that raise many legitimate questions regarding its long-term intentions include its aircraft carrier project, the manufacture of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) and nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSN), the establishment of a submarine base at Sanya, the development of anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) and anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCM) capable of attacking a U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, and the build-up of its A2/AD capabilities.[89]

The PLA started sea trials of its aircraft carrier, the refitted Soviet carrier the Varyag, in 2011. The Pentagon believes that if China had begun construction of its first indigenous carrier in 2011, it would have been able to achieve operational capability as early as 2015.[90] Many U.S. naval experts believe that China will be making its biggest mistake ever if it builds a carrier. Once an aircraft carrier battle group becomes the center of gravity of the PLA Navy, the U.S. Navy will be able to destroy China's entire navy in one campaign, as a carrier is an easy target.[91] Some Japanese analysts have described the Chinese carrier as an "iron coffin" and claim that "Japan's submarines would be more than a match against Chinese carriers."[92] Professor Bernard Cole of the U.S. National Defense University,

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[89]Office of Secretary of Defense, ed., *Quadrennial Defense Review Report 2010* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2010), 31. For the definition of "anti-access" and "area-denial," see Joint Chiefs of Staff, ed., *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2011), 8.

[90]Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2011*, 3, 46.

[91]Wendell Minnick, "China's Navy Prepares to Move beyond Littorals," *Defense News*, October 17, 2011, http://mobile.defensenews.com/story.php?i=7969490&c=FEA&s=SPE (accessed October 18, 2011); Eric A. McVadon, "U.S.-PRC Maritime Cooperation: An Idea Whose Time Has Come?" *China Brief*, June 13, 2007, 10.

[92]Minnick, "China's Navy Prepares to Move beyond Littorals."

who believes that China will certainly have aircraft carriers by 2020, said he would "love to see China invest all its money in aircraft carriers which are more and more just big submarine targets."[93] Indeed, in any combat situation with U.S. naval and air forces, Chinese carriers would become highly vulnerable targets.[94] Admiral Timothy Keating, former commander of PACOM, once told General Guo Boxiong (　　　), then the most senior vice chairman of China's Central Military Commission (CMC), that the United States would be willing to help if China decided to proceed with the construction of aircraft carriers.[95] This indicates that the U.S. Navy welcomes Chinese carriers because they consume massive resources and may well fall prey to U.S. submarines in the future. A more credible view is that China's carriers could be used for power-projection operations not involving fighting with U.S. forces and for military operations other than war.[96] In this sense, aircraft carriers would be particularly valuable to China *only* on the political front—promoting its major world power status and satisfying Chinese nationalism.

For China, strengthening asymmetric warfare measures such as developing nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and nuclear powered attack submarines (SSNs) would be a better strategy against the likely rival the United States. The underground facilities at the PLA Navy's new base on Hainan Island offer the potential for stealthy deployment of submarines into the South China Sea.[97] In addition, China may field up to five new SSBNs, including its newest Jin-class (Type 094), and may add up to five advanced Type 095 SSNs to its inventory in the coming years.[98] However, according to a chart in a U.S. Navy report, even the newest Jin-

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[93]Bernard Cole, "China's Blue Water Navy: Tipping the Strategic Balance?" *Center for National Policy*, November 5, 2010, http://cnponline.org/index.php?ht=a/GetDocumentAction/i/20220 (accessed March 4, 2012).

[94]O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization*, 11.

[95]McVadon, "US-PRC Maritime Cooperation."

[96]O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization*, 11.

[97]Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2010), 2.

[98]Ibid., 2-3.

class submarines are louder than the Soviet Delta III submarines built more than thirty years ago.[99] The PLA Navy's submarines may well be betrayed by their own noise and thus become easy targets of potential rivals such as the United States and Japan. Moreover, to counter the threat of PLA submarines, the primary areas of U.S. submarine deployment are the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea, while U.S. airborne/surface vessels' anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations cover the vast Western Pacific Ocean, the South China Sea, and part of the Indian Ocean.[100] U.S. military strategists believe that as long as U.S. and Japanese ASW planners take the actions necessary to exploit their advantage, the PLA submarines can hardly pass through natural chokepoints.[101]

Developing ASBMs and ASCMs is another way of increasing asymmetric warfare capability. China is developing an ASBM with a range in excess of 1,500 km, armed with a maneuverable warhead, and capable of engaging adversary surface ships (including carriers) up to one thousand nautical miles from the Chinese coast.[102] Skeptics hold that the PLA still has to overcome three major technical challenges: real-time satellite reconnaissance, target tracking in terminal reentry, and terminal maneuvering.[103] It may take at least five years for near-real-time regional coverage technology to be attainable, and global coverage could be attainable within ten

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[99]William Matthews, "China's Subs Getting Quieter but Still Louder than Older Russian Submarines," *Defense News*, November 30, 2009, http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4396071&c=FEA&s=CVS (accessed December 4, 2009).

[100]Jan Van Tol et al., *AirSea Battle A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2010), 72.

[101]Ibid., 72-73.

[102]Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010*, 2, 30, 31; Mark Stokes, *China's Evolving Conventional Strategic Strike Capability: The Anti-ship Ballistic Missile Challenge to US Maritime Operations in the Western Pacific and Beyond* (Arlington, Va.: Project 2049 Institute, 2009), 2.

[103]Andrew S. Erickson and David D. Yang, "Using the Land to Control the Sea? Chinese Analysts Consider the Antiship Ballistic Missile," *Naval War College Review* 62, no. 4 (Autumn 2009): 64-65, 70-72; Eric Hagt and Matthew Durnin, "China's Antiship Ballistic Missiles Developments and Missing Links," *Naval War College Review* 62, no. 4 (Autumn 2009): 90.

years.[104] However, Admiral Robert F. Willard, the former commander of PACOM, revealed in December 2010 that the world's first land-based "carrier killer," the DF-21D ASBM, had been developed by China and had reached initial operational capability.[105] With regard to ASCMs, the PLA Navy currently has Russian-made SS-N-22/Sunburn cruise missiles (on China's Sovremennyy-class guided missile destroyers) and SS-N-27B/ Sizzler missiles (on China's Russian-built, Kilo-class submarines); both are capable of attacking aircraft carriers.[106]

The PLA is also fielding an array of conventional ballistic missiles, ground- and air-launched land-attack cruise missiles that hold targets at risk in the northeast Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific. ASBMs, ASCMs, land-attack ballistic missiles, and land-attack cruise missiles together constitute the PLA's multilayered A2/AD capabilities.[107] Among all likely threats, this could pose the biggest challenge to U.S. forces. President Barack Obama, in the company of Secretary of Defense Panetta and Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, addressed this problem on January 5, 2012, when he announced that the United States would "rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region" and invest as required to ensure its ability to counter China's A2/AD capabilities.[108] The navy is developing three types of lasers for potential use on surface ships—fiber solid state lasers (fiber SSLs), slab SSLs, and free electron lasers (FELs). It has also developed a laser weapon system and a maritime laser demonstrator, prototypes for fiber SSLs and slab SSLs respectively.[109] A gener-

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[104]Hagt and Durnin, "China's Antiship Ballistic Missiles Developments," 103-5.

[105]Andrew Erickson and Gabe Collins, "China Deploys World's First Long-Range, Land-Based 'Carrier Killer': DF-21D Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM) Reaches 'Initial Operational Capability' (IOC)," *China SignPost*, December 26, 2010, 1, 5, 6, http://www.chinasignpost.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/China_SignPost_14_ASBM_IOC_2010-12-26.pdf.

[106]Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010*, 2.

[107]Ibid., 31-32.

[108]Secretary of Defense, ed., *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 2, 4.

[109]Ronald O'Rourke, "Navy Shipboard Lasers for Surface, Air, and Missile Defense: Back-

alized vision for shipboard lasers has been developed for current and future use.[110] The U.S. Navy is also developing an electromagnetic rail gun, a revolutionary capability for the engagement of surface and air threats at long ranges up to two hundred nautical miles.[111] The potential missions of both laser weapons and rail guns include air and missile (ASCM and ASBM) defense.[112] The maneuver space of contemporary sea power extends from the ocean floor to space; the United States' lead in space technology ensures that its command of the sea is superior to that of any likely opponent. The U.S. Air Force is developing the X-37B orbital test vehicle which, according to a former astronaut and senior NASA official, is ultimately meant to give the United States new advantages on terrestrial battlefields.[113] Although developing or testing a system does not equate to fielding it, the United States' revolution in military affairs, in space and weapons technology in particular, may well continue to ensure that it has a significant lead in hard power over the PLA. A more integrated approach to joint operations between the U.S. Navy and the air force, the concept of the AirSea Battle which is currently under development, is addressed below.

Soft Power in Opposite Directions

Classic sea power theories contend that the issue of command of the sea only exists in wartime. However, since 9/11, the United States has decided to push its command of the sea landward in peacetime by means of the fleet-in-being. It takes more soft power than hard power to achieve this goal. Therefore, the soft power element of U.S. maritime/naval strategy

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ground and Issues for Congress" (CRS Report for Congress, April 8, 2011), 9, 10, 42; O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans," 77.

[110]O'Rourke, "Navy Shipboard Lasers," 13.

[111]O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans," 77.

[112]Ibid., 50.

[113]William J. Broad, "Surveillance Suspected as Spacecraft's Main Role," *New York Times*, May 23, 2010, A14; "Star Wars 2010? U.S. Military Launch Space Plane on Maiden Voyage. . . But Its Mission Is Top Secret," *Daily Mail*, April 23, 2010, http://www.dailymail .co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1268138/X-37B-unmanned-space-shuttle-launched -tonight.html (accessed September 1, 2010).

deserves deeper exploration. Joseph S. Nye defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments," and he points out that the resources that generate soft power for a country include its culture, values, and policies.[114] Yan Xuetong (

) argues that morality can play a key role in shaping international competition between political powers and in separating the winners from the losers.[115] The dynamics that enable the United States to solidify its positions in the Indian Ocean and the Asia-Pacific region come from its appeal to freedom and democracy, its great insight into the regional security posture, and success in traditional/non-traditional security policies.

On the frontline of the Indian Ocean, the combined task force missions CTF-150, CTF-151, CTF-152, and CTF-158 are primarily focused on coping with non-traditional security threats. Among these, CTF-151 carries more strategic implications than the others. Because the security of the Gulf of Aden is vitally important for many countries' oil imports and maritime trade, the United States proposed a resolution in the UN Security Council (Resolution 1851) that authorized the extension of counter-piracy efforts to include potential operations in Somali territory and airspace to suppress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea. Some legal experts are concerned that what the United States had in mind was "if the intervention was successful off Somalia, it or the principle could be applied elsewhere, e.g., in the Malacca Strait" and that the recent U.S. doctrine of justifiable intervention might "become [an] internationally accepted [excuse] for foreign interventions."[116] Indeed, as the Malacca Strait becomes "the maritime heart of Asia,"[117] it would be wise for the United States to create a legal precedent elsewhere for a landward push of command of the sea.

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[114]Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "The U.S. Can Reclaim 'Smart Power'," *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 2009, http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-oe-nye21 -2009jan21,0,3381521.story (accessed February 17, 2009).

[115]Xuetong Yan, "How China Can Defeat America," *New York Times*, November 21, 2011, A29.

[116]Mark J. Valencia and Nazery Khalid, "The Somalia Multilateral Anti-Piracy Approach: Some Caveats" (paper presented at the Austral Policy Forum, February 16, 2009), 4-5.

[117]Kaplan, "Center Stage for the 21st Century," 25.

On the front line in the crisis-prone Asia-Pacific, both traditional and non-traditional maritime security policies seem practical and necessary. On the one hand, the rise of China has impacted the security of many countries in the region. Beijing's authoritarian regime, its territorial disputes with neighbors, its manipulation of nationalism, and its uncertain military intentions all make it likely that China will rely on military force to gain diplomatic advantage or resolve disputes in its favor. According to U.S. intelligence, China's A2/AD capabilities extend well into the South China Sea.[118] If this is the case, China's inclusion of anti-SLOCs as one of the six offensive and defensive campaigns of the PLA Navy[119] will mean that U.S. national interests and those of its allies and partners will be challenged in waters surrounding China. Naturally, China's neighbors opt for defense cooperation with the United States. On the other hand, as a result of population growth in what is a climatically and seismically fragile zone, the Asia-Pacific has become a hot spot for natural disasters. Washington's philanthropic efforts in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief further help to win the hearts and minds of the local people.

Yan argues that if China continues to rely on military or economic power without concern for morally informed leadership, it can hardly escape failure; this may explain why the United States has more than fifty formal military allies, while China has none.[120] By contrast, an appealing culture, values, and policies allow the United States to occupy the moral high ground and to justify the insinuation of the NECC into coastal states as it pushes its command of the sea landward.

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[118]Senate Armed Services Committee, ed., "Statement of Admiral Robert F. Willard, US Navy Commander, US Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Appropriations on US Pacific Command Posture," February 28, 2012, 9.

[119]The PLA Navy doctrine on maritime operations focuses on six offensive and defensive campaigns: blockade, anti-SLOCs, maritime-land attack, anti-ship, maritime transportation protection, and naval base defense; see Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010*, 22.

[120]Yan, "How China Can Defeat America," A29. Yan argues that North Korea and Pakistan are only quasi-allies of China.

Smart Power-Oriented Command of the Sea

Nye believes that smart power is the combination of hard and soft power.[121] NECC actions and activities extensively used by the partnership stations, CTFs, and the Combatant Command and Engagement program are manifestations of smart power.

Naval functions supported by the NECC, such as riverine warfare, civil affairs, explosive ordnance disposal, expeditionary training, intelligence, logistics, combat readiness, naval construction, maritime security cooperation, and HA/DR, are basically navy irregular warfare operations.[122] These functions and operations fall into the field of military operations other than war (MOOTW). MOOTW encompasses the use of military capabilities across the range of military operations short of war and it has become a norm of the Cooperative Strategy around the world. For the United States, MOOTW has direct links with its national security strategy, defense strategy, and military strategy. MOOTW supports deterrence, forward presence, and crisis response options; in peacetime, MOOTW helps deter potential aggressors from using violence to achieve their aims.[123] The Joint Doctrine for Joint Force Employment stipulates that when the use of force cannot accomplish national goals or secure national interests, the United States can use MOOTW to transcend the shortcomings of combat military operations in order to accomplish national security objectives.[124] According to the U.S. Naval Doctrine, "application of our expertise in operations other than war also exercises many of our wartime capabilities and our ability to accomplish our Service roles in defense of our nation."[125] Combat and noncombat MOOTW is often conducted simultaneously.[126] That is, combat and noncombat military opera-

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[121]Nye, "The U.S. Can Reclaim 'Smart Power'."

[122]O'Rourke, "Navy Irregular Warfare and Counterterrorism Operations," 1-3, 10-11.

[123]Joint Chief of Staff, ed., *Military Operations Other than War*, 7.

[124]Ibid., 7, 9, 27. See also Chiu-lung Huang, *Feichuantong anquanlun yu zhengce yunyong* (Unconventional security theory and policy application) (Taipei: Jiegouqun, 2009), 16-17, 18.

[125]*Naval Doctrine Publication 1—Naval Warfare*, 22.

[126]Joint Chief of Staff, ed., *Military Operations Other than War*, 9.

tions are exchangeable; decision makers can use combat and noncombat MOOTW as dual tracks for shaping the security environment.

In an attempt to shape the regional security environment, the United States is taking action to rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific. The Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell said in January 2011 that the Pentagon would consolidate its forward presence "along the Pacific Rim, particularly in Southeast Asia."[127] In December 2011, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, the chief of naval operations, announced the expansion of combined efforts with Japan, South Korea, and Australia in high-end operations such as anti-submarine warfare and integrated air and missile defense. The U.S. Navy will also conduct counter-piracy, counter-trafficking, and other similar operations with Singapore around the South China Sea. In addition, to promote maritime domain awareness, land-based P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft or unmanned broad area maritime surveillance aerial vehicles will be deployed to the Philippines or Thailand.[128] In January 2012, the United States announced its intention to station several LCSs in Singapore (as planned in 2008),[129] to rotate six thousand marines on six-month training deployments in Darwin, Australia, and to talk with the Philippines about rotating surveillance aircraft or perhaps navy ships through Philippine bases.[130] These military deployments highlight the United States' determination to employ the fleet-in-being-like NECC to conduct combat and noncombat MOOTW so as to push command of the sea landward around the South China Sea and shape the security environment in its favor. Although Robert Work's projection of a total of 499 ships seems unlikely, if there is to be any chance of reaching that goal, a dramatic increment will come mainly from the requirement of ships and craft for the

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[127]U.S. Department of Defense, "DOD News Briefing with Geoff Morrell from the Pentagon," January 26, 2011, http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4758 (accessed August 14, 2011).

[128]Jonathan Greenert, "Navy 2025: Forward Warfighters," *Proceedings* 137, no. 12 (December 2011): 20.

[129]Work, *The US Navy: Charting a Course for Tomorrow's Fleet*, 64.

[130]O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans," 45-46.

NECC, which again reflects the U.S. Navy's audacious agenda for a land-ward push of command of the sea.

With regard to the nucleus of command of the sea capabilities, the United States has developed, in the context of the FORCEnet system, an "AirSea Battle" operational concept in opposition to China's A2/AD capabilities, as "AirSea Battle is to China what the [the U.S. Navy's mid-1980s] maritime strategy was to the Soviet Union."[131] According to some U.S. experts, the basic concept of AirSea Battle is that having withstood the initial attack, the United States will execute a blinding campaign against PLA battle networks to prevent the PLA from targeting high-value navy surface units and to ensure that the U.S. Navy has operational freedom of maneuver.[132] The ideas under consideration include: new jointly operated, unmanned strike aircraft with up to 1,000-mile ranges; using air force aircraft to deploy sea mines; conducting joint navy, Marine Corps, and air force strikes inside China; joint air force/navy attacks against Chinese anti-satellite missiles inside China; and joint navy and air force cyber-attacks on Chinese anti-access forces.[133] The AirSea Battle is in fact a very forward-deployed strategy which may need air force ground attack jets or navy LCSs to defend main battle ships tasked for the destruction of China's A2/AD capabilities from the PLA Navy's small-boat "swarm" attacks.[134] Hence, the AirSea Battle concept suggests increasing dependence on the United States' weapons systems, its maritime intelligence-collection system, and network-centric warfare system deployed in the waters surrounding China, all of which in turn rely on the partnership-creating efforts of the NECC. With the help of the high-payoff programs Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel, the smart power-oriented NECC has proven its utility in advancing Mullenism and is paving the way for the AirSea Battle to work out.

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[131]Ibid., 41.

[132]Tol et al., *AirSea Battle*, xiii, xv.

[133]Gertz, "Pentagon Battle Concept Has Cold War Posture on China"; O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans," 42.

[134]Gertz, "Pentagon Battle Concept Has Cold War Posture on China"; Murphy, *Littoral Combat Ship*, 4, 30-34.

The former State Department China specialist John Tkacik has said that the only way to balance China is to lend the weight of U.S. air and naval forces to regional allies' ground forces.[135] Jim Thomas, vice president for studies at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, even suggested that the United States should help Southeast Asian nations focus their contribution to the AirSea Battle concept and develop regional mini A2/AD complexes to hedge against a more aggressive and expansionist China in the future.[136] Senator John McCain urged the United States to help ASEAN partners build up their maritime defense and detection capabilities, including early warning radar and coastal security vessels, so as to provide for a more common operational picture in the South China Sea.[137] This implies that PACOM will continue to commit NECC-underpinned Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel to the enhancement of the interoperability of combined operations between the United States and its regional defense partners.

The United States is undoubtedly a pioneer in leveraging its smart power to promote its dominance of international politics. China also employs MOOTW to promote military exchange and international influence and has the potential to contribute to the delivery of international public goods.[138] However, Beijing's negative soft power only serves to justify Washington's interventionist Mullenism. Since the AirSea Battle is meant for a blinding campaign against PLA battle networks, and as Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel proceed to enhance interoperability between the United States and its regional defense partners, the United States stands a good chance of being able to ensure that its navy has operational freedom of maneuver and can take command of the waters surrounding China.

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[135]Gertz, "Pentagon Battle Concept Has Cold War Posture on China."

[136]Thomas, "China's Active Defense Strategy," 4-5.

[137]John McCain, "Remarks by Senator John McCain at the Center for Strategic and International Studies Conference on Maritime Security in the South China Sea," U.S. Senate, June 20, 2011, http://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm? FuseAction=PressOffice .Speeches&ContentRecord_id=af2b3a40-cd28-aa40-64e3-8102b2bb3601&Region_id =&Issue_id=f9a5665a-b73f-42fc-91d0-ab93a2876f4c (accessed March 17, 2012).

[138]Office of the Secretary of Defense, ed., *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010*, 1, 5, 7-9, 19, 37.

Implications for International and Regional Security

The Cooperative Strategy lacks the concrete form of an alliance, which means that there are no stipulated treaty obligations or penalties and that the United States has no power over its partners. But as traditional maritime security issues concerning waters around China continue to heat up, mutual interests between the United States and its regional partners will naturally facilitate the advance of Mullenism in the Asia-Pacific. In a time of crisis or even war, the U.S. Navy will be poised to launch combat/ noncombat operations rapidly in the form of an active and vigorous fleet-in-being alongside its partners.

In 2006, the United States and the United Kingdom proposed a "global partnership" between NATO and non-European states that would provide a forum for expanded dialogue with other major democratic countries; some scholars further suggested that NATO open its membership to any democratic state willing and able to contribute to the fulfillment of the organization's new responsibilities in dealing with global threats and needs.[139] Because this proposed "global partnership" would rely on the navies of the participating countries and the U.S. Navy would take the lead, it may be regarded as the predecessor of the "global maritime partnership," an alias for the TSN. The progress of constructing a maritime security alliance and pushing sea command landward in the Indian Ocean and the Asia-Pacific indicates that the United States has quietly started engineering a "global NATO" or "NATO of the seas" in both regions. Although there are neither NATO training organizations in individual countries nor unified military commands in these regions, the original proposal for a "global NATO" would see its membership opened to any democratic state that is willing to cooperate with NATO in promoting global peace and stability; a draft treaty would not be necessary for this maritime NATO. Hence, the new alliance does not require that NATO-mandated articles, training organizations, or commands be copied in the newly recruited countries.

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[139]Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, "Global NATO," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 5 (September-October 2006): 106.

Consequently, even though China is expanding its sea power, the United States is still confident that it can play the role of "a coalition builder supreme," "a mediator and an enforcer of standard procedures," or a "stabilizing power" between the two rising sea power rivals—China and India, and that it can bring together rival countries under a single umbrella of a global maritime system,[140] or global maritime partnership. Lincoln Bloomfield, former assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs, has publicly stated that the United States would strengthen the commitment and intervention of its navy and air force in the Pacific Ocean and that China would gain great prestige and have an opportunity to lead on international issues if it cooperated with the United States. Bloomfield suggested that Beijing find a way to self-balance and that it should assure the United States that it does not intend to influence the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific.[141] This remark shows that high-ranking U.S. officials are very confident that their country has the power to shape the security environment and maintain regional peace and stability.

Due to the big power gap between the United States and China, Washington is expected to continue with its hedging strategy—a mixture of engagement and containment—toward China. This made its first appearance in the *2006 National Security Strategy*, which stated that the United States "seeks to encourage China to make the right strategic choices for its people, while we hedge against other possibilities."[142] In other words, the Americans will encourage China to cooperate with the global community and accept international law. At the same time, Washington is prepared to use military force to deter China from behaving aggressively.[143] The current Obama administration seems to have inherited this strategy, which

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[140]Kaplan, "Center Stage for the 21st Century," 24, 28, 29, 32.

[141]Pei-fen Chiu, "Bulun fei'er: Mei buhui tuichu yatai diqu" (Bloomfield: U.S. will not drop out of Asia-Pacific), *China Times*, July 22, 2010, A14.

[142]White House, ed., *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2006* (Washington, D.C.: White House, 2006), 42.

[143]Richard Sokolsky, Angel Rabasa, and C. Richard Neu, *The Role of Southeast Asia in U.S. Strategy toward China* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2001), 71-72; Evelyn Goh, *Meeting the China Challenge: The U.S. in Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies* (Washington, D.C.: East West Center, 2005), 1-2.

is expected to last for the foreseeable future, even if U.S. influence recedes. As Robert Kaplan, senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security, puts it, the U.S. Navy quietly leverages its closest allies—India in the Indian Ocean and Japan in the Pacific—to contain China's expansion, while still trying to incorporate China's navy into an international alliance.[144]

Conclusion

Before the end of the twentieth century, Mahanism inspired the United States to employ "forward presence" to control almost all the chokepoints and oceans and create a *Pax Americana*. After 9/11, Mullenism, standing on the shoulders of Mahanism, seeks to push command of the sea to the rivers, harbors, and shoreline of all coastal states in order to sustain the *Pax Americana*. Mullenism lies at the core of the 2007 U.S. maritime strategy.

The U.S. Navy employs the Southern Partnership Station, the African Partnership Station, the combined task forces, and Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel as part of the Cooperative Strategy. The NECC, designed for the landward push of command of the sea, is extensively used in these programs. The advances in these partnerships and combined task forces suggest that the U.S. Navy has secured binding security arrangements; the expansion of MSSIS is evidence that seventy more countries are carrying the trademark of the Cooperative Strategy.

In the Asia-Pacific, future demand for LCSs and other patrol craft will help the U.S. Navy advance interoperability with defense partners; as more amphibious warfare ships and LCSs join the order of battle, increased participation in humanitarian relief efforts will help the NECC retain its foothold in the region, and this will enable the seamless extension of U.S. naval capabilities from blue water to brown water and provides direct support to the joint force ashore. In the future, the Cooperative Strategy or Mullenism

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[144]Kaplan, "Center Stage for the 21st Century," 24.

in the Asia-Pacific will likely consist of NECC complexes or an active, vigorous, and interlocking defensive fleet-in-being which will serve to shape the security environment in peacetime and counter attack or obliterate an enemy from the sea in times of crisis.

The biggest threat to the United States' maritime hegemony in the Asia-Pacific comes from China's A2/AD capabilities. The United States continues to pursue its revolution in military affairs, in space and weapons technology in particular, to ensure that it can retain its significant lead over the PLA in terms of hard power. In terms of soft power, Beijing's nationalism, authoritarian regime, territorial disputes, and uncertain military intentions have alienated China's neighbors. The attraction of U.S. culture, values, and policies enables the United States to further its prestige, dominate security issues, and justify its insinuation of the NECC into regional coastal states. With the help of Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel, the smart power-oriented NECC is steadily advancing Mullenism and paving the way for AirSea Battle to work out. Comparatively, the United States stands a good chance of ensuring that its navy has operational freedom of maneuver and can take command of the waters surrounding China.

Finally, the evolution and advances of U.S. maritime/naval strategy indicate that the United States has quietly started the political engineering necessary for the creation of a "global NATO" in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The U.S. Navy can use global waters as a broad blue highway to control territory of strategic interest. When necessary, the navy can seamlessly extend its command of the sea throughout the blue, green, and brown water and even well beyond the littoral. Consequently, it is confident that it can maintain peace and stability in the Indian Ocean and the Asia-Pacific. As long as the present incarnation of Mullenism stays afloat, *Pax Americana* will survive and the "post-American era" will remain on the distant horizon.[145]

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[145]As President Obama has claimed, since the United States retains military superiority in all areas, "the 21st century will be another great American Century." See White House, "Remarks by the President at the Air Force Academy Commencement," May 23, 2012, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/05/23/remarks-president-air-force-academy-commencement (accessed June 1, 2012).

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