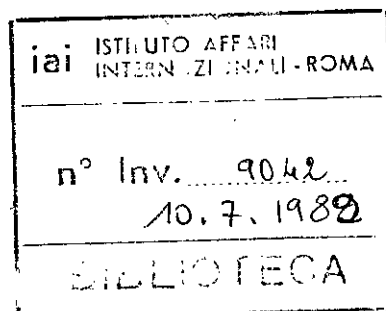


THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, SOUTHERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN  
Istituto Affari Internazionali  
International Institute for Strategic Studies  
Castelgandolfo, 10-11/IV/1978

1. "Summary of Castelgandolfo conference"
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SUMMARY OF CASTELGANDOLFO CONFERENCE  
April 10-11, 1978

1. Introduction

This extremely short paper has two aims: first to give a rapid outline of the debate at the Castelvandolfo conference, with special emphasis on those questions where a substantial consensus emerged and on those where differing viewpoints were expressed; second to identify on the basis of this summary, those elements in the situation in need of deeper discussion, thereby giving a broad outline of the themes due to be discussed at the next conference and thus the final results of the original project on NATO's Southern flank.

2. The main points discussed

a) Military questions

Differing views were expressed concerning the survival of the VI fleet and its ability to operate throughout the Mediterranean (including the Eastern sector) and thus to accomplish the mission assigned it in wartime. These doubts were due to the seriousness of the Soviet threat which has recently grown with the assignment of "Backfire" to the marine air force. The following opinions were expressed:

- The main task of the VI Fleet is now the destruction or neutralization of the Soviet fleet. There is no possibility of the VI Fleet being able to give air support to the land battles on the Italo-Yugoslav or the Greek-Turkish-Bulgarian fronts in the early stages of a conflict.

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- "Backfire"'s performance, which enables it to cover practically the whole of the Mediterranean, represents a further significant increase of the threat. This increased threat should however be evaluated together with other considerations (the efficiency of Turkish air defence, the high level early warning/intercept capability of the Hawkeye/F-14 system, the impossibility of escorting "Backfire" with Soviet fighters on anti-ship missions). All these factors allow a reduced evaluation of the threat.

- The survival of the VI Fleet is linked to its ability to blunt a surprise attack and to the entry into service of ships equipped with more advanced anti-missile and anti-aircraft defences (the Aegis system).

- It would be wrong, in the evaluation of the Soviet threat, to under-estimate the Soviets' significant mine-laying capability.

- The availability of air and naval bases in the North African countries is of considerable importance in determining the operational capability of the Soviet Fleet. This availability has a decisive role in determining the VI Fleet's ability to operate in the Mediterranean.

- The VI Fleet ability to carry out assigned missions and to survive also depends on the fleet's ability to deploy at least two task forces with carriers in the Mediterranean during crises and thus to have these available for use in a conflict.

- In a conflict between NATO and the Warsaw Pact it may be assumed that the Southern European NATO countries would participate actively in naval and air operations alongside United States' forces. It is logical to assume that French forces, which are far from being insignificant, would participate in the war thereby helping to strengthen the VI Fleet.

- At the same time it would be wrong to exclude the possibi-

lity, however improbable it might appear, that a number of North African and Middle Eastern countries might not only provide the Soviets with air and naval bases but might also play an active role in the conflict alongside Soviet forces.

There was considerable discussion over the possibility of increased use of ground bases for control of the Mediterranean. This could be achieved through the use of what new technologies can offer in the field of satellite observation of broad stretches of sea with localization and tracking of hostile naval forces, in navigation when the NAVSTAR system becomes operational, in new missile systems (both air-sea missiles with stand-off capability and air or ground launched cruise missiles), and in anti-submarine warfare (more sophisticated detection systems, particularly effective mines) etc. In other words the discussion was centred around whether or not it was possible to reduce or eliminate the Mediterranean role of the VI Fleet (with all its alleged vulnerability to the Soviet threat) and replace this role with aircraft deployed on land bases. These would thus take on the role of denying the sea to the Soviet fleet and thus, indirectly and in collaboration with the "lighter" navies belonging to the NATO countries on the Southern flank, of keeping open Mediterranean lines of communication. As a minimum it should be possible, if not to completely replace the VI Fleet in all its roles and for all missions, at least to achieve increased integration of land-based and naval forces thereby allowing the Americans to reduce their naval presence in the Mediterranean and increase that presence on other areas which are equally important from a strategic point of view: the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans, the sea routes to the South of the Cape of Good Hope and to the West of Gibraltar.

Nonetheless the objection was raised that if this concept of

ground basing were assumed as the only alternative to the American naval presence in the Mediterranean (or to those elements in the American force capable of projecting power ashore namely aircraft carriers and marines units) the result would be the loss of the fundamental role played by the VI Fleet in peacetime: that is not only the maintenance of the balance of military power between the two blocs but also the defence of unilateral super-power interests vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. What is more the flexibility of the VI Fleet, that is its ability to influence crises in the Middle East, in North Africa and in the Persian Gulf even without direct military intervention would also be lost. None of these areas are officially included in the sphere of responsibility of NATO although they obviously are included in the sphere of responsibility of a great power like the USA.

At the same time one should not underestimate the importance of the fact that once the USSR has completed construction of the 4 "Kiev" class aircraft carriers it will be able to deploy a task force in the Mediterranean which will be similar to, if not as strong as American task forces. The obvious aim here is to increase the influence of the Soviet naval presence and to increase the Soviet naval intervention capability in a crisis due to the availability of carrier-based V/STOL aircraft capable of projecting power ashore.

It should also be remembered that ground bases would reduce the flexibility of intervention and are particularly vulnerable to attack from the air particularly if the necessary hardening for aircraft and infrastructures (hangarages for aircraft, hardening for command, control and communication centers, bunkers for personnel, rapid runway repair capability etc.) were lacking. Finally ground bases could prove to be unavailable to US forces

if the allied countries on whose territory they were located decided that the dispute or the confrontation between the superpowers was not covered by the North Atlantic Treaty.

b) Political questions

Many important political and politico-military questions were raised during the conference. I will not attempt here to give a complete account of the discussion but rather to concentrate on those points on which interest was concentrated.

- It is difficult to see the Mediterranean, within the limits of Nato's area of responsibility, as an area of direct military conflict between East and West except in the context of a general conflict originating in other NATO theatres or in other areas.

- Crises on the Southern flank may originate from crises outside the two blocs with direct linkages to Mediterranean countries (a post-Tito crisis in Yugoslavia, a new confrontation in the Middle East, a crisis between Algeria and Morocco over Mauritania etc.) or to other external crises (which are more probable and at least equally dangerous) linked to destabilizing events in non-Mediterranean areas (Saudi Arabia, the Red Sea and Indian Ocean areas). In both cases NATO would be faced with particularly complex and difficult options. The European countries' attitudes would be determined by a whole series of factors: - policy towards the Arab countries or African policy in general, economic interests in the crisis area, political ties with the countries included in the crisis, relations with the United States and the effectiveness of any pressure from the US, the stability of Governments in power and their ability to assume responsibilities and to take decisions even when these are unpopular, etc. Oil

would be particularly important and could well play a decisive role in shaping the final decision.

- Crises on the Southern flank could originate in crises within the alliance such as a show-down between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus or the Aegean continental shelf. As in the past it is extremely unlikely that NATO would be able to exert a direct influence over the course of events.

- The factors of political, economic and social instability sometimes dramatically present in NATO Mediterranean countries have become more important for the effective viability of the Alliance than the military factors which predominate in the Northern and central sectors. In other words NATO vulnerability on the Southern flank is more due to the internal instability of Mediterranean alliance members than to any superiority of the Pact in conventional military forces.

- In the present Mediterranean situation the United States are aware that they have to maintain their presence in the area in order to meet demands and crisis situations lying outside official NATO responsibilities, but which nonetheless involve the world balance of power. At the same time they are also aware that it is precisely in this situations in which they could find themselves without essential (or, at any rate, useful) allied logistic support (airports for air-lifts, port infrastructure, etc.). This could lead the USA to look for alternative solutions which would eliminate the need for ground bases. These might involve a re-evaluation of the deployment and size of US forces and/or of contingency plans for intervention in crisis zones in view of possible changes in the internal situation in NATO Southern flank countries or in the at-

titudes of other European allies.

There is also the problem of how far the VI Fleet's intervention capability in crises outside NATO, with or without allied help, is a real rather than a theoretical capability, of the levels of violence which should be hypothesized in such an eventuality and thus of the effective constraints on the flexibility which a naval presence is claimed to grant the USA in the Mediterranean.

- It is thus of great importance to achieve a greater coherency of view between the United States and the European allies over crises outside NATO which would be bound, directly or indirectly, to involve the Mediterranean area and/or affect Europe's oil supplies and/or the overall military balance between the two blocs. The achievement of this coherency of views obviously depends on different perceptions of the "threat" by the USA and by different European NATO countries; views in the central sector and on the Southern flank clearly differ. Different perceptions obviously influence European priorities concerning crises outside the Alliance. At an operational level this coherency of views could lead to joint contingency planning or to the discussion and approval of a series of coordinated political principles, at least on essential questions so as to avoid policy differences, differing positions, misunderstandings and ruptures between the United States and her European allies.

This greater coherency, which as far as an intervention policy is concerned, could be defined as a two way street, would increase both the United States' and the European countries' flexibility of action. Furthermore such a series of principles made public through appropriate channels could act as a deterrent against any further expansion of Soviet international activism.

- The enlargement of the EEC and the possibility that Spain might become a member of NATO both represent "novelties" in the Med-



Mediterranean area and as such are worthy of discussion. Enlargement could improve the effectiveness and credibility of EEC Mediterranean policy and might favour a more open North-South, Euro-Arab dialogue. Spanish NATO membership would mean an increase in allied naval forces deployed in the Mediterranean and this could act as a further counterweight to the threat from the Soviet fleet.

- Within the Mediterranean framework the Alliance seems to be moving away from its traditional tasks towards a different form of crisis management involving not only individual military security factors but also other political, economic and social questions. Involvement in these questions requires new policies and policy tools.

### 3. Hypotheses for research

- The research should analyze in greater depth the American Mediterranean naval forces' ability to survive, with particular reference to the Eastern Mediterranean. We should also investigate the question of whether, in the future, the US naval presence is destined to be replaced with ground-based air forces, that is of whether there is likely to be a transition from naval projection of power to ground-based projection of power. Among other factors this analysis will have to consider: - new technologies; trends naval development in the United States and the Soviet Union; the respective capabilities of the two navies including their mining and ASW capabilities; the possibility of periods of peace, of tension or of war, either as a result of a conflict between NATO and Warsaw Pact or alternatively of a confrontation between the two superpowers as the result of a crisis in the area escaping their reciprocal control; the adaptability of the ground-basing concept to crises outside NATO and to the possibility of domestic change in individual Mediterranean

Alliance members; the adequacy of ground basing for assuming all the roles previously belonging to naval forces; survival and flexibility considerations; weapons system to be used; the respective cost effectiveness of ground-basing and of naval forces; integration and coordination with allied forces etc.

- The research will have to give a more detailed analysis of the real relationship between internal instability in the NATO Mediterranean countries (with a detailed examination of their political, economic and social problems) and the risk of increased Alliance vulnerability vis-à-vis the Eastern bloc. It is also necessary to consider what is the real connection between internal political change, changes in foreign policy and more particularly changes in attitudes towards NATO (commitments, participation, military expenditure, American bases on allied territory, the nuclear weapons' storage sites, attitudes adopted in NATO crises etc.), how far this connection may be affected by external and above all American attitudes, NATO perceptions of this kind of change, the kind of reactions which are likely to result and possible consequences. The possibility of direct participation in government by the Italian Communist Party could be used as a case study.

- The research will have to provide a more detailed analysis of possible scenarios for crises outside NATO, the "strategic" linkages between the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, the most possible and the optimal response by the Alliance and the likelihood that such a response could be coordinated with the USA. In this context it is necessary to examine the strategic implications of those economic considerations which are beginning to exert an ever greater influence on the European countries' Mediterranean and African policies and of the opening of a Euro-Arab or a Euro-African dialogue.

It is also necessary to examine differing perceptions of the threat and the importance of these in decision-making. Finally it is necessary to examine possibilities for and the viability of a more concrete coordination of diplomatic, political (and maybe even military) action between the USA and the European allies when faced with crises outside NATO, as well as the ways in which such coordination could be organized and put into effect and the limitations of this effectiveness. As far as American reactions are concerned the analysis should cover practical and theoretical possibilities for intervention, that is the constraints existing on the use of force and of air and sea forces in the Mediterranean.

- The research should analyze in greater detail the posture the Alliance should adopt towards the Mediterranean situation, both from the usual restricted viewpoint of the confrontation between the two military blocs and from a broader viewpoint taking in linkages between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf and between the Mediterranean and Africa. In other words the research should face up to the problem of possible alternatives to NATO in its present form (a broadening or a narrowing of the Alliance to include new elements or to increase the role of bilateral relations, etc.) and that of the role to be played by the United States. It should also be considered what role France could play and the way in which other European institutions, such as the EEC could credibly take on particular responsibilities in the Mediterranean area.

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THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, SOUTHERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Patterns and Priorities of the Superpowers' Presence  
in the Mediterranean Area. Present Situation and  
Future Perspectives.

by Maurizio CREMASCO

Castelgandolfo  
10/11 April 1978

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or for quotation

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## INTRODUCTION

On the Southern Flank of the Atlantic Alliance and, indeed, in the Mediterranean area in general, the presence of the United States and the Soviet Union, the motives behind that presence, the priorities of the two superpowers and their mutual relations are very different from those to be found in continental Europe.

Here, the confrontation between them is based on two military Alliances with basically similar roles and missions (even if American forces do not have the same role as their Soviet counterpart in guaranteeing the "faithfulness" of their allies). The situation in the area is fundamentally a stable one. There is a well-defined dividing line between the blocs, well-defined, that is, in politico-military, as well as in purely geographical, terms. It is thus fairly clear how one side would react if the other attempted to change the status quo. (At the same time, the Soviet Union has a strong tendency to drastically limit the room for institutional change in countries lying within her "security belt" and does not hesitate to intervene if she believes internal order in her bloc to be threatened). The range of action possible in continental Europe is thus extremely limited. What is more, within this area, any confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union would inevitably be tied to the vital interests of the European members of the two Alliances, who could in no way avoid involvement.

Finally, there exists within the area a certain homogeneity of interests and behaviour between countries belonging to the same Alliance, and there exist neither political nor economic motives capable of pushing Alliance members into open, destabilizing dispute. In this way, each of the dominant superpowers avoids the

effort needed to resolve internal conflicts within their respective Alliances which could weaken it in its relations with its main opponent.

In the Mediterranean area, on the other hand, the frontier between the superpowers is far less well-defined, not only because of the predominance of water over land, but also because many countries in the area formally belong to neither of the two blocs. Although, over the last ten years, these countries have been losing their role as "extras" and have taken on a "star role" in international events, they are still open to military and economic penetration by the superpowers. The European members of the Atlantic Alliance participate actively in this penetration with economic and industrial aid as well as arms sales. Nonetheless, an overall political strategy capable of rendering these ties more coherent and of formulating objectives is, as yet, lacking.

At the same time, given that the area includes countries outside the two Alliances, it is possible for the two superpowers to arrive at a confrontation over questions of little or no interest to the European allies.

The different roles assigned by the United States and the Soviet Union to their respective forces represents a further element of instability lacking in central Europe. The United States are fully aware of the vital importance of free transit through the Mediterranean and, using the VI fleet capability to project power ashore, they have assigned their naval forces the primary tasks of keeping communications routes open and of giving support to the ground battle on the Southern Flank - two tasks of extreme importance to NATO. Clearly these tasks are, in the last analysis,

subordinated to the essential task of ensuring the fleet's own survival against attacks from Soviet missile-launching vessels and attack submarines. Nonetheless, the presence of the VI fleet in the Mediterranean is also useful for the defense of specifically American interests, namely among other roles, the defense of friendly states outside NATO, particularly Israel and as a deterrent against Soviet threats of direct intervention in recurrent crises in the Middle East.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, does not depend quite as closely on the Mediterranean: even a drastic reduction in her trade via the Mediterranean would have no determining effect on her economic and industrial viability. She thus deploys her forces in a sea denial role with particular emphasis on the destruction of the most important elements in the United States fleet, that is missile-carrying nuclear submarines and aircraft-carriers. This gives her a certain advantage in the sense that she can exploit the vulnerability which is inherent in the position of a power which seeks to maintain a position of predominance which is being openly challenged and which is attempting to defend itself against a threat which is becoming ever more concrete and a cause for ever growing concern. Nonetheless, this advantage is offset by the fact that in order to enter the Mediterranean Soviet ships have to pass through two choke points and that if they are to operate effectively, they need naval and air bases. The Soviet fleet, just like its American counterpart, serves to protect Soviet interests in the Middle East, in North Africa as well as playing a supporting role in the penetration of the Third World and for "anti-imperialist" movements .

Finally, there exist on the Southern Flank, differences and conflicts between members of the same Alliance. If the main problem facing the Warsaw Pact is the degree of distinctly limited independence claimed by Roumania, NATO has to face the far more serious problem of the conflict which has torn Greek-Turkish relations, bringing the two countries to the brink of war, and provoking Greek withdrawal from the Alliance's military organization, the re-organization of LANDSOUTHEAST and SIX ATAF commands and United States involvement in an extremely difficult game. The Atlantic Alliance has played a very limited role here and has lost a certain degree of credibility. The end result has been a strengthening of bilateral defense ties between the United States, Greece and Turkey (even if these are now more limited in scope than in the past), sanctioned by two treaties awaiting final ratification by the United States Congress. The importance of the dispute should not, however, be under-estimated, given the weakening in the credibility and the military posture of the Alliance which it implies. Should the dispute be reopened and explode into an open conflict between Greece and Turkey, it would mean the end of NATO's Southern Flank.

#### Trends in Soviet Policy

It was logical that the transformation and strengthening of the Soviet navy would be reflected in the situation in the Mediterranean. Nonetheless, the increase in the Soviet presence in recent years has superceded all estimates. If one examines the geographical distribution of US/USSR combatant deployment (aircraft carriers, general purpose submarines, major and minor surface combat units, amphibious ships and mine warfare ships) from 1965 to 1975, a signifi-



cant trend becomes clear. Whereas in the Pacific the average Soviet naval deployment has passed from 2 to 3 units, in the Atlantic from 2 to 10 and in the Indian Ocean from zero to 9, in the Mediterranean the increase has been far more impressive: from 4 to 28 units. In the same period the US VI fleet has decreased from 34 to 31 units.

During the June 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict, the Soviet Mediterranean Eskadra was boosted to about 70 ships; since the war, the Soviets have maintained an average of at least 35 to 40 ships: 10 to 15 cruisers, frigates, destroyers, escort ships and sometimes a helicopter carrier, 2 or 3 amphibious ships, 6 or 7 diesel-electric submarines, a couple of nuclear undersea craft and 10 to 15 auxiliary ships.

Apart from nuclear submarines which generally come from the Northern fleet, since transiting the Strait of Gibraltar is less detectable than passing through the Dardanelles, most of the surface ships and conventional submarines are rotated from the Black Sea Fleet.

On some occasions, considering the arriving and the departing ships, more than 75 Soviet vessels have been present at one time in the Mediterranean.

If we analyze the pattern of Soviet penetration and attempted penetration in the Middle East and in the North African countries, it is possible to detect certain elements in common with Soviet-Yugoslav relations (even if the ideological context is very different).

The first characteristic element is military aid:

- the sale or gift of both sophisticated and less sophisticated weapons systems (with a trend to supply weapons with an ever higher technology content);

- the presence of both civilian and military advisers and technical personnel who, in certain countries, in given situations, become a military force in their own right with important, indeed fundamental, roles in operational and logistic duties (command and control of defense networks, running of radar and missile bases, piloting of aircraft on surveillance and reconnaissance missions over the Mediterranean with an anti-VI fleet role and occasionally of aircraft in a combat role, first and second level maintenance of equipment and weapons systems;
- training of military personnel in the countries receiving the weapons both in loco as on-job training and in the Soviet Union with specialized operational and technical courses.

Although the expulsion of military advisers is always a possibility (as we have seen in practice), the importance of this kind of tie should not be under-estimated.

Supplying weapons, technical assistance, training and spare parts means creating a degree of dependency from which it is very difficult for the receiving country to escape without risking serious military weakening (it takes much more time to build and strengthen one's armed forces than for these to deteriorate). Without spare parts and expert maintenance, operational efficiency falls extremely rapidly.

Turning to alternative sources of supply in no way reduces the complexity of the problem. Quite apart from all the possible delays in the acquisition process, there are the effects of the lack of standardization on operation efficiency, difficulties in integrating Soviet and Western weapons in the same logistics system

(maintenance, supplies, administration) and difficulties in training personnel.

What is more, training in the Soviet Union, especially on officer courses, at military academy or Staff level creates personal acquaintances, friendships and a characteristic process of identification with the mentality, attitudes and behaviour of the military élite in the host country. All this, if these officers take on a key role in the armed forces or the government of their respective countries, could, for the Soviet Union, prove to be extremely useful. At the same time, one should not forget the advantages deriving from a spread of doctrines, operational concepts and tactics which would facilitate joint or integrated operations should these countries decide to side with the Soviet Union in a conflict.

Apart from military supplies, there is also economic aid. Here, however, the Soviet Union has been less effective and influential. Outside the military sector, Soviet technologies, managerial techniques and models of industrial organization are decidedly inferior to those offered by the West; client states are fully aware of these shortcomings and tend to turn to Europe, especially to those countries from whom it is possible to receive economic and industrial aid without this necessarily signifying a political choice.

What seems to have been completely lacking, partly because socio-political conditions have not been apt, has been any attempt to export Communist ideology. The deep differences which exist between the Soviet Union and her client states, which have often taken the form of drastic opposition by the latter to any kind of domestic political movement with Communist leanings, have not pre-

vented the establishment of stable relations which, in many cases, have culminated in treaties of friendship and mutual cooperation. In other words, ideological differences in no way deprive the Soviet Union of possible leverage in these countries, which could be used in favour of Soviet international interests and which could provide useful support for Soviet policy in a crisis, enabling the USSR to exert external pressure on Western Europe and the United States. This pressure could be particularly effective if it included a more or less explicit threat to use the oil weapon.

If we move from these detailed considerations to the general pattern of Soviet policy in the Mediterranean area, with its specific objectives and priorities, we may note that, quite apart from winning a stronger influence over the international attitudes adopted by the Middle Eastern and North African countries and the creation of a degree of military dependency, the main aim is to win the (preferably exclusive) right to use naval and airbases in these countries. Naval bases serve to give the sort of logistic support which cannot be guaranteed from anchorages in international waters, the kind of maintenance which is only possible with port facilities and recreation areas for crews. Air bases are needed as staging bases for air-lifts to African countries, as deployment bases for reconnaissance and MAP aircraft for surveillance of Western fleet movements in the Mediterranean, especially during NATO manoeuvres and exercises and for photographic missions.

Air and naval facilities are useful in peace time and in periods of crisis for maintaining a significant military presence and for increasing flexibility in the ways in which this presence can be used. In war time they are essential for effective operations

in the Mediterranean. If we look at the situation in detail, we find that Soviet relations with the various countries in the Mediterranean area are as follows:

Syria - After the cooling in relations provoked by the Syrian military operation in Lebanon, these now seem to be as healthy as ever. Syria has received considerable quantities of military material including Mig-23's, SA-3, SA-6 and SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles, surface to surface SCUD missiles and T62 tanks. Soviet advisers and technicians are present in the country. Soviet vessels are using the ports of Tartus and Latakia, which are the only naval bases the Soviet Mediterranean fleet now has available.

Egypt - It is unnecessary to repeat the history of Soviet-Egyptian relations after the forced repatriation of Soviet personnel and the clear drop in the operational capability of the Egyptian armed forces due to the interruption in supplies of spare parts and the lack of necessary expertise in maintenance. Nor is it necessary to go into Egypt's efforts to diversify her sources of weapons supply with soundings, contacts and contracts with companies in various Western countries: France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States.

The Port of Alexandria is no longer available as a logistic base for the Soviet fleet.

Libya - Libya has received huge quantities of Soviet weapons including highly sophisticated weapons such T62 tanks, M-23 "Flogger" aircraft, medium-range Tu-22 "Blinder" bombers, SA-3 surface-to-air missiles and SCUD surface to surface missiles.

Soviet personnel are reportedly stationed in the

Country. During Kossygin's visit to Tripoli in May 1975, it is reported that agreement was reached for arms purchases to a value of 4 billion dollars (800 million according to official Libyan sources). The agreement is said to have provided for the supply of tanks, MIG-23's, 6 conventional submarines, aid in the rebuilding of service and repair facilities for submarines in the ports of Benghazi and Tobruk and submarine training courses in the Soviet Union for Libyan navy personnel.

The Libyan navy is equipped with missile launching "Osa 2" fast patrol boats, each of which possesses four launchers for "Styx 2" surface to surface missiles.

Although Libyan officials have always denied that the Soviet Union has been granted base rights, there have been repeated press reports that the Soviets have been allowed to use Okba Ben Nafie airport (or even that the airport has been given as a concession). There have also been reports of Soviet Mig-25's reconnaissance aircraft from Libyan bases having flown over the Western and Middle Eastern countries as well as over the Mediterranean.

Nonetheless, Libya has also turned to the Western market, purchasing Mirage F-1's, tank landing craft, "Alouette III" helicopters and "Crotale" surface to air missiles from France, missile launching corvettes equipped with "Otomat" surface to surface missiles from Italy, and C-130E transport aircraft from the United States. Yugoslavia has supplied "Galeb" training aircraft.

It is clear that use of naval bases and airports in Libya would give the Soviets significant advantages in terms of complete air cover over the central and Western Mediterranean for surveillance and reconnaissance, increased potential for contrasting and preventing VI fleet hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean and precious logistic

support for attack submarines operating in the Mediterranean.

Algeria - Algeria too has received weapons from the Soviet Union. In the naval field especially she has received missile launching "Komar" fast patrol boats armed with the original version of the "Styx" surface to surface missile and "Osa II's" equipped with the up-dated "Styx II".

What is more, the Soviet fleet visits Algerian ports more frequently than those of other North African countries. There are press reports that Algeria may have opened the former French naval base at Mers-el-Kébir to the Soviet fleet and that during the Angolan conflict Soviet transport aircraft used Colomb-Béchar airport as a staging base.

Finally, it seems impossible to completely exclude the possibility that Soviet use of naval bases and airports could be exchanged for Soviet diplomatic and military support should there be a worsening in relations between Algeria and Morocco over the Saharan issue.

The availability of these bases (even more than that of Libyan bases) would not only facilitate control over the Western Mediterranean but could represent a real threat to traffic through the Straits of Gibraltar, which lie within the range of Soviet fighter bombers operating from Algerian territory.

Morocco - possesses very few Soviet weapons and is politically oriented in a pro-Western direction. Nevertheless, she has economic ties with the Soviet Union which are far from being insignificant. The recent visit by the Moroccan Prime Minister to the Soviet Union (March 1978) and his talks there with Soviet leaders led to a long term agreement on economic and technical cooperation in the exploi-

tation of the phosphate deposits at Meskala, involving an estimated two billion dollars of investment, as well as numerous protocols which should make Morocco the Soviet Union's main economic partner in Africa.

Yugoslavia - In her relations with Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union has sought to pursue two objectives: the broad goal of re-integrating Yugoslavia within the Soviet sphere of influence (and even, if possible, within the Warsaw Pact) implying a clear break with her present non-aligned position in international affairs, and the more limited (though no less important) aim of creating closer political and military ties (perhaps through a degree of Yugoslav dependency on Soviet military supplies) which in turn might make it easier to win concessions over the use of Yugoslav ports, over-flying rights and more ambitiously, the use of Yugoslav airports.

Yugoslav law allows the majority of countries, under certain conditions (essentially that they are not participating in aggressive operations) to use naval infrastructures in the Adriatic ports for repairs and for other maintenance and supply operations. In 1974, the law was amended so as to increase the number of warships and auxiliary vessels allowed to berth in Yugoslav ports at the same time ("Radio Free Europe" reported that the increase was from 3 to 5 vessels).

This does not seem sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the Soviet navy. The possibility of using Yugoslav port infrastructures and creating an exclusively Soviet base in the Adriatic has always been one of the main subjects discussed in talks between President Tito and Soviet leaders.

In this light, Admiral Gorshkov's visit to Yugoslavia in



August 1976, and the interest he showed in port facilities on the Adriatic coast, seems particularly significant. Equally significant was CPSU Secretary Brezhnev's visit to Belgrade in November of the same year and his insistence on real concessions from President Tito. There were press reports that he went so far as to request permission to rent the Gulf of Kotor to build a Soviet naval base there. It seems that Brezhnev was similarly insistent in requesting permanent over-flying rights for military and civilian Soviet aircraft.

To date, over-flying rights have always been granted when requested, even during international crises such as the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, when Soviet aircraft flew over Yugoslavia on the way to the Middle East. At the same time, however, similar permission was granted to American aircraft supplying the air-lift to Israel.

Nevertheless, it is always possible that the Yugoslavs could change their procedures and grant permission for over-flying only if considerable advanced warning were given; permission would even be restricted to particular kinds of aircraft or be denied altogether thus depriving the Soviet Union of a simple, direct route to the North African countries. If Turkish air space were similarly closed to Soviet air traffic, this would be very serious indeed, although such a situation is unlikely to arise except in a far broader international conflict than those we have so far witnessed in the Middle East.

Finally, it is unnecessary to emphasize how important it could be for the Soviets to dispose of or to have access to air bases on Yugoslav territory for assuring air-cover over the central Mediterranean, for attacking targets in Italy and Greece during a conflict and for support missions for operations on the central front.

To date, President Tito has always resisted Soviet pressures and refused to give the Soviets particular privileges for the use of Yugoslav air and naval facilities. Nonetheless, even if we exclude from consideration the possibility of a direct Soviet intervention after the death of Tito, more or less openly supported by the Warsaw Pact countries and unhindered by the Americans (with the support of the NATO allies), the coming to power of a leadership with a more favourable attitude towards rapprochement with the Soviet Union could change the situation.

Even if nothing changed, the Soviet Union could perhaps win certain concessions or "most favoured nation treatment", using military supplies and aid as a form of pressure as well as exerting indirect pressure as what we might call "an influential mediator".

In practice, even though it is believed that the Yugoslav arms industry is capable of covering about 80% of the country's requirements, in high technology sectors, procurement abroad continues to be essential. One of these sectors is combat aircraft.

In the very near future, Yugoslavia will need to modernize her airforce. Although it is hoped to complete the Yugoslav-Romanian "Orao" project which is behind schedule, the Soviet Mig 23 seems the most logical choice, particularly if one considers that interceptor squadrons in the Yugoslav air force are already equipped with Mig-21 F/PF. In any case, even if Yugoslavia wished to diversify her sources of supply, it would be difficult for her to find a Western country willing to supply her with aircraft of the same class as the Mig-23.

The offer of a Yugoslav-Soviet agreement in this field, particularly if coupled with attractive economic terms, favourable

trade-offs and industrial compensatory measures could represent one way of winning concessions, especially over the use of Adriatic ports by the Soviet Mediterranean fleet.

Pressure could be exerted within the context of a serious crisis in Yugoslav-Bulgarian relations, due to renewed Bulgarian claims on Macedonia. The Soviet Union could then present herself to Yugoslavia as a mediator capable of using her influence to limit Bulgarian claims, always providing that Yugoslavia were prepared to be more flexible in her attitude to Soviet requests. This is perhaps an improbable scenario. It is not, however, impossible if one considers the delicate transitional period which is bound to follow the death of Tito.

Albania - Albania is a special and extremely uncertain case. Internationally, she is practically isolated, after the evident cooling in her relations with China; she is closed off from the outside world in a rigidly dogmatic system which leaves little room for development. In the medium term a change of leadership seems likely. At this point, Albania could once again play the Soviet card and here, the question of Adriatic naval bases could return to the surface. After all, the only naval facilities the Soviets have ever possessed in the Adriatic was the naval complex for submarines near Vlone in Albania.

Turkey - Given the importance that these might assume should there be any further cooling in Turkish-American relations, some reference should obviously be made to Soviet relations with Turkey. One should recall:

- the technical cooperation agreement signed in 1975 for important industrial projects in Turkey, including the enlargement of the Iskenderum Steel Mills;

- Brezhnev's hint, in his opening speech at the 25th Congress of the CPSU in February 1976, that there is a trend in Turkish-Soviet relations towards political as well as economic cooperation;
- the passage of the Kiev through the Straits in Summer 1976 with Turkish acceptance of the Soviet definition of the ship as an anti-submarine cruiser;
- the repeated Soviet attempts to secure the signature of a Treaty of non-aggression between the two countries.

The advantages which the Soviet Union could draw from a more open Turkish attitude are self-explanatory, especially in so far as concerns transit for naval units through the Dardanelles, over-flying rights in a Middle Eastern crisis or in a confrontation between the Americans and the Soviets in which Turkey did not feel herself to be directly involved.

### Trends in American Policy

Certain characteristics of the United States position are at least partially similar to those typical of the Soviet presence. The American position is undergoing a process of change which could lead to reduced availability of bases, as well as operation and logistic infrastructures, a reduction in the American presence or, at very least, a reduction in the flexibility with which American forces can intervene and a more limited overall operational capability.

In the same way as the Soviet Union, the United States have used economic and military aid as a way of obtaining access to ports and airports, of building dumps for POL and munitions, communications centres, listening stations, etc., as well as stationing troops.

(There are differences, of course, the United States are usually dealing with American allies). American military aid, like Soviet aid includes technical assistance, specialized training courses, etc.

Like Soviet policy, American policy in the Middle East and North Africa has had moments of success as well as a number of failures. The United States have lost their bases in Libya and seem to be completely without leverage in both Libya and Algeria. They maintain relations with and sell arms to Tunisia and Morocco where, until the end of 1977, they enjoyed communications facilities under informal arrangements. Once the Soviets had left the stage, they resumed relations with Egypt and are playing an active role as mediators within the Middle Eastern area.

Paradoxically, the main dangers of a weakening in the American position come from within the Alliance, due to a series of factors, including political and institutional changes in Spain, Portugal and Italy, the risk of a new break in Greek-Turkish relations which could push the two countries back to the brink of war and Greek and Turkish resentment against the United States stemming from the American role during and after the Cyprus crisis.

The facilities to which the VI fleet and other American forces have access in the Mediterranean are of fundamental importance. Their loss, or any limitation of their use to NATO contingencies and operations which serve mutual defense interests - such as those which emerge fairly explicitly in the agreements reached with Greece, Turkey and Spain in 1976 - could pose very serious problems for the United States.

In practice, the Americans are faced with an alternative: either they must accept a reduction in their ability to intervene in

favour of what their allies, at least, see as exclusively American interests, with the result that in a crisis as in 1973, they could come up against allied refusal to cooperate which could make it impossible to make full use of available resources and of all possible tactical and strategic options. The alternative would be to create an independent capability to operate throughout the Mediterranean basin even without supporting allied infrastructures. This would, however, mean paying a high price.

It is significant that the cost in terms of military and for economic assistance required to buy the right to use military installations in allied and non-allied countries is growing towards a level which could bring the United States to re-evaluate its presence in the Mediterranean area and to request greater European military participation in the NATO posture on the Southern flank.

Let us now proceed to examine United States relations with the various Southern Mediterranean countries in greater detail, with special reference to the importance of the facilities conceded to American forces, the possibilities open for replacing these while maintaining US forces' present missions and the impact of their complete loss.

Italy - Italy acts as host, not only to a number of NATO commands (CINCSOUTH, STRIKFORSOUTH, FIVE ATAF, LANDSOUTH) and a number of military communications stations in the US Defense Communications System (DCS), but also to three important bases: a major support complex in Naples, utilized by the VI fleet, a naval air facility at the Sigonella airbase in Sicily and a homeport for a submarine tender which services US nuclear submarines at La Maddalena, a small island off the North-East coast of Sardinia.

Given Italy's particular geographical position, the loss of these bases would make it much more difficult than at present for American forces to fulfil their military mission, particularly in the Central Mediterranean. For the moment, it is unthinkable that the four countries capable of providing replacement air and naval infrastructures namely Libya, Tunisia, Malta and France would be willing to accept American military personnel on their soil.

Relations between Italy and the United States are extremely good. Nonetheless, it is possible that this situation could change if the Communist Party joined the government. It may be presumed that this would not lead to any significant change in Italian attitudes towards NATO and existing American bases, but that it would lead to strong resistance to the establishment of new military installations. Obviously, the Italian attitude would also depend on the reactions in the United States and within the Atlantic Alliance to such an important domestic political change, and, as far as regards new installations, on the overall international situation at the time of the request.

Greece - The most important installations used by American forces in Greece are the Hellenikon Airbase, close to Athens and the Souda Bay air and naval facilities on Crete.

Facilities in Greece ensure control over the Aegean Sea and thus over passage through the Mediterranean as well as providing staging bases and supply depots for air and naval forces committed to the surveillance and monitoring of Soviet forces in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Following the Cyprus crisis, Greece withdrew from the Atlantic Alliance's military organization. Greek-American relations also

deteriorated. In April 1976, Greece and the United States signed a series of "Principles to guide future US-Greek defense cooperation". These served as a basis for negotiations between the two countries for the amendment of the 1953 military facilities agreement.

If the United States were obliged to withdraw from Greece, the only two countries which could provide alternative bases would be Italy and Turkey (it is completely unrealistic to think that Egypt, Libya or Cyprus would be willing to tolerate even a minimal American military presence on their territory).

Turkey's geographical position has the advantage that it permits continued easy control over the Eastern Mediterranean. At the same time, however, there is the disadvantage that existing Turkish infrastructures (especially naval infrastructures) would need to be expanded and strengthened if American forces were to use them without loss of operational flexibility.

Italy possesses adequate air and naval facilities which could be used by American forces without excessive enlargement (much less than would be necessary in Turkey). Italy's geographical position would, however, make it difficult to carry out the tasks for which Greek bases are used at present.

It must, in any case, be emphasized that there is absolutely no certainty that the Turkish and Italian governments would be willing to accept an expansion of the American military presence. Much could depend on the international situation at the time of the request and the military and/or economic aid the United States were willing to offer in return.

Turkey - The military facilities which Turkey has granted the United



States has made it possible to monitor Soviet air and naval activities, to track missile and nuclear tests and to collect valuable information on military activity in the Near Eastern area around Turkey. Apart from the intelligence collection sites located on the Turkish Black Sea coast, the most important facilities include supply depots, communications centres, and the Incirlik and Cigli airbases. LANDSOUTHEAST and Vith ATAF Command headquarters have been established at Izmir in Turkey.

When, in July 1975, the American Congress decided to suspend military aid and arms sales to Turkey, the Ankara government declared that the 1969 Defense Cooperation Agreement and all related agreements had "lost their legal validity". All American installations were to pass under the "full control and custody of the Turkish armed forces".

In March 1976, the United States and Turkey signed a new agreement which was "consistent with but not identical to" the 1969 DCA. This agreement, like the Greek agreement, is still awaiting final approval by the United States Congress.

Should the United States be forced to abandon her bases in Turkey, there seem to be relatively few relocation options. For obvious reasons, it would be unrealistic to consider Egypt, Syria or the Lebanon. It might be possible to relocate bases in Israel, but the Tel Aviv government could always refuse an American request which, in any case, would undermine the United States possibilities of continuing in the mediating role which to date has represented the only hope of a continued dialogue between Egypt and Israel and a peaceful settlement to the Middle Eastern situation.

There remains the Greek option. Greek installations are more than adequate to meet the requirements of an increased American pre-

sence following the closure of Turkish bases. Nonetheless, Greece's geographical position is not such as to allow the collection of the highly valuable intelligence information presently collected from sites on the Black Sea coast. This information could, however, be collected using alternative methods (increased use of satellites, installations in Iran and Greece, etc.). Finally, here too one should always remember that the Greek government could always refuse to accept the transfer of American forces from Turkey to Greece.

Portugal - Rigorously speaking, Portugal does not belong to the Mediterranean area. Nonetheless, the bases in the Azores are extremely important for operations in this area, both as staging facilities for MAC aircraft bound for Mediterranean and European countries and as supporting installations for anti-submarine warfare and thus for the control of the sea-lanes linking the VI fleet to its major supply depots on the American East coast.

In the Summer of 1974, the date on which the agreement on the Lajes airbase expired, the Portuguese government declared that it did not intend to seek the withdrawal of the Americans from the Azores. In April 1975, it was announced that Portugal would not allow the use of the Lajes base for support to Israel in the event of a new Middle Eastern conflict. Since then, there has been no clarification in the position. It will only be with a new agreement between the United States and Portugal that it will be possible to know if limitations are to be placed on the use of the Azores' facilities by American forces.

Two countries could provide alternatives to the bases in the Azores should these be lost, namely Morocco and Spain.

Nonetheless, despite the fact that in the 1950's Morocco made

installations available to US forces (and to the Strategic Air Command in particular) and despite the presence of an American communications centre at Kenitra right until the end of 1977, it is unrealistic to suppose that Morocco, which is today in a substantially non-aligned if slightly pro-Western position, would be prepared to accept the establishment of new bases.

As far as Spain is concerned, which already acts as host to American military personnel in various bases, and which has recently signed a Treaty of Friendship and collaboration with the United States, the question is rather more complex. Although, it would be logical for the Spanish government not to refuse a relocation of American forces from the Azores, there is absolutely no guarantee that it would not insist on precise limitations on the strength and the kind of American forces stationed in the new bases. At the same time, it is very probable that acceptance of an American request would be tied to American military and/or economic aid.

If it were ever necessary to stage a new airlift to Israel, the loss of the Azores would be a very serious handicap. In order to avoid dependency on the availability of staging bases in other countries, the United States could proceed to purchase a certain number of advanced tanker/cargo aircraft (ATCA). It appears, however, that this solution would have an unusually high cost/effectiveness ratio.

Spain - Although Spain does not belong to NATO, she allows the United States to use a certain number of facilities on her territory. The most important of these are: the naval base complex at Rota; the Torrejon, Zaragoza and Moron airbases; the Cadiz-Zaragoza Pipeline and the Bardenas Reales Firing Range.

As mentioned above, in 1976 the United States and Spain con-

cluded a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, whose main clauses allow American forces to use practically all the facilities where they are presently located. Nonetheless, it has been agreed that the nuclear submarine squadron currently operating out of Rota naval base will be withdrawn by July 1, 1979, that the 98th strategic wing of tanker aircraft will also be withdrawn (a maximum of five tankers will continue to be stationed at the Zaragoza airbase) and that the United States "will not store nuclear devices or their components on Spanish soil".

Although it is unclear whether the United States will be allowed to use Spanish bases to resupply Israel in the event of another war, the most significant limitation imposed by the agreement is the withdrawal of nuclear submarines from the Rota base. It appears as if relocation will be extremely difficult. If Morocco is excluded, the only other two possibilities are France and Portugal.

France does not belong to the Alliance's military organization, has always followed an independent military policy and is extremely unlikely to accept the presence of an American base on her territory. Portugal could possibly accept the relocation of the nuclear submarine tender but in the Azores, rather than in Metropolitan Portugal (for domestic political reasons). Given, however, that what is required is a base for nuclear submarines, with all that the word "nuclear" implies, Portugal might also refuse an American request.

The only alternative would seem to be the deployment of submarines armed with long-range "Trident" missiles. This, however, is only possible if "Trident I" shows that it can actually operate over its planned 4000 NM range. This would make it possible to

base the Rota nuclear submarine squadron at a port on the East coast of the United States without any significant loss of strike capability.

Yugoslavia - The United States are fully aware of the importance of Yugoslav neutrality on the Southern flank and of how necessary it is that the country should continue its present independent policy without ceding to Soviet requests for naval and air facilities.

During Tito's visit to the United States last March, President Carter stated that "Yugoslavia's independence and territorial integrity are fundamental for world peace now and in the future", thereby indicating implicitly that the United States would not stand idly by should the Soviet Union attempt to profit from the delicate transitional period following the death of Tito for a direct intervention.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to see what the United States could do or how she could react if Tito's successors moved closer to the Soviet Union as part of a general readjustment in Yugoslav foreign policy (even if this were stimulated or rendered essential by the Yugoslav domestic situation), or how she could make her opposition felt if this kind of rapprochement led to a greater Yugoslav willingness to concede the Soviet Union special or privileged treatment in the use of the Adriatic ports, airbases or other facilities such as over-flying rights.

As far as regards the possibility of military aid, the United States and Yugoslavia are not in an easy position. In 1976, an attempt to reach an agreement on the sale of arms, which were to have included second generation "TOW" anti-tank missiles, failed as

a result of publicity in the American press and open Pentagon opposition to the sale of advanced technology weapons systems, even to a non-aligned Communist country, for fear that the technical and operational characteristics of these systems could fall into Soviet hands.

Today, as a result of Tito's visit to Washington, mentioned already, it seems as if the American administration is willing to sell weapons to Yugoslavia. It is possible though that they are not prepared to sell all the weapons on the list which the press says has been presented by the Yugoslavs ("Harpoon" anti-ship missiles, "Maverick" air-to-surface missiles, "Dragon" anti-tank missiles and an integrated naval defense system). According to US officials, however, there does exist an agreement in principle to sell Yugoslavia several of the requested items.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, a number of fairly significant trends seem to be emerging.

The Soviet Union:

- has drastically limited American supremacy in the Mediterranean;
- presents, with the high number of anti-ship missiles in the possession of its fleet in the Mediterranean, a concrete threat to the survival of the VI fleet, especially if there were to be a Soviet pre-emptive strike. Nonetheless, the operational flexibility of Soviet naval forces would, in a conflict be limited, unless that is, the Soviets achieved complete free access to the Mediterranean and to naval and airbases on the North African coast and in the Middle East;

- is able in a Mediterranean crisis to make its presence felt and to project power ashore although, for the moment, to a very limited extent;
- is continuing with success its policy of penetrating and of giving economic and military aid to the North African countries. It is probable that the USSR will succeed in obtaining naval and air facilities in these countries and indeed that a certain number of these facilities are already in use. This policy is tied to more general Soviet policy and direct Soviet intervention in Africa.

The United States:

- are forced by the presence of the Soviet fleet to reconsider priorities for her naval forces in the Mediterranean. The VI fleet could only provide support for possible land battles on the Southern flank if it had already won the battle at sea, thereby guaranteeing its own survival;
- no longer disposes of bases in North Africa. Even in allied countries these bases are not available unconditionally. What is more, the ties between a number of allied countries which provide facilities and the United States are today on a more bilateral basis and are thus more costly and in a sense more vulnerable than in the past. All this weakens ties with NATO;
- could find herself, during a crisis in which her allies did not feel themselves to be involved, having to count on her ability to support her forces without outside help;
- could find herself having to adopt a difficult mediating role in any new crisis between Greece and Turkey.

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Technological and Military Changes affecting the  
Maritime Balance in the Mediterranean Sea

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Castelgandolfo  
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## INTRODUCTION

This paper will be divided into two sections, the first of which will examine the most recent technological developments in naval warfare and weapons systems, with particular reference to achievements by the United States, and the second a number of related questions. Here, special attention will be given to the Mediterranean as a source of points for discussion and debate.

### The Soviet Navy

Over the last twenty years, the Soviet Navy has been transformed, from a force capable merely of defending sea zones around the Soviet Union, into one which can not only "show the flag" in all the world's seas, but can make its presence felt in concrete terms and thus exercise political and military pressure in any zone of interest to the Soviet Union, in crisis areas or in regions where there exists a naval vacuum. The Soviet Navy is today a force which, in a conflict, could effectively oppose allied naval forces and threaten the viability of maritime lines of communication essential for Europe and the United States' survival, while, at the same time, maintaining its coastal defense capability intact. It is a force which has acquired a capability to intervene with steadily improving amphibious forces, at least in areas close to Soviet territory. Using the Soviet mercantile marine, which has expanded at an equally rapid rate, the Soviets can maintain sea supplies, at an adequate level, to countries involved in regional conflicts which request aid from the Soviet Union.

Nonetheless, in certain fields the Soviet Navy still has its weaknesses: her ASW capabilities remain inadequate; her submarines

are still relatively noisy; she lacks adequate air defense; she has a poor capability for sustained combat operations; many of her missile systems lack a reload capability; she has a limited ability to provide logistic support to her forces at sea and her logistic ships are highly vulnerable; she has little capability to project power ashore in distant areas because she has no sea-based tactical air power and her amphibious forces are mostly designed for short duration amphibious lift near the homeland.

### Technological Developments

Technology has had many varied effects on the evolution and strengthening of naval forces. Nuclear power made it possible for vessels to operate for long periods without refuelling and to maintain unusually high speeds. Particularly for submarines, the use of nuclear power implied a high degree of operational flexibility.

Improvements in conventional drive systems connected with special construction techniques - hydrofoils, hovercrafts, surface effect ships - have increased speeds and thereby mobility and the capacity to intervene rapidly. This is very useful in anti-submarine warfare and, at the same time, decreases these vessels' vulnerability.

The development of even more precise and sophisticated ship-to-ship and ship-to-air missiles has given even small vessels, and thus relatively small navies, significant strike power, not only in offensive terms (the ability to inflict significant damage on larger warships) but also for defense. When this is combined with increased speed and manoeuvrability, this makes these small vessels difficult and expensive to attack and destroy.

The development of helicopter and verticle take-off air-

craft and their improved ability to operate from relatively small vessels, even in adverse sea conditions, has increased the potential for surveillance, offense and defense both by single units and by naval forces in general. This makes it easier for escort units to defend logistic units and convoys and increases naval forces' ability to give support to amphibious operations.

Developments in electronics and computers have made it possible to improve the accuracy of search and localization systems, command systems and semi- or fully automatic fire control centres, especially well adapted to facing a complex, diversified missile or air threat.

At the same time, technology has made it possible to improve the kind of coordination between ships, aircraft and helicopters, essential for efficient operation, especially in anti-submarine warfare.

### Naval Building

Let us consider the various sectors and their development trends. As far as naval building is concerned, the United States are planning:

- nuclear strike cruisers (CSGN), equipped with the Aegis anti-aircraft and anti-missile system, capable of operating either as an integral part of nuclear carrier task forces or alternatively as independent units. This latter capability being due to their high performance, minimal dependency on logistic support and offense and self-defense capabilities;
- guided missile destroyers (DDG-47 class), equipped with the Aegis

anti-aircraft and anti-missile system, for use with conventional task forces and for support for amphibious forces or logistic units in high threat density areas;

- guided missile frigates (FFG-7 class) for use as escort units, especially for logistic units and convoys in areas with a lower threat. This building programme is a typical example of programmes being carried out by many Western navies for which guided-missile frigates are becoming basis units (e.g. the Italian "Lupo" class and the Dutch "Kortenaer" class frigates; the NATO frigate 122 which is to be adopted by the GFR);
- a limited number of "Pegasus" class hydrofoils (PHM-1). The number of vessels to be constructed has been reduced from the 30 originally planned to 6 owing to rapidly rising costs. The first vessel was delivered to the US Navy in June 1977. It is the UN Navy's intention to use the 6 PHMs as a tactical squadron of small, high speed, high firepower vessels to develop advanced tactics and gain technological experience, for a better understanding of the employment opportunities for these units and of the optimum characteristics for hydrofoils of the future.

The technical success of the PHM is reported to have removed all doubts as to the technical viability of larger hydrofoils, with nearly 1000 tons displacement, a transoceanic capability and for 90% of the time, a velocity of more than 40 knots in all seas;

- new helicopter carriers (LHA's). These, given their size and displacement (similar to those of the Soviet aircraft carrier, the Kiev), could, in certain circumstances, replace aircraft carriers as on-scene ready forces. If we consider the (fixed and rotating

wing) aircraft with which they are equipped and the Marines units they carry, it is clear that they are suitable for a wide range of functions and that, in particular, they could partially fulfil the forward deployment commitments previously fulfilled almost exclusively by strike carriers.

For the future, the United States are studying whether it would be possible, within acceptable cost/effectiveness ratios, to build, on the one hand, larger, more capable versions of the Sea Control Ships (now designated as the V/STOL Support Ship or VVS) - a ship of this kind has been included in the building programme for fiscal 1980 - and on the other, Surface Effect Ships, which, with displacements of several thousand tons and speeds in excess of 80 knots, could significantly increase the operational flexibility of escort forces, particularly in anti-submarine roles. This kind of vessel could be operational towards the end of the 1980's.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union has built:

- the aircraft carrier "Kiev" (officially designated as an anti-submarine cruiser), which, quite apart from its significant defensive and offensive missile weaponry, is equipped with KA-25 "Hormone" helicopters and Yak-36 V/STOL "Forger" aircraft. The ship is capable of undertaking anti-submarine operations and of giving support to amphibious operations;
- an improved version of the "Kara" class cruiser, a unit first assigned to the Soviet Navy in 1972, one of the most technologically advanced of Soviet surface ships;
- an improved version of the "Krivak" class guided-missile destroyer;

- the 'Nanucka' class guided-missile patrol gunboat, another technologically advanced ship. Relative to its displacement, the 'Nanuchka' is the most heavily armed warship in the world. She is equipped with six anti-ship cruise missiles and a SAM system as well as guns. She also carries a complement of equipment for electronic and radar countermeasures;
- the 'Boris Chilikin' class replenisher oiler (AOR). This ship is especially significant as it could significantly improve the Soviet Navy's poor alongside, underway replenishment capability. As is well known for support operations, the Soviets are extremely dependent on the availability of mobile bases. These bases, composed of merchant tankers and/or naval auxiliaries, are normally located in anchorages in international waters to provide limited logistic support and minor maintenance.

### Anti-Submarine Warfare

As far as anti-submarine warfare is concerned, technology offers good prospects for the future even though there has yet to be a breakthrough capable of significantly facilitating the struggle against modern nuclear and conventional submarines.

In the undersea surveillance field, the United States are planning two new systems, the SURTASS (Surveillance Towed Array Sensor) and the MSS (Moored Surveillance System).

The former gives fleet commanders a highly effective mobile sensor, allowing surface vessels in tactical escort roles to increase their cover of those areas enemy submarines would have to cross to launch missile or torpedo attacks.

The second system, which involves the deployment of passive sensors by aircraft, submarines, or surface vessels in a distributed pattern in the area of interest, will provide surveillance in areas where coverage cannot be achieved by other methods.

In the sensors field, major improvements are predicted in the AN/SQS-26 surface ship sonar and the provision of the TACTAS (Tactical Towed Array Sensor) to the combatant ships; both systems will be integrated with the LAMPS III helicopters. Furthermore, the new AN/BQQ-5 submarine sonar will be installed on the new "Los Angeles" (SSN-688) class attack submarines.

In the field of anti-submarine weapons, it is planned to improve the MK-46 torpedo (Mk-46 Neartip) and to develop a new advanced light weight torpedo (ALWT) which will have a more powerful warhead, greater speed and greater depth capability than the Mk-46 Neartip. As far as ASW mines are concerned, it is planned to develop the "Quickstrike" family of air and submarine-laid mines, which are economical, operationally flexible and resistant to countermeasures, as well as the propelled rocket ascent mine (PRAM) which will not, however be ready for procurement until the late 1970's. Both systems will help to increase the anti-submarine capability of the "Captor" mine, which is already operational.

As far as regards aerial vectors, we may quote the improvements achieved in the technological sophistication of the search, localization and tracing systems used by the "Orion" maritime patrol aircraft, the entry into service of the new "Viking" S-3A anti-submarine aircraft carried by aircraft carriers (a great improvement over the old S-2) and the planned entry into service, in a few years time,

of the new LAMPS Mk-III helicopter.

### Naval Weapons

As far as naval weapons are concerned, the real revolution has been the introduction of the anti-ship missile which has now become a typical weapons for all kinds of surface vessel, including vessels with relatively low displacements, and which can even be mounted on submarines (and launched from a submerged position) as well as on attack aircraft (the air-to-surface version).

In this field, the Soviet Union is several years ahead of the United States. Whereas the Soviet surface fleet is now fully missile equipped, the United States, although possessing a stronger naval air arm, will only achieve a complete balance when the "Harpoon" missile and the tactical version of the "Tomahawk" cruise missile are fully operational.

Not only will "Harpoon" be used to equip practically all new surface vessels, it will also be mounted on MAP P-3C "Orion" aircraft, on the S-3A "Viking" anti-submarine aircraft and on carrier-borne attack aircraft.

With "Harpoon", attack aircraft will have stand-off ranges greater than the range of Soviet defensive missile systems. In particular, all weather A-6E aircraft configured with "Harpoon" will outrange even the most advanced Soviet anti-ship missile. In other words, carrier attack aircraft will be able to attack Soviet surface ships at distances sufficient to ensure that these cannot effectively threaten nuclear carrier task forces with surface-to-surface missiles.



As well as the improvements which have been made to the second version of the SS-N-2 "Styx" missile (which has been used to arm "Osa" units in the Algerian and Libyan as well as in the Soviet Navies), the Soviet Union has developed a series of naval surface-to-surface missiles: the SS-N-9 mounted on "Nanuchka" class units; the SS-N-10 (or SS-N-14) mounted on "Kara", "Kresta" and Krivak II" class units; the SS-N-11 mounted on the most recent versions of the "Osa" class and a number of modified "Kashin" class units; the SS-N-12 mounted on "Kiev" class units.

#### Aerial Vectors

In the aerial vectors field, the most significant American innovation has been the entry into service on aircraft carriers of the new F-14 fighter interceptor armed with "Phoenix" air-to-air missiles. The most important Soviet innovation has been the introduction of the new "Backfire" bomber which, on account of its range (around double that of the subsonic "Badger" which it is to replace), its supersonic speed, its improved electronic warfare capability, and the possibility of equipping it with the most recent AS-6 air-to-surface missiles, represents a qualitative leap in terms of potential threat and the Soviets ability to guarantee adequate air cover even in areas not covered by "Badgers".

#### Anti-Aircraft Defense

In the anti-aircraft defense sector, the United States are developing the Aegis system, which is to be mounted, as we said earlier, on the CSGN's and on DDG-47 class destroyers.

In its functions as a fully integrated detection-to-kill air

defense system, Aegis offers extremely fast reaction times, significant resistance to jamming and the ability to oppose high density attacks. In its functions as a command and control system, it allows the commander of the task force to coordinate the various air defense weapons, in the units under his command, with a high degree of effectiveness.

Other planned developments include: Standard Missile (SM-2); improvements to provide a mid-course command guidance capability; improvements of the ECCM features of the SAM systems; improvements of the intercept performances in a jamming environment, as well as the purchase of the "Phalanx" CIWS (Close-In Weapon System), a low-cost, high rate-of-fire, 20 mm gun system which will provide the surface ships a limited endurance defense against the majority of existing Soviet missiles.

Two further sectors should also be mentioned:

#### Fuel Air Explosives

The first of these is Fuel Air Explosives (FAE). FAE weapons enclose a highly inflammable mix of hydrocarbons in internal tanks. On impact, this mix is freed and vaporizes spontaneously, forming a cloud with a diameter of around 16 metres and a thickness of 3 metres. This cloud (in the aerosol state) is then detonated, provoking a shock wave whose destructive power is much higher than that of a TNT bomb.

Reportedly, FAE's have been used as anti-ship weapons during operational trials and the results have proved extremely interesting. When a second generation FAE charge on a barge was exploded close to

target, a US Navy destroyer, the damage inflicted was sufficient to sink the vessel.

The use of FAE charges as anti-ship weapons appears especially promising. On-board superstructures (radar and communications antennae, electronic warfare and flight assistance systems) as well as aircraft and helicopters on deck are especially vulnerable to the effects of the shock wave. It is believed that an over-pressure of  $0.42 \text{ Kg/cm}^2$  would be more than enough to inflict sufficient damage on a warship to decisively reduce its operational capability. If we bear in mind that third generation FAE charges should lead to over-pressures of around  $0.9 \text{ Kg/cm}^2$  with a charge of 500 Kg of methane, at a distance of 100-130 metres from the edge of the gas cloud, and a residual pressure of  $0.42 \text{ Kg/cm}^2$  at 170-190 metres, we can easily realize the importance which these weapons could assume in naval warfare, particularly if and when third generation FAE charges are applied to high-precision anti-ship missiles. This does not, however, seem to be the trend.

#### Remotely Piloted Vehicles

The second sector is RPV and mini-RPV (remotely piloted vehicles). These may be used as vectors for surveillance and reconnaissance missions and as laser indicators for laser-guided shells, fired by the naval cannon of the major combatants.

This is a sector in which research and development is extremely intensive. Nonetheless, particularly in naval applications, there are still serious problems to be resolved before these weapons can be used in war with operationally valid results.

The main problem is in launch systems and in systems for the

recovery of RPV once their mission has been concluded. For naval units, this has proved to be a difficult and complex operation.

Having summarized the technological changes affecting both the naval confrontation between the two superpowers and naval warfare in general, let us now examine the specific effects in the Mediterranean area.

### The Mediterranean Theatre

Technological progress in naval warfare and weapons systems; the qualitative strengthening of the fleets of the superpowers and their respective naval air arms; the purchase by North African countries of naval units equipped with anti-ship missiles and the decision of certain of these countries to buy advanced technology aircraft possessing an extended range of action and a high weapon load, poses complicated questions concerning future trends in the Mediterranean area, which a series of political factors may well render even more complex.

An overall examination of these questions and the way in which they are tied to specific politico-military scenarios, lies outside the scope of this paper. In practice, the formulation of confrontation and conflict scenarios in the Mediterranean area could easily become a never-ending exercise. At the same time, whereas the consideration of specific scenarios might facilitate analysis, it could well prove to be an over-restrictive approach.

Here, I will limit myself to posing these questions, which can serve as a basis for a full and interesting discussion. At the same time, however, we must be aware that the list of questions dealt with here is in no way an exhaustive one.

The first question is the missile capability of Soviet surface ships and the Soviet naval air arm. What we must ask is whether these forces would be capable of inflicting sufficient losses on the VI fleet to reduce the latter's ability to fulfil its double mission: control over the Mediterranean and support for ground operations on the Southern flank. In other words, would these forces be able to oppose the VI fleet's control over certain areas in the Mediterranean (considering a VI fleet made up of two carrier task forces and support ships), and thus reduce if not interrupt the flow of supplies through the Mediterranean? This question is directly tied to that of the vulnerability, that is the survival capability of the VI fleet and, in particular, its most important component, namely the carrier task forces.

There can be no doubt that, in absolute terms, aircraft carriers, like any major combatant, are vulnerable to a concentrated missile attack from surface ships, submarines and aircraft, particularly if this were a surprise attack, launched with minimal warning and timed so as to be as effective as possible, making it difficult for the defense to counter such a diversified threat. Here the Soviets are favoured by the fact that their ocean surveillance satellites keep them continually informed of the position of United States' fleets.

The attack would be less effective if the element of surprise were wholly or partially lacking or if it were impossible to concentrate a sufficient number of missiles on the same target. At the same time, the entry into service of the new nuclear strike cruisers and of DDG-47 class destroyers, both equipped with the Aegis anti-ship missile defense system, would further complicate the planning of this kind of attack, increasing the number of vectors which would have to

be targetted against each priority target and complicating calculations of risk margins and of military cost effectiveness ratios.

In other words, were there to be advanced warning, a far from improbable hypothesis given that the Soviet Mediterranean fleet would have to be strengthened with surface ships and submarines from the Black Sea and the Atlantic fleets brought in through the Bosphoros and through the Straits of Gibraltar - the kind of movement which could not pass unobserved - and given that the re-deployment of Badger and Backfire aircraft to bases closer to the zone of operations, so as to exploit their range better, would also be visible, it seems less likely that the VI fleet could be neutralized as an operational force in the Mediterranean.

At the same time, if we consider the vulnerability problem in relative terms, carriers and strike cruisers, because of their size and displacement, possess significant self-protection and armour features. Furthermore, they have a great deal of redundancy and highly effective damage control systems.

Although we should bear in mind that evidence given during Hearings is motivated by prestige factors and by the need to justify programmes and funding and to reaffirm the armed forces traditional roles and missions, it is worthwhile quoting the Department of the Navy response to a question by Senators Nunn and Culver during hearings before the Senate Committee on armed services for the fiscal year 1977 authorization for military procurement. The question concerned the vulnerability of carrier task forces. The answer read as follows:

"Aircraft carriers operated in flexible task forces which combine the various kind of offensive and defensive systems in mu-

tual support, routinely deploy in forward area. Further, task forces are capable of tactical surveillance to the extent that the effect of surprise should be blunted. Task force airborne early warning and fighter aircraft can engage incoming raids hundreds of miles from the task force and well beyond Soviet anti-ship missile range. Given adequate intelligence, along with on-board capabilities for long range surveillance and reconnaissance, naval tactical commanders would use the mobility inherent in carrier task forces to maintain the tactical advantage over opposing forces.

Thus, carrier task forces tend to be less vulnerable as isolated naval units than the underway replenishment groups which support them. Carriers themselves are less vulnerable than other surface combatants, across the spectrum of warfare, because of their size and compartmentation. For example, during training exercises in 1969, the nuclear carrier Enterprise endured accidental explosions of 9 major caliber bombs (equivalent in explosive power to 6 anti-ship cruise missiles) on her flight deck. All essential ship systems remained operable, effective damage control contained the effects of the fires, and the ship could have resumed air operations within hours".

As far as the second question is concerned, namely the Soviet Eskadra's ability to interrupt lines of communications (LOC's) in the Mediterranean, various arguments should be borne in mind.

During the Second World War, in the period from 1940 to 1943, British air and sea forces failed to cut logistic supply links between Italy and North Africa. The statistics here are extremely interesting, showing that, for all kinds of load and for all destinator countries,

the majority of the load arrived at its destination.

<u>Load</u>	<u>Destination</u>	<u>% Arriving at Destination</u>
Men	Libya	91.6
Materials	"	85.9
Fuel	"	80.0
Men	Tunisia	93.0
Materials	"	71.0
Fuel	"	71.0

This success was achieved despite the fact that Britain had an important strategic stronghold in Malta as well as easy access to the Mediterranean for her naval forces, the advantages accruing from superiority in radar and acoustic detection devices and advanced knowledge of convoy movements derived from the decoding of Italo-German communications, and despite the fact that the Italians lacked adequate air cover and that Italian escort unit were often too few and of insufficient quality.

Clearly, these statistics are not conclusive. Surface ships and attack submarines have been drastically improved since the Second World War, both in terms of speed and offensive capability. The offensive capability of attack aircraft has also increased enormously. At the same time, however, there have been improvements in the anti-aircraft and anti-submarine capabilities of escort units.

What is more, the majority of maritime traffic is through the Western Mediterranean, that is in a zone where sea control and



the maintenance of logistic flows should be relatively easy, particularly if the Soviet Union lacked naval and/or air bases in the Western North African countries.

It might be easier for the Soviet Union to attempt to interrupt maritime traffic towards Europe outside the Mediterranean: in the Indian Ocean, along the sea routes to the South of the Cape of Good Hope or in the Atlantic. This would be particularly true if, as does not seem entirely improbable, the Soviets were able to use ports and airports in African countries (Mozambique, Angola, Guinea). The use of "Backfire" from African bases in an anti-ship role might well be facilitated by the almost total lack of a Western interception capability. It is through the Atlantic that the majority of material and men would have to pass to reach the central front. In this context, it appears significant that all the more important Soviet naval exercises in which a predominant role was assigned to the cutting of the sea lanes, have been held in the Atlantic and especially in a broad area to the North of Great Britain. Obviously, if Libya and Algeria, as well as offering port and airport facilities to the Soviet Union, participated with their naval and air forces in operations against allied forces (the Libyan TU-22 "Blinders" and Mig-23 "Floggers" could play a significant role here), this would change the terms of the question (even after having taken account of the low operational effectiveness of these forces).

The third question concerns the Soviet fleet's ability, given the increased cover and offensive support offered by the new "Backfire" bomber, to deny control of the Mediterranean to the VI fleet. Normally, this question is answered in the affirmative. In

the hearings for fiscal year 1977 authorization, the Navy Department, in an answer to a specific question by Senator Stennis, was fairly explicit:

"In the event of conflict, we could retain control of the North Atlantic Sea lanes to Europe, but would suffer serious losses to both US and allied shipping in the early stages; our ability to operate in the Eastern Mediterranean at best, would be uncertain".

Other experts have gone so far as to state that:

"It seems unwise to count on extensive VI fleet operations in the Mediterranean for very long after major hostilities start. Nor does it seem likely that Italy, Turkey or Greece could hold out long under present concepts of operation without VI fleet and other US support. The Mediterranean may be untenable for surface combat or supply ships in the event of hostilities".

Nonetheless, the concept that allied fleets would be unable to operate in the Mediterranean is a credible hypothesis only in certain specific conditions. The concept requires that the Soviets would have full control over the Dardanelles and thus that Soviet submarines and surface vessels would be able to pass freely from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. This implies that the land battle on the Greek-Bulgarian and the Turkish-Bulgarian borders would result in Warsaw Pact troops reaching the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Marmara as well as penetrating Turkish territory to the East of the Straits. Nonetheless, even if Western control over the Straits were lacking, would it not be possible to block them with a vast mining operation, using the extremely effective mines provided by modern technology?

Acceptance of the concept means accepting that Soviet naval and air units would be able to use Syrian and/or Egyptian and/or Libyan and/or Algerian ports and airport facilities. It means accepting that the Turkish air defense system would be unable to oppose overflight by Soviet aircraft and that the (limited) Turkish and Greek navies would be unable to play any significant role. Of course, as far as Turkey is concerned, it is always possible to hypothesize a confrontation between the two superpowers in which the Soviet Union, using politico-military pressure and/or the promise of support against Greece in the dispute over the Aegean continental shelf, convinced Turkey to open her air space to Soviet penetration. This hypothesis appears, however, to be unrealistic, at least in the present situation and for the foreseeable future.

Acceptance of the idea that the VI fleet would be unable to operate in the Mediterranean implies belief in a high survival rate for Soviet "Backfire" aircraft against E-2C and F-14's (armed with "Phoenix" missiles capable of locking on as many as 6 targets simultaneously and with an anti-cruise missile capability), with a long range (the F-14 can maintain station 500 miles from the carrier), which can, if necessary, be extended by in-flight refuelling and the use of airports in Greece and in Turkey (unless these had been closed by the destruction of equipment and infrastructures) and perhaps in Israel.

It means accepting that it would be impossible to use Italian (or Spanish) airports for B-52's armed with GBU-15 guided bombs (8 per B-52). These aircraft were used as conventional bombers over North Vietnam with very low losses despite the fact that the density of air defense systems was many times higher than the level possible

for Soviet naval units. These bombers with their highly effective ECM stand-off capability, the extreme precision of the GBU-15 (which uses both electro-optical guidance and infra-red imaging - IIR) and the possibility of a fighter escort supplied by the carriers, could play an important anti-ship role.

I believe then that prospects for Soviet control of the Mediterranean should be looked at in closer detail than is usual and that this analysis should be made to depend on an objective evaluation of whether certain conditions are likely to be fulfilled. In other words, Soviet control cannot be excluded "a priori"; just as it cannot be regarded as an "a priori" certainty.

One has the impression that in a conventional conflict - that is the assumption on which this paper is based - excluding the possibility of a surprise attack catching allied forces completely unprepared (as has been hypothesized in Central Europe), and destroying the more significant elements in the VI fleet, and assuming that the Soviet fleet would be unable to use bases in North Africa and Middle Eastern countries, it would have difficulties in fulfilling its sea denial mission and in accomplishing its task of drastically reducing the viability of LOC in the Mediterranean.

Success would be easier against surface ships than against nuclear and conventional attack submarines. Anti-submarine Warfare (ASW) has its own intrinsic difficulties which are especially serious in a "noisy" sea such as the Mediterranean.

These Soviet difficulties would obviously be worsened if, as seems reasonable, both the French fleet (which today concentrates its best forces in the Mediterranean) and the Italian fleet participated in the conflict. Both fleets are, at present, being moder-

nized and strengthened (increased offensive missile capability, increased defense capability against cruise missiles, a more sophisticated and diversified anti-submarine capability). At the same time, our evaluation must include the weaknesses of the Soviet fleet mentioned earlier. Nonetheless, it is clear that the VI fleet can only fulfil its task of giving support to the land battle once it has won its battle in the Mediterranean.

Other questions concern the entry into service of the Soviet aircraft carrier, the "Kiev". Despite its undoubted offensive and defensive firepower and the anti-submarine capability provided by its 20-25 Ka-25 "Hormone" helicopters, we must ask whether it can really be considered as a unit capable, on an enormously reduced scale, compared to US carriers, of projecting power ashore? Could it not be what the Soviets have claimed it to be, namely a ship designed primarily for anti-submarine operations, especially against American nuclear missile-launching submarines?

Perhaps it is too early to give a definitive answer, particularly if we consider that the "Kiev" is a prototype and that the "Forgers" with which it is equipped are also at an experimental stage.

It should be noted, however, that the 15-20 "Forgers" on board do not seem to possess a search or intercept radar and are equipped merely with a small ranging radar for air-to-surface use. Given its limited range (it has been estimated that with 2 450 litre pylon tanks and 2 air-to-air missiles, "Forger" could circle for an hour at about 100 miles from the carrier), it seems as if "Forger" is ill-suited for sea surveillance missions, for ship defense or for attacks against enemy aircraft. "Forger" could, however, be used as an

attack vector (guided by radar on the carrier) against MAP aircraft, using air-to-air missiles, for mid-course guidance for SS-N-12 surface-to-surface missiles, as a fighter bomber supporting amphibious operations or for interdiction missions against targets close to coast (4 wing pylons for a mix of air-to-surface weapons and a gunpack, possibly the twin-barrel 23 mm GSh-23 gun beneath the fuselage).

Overall, it seems as if the "Kiev" could act as the nucleus for a task force, similar, on a very reduced scale, to American task forces, the aim being to increase the weight in terms of intervention capability, flexibility and the range of aircraft, of the Soviet naval presence in peace time and in crisis areas.

Whatever evaluation we give of the "Kiev's" effective capability, which for the moment appears to be limited, it is, in any case, significant that the Soviets have decided to construct an aircraft carrier.

It will be interesting to follow developments, particularly if V/STOL aircraft are built with a more sophisticated avionics, improved range and a higher weapons load, capable of using the whole deck length for take off and thus of accomplishing missions assigned them more effectively than is possible at present.

A further question concerns the development of the navies of the Mediterranean countries. Today, these are equipped with fast vessels carrying surface-to-surface missiles capable of representing a significant threat to larger, better-armed units. Has this development reduced, or annulled the possibility of using "Gunboat diplomacy" in the Mediterranean area? In other words, have the risks, connected with the use of naval forces as a means of politico-military pressure,

now become so great, in the face of the light missile boats, as to exclude many of the courses of action which until now the two superpowers have had open to them?

In practice, it seems probable that, although this kind of action has become more risky than in the past, it is still possible. The possession of fast missile boats is insufficient if the country in question lacks an adequate surveillance capability, significant air cover and a command and control system capable of managing the crisis without engaging in excessive reactions. What is more, the country against which the superpower pressure is being directed, must be able to make a military evaluation of the risks and consequences of a response and a political evaluation of the degree of international support on which it can count.

The two superpowers are able to match the naval forces they deploy to the kind of presence desired, that is, to the kind of pressure they wish to exert without exposing their most important units to unnecessary risks. The United States could, for example, use their new general purpose helicopter assault ships (LHA's). Equivalent in size to the old WWII "Essex" class carriers, they match the size of the Soviets' "Kiev", and, while not as formidable as a carrier in some respects, could perform a wide range of functions in a crisis. These could represent a basic element in any deployment of forces, without exposing aircraft carriers as hostages. Carriers could be kept in a safer position in the rear, while still maintaining a certain intervention capability with their attack aircraft.

The last question, though others are bound to be raised during the debate, concerns the role of Western countries in the Mediterranean.

Are these countries, and especially those with the keenest interest in keeping open communications lines vital for their survival, fully aware of the changes which have occurred in the area? Is there any preparation to face these changes at a political and at a military level? Unfortunately, the answer appears to be that there is not. There seems to be a complete lack of coordination, both in foreign and military policy. Defense budgets continue to give priority to ground rather than to air or naval forces, even in countries like Italy where there are no grounds for this kind of attitude. There is no will to pursue weapon and equipment standardization with the vigour necessary for the allied forces to operate together without the danger of sinking each other's ships and shooting down each other's aircraft. There seems to be a continuing trend to delegate action in the Mediterranean to the United States, without any great effort to devise techniques and tactics better adapted to more active European participation.

There is, however, another question mark hanging over the role of the Western countries. Supposing the Soviets, given the difficulties, decide to avoid the attempt to cut the traffic to the Southern flank countries in the Mediterranean, and try to cut lines of communication in the Indian Ocean, to the South of the Cape of Good Hope and along the Atlantic routes, how should these countries react?

Should they attempt to build up the capability to control the Mediterranean on their own, thus allowing the deployment of American task forces were the threat is thought to be most serious? Should they unconditionally accept Southern African support, together with all the inevitable political repercussions on the African continent and



the possibility that even non-aligned countries could concede bases to the Soviet Union? At the same time, is there any politically and economically viable alternative which might allow naval forces belonging to Western countries to operate outside the Mediterranean?

As we have already stated, the Mediterranean is not of fundamental importance for the survival of the Soviet Union, in the sense that the closure of the sea to Soviet mercantile traffic would not have a determining effect on the country's economic and industrial life. For the European countries, on the other hand, free passage through the Mediterranean is vital. Their traffic can, however, be threatened long before it reaches the Straits of Gibraltar. Any naval and/or air bases the Soviet Union might procure in Africa, would give her a degree of flexibility which would undoubtedly increase the vulnerability of the Southern flank.

## WEAPONS SYSTEMS CHARACTERISTICS.

A. U.S. SHIPS.1. Nuclear Strike Cruiser (CSGN)

Displacement: about 17,000 tons.

Nuclear propulsion.

Aegis System with Advanced Standard Surface-to-Air Missile (SM-2).

Ability to carry 8 "Tomahawk" cruise missiles (300 NM range).

Ability to carry 16 "Harpoon" missiles (60 NM range).

One 8 inch gun.

One "Phalanx" Close-In Intercept System.

Ability to handle 2 VTOL aircraft or LAMPS helicopters.

TACTAS System and SQS-53 hull-mounted sonar.

Fragmentation protection in vital areas.

Minimum dependence on logistic support which permits to operate in remote locations and remain for extended periods.

Uniquely suited for independent missions.

2. DDG-47 Class Guided Missile Destroyer

Displacement: about 9,000 tons.

Gas Turbine propulsion.

Aegis System.

2 twin launchers for SM-2 MR missiles.

8 "Harpoon" missiles.

1 twin 127 mm (5 inch) rapid fire gun mounting.

2 LAMPS helicopters plus ASW sensors.

3. FFG-7 Class Guided Missile Frigate

Displacement: about 3,600 tons

Gas Turbine propulsion.

MK-92 fire control system plus Standard Missiles to provide AAW/ASMD.

"Harpoon" missile capability.

2 LAMPS helicopters plus hull sonar and potential for Towed Array.

1 single 76/62 mm gun mounting.

1 "Phalanx" System.

2 triple launchers for MK-32 torpedo.

4. Patrol Hydrofoil Missile Ship (USS "Pegasus" PHM-1)

Displacement: about 235 tons.

MK-94 fire control system.

8 "Harpoon" missiles.

1 single 76/62 mm rapid fire gun mounting.

5. "Tarawa" Class General Purpose Helicopter Assault Ship (LHA)

Displacement: about 39.000 tons.

About 30 troop helicopters or "Harrier" AV-8 V/STOL aircraft in place of some helicopters.

3 single 127/54 mm gun mountings.

2 BPDMS (Basic Point Defense Missile System) launchers firing "Sea Sparrow" missiles.

Ability to transport and land a unit of about 1900 Marines fully equipped.

LAMPS = Light Airbone Multupurpose System.

B. URSS SHIPS.1. "Kiev" Class ASW Cruiser.

Displacement: about 40,000 tons.  
20-25 Ka-25 "Hormone" helicopters.  
15-20 Yak-36 "Forger" VTOL aircraft.  
4 twin launchers for SS-N-12 surface-to-surface missile.  
2 twin launchers for SA-N-3 surface-to-air missile.  
2 twin retractable launchers for SA-N-4 surface-to-air missile.  
2 twin 76 mm dual-purpose gun mountings.  
12 tube ASW rocket launchers.  
4 tube "chaff" launchers.

2. "Kara" Class Cruiser.

Displacement: about 10,000 tons full load.  
2 quadruple launchers for SS-N-10 (SS-N-14) surface-to-surface missile.  
2 twin launchers for SA-N-3 surface-to-air missile.  
2 twin retractable launchers for SA-N-4 surface-to-air missile.  
2 twin 76 mm dual-purpose gun mountings.  
4 twin 23 mm anti-air gun mountings.  
2 six-tube rocket launchers.  
2 five-tube launchers for dual-purpose torpedo.  
1 Ka-25 "Hormone" helicopter.

3. "Krivak" Class Missile Destroyer.

Displacement: about 4,000 tons full load.  
1 quadruple launcher for SS-N-10 (SS-N-14) surface-to-surface missile.  
2 twin launchers for SA-N-4 surface-to-air missile.  
2 twin 76 mm dual-purpose gun mountings.  
4 30 mm anti-aircraft guns.  
2 four-tube launchers for torpedo.

4. "Nanuchka" Class Guided Missile Patrol Gunboat.

Displacement: about 850 tons.  
2 triple launcher/containers for SS-N-9 surface-to-surface missile.  
1 twin retractable launcher for SA-N-4 surface-to-air missile.  
1 twin 57 mm anti-aircraft gun mounting.

C. URSS - SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES.

1. SS-N-9 shipborne surface-to-surface missile.

Carried in 2 triple launcher/containers aboard the "Nanuchka" class missile patrol boat. No pictures or official detail of the missiles have been made public. Estimated range up to 150 NM with external mid-course guidance by cooperating aircraft or helicopter. A normal operating range of about 40 NM seems likely. Mid-course guidance probably by autopilot with terminal guidance probably by active radar homing.

2. SS-N-10 (SS-N-14) surface-to-surface missile.

Carried in new launcher/containers aboard "Kara", "Kresta II" and "Krivak" class vessels. No pictures or official detail of the missile have been made public. Estimated range of about 30 NM but this figure is thought to be applicable only to the maximum autonomous range, without the assistance of an aerial vector for mid-course guidance.

Terminal guidance is most likely active radar homing.

3. SS-N-11 surface-to-surface missile.

Carried in new launcher/containers aboard the latest version of the "Osa II" class missile FPB. Are generally believed to be an advanced version of the SS-N-2 "Styx" missile with better guidance techniques. No pictures or official detail of the missile have been made public. Range is estimated as about 20 NM maximum.

4. SS-N-12 surface-to-surface missile.

Carried by the "Krev" aircraft carrier. Estimated range about 250 NM.

D. URSS - AIR-TO-SURFACE MISSILES.1. AS-4 KITCHEN.

The air-to-surface missile which arms the Tu-22 "Blinder". Is reported to be at present carried, singly, recessed under the belly, by the "Backfire" bomber as an interim weapon until the AS-6 is operational.

Estimated range varies from 300 Km to 800 Km. A UK MOD report quoted a maximum range of 298 Km.

2. AS-5 KELT.

The air to surface missile used by "Badger" bombers.

Estimated range varies between 160 Km and more than 320 Km. However a UK MOD report gave the former figure as the maximum range.

3. AS-6 KINGFISH.

Reported to be under development. Probably is the air to surface missile which will arm the "Backfire" bomber.

Maximum range has been quoted in a report issued by the UK MOD report as 135+ statute miles (220 Km).

E. USA - AIR-TO-SURFACE MISSILES.1. "Harpoon" Missile (AGM-84).

Produced by Mc Donnell Douglas Astronautics. Anti-ship, supersonic missile, with all-weather performance, a range of 60 NM and a 500 lbs warhead with a pre-explosion penetration capability.

It is reported that the missile can make in-flight turns of up to 90°, fly toward the target few meters above sea level, and climb rapidly close to the target so as to strike from above, thereby increasing its attack capability against fast-moving vessels.

For mid-course guidance the "Harpoon" uses a system comparable to an inertial navigation system, composed essentially of a radio-altimeter and a digital computer, which uses velocity data from 3 axis given by a gyroscope system, to calculate the signals to be given to the missile's mobile surfaces.

For final guidance the missile is equipped with an active radar system, resistant to electronic counter-measures.

## F. USA - AIR DEFENSE AND ASW SYSTEMS.

### 1. AEGIS.

The Aegis weapon System MK 7 is a fast-reaction, high fire power shipboard Anti-Air-Warfare weapon system, possessing a high degree of system availability, able to counter massed attacks using the SM-2 Standard Missile. The system will be particularly effective against highly coordinated attacks of low-altitude, high-speed aircraft and missiles, air-to-surface missiles, and surface-to-surface missiles. In addition the system has a significant capability against small surface targets without compromise to the primary AAW capability.

Aegis provides the following key performance factors:

1. Low Past Reaction Time, particularly against low altitude attacks.
2. High Fire Power to prevent system saturation by a massed attack.
3. High Electronic Countermeasures and Clutter Resistance to include a capability to over-coming extensive jamming and land-weather, and sea clutter.
4. High Availability to ensure system operation when needed.
5. Extended Coverage to defend other ships in the area.
6. Efficient, Effective and Designed Integration with other ship systems, of the Aegis armed combatants, and with other fleet combatants (Aegis or non-Aegis) by data-links.

The Aegis system is based on the use of a AN/SPY-1A phased array radar to automatically detect and track multiple targets simultaneously while directing the engagement of a significant number of intercept missiles.

The system is also capable of acquiring, tracking and controlling multiple missiles simultaneously. It can be reprogrammed to fire new missiles.

### 2. PHALANX (CIWS).

This system will provide the fleet with a close-in last-ditch defense against the air threat in general and the Soviet anti-ship cruise missile in particular.

It adapts the Army's "Vulcan" 20 mm six-barrel gun mount to Navy use, and incorporates a fully automatic aim correction feature, and an autonomous threat evaluation that commences fire when a valid target is within range.

3. STANDARD MISSILE - 2 (SM-2).

SM-2 Medium Range. Speed above 2 Mach.

Estimated range = 18 Km.

SM-2 Extended Range. Speed above 2.5 Mach

Estimated range = 55 Km.

4. CAPTOR MINE (ENCAPSULATED TORPEDO).

Is a deep water mine that consists of a modified MK-46 torpedo housed in a capsule which contains its own acoustic detection and classification system. When a submerged target comes within range of its sensor and is classified as enemy, the Captor releases the M-46 torpedo.

Owing to the mobility of the torpedo, the Captor mine has a damage radius several orders of magnitude greater than any conventional mine.



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THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, SOUTHERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Internal Political Changes and the Atlantic Alliance

by Stefano SILVESTRI

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The Southern European members of the Atlantic Alliance each have their own past. Portugal (which belongs only marginally to the Mediterranean area) had difficulty in overcoming NATO fears deriving from Communist participation in the Portuguese government. Thanks to the solidarity of her European allies, however, the Portuguese domestic political balance has been modified and today is better adapted to allied requirements. France does not belong to NATO. Italy is being submitted to pressure aimed at avoiding Communist participation in government, although, sooner or later, it seems as though this participation will be necessary in order to maintain domestic stability. She is thus in the difficult position of having to reconcile the stability of her domestic situation with that of her international position. Greece has withdrawn from all those Eastern Mediterranean commands in which the Turks participate and is negotiating her membership of and role in NATO directly with the United States. Turkey is showing strong pro-Arab leanings, is gradually undertaking an economic and political rapprochement with the USSR and fears that Greek membership of the EEC could eventually lead to her own isolation in Western Europe. She feels that she is being submitted to dangerous American pressures over the Cyprus question and reacts nationalistically. As far as those non-member states with direct ties to NATO are concerned, the situation is no clearer. Spain has an agreement with the USA which provides for the withdrawal of all American nuclear warheads from Spanish territory by the end of 1979; at the same time, the country is bitterly divided over whether or not to join the Alliance. Malta is renegotiating the agreement over NATO use of the port and arsenal at La Valletta, but has also requested a kind of "international

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neutrality guarantee" from a strange mix of countries: France, Italy, Libya and Algeria.

It is thus clear that at least in the Mediterranean, the Atlantic Alliance is an extremely fluid grouping.

It seems evident that perceptions of the Atlantic Alliance and NATO vary with the nationality of the observer. First, throughout the Mediterranean, there is ever broader acceptance of the distinction drawn by De Gaulle between the Atlantic Alliance (which is seen as an essentially political grouping, as representing a "choice of international camp") and NATO (which is identified with the American military presence in the zone). A further distinction is then drawn between the "Atlantic sphere" (that is primarily relations with the USA) and the "European sphere" (that is relations with the EEC or with individual West European powers).

These distinctions should be emphasized as they play a crucial role in the foreign and domestic policies of the Southern European countries. Certainly, it is not always easy to distinguish between the positions assumed by the USA and those assumed by the EEC, Germany, France, etc. on Mediterranean problems. On some occasions, however, this distinction is possible (and, at times, it affects vital issues such as solidarity with the Portuguese Socialists or the attitude to be adopted towards the Greek Colonels). Even when European and American positions are similar, they are never seen as being identical, as it is argued that European methods and interests must necessarily differ.

Simplifying, to a maximum, current convictions in the Southern European countries, we may say that:

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- a) the US role is commonly identified with the military element in international politics;
- b) this role is considered to be essential as a "guarantee" of the balance with the USSR;
- c) the European role is identified with the economic and commercial side of foreign affairs;
- d) the European countries are seen as essential partners in economic development policy.

Naturally, this is not always the case. It is clear, for example, that the USA is considered as an important economic and financial power, especially if a Southern European country is engaged in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund. Equally clear, is the growing importance assumed by the Arab oil-exporting countries, for economies as weak as those of Southern Europe. Nevertheless, despite the considerations, the basic equation which sees the primary US role as tied to the military balance, remains valid.

What is more, this equation does not seem to contradict the positions the USA has gradually assumed towards the Southern European countries. Here too, the main priority seems to have been the maintenance of the military balance. Other considerations seem to have received far less attention. Thus, the whole problem of political change in Southern Europe (from right wing coups d'état to Communist participation in government) seems to be seen exclusively from the point of view of maintaining American bases, freedom of action for American forces, security for NATO secrets, etc. This has three

consequences:

- 1 - It means that the permanence and effectiveness of the American presence in the Mediterranean depends almost exclusively on American military forces. On the one hand, this may be positive; it gives a more concrete character to discussions and clarifies the interests of the parties. At the same time, however, it reduces American flexibility when faced with political change and conflicts in the Mediterranean, and forces the USA to continually establish linkages between internal political developments in the Southern Mediterranean countries and relations with the USSR. In this way, relations between allies are inevitably affected by any, even temporary, crisis in détente;
- 2 - It means that the American presence suffers from the fact that American forces present in the Mediterranean, and especially the VI fleet, are not only NATO forces committed to the East-West conflict, but also have other roles, for example in the Middle East, which lie outside NATO interests and where US allies may have positions differing from those of the USA;
- 3 - It establishes an excessively tight tie between the American political role and the ups and downs of military strategy. In this way, a relatively minor "technical" problem, such as the neutron warhead, can become a problem for the American political role in Europe.

Recently, the use of American military strength in the Mediterranean for political ends, has become increasingly difficult. On the one hand, the Soviet military presence prevents the Americans from using their forces for peacekeeping or enforcing and implies a continual risk of escalation; on the other, the proliferation of ever more sophisticated conventional weapons in large numbers to many different actors (including the Palestinians), forces the Americans to use more than the minimum level of force previously required and thus creates increased difficulties in decision-making. Finally, the crisis situations in which American forces might have to operate, are becoming ever more difficult and ambiguous:

- it is no longer possible to resolve these crises by the straightforward use of military pressure (consider, for example, domestic political change or the Yugoslav problem);
- even when the use of American military strength could have a positive effect, decision-making must be extremely rapid and decisive (as shown in the last Cyprus crisis).

The political use of American military strength in the Mediterranean is further complicated by the differences between the strategic situations in the Eastern and Western sectors and on the North, South-Eastern and South-Western shores. In the Western sector on the Northern shore, there are fewer problems, there is a higher degree of military security and military reactions are less necessary (the main requirement is to maintain a credible balance with the Soviets). On the Southern shore, on the other hand, there is a stronger Soviet presence and a conflict between the Maghreb states. Any kind of military intervention could lead to escalation

or could have ambiguous results (excessive support for Morocco could, for example, lead to the loss of Algeria.....there is the problem of the Canary Islands and the complicated political dispute between Tunisia and Libya.....one needs to take account of the possible impact of military intervention in the region on Malta's international position, etc.).

In the Eastern sector, there is a lower degree of military security and the Alliance is infinitely less compact than in the West. This increases the significance of domestic political developments in each individual country within the area and of these countries' relations with the USA. In the South-Eastern sector, there is a major risk of escalation and a highly significant military commitment. What is more, President Sadat's peace initiative has, at least, to some extent, changed the terms of the Middle Eastern problem, forcing the USA to abandon its strategy of seeking a US-Soviet agreement as a means towards a solution. In this way, the local confrontation between the USA and the USSR has become more acute.

The differences existing between different situations within the Mediterranean have worsened the problems facing a key country within the Alliance, namely Italy. Italy lies in the boundary zone where the various Mediterranean sectors meet and is thus affected by the policies adopted for each sector. Slowly, she is thus being transformed from being a country with an isolated role in the Mediterranean, when only ties were with Western Europe, into a "frontier country" faced with all the risks and pressures implied by this position.

The main problem facing the Southern European countries is internal political stability (and economic development: it is impossible to separate the two questions). There can be no doubt that over the years, the Atlantic Alliance and the continuing American military presence have favoured this stability. In the immediate post-war period, memberships of the Atlantic Alliance provided an answer to the problem of how to consolidate the Southern European states as well as guaranteeing internal order, international security and a clarification of the Southern European countries' domestic political situations. The choice between a pro-Western and a pro-Eastern position was the central issue around which stable government majorities were formed. Nevertheless, this emergency situation was in flux right from the beginning and has now changed completely.

The first sign of evolution was in Yugoslavia: the maintenance of a Communist régime in no way prevented a free choice of foreign policy. The theory of non-alignment helped the Yugoslav government to persist in its option in favour of independence from the Soviet bloc. Nevertheless, it was this basic decision which came first, rather than the theory.

Albania is a similar case. Given that she needed to affirm her independence, not only from the USA and the USSR, but also from Yugoslavia, she opted not for non-alignment but for China. The tactical nature of this option was clearly shown after the death of Mao when Albania continued to insist on her independence, while abandoning the Chinese label.

In the West, there is the classic case of Gaullist France



(the Socialists proposed an up-dated version to be applied if they won the Elections). Internal stability was maintained, but there was a change in foreign policy. Thus, rather than France's international position determining her internal stability, the need to consolidate French internal stability, shaken by the trauma of the colonial wars, was allowed to determine France's international position; the government used its dispute with the USA as a means of recovering internal consensus.

There is a similar situation in Greece and Turkey: on several occasions, both countries have felt in some way betrayed by American decisions (as early as the 1964 Cyprus crisis for Turkey and even since American acceptance of the Colonels coup d'état for Greece). Both countries have used their disputes with the USA as a means of generating domestic consensus.

All this tends to lead us to the conclusion that the mechanical linkage of a pro-Western (or pro-Eastern) international option and internal stability, which grew up in the post-war period, is today no longer valid

Unfortunately, however, this analysis could bring me to two different conclusions. One of these is the normal American argument. In short, certain kinds of domestic change are destabilizing, in that they can lead to a modification of an allied country's international position and loyalties. It is thus necessary to hinder this kind of change.. Where this proves to be impossible, the American government seems convinced of the need to "rethink" its own political position towards these countries and maybe go so far as to consider them "marginal" members of the Atlantic Alliance. This raises doubts as to

the American guarantee against the USSR and to the automatic nature of the Alliance's guarantee to these countries. What is more, it could create serious political cooperation problems.

The Southern European countries seem to look at these questions in a different light. They do not believe that international stability necessarily depends on their domestic political options; on the contrary, they believe that these same domestic political options depend on a stable international framework. They, therefore, rely on the working of American and NATO guarantees of stability and security, at the same time as NATO and the USA are beginning to place these in doubt.

This leads to serious misunderstandings, and probably to threats to both internal and international security and stability.

In these conditions, it is not easy to rethink NATO's role in the Mediterranean.

The USA believe in the need for a change in NATO, at the very time that NATO is most necessary to the Southern European countries, as a general guarantee of stability and security. Meanwhile, the Southern European countries seek to use NATO for their own domestic political ends, although

- a) various countries objectives may be incompatible (e.g. Greece and Turkey;
- b) these same domestic political ends may appear to the Americans as a threat to the political balance between the two blocs.

It is extremely difficult for NATO to escape this maze of

contradictions. If NATO has survived, this is because very few questions are being asked; everything is entrusted to old cooperation routines. At least in the Mediterranean, "rethinking" NATO means liquidating NATO, unless that is, the Alliance moves into a new political dynamic.

In my opinion, it is unlikely that this dynamic can be centred around the USA

- a) because the USA is already at the centre of the present system and cannot risk adventurous or over-radical moves, without risking a crisis in the system as a whole;
- b) because the USA is too closely identified with military forces and military problems;
- c) because US global interests lead the USA to an operational analysis and operational conclusions which differ from those of their allies in the area;
- d) because the US image has already been over-exploited for domestic ends (often with merely tactical ends in view) by political leaders in the various Southern European countries.

There is, however, room for Western European initiatives (by the EEC, other international groupings, or by individual Western countries). The Portuguese, Greek, Maltese and Spanish cases have given a certain vague credibility to European foreign policy. What is more, on many crucial problems such as economic development, energy problem, the labour market, and certain foreign policy questions of immediate significance for the Mediterranean (the attitude to be taken over the Palestinian problem, for example), the Europeans are closer to the

Southern European domestic political "problématique" than the Americans. This makes it easier to discuss problems, which are not immediately military in nature, with a higher degree of mutual understanding.

None of this leads to concrete proposals. The aim of this paper has been to indicate certain aspects of the problem and thus, to open a discussion and give some ideas as to how this might proceed.

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THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, SOUTHERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Changes affecting the Military Balance  
in the Mediterranean Area

by Kenneth HUNT

Castelgandolfo  
10/11 April 1978

QUESTA PUBBLICAZIONE È DI PROPRIETÀ  
DELL'ISTITUTO AFFARI INTERNAZIONALI

# THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, SOUTHERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

## Changes affecting the Military Balance

### in the Mediterranean Area

by Kenneth Hunt

Over the past decade there have been a number of changes in the political and military balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Few of these have favoured the West militarily. There has been a steady growth of Soviet military power right across the board: NATO has not kept pace. The Alliance has also done harm to itself. The conditional membership of France, the running dispute between Greece and Turkey and the slow reduction of British forces have all put NATO at some disadvantage.

The Alliance survives nonetheless, partly because deterrence still remains, however endangered, but mainly because there is still a sufficient identity of interest among the allies in their security, not only among West Europeans but between them and the United States. This shared interest is, however, arguably stronger in Central and Northern Europe than in the South, yet the changes ahead may be more serious in the South and test Alliance cohesion more. Many of the changes will have military implications; the aim of this paper is to see what these might be.

### THE PRESENT BALANCE

As a preliminary it is worth noting the special features of the military balance in the Mediterranean as compared with the Centre. It is, of course, very difficult to assess the balance in either region since there are so many factors to take into account. As a first step, numbers can be compared but there will be arguments about how many Soviet troops should be included and the part that reinforcements play. This can only be a first step though, because quality enters into the equation and the area is materially affected by what happens outside it, by the navies in the Atlantic and by the strategic nuclear balance.

The Mediterranean is even more complex. It cannot be isolated from the Centre, as the main theatre of operations, and it has its own naval equation. And there is not just one balance in the Mediterranean but several. There are really four distinct sectors in NATO's Southern Region: the three land areas of NE Italy, Northern Greece and Thrace; and Eastern Turkey; and the maritime sector of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Of course, all are connected by considerations of reinforcement but it is here that the separateness can at once be seen. For logistic and political reasons it is hardly practicable to plan on using Italian forces (in any numbers) in Greece and Turkey, or Greek or Turkish forces in Italy. Greek or Turkish forces could hardly reinforce each other and Turkey would even have difficulty in moving forces from Western to Eastern Turkey. It is not easily possible to compensate for weakness in one sector by strength in another.

In effect there are, unlike the Centre, largely national defence forces in the Mediterranean, apart from the presence of some US forces, notably the Sixth Fleet and USAF fighter squadrons. A comparison of numbers, which can be seen in The Military Balance, is therefore of limited utility in face of this fragmentation of NATO forces and the relative cohesion of the Warsaw Pact in the region (though with a question mark over Pact use of Romanian forces and territory). For land and air forces the two sides are much more even than in the Centre but the figures mask the fact that Greek and Turkish forces are largely infantry whereas those of the Pact are heavily mechanized or armoured. And Turkish forces have been badly affected by the arms embargo imposed by the US Congress: it has been said that one-third of the air force is grounded for lack of spares and that the armed forces as a whole have no more than half their potential capability. Greek forces too, will have been adversely

affected by having taken no part in NATO exercises for some 21 years. Greek unwillingness to supply air warning information through the NADGE chain, or allow communications <sup>to</sup> Turkey via the land-line across Greece, handicap the NATO defences as a whole. Limitations on the use of American military facilities in Greece and Turkey affect both alliance strength and US national monitoring of Soviet activity (including missile testing).

The naval balance is not an unreasonable one for NATO although it primarily depends on the US Sixth Fleet and has materially worsened in the last decade with the build-up of the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet. Ship numbers in the Sixth Fleet normally match those of the Soviet Navy, with US ships rather more powerful and enjoying greater air cover both from the two large carriers normally on station and from land-based air. When other allied navies are counted as well, the Soviet Fleet is heavily outnumbered (though not necessarily locally).

The two fleets do, however, have different roles and here NATO has for some time been faced with a real problem. The Sixth Fleet was designed as a projection force, that is to project power on land through air strikes and amphibious landings, notably in the Thrace area. To carry out these tasks the Sixth Fleet would have to stand well inshore but can hardly do this until the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet has been neutralised. This sea battle must therefore now come first, before the Sixth Fleet is free to operate in the waters of the Eastern Mediterranean, waters that are in any case well within range of the new Backfire bomber with its anti-ship capability. The sea battle can, no doubt, be won but, until it is, the naval contribution to the land battle will be small. And Thrace is very vulnerable, with little depth. Time could be very short.

It may be that in war or time of tension, the large US attack



carriers would initially be withdrawn from the Mediterranean, since they are high value targets that would need heavy defence. Without the air cover they give, amphibious operations would be impracticable and tactical air support much less. The Soviet Mediterranean Fleet thus exercises a strong influence over NATO operations in the South.

#### MILITARY CHANGE

With this brief survey as a context, the implications of change can be examined more easily. Purely military change, divorced from political developments (which of course will have military implications too), is perhaps better taken first.

THE SIZE OF THE FORCES. It seems unlikely that any NATO country will increase its forces, though admittedly Greece and Turkey have done so in the last year or two in order to face each other. Greece has put garrisons in the islands in the Eastern Aegean (which is forbidden by the Treaty of Lausanne), while Turkey has created a new Army facing them in Izmir. Italy has just reduced numbers in the Army. Britain has residual forces in the Mediterranean but is likely to withdraw them rather than return, particularly if a settlement is reached in Cyprus. (It is certainly arguable that Britain should concentrate her limited forces in the Centre and the North and not try to keep any at a great distance away in the Mediterranean, save perhaps for maritime air squadrons). France seems likely to keep strong naval forces in the Western Mediterranean but probably not involve them. The United States could well alter the composition of the Sixth Fleet to give primary emphasis to sea control and the Soviet naval threat, but seems unlikely to reduce its power in the absence of political events that would throw the American role in doubt. Clearly a continuance of anti-American policy in Greece and Turkey or an alteration of the status of those countries with the Alliance

(discussed below) would put in some doubt an American presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, perhaps even a permanent presence in the Mediterranean as a whole.

The Warsaw Pact, with interior lines, is more flexible on land and in the air in the Balkan area and can change forces round with relative ease but faces the problem of the naval choke points of the Bosphorus and Dardenelles and Gibraltar. Naval deployments from the Black Sea would probably be made in or before a time of tension.

#### QUALITY

It has, ironically, taken the dispute between them to bring Greece and Turkey to spend more on defence and this uncovenanted bonus is likely to continue (bonus on the assumption that their forces would face North again at a time of acute East-West crisis). A major improvement would, however, be brought about if there were a resumption of supplies of spares and arms to Turkey from the United States and ratification by the US Congress of the recent US military aid agreements with both countries (which depends on progress over Cyprus). But even given this, there is no likelihood of matching the pace and quality of Warsaw Pact mechanisation.

A real change could, however, come from the introduction of new technology into the Sixth Fleet and USAF squadrons. Sea and air-launched cruise missiles, precision-guided air-to-surface missiles and more advanced target acquisition, and surveillance, could give the Fleet much greater sea control capability and make the task of the Soviet Fleet far more difficult. Introduction of such weapons into other NATO forces is improbable for very many years yet.

#### POLITICAL CHANGE

Major military implications could, of course, follow from domestic political change. The likelihood of this change and

and its possible nature is covered in other papers; only the military considerations in various parts of the region are discussed here, taking them from West to East.

Before doing this it is, however, necessary to glance for a moment at the effect that the Arab-Israel dispute has on the military situation in the Mediterranean. Put briefly, American diplomacy has undercut the Soviet position in the Middle East, notably in Egypt, where the removal of Soviet bases has represented a gain for NATO. Against this the Soviet Union is giving support to those states opposed to present Egyptian policy, forging in the process a much stronger link with Libya. The course of the negotiations will continue to have effect on Arab attitudes towards the two superpowers. If either can capitalise on this by acquiring military facilities or links, or <sup>by</sup> denying them to the other, it will affect the military equation in the Mediterranean. If, for example, the Soviet Union were to obtain airfield facilities in Libya or Algeria it would make a very great deal of difference to the operation of Soviet naval vessels in the Western and Central Mediterranean. In short, the North African seaboard is militarily of great significance but the alignment of the two littoral countries has much to do with Israel and little with NATO.

The Iberian Peninsula

Portugese forces are not of particular importance to the Alliance but Portugese territory is. If change in Portugal allowed the Soviet navy and its air force to operate from there, NATO navies would be severely handicapped. Denial of the Azores would mean the loss of an invaluable base for maritime reconnaissance in the Atlantic and for staging. But though NATO is unlikely to be able to operate from France, it in effect does so from Spain and from Gibraltar. While NATO itself has no urgent need for

ports and airfields in Portugal there is ample reason for wanting to deny them Soviet forces.

Spain has a military agreement with the United States with some three years still to run. It allows the United States to use a major naval base at Rota and operate aircraft, both fighter and maritime reconnaissance squadrons, from a number of airfields. Major overhauls can be carried out to surface ships and submarines in Rota thus saving the two to three weeks transit time that would otherwise be needed for them to return to US ports, with more operating time as a result. Through this agreement with the US, NATO in effect uses Spanish territory though Spain is not an Alliance member. If Spain became a member there would be the additional advantage of Spanish forces, not so much the army perhaps as the navy and air force. Though the army has three divisions that compare not unfavourably with many others in the region, the Spanish navy, with 10 submarines, some 25 escorts and a helicopter carrier, would greatly strengthen NATO ASW forces. Her air force has a number of squadrons with good, modern aircraft and would again be an acquisition. On purely military grounds therefore, Spanish membership of NATO has much to recommend it: the forces would be an increment and there would be no problem of renewing the US bases agreement which gave some difficulty last time. But it would need to be on the basis of political consent in Spain.

Gibraltar is militarily significant for its position at the entrance to the Mediterranean, but it seems likely to remain available to NATO, whether through a continuance of the link with Britain or through agreement reached with Spain, Britain and Gibraltar.

#### THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN

France is what might be called a conditional member of NATO though recently <sup>she</sup> has seemed to have moved a little nearer in practice. For France to become less conditional would be

militarily very helpful indeed; her airfields would be important for air reinforcement from the United States and her territory would give logistic depth sorely needed. This is, of course, unlikely, but, whatever shade of government emerges from the elections, a French presence in the Western Mediterranean will probably continue, for good nationalist reasons at least. On the whole, the position of France may be no more problematic in the future than in the past.

Italy can conjure up a wider range of alternative scenarios - apart from the status quo (whatever that is) - from the possible inclusion of Communists in government coupled with continuation of present defence policies, to a radical change of defence policy leading to an eventual withdrawal from NATO.

The first alternative could raise the question of Italy's (permanent) membership of the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) - whether this could be allowed to continue, including the discussion of sensitive nuclear matters, on the basis that some members of the Italian Cabinet would not be a party to secrets shared by others. Given the fact of Cabinet government, which presumably has to reach common decisions on defence policy, it is hard to see Italy's participation in the NPG remaining unaffected. Then would Italian officers whose loyalty is to their government, whatever their personal feelings, be allowed to continue in key NATO positions involving highly classified information?

Since the secrets are so often American ones, certainly in the nuclear field, it is the American attitude that will be important here, but, of course, it has been the American view of Eurocommunism that has tended to be uncompromising, particularly in Congress. On balance it would seem likely that if Communists shared government, in whatever post, Italy would, by one device or another, be excluded from anything that mattered in the NPG. Would this mean much militarily? Probably not;

Italy is not so closely committed by problems of nuclear strategy as are the countries in the Centre. Politically, however, the damage could be much greater. The extent of this is for others to assess but if it gave rise to frictions with the United States, then the problem of American tenancy of Italian bases might be involved, as might be Italian operation of American double-key nuclear weapons and their storage in Italy. So there could be indirect military implications of such a decision, which could be very important.

The more extreme hypothesis - of Italy one day withdrawing from NATO - obviously has far-reaching military implications, since Italian territory and forces would not be available and Greece and Turkey would be militarily isolated in the Eastern Mediterranean. Though much would depend on the political attitude taken by other Mediterranean countries in such a circumstance, it would be hard to make a persuasive military case to Greece and Turkey - that they could then still depend on adequate outside military assistance with no NATO foothold in the Central Mediterranean. The Southern Flank would be in very sorry straits, dependent only on the willingness of the United States to remain actively committed and present in force in the Mediterranean (which Congress might well question).

Short of this extreme are other possible cases. - for example, a 'no foreign troops' or 'no nuclear weapons' policy, or a French version of NATO membership. Perhaps discussion of the various political possibilities and probabilities ought to precede any attempt at a discussion of the military implications of such a wide range of alternatives.

If the status of Jugoslavia were to change in such a way as to allow Soviet access to airfields and ports in that country, the military implications would be distinctly adverse. Soviet ability

to operate in the Central Mediterranean would be greatly enhanced; Italy (and Austria) would become a theatre of much more direct confrontation and political pressure, particularly if the Soviet Union chose to make it so, though much would depend on how the change happened - whether contested, by invitation, ambiguous or otherwise. It is the political and psychological effect that would probably be uppermost. Greece would be uncomfortably hemmed in and Turkey no doubt begin to wonder. It would be harder to sustain the Southern Flank yet, paradoxically, if there were, as a result of such a change in Yugoslavia, a return to cold war hostility then NATO might be strengthened politically. But it would have been weakened militarily in a most uncomfortable way. Yet NATO does not really have either the forces or the inclination to go into Yugoslavia, so this contingency, admittedly extreme, would find it both prepared for it and very much off balance. Though the political price of military intervention would be high, the Warsaw Pact is far better positioned for it than is NATO.

#### EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Turkey, Greece and Cyprus are conveniently discussed together. Turkey has territory of immense strategic importance, nothing that Greece has can match it. Not only does it sit astride the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, it also contains airfields within easy range of Soviet targets and facilities invaluable for surveillance. The United States has some 27 major facilities, many concerned with monitoring activity in connection with SALT, such as tracking missile tests or following naval movements in the Black Sea (the friction with Congress means that most are, for the time being, not operating). Turkey uses these strategic assets to give what leverage she can over NATO and the United States, though not with much success so far in Congress. This is partly because Congress leans towards the Greek side of the

case, partly because the assumption is that Turkey needs the link with the United States and NATO and will not go to the lengths of breaking it. There are, however, some currents of neutralism in Turkey and alternative defence policies are theoretically possible. These possibilities and others will be discussed elsewhere. Sufficient here to say that if NATO were not able to rely on Turkish membership, or not able to use Turkish territory, it would be militarily disastrous. It is Turkey that is the keystone in the Southern Flank; without it an Alliance position in Greece would be militarily untenable in war and not necessarily attractive for Greece herself in peacetime. American support and a willingness to keep forces in the region would be at once in doubt.

There are American and NATO facilities in Greece, which have been closed or under constraint since 1974. They are useful both for NATO defence and as forward operating bases for the United States - but not so useful or important as those in Turkey. Greece has notified her intention to leave the integrated military organisation, but has not actually done so, though she has left the DPC and withdrawn officers from some HQs. There are obvious political reasons for this reluctance to break the link completely, but this has not stopped her from taking actions that are militarily damaging, such as disconnecting NADGE computers, and limiting American usage of bases. A complete break would, of course, be worse (though it would no doubt please Turkey), but Greece has no immediately attractive alternative to NATO and could not turn neutrality to account with the Soviet Union to the extent that Turkey could. But political change towards the left in Greece could bring a break both with NATO and the United States. It would be a military blow. The NADGE and communications links would suffer, as would the ability to operate in the Eastern Mediterranean and Aegean. It would not have the



catastrophic effect that defection by Turkey could have, but would be highly unwelcome. How unwelcome would depend on the nature of Greece's subsequent political alignment.

Cyprus is one of the causes of the Greek-Turkish dispute and is in effect usable on behalf of NATO through the British presence on the island in sovereign bases which include a large airfield and a valuable radar and signal station. If the Cyprus problem is solved, Britain might not want to stay. It would be possible to duplicate the military facilities on Turkish soil, if politics allowed, though at some expense. Cyprus is thus somewhat akin to Malta in that it has facilities that NATO can find elsewhere but which it certainly would not want the Soviet Union to inherit. Soviet use of Akrotiri airfield in South Western Cyprus would add to NATO's difficulties in the Eastern Mediterranean, by giving fighter and other air cover to the Soviet Fleet. The radar site on Mount Olympus would be invaluable for surveillance. The future status of Cyprus is therefore militarily important to NATO.

#### CONCLUSION

It is clear that political change in the Mediterranean is capable of producing serious military implications, direct and indirect, some of which might threaten the existence of the Alliance in the Southern Region. Though this analysis has taken countries separately, for purposes of discussion, there would of course, <sup>be</sup> political interactions arising from events in any one of them, impossible to forecast but likely to lead to greater difficulties. The Alliance has, however, survived problems in the past, though things have got worse rather than better. The concentration here on the dark side rather than the bright, inevitable in a worse case analysis of this kind, is not meant to indicate that this is the side the Alliance will necessarily

see. If sufficient diplomatic and political skill is brought to bear most of the problems can be averted. With even more skill, some of them can be presented to the Soviet Union instead.

Conference at Castelgandolfo, 10-11 April 1978

THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, SOUTHERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

The Military Presence of the Super-Powers

in the Mediterranean

by Jonathan Alford

Introduction

The military position in the Mediterranean in recent years as between the superpowers has passed from a situation of clear-cut superiority by the United States to an uneasy balance which shifts quite rapidly in favour of one or the other in response to political developments in the littoral states. The basin is no longer one in which the United States 6th Fleet can exercise undisputed control of the sea nor is it one which can be entirely denied to US naval forces by the Soviet Union. Land-based air power is the factor which, more than any other, is likely to determine whether the United States can control the sea or whether the Soviet Union can deny its use - either for military purposes or for the carriage of vital oil supplies and other essential commodities. Sea-based air power is clearly of great importance to the protection of the fleets at sea but geography indicates that the proximity of those fleets to coastlines at all times will make it difficult or impossible for them to function effectively unless they can operate within range of their own or allied aircraft based on land. This search for secure airfields by both sides is central to the military equation. In parallel with this search but somewhat less important has been the need for both sides to retain facilities for the fleets in littoral countries. However while this search is clearly of great importance in peacetime in order to ease the problems of maintaining naval forces at a distance from home bases, it is unlikely to prove critical in a short war. In peace it will prove costly, awkward and uncomfortable for both sides to sustain a naval presence without bases but it is not likely to be impossible for either to do so. On the other hand, the victor in war is likely to be the side that can dominate the air - in the Soviet case to attack and in the United States case to protect deployments.

The aim of this shortpaper is to outline who has got what and where in the Mediterranean in terms of forces and support facilities so far as these can be ascertained. Part at least will be conjectural for published sources are unclear as to the exact position of the Super-Powers in some countries. It will not attempt to predict outcomes or, except in a most simplistic way, attempt to assess the military balance.

While no statement of Soviet objectives can be anything other than conjectural, we have a full statement of United States' objectives in the US Congressional Record:

### General Objectives

- (1) To deter Soviet armed aggression against NATO states and other nations of the Middle East.
- (2) To project sufficient power to provide an effective defense should deterrence fail.
- (3) To encourage peace and stability in the Middle East.

### Specific Objectives

- (1) To maintain the strength of NATO's southern flank.
- (2) To maintain Free World Supply lines in the Mediterranean area
- (3) To support friendly states outside of NATO, particularly Israel.
- (4) To deny the Soviet Union use of the Suez Canal in time of war.

So far as the United States is concerned, what follows must be measured against and related to these stated objectives. It would not be rash to suggest that Soviet objectives are close to a mirror image of those of the United States.

### Geographical Factors

It is hardly necessary to stress the obvious geographical factors and the very enclosed nature of the sea. What may be less obvious is that the sea is itself divided into a number of sub-basins by very distinct choke points. Concentration of naval and air forces at these choke points can make it easy for each side to deny passage to the other and the relatively shallow waters at these choke points make the mining threat of peculiar significance. In particular, the Strait of Sicily can be closed relatively easily which effectively divides the sea into two unconnected areas. It is this which tends to enhance the value of Italy and Italian bases to the United States and leads them to deploy - at normal times - one carrier task group on each side of the Straits. Furthermore it is certainly no accident that almost all the anchorages used by Soviet naval units on a regular basis are close to choke points. Their significance is well understood by both sides.

It is also obvious that geography does not favour both sides to anything like the same extent. The Soviet Union would find it impossible to reinforce her Mediterranean Fleet in war nor could she withdraw units should she wish to do so. The Dardanelles and the Straits of Gibraltar - both currently in NATO control - reduce flexibility to zero in time of war. On the other hand, Soviet land-based air power - particularly the introduction into service of the BACKFIRE bomber - can now reach out to the Western Mediter-

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1. US Military Installations and Objectives in the Mediterranean. Library of Congress, March 27th, 1977. Report of the Foreign Affairs and National Defence Division of the CRS to the Committee on International Relations. P.8.

anean basin in order to make what had been considered a haven for the 6th Fleet an area which will have to be fought for. Furthermore, Soviet maritime reconnaissance satellites are likely to give the kind of target information which hitherto would have had to be obtained by vulnerable maritime reconnaissance aircraft. Nevertheless, geography makes it seem likely that, in war, there will always be a sacrificial aspect to the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet. It has to stand and fight it out. What will be crucial for NATO will be how long their Fleet can deny the sea to the civil and naval shipping of NATO and therefore how long it can inhibit NATO from carrying out essential operations to reinforce the Southern Flank.

## The United States

### Naval

This section divides into a discussion of the Fleet and its support facilities. It is also necessary to consider briefly the strategic nuclear deterrent deployed in the Mediterranean. A number of SSBNs are normally kept on station in the basin. It is not known whether these are targetted by SACMUR or whether they are part of the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP). Clearly their presence in these waters adds considerably to Soviet anti-submarine warfare (ASW) concerns.

### US 6th Fleet

This normally consists of about 45 ships of which half are combatants. It has seven Task Forces (TFs) as follows:

TF- 60 Two Task Groups (TGs), each of one carrier and escorting vessels comprise this TF. Each TG will have between four and six destroyer escorts and may have submarine escorts as well. These carriers are rotated from US ports.

#### TF- 61

TF- 62 These two TFs hold the amphibious and assault elements of the Fleet. TF - 61 has a helicopter carrier (LPH) which embarks both CH-46 and CH-53 helicopters and a marine battalion. Other assault shipping is also included to allow the delivery ashore of the battalion and its supporting elements. TF- 61 describes the shipping, TF-62 the embarked marine battalion group.

TF- 63 This is the supply force of oilers and replenishment and repair ships.

TF- 64 The SSBN force.

TF- 67 The surveillance force of aircraft, destroyers and inshore patrol vessels for keeping track of all Soviet units and for shadowing when necessary.

TF- 69 The 'hunter-killer' submarine force of nuclear-powered vessels (SSN). It probably consists of about four SSNs operating out of La Maddalena (Sardinia)

### Basing

Apart from the SSBNs (which are based at Rota - in Spain, just outside the Mediterranean - until 1979) and the carriers which are US based, all naval units operate out of Italian harbours. Some doubt exists as to whether the six destroyers which were home-ported in Greece are still there or are also rotating from the US on six month commissions. The main Italian ports are Naples (main supply base), Gaeta and La Maddalena (SSNs - including depot ship). There are extensive storage facilities ashore, including nuclear warhead storage.

### Air Forces

There are three main components - naval air forces embarked, naval maritime reconnaissance based ashore, and USAF tactical aircraft based in Spain but capable of forward deployment when necessary. Small numbers of tactical transport aircraft (C-130) and tanker aircraft (KC-135) are also stationed in the area.

### Embarked Naval Air Power

Each carrier will normally embark about 90 aircraft of many different types. About half of these are dedicated to the defence of the TG and the remainder are strike aircraft. The mix will consist of fighters, ASW aircraft, early-warning and control aircraft, electronic warfare (EW) aircraft and, for strike purposes, fighter-bombers.

### Naval Maritime Reconnaissance

The air element of TF-67 (P-3 Orion aircraft) is based at Sigonella (Sicily). These aircraft are for ASW operations and to maintain sea surveillance over the whole of the Mediterranean basin from this very central location. They may also be deployed temporarily to airfields in Spain, Greece and Turkey in order to provide more time on station over more distant waters.

### USAF Tactical Aircraft

401st Air Wing is primarily based in Spain (Torrejon) and consists of 48 F-4s (FGA), some RF-4s (reconnaissance) and twelve FB-111 (strike). Over the years they have used many forward bases on rotation and would expect to deploy forward in war but recent uncertainty both in Greece and Turkey has made it difficult to determine which airfields are in use. In Italy, Aviano and Udine - both in NE Italy - are used as forward bases. In Greece, Athens International Airport is still assumed to be available, as is Iraklion on Crete. In Turkey, there are reports that US aircraft are still using Incerlik (SE Turkey) and Cigli (Izmir) but there are a number of difficulties arising from the strained US-Turkish relations. Both the F-4s and the FB-111s are nuclear capable but neither threaten the Soviet Union unless based forward or refuelled in flight. They are considered by the US to be theatre systems and not part of the strategic deterrent. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, has argued consistently

that they can threaten the Soviet Union from their forward bases and should therefore be constrained by SALT. To date, the US have managed to keep such forward based systems (FBS) out of the SALT discussions.

### Land Forces

Apart from the marine battalion group embarked in TF-61, there are some relatively small army units in the theatre. There is an air-portable battalion at Vicenza (Italy) together with an artillery battery and it is believed that there remains one artillery battalion near Athens. It is presumed that the significance of both artillery units is to ensure that a nuclear capability exists for allied ground forces in both theatres. There are also a number of rather important training areas - especially in Italy - for the marine units (Sardinia and Monte Romano), and logistic sites, most notably at Camp Darby, near Livorno, which supports the US Army in Europe (USAEUR). The US 8th logistics Commands is located at Camp Darby.

### Support Facilities

The picture of US presence in the Mediterranean would be incomplete without some mention of the large number of logistic facilities and land-based communications facilities - mainly naval - and intelligence-gathering stations. The latter are mainly in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Library of Congress Report<sup>2</sup> lists no less than 199 military facilities of all kinds in the Mediterranean (including Portugal): 61 in Turkey, 24 in Greece, 58 in Italy, 28 in Spain, 2 in Morocco, 4 in France and 22 in Portugal. Naval communications and navigational facilities exist throughout the region including some in Morocco (Kenitra - near Rabat) and near Athens. Radar and electronic intelligence (ELINT) stations are deemed to be of very great importance both for early warning of Soviet attack and for the collection of data on Soviet missile tests. It might be assumed that satellite deployments may have, to some extent, superseded land-based systems but there are grounds for believing that the constant watch carried out by systems in Turkey remain very important to the United States. In the Report quoted at (2), the authors note (page 46) that 25% of the information on Soviet missile launches derives from Turkey. They go on to say:

"The essential problem that would be created by the loss of Turkish sites would be a loss of information that could strongly confirm data, such as tactical Soviet military information, obtained from other sources.... Certain data could not be obtained through satellites (but) could be gained through the augmented use of existing intelligence collecting sites in countries geographically close to Turkey."

Crete and Iran are suggested as alternatives but the reservation is made that neither would be as entirely suitable as Turkey.

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2. US Military Installations and Objectives in the Mediterranean, Library of Congress, March 27th 1977. Report by the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division of the CRS to the Committee on International Relations. P.8.

There are other airfields which can be used from time to time or are in use for small numbers of reconnaissance aircraft and tankers. These include Moron and Zaragoza in Spain, Salonika in Greece, Souda Bay (Crete) and Kenitra in Morocco. Lajes, although outside the Mediterranean, is obviously a very important staging base for US trans-Atlantic flights and was shown to be vital in 1973. In-flight refueling of strategic transport aircraft could be an alternative, although costly, solution.

#### US Operations in Peace and War

A recent Commander-in-Chief southern Europe has listed the tasks of the US 6th Fleet in war as follows:

- Establishing an acceptable level of risk for naval forces.
- Keeping the sea lines of communication open for allied shipping.
- Tactical air projection
- Amphibious assault projection

and he went on to state that the first had over-riding importance. In peace, the function of the US presence is as a political-strategic counter-weight to the influence of the Soviet Union in the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean and to try to keep the Arab-Israeli dispute from getting out of hand. This is not the place to discuss tactics in war beyond stating that the United States will have to counter the considerable Soviet submarine threat in waters which are often very difficult for submarine detection and will have to keep at a distance Soviet land-based aircraft and shipping armed with stand-off missiles. In the confined waters of the Mediterranean neither task will be easy and it will be impossible to project power ashore if the level of risk has not been reduced to what is considered 'acceptable'. In peace, routine port visits and exercises in the Mediterranean are used to build confidence among allies and even, occasionally, US vessels will cruise in the Black Sea (as in April 1976). More importantly, as in the Lebanon in 1958 and in the Jordan crisis of 1970, the US forces in the Mediterranean can be used to demonstrate political commitment. It must also be said that port visits have been the occasions of violent demonstrations against the United States - as in Izmir and Istanbul in 1969 and 1970.

Routine forward deployment of strike aircraft and the incorporation of aircraft in NATO exercises are not unimportant political gestures on the part of the United States in peace. It is also significant that the FY 79 Posture Statement indicated that US intervention forces would be over-hauled and, if necessary, re-jigged for 'half-a-war' in the Middle East. These forces could either be airlifted through the Mediterranean - presumably staging at Lajes if permitted to do so - or be all or part of a marine amphibious force (MAF). Admiral Turner, in July 1977, was already

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3. US Naval Institute Proceedings, July 1977 "Countering the Soviet Threat in the Mediterranean" by Admiral Stansfield Turner and Commander George Thribault. p. 26.



talking of the introduction of "40-50,000 troops, 300 aircraft and all the follow-on support" into the Theatre.<sup>4</sup> It is abundantly clear, however, that the move of forces of this magnitude into the Middle East will require harbours and/or airfields in the Eastern Mediterranean which the United States does not, at the moment, have assured access to outside Israel. The importance to the United States of secure entry ports and airfields in the event of a possible Middle-Eastern intervention cannot be over-estimated.

#### The Soviet Union

For the Soviet Union, the past few years have seen some setbacks in the overall policy of extending her military influence in the Mediterranean. Whereas she has made considerable steps forward in her ability to threaten US naval units through long-range aircraft armed with effective stand-off missiles and through effective radar satellite surveillance and tracking, her ability to maintain naval forces in the area has tended to diminish. She has lost the use of bases in Egypt - especially Alexandria - and there is no hard evidence that approaches to Syria, Libya and Algeria have born fruit in any substantial way. All these seem reluctant to grant the kind of facility that the Soviet Union at one time enjoyed in Egypt. There is evidence<sup>5</sup> that the loss of submarine base support at Alexandria in 1976 (as did the loss of Vlone in Albania in 1962) has enforced a change in the balance of the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet. It must be noted that the surface combatants and auxiliary shipping are normally drawn from the Soviet Black Sea Fleet while submarines, because of restrictions imposed by the Montreux Convention on the passage of submarines through the Dardanelles, come from the Baltic or Northern Fleets. Robert Weinland has argued, in the article quoted above, that surface combatant movements through the Dardanelles have been reduced by nearly 40% since 1973 while the passage of auxiliaries has remained nearly constant. To complete the argument, he claims that the average length of each Soviet deployment into the Mediterranean has remained at about 90 days. Thus he argues that the auxiliary fleet can no longer sustain both surface units and submarines

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4. Ibid p. 26

5. Robert G. Weinland, "Land Support for Naval Forces: Egypt and the Soviet Escadra 1962-1976", Survival, March/April 1978.

at the same level as before as a result of inadequate shore-based facilities and back-up. There are no figures available for submarine transits of the Straits of Gibraltar but he suggests that it is unlikely that the Soviet support facilities afloat can sustain as many submarines as before - or that more submarines have had to be drawn from Northern Fleets with each spending a shorter time on station.

What seems to be clear is that almost all Soviet Fleet support is now carried out in sheltered anchorages close to choke points rather than at sea. Although Soviet naval units do visit a large number of ports around the littoral, their stays are short. Only in Syria does there appear to be some evidence that dockyard facilities are available - mainly in Latakia but also in Tartus and Banyas. Therefore Weinland, in a private paper, has described Soviet naval activity on a typical day as likely to be:

At sea - almost all of the submarines, a few surface combatants and a few of the auxiliaries.

At anchorages in international waters - most of the surface combatants and a few of the auxiliaries.

In port - most of the auxiliaries.

The combatants at sea would be shadowing US naval units or on the move from one anchorage to another. Exercising would be comparatively rare. Given that Soviet naval activities in the Mediterranean would be similar to those observed elsewhere, one must suppose a pattern of relative inactivity in peacetime coupled with a 'surge' capability in times of tension or crisis. Therefore, even if Syria were to be prepared to offer more facilities and even if these were adequate, it is too far from the deployment areas and choke points that matter. The favoured anchorages are in shoal water with some shelter from prevailing winds and close to choke points. From West to East, they are:

- Alboran Island (100 miles East of Gibraltar)
- Gulf of Hammamet (off Tunisia and adjacent to the Straits of Sicily)
- Kithira (off the West end of Crete)
- South and East of Crete

#### Naval Forces

Unlike the United States, whose 6th Fleet - both by numbers and type - remains much the same from year to year, the Soviet 5th Escadra will vary somewhat. In terms of ship-days, the Soviet Union has come down slightly from a peak of 20,600 in 1973 to about 18,600 in 1976. The latter figure indicates a daily average of some 50 vessels of all types. Of these, about 25 would be combatants and the rest auxiliaries. About 10 of the combatants would be submarines (torpedo and cruise-missile) and the rest a balanced force of cruisers, destroyers, escorts and landing craft.

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6. "The Soviet Navy in the Mediterranean". IISS Working Paper by Robert G. Weinland, 24th January 1975.

One reason why a more precise count is impossible is that a number of Soviet units are always on transit to the Black Sea from outside the Mediterranean and this tends to distort the picture. ASW cruisers (of the Moskva type) have exercised in the sea and it may well be that the Soviet Union intend to deploy carriers of the Kiev type in years to come but, as only one of these vessels is in commission and it has spent most of that commission in northern waters, it is too early by some years to draw conclusions. It will in any case be far less capable than the major US carriers in terms of the aircraft it carries and their performance.

#### Air Forces

There are scattered reports of Soviet land-based aircraft operating out of Libyan and Algerian fields. In particular there is uncertainty over the extent to which Colonel Qaddafi has allowed Soviet use of the ex-US base at Wheelus. The WEU Report makes clear that, at the time (1976), the evidence was largely confined to press reports. Nevertheless MiG-25 (Foxbat) reconnaissance aircraft have been reported in Libya and the indications are that Libya has moved rather closer to the Soviet Union over the past year and it would be surprising if basing facilities were not granted for at least some Soviet aircraft. This would not, of itself, make up for the loss to the Soviet Union of Egyptian facilities which were extensive, amounting to some seven airfields. In the case of Algeria, the airfield at Colomb-Bechar was used for staging during the Angolan intervention but the close and growing economic links between Algeria and the United States would tend to make it unlikely that President Boumedienne would upset those relations at the present time by inviting in the Russians. By way of circumstantial evidence, Soviet warships have virtually no facilities - apart from taking on drinking water - at the excellent Algerian base at Mers-el-Kebir. Clearly things could shift rapidly in either country if either felt that the price for Russian political or military support might be the granting of base rights and were prepared to pay that price. This would radically alter the military position in the Central and Western Mediterranean. In the Eastern Mediterranean, it is far from clear what Soviet forces are actually operating out of Syria for President Assad has shown himself in the past unwilling to have the Russians in Syria more than he has to. Whether the Soviet Union managed to force base concessions in responding to Syrian requests for arms last year is not known. Again it is certain that Syria does not give anything like as much as Egypt once gave so that Russia is a net loser over time.

Turning to Soviet-based air power, there is little doubt that aircraft based principally in the Crimea can cover the Mediterranean and that BACKFIRE in particular can do so at low level all the way. However, aircraft from the Crimea must overfly NATO territory or accept major diversions through Yugoslavia or Iran. They will

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7. "Security in the Mediterranean", NEU Document 708, 19th May, 1976.

therefore be somewhat vulnerable to ground-based air defences and intercept. More importantly, there is no possibility of providing fighter cover over Soviet Fleet units who must therefore rely entirely on SAM defences to hold off NATO and US aircraft. It is worth noting that there do not appear to be any Soviet air forces based in Bulgaria or in Romania in peacetime but Turkey is clearly within range of many types of Soviet strike aircraft operating out of Southern Russia.

#### Land Forces

The 5th Escadra contains, as has been noted, a small number of amphibious craft. No figures are available for the exact numbers of marines embarked but carrying capacity suggests that there cannot be more than about one company afloat with light support (perhaps 6 PT-76 Light tanks). Apart from Soviet training and administrative missions, there do not appear to be any combat land forces in any Mediterranean country at the present time but Soviet intervention forces operating out of Southern Russia constitute a major and increasing threat to the region. The demonstration of Soviet airlift potential in the recent Ethiopian reinforcement was impressive and showed a determination to exercise power at a distance which will have to be taken into account in the Mediterranean in future, perhaps in the context of unrest in Libya or Algeria where, by invitation or under the pretext of fraternal assistance, Soviet air transported forces can be shifted in great numbers and in a very short time. Geography will greatly favour the Soviet Union in such a contest with the United States, even if the intervention forces were of the same order of magnitude. Distances to the Soviet Union are far less and, if past experience is anything to go by, both Yugoslavia and Turkey are likely not to interfere with Soviet flights in a situation short of general war. At the time of the Yom Kippur War of 1973, seven airborne divisions were thought to be available. While a more thorough study of airlift (including Aeroflot aircraft) and distance would be needed to predict the rate of build-up in a particular scenario, it would appear that something of the order of a division on light scales could be moved each day to anywhere in the region. This is much greater than any projected intervention rates by the United States. Soviet amphibious forces in the Black Sea constitute a marginal threat to Turkey's northern coast line and might be used to seize control of the Straits in war but the difficulties would be great and success could only follow from a half-hearted Turkish response.

#### Miscellaneous Soviet Facilities

Tivat in Yugoslavia is sometimes used for submarine overhaul but, in an even-handed manner, the Yugoslavs offer the same facility to others and it can only be thought of as being of very minor importance to Russia. Port visits are made throughout the region but tight control is maintained over shore-leave. Much of Soviet intelligence gathering in the Mediterranean is carried out, as elsewhere in the world, by AGIs (Auxiliaries General Intelligence) i.e. trawlers. It is also noted that Soviet supply ships may be supplemented by Soviet mercantile marine vessels operating under military control although these would not often be suitable for underway replenishment.

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8. "The Strategic Balance in the Mediterranean" by Jesse W. Lewis Jr., American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington DC, March 1976, p. 64.

### Conclusion

It is a truism to suggest that the military balance in the Mediterranean will depend upon political developments in the region but it is bound to be almost uniquely true for such a relatively small area of water surrounded by many countries almost all of which are to some degree subject to real or potential instability. It is also true that technological developments will tend to make the sea a more hostile environment for both Super-Powers but this is likely to operate more to the disadvantage of the power wishing to maintain control of the sea than to the power wishing to deny the sea to the other. It may be no more than a rumour that the United States is considering the withdrawal of carrier TGs from the Mediterranean or at least from the Eastern Basin but it is a symptom at least of the growing nervousness that naval commanders feel in the face of the submarine threat and the deployment of very capable long-range aircraft armed with stand-off missiles operating against surface units acquired by radar satellites. On the other hand, the Soviet Union is not having it all its own way in the region and has substantially fewer and less capable base facilities than a few years ago. There is evidence that many states which have been asked to provide bases for Russia have shown great reluctance to commit themselves in this direction and it is not easy for Russia to maintain her substantial naval force in the Mediterranean or for her to provide it with land- or sea-based air cover. Many will be watching Malta to see which way Mintoff will play his cards. NATO and the United States could only view with considerable alarm the prospect of the 5th Escadra in Grand Harbour, Valetta, and strike aircraft of the Soviet Air Force at Luqa.

However it is the proven ability of the Soviet Union to airlift ground forces and their equipment over considerable distances which should be the greatest cause for concern in the West. It is therefore encouraging that the United States is appearing to take most seriously the need to modernise her own conventional intervention forces as a counter to this Soviet capability. The danger would seem to be that a situation may arise in which Soviet intervention can get underway in response to an ambiguous development - as in Ethiopia - in which the West finds itself faced with painful choices and wakes up to find a Soviet presence established in the North African littoral. This could altogether change the present balance of military power in the region.