

CHAPTER 20

SEA POWER

Control of the seas means security. Control of the seas means peace. Control of the seas can mean victory. The United States must control the sea if it is to protect our security.

—John F. Kennedy

The United States is in a position of world leadership. Maintaining that position is a never-ending task that becomes harder with each crucial world situation. The Navy has a vital role in protecting world freedom. We can only maintain this freedom through a Navy that has total dedication to that end. You are an important link in our Navy's commitment to freedom.

In the Navy, we, like our forefathers, must make many sacrifices to maintain our goals. That often means being away from our homes for long periods, standing long watches, or doing arduous work. The result is fulfilling the goal of keeping the world free.

As you study for advancement to petty officer, you should begin to realize your importance to the overall mission of the Navy. Advancement will be just one of the rewards you will receive for dedication and sacrifice.

UNITED STATES SEA POWER

Learning Objectives: When you finish this chapter, you will be able to—

- Recognize the importance of sea power in relation to today's world.
- Identify the operational components of the U.S. Navy sea power.

Sea power as a concept means more than military power at sea. Sea power describes a nation's ability to protect its political, economic, and military interests through control of the sea. The principal parts of sea power are naval power, ocean science, ocean industry, and ocean commerce.

Sea power encompasses commercial rivalries in peacetime, diplomatic maneuvering and the clash of fleets in wartime. The concept of sea power has been valid whether the fleets were wooden men-of-war or mighty battleships. It remains sound today, although

technology has caused ship-to-ship battles to become part of history instead of part of contemporary tactics. Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, USN, was the first person to use the term *sea power*. He used it in his principal work, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*, published in 1890. Mahan proposed that there were six conditions required for a nation to have sea power:

1. An advantageous geographical position
2. Serviceable coastlines, abundant natural resources, and a favorable climate
3. Extent of territory
4. A population large enough to defend its territory
5. A society with an aptitude for the sea and commercial enterprise
6. A government with the influence to dominate the sea.

In the decades immediately following the Civil War, the primary role of the U.S. Navy was as coastal defender and commerce raider. The United States did not exercise sea power, but believed in the concept of national isolation. In effect, the nation stressed naval expansion within its own country. By 1890, however, the nation began naval expansion toward other countries; its concept of national isolation began to ebb.

Those groups in the Navy and in the government who believed in sea power endorsed Mahan's doctrine. They based their endorsement on the belief that history provides clues to achieving maritime supremacy. Mahan's concept, therefore, became the intellectual force behind the United States' development of its Navy into a sea power.

During World War II the emerging effects of aircraft, aircraft carriers, and radar meant we fought fewer battles with ships within sight of each other. In modern naval tactics, we employ gunfire for protection

against aircraft and missiles or for bombarding shore targets. If aimed at ships, the targets will most likely be small, fast, patrol craft. These crafts deliver missile or torpedo attacks in coastal waters.

Sea power today includes many aspects of the naval strength of a nation that did not exist in the last century. Sea power now encompasses maritime industry and marine sciences. These industries and sciences add to our national economy by exploring new resources for food, freshwater, minerals, and even living space.

Figure 20-1 shows a Carrier Task Group, one concept of sea power today. Sea power is a unique resource that nations can use in the oceans. We use it to reach political, economic, and military goals in times of peace and war.

The seas are our lifeline for survival. In addition to being a barrier between nations and a broad highway for ships, the seas are an important source of food, minerals, and metals. We use oceangoing craft to get to these riches. The development of these craft has resulted in the need to provide for their protection.

A well-established theory for the economic advantage of a nation is to produce goods and services

and exchange them with other nations. Throughout history, nations that have traded this way and conducted a strong foreign trade have prospered and grown in economic and political strength. Those that have failed in commerce have also failed as world powers. Throughout history, no country has ever become a world power without a strong foreign trade. All countries generally have raw materials, but they often have limited quantities. Countries then trade with each other to get needed materials. Modern nations with highly complex economies need more raw materials from other countries. We can often obtain many manufactured goods cheaper from other countries than we can produce them locally. As a matter of economic reality, most nations must trade or decline in strength.

Until recently, Americans believed that our raw materials would last forever and that we could live without help from any other nation. With our population growth and the advanced technology of the United States, this concept has changed. Today we rely heavily on trade with our world neighbors for raw materials. We need that kind of trade to keep our economy strong and our work force employed.

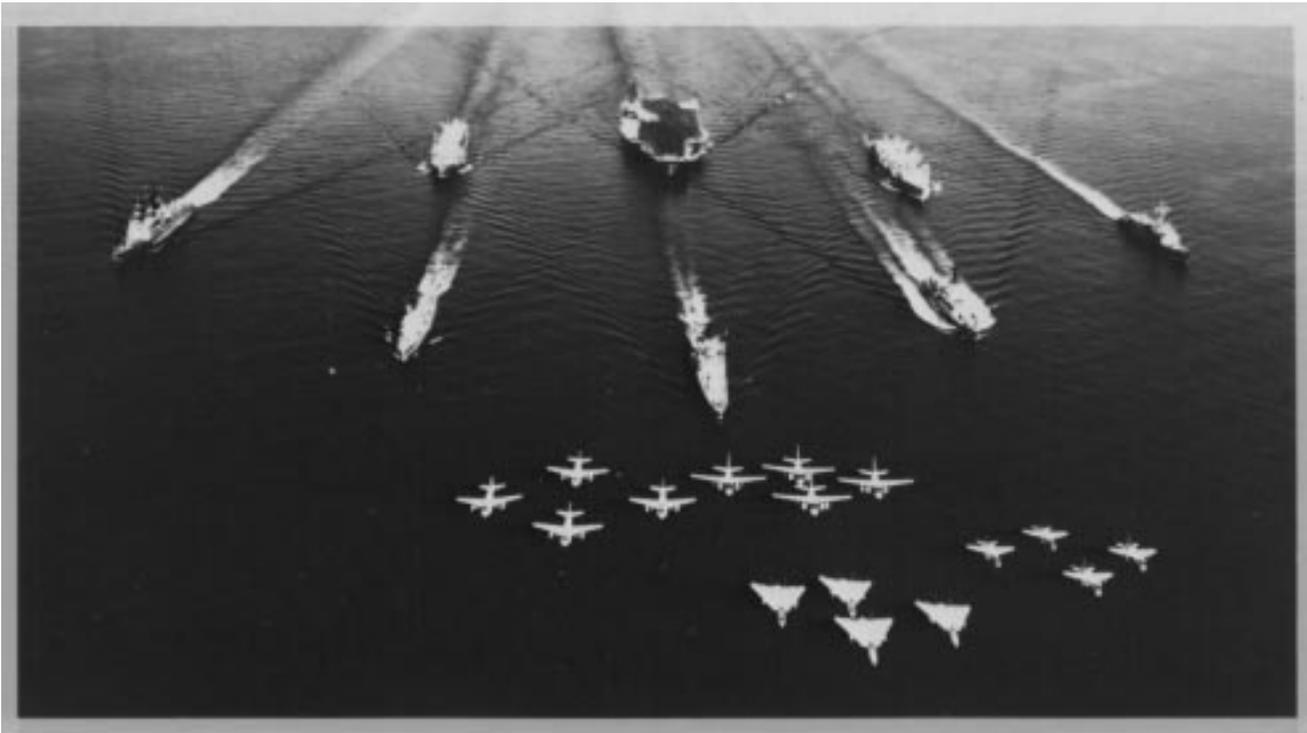


Figure 20-1.—U. S. naval sea power.

Student Notes:

The United States is not as independent as people think. We must import most of our raw materials. Actually, we import no fewer than 77 resources to maintain our present economy. As an example, we import 85 percent of the manganese we need to make steel. We use columbite to make nuclear reactors, stainless steel, rockets, and missiles; we import 90 percent of it. We also import bauxite (used to refine aluminum) and chromite (used to strengthen steel). More than 90 percent of the tin we need in this country we import. At one time, the U.S. consumed more than one-third of the entire world's supply of oil. However, through conservation efforts we have reduced that oil consumption. Half of the free-world mineral production goes into the industrial needs of the United States. Of all our needed minerals, only about 11 are found within our borders; the U.S. is a raw-material-deficient nation. The United States could not possibly produce enough aircraft to move all the goods that now travel by water. Our economy depends on waterborne commerce.

The United States, like all nations of the world, acknowledges freedom of the seas under international law. When fighting wars, nations do whatever is in their power to prevent the enemy from using the seas. They aim to cut commercial shipping lanes to prevent the enemy from receiving critical raw materials for the war effort. Throughout history, the great nations have been those which controlled the seas. From the ancient times of Persia to the World War II days of Japan, loss of sea power has caused many nations to fail.

Before World War I, we were a quiet nation and stayed mostly to ourselves. When we were drawn into World War I, we became the most industrialized nation in the world. Our economy slowed down after the war; when World War II started, we once more became highly industrialized. We have remained that way ever since. Our defense depends on a highly productive industrial system. We must keep the sea-lanes open so that the supply of essential raw material continues to flow in our direction. Halting the flow would be a great blow to the safety and economy of the United States. In the wars of this nation, we have managed to maintain a constant supply of raw materials. But, to keep our troops supplied, we have had to ship over 97 percent of our products overseas.

You should realize the importance of the United States' ability to maintain control of the seas for the use of the free world. To protect our national security and sustain our economy, our nation must continue to take the following actions:

- Import raw materials from throughout the world, convert them into manufactured goods, and export them to the world marketplaces by ocean shipping.
- Keep the sea-lanes open and secure in times of peace and tension, and deny them to the enemy in times of war.

Many areas of sea power are covered in the remainder of this chapter. Keep in mind that no matter where your station is, your job plays an important role in our nation's sea power. Your job helps keep us all free and secure.

REVIEW 1 QUESTIONS

- Q1. What is sea power?
- Q2. List the principal operational components of our nation's sea power.
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
- Q3. According to Alfred Mahan, there are six conditions required for a nation to have sea power. List these conditions.
- a.

Student Notes:

- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

Q4. In today's world, what aspects of naval strength exist that didn't exist in the 19th century.

Q5. As this century closes, no nation is totally independent. To protect ourselves and to keep our economy going, this country must take the following actions:

- a.
- b.

THE U.S. NAVY'S RESPONSIBILITY IN SEA POWER

Learning Objectives: When you finish this chapter, you will be able to—

- Identify the missions and functions of the U.S. Navy in wartime and peacetime.
- Identify the functions of the U.S. Navy to include strategic nuclear deterrence and security of sea-lanes communications.

At this point in your Navy career, if you haven't done so already, you may soon find yourself asking several questions. Why are we spread out far and wide from our shores? Why do we have a Navy? What is the purpose of this deployment? If you look at the goals of our nation, you will see what our mission is. First, you should understand why we need a strong Navy to

support our national objectives. Some of these reasons are as follows:

- Two of our states are outside the continental United States (Hawaii and Alaska).
- Four U.S. territories lie overseas (Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Northern Marianas).
- Two of our allies (Canada and Mexico) border the United States; the rest of our allies, some 42 of them, are overseas.
- NATO countries and Japan, our principal allies, are highly dependent on U.S. support and imports, the bulk of which comes to them by sea.
- Ninety-nine percent of all U.S. overseas trade is transported by sea lines of communications (world trade routes).
- The U.S. industrial output depends on continued shipments of raw materials and energy-producing resources from overseas.
- Our ability to control the seas is essential in the deterrence of a general war and aggression against any nation or area vital to our interest.

Now, let's look at the primary functions of the Navy. The Navy and the Marine Corps organize, train, and equip Navy and Marine Corps forces to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations at sea. These operations involve sea-based aircraft and land-based naval air components. These forces have five primary tasks:

1. They must seek and destroy enemy naval forces
2. Suppress enemy sea commerce gain
3. Maintain general naval supremacy
4. Control vital sea areas
5. Protect vital sea lines of communications

The Navy's business is to clear the way for the operating forces to accomplish their task, whatever it is. The Navy must drive the enemy's fighting forces off the high seas, out of the air, and across the seas. The Navy

Student Notes:

must block the enemy's sea-lanes and sink its merchant ships and transports.

In recent years, we have exercised control of sea-lanes in the Middle East. During the 1987-1989 "tanker wars" in the Persian Gulf (fig. 20-2), the U.S. Navy protected merchant ships and oil tankers flying the U.S. flag. In 1990, we conducted a naval blockade of Iraq to enforce United Nations sanctions following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The Navy also provides forces for joint amphibious operations. It trains all forces assigned to these operations in amphibious warfare as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It also conducts naval reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare, mine laying and controlled mine-field operations, and protects shipping. Operation Desert Shield/Storm is a typical example. The Navy joins with the other services in defending the United States against air attack.

As you can see, the Navy's mission is very complex. As a result of that complexity, the United States is undertaking a massive modernization of Navy ships,

aircraft, and weapons in three forms. The first involves the speedup of research and development to find new weapons. The second entails the laying up of old ships to save operating and overhauling costs and the shifting of that money into new construction. The third consists of the "hi-low balanced mix" concept. That concept involves the purchase of a few highly effective aircraft and ships, such as nuclear propulsion aircraft carriers (CVNs) and submarines (SSBNs). At the same time, we are developing new classes of low-cost ships, such as guided-missile frigates and sea-control ships.

Our nuclear-age world has resulted in a nuclear-age Navy. Although the Navy uses nuclear weapons and guided missiles as its primary destructive weapons, it still maintains, and is improving, conventional weapons. Such weapons enable the Navy and Marines to rapidly deploy and to apply the necessary force to fight a limited war.

The Navy leads the way in scientific projects. In the area of navigation, Navy ships can navigate on and under the oceans for days at a time. They no longer rely on traditional sources such as landmarks and stars to fix



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Figure 20-2.—U. S. ships blowing up an oil platform in the Persian Gulf.

Student Notes:

their position. The Navy continues to improve its propulsion systems. The Navy's continued improvements in propulsion systems allow Trident submarines to operate undetected beneath the oceans. The newer, faster, and quieter fast-attack submarines prowl the oceans at will. These ships have added a new dimension to the world of undersea warfare. We have made great strides in underwater acoustics, oceanography, and other scientific fields.

Throughout history, the shores of the enemy and the range of our ship's guns have limited the Navy's radius of action. Now with the development of long-range aircraft and ballistic missiles, the Navy's radius of action spans the world.

In the past, when ships sailed in a task force, they traveled together in formation. However, that tactic increased the number of losses during an attack. Today, ships are dispersed over a wide area, which increases their chances of survival in the event of a nuclear attack.

Although the tactics of our fleets have changed, the meaning of sea power and the need for sea power have remained constant. The Navy will always seek positive change, using weapons dictated by the times and situation, to protect our nation from enemy invasion. America's sea power will play a vital part in tomorrow's world and will have a great influence on peace.

Our nation and the other countries of our world rely on the U.S. Navy to guard their liberties. We must continue to guard these liberties as an instrument of peace, not as an instrument of terror or offensive threat. We must join with other free nations in promoting freedom throughout the world.

THE U.S. NAVY'S MISSION

Today, the Navy, together with the Army and the Air Force, is a member of the National Military Establishment. Their mission is to be prepared to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations in support of the national interest. As part of the National Military Establishment, the U.S. Navy's mission is to assure continued maritime superiority for the United States. The National Security Act, passed by Congress in 1947, instituted the National Military Establishment. The aim of the National Military Establishment is the

coordination of the security of the United States under the Secretary of Defense.

You have an important part to play in the mission of the Navy. Your responsibility grows as you advance in rate. Before you start to take on that responsibility, you should be familiar with certain terms so that you can fully understand the mission of the Navy. They are national strategy, national interests, and national objectives, as stated in Naval Warfare Publication 1 (NWP-1). Naval Warfare Publication 3 (NWP-3) defines naval strategy. Those publications outline our commitment to the security of the United States.

National Strategy

National strategy is that broad course of action designed to achieve national objectives in support of national interests. To satisfy that objective, the defense forces must have the capability to deter aggression and to prevent coercion. They must also have enough influence to shape world events in favor of U.S. interests. The United States maintains its defense forces to preserve its physical security and protect its political independence.

National Interests

National interests are conditions that are to the advantage of our nation to pursue or protect. These conditions frequently are of a continuing nature. They range from the ultimate interest—national survival—to specific regional interests. Collectively, those interests determine the importance of a particular region to the security of the United States.

National Objectives

National objectives are specific goals our nation seeks to advance, support, or protect. We primarily have political, economic, and security objectives.

Naval Strategy

Naval strategy is our nation's use of naval forces (including naval aviation and Marine Corps forces) to achieve its naval objectives. National strategy determines our naval objectives. Our overall naval strategy objective is control of the seas and the denial of

Student Notes:

an enemy's use of those seas important to our operations.

The Navy's job goes hand in hand with the national interest and the objectives of the rest of the U.S. armed forces. Title 10 of the U.S. Code states that the Navy is to be prepared to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations in support of the national interest. That means we must assure continued maritime superiority for the United States. We must be able to totally defeat any threat to the continued free use of the high seas by the United States. Therefore, we must maintain the ability to destroy hostile aircraft, surface ships, and submarines that threaten our seaborne forces and those of our allies. The national strategy determines the Navy's mission. We carry out that mission in joint coordination with the other armed forces and in combined planning with U.S. allies. In carrying out that mission, the Navy has two major functions—**sea control** and **power projection**.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE U.S. NAVY

Sea control, total control of the seas for the free movement of all, is the first function of the U.S. Navy. It means control of set air, surface, and subsurface areas,

when and where needed. Sea control is crucial to national strategy. It allows us to use the oceans as barriers for defense and as avenues to extend our influences overseas.

Power projection is the second function of the Navy. It is the ability to use sea power throughout the world in the timely and precise manner needed to accomplish a given goal. This covers a wide area. We accomplish power projection by using a broad spectrum of offensive naval operations. These operations include the tactical employment of carrier-based aircraft and the use of amphibious forces and naval gunfire support forces. They also include the strategic nuclear response by the fleet ballistic missile forces.

The functions of sea control and power projection are closely related. Depending on the type of force we are to use, we need some degree of sea control in the sea areas from which we are to project power. The United States developed the naval forces' capability to project power largely as one means of achieving or supporting control of the seas.

To carry out the functions of sea control and power projection in support of its mission, the U.S. Navy has three functions.

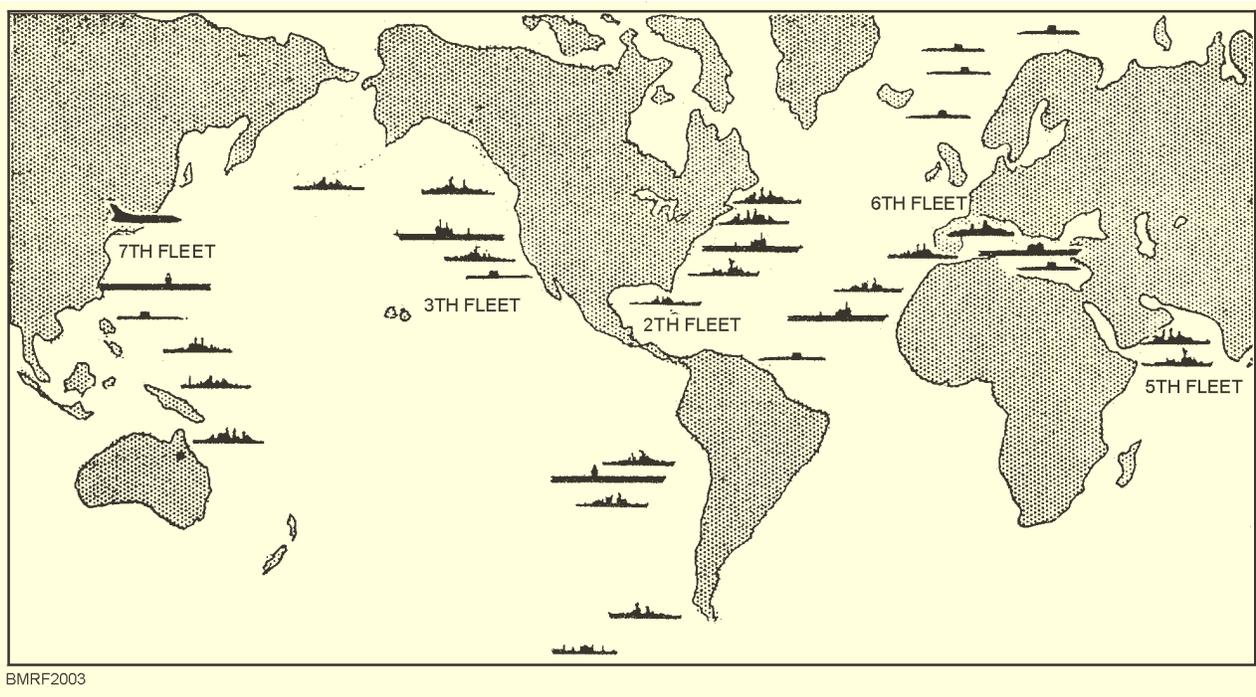


Figure 20-3.—U.S. naval presence throughout the world.

Student Notes:

1. Strategic nuclear deterrence
2. A strong naval presence
3. Security of the sea lines of communications

Strategic Nuclear Deterrence

The effectiveness of the submarine-launched ballistic missile provides the strongest deterrent in our strategic nuclear forces. Thus that deterrent is a stabilizing factor in the strategic nuclear balance.

Naval Presence

To achieve naval presence, the Navy deploys operationally ready naval forces to various overseas locations throughout the world (fig. 20-3). From these locations, our forces can combat hostile forces and support forward-positioned U.S. ground and air forces as well as U.S. allies.

Security of the Sea Lines of Communications

The success of a forward military strategy depends upon the Navy's ability to keep the sea lines of communications open. These lines are between the United States and its forward deployed forces, its allies, and those areas of the world essential for imports. The most vulnerable areas of these sea lines are those closest to potential hostile bases and farthest from friendly territory. Land-based air and patrol combatant craft aid in the protection of shipping in those areas. The protection of the most vulnerable sea areas requires that U.S. Navy forces be present in enough strength to defeat hostile air, surface, and submarine threats. One of the most demanding requirements upon the capabilities of U.S. naval forces is overseas deployment. The deployments place great demands upon both Navy personnel and our multipurpose combatant ships.

REVIEW 2 QUESTIONS

- Q1. List the primary tasks of the Navy's operating forces.
- a.
 - b.

- c.
- d.
- e.

Q2. List three of the ways that the Navy uses to modernize its arsenal.

- a.
- b.
- c.

Q3. As determined by national strategy, what are the missions of the U.S. Navy?

- a.
- b.

Q4. Navy missions are determined by national strategy. List some of the ways the Navy carries out their missions.

- a.
- b.
- c.

THE U.S. MERCHANT MARINE RESPONSIBILITY IN SEA POWER

Learning Objective: When you finish this chapter, you will be able to—

- Identify the missions and functions of the U.S. Merchant Marine in wartime and peacetime.

Our Navy evolved from the American merchant marine. Practically every Navy member of the

Student Notes:

American Revolution was an experienced merchant mariner. The merchant marines were volunteers at that time, as you are today. When it first came into being, the U.S. Navy converted merchant ships into fighting ships by adding cannons to the decks. Through determination and the skills these merchant mariners had learned on the high seas, we won a great war. Congress authorized the first six frigates of the Continental Navy on 27 March 1794. Ex-merchant mariners commanded and manned these frigates. Until World War II, the officers and personnel trained in the merchant marine formed the most important manpower reserve for the Navy.

With the threat of World War II in Europe and Asia, Congress enacted the Merchant Marine Act of 1936. That act provided for a strong merchant marine to service the fleet as a naval auxiliary during times of war and national emergency.

When World War II started, merchant ships were scarce. Since the United States needed to get ships quickly to supply the war effort, we seized the ships of the enemy in our ports. We also took possession of ships from foreign private operators in both domestic and foreign trade. We bought foreign ships and redoubled our U.S. shipbuilding efforts.

Within a year and a half after we entered the war in 1941, shipyards produced ships faster than the enemy could sink them. By mass-producing ships for the war effort, the Kaiser Shipbuilding Company produced a ship a day. Most shipyards built liberty ships that made only one trip to the war zone. If ships did come back, the Navy loaded them and sent them out again. Shipyards also mass-produced larger and faster ships—victory ships and tankers. Many of them were still in service 20 years later. We produced more than 6,000 merchant ships during World War II and somehow found and trained the crews to sail them.

The Army and Navy used many merchant ships as auxiliaries. We used them as hospital ships, repair ships, airplane carriers, and for other special uses. We devised and used new methods of loading and replenishment. Every inch of the ship's cargo holds and topside areas was loaded for increased carrying capacity.

The U.S. merchant marine plays an important part in the sea power of this country. Besides importing essential raw materials for defense of the free world, the

merchant marine transports Army and Air Force personnel during times of war or national emergency. It also transports large amounts of equipment, ammunition, fuel, and other supplies that must follow our forces. In previous wars, we moved most of our troops to the war zone by ship. Although we airlifted most of our forces to the war zone during the Vietnam conflict, the merchant marine transported about 97 percent of needed supplies. We must supply about 5 tons of supplies to take care of each person at the front during war. Getting those vital supplies to the right place is a major task. The experience gained from two World Wars and the Korean and Vietnam conflicts taught us how important the merchant marine is.

PEACETIME MISSION

The merchant marine today consists of all commercial oceangoing vessels flying the U.S. flag. Although the U.S. merchant marine is not part of the armed forces, it serves with them in wartime. It is subject to unified control under the Maritime Administration during times of war. The merchant marine includes all waterborne transportation—combination cargo-passenger ships, tankers, dry-cargo vessels, river barges, and harbor tugs. We have restricted our discussion of the merchant marine in this chapter to oceangoing ships of 1,000 gross tons and over. Ships of that group include the liner fleet (ships operating on regular schedules). They also include ships contracted to carry cargo to all areas of the world and ships in domestic and foreign trade. The term *merchant marine* refers to all these ships and their crews.

WARTIME MISSION

In a war, the mission of the U.S. merchant marine includes the following:

- Transport essential materials and cargo needed for the U.S. economy and needed to aid in supplying the economic needs of overseas allies
- Resupply American and allied military forces overseas
- Provide underway replenishment for wet or dry cargo and other direct services to Navy ships at sea

Student Notes:

- Increase combatant naval forces by being armed to carry out convoy, anti-aircraft, or anti-submarine duties

In wartime or a national emergency short of war, our government can get much-needed ships to perform merchant marine tasks from several sources. These sources include merchant ships flying the U.S. flag or a foreign flag, the National Defense Reserve Fleet, and the Military Sealift Command (MSC).

REVIEW 3 QUESTIONS

- Q1. Describe the peacetime mission of the U.S. Merchant Marines.
- Q2. List the wartime mission of the U.S. Merchant Marines.
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

THE U.S. COAST GUARD RESPONSIBILITY IN SEA POWER

Learning Objective: When you finish this chapter, you will be able to—

- Identify the missions and functions of the U.S. Coast Guard in wartime and peacetime.

The multimission nature of the Coast Guard makes it unique among the armed services of the United States. It has an operational peacetime role and is the only U.S. military service outside the Department of Defense.

The Coast Guard is the nation's oldest continuous seagoing service. It was set up in 1790 as the United States Revenue Marine (later renamed the Revenue Cutter Service). The United States Revenue Marine was

an arm of the Treasury Department, under then Secretary Alexander Hamilton. The Revenue Marine was primarily a law enforcement agency. Its responsibility was to collect custom duties from ships entering United States waters.

Although the original role of the service was law enforcement, revenue cutters took part in almost every conflict involving the United States. These involvements showed the military readiness of the service.

In the mid-1800s, Congress set up the U.S. Lifesaving Service, consisting of stations scattered along U.S. coasts. Shortly after the turn of the century, the Lifesaving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service merged to form the U.S. Coast Guard. That merger provided the Coast Guard with its traditional image—the *lifesavers*.

In 1939, the Coast Guard joined the Lighthouse Service and assumed responsibility for setting up and maintaining aids to navigation in U.S. waters. That responsibility has grown to such an extent that today the Coast Guard maintains nearly 50,000 navigational aids, including worldwide electronic navigation systems.

PEACETIME MISSION

The modern-day mission of the Coast Guard is an interesting mixture of duties, including the following:

- Enforcement of maritime laws and treaties
- Search and rescue operations
- Enforcement of U.S. drug and contraband laws
- Installation and maintenance of aids to navigation
- Icebreaking operations that keep commercial vessel traffic moving in domestic waters and support scientific research in the Arctic and Antarctica

As the primary maritime law enforcement agency of the United States, the Coast Guard enforces the following maritime regulatory laws:

Student Notes:

- Safety regulations for all U.S. commercial vessels, offshore structures, and recreational boating
- Port safety and security, including ports, harbors, and their approaches
- The movement of vessels in ports and waterways during crisis situations
- Marine environmental protection to prevent and contain spills of oil and other hazardous substances

Finally, because the Coast Guard is a military service—one that has ships, planes, and boats—it also has a military readiness mission. The Coast Guard works closely with the Navy, undergoes regular refresher training for its major cutters, and participates in joint operational exercises.

The Coast Guard by itself is among the largest navies in the world, ranking 9th or 10th based on the number of armed vessels. Figure 20-4 shows a 378-foot Coast Guard cutter. The Coast Guard gives significantly to the nation’s sea power.

The Coast Guard has continued to grow and shoulder additional responsibilities. In the last 30 years, it has gained responsibilities for polar and domestic icebreaking, cleanup and protection of the marine environment, and recreational boating safety.

WARTIME MISSION

With the start of World War II, the Coast Guard assumed the responsibilities of in-port safety and security and commercial vessel safety. In 1967, the Coast Guard became part of the newly formed Department of Transportation.

In wartime the U.S. Coast Guard has always served with pride. Today, during a wartime condition, the U.S. Coast Guard operates directly under the Chief of Naval Operations. It still has the same mission as it did during World War II, plus added roles. The Coast Guard assumes convoy duties as well as antisubmarine warfare missions. Its cutters are well suited for convoy duties as they have a long cruising range and room for armament. The air search and rescue section of the Coast Guard flies rescue missions. It also flies reconnaissance and antisubmarine aircraft. The Coast Guard’s mission in wartime will strain its limited assets.



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Figure 20-4.—U.S. Coast Guard—an element of sea power.

Student Notes:

REVIEW 4 QUESTIONS

- Q1. List the peacetime missions of the U.S. Coast Guard.
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
- Q2. List the wartime missions of the U.S. Coast Guard.
- a.
 - b.
 - c.

U.S. MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND (MSC) RESPONSIBILITY IN SEA POWER

Learning Objective: When you finish this chapter, you will be able to—

- Identify the missions and functions of the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC) in wartime and peacetime.

In 1949, the United States set up the Military Sealift Command (MSC) by combining the sealift missions of the Naval and Army Transport Services. (The MSC was originally called the Military Sea Transportation Service.) Today, the MSC is an operating agency within the Department of Defense.

MSC ships fall into two general classes—the nucleus fleet and privately owned ships under charter by MSC (fig. 20-5). The nucleus fleet consists of

government-owned ships and chartered tankers. All of these ships have the title United States Naval Ships (USNS). Most nucleus fleet ships have crews of civilian mariners who have civil service status. They enjoy the normal benefits of federal employees, but their pay and work rules stem from those of the commercial maritime industry. Private contractors with union crews operate some ships of the nucleus fleet (tankers). The bulk of the nucleus fleet consists of special project ships such as research vessels and those involved in direct support of the Navy fleet.

MSC transports dry and liquid cargo primarily aboard chartered ships and tankers of the nucleus fleet. MSC contracts most of these ships as voyage charters but occasionally contracts them as time charters. Voyage charters contract ships to carry specific cargo to a certain destination. Time charters contract for the use of an entire ship for months or years. All chartered ships are operated by their owners and manned with union seamen. This segment of the MSC fleet varies in size depending on the command's current requirements.

The ships of the Military Sealift Command fleet go where and when needed to support our armed forces. On any given day some ships may be operating in both polar regions or sailing to and from Alaskan military bases. At the same time other ships may be delivering cargo for military units in Europe and the Far East. In peacetime and wartime, the MSC fleet is ready to respond immediately if needed to support national, military, economic, and diplomatic policies.

PEACETIME MISSION

In peacetime the Military Sealift Command relies heavily on the U.S. merchant marine. The MSC ships nearly 25 percent of all military cargo on privately owned U.S. flagships and other merchant marine vessels. The small size of the MSC-controlled fleet requires the MSC to add to its available sealift forces during United States involvement in armed conflict.

WARTIME MISSION

During peacetime, the MSC supports the fleet by supplying fuel and supplies. During wartime, MSC ships used in moving troops and supplies to the war zone bear arms for protection. Besides moving troops to

Student Notes:



Figure 20-5.—Civilian-operated MSC oiler refueling an LPH.

the front, these ships provide underway replenishment to allow Navy ships to stay on station. They carry Navy personnel to handle areas such as weapons and communications to allow the civilian crew to continue its normal work. The MSC ships travel alone or in convoys, but they go wherever the fleet goes during a war. They move vital supplies at the front as well as at sea.

REVIEW 5 QUESTIONS

- Q1. What is the peacetime mission of the Military Sealift Command?
- Q2. What is the wartime mission of the Military Sealift Command?

SUMMARY

Sea power is a nation's ability to use the oceans for its political, economic, and military interests to achieve its national objectives. Nations exercise sea power in times of peace and war.

Today, the United States depends on other nations for many goods and commodities needed to keep the economy strong and to keep people working.

The U.S. merchant marine, Military Sealift Command, U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Navy make up the essential ingredients for U.S. sea power. Together they support the United States in its national strategy, interests, and goals. The mission of the Navy is to be prepared to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations. To accomplish its mission, the Navy must perform two main functions—sea control and power projection. Sea control is the basic function of the Navy. Power projection is the ability of the Navy to project military power from the sea worldwide.

To carry out these two functions in support of its mission, the Navy has three main functions: strategic nuclear deterrence, naval presence, and security of the sea lines of communications.

A balanced sea power is the essential ingredient of our national strategy. It is not limited to any one course of action and can meet any type of aggression from the most primitive to the most sophisticated. Today the very survival of our country and of our way of life depends on sea power.

REVIEW 1 ANSWERS

- A1. Sea power is **a nation's ability to protect its political, economic, and military interests by controlling the seas.**
- A2. The principal operational components of our nation's sea power are—
- a. **Naval power**
 - b. **Ocean science**
 - c. **Ocean industry**
 - d. **Ocean commerce**
- A3. The six conditions required for a nation to have sea power according to Mahan are—
- a. **An advantageous geographical position**
 - b. **Serviceable coastlines, abundant natural resources, and a favorable climate**
 - c. **Extent of territory**
 - d. **A population large enough to defend its territory**
 - e. **A society with an aptitude for the sea and commercial enterprise**
 - f. **A government with the influence to dominate the sea**
- A4. In today's world, sea power includes **maritime industry and marine sciences.** Maritime industry and science add to our national economy by exploring new resources for food, fresh water, minerals, and new living spaces.

Student Notes:

- A5. To protect ourselves and to keep our economy going, this country must—
- a. **Import raw materials, convert them into manufactured goods, and transport them to marketplaces throughout the world via shipping**
 - b. **Keep sea-lanes open and safe in times of peace and tension, and deny sea-lanes to the enemy in times of war**

REVIEW 2 ANSWERS

- A1. The primary tasks of the U.S. Navy's operating forces are to—
- a. **Seek out and destroy enemy naval forces**
 - b. **Suppress enemy sea commerce gains**
 - c. **Maintain general naval supremacy**
 - d. **Control vital sea areas**
 - e. **Protect vital sea lines of communication**
- A2. The Navy is modernizing its arsenal by—
- a. **Researching and developing new weapons**
 - b. **Laying up old ships to save the cost of operating and overhauling so money can be shifted to constructing modern ships**
 - c. **Purchasing highly effective aircraft and ships, such as nuclear propulsion aircraft carriers (CVNs) and ballistic submarines (SSBNs), and at the same time, developing new classes of cost-effective ships**
- A3. The missions of the Navy determined by our national strategy are—
- a. **Sea control**
 - b. **Power projection**
- A4. Navy missions, as determined by national strategy, are carried out by—
- a. **Maintaining a ready and capable submarine-launched variety of ballistic missiles**

- b. **Deploying operationally ready naval forces to various overseas locations throughout the world**
- c. **Maintaining an open and secure sea line of communication between the U.S. and its forward deployed forces allies and areas of the world essential for imports**

REVIEW 3 ANSWERS

- A1. In peacetime, the U.S. Merchant Marines **transport essential materials to and from the United States for the defense of the free world.**
- A2. In wartime, the mission of the U.S. Merchant Marines is to—
- a. **Resupply American and allied military forces overseas**
 - b. **Provide wet and dry replenishments and other direct services to ships underway**
 - c. **Increase combatant naval forces by being armed to carry out convoy anti-aircraft, and antisubmarine duties**
 - d. **Transport essential materials and cargo needed for the U.S. economy and the economy of allies overseas**

REVIEW 4 ANSWERS

- A1. The peacetime mission of the Coast Guard includes—
- a. **Enforcing maritime laws and treaties**
 - b. **Conducting search and rescue operations**
 - c. **Enforcing U.S. drug and contraband laws**
 - d. **Installing and maintaining aids to navigation**
 - e. **Icebreaking operations that keep commercial vessel traffic moving in domestic waters and support scientific research in the Arctic and Antarctic**
- A2. The wartime mission of the U.S. Coast Guard includes—
- a. **Maintaining in-port safety and security**

- b. **Maintaining commercial vessel safety**
- c. **Assuming convoy duties as well as antisubmarine warfare duties**

REVIEW 5 ANSWERS

A1. The peacetime mission of the Military Sealift Command is to **support the mission-ready ships at sea by providing fuel and other essential supplies.**

A2. The wartime mission of the Military Sealift Command is to—

- a. **Move troops, equipment, and other supplies**
- b. **Provide replenishment to ships on station and under-way**