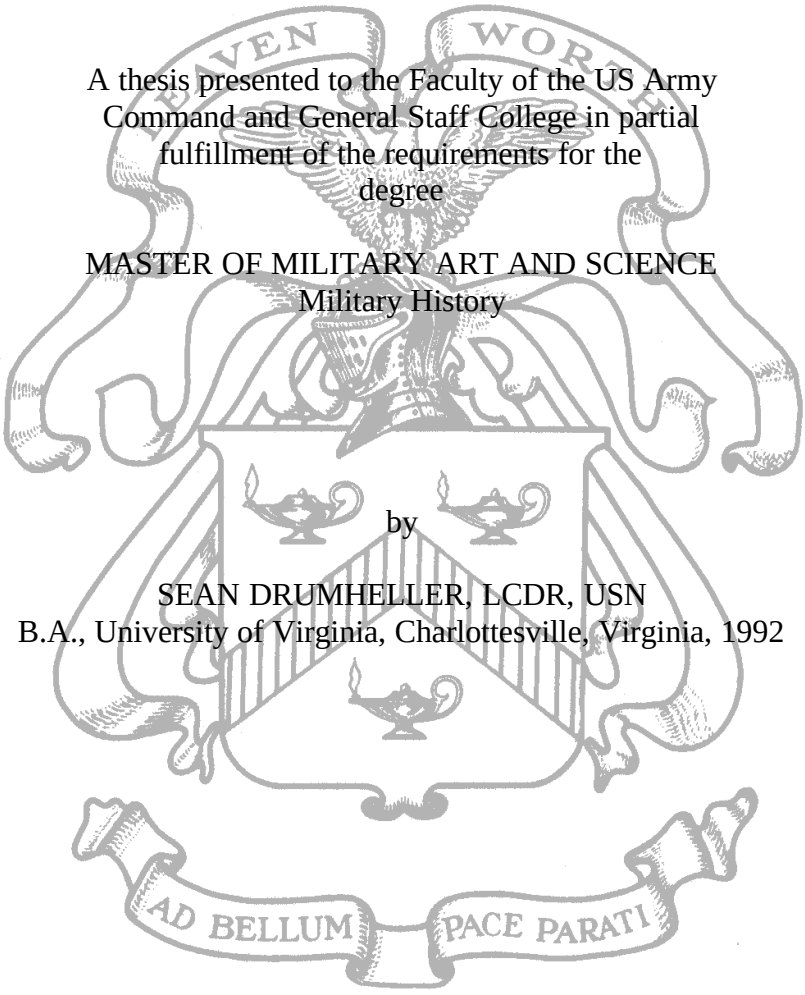
THE FIGHT FOR THE STRATEGIC ARSENAL: WHY THE NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE FOR RELEVANCE



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In two periods of the twentieth century strategic bombers and aircraft carriers have come into direct conflict. The underlying themes of the rise and fall of nuclear warfare and incompatible service culture dominate the rivalry between the Air Force and the Navy. After the Second World War, the main area of contention involved the emergent use of nuclear weapons as the expected primary mode of choice for conflicts to come. After the Cold War, the military faced restructuring due to the lessened importance of nuclear weapons and a national policy changing from deterrence to forward presence. Perhaps the greatest cause of conflict between the Air Force and the Navy relates to their different backgrounds of experience. Developing from their disparate histories, a lack of commonality affected their abilities to agree on military policy, and led to disputes over the merits of their respective programs and how they would comply with the security strategy of the nation. By examining the linkages and similarities between the periods after World War II and the Cold War, why the services sustained a near-continuous struggle over a period of decades will provide insight into the conditions that create similar rivalries.

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ABSTRACT

THE FIGHT FOR THE STRATEGIC ARSENAL: WHY THE NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE FOR RELEVANCE, by Sean M. Drumheller, 72 pages.

In two periods of the twentieth century strategic bombers and aircraft carriers have come into direct conflict. The underlying themes of the rise and fall of nuclear warfare and incompatible service culture dominate the rivalry between the Air Force and the Navy. After the Second World War, the main area of contention involved the emergent use of nuclear weapons as the expected primary mode of choice for conflicts to come. After the Cold War, the military faced restructuring due to the lessened importance of nuclear weapons and a national policy changing from deterrence to forward presence. Perhaps the greatest cause of conflict between the Air Force and the Navy relates to their different backgrounds of experience. Developing from their disparate histories, a lack of commonality affected their abilities to agree on military policy, and led to disputes over the merits of their respective programs and how they would comply with the security strategy of the nation. By examining the linkages and similarities between the periods after World War II and the Cold War, why the services sustained a near-continuous struggle over a period of decades will provide insight into the conditions that create similar rivalries.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Twice in the last century the dispute between the Air Force and the Navy developed into a major confrontation. The conflict centered on the role of aviation, through its technological advances and service implementation. After World War I, members of the Army Air Corps, led by Brigadier General Billy Mitchell, campaigned for their independence from the Army, and proposed to incorporate all forms of aviation, including Navy assets, under the direction of a newly created service. From this proposal also emerged the first ideas towards a consolidation of the services under a single department, with equal representation from the air, land and sea components. Unwilling to relinquish their investment in naval aviation, the Navy completely opposed General Mitchell's ideas, and thus began a rift that that would continue to deteriorate over the next several decades.[1]

The rivalry peaked twice in the twentieth century. After World War II the primary issues of the day were service unification, the shrinking military budget, and nuclear weapon delivery vehicles. The proposal for a unified parent military department persisted long after General Mitchell's campaign, and in the years 1945-1947, it stimulated heated debate with both sides standing firm on their positions.[2] With the Soviet Union the next likely adversary in war, the way in which the United States would defend itself from the Communists was of primary importance in the development of strategy and doctrine.

The second occurrence happened in the 1990s at the end of the Cold War. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the dilemma of what would become of a Cold War military in a post-Cold War world required attention. The platforms that dominated the

inventories of the services were designed to fight a Soviet military they never faced. In looking ahead to the threats of the future, none of which were comparable to the Soviet Union, missions for these same platforms had to adapt to the new paradigm, or they would fall victims to the reduced military spending that threatened them.

A number of themes were common to the two periods. Why did the Air Force and the Navy allow their disagreements to get so publicly heated in both periods? The debates that raged after World War II culminated in front of a House Armed Service Committee meeting in October 1949, in what would be called "The Revolt of the Admirals" that same month in *Time* magazine.[3] Though the two services never repeated a public spectacle of that caliber, the years after the Cold War produced a number of documents and articles espousing their respective programs while denigrating those of their sister service.

An examination of the national policy of the two periods will answer what array of military forces best adhered to the guidance and policy towards deterrence, engagement and enforcement. After World War II, though the military as a whole was starting to adjust to the reduced spending of the post-war years, the United States Government recognized that the military could not be compromised in light of the increasing tensions between the US and the Soviet Union. The new emerging threat posed by the Soviet government and the spread of Communism gave great cause for concern, and new technologies were to be the guarantee of success in conflicts of the future. After the Cold War the massive threat posed by a rival superpower was no longer present. The forces designed for that enemy had to instead "prepare for the complex and uncertain security environment" of a world with only one superpower.[4] The task of how

to effectively manage the chaotic environment called for a shift from deterrence to engagement.

With the use of the nuclear weapons to end World War II, the United States possessed the capability to achieve strategic objectives with their use on the battlefield. Warfare had never before seen such awesome power, and nuclear energy's potential would introduce a new era of political and military thought on how future conflicts would be fought and won. This new arsenal of nuclear weaponry would force a significant reassessment of the nation's military power and associated strategy for decades to come.

In the late 1940s, the prevailing idea was that wars would no longer be conducted by sending wave after wave of strategic bombers with conventional ordnance deep into an enemy's territory to degrade the long-term capabilities of its military-industrial centers and ultimately force defeat. Nuclear weapons had the ability to end warfare as quickly as it began, for they "brought a destructive dimension that was devastating to morale, which meant the destruction of the will to continue, the hardest target to destroy with any kind of weapon."[5] The populace was expected to give up the fight once they had witnessed "the total destruction of a city's infrastructure, the total elimination of the fire and police departments, elimination of the medical and hospital facilities and people, total destruction of all communications and yes, the magnitude of the results of the prompt and residual radiation."[6]

The recognition of this new weapon's significance was not lost on the United States military, specifically within the ranks of the Army Air Forces and the Navy. Even before the use of the weapons over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the two services were becoming more at odds over the role of aviation within the respective services. Aircraft

were significant because they were the only vehicles capable of delivering nuclear weapons to their targets at that time, and therefore, technological advancements were aggressively pursued by the nation's military. The difference between the Air Force and the Navy was that the Navy viewed carrier aviation as part of a larger fighting force, while strategic bombing was considered by the Air Force to be the most dominant form of warfare.[7] This difference helped drive some of the conflict between the services.

Other than the obvious budgetary considerations, why did the Air Force and the Navy feel so strongly for their programs that they encouraged the elimination of the other? After World War II the Air Force's new long-range bomber aircraft, the B-36, and the Navy's newest aircraft carrier, the *United States* (CVA 58), represented the two services' primary platforms. The Navy's position was that the bomber was too vulnerable to be able to successfully reach the assigned targets without first falling to enemy fighter aircraft.[8] They further attempted to sabotage the program by falsely asserted impropriety by Air Force officials in procuring the aircraft.[9]

The Air Force believed that in light of the defeat of the navies of the Axis powers during the Second World War, and the insignificant perceived threat that the Soviet Navy posed to the US and its national interests, the Navy was no longer relevant in future warfare. The Soviet Navy was considered at that time a building program at best. They did not possess an aircraft carrier, and would not build their first, the *Admiral Kuznetsov* until the 1980s. They had acquired the German aircraft carrier *Graf Zeppelin*, but as it was only partly built and heavily damaged, it was eventually purposely sunk in the Baltic Sea in 1947. During World War II, the focus of the Soviet fleet had been coastal defense, with only seventy-five sea-worthy vessels and over 2,000 lighter ships built during the

period of 1941-1945. A significant number of Soviet vessels were obtained through the Lend-Lease program, and many of those were returned to the United States and United Kingdom after the war. Others were former German navy ships in various states of damage and disrepair. Most of these were not considered to be significant strategic importance to the relative power of the Soviet Navy.[10]

Given the lack of a comparable sea threat, Navy critics thought it was best suited remaining in the role in which it excelled, protecting the shipping lines of communication and the merchant vessels conducting the world's trade. Leaders within the Air Force also believed that the size of the atomic weapons expected to be the choice for future warfare precluded their use by the Navy's carriers and their small aircraft. As the missions over Nagasaki and Hiroshima were carried out by the Air Force, they expected they would be called on to conduct future missions as well.

Similar, but opposite, stances emerged after in the 1990s, when the Soviet Union crumbling ended the Cold War. The objects of the arguments were still strategic bombers and aircraft carriers. The Air Force maintained an inventory of B-52 Stratofortresses, B-1 Lancers, and new B-2 Spirits. The Navy had been building Nimitz-class carriers since 1968, and was looking towards the future with a new carrier class, the CVX, or Aircraft Carrier, Experimental.

At that time the Navy declared that strategic bombers were no longer needed in a world without a nuclear adversary. Though the Air Force believed that the bombers could just as easily accomplish similar missions with conventional ordnance, the Navy believed their use would be so limited that they were not cost effective to keep them in service. The Air Force believed that aircraft carriers had become so bloated in costs that they

could not provide enough striking power to justify the operational funding required to keep deploying them. There were a number of comparisons made to justify, dollar for dollar, just which platform was the best fit to support the country's security strategy.

The most significant theme throughout the two time periods concerned the expected use of nuclear weapons in combat. In the period between World War II and the Cold War, the programs of the Air Force and the Navy focused on how aircraft would deliver these weapons to the intended targets. After the Cold War, with the Soviet Union no longer an immediate nuclear threat, the transition of the weapons platforms from a nuclear to a conventional role preoccupied the two services.

A second theme dealt with the way the two services reacted to the lessons learned from World War II and the Cold War. What emerged from the periods just ended significantly affected the doctrinal and tactical thinking for future conflicts in order to satisfy the governmental strategy of the time period. With their respective contributions each service had been crucial to the successes in the Second World War's two theaters against the Germans and the Japanese. The realized and perceived needs for the future drove the development of newer and more capable bombers for the Air Force and aircraft carriers for the Navy. After the Cold War the precision-strike capability of strategic bombers helped argue their relevance, while the Navy advertised the mobility of the carrier to pursue the policies of engagement and forward presence toward nations on and near major bodies of water.

The final theme to address is the culture or ethos in the two services that drove them to fight so vehemently against each other in the two time periods. The Navy resisted relinquishing their historical status as the front-line defense for the nation as the new age

of aviation began to take hold. The warships of the Navy were no longer the outermost layer of the nation's aegis, as aircraft capability utilized that third dimension the Navy was unable to defend.

Combat was no longer being fought on just land and sea. Aviation in warfare was developing rapidly, and was quickly proving to be an equal, if not more significant, facet of combat. The technological capability of the aircraft was growing exponentially, and there seemed to be no limit as to what an aircraft would be able to do. Greater range, increased performance, and heavier payloads continued to demonstrate that the aircraft was a worthy asset to the nation's military. In just a few decades aviation had developed from a supporting role on the battlefield prior to World War II, to one of significant offensive power against an enemy.

Feeling the noose around their collective necks with the *United States* in jeopardy, a member of the Secretary of the Navy's staff, Cedric Worth, generated a "leaked" document in May 1949 that "made claims of serious improprieties in the B-36 program, and cited fifty-five allegations of wrongdoing in its procurement by Secretary Johnson and Secretary Symington. The anonymous document . . . was the catalyst for the Hearings before the House Armed Services Committee on Unification and Strategy."[11] As a result of Worth's poor judgment and lack of ethics, the document led Representative Carl Vinson to call for a Congressional inquiry into the B-36 program that ultimately found no wrongdoing, and exonerated the accused. Though the Navy suffered publicly from the actions of one man, that session brought about the need for an additional hearing in October 1949 to address unification and national security issues, which would become the scene where the admirals' publicly opposed the views of their civilian Navy

leadership over how the emphasis on strategic bombing and nuclear weapons created a single-faceted approach to future conflict, and adversely affected the Navy's capabilities to accomplish assigned missions.[12]

The rapid acceptance of the aircraft as a dominant asset on the battlefield facilitated the creation of the Air Force out of the shadow of the Army from which it had developed. The potential for these land-based aircraft had stimulated theorists such as Major General Sir Hugh M. Trenchard of Great Britain, Lieutenant Colonel Edgar S, Gorrell and Brigadier General Billy Mitchell of the United States, and General Giulio Douhet of Italy, with Mitchell and Douhet the most influential in providing the foundation for the US strategic bombardment doctrine.[13]

Out of the efforts these men started, and the successful use of strategic bombing during World War II, the airmen of the Army Air Forces achieved their goal of obtaining independence from the Army. The National Security Act of 1947 brought about the creation of the United States Air Force, as well as the National Security Council and the unified National Military Establishment.[14] With that achievement the Air Force was intent to preserve their status at all costs. With the B-36 the rising centerpiece of the military, they sought to preclude any chance of sharing that responsibility with the Navy. The design of the *United States* threatened to limit the bomber program by presumably sharing the responsibility of delivering nuclear weapons on the future battlefield. Their campaign helped bring about the cancellation of the carrier in 1949, which ultimately set into motion the events leading up to the infamous "revolt" later that year.[15]

A great deal of animosity emerged out of the confrontations of the early post-war years. Though the roles and missions of the two services stabilized during the four

decades of the Cold War, the dispute had not been forgotten. Just as the Communists lost power in the Soviet Union and the government recognized the need for such programs as the Bottoms-Up Review of 1993 and the Committee on Roles and Missions of 1995, the debate heated up again, returning to many of the similar arguments that had been heard years earlier. The nation was fortunate to not have a repeat of the events of 1949. However, a number of articles, such as *Air Force Magazine*'s "The Carrier Myth" in March 1999, and *The Hook*'s "When Virtual Presence Equals Actual Absence," in the spring of 1998, showed the two services still had it out for each other even several years after the fall of Communism.

"The . . . period was a hectic and confusing time for the United States and its leaders. Defense decision makers attempted to maintain the country's expanded security commitments in the face of declining budgets and diminished military capabilities."[16] Having left out the two words "early postwar" from the above quote allows it to apply to either of the two time periods to be discussed. This thesis will address the above questions and themes chronologically, compare the service culture link that carries through to today, and conclude with the implications for the future. By examining the linkages and similarities between the periods after World War II and the Cold War, why the services sustained a near-continuous struggle over a period of decades will provide insight into the conditions that create similar rivalries.

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[1]Jeffrey G. Barlow, *Revolt of the Admirals: The Fight for Naval Aviation, 1945-1950* (Washington, DC: Naval Historical Center, 1994), 23.

[2]Herman S. Wolk, "Revolt of the Admirals," *Air Force Magazine*, May 1988, 63.

[3]Lieutenant Commander Andrew L. Lewis, "The Revolt of the Admirals" (master's thesis, Air Command and Staff College, 1998), 30, 42.

[4]Charles M. Perry, Laurence E. Rothenberg, and Jacquelyn K. Davis, *Airpower Synergies in the New Strategic Era: The Complementary Roles of Long-Range Bombers & Carrier-Based Aircraft* (McLean, VA: Brassey's, Inc., 1997), ix.

[5]Jerry Miller, *Nuclear Weapons and Aircraft Carriers: How the Bomb Saved Naval Aviation* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 47.

[6]Ibid., 20.

[7]Barlow, 3.

[8]Ibid., 249.

[9]Ibid., 208.

[10]Jürgen Rohwer and Mikhail S. Monakov, *Stalin's Ocean-Going Fleet: Soviet Naval Strategy and Shipbuilding Programmes, 1935-1953* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2001), 180-184.

[11]Lewis, 27.

[12]Dean C. Allard, "Interservice Differences in the United States, 1945-1950: A Naval Perspective," *Air Power Journal* 3, no. 4 (winter 1989): 81.

[13]Barlow, 9.

[14]Lewis, 5.

[15]Barlow, 188.

[16]Ibid., 294.

CHAPTER 2

THE POSTWAR YEARS

The rivalry between the Navy and Air Force originated in 1920, when Brigadier General William L. "Billy" Mitchell vociferously advocated the creation of an independent air force. Before a Congressional committee on 3 February 1920 he proposed "a strong air force that could assume the Navy's traditional role as the country's first line of defense: protecting the United States against an enemy invasion fleet through attacks by pursuit (fighter), bomber, and torpedo aircraft."[1] In order to protect the Navy's interests in their budding naval aviation program, the senior leadership sought to prevent it from being caught up in the potential new service organization. Some voiced concern that the Navy might lose its air arm if it failed to counter Billy Mitchell's efforts.[2] It would be the start of significant competing interests between Navy and Army Air Force leaders.

At first Mitchell and his supporters lacked the support of the War Department, and the proposal lay dormant for a number of years. However, the issue reemerged in 1943 with Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall's paper submitted to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on "A Single Department of War in the Post-War Period."[3] Through this proposal for service unification the Army Air Force saw an opportunity to yet again push for independence, as Marshall described a military grouped in the three categories of land, sea and air. This was the first support originating in the hierarchy of the War Department that could eventually lead to the Army aviators' ultimate wish, and the Navy was now alone in their opposition.

> The Navy Department's uniformed leaders had good reason to oppose a unified department of war. The Army . . . advocated this "radical reorganization" of the armed forces to facilitate postwar planning at a time when the US war experience was far from complete. Moreover Navy leaders were convinced that an "efficient mechanism" already existed for handling wartime operations and planning postwar demobilization in the form of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
>
> There was an even more powerful reason to oppose such unification--the realistic concern of many senior naval officers that under such a department of war, the new air component would either absorb naval aviation entirely or deprive it of most of its funding.[4]

The Navy's two predicted scenarios resulting from the creation of an independent air force involved either the consolidation of all aviation activities similar to the British after World War I, or the addition of a third strategic force to the two already maintained by the Army and the Navy, with each fighting for smaller postwar budgets. This new air force was assumed to receive the lion's share of that reduced funding due to their perceived relative strength as compared to the other two in the accomplishment of a future national security strategy.[5]

None of the services in the post-war years were particularly pleased with the lack of funding, as each had the intention of maintaining warfighting capabilities and expanding on new technologies.

> The Navy expected to continue the build-up of its fleet in peacetime on the basis of these wartime undertakings. Furthermore, it expected to maintain a sizable fleet in operation to carry out the Navy's traditional role in diplomacy. It had plans for future development of naval weapons, notably naval air and undersea craft; and very soon some Navy officers were counting on Navy use of atomic bombs. The Air Force was intent upon developing the strategic independence of its forces. It set a minimum-strength goal of 70 groups, and emphasized the development of aircraft capable of strategic bombing, and to many Air Force planners strategic bombing would be atomic bombing.[6]

The Navy's issues against unification fell into three categories. First, despite his tremendous foresight towards a joint concept, the timing of Marshall's proposal was

considered poor, with the war still ongoing and the Pacific theater especially active at that particular time. The leadership representation required to address the proposal would be unavailable for an undetermined amount of time while their obligations kept them focused on the war. Second, they were greatly concerned about their aviation program. Its tremendous potential represented great opportunities for Navy in conducting future warfare, and if it left the Navy's custody, it would likely languish without funding as a second-tier capability behind the greatly advertised strategic bombers. Third, they supported keeping the Marine Corps within the Navy's chain of command, due to its prowess in the area of amphibious warfare. Their mission specialization supported their continued relevance. The Army saw their mission as redundant, and intended to absorb the force into the larger service.

Throughout the years the Army Air Corps, renamed the Army Air Forces in 1941, sought independence from the Army, they also favored the consolidation of the Navy's aviation programs under their influence. They claimed that all flight activity should be coordinated under a single authoritative body. As the aircraft carrier was now the centerpiece of the Navy's fleet, the loss of naval aviation threatened the very existence of the service. By giving up aviation the service would potentially no longer have a mission at all, and would fall into irrelevance and extinction. The capabilities of naval aviation had been demonstrated in the Pacific Theater of World War II, and the future potential seemed unlimited. There was equal concern for the future of land-based naval aircraft, used for reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare, and the protection of shipping. The Navy committed their support to maintaining that capability within their service, as they felt the low expected priority given to it if controlled by another service would preclude

any of its effectiveness. The insurance they needed to help sustain the program would turn out to be the atomic bomb.

The Army's argument against the Navy was strong, however. General Carl A. Spaatz, Commanding General US Strategic Air Forces in Europe remarked,

> Why should we have a Navy at all? The Russians have little or no Navy, the Japanese Navy has been sunk, the navies of the rest of the world are negligible, the Germans never did have much of a Navy. The point I am getting at is, who is the big Navy being planned to fight? There are no enemies for it to fight except apparently the Army Air Force. In this day and age, to talk of fighting the next war on oceans is a ridiculous assumption. The only reason for us to have a Navy is because someone else has a Navy and we certainly do not need to waste money on that.[7]

Army Air Force Brigadier General Frank A. Armstrong, Jr., at that time senior air instructor at the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, Virginia, had an extreme view of the separate service initiative, as he spoke to numerous businessmen and senior military officers at a December 11, 1946 dinner engagement:

> You gentlemen had better understand that the Army Air Force is tired of being a subordinate outfit. It was a predominant force during the war, and it is going to be a predominant force during the peace, and you might as well make up your minds whether you like it or not, and we do not care whether you like it or not. The Army Air Force is going to run the show. You, the Navy, are not going to have anything but a couple of carriers that are ineffective anyway, and they will probably be sunk in the first battle.
>
> Now as for the Marines, you know what the Marines are, a small bitched-up army talking Navy lingo. We are going to put those Marines in the Regular Army and make efficient soldiers out of them.
>
> The Navy is going to end up only by supplying the requirement of the Army Air and the Ground Forces, too. . . . Army Air is still going to stay, and we are going to take over, too.[8]

The Navy's opposition to both the unification and three service proposals resulted from a mistaken link between the two. In actuality they were separate, but since both originated from within the Department of War, the confusion was somewhat

understandable. Though an early advocate of unification before the end of World War II, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz explained he changed his stance on the issue because "the theoretical advantages of such a merger are unattainable, whereas the disadvantages are so serious that it is not acceptable. . . . I believe we should have very good reasons--better reasons that any offered so far--before we change a system that has proved itself so effective."[9] Secretary of Navy James V. Forrestal expressed concern about granting independence to the Army Air Force.

> I am entirely confident that we would have . . . [the War Department's] complete support on the thesis of a department for Air, but I must say that I haven't quite yet reached that conclusion. . . . If I were sure that we could confine a separate air arm to strategic operations I would be for it, but with our own arm, the tactical arm of the Army, and the Marines' tactical units, I am afraid it will be an easily salable idea to the public that all should be rolled together, and while I am no expert on war I have seen enough of this to know that as far as the Navy arrangement is concerned that would be fatal.[10]

Through a significant amount of political wrangling between senior members of the two departments, Secretary Forrestal eventually overturned his view. He signaled concurrence with the proposal for unification and submitted a joint memorandum with Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson to President Harry S. Truman in January 1947. Forrestal changed his position because he believed at last that the Department of War and the Army Air Forces had given up their intentions to assume Navy primary missions in order to further the unification and independence agenda. The National Security Act of 1947 was signed into law on 26 July 1947. The Act created the National Military Establishment, headed by a Secretary of Defense, and consisted of three services--Army, Navy and Air Force.

With the dust of this controversy appearing to settle, the more significant issues regarding the use of nuclear weapons began to take front stage. Simultaneous with the signing of the National Security Act, President Truman had also signed Executive Order 9877 as a supplement to the act, attempting to clarify the functions of each service. Unfortunately, through contradictory wording between the two documents, controversy emerged over the lack of specificity in the differences of responsibility of the two services in strategic air operations. Secretary Forrestal sought to eliminate the discrepancy by gathering the Joint Chiefs in Key West, Florida in March 1948 to arrive at a commonly accepted resolution.

The conference succeeded in generating more specific responsibilities for the respective air components. The Key West Agreement, formally named "Functions of the Armed Forces and the Joint Chiefs of Staff," delineated that primary responsibility for strategic bombing resided with the Air Force, but the Navy could also participate. The work by well-placed Navy officers during the Second World War would ultimately benefit the Navy in creating a nuclear capability.[11]

The Navy's interest in nuclear energy and its future military impact stemmed from early involvement with the Manhattan Project during the early 1940s. The Navy officers intimately involved with the program advised the leadership in Washington of the importance of this new technology, and its potential impact on the service. The release of this weapon over Japan by United States Army Air Forces B-29 bombers was expected to have far-reaching impact on the future of the military, and therefore the Navy knew it needed to participate also.

Many in the Navy felt very strongly that the Army Air Forces would quickly take precedence within the military establishment if they were able to obtain primary control over this weapon. However, according to a Joint Chiefs of Staff paper, JCS 1477/10, this opinion was not necessarily the common view the Navy thought it was. The paper stated that "American security required a large force posture with considerable capabilities to conduct non-nuclear as well as nuclear operations."[12]

Strategy questions concerning the use of nuclear weapons induced a great deal of consternation between the services. The civilian control over the military proved a necessity to keep each in check, and ensure the national policies were adequately represented. The generals and admirals in charge proved incapable of handling the issues surrounding the use of this weaponry without getting mired in the loyalties to their respective services. Early problems included the lack of weapons in the inventory, which was due to the slow rate of production. The emergence of the nuclear weapon appeared to give the flexible aircraft carrier yet another important capability to prove its worthiness to the civilian leadership in the executive and legislative branches. Proving its ability to conduct nuclear missions would ensure future development of Navy programs, as it was readily apparent that nuclear-related issues were to receive generous congressionally-sponsored funding. The Navy continued to believe its programs remained in jeopardy of being handed over to the Air Force, thereby fueling the ongoing controversy. General James H. Doolittle, despite having needed the carrier to enable his bombing mission over Japan, doubted the future of the platform before the Senate Committee on Military Affairs in 1945.

> The carrier has reached, probably, its highest degree of development. I feel it has reached its highest usefulness now and that it is going into obsolescence.
>
> The carrier has two attributes. One attribute is that it can move about; the other is that it can be sunk.
>
> As soon as airplanes are developed with sufficient range so that they can go any place that we want the to go, or when we have bases that will permit us to go any place we want to go, there will be no further use for aircraft carriers.[13]

The Navy's perception that nuclear weapons were going to dominate the national strategy put them in severe discomfort about their future unless they discovered a means by which they could participate.

The program thought as giving them their best chance for the future was the new super carrier, the *USS United States* (CVA 58). By virtue of its increased displacement and flight deck size, it could handle the larger carrier aircraft that would be needed to heft a weapon of the size of the bomb used on Nagasaki, the "Fat Man," weighing 10,000 pounds. The size of the new ship was impressive when compared with the two classes of carrier in use at the time. The Essex-class of 1938 measured 872 feet in length and weighed 27,100 tons. The Midway-class of 1942 was 968 feet and 45,000 tons. The *United States* was to be 1,090 feet and 65,000 tons.

The new super carrier had received approval for construction, but it was not long before it found itself in severe jeopardy. Some of the criticism of the Navy's carrier program came from the most senior officers in the military. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Omar N. Bradley said, "I have participated in the two largest amphibious assaults ever made in history [and] in neither case were any Marines present. And in neither case were any Navy carriers present."[14] In General Bradley's examples land bases were nearby, precluding the need for aircraft carrier presence, unlike many of the campaigns in the Pacific theater. Often, the purpose of a particular Pacific campaign was

to secure airfield capability for the bombers of the Army Air Forces, in order for them to further their operations against Japan.[15] General Bradley's criticism of a robust Navy also concerned the lack of an immediate adversary.

> The USSR, except possibly in the field of submarine warfare, is not a naval power of consequence. Further, the USSR is not dependent on maritime shipping to reach sources of raw materials. Thus, the vast preponderance of Allied naval power--which in addition to the United States Fleet, overwhelmingly the largest in the world, includes the second naval power, the British Empire, and the additional naval forces of other potential allies--will have but little opportunity to operate against Russian surface vessels and should be more than adequate to cope with the major naval threat, the hostile submarine.[16]

The Navy was limited in their design constraints due to the slow pace of technological advances regarding nuclear weapons. Experts believed that nuclear weapons would remain of the same tremendous size for the immediate future.[17] Undaunted by those limitations the Navy recognized the need to move forward with their nuclear pursuits. Rear Admiral Jerauld Wright, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Plans and Policy), stated that "atomic weapons are the most logical justification for construction of a large carrier and twin engine carrier planes for the 1948 building program."[18]

As of August 1946, the program to pursue the use of nuclear weapons on aircraft carriers had received the endorsement of President Harry S. Truman by Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal, according to a letter from Rear Admiral Wright. Given that a requirement had been placed on the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics toward the end of the war to produce an aircraft capable of carrying an 8,000-pound bomb, designers used that direction as a means for crafting a way for a carrier aircraft to carry a weapon the size of

the "Fat Man," which weighed 10,000 pounds.[19] Bringing an atomic bomb capability to Navy carriers became ever closer a reality.

In December 1947, Rear Admiral Daniel V. Gallery, intimately involved in the early stages of the Navy's nuclear program as Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Guided Missiles), proposed in a limited distribution memorandum that the primary mission of the Navy ought to be the delivery of nuclear weapons on an enemy's capital and military/industrial complexes, with the secondary mission control of the seas. The Air Force, in his view, should be tasked with the aerial defense of the United States, including that from atomic attack, and a secondary capability of delivering nuclear weapons from overseas bases. His memorandum was classified Top Secret and intended for a limited Navy-only audience. However, as copies of the memo were distributed around Navy headquarters, one found itself in the hands of Air Force Secretary W. Stuart Symington.

Symington was infuriated by the proposed Navy intrusion into Air Force affairs, and the situation even caught the attention of Representative Albert J. Engel (R-MI), Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee's Army Subcommittee. The memo was sent to the congressman, accompanying a letter from both the Navy secretary and the Chief of Naval Operations stating the memo was an opinion paper, not an official Navy position. To make matters worse, a civilian reporter named Drew Pearson, a known pro-Air Force, anti-Navy columnist, obtained a copy through unknown means and published it in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *Philadelphia Bulletin*. The public reaction, as well as the requirement for the Navy to address the situation publicly through revealing the letter to Representative Engel and publicly admonishing Gallery, threw yet another log

on the already growing fire of rivalry between the services on the nuclear issue, as well as the assignment of their respective roles and missions. The unauthorized release of the classified document to the public nearly lost Gallery his career, but luckily he managed to survive the debacle.[20]

Following World War II, the Navy formed an organization for the atomic program, the Special Weapons Division (OP-06) in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations. From there the idea of the carrier and the nuclear weapon took hold in more positive terms. Intense interest had already been raised among the services over the Navy's involvement in atomic warfare. From OP-06 came a letter to the president through Secretary of the Navy Forrestal seeking authority to proceed with the project. Eventually, the letter was returned from Secretary Forrestal's office with a note saying that presidential approval would not be required.

Disagreement over control of nuclear weapons continued to be a point of contention for the two services. Each also sought increased funding for the expansion of their nuclear capabilities. Secretary Forrestal again brought the Joint Chiefs together in August 1948, this time in Newport, Rhode Island. The Newport Agreement reached between the leaders, specified that though the Air Force was assigned as the executive agent of the nuclear program, now called the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, "the exclusive responsibility and authority in a given field do not imply preclusive participation."[21] The Navy was officially cleared to participate in the Special Weapons Project, as could they develop the means to execute a strategic air operations capability.

Granted the opportunity to develop their nuclear role, the problem for the Navy was a lack of any realistic capability to deliver such a weapon. Atomic weapons were

extremely large and heavy, characteristics not compatible with aircraft carrier operations of the time. A smaller weapon would not emerge until the 1950s with the Mark VII weapon, measuring twenty-two inches in diameter and armed with a ten kiloton warhead.[22] The Mark VII alleviated the fear that weapon production would lead in the other direction, as one proposed weapon weighed 80,000 pounds and measured 120 feet long and nine feet wide.[23]

The first aircraft tested for carriage of a nuclear weapon from the deck of an aircraft carrier was the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation P2V Neptune. Originally designed and utilized as a land-based anti-submarine aircraft, it was only barely capable of operating from an aircraft carrier. It was nearly impossible to land on a Midway-class carrier due to its size, and to guarantee the ability to successfully get airborne, the plane was outfitted with JATO (Jet-Assisted Take Off) bottles. However, the most important aspect of the Neptune for the Navy was that it was a reasonably successful starting point by which subsequently designed aircraft would be compared.

One small incident that fortunately had no significant impact on the Navy's struggle to enter the nuclear age concerned a demonstration of the P2V's carrier performance for such onlookers as Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Following the demonstration, the high-ranking officials boarded the same aircraft for their flight back to Washington. Ironically, Secretary Johnson was at that time in the process of canceling the *USS United States*. Captain John T. "Chick" Hayward, commanding officer of Composite Squadron Five (VC-5), the organization evaluating the Neptune's carrier suitability, was responsible for flying the distinguished guests back to Washington, DC. While strapping Secretary Johnson into his

seat, Hayward told him that if the starboard engine failed on takeoff, the Navy would be able to get their flush-deck carrier, after the plane collided with the *Midway*'s superstructure.[24]

The second aircraft the Navy used to further their efforts was the North American AJ Savage. According to a key procurement official for the Navy, the aircraft was never intended to be the right aircraft for the job, but was intended for testing and proving the concept of carrying the tremendous payload of a nuclear weapon. The aircraft was designed for a carrier the size of the *United States*, but since that project was cancelled by the time of its inception the Navy attempted to try and make it work with the Midway-size ship. It was found to be too large to use aboard the ship under normal circumstances, so the accepted plan was for the aircraft to be based at Fort Lyautey in Morocco, and flown aboard for loading of the weapons and subsequent launch on mission. Though the process was not an efficient one, it gave the Navy a realistic nuclear capability.[25] It would not be until the introduction of the Forrestal-class aircraft carrier and the A3D Skywarrior in the mid-1950s that the Navy truly had an efficient and effective system in place where the aircraft and carrier were integrated for the nuclear mission.[26]

By the spring of 1950, weapons development had evolved to where a nuclear bomb, the Mark VII, had been produced weighing only 1700 pounds. Perhaps in response to the Air Force's new F-85 Thunderjet and the F-104 Thunderchief, Air Force Tactical Air Command aircraft that could carry this small nuclear weapon, the Navy pushed for their own tactical aircraft, the F2H Banshee, to also undertake the nuclear mission. The significance of a nuclear-capable Banshee was that it could be operated from the much smaller Essex-class carrier, the current mainstay of the fleet. The Navy would soon

conceivably prove themselves worthy of sharing the mission with the Air Force. The nuclear pursuit continued as weapons were developed in ever-smaller size with increased blast capability.[27]

Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson cancelled the program to build the *USS United States* in April, 1949, though Congressional funding had already been allocated and construction already begun. He had held the position of Assistant Secretary of War in the late 1930s, and had actively supported the Army Air Corps, so the Navy felt he favored them and opposed the Navy. Johnson's direction to cancel the carrier was mostly for political reasons, not the least of which was that he did in fact hate the Navy and the Marine Corps. A news reporter, Davis Merwin, recalled an interview with Secretary Johnson a few weeks after the cancellation.

> Johnson told me himself that the Navy was promoting the new [carrier] design as a means of competing with the Air Force, that while he was SecDef the Navy would have no part in long range or strategic bombing and that he was going to permit an extension of carrier aircraft combat radius from what he said was a present 530 miles to 750 miles, in which we are giving them an additional 200 miles, which is all they are going to get.[28]

Johnson also aspired to become the next President of the United States. He wanted his constituency to view his cost-cutting measures within the Navy as benefiting the American public, and planned to use his actions to bolster support for his political aspirations.

Though no direct evidence of Air Force involvement in the cancellation was found, a memorandum from Air Force contractor W. Barton Leach to Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenburg in early February 1949 provided a suggestion of the Air Force's official stance towards the super carrier.

> a. Probable military usefulness of an aircraft carrier larger than existing types has not been established . . .
> b. The project for a super-carrier should be given careful, detailed and objective study by bodies [i.e., the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group] upon which the three services are represented.[29]

Leach continued by stating the intention of the proposed Air Force position was "to prevent Congress from committing itself still further in approving the CVA-58."[30] The Air Force also mistakenly viewed the leaked Gallery memorandum as the Navy's true intentions towards the use of nuclear weapons, and therefore sought to counter any efforts to encroach upon their operational territory.[31]

The cancellation of the *United States* occurred when Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan was out of town and unable to defend the program from being terminated. Enraged by the manner in which Johnson conducted himself, Sullivan quit his position in protest of the abrupt action. Johnson chose Francis P. Matthews as Sullivan's replacement, a man with no military or government experience, presumably to act merely as a pawn of the Secretary of Defense.[32]

Ironically, although the Navy saw the cancellation as a tremendous failure for their own nuclear goals, Captain James D. Small viewed it as a benefit. He was one of the officers intimately involved in the building of carriers during his Navy career. In his opinion the carrier would have failed miserably if it had actually been built, due to some significant design flaws. The island superstructure was designed on an elevating platform, inviting a host of operating and maintaining challenges. The catapult for launching extremely heavy aircraft was still in the design phase, but as one proposal suggested using powder charges for rapidly propelling the planes from the flight deck, the logistical challenges of storage and replenishment had yet to be addressed. Though the

Forrestal-class carrier was not introduced until the mid-1950s the Navy was able to remain competitive in the nuclear competition, arguably benefiting the continued existence of naval aviation altogether.[33]

The close association between the Air Force and nuclear weapons developed as an enhancement of the capabilities they developed in the inter-war years prior to World War II. While the Navy had developed its carrier air doctrine at sea during fleet exercises, the Army Air Corps founded its strategic bombing doctrine from the ideas of contemporary thinkers of that time.[34] The largest influence came from Brigadier General Billy Mitchell and General Giulio Douhet of Italy. The emerging theories became doctrine and were extensively taught at the Air Corps Tactical School, which led to their exclusive use of strategic bombing throughout World War II. Strategic bombing was ultimately viewed as so successful that it remained as doctrine even after the conflict concluded, especially due to the emergence of the nuclear bomb.

The Army Air Force quickly undertook the issue of using nuclear weapons after World War II, and looked ahead to the next potential conflict. Leaders quickly recognized the Soviet Union as the next potential adversary, and the Joint Staff researched targets that would cripple the Soviet war industry if targeted with nuclear weapons.[35] As the Army Air Forces had been responsible for the delivery of the two weapons over Japan, they viewed themselves as the logical choice for being given the responsibility to continue that capability.

Army Air Force B-29s carried the first two atomic bombs to Japan. They were large enough and had an acceptable operating range to maintain the responsibility for the mission. Looking ahead at the looming potential threat of the Soviet Union, however,

identified the shortcomings of the aircraft in the future. The majority of the twenty proposed targets within the Soviet Union were located beyond the approximate 2,000-mile range of the B-29. However, a successor had already been in the works for several years.

Before the United States' involvement in World War II the need for an extremely long range strategic bomber was identified as a contingency in case the Germans conquered Great Britain, leaving the US with no forward basing capability in Europe. The aircraft later designated the B-36 was designed to have a 10,000-mile range and a 10,000-pound payload capacity. Consolidated Aircraft worked at the design throughout the war, but the conflict ended before the aircraft's completion. Numerous engineering and materiel delays and design problems plagued the development of the airplane until the first aircraft were delivered to the Air Force in June 1948.

The predominant problem with the aircraft was the performance data that differed significantly from what was advertised and desired. The Air Force required a capability that far outpaced that of the B-29, which the B-36 struggled to achieve. The design specification required the aircraft to operate between 240 and 300 miles per hour at an altitude of 40,000 feet. This provided for the best combination of operating parameters to make an intercept by an enemy fighter difficult at best. The actual performance data of the operational B-36B, outfitted with more powerful engines than the original B-36A, could only maintain 218 miles per hour at 35,800 feet. The potential vulnerability of the aircraft created an opening by which the Navy could criticize the Air Force's choices.

Some in the Navy sought drastic means by which to highlight the difficulties in the B-36 development in order to bolster the future of naval aviation. An anonymous

document surfaced alleging collusion in the B-36 program involving Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson and Air Force Secretary W. Stuart Symington with the aircraft manufacturer, Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation. The allegation detailed an illicit financial arrangement between the three outside of the official contract, as well as the offer of political and personal favors to Floyd Odlum, Chairman of the Board at Consolidated Vultee.[36]

Republican Congressman James E. Van Zandt of Pennsylvania demanded a full investigation into the B-36 program in May 1949.[37] The House Armed Service Committee scrutinized the matter thoroughly, but found no wrongdoing on the part of either Secretary or Consolidated. Ultimately, the falsified information was traced to Cedric R. Worth, special assistant to Under Secretary of the Navy Dan A. Kimball, who was immediately terminated after the discovery.[38] However, the Navy's reputation had been tarnished from the affair.

The final showdown in the post-war years occurred during a hearing by the House Armed Service Committee on Unification and Strategy in October 1949. Though the Secretary of the Navy provided encouraging words in his prepared statement about Navy morale and the service unification process, the number of senior admirals who followed Matthews provided a much more somber picture. Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, and former Vice Chief of Naval Operations, expressed great concern about the abundance of budgetary emphasis on the type of warfare that the B-36 symbolized. "The type of war we plan to fight must fit the kind of peace we want. We cannot look to the military victory alone, with no thought to the solution of the staggering problems that would be generated by the death and destruction

of an atom blitz."[39] He also highlighted the deficiencies of the B-36 by stating that it was unlikely to arrive at a target or hit it with an acceptable degree of precision, due to its lack of performance and the difficulty of target acquisition under combat conditions at extreme altitudes. Other like-minded presenters following Admiral Radford included Fleet Admirals Ernest King, Chester Nimitz, and William Halsey, Admiral Raymond Spruance, and former Commandant of the Marine Corps General Alexander Vandegrift.

The final testimony came from the Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Louis E. Denfeld. His words would best indicate the viewpoint of the Navy as being in line with Secretary Matthews' platitudes or the condemnation by the senior admiralty. His remarks aligned with that of his peers.

> "Why do we need a strong Navy when any potential enemy has no navy to fight?" I read this in the press, but, what is more disturbing, I hear it repeatedly in the councils of the Department of Defense. As a result, there is a steady campaign to relegate the Navy to a convoy and antisubmarine service, on the grounds that any probable enemy possesses only negligible fleet strength. This campaign results from a misunderstanding of the functions and capabilities of navies and from the erroneous principle of the self-sufficiency of air power. . . . Fleets never in history met opposing fleets for any other purpose than to gain control of the sea--not as an end in itself, but so that national power could be exerted against the enemy.[40]

The words rang clearly as the senior leadership, minus the Navy Secretary, expressed their great concern, and very soon afterward the other services had their opportunity to rebut the Navy's position. Air Force Secretary Symington and Chief of Staff General Vandenburg denied any deficiencies in doctrine or aircraft design that would warrant the Navy's position. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Omar N. Bradley criticized the Navy's desire for more offensive capability because of the lack of any significant opposition by the current Soviet Navy, and openly called the admirals "fancy dans" for the manner in which they rebelled against the rest of the services.[41]

The outcome of the hearing gave the opportunity for the Navy to express its concern for the direction the national security strategy was headed. Admiral Denfeld was forced to resign for his insubordination against Secretary Matthews, but the overall outcome of the "admirals' revolt" was considered positive. The future of naval aviation and the aircraft carrier saw bolstering due to the awareness and importance of the Navy's mission conveyed to the House Armed Service Committee, and not only had the carrier gained additional legitimacy, but they had also were able to continue with the nuclear mission.

Through the events of unification of the military under the Department of Defense, along with the creation of the Air Force, the Navy fought for its survival due to a perceived, more than blatant, threat to its existence. It identified a situation where increased support for strategic bombing, as well as the potential loss of its own aviation program, would relegate the service to such a minor role in the national military establishment as to eliminate it from any true offensive capability. The Navy's efforts in creating their own capability for the delivery of atomic weapons provided some opportunity to validate the aircraft and carrier combination as a viable alternative to the strategic bomber, enough so that it likely contributed to the survival of naval aviation. The Air Force enjoyed the position of being favorably suited to accommodate the expected needs of future warfare, but struggled in producing the true capability to face the expected adversary of the Soviet Union.

The opposition that each service displayed toward the other indicated challenges within each organization to demonstrate the merits of their own capability. The Navy suffered from an often combative stance, as well as the ungentlemanly approach of lies

and false accusations. The Air Force, while not always being completely forthcoming about their own difficulties, succeeded through successful use of public relations and a unity of leadership. They emerged as holding the high ground after this chain of events, but sadly it did not bring to an end the rivalry between the two services, languishing with a clear-cut assignment of roles and missions. The Korean War and the Cold War would put their differences in the background, only to emerge again decades later.

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[1]Jeffrey G. Barlow, *Revolt of the Admirals: The Fight for Naval Aviation, 1945-1950* (Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1994), 4.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., 23.

[4]Ibid., 24.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Harold Stein, ed., *American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies* (Birmingham, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1963), 467.

[7]Demetrios Caraley, *The Politics of Military Unification: A Study of Conflict and the Policy Process* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), 100.

[8]Ibid., 151.

[9]Ibid., 52.

[10]Barlow, 29.

[11]Steven L. Rearden, *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense*, vol. 1, *The Formative Years 1947-1950* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense Historical Office, 1984), 393-397.

[12]Miller, 23.

[13]Caraley, 49.

[14]Miller, 29.

[15]Ibid., 25.

[16]"Texts in Service Hearings," *Army and Navy Journal*, October 22, 1949, 214.

[17]Miller, 31.

[18]Ibid., 32.

[19]Ibid., 33.

[20]Barlow, 117, 120.

[21]Richard I. Wolf, ed., *The United States Air Force: Basic Documents on Roles and Missions* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, US Air Force, 1987), 182.

[22]Miller, 63.

[23]Ibid., 53-54.

[24]Ibid., 84.

[25]Ibid., 95.

[26]Ibid., 99.

[27]Ibid., 121, 125.

[28]Barlow, 188.

[29]Ibid., 183.

[30]Ibid.

[31]David A. Rosenberg and Floyd D. Kennedy, Jr., "History of the Strategic Arms Competition, 1945-1972: Supporting Study: US Aircraft Carriers in the Strategic Role. Part I -- Naval Strategic in a Period of Change: Interservice Rivalry, Strategic Interaction, and the Development of a Nuclear Attack Capability, 1945-1951," Prepared for Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Plans and Policy), (Falls Church, VA: Lulejian & Associates, Inc., 1975), 107.

[32]Barlow, 1.

[33]Miller, 182-185.

[34]Barlow, 9.

[35]Miller, 211-212.

[36]Barlow, 208.

[37]Thomas M. Coffey, *Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1986), 284-6.

[38]Barlow, 1.

[39]Ibid., 247.

[40]Ibid., 253.

[41]Ibid., 262.

CHAPTER 3

END OF THE NUCLEAR ERA

> The Cold War is behind us. The Soviet Union is no longer. The threat that drove our defense decision-making for four and a half decades—that determined our strategy and tactics, our doctrine, the size and shape of our forces, the design of our weapons, and the size of our defense budgets—is gone.
>
> Now that the Cold War is over, the questions we face in the Department of Defense are: How do we structure the armed forces of the United States for the future? How much defense is enough in the post-Cold War era?[1]
>
> Department of Defense, *Report on the Bottom-Up Review*

Two years before the Berlin Wall crumbled in 1989, the United States had recognized the need to reexamine the current force structure in light of a decreasing threat posed by the Warsaw Pact nations.[2] Planners could not completely dismiss World War III as a possible scenario, but the other missions undertaken by the military during the Cold War would drive the requirements for the military's size and capability. Balancing the military requirements in situations other than direct combat, now known as military operations other than war, with the preparedness to meet any other contingencies required a discriminating assessment of the force structure necessary to defeat the Soviet Union.

Two phases of assessment emerged after the Cold War. As the product of the first phase, the Base Force plan emerged coincident with the Bush administration of 1989 to 1992. It delineated the first proposed adjustment of the post-Cold War composition of the armed forces, and how it would operate in this post-Cold War world. The goal was to adapt the size of the military to the expected type of post-Soviet threat and an imminent reduced military budget. The second phase occurred during the Clinton Administration

from 1993 to 1996, producing the Bottom-Up Review and the Committee on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces.[3]

The reevaluation brought the United States into familiar territory. As had occurred in the years after World War II, the nation again faced a need to reevaluate and restructure the military, in order to both accommodate the reduction in defense spending and anticipate the enemy of the future. The significant differences between the two restructuring efforts involved the uncertainty of the future enemy, and the expected role of nuclear weapons in the new force structure. The examination and elimination of mission redundancies also warranted attention in order to best address fiscal responsibility.

After World War II the United States saw the Soviet Union clearly as their main future adversary, with its desire to spread its ideology and influence beyond its borders into Europe and Asia, and even the Western Hemisphere. Opponents of a Cold War military in a post-Cold War era argued that even a major regional conflict, anything remotely approaching that expected in an engagement of the Soviets, was the least likely and least dangerous of the challenges the military would face. The likely involvement would include,

> unconventional conflicts, such as internal and ethnic conflicts, and terrorism in its various forms. Throughout the Cold War, the American military confronted these types of conflicts in Greece, the Philippines, Lebanon, the Dominican Republic, and Vietnam. Its performance was uneven at best, and strong misgivings remain concerning the wisdom of US forces becoming engaged in such conflicts.[4]

Given the less than stellar track record of American military performance in smaller conflicts in the recent past, the importance of succeeding in such missions in the future

required deliberate evaluation of how to best utilize the current military design and modify future requirements for a suitable force.

The unknowns posed the biggest challenge for those who would shape the military of the future, such as which country would pose the biggest threat, and when and how that threat would be manifested. Not since the years after World War I had the definition of the enemy for which to train and equip been so unclear. Modern technology also produced uncertainty, as future systems designed during the Cold War would potentially find little utility without a military rival like the Soviet Union, and the design of follow-on systems would have to be capable of being used in scenarios ranging from humanitarian efforts to offensive operations.

The Base Force plan provided a strong step forward toward reducing manpower and budgets in the three services. General Colin L. Powell's vision for the Armed Forces acknowledged the inevitable reduction in military funding, but strove to ensure the high level of capability and proficiency necessary for engagements worldwide. The name for the proposal was the "Base Force," as it represented the level of manning and equipment below which commitments could not be met. He proposed a manning reduction by twenty-five per cent over a four-year period, in order to achieve a compromise between the "hollow force" he witnessed as an Army lieutenant colonel in the early 1970s after excessive downsizing, and the current unsustainable force level with the anticipated smaller budget.[5] He wanted the force to be focused on meeting the requirements of a superpower, rather than focusing on projected threats that were extremely difficult to predict accurately, thereby avoiding potential inadequacies in effective response.[6] For the

Navy and the Air Force the cuts meant reducing aircraft carriers from 15 to 12, and drawing down each segment of the nuclear triad, including strategic bombers.

During the process by which the Base Force plan was generated, the United States participated in a significant conflict against a third world opponent. As a prospective model for the new era, Operation Desert Storm in 1991, proved to be a poor gauge by which the Base Force planners could forecast future adversaries. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell articulated this in a news conference on the Department of Defense Bottom-Up Review. "Desert Storm was that Cold War battle that didn't come, without trees and mountains. We got a nice desert, and we got a very, very incompetent enemy to work against."[7] The assessment of future adversaries would have to come via other means than using the Iraqi military as a model.

With the transfer of power from President Bush to President Clinton came a requirement to "improve" upon the Republican product. Directed by Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, the Bottom-Up Review of 1993 expanded the cuts imposed by the Base Force. However, shortfalls existed in this evaluation as well. Critics blamed the measure as not being a significant departure from its predecessor. Both the Bottom-Up Review and the Base Force plan overly specified future enemies' responses and capabilities, and therefore limited the military's flexibility in response to the unknown. In establishing requirements for forces, only one scenario was utilized to provide the basis for the new proposed structure of the military. The anticipated worse case scenario still relied on the possibility of two major regional contingencies to determine the necessary force size, and concluded that an end strength similar to that reached by the previous administration was still needed.[8]

Despite the attempt to reorganize the military to best meet new challenges under a reduced military budget, the same decades-old problems persisted. The desired outcome was a delicate balance between maintaining service competition, encouraging continued technological advances without a designated adversary, and reducing operational redundancy, allowing budgetary savings. Instead of providing "the direction for shifting America's focus away from a strategy designed to meet a global Soviet threat to one oriented toward the new dangers of the post-Cold War era," the opposite occurred.[9] The assessed threat used for modeling was managed such that it matched current military capability, thereby justifying the continuation of programs already in progress.

The requirement of sustaining two simultaneous major regional conflicts permitted only a modest reduction of current force structure, and continued the need of a military of near-current composition. Getting more capability out of money invested--more "bang for the buck"--became the next argument for those identifying programs where spending could be lessened. During the process of the Bottom-Up Review, the lack of progress in achieving reduced budgets without compromising the force itself necessitated a focus on limiting redundancies and overlapping responsibilities. The individual services took up that cause when formal inquiries were unable to do so themselves. This elicited similar arguments heard decades earlier between the Air Force and the Navy.

In the decades since the 1948 Key West agreement, core military capabilities continued to intertwine and overlap, and more than one service possessed the capability to accomplish missions historically associated with a single service. Similar to what transpired years earlier, the services each sought to promote their own programs without

acknowledging the contribution of the other service. The Air Force continued to tout the superiority of the extremely long range of their bomber fleet, capable of projecting power on a global scale, while the Navy relied on the historical precedent of the aircraft carrier's accomplishments overseas. Both asserted they could effectively meet the national goal of forward presence in support of our allies and friends. Most officials in the military and the government polarized themselves on the side of one service over the other, though the most effective solution likely fell somewhere between the two, incorporating the capabilities of both programs.[10]

The contentious issue shifted from the delivery of nuclear weapons in future warfare during the 1940s to the effective conduct of forward presence around the world at affordable cost, in support of the post-Cold War military strategy. The intention of the Committee on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces of 1995 was to examine service responsibilities and balance them off of advances in technology and new future threats to national security in order to ensure the most efficient and effective military capability for the future.[11] Like the 1948 Key West agreement, the findings did little to affect the force structure to any significant degree.

> History reveals a tendency for the services to diverge rather than coalesce during periods of relative fiscal austerity. That is, each service tends to put planning priority on assuring and protecting core competencies that support and facilitate operations of the other services. It is easier to be joint in word and deed in times of fiscal largess; parochialism is stronger when budgets draw down.[12]

By 1997 four white papers had been generated by the two services in support of their positions on the way ahead. The Navy produced . . . *From the Sea* and updated it in *Forward . . . From the Sea* in 1994, and the Air Force published *Global Reach--Global Power*, revised later in *Global Presence 1995*. The Navy's predominant view supported

the expanded role of the carrier into the littoral region rather than the expected traditional presence further from the coast in “blue water” operations far from shore. The Air Force believed that forward presence requirements delineated in the National Security Strategy and the National Military Strategy could be achieved through the operations of its extremely long range bomber fleet. Despite operating from well within United States territory, their ability to fly to any point on the Earth within twenty hours provided necessary quick-reacting offensive power. In their official vision statements, each service provided reasons for their continued importance to the nation, while avoiding any derogatory remarks toward competing capabilities. Those remarks most predominantly appeared in magazines and other media outlets by both active duty officers and retirees.

The arguments emerging in the unofficial channels of service periodicals explored the merits of each weapon system’s ability to serve the nation’s policy. The Navy, in endorsing their aircraft carriers, argued that with only 20 B-2s and an aging fleet of B-1s, the Air Force proposal could not provide sufficient deterrence from the aggressiveness of regional states wishing to act against their neighbors. The Air Force, advocating their bombers’ prowess in both conventional and nuclear roles, criticized the carrier as being overly expensive for the capabilities it brought, as well as being susceptible to attack from weapons like mines and anti-ship missiles. In reality neither scenario offered the perfect option by itself, but together they provided sufficient capability to accomplish most, if not all, assigned missions.

The Navy took the offensive by criticizing the expensive Air Force programs still supporting the nuclear triad. Opponents stated the B-2 no longer had a place in the current military strategy, and therefore, the B-52 and the B-1 no longer required it as a

replacement. Due to the uncertainty of the climate in the crumbling of the former Soviet Union, all of the segments of the nuclear triad remained intact in order to preserve, at least in the short term, the capabilities of defending the nation against attack and maintaining offensive capability as a last option. For the purpose of the reviews conducted at that time, the need to maintain the nuclear forces intact was deemed more important than scrutinizing possible budget cuts in a capability that would likely never be used.

In an article covering a joint conference about interservice rivalry in 1996, Gene Myers described criticism towards the Air Force about technology being substituted for doctrine. With the focus on air superiority and strategic attack, the Air Force relied on two aspects of warfare unproven in their effectiveness. The effects of strategic bombing in World War II, Vietnam and Iraq had not effectively eliminated the need for land forces to bring the enemy to culmination.[13] Though written before Operation Allied Force in Kosovo and Serbia, a similar argument emerged saying it was the perceived threat of employing coalition ground forces that finally convinced President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia to order the withdrawal of his troops from Kosovo. Likewise, air superiority had been proven to be insufficient to guarantee success in battle. The US achieved it in Vietnam, and the Soviet Union had it in Afghanistan, but both cases ended in failure. The examples in the article were presented as extremes, not universal truths. However, they were meant to highlight the doctrines' potential weak points, and call for a need for reexamination.

Through interviews with former Air Force Chief of Staff General Ronald R. Fogleman for a September 1996 article in *Air Force Magazine*, the position of the Air

Force as the preeminent service in the US military rang clear as the recurring theme, despite the fact that no service brought enough capability single handedly to make such a boastful claim. Even considering the added capability afforded by stealth technology, precision conventional weapons and global reconnaissance, the Air Force could not hope to be more than an equal partner in providing forces in the joint undertaking of a mission.[14]

Sounding strangely similar to his predecessors from the years after World War II, General Fogleman stated that "the inherent characteristics of airpower will make it the weapon of choice by the national command authorities, as we get deeper and deeper into this transition from the Cold War."[15] He continued by saying that once aircraft had achieved dominance, land and sea forces could be able to safely enter the theater. The views expressed here sound reminiscent of the same arguments made by his predecessors espousing strategic bombing as the predominant military apparatus.

Unfortunately, General Fogleman made the common mistake of using previous conflicts' lessons learned to promote the vision for the future. He referenced the successes of Operation Desert Storm to prove the merits of airpower achieving strategic and operational objectives without the use of the naval and land components. However, he did make the concession that airpower alone could not win wars, and that the war in Iraq was a proving ground for technological advances vice a template for the future.

In criticism of the Air Force's proposal for global presence, Commandant of the Marine Corps General Charles C. Krulak stated, "If you think a B-2 bomber flying at 60,000 feet is going to mean diddly squat to people you are wrong. What makes an impact is for them to look out and see a gray ship. That is presence."[16] His argument,

while coarse, makes the point that before the beginning of hostilities, Air Force bombers do little to provide deterrence. They project US power beyond its borders very well, but do so more at the outset of a military engagement, instead of helping to prevent getting there in the first place.

> Today's force structure is largely a legacy of the Cold War when intercontinental bombers were part of the Nuclear Triad to deter, and if necessary, defeat the former Soviet Union. While part of the bomber force continues to support the nuclear deterrent mission, the environment permits, in fact demands, increased emphasis on conventional missions. The bomber force structure required to prosecute two nearly simultaneous major theater wars and contribute to a nuclear posture that deters aggression has been defined by studies and national guidance. The 1993 Bottom-Up Review (BUR) confirmed today's bomber force structure requirement. Today's sizing of forces was built on the philosophy that the US should maintain sufficient military power to be able to win two nearly simultaneous, major theater wars.[17]

The vision of the Air Force changed with the introduction of *Global Presence: A Vision for the 21st Century Air Force*. Progressing beyond a bomber-only presence capability, the Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) was introduced, incorporating bomber and fighter aircraft as well as numerous support aircraft, personnel and equipment needed to provide a credible amount of combat power within forty-eight hours. The success of this new type of organization depended on the grant of overseas basing rights in proximity to the area of operations. Without the ability to establish a forward base in theater, the operational challenges increased, such as determining the basing location and flight routes for the in-flight refueling aircraft, in order to support the aircraft flying significantly longer distances to get into the area of responsibility.

The Navy's transition after the Cold War dealt less with the issue of nuclear weapons than it did with shifting its emphasis away from the now-absent threat from the Soviet Union. During the Cold War Navy estimates determined fourteen aircraft carriers

were required to effectively counter Soviet Navy operations and ensure the sea lanes remained open and navigable for international shipping. After assessing their use in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the recommended number only dropped to twelve. In order to provide forward presence in support of our allies overseas, three to four carriers were required to ensure a carrier was available to occupy a particular area. With one carrier required in a particular overseas location, at any one time a second carrier would be either en route there or back to its home base. A third would be in the process of training its crew and operationally checking its systems to prepare for deployment, and a fourth would potentially be in some sort of mid- to long-term periodic maintenance period. Other necessary requirements, such as the training of future naval aviators and the conduct of joint and international exercises, would make further platforms necessary to accomplish assigned missions. The fact that our requirements send our ships to locations in the Mediterranean Sea, Arabian Gulf, and western Pacific Ocean make the need for duplicate capability available on both coasts of the United States.

Pat Towell, in his article "Gulf Threat Invigorates Debate on Post-Cold War Military," stated the "Navy's traditional role in deploying aircraft from carriers near trouble spots overlaps with the Air Force's capability to reach halfway around the world now that its fighter planes can be refueled in midair."[18] Written just prior to the hostilities of Operation Desert Storm in 1991, he provided one of the earliest observations about the redundancy between the Air Force and the Navy as the world emerged from the Cold War. To Towell's credit, he did recognize that, even before the fighting began, the conflict against Iraq in 1991 would not be indicative of the type of threat or environment the United States should expect to face in the future. A desert environment and a large,

poorly trained conventional army would provide a poor template by which future military needs could be established.

His assertion about overlapping capabilities is not necessarily shared by Robert F. Johnson. The retired Navy Captain in his article, "Carriers are Forward Presence," highlighted an important limiting example in the Arabian Gulf area of operations. He described how the Air Force ably supported Operations Northern Watch and Southern Watch, but only as long as the missions are first agreed upon by their country hosts. Restrictions placed on them by Turkey and Saudi Arabia required the government first approve any late changes to missions, else they would likely be cancelled. He added that carriers do not face that same kind of restriction.[19] As long as Turkey, Saudi Arabia or Kuwait allows overflight rights into Iraqi airspace, a carrier can provide the necessary support. However, the single most limiting factor of carrier flight operations revolves around the single shift of flight deck crew available. A twenty-four hour per day capability is possible, but only for seventy-two consecutive hours before an eighteen-hour recovery period is required. Under normal operating conditions, a carrier can sustain indefinitely ten to twelve flight hours per day. Certain modifications to manning can produce different results, but when all launch and recovery stations are manned as under normal stipulates that operational limitation.

This comparison highlights the way the two capabilities complement each other with their respective differences in execution, as opposed to one being the replacement of the other. Range limitations for the Navy would likely confine them to areas closer to the coastline, where the Air Force could easily cover targets further inland. The result would be effective and integrated use of all air assets on the battlefield in support of an

operation. Exerting the influence brought by both of their complementary capabilities, strategic bombers and aircraft carriers can provide forward presence supportive of the National Security Strategy and a timeliness of response that enhances deterrence, regional stability and warfighting.

Former Commander, US Atlantic Fleet, Admiral Henry H. Mauz, Jr. acknowledged that strategic bombers were successful with regards to deterrence and armed conflict, "but their contribution to overseas presence is limited, and to suggest that they compare to naval forces is nonsense."[20] A ringing endorsement for the success of naval forces in the role of forward presence came from a former Soviet admiral remarking that, "We perceived the US Navy as more psychologically impressive, since the US Air Force maneuvers were not so obvious."[21] Credible use of the carrier in the 1990s in the Central Command theater led the commander, General Binford Peay, US Army, to remark,

> Because of their limited footprint, strategic agility, calculated ambiguity of intent, and major strategic and operational deterrent capability, naval forces are invaluable. Our ability to rapidly move these forces in 1993 and again in 1994 from the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Gulf to positions off the coast of Somalia and Kuwait demonstrates extraordinary utility and versatility . . . the carrier battle group, in particular, has been an unmistakable sign of US commitment and resolve in the Central Region.[22]

In looking to the future, the Navy had a difficult time in the 1990s promoting a successor for the Nimitz-class carrier, the design of which had been in use since the *USS Nimitz*, commissioned in 1975. The argument over the program cost demonstrated the myopic view of only seeing the dollar figure for the construction, without viewing the costs for the investment of fifty years of service per ship. Spread over the entire lifespan of the vessel, the costs seem less exorbitant. Considering that history shows that an

average carrier would see an average of twenty-five overseas deployments, more than twenty international crises, and several major regional conflicts, the investment seemed well worth the value to many Navy supporters.[23]

Lieutenant General William E. Odom, US Army Retired, criticized prolonging the legacy of naval aviation and the aircraft carrier.

> With aircraft technology permitting long-range flights, carrier-based air support is increasingly obsolete. It takes longer to deploy than air force capabilities and has only a fraction of the air strike capability at a much higher cost. An air force wing--about 70 fighter-bombers strong--can move from Germany or the United States into the Persian Gulf within 24 hours. Unless a carrier happens to be close by, it can require three days to a week to arrive. When it does, it provides about 40 ground attack aircraft that are far less capable.[24]

He continued by stating that after cost comparison with budgetary numbers he admitted were difficult to obtain that,

> a carrier-based aircraft is the most expensive way to deliver a bomb to a target. When aircraft could fly at most 300 miles round-trip, floating airports made sense. Today, when fighters and strategic bombers can fly across oceans in less than a day, the case for carriers is weak.[25]

The Air Force position touted the capability of sending an entire Air Expeditionary Force into an area of potential conflict within twenty-four to forty-eight hours, given that a prepositioned set of necessary equipment was on hand. The full striking power of that force plus all of the support aircraft and personnel could be fully operational in a short period of time, with the only limitation being the availability of runways, parking spaces and berthing accommodations. Though perceived as a significant limitation, the argument was that in the nation's key strategic areas of the Middle East, northeast Asia and Europe the arrangements already existed with allies and partners for providing the space needed for that force.[26]

The argument for aircraft carriers touted the ship's ability to operate in international waters, without the need to obtain permission for landing or overflight rights. Saying such assumed that the area of operations borders on a major waterway, of which the Persian Gulf is an example of one of the smaller bodies of water able to permit such a large vessel. Navy proponents cited that ninety per cent of the world's population lived within a few hundred miles of the coastline, lending credence to their claims of capability. Operating from four and one half acres of US sovereign territory, the aircraft flying from the deck of a carrier had a significantly shorter distance to fly to the target, since the "mobile airport" transported them the majority of the way.

Critics of carriers faulted the capabilities of sea-based air due to the requirement for land-based refueling aircraft to assist the relatively short-ranged strike aircraft in getting to the target. However, recent operations have shown that all aircraft with the capability to do so, whether land- or sea-based, typically require in-flight refueling to complete their missions. A single B-2, flying from the continental United States to a target in the Middle East, requires the equivalent fueling capacity of a KC-10 Extender--approximately 200,000 pounds of jet fuel--in order to complete the roundtrip flight. One important challenge for several of the recent combat operations, including Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, has been the availability of in-flight refueling assets, both for the Air Force and the Navy. The apportionment of those aircraft has been and will continue to be closely scrutinized.

Throughout the years after the end of the Cold War, the efforts of the Base Force plan, the Bottom-Up Review and the Committee on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces were unable to make definitive headway towards changing the composition of the

military to realize the era of new priorities. The efforts to transform the force to accommodate new threats to the United States in the absence of the rival superpower did very little, if anything, to draw down the force size as the reduced budget required. Instead, the large superpower threat evolved into two simultaneous major regional conflicts that arguably placed a larger demand on the armed forces than previously planned. The plans did little to squelch the debate over the costly programs carried over from the Cold War. Instead, the threat of somewhat smaller, and potentially concurrent, military engagements actually contributed to their sustainment, instead of being used to fight the Soviets.

Despite the efforts of the three reviews to establish the requirements for this new world order and eliminate once and for all the ambiguity of the roles and responsibilities, the services once again initiated a duel of words in an attempt to gain dominance within the military establishment. The outcome of all of the rhetoric, when taken as a whole, spoke to the way that the programs complemented each other, rather than providing a convincing enough position to declare a single victor. An appropriate mix of capability probably could never be determined as long as the types of missions facing the military vary.

The controversy over spending programs continues even today. Halfway through the first decade of the new century, the purchase of aircraft remains cause for dispute. Though the aircraft are smaller and cost less per copy than the capital programs of the aircraft carrier and strategic bomber, the implication of the military weapon systems that questionably fulfill the nation's strategy is still an issue.

The parochialism of the individual service agenda has yet to be eliminated, and the Air Force and the Navy are still unable to fulfill the requirements of the entire nation without getting mired in interservice competition. Even today, our country is still in transition from the Cold War, and it seems that the lessons have not yet been learned to best match the budgetary dollar to the required mission at hand. Whether the F/A-22 Raptor competes with the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, or a strategic bomber program attempts to wrest funding from an aircraft carrier program, the competition of forcing one program over the other does more harm than good toward achieving an complementary and effective force to meet future challenges.

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CHAPTER 4

SERVICE CULTURE

The aviation programs of the Air Force and the Navy have often competed throughout the twentieth century. Their multi-billion dollar weapons systems programs have historically vied for funding during times of reduced budgets, but the Air Force and the Navy have been unable or unwilling to see eye to eye for a more fundamental reason. The fact that their capabilities have overlapped, presumably infringing on the other's claimed territory of responsibility, does not reveal the whole story. In order to better understand the cause of their interservice rivalry, one must examine the differing cultures resident within each of the services to determine why each has been unable to appreciate the point of view of the other service. Each service developed under different circumstances over time, and their perspectives on strategy, doctrine, etc. have stemmed from their unique experiences and leadership. Examining the historical backgrounds of the Air Force and the Navy sheds light on how their different service cultures have affected the way they operate, often incompatible with one another.

What is service culture? As defined by Edgar H. Schein in his book, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, culture is a "pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems."[1] The significance of culture is that it defines a group's thoughts, beliefs and actions. Service culture also determines the way in which each service trains, equips and organizes. It serves as a foundation for an organization's management practices and for

behaviors demonstrating and reinforcing those underlying beliefs and values. The concept of culture assists in explaining some of the seemingly incomprehensible and irrational aspects of groups and organizations. Culture develops from three influences: "(1) the beliefs, values, and assumptions of founders of organizations; (2) the learning experiences of group members as their organization evolves; and (3) new beliefs, values, and assumptions brought in by new members and leaders."[2] Past, present and future leaders of an organization contribute the most to the evolution of the organization.

In creating and executing strategy, "Culture provides an interpretational lens for the origins of conflict, shapes the contours of how conflict will be processed and the expectations concerning outcomes."[3] The historical experiences determine the foundation by which policies and doctrine are created. Examining the backgrounds of the Air Force and the Navy will allow better understanding of the origins of why they clash on matters of executing the nation's strategies.

The Air Force, an organization originating in the twentieth century, recognized the growing importance of their role after World War I while still a branch of the US Army, and sought equal status with the other services. Growing originally out of an Army culture, the Air Force developed its strategy from the writings of Brigadier General William L. "Billy" Mitchell and Italian General Guilio Douhet. From those writings the idea of conducting decisive combat from the skies was first introduced.

Douhet proposed in 1921 the importance of seizing command of the air in order to deliver bombs on airports, supply bases, and centers of population.[4] The goal was to quickly break the will of the people and convince them to force the government to sue for an early peace.[5] Mitchell's ideas followed Douhet's but he also focused on the

independence of all air assets under a centralized command, freed from its subordinate position within the Army.[6]

Based on the Army Air Forces' efforts during World War II, the results of strategic bombing were somewhat mixed. The decisiveness that was desired never materialized, and it took Strategic Bombing Surveys in both the European and Pacific theaters to determine the effectiveness of the respective bombing campaigns. Given the effect of the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the future looked significantly brighter, with the tremendous size and weight of this new weapon the military required delivery platforms that only the Army Air Forces could provide.

The goal was for this new form of warfare to be superior to typical land and sea campaigns. The war of attrition of World War I and the resulting millions of deaths drove the military and civilian leadership to seek other means to achieve military goals. Therefore, the ability of aircraft to bypass the normal defenses of an opposing army and proceed straight to a targeted center of gravity would bring the enemy to culmination in an uncharacteristically brief period, and with the savings of thousands, if not millions, of American lives. In order to avoid the type of conflict the world faced during World War I, the means of conducting war in as brief as possible a time frame was sought. These aggressive and optimistic airmen enthusiastically shouldered the burden of bringing this new kind of abbreviated warfare to reality.

The struggle for independence was finally achieved with the enactment of the National Security Act of 1947, formally creating the US Air Force as a department within the National Military Establishment, joining the Departments of Army and Navy. Enjoying their new equality, they sought any means by which they could guarantee

continued favorable status, even seeking to emerge as dominant over the other two. The tenacity by which the Air Force sought to achieve, and later maintain, their equality translated into a culture where airmen believed themselves to be superior to other servicemen, as they revered their aircraft over other methods of conducting war.

The strategic bomber epitomized the Air Force, from its extensive use during World War II and incorporating nuclear weapon capability after the successful attacks against Japan in 1945. Not resting on their laurels, they expanded beyond a bomber force to provide the added capabilities of fighters, strategic lift, tanking, reconnaissance, and ballistic missiles. Seeking to maintain their recently attained independence, they strove to ensure their continued viability within the military.

As the Air Force is only in its sixth decade of existence, and more than a century younger than the Navy, it has yet to achieve the same level of cohesion that time and tradition has brought to the much older services. The Air Force is also less united than the other services due to its own internal organization. Though the service began solely as a bomber fleet, the additional subsets of the service were grouped according to their assigned mission. Until the recent reorganization into an Air Expeditionary Force concept in the last decade, the Air Force consisted of numerous communities, each having unique capabilities and their own sub-culture. Each aircraft type remained in like units until deployed for operational requirements, making the process of integration for the first mission a challenge. In the transition to a more cohesive deployable unit, the Air Expeditionary Force remains integrated in an organization ready to conduct operations as directed.

Where the Air Force lacks a long history, the Navy's heritage and deep-seated traditions created a strong naval culture among its sailors. Dating back to 1775, the Navy assumed the primary responsibility for the protection of the nation and trade. The relative isolation the United States has enjoyed in the past, and its geographic location, required the Navy as the front line of defense by protecting the nation's coasts from seaborne attack. The realization of this defense requirement only surfaced after 1890 when Alfred Thayer Mahan published *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*. He proposed that through the control of the sea, a nation could project power ashore.[7] The vessels operated in a predominantly independent role, as the limits of communication prevented constant contact allowing for more direct supervision. Therefore, the standard modus operandi for Navy forces was to receive tasking from superiors, and proceed on the mission with no further contact from superiors until completion.

This independent mindset pervaded the service for decades, and typified the decentralized control that would clash with attempts to work together with other services in later years. An additional difficulty in working with the Navy was that the other services had an almost complete lack of knowledge of how the Navy operated. Conducting their operations far out at sea beyond contact from superiors, the manner in which Navy commanders operated differed completely from the closely monitored and controlled system for directing land forces.

This mysticism of Navy operations was exemplified by remarks from former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, when he stated that sailors "frequently seem to retire from the realm of logic into a dim and religious world in which Neptune was God, Mahan his prophet and the United States Navy the only true church."[8] Likewise, General

George C. Marshall found himself out of his element attempting to negotiate unified command within the Pacific theater during World War II. He and other leaders in Washington attempted to give General Douglas L. MacArthur command over fleet units in his area of responsibility, but he lacked an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of naval communications. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Ernest J. King then remarked, "His basic trouble was that like all Army officers he knew nothing about sea power and very little about air power."[9] Clearly, comments like that indicate that the Navy was somewhat of an enigma to those outside of the organization.

The recognition of the potential of aircraft in warfare changed the status of the Navy's role as it had done in the Army Air Corps, but it did not affect the culture. From the outset naval aviators were indoctrinated both as traditional naval officers and as airmen. This policy maintained the cohesion so firmly entrenched within the Navy. The desire to maintain the historical role of the primary defenders of the nation continued long after aircraft attained the status to remove them from that responsibility.

Naval aircraft were developed to extend the reach of effects of ships, both through reconnaissance and combat. As the capabilities of the aircraft improved, so did the range naval vessels could exert their influence. Once that influence reached inland, the services began to cross boundaries that had historically divided them.

Contributing to the difficulty of interoperability between the services, the Army and Navy experienced no real collaborative opportunities, nor had it been considered necessary. That changed once the US obtained the Philippines after the Spanish-American War in 1898. Maintaining an overseas garrison force for the first time, the Army expanded from its original role as the last line of the nation's defense within its

borders.[10] The force remaining in the Philippines began a trend of overseas stationing that continued with China, Germany, Japan and Korea. Today, that presence also exists in Kosovo, Bosnia, and, most recently, Iraq.

Before this more than one hundred year period of having Army forces stationed overseas, however, the norm was for them to remain within the borders of the United States, and maintain themselves without Navy interaction. Likewise, the Navy assumed the responsibility of maintaining presence beyond the nation's borders, preventing impediments to shipping and freedom of navigation by enemies or criminal elements. That mission further developed into the protection of the nation's shores from attack.

The shoreline represented a seam dividing the two services from the need to interact, which changed with the advent of aviation. Self-reliance in the accomplishment of assigned missions in their respective areas of responsibility had been the accepted standard. As both services developed their own use for aircraft, the lines of separation between the services began to blur. The revelation of this conflict of interest over the development of aircraft did not occur immediately. The focus of effort for the two services initially avoided the overlap.

At first, the Navy's use of aircraft supported their developing maritime strategy, using them to expand reconnaissance, and later augmenting the offensive and defensive capabilities of the task force. The Army developed what would become the Army Air Corps to similarly support reconnaissance and, to a lesser degree, add an offensive capability. Even at this point aircraft remained firmly within the sphere of influence of the respective service. Only when the Navy expanded the range of their offensive operations inland to port facilities and airfields did the first overlap occur. The continual

development of aircraft range and payload capabilities accentuated the overlap. For the first time the same either the Army Air Corps or naval aviation could engage the same targets. Similarly, Army aviation was developing the capability to detect and attack ships, further encroaching upon each other's accepted territory.

Until this period each service had operated independently, with no need or desire to combine efforts, and therefore each service's cultural development also differed. As seen most predominantly in the Pacific theater of World War II, the integration of Navy and Army Air Corps forces became necessary for the accomplishment of the island-hopping campaign. Coordination of each service's assets helped guarantee the most effective use against Japanese forces.

Though the forces experienced some opportunity to coordinate and integrate their efforts, the cooperation did not persist after the war. The development of nuclear weapons exacerbated the growing tension regarding the blurring lines of responsibility. As their aircraft programs developed and improved in capability, each service claimed the ability to successfully conduct attacks with this weapon of choice on the battlefield, which became the focus of controversy between the services.

Lacking a familiarity with the way the other service worked prevented considerations being given toward cooperation in operations. Only when the emphasis was directed from the most senior military leadership did that change. Until the establishment of joint training, multi-service interaction generally only occurred during combat operations. During the Cold War, the threat of the Soviet military allowed the division of responsibility between the services to continue, sustaining the different service cultures.

Policy makers recognized that increased inefficiency and friction result from pursuing agenda determined beneficial to the individual service, vice seeking to achieve the goals of the joint organization as a whole. By enacting the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Congress finally mandated a requirement for the services to integrate at the most basic level. The act attempted to further integrate the services, in order to maximize the development of a joint culture without minimizing the importance of individual service culture. The Act delineated a requirement for all officers to hold twenty-two months of service in a joint assignment as a prerequisite for attaining flag officer rank. It also created the means by which officers could study joint doctrine through the Professional Military Education program.

Goldwater-Nichols moved the military a step in the right direction by starting to integrate the officer corps. Though the step was a small one, the goal of reducing the rivalrous service cultures and promoting a more cooperative environment made it necessary. Despite the argument that the Act lacked sufficient measures to accomplish its goals, the solution starts with the support of the officer corps as, "the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to work with culture."[11] If that is in fact true, then over time the efforts will prove successful. Through the 1990s, however, the same issues were prevalent.

Service culture persisted during that decade due to individual services formulating their own military strategies that were often incompatible, even in the final years of the Cold War. This prevented any successful collaboration in meeting the requirements of the National Military Strategy. It also continued to stoke the coals of interservice rivalry.

Addressing overlaps in capabilities occurred only in budgetary struggles, rather than collaborating on a mutually agreeable compromise.

The success in Operation Desert Storm drove planning efforts together for a short time, but with the publishing of the Navy's *Forward . . . From the Sea* and the Air Force's *Global Presence*, the creation of separate strategies re-emerged.[12] As long as the services generated their own strategy without collaborating with the other services, they fostered individual culture instead of a move toward a joint culture. Any lessons learned from Desert Storm disappeared when the services resumed single-service operations afterwards. The handling of the administrative requirements of each service resided internally. The appeal for funding before Congress occurred on a service level. Each service was responsible for the training, organizing and equipping their units to prepare them for combat. Little interaction between services existed, except to compete for funding.[13]

Improvements to interoperability require changing service culture. Increased routine interaction will help to preserve the lessons learned during previous joint operations and to alter the experiences of the services that form the basis of service culture. As interaction becomes a normal part of each service's operations, interoperability will become an important requirement for each service. As service culture changes to accept the importance of interoperability, it will become a planning assumption for service staffs.[14]

Perhaps each service's different sets of core values promote a service-centric outlook to the individual airman or sailor, instead of embracing a joint set of core values. The Air Force endorses "Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We

Do,"[15] while the Navy promotes "Honor, Courage and Commitment."[16] From the two sets of values only service and commitment provide commonality. According to Joint Publication 1 (JP 1), "Joint Warfare of the Armed Forced of the United States," integrity is the "cornerstone for building trust."[17] The Navy's core values seem to diverge from the accepted joint framework, and the Air Force does not go far enough with their values. In order to better support the joint values of integrity, competence, physical and moral courage, and teamwork, the services should be expected to mirror the joint doctrine. Though this change might be a small step in overcoming service cultural discrepancies, a common value set across all services makes sense over the current construct.

In the future technology might determine the outcome of service culture's effects on interservice rivalry. A combined force structure of extremely long range precision guided weapons, and aerial or space borne reconnaissance and strike vehicles would potentially end all competition for competing platforms specific to an individual service. For example, the likelihood of the aircraft carrier remaining a viable asset in today's military for its entire fifty-year lifespan is difficult to foresee. The speed of technological advances makes the future impossible to forecast, but one proposal for a future force endorses the use of unmanned combat vehicles. The implications of such an option on the continued arrangement of separate services are unknown.

Periodically, there has been discussion about combining the services into a single organization, based on the joint task force construct used in the way the nation goes into combat. The success of joint operations starting with Operation Desert Storm in 1991 has demonstrated the feasibility of creating a non-service-specific design for the military.

Eliminating the separate service identities altogether would seemingly end the rivalry attributed to the overlap of capabilities.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower identified the merits of a combined military as early as 1950, in a speech to the National War College.

> Separate ground, sea and air warfare is gone forever. If ever again we should be involved in war, we will fight it in all elements with all Services, as one single concentrated effort. Peacetime preparatory and organizational activity must conform to this fact. Strategic and tactical planning must be completely unified, combat forces organized into unified commands, each equipped with the most efficient weapons systems that science can develop, singly led and prepared to fight as one regardless of Service.[18]

The difficulty in creating such a drastic change in the current structure of the military lies in the very reason the services possess difficulty in coordinating successfully. The parochialism of their culture strengthens the resolve to maintain that separate identity, resisting the benefits streamlining would accomplish. Starting with the Key West agreement of 1948, and continuing through Goldwater-Nichols and the Commission on the Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces in 1995, the government arguably has never achieved its goal of defining roles, missions and functions adequately within the constraints of maintaining service identities. Whether or not eliminating those identities will bring the armed forces to the joint ideal cannot be accurately foreseen. The difficulty in convincing the acceptance of such a radical change is the first hurdle, and therefore does not look to be a quick solution.

Dr. Don M. Snider accurately describes the association between service culture and interservice rivalry. “Interservice rivalry occurs when the services, each following its own interests and ideology, compete within DOD for peacetime roles and wartime missions--and thus for resources--that they believe accrue to their unique strategic

approach to war fighting."[19] The differing service cultures combined with competing capabilities across varying spectrums of warfare prevent definitive seams by which to define a service with a particular mission. Therefore, the overlaps exist and have even been accentuated over the last several decades. Though the delivery was somewhat facetious, Colonel Richard Szafranski, in his article, "Interservice Rivalry in Action: The Endless Roles and Missions Refrain," felt a possible solution for the infighting could be found if "the service chiefs can agree to put interservice rivalry aside, to forget past grievances, to speak with one voice. This, however, could occur only in an aviation fantasy world--a world where pigs fly."[20] He believed that an amount of tolerance was all that could be expected from the services, and that a flare-up of tension would likely re-emerge.

The rich historical tradition of the Navy and the tenacity and technological pursuits of the Air Force have created difficulties in interoperability, exacerbated by a value system misaligned from joint doctrine. Though a drastic restructuring of the armed forces could eliminate service culture from playing a factor in those conflicts of interest, the direction to do so would have to come from the highest of authorities, and still may not successfully eliminate the negative aspects of individual service parochialism. The efforts of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, among other studies and policies, have made some of the progress needed to expand the awareness of the officer corps outside of their respective services. Assuming that progress continues, the likelihood of keeping service structure intact will probably suffice in eventually overcoming this roadblock to "jointness."

[1]Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 12.

[2]Ibid., 211.

[3]Hugo van der Merwe, Dennis J.D. Sandole and Wallace Warfield, *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Practice* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 176.

[4]Giulio Douhet, *The Command of the Air*, trans. Dino Ferrari (New York: Coward-McCann, 1942), 25, 34.

[5]Ibid., 58.

[6]Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 631.

[7]C. Kenneth Allard, *Command, Control and the Common Defense* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 11.

[8]Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper, 1948), 506.

[9]Thomas B. Buell, *Master of Sea Power: A Biography of Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980), 216-217.

[10]Allan Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense* (New York: Free Press, 1984), 331.

[11]Schein, 2.

[12]Ibid., 20.

[13]Allard, 94-96.

[14]Brian D. Pearson, "Interoperability: Treat the Disease, Not the Symptom" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1995), xi.

[15]US Air Force, "United States Air Force Core Values" [Web site] (accessed 27 March 2004); available from http://www.usafa.af.mil/core-value/; Internet.

[16]US Navy, "Core Values of the United States Navy" [Web site] (accessed 27 March 2004); available from http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/traditions/html/corvalu.html; Internet.

[17]Joint Publication (Pub) 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States* (14 November 2000), viii.

[18]Richard L. West, Lieutenant General, United States Army (Retired), *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986: Its Impact on the Army* (Arlington, VA: Association of the United States Army, 1988), 3.

[19]Don M. Snider, "The US Military in Transition to Jointness: Surmounting Old Notions of Interservice Rivalry," *Airpower Journal* 10, no. 3 (fall 1996): 18.

[20]Colonel Richard Szafranski, "Interservice Rivalry in Action: The Endless Roles and Missions Refrain," *Airpower Journal* 10, no. 2 (summer 1996): 58.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Given the analyses of the two main periods of conflict between the Air Force and the Navy, what do they tell us about the roots of interservice rivalry and their importance? Likely, infighting between branches, functional areas, specialties, etc. has occurred as an inwardly focused competition in the absence of a defined enemy for as long as specialized soldiers have existed. In the twentieth century, however, there are two themes that address the specific infighting between the two services in the late 1940s and the 1990s. One manner in which the services touted their primary weapons programs of the strategic bomber and aircraft carrier was creating or modifying service missions as a direct result of the importance placed on nuclear weapons by military leadership after the Second World War. The same occurred during the transition period after the Cold War, as nuclear weapons were deemphasized by the military, but sustained as part of a global power equalizer among the nuclear-capable states. The other theme concerned the different histories and backgrounds of the services, and how their narrow vision confined them to seek only what benefited their interests instead of striving to support the larger picture and searching for what was best for the whole country. The parochialism of service culture prevented an objective examination of one service by the other. These prevailing premises highlight why the Air Force and the Navy sustained a near constant struggle for a period of several decades and demonstrate a representative example of how rivalries persevere despite attempts to remedy them.

The initial draw to this subject matter was what appeared to be a similarity of circumstances of the two strategic bomber and aircraft carrier arguments in the last

century. At first the two appeared more alike than after closer examination. The direction of national policy drove much of the controversy, but what differed primarily was the extent to which the service appearing to fall into disfavor would strive to reinvent itself to maintain a perceived relevance. Sustaining the goals of each service took shape quite differently in the two periods.

In the time frame immediately after World War II the expected weapon of choice for future conflict would be nuclear. The advantage held by the Air Force, with their large, land-based aircraft capable of carrying thousands of pounds of nuclear ordnance for thousands of miles into the heart of the Soviet Union seemed unmatchable for the Navy. However, they would not give up without a fight. Faced with a significant potential reduction of their mission with no perceived maritime threat, they attempted to discredit the proclaimed capabilities of the Air Force bombers, especially the B-36 Peacemaker, both to express concern about the nation's planned one-faceted offense and highlight the limitations of an aircraft less capable than advertised. In disparaging the Air Force they also sought to participate in the same missions by aircraft launched from aircraft carriers.

Actions undertaken to advocate the Navy's goals were at times unethical, but only through the fault of a few individuals, perhaps too caught up in pursuing their cause without considering the implications. Cedric Worth and his "anonymous document" significantly hindered the Navy's aims, as did Rear Admiral Gallery's internal memorandum. However, the Air Force was also culpable for causing unneeded turmoil. Brigadier General Armstrong's critical remarks before a largely Navy audience,

slandering the Marine Corps and declaring the Navy obsolete, were not exactly in keeping with the professionalism expected of a senior military officer.

Another significant event was the "Revolt of the Admirals." Five admirals and a former Commandant of the Marine Corps stood their ground before a Congressional committee, and presented the current issues for the Navy. They believed that the preponderance of attention given to strategic nuclear bombing was not only the wrong course for the nation to follow, but it would cause significant degradation to the rest of the military and its ability to conduct its other missions. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Louis E. Denfeld's testimony was their linchpin of consensus. Had he followed the wishes of his superior, Navy Secretary Francis P. Matthews, the result would not nearly have been as effective in benefiting the Navy's carrier program and its overall position within the National Military Establishment. With Secretary Matthews the only senior Navy official to present a positive outlook on behalf of the service, his remarks revealed him as a puppet of Defense Secretary Louis A. Johnson.

Out of all of the turmoil that ensued, the Navy was ultimately able to pursue the use of nuclear weapons with carrier aircraft, but the issue of the infighting between the Air Force and the Navy remained unresolved throughout that time frame. Despite attempts in Key West and Newport to address the manner in which the two services could undertake their assigned missions without infringing upon each other were largely unsuccessful. The distraction of the growing threat of the Soviet Union's expansionist policy served to postpone any internal resolution until decades later.

In the 1990s the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact signaled the end of the Cold War, but the period also stimulated a renewed struggle

between the two services over the accomplishment of a new national strategy in a global environment with the United States as the only superpower. The US military predominantly maintained weapon systems originally designed for use against its Soviet counterparts. Now the transition from a policy of nuclear deterrence to one of forward presence in support of allies and friends would become the focal point for disagreement. The argument emerged over whether that policy was best suited for a carrier providing that physical presence in international waters near a country of concern, or a force of strategic bombers, awaiting the order to strike from within the borders of the United States, could provide a virtual presence through their ability to speed to any location on the earth within twenty hours.

The arguments, appearing in professional journals and other media, included a cost versus gain comparison between the operations of the two weapon systems. Dollar figures were nearly impossible to determine with a high measure of fidelity, as the nebulous prices for the weapon systems themselves were difficult to clarify. The limitations of requiring basing and overflight rights for aircraft other than the bombers highlighted that although the Air Force has enjoyed the luxury of welcome hosts in the vicinity of recent crises, future conflicts have no such guarantee. The firepower provided by the embedded air wing on an aircraft carrier may be the only ready resource available to provide that desired regional forward presence and force multiplier. Though strategic bombers once awaited the call to execute a nuclear strike, they now demonstrate the capability of conducting precision conventional strikes deep into hostile territory, maximizing its stealth and lethality to accomplish difficult missions. In conjunction with the capabilities of an aircraft carrier, the two were likely better suited as an enhanced

complementary force striking from different directions and destroying targets throughout the area of operations, all while remaining unpredictable to an enemy trying to guess from where the next strike will arrive.

Also prevalent throughout the two periods was the phenomenon known as service culture, which greatly affected how the two services failed to comprehend the basis for each side's agenda. Fundamental differences in the way each service evolved shaped issues that were important for one but not necessarily the other. Air Force culture developed out of the Army, where centralized control was the norm, and differed from the Navy with its historically decentralized structure. This difference was exacerbated by the general lack of interaction shared by the two services until the development of aviation. Only when the utilization of air power by both services began to encroach into the traditional territory of the other service did the conflict truly develop.

Attempts to align the priorities of the two services have yet to make significant progress into creating a true jointly focused military. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 attempted to break down parochialism through increased education across all services and mandated integration at the lowest levels. Some critics have also proposed altogether eliminating the identities of different services into a joint force construct consistent with the ubiquitous adage, "Train like you fight, fight like you train."

The separate identities, however, are not the blame for a serviceman's lack of identification with other services. Some blame must remain with the individual services for instilling a core value framework that differs from what is needed for the joint force of the future. The joint core values of integrity, competence, physical and moral courage,

and teamwork should be the common foundation from which the services can expand, but not deviate.

Despite some critics' endorsement of a unification of the services or some other attempt at fixing the problem by some other organizational means, the fact is that rivalry would still exist. Where the conflict now occurs between the services, future struggles would persist between functional areas. The positive aspects of interservice rivalry are in fact beneficial to the military. In the absence of a defined enemy, the services themselves create the competition which improves the overall military. In times of budgetary reductions, competing for the shrinking defense dollars that the services present their best case, and pursue the best systems for the good of the country and satisfying the requirements set by the National Military Strategy.

The Air Force and the Navy have historically placed the highest importance on advancing their own individual causes, disregarding any overlap in capabilities of another service. Future challenges can only be avoided through a genuinely joint approach to advancing national goals and guidelines. Nuclear weapons provided the catalyst for interservice confrontations during the twentieth century. Military capabilities in space may provide similar problems in the near future, as all services have interests there. Further technological advances may also provide the means for continuing the cycle of interservice rivalry, but by understanding the negative aspects this infighting has historically produced, the military can strive to remain positive and constructive in their competitiveness.

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