

SUPERPOWER MARITIME STRATEGY IN THE PACIFIC



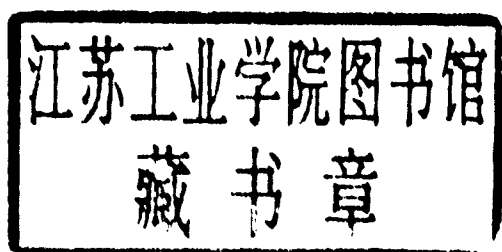
EDITED BY
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Frank C. Langdon and Douglas A. Ross



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Superpower Maritime Strategy in the Pacific

The maritime region of the Pacific is an area of continuing superpower tension, having not yet seen the spread of political relaxation that is going on in Europe and also in Asia. Aggravated by a rapid military technology race, Pacific strategies, deployments and alliances differ markedly from those of NATO and the Warsaw Pact in Europe and the Atlantic; these differences are poorly understood and pose particular difficulties for any proposed arms talks.

Superpower Maritime Strategy in the Pacific provides a critical overview of the present military confrontation. Soviet and American objectives are assessed independently and from the perspectives of China, Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, all of which have much at stake. The book argues that if the Pacific maritime region is to fulfil its promise as a source of economic growth and energy, the demands of the regional powers for arms control must be heard.

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Preface

Although military developments in the Pacific region have been the subject of an increasing number of conferences and publications, most studies have tended to deal with regional security planning in a rather piecemeal fashion. It is the purpose of this volume to analyse the issues and concerns that have been generated by the strategic confrontation of the two superpowers in the area, including the impact that their military rivalry has had upon the other main participants. Pacific security issues have received too little attention in studies of Western security because the Pacific has been accorded a tertiary status after Europe and the Middle East in assessing the threat of East-West warfare. Most Western defence analysts are predominantly interested in the military balance in Europe and any treatment given to the Pacific 'theatre' is often provided as little more than an afterthought. This may simply be a reflection of the undue dominance of American security perspectives in the public literature on Pacific security.

The American defence-policy community views the Pacific region as but one potential theatre for confrontation with the USSR, and as but one set of troubled alliance relationships that it must manage. What is more worrying for many US Pacific allies is the deeply ingrained attitude among many influential Americans that the US should avoid a collaborative approach to security management in the Pacific because its national interests are better served by the existing set of bilateral relations – which may be manipulated more readily than an arrangement built upon genuine collective defence. It is evident that this same logic also leads many Americans to avoid discussion of arms-control measures for the north Pacific, given what they interpret quite rightly to be a naval military balance that is distinctly favourable to the United States. This point is argued by Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glaser in Chapter 7. For most of America's Pacific allies it is the region which is of primary security interest, and they have a greater stake in peace and stability there than does the United States – whose leaders seemed determined to maintain a politically exploitable balance of force in the region. Unfortunately,

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America's Pacific allies have either wilfully ignored the destabilizing implications of this situation, or they have accepted such US policy uncritically – believing it to be the best way to maintain credible American security protection.

Political leadership in Japan, for example, which is far and away the strongest and most important regional ally of the United States, has consistently delegated all responsibility for regional security-planning initiatives to policymakers in Washington. They purposely avoid public debate of defence policy because of the continuing unpopularity of the subject in Japan. Even on the topic of arms control the Japanese government leaders remain cautious in discussing a Japanese security role in the Pacific (despite the fact that Japan has actively participated in such discussions in the United Nations).

Canada, the next wealthiest close Pacific military ally of the US, has throughout the post-Second World War period devoted itself almost exclusively to security planning in Western Europe or continental North America. It has never seriously entertained building up its military capabilities in the Pacific region so that it could take on a security role commensurate with its economic strength and diplomatic experience. Canadian perceptions of imprudently bellicose and provocative interventionary tendencies in the US in the past have had much to do with Ottawa's reticence about direct involvement. Only with the fairly dramatic expansion of the Soviet Pacific Fleet in the 1970s and early 1980s have Canadian officials become concerned about the vulnerability of their Pacific coasts and the implications of having little or no voice in Pacific regional security co-operation.

The other Commonwealth powers in the region, Australia and New Zealand, give indications of a willingness to think through a more independent, new approach to regional security co-operation. But their leaders have for the most part been sufficiently realistic to know that they cannot achieve major reforms in the direction and content of American military policy and operations by themselves. New Zealand's experience in its efforts since 1985 to ban nuclear-armed ship visits by the US Navy, and the lukewarm – and in some quarters, even hostile – attitude of the US government to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone initiative, have underscored the limits to independent action on the arms-control front in the South Pacific.

South Korea and Taiwan, meanwhile, have been preoccupied with the problems of national reunification that have so dominated domestic politics and foreign relations with the United States for the past four decades. Their very vulnerability, both militarily and politically, has precluded them from taking any initiatives for revamping regional security collaboration by the Western-oriented states in the region.

The past two years have seen significant progress on a number of

fronts. The conclusion of the INF Treaty in late 1987 opened the way for the imminent removal of all Soviet SS-20s in the Soviet Far East, thus significantly reducing the missile threat looming over Japanese, South Korean, and, in particular, American air and naval forces stationed in or near these countries. The Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan has unfrozen security relations in East Asia. This welcome if long overdue measure, coupled with a modest cut in Soviet troop strength on the Sino-Soviet frontier and a declaration by Hanoi that Vietnam will carry out a unilateral withdrawal of its forces from Cambodia, paved the way for a Sino-Soviet summit meeting and confirms the new *modus vivendi* between Beijing and Moscow. The reduction in Sino-Soviet tensions has evidently buried for the time being the fear in China of surprise attack of 'preventive war' by the USSR. The successful staging of the Olympics in Seoul in 1988 also produced hope that the general easing of East-West tension might soon lead to a thawing of tensions in the Korean peninsula as well.

All of these developments suggest that the post-war status quo in the Pacific region is on the verge of a major transformation. But this fairly widespread sentiment faces a very large obstacle: the continuing maritime military rivalry of the Soviet Union and the United States in the Pacific. The steady deployment of an ever larger number of sea-launched cruise missiles on American ships and submarines, the imminent arrival of Trident II sea-launched ballistic missiles on their submarines, and the steady upgrading in other shipborne weaponry does not bode well for attempts to cap the US-Soviet naval rivalry in the region. The constant qualitative upgrading in American naval forces has been matched by unrelenting Soviet efforts to expand and improve naval forces deployed in the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk, and the region east of Kamchatka. The growth in Soviet naval capability, especially its nuclear-powered, attack-submarine capability, has been so rapid in the space of 15 years that some observers believe that the 'Red Banner' Pacific Fleet threatens American naval dominance of the Pacific, a state of affairs unparalleled since the Second World War.

Both the US and the USSR use the Pacific region for the testing and development of strategic nuclear-weapons systems. Both countries have significant in-area deployments of military radar-tracking systems of relevance to new commitment to large-scale ballistic missile defence. And both over the past 7 years have upgraded their major base facilities in the region: the USSR in Vietnam, Kamchatka and near Vladivostok, and the US in Adak in the Aleutians, as well as forward-deployed forces in and around Japan and South Korea.

One critical failing in Pacific regional security is the complete absence of any regional forum for the discussion of international security and arms control. The states of the region have been unable to develop

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anything analogous to the regional security co-operation framework that has been developed in Europe over the past 20 years. It is a major short-coming which leaves the Asia-Pacific region seriously disadvantaged in the new round of arms-control and disarmament agreements. At worst, this gap in arms-control negotiations for the region might in time lead to uncertainties and anxieties which themselves could frustrate the attainment of real arms-control progress elsewhere in East-West relations. The interdependence of different regional security arrangements may be much greater than most defence specialists believe. The chapters in this volume point to the need for more serious consideration of arms control in the Pacific:

As for those organizations and individuals who have helped over the past 4 years to make this volume and related work on this subject possible, the editors would like to express their thanks to them all. Foremost among those to be acknowledged are the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security whose funding made possible initial research on this topic and then provided much of the funding for the international symposium that was held in Vancouver at the University of British Columbia in May of 1988. Thanks are due as well to the office of the dean of arts and of the Institute of International Relations at the University of British Columbia which provided needed funding. The Military and Strategic Studies Programme of the Canadian Department of National Defence also provided financial support. The Research Council funding also made possible the editors' initial research in this field beginning some 5 years ago, while the Institute of Peace and Security and the Strategic Studies Programme funded other specific aspects of the ongoing research programme conducted by the editors while working with the Institute of International Relations under the supportive guidance and encouragement of its Director, Mark W. Zacher. Terry McGee, the Director of the Institute of Asian Research at the university, and his assistants, Katie Eliot and Sabrina Yan at the Institute of Asian Research provided the places for the international gathering of the authors of this book and other defence specialists. Thanks are due for the use of their unique centre, which is in a beautiful Asian temple-style building in the dramatic setting of a Pacific rain forest among the firs and cedars of the West Point Grey campus of the University of British Columbia which is within sight of the sea and the snow-capped coast range.

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Frank C. Langdon and Douglas A. Ross
Vancouver

Abbreviations

ABM	anti-ballistic missile defence
ACD	arms control and disarmament
ACM	advanced cruise missile
ALCM	air-launched cruise missile
ANZUS	Australia/New Zealand/United States
AOR	area of responsibility
ASAT	anti-satellite weapon
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
ASROC	anti-submarine rocket
ASW	anti-submarine warfare
ASWFZ	anti-submarine warfare-free zone
BMD	ballistic-missile defence
CBM	confidence-building measure
CCSBMDE	Conference on Confidence- and Security- Building Measures
CD	Conference on Disarmament
CFC	Combined Forces Command
C ³ I	command and intelligence
CINCPAC	Commander-in-Chief US Forces Pacific
CINCPACFLT	Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet (US)
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COCOM	Co-ordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls
COMMARPAC	Canadian Commander Maritime Forces Pacific
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSBM	confidence- and security-building measure
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
CTB	comprehensive test ban
CVBG	carrier battle group
DSP	Defence Support Programme (US)
ELF	extremely low frequency

Abbreviations

EMCON	emissions control
GIN	Greenland-Iceland-Norway
HF	high frequency
ICBM	inter-continental ballistic missile
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
INF	intermediate-range nuclear forces
KAL	Korean Air Lines
LF	low frequency
LRMP	long-range maritime patrol
LTBT	Limited Test Ban Treaty
MAD	mutual assured destruction
MBA	Military Bases Agreement
MBFR	mutual and balanced force reduction
MIRV	multiple independently-targetable re-entry vehicle
MSDF	maritime self-defence force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NAVSAT	naval satellite positioning system
NCND	neither confirming nor denying
NFU	no first use
NDP	New Democratic Party (Canada)
n.m.	nautical mile
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defence Agreement
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSA	negative security assurance
NTB	nuclear test ban
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OTH	over the horizon
OTH-B	over-the-horizon backscatter
PALs	permissive action links
PLA	People's Liberation Army (China)
PRC	People's Republic of China
RIMPAC	Rim-of-the-Pacific naval exercises
ROEs	rules of engagement
ROTHR	relocatable over-the-horizon radar
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SASW	strategic-anti-submarine warfare
SDI	strategic defence initiative
SIGINT	signals intelligence
SLBM	sea-launched (or submarine-launched) ballistic missile
SLCM	sea-launched (or submarine-launched) cruise missile

Abbreviations

SLOCs	sea lines of communication
SOSUS	sonar underwater surveillance system
SPNFZ	South Pacific Nuclear-weapon Free Zone Treaty
SRAM	short-range attack missile
SS	submersible ship
SSB	submersible ship ballistic
SSBN	submersible ship ballistic nuclear
SSGN	submersible ship guided nuclear
SSN	submersible ship nuclear
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
TVD	theatre of military action (USSR)
VLF	very low frequency
VSTOL	vertical short take-off and landing
ZOPFAN	zone of peace, freedom, and neutrality

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