



# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

## THESIS

**REMAINING RELEVANT:  
HISTORICAL CONTRIBUTIONS, CIVIL-MILITARY  
CHALLENGES, AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE  
CAPABILITIES ON COAST GUARD CUTTERS**

by

Brian A. Smicklas

March 2018

Thesis Co-Advisors:

Cristiana Matei  
Robert Simeral

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CAPABILITIES ON COAST GUARD CUTTERS**

Brian A. Smicklas  
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard  
B.S., Coast Guard Academy, 2000  
M.A., Norwich University, 2012  
M.A., Naval War College, 2015

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requirements for the degree of

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March 2018**

Approved by: Dr. Cristiana Matei  
Co-Advisor

Robert Simeral  
Co-Advisor

Dr. Erik Dahl  
Associate Chair for Instruction  
Department of National Security Affairs

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since 1790, throughout both World Wars, Vietnam, and a majority of the Cold War, the Coast Guard's major cutters relevantly contributed to United States naval warfare capacity. The post-Cold War global security environment reinforced the Coast Guard's relevance as a hybrid military-and-law enforcement service, sharing similarities with many navies throughout the globe. However, despite very recent recapitalization, Coast Guard major cutters, the mainstay of Coast Guard armed service relevance, are potentially less prepared for war than at any other time in service history due to the reemergence of long-term, strategic competition from revisionist powers such as Russia and China, and rogue regimes in North Korea and Iran. These nations present grave threats to the United States homeland, especially in the undersea domain. Adding to the relative lack of armed service relevance, the Coast Guard continues to struggle with professionalism, in part due to the many non-military missions accrued throughout service history.

To improve armed service relevance and professionalism, the Coast Guard should reconstitute the anti-submarine mission it cast aside in 1992. By doing so, the major cutters can effectively deter peer adversaries, protect the vulnerable marine transportation system, increase effectiveness against subsurface threats against the homeland, and achieve the functional and societal imperative to "Guard the Coast," thereby enabling the Navy to take war to the enemy and enhancing the relevancy of the Coast Guard as an armed service.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALFS	Airborne Low Frequency Radar
ASW	Anti-Submarine Warfare
CAPT	Captain (O-5)
CCDB	Consolidated Counter Drug Database
CINCLANT	Commander-in-Chief Atlantic
CIWS	Close In Weapons System
CJCS	Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff
DEFOR	Defense Forces
DoD	Department of Defense
DoT	Department of Transportation
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
EOD	Explosive Ordinance Disposal
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarios Colombia
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GAO	Government Accountability Office
JFMCC	Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander
JPME	Joint Professional Military Education
LCS	Littoral Combat Ship
LFA	Lead Federal Agency
MARDEZ	Maritime Defense Zones
MCM	Mine Counter Measure
MER	Marine Environmental Response
MIO	Maritime Intercept Operations
MPAS	Mission Package Application Software
MFTA	Multi-Function Towed Array
MTS	Marine Transportation System
NATO	North American Treaty Organization
NORTHCOM	U.S. Northern Command

NAVGUARD	Joint Navy Coast Guard Advisory Board
NMS	National Military Strategy
NTNO	Navy Type Navy Owned
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OPHOURS	Operational Hours
PACOM	U.S. Pacific Command
PLAN	Peoples Liberation Army Navy
POSD	Port Operations Security Defense
PRAIRIE	Propeller Air Internal Emission
PWCS	Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security
RADAR	Radio Detecting and Ranging
TCDL	Tactical Common Data Link
TLAM	Tomahawk Land Attack Missile
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USN	U.S. Navy
USNI	U.S. Naval Institute
USRC	U.S. Revenue Cutter
VCJCS	Vice Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff
VDS	Variable Depth Sonar
VEO	Violent Extremist Organization
WHEC	U.S. Coast Guard High Endurance Cutter
WHEM	U.S. Coast Guard Western Hemisphere Strategy
WMSL	U.S. Coast Guard National Security Cutter (NSC)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Since 1790, U.S. Coast Guard major cutters have contributed to the national and military objectives of the United States, yet the service has struggled with enduring civil-military challenges. These challenges have compelled the Coast Guard to accumulate a multitude of missions while diluting the lethality of major cutters and their contribution to the defense readiness mission. As the nation enters a period of strategic competition against revisionist peer powers with asymmetric undersea capabilities, the Coast Guard has an opportunity to solidify a societal and functional imperative by reconstituting the anti-submarine (ASW) mission to protect the marine transportation system.

The United States Coast Guard is statutorily defined as an armed force under Title 10 U.S. Code § 101(a)(4). In nearly every major conflict, Cutters, the term utilized for commissioned vessels since the day of the Revenue Cutter Service, a forbearer of today's USCG, have been the expeditionary backbone of the USCG's commitment to the Department of Defense. The service, especially the major cutters, have contributed to the defense of the United States since the founding of our nation. Although the USCG is statutorily expected to maintain interoperability in the event of reforming as "special service" under the U.S. Navy during a time of declared war, civil-military challenges and USCG leadership decisions may end the Coast Guard's major cutter expeditionary contribution to the DoD. However, since the implementation of DoD's Second Offset Strategy, the USCG has rapidly lost relevancy compared to the DoD, especially the USCG Cutter fleet.

This thesis presents a historical examination and analysis of major cutter contributions to national military objectives and civil-military challenges throughout the history of the service to determine the factors contributing to the cutter fleet's decline in capability, and ultimately addresses the larger issue to determine how the Coast Guard contributes to national objectives as an armed service. Through this examination, recommendations are presented that could remedy the Coast Guard's relevance in a period of great power competition.

This research also includes analysis of civil-military theory that provides a framework for evaluating the historical contributions and challenges that have shaped the Coast Guard. The analysis suggests the Coast Guard could enhance service resiliency against political and budgetary civil-military challenges by increasing the military relevance of the Coast Guard as an armed service. Historical study shows Admiral Paul Yost, while serving as Coast Guard Commandant from 1986–1990, employed this approach. Under Yost’s leadership, the Coast Guard leaned toward lethality by embracing advanced weapons on major cutters, increasing deployments in support of geographic combatant commanders, and working to alter the culture of the Coast Guard to align with the other armed services. As a result, the Coast Guard enjoyed increased relevance to the DoD, and the service benefitted. In today’s strategic environment, enhancing the Coast Guard’s major cutter ASW capability would improve relevance to the DoD, address a societal and functional imperative for guarding the coast, and improve the service’s ability to attain an enhanced level of objective control and stability for a service historically confronted by significant civil-military challenges.

What this thesis will not address is non-major cutter USCG contributions to national military objectives. Over the past few decades, the Coast Guard’s Port Security Units, Maritime Security and Response Teams (MSRTs), and pollution experts have all recently deployed in support of various Combatant Commanders. However, major cutters have over 200 years of contributions, and their past and potential future impact to national military objectives remains the focus of this thesis.

The Coast Guard removed the ASW capabilities from major cutters in 1991. Citing a change in the strategic environment due to the peaceful resolution of the Cold War, the removal of ASW functionality was predicated by the assurance that the ASW capability would be reconstituted if the strategic environment changed. Based on recent national guidance outlining the reemergence of strategic competition from peer competitors, it is time to regenerate the Coast Guard’s ASW component. Improving the ability for major cutters to defend against subsurface threats would enable naval warfare assets to take the fight to the enemy, rather than warships designed to fight the enemy remaining near port to protect ports and coastal sea lines of communications against subsurface adversaries.

# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Although often beleaguered by civil-military challenges, as the United States enters a more threatening environment, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) has an opportunity and an expectation as an armed force to become a more relevant and interoperable partner to the DoD. Since 1790, the USCG has filled a niche role in the defense of the United States, but that role has diminished in recent decades. The United States Coast Guard is statutorily defined as an armed force under Title 10 U.S. Code § 101(a)(4). However, the USCG is not organized under the Department of Defense (DoD); rather, the USCG currently resides under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). While administratively separate from DoD, the USCG has been a major contributor to the defense of the nation and proudly promotes participation in nearly every major conflict since the founding of our nation.<sup>1</sup>

Although the USCG is statutorily expected to maintain interoperability in the event of reforming as “special service” under the U.S. Navy during a time of declared war, civil-military challenges and USCG leadership decisions may end the Coast Guard’s expeditionary contribution to the DoD and jeopardize the status of the Coast Guard as an armed force.

In nearly every major conflict, Cutters, the term utilized for commissioned vessels since the day of the Revenue Cutter Service, a forbearer of today’s USCG, have been the expeditionary backbone of the USCG’s commitment to the DoD. However, since the implementation of DoD’s Second Offset Strategy, the USCG has rapidly lost relevancy compared to the DoD, especially the USCG Cutter fleet.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, examination and analysis are necessary to determine the factors contributing to the cutter fleet’s decline in capability, and ultimately address the larger issue to determine if the USCG should remain

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Havern, “225 Years of Service to Nation: Defense Readiness,” *Coast Guard Compass*, July 14, 2015, <http://coastguard.dodlive.mil/2015/07/225-years-of-service-to-nation-defense-readiness/>.

<sup>2</sup> Robert R. Tomes, *U.S. Defense Strategy from Vietnam to Operation Iraqi Freedom: Military Innovation and the New American Way of War, 1973–2003* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 64.

an armed service under Title 10. Examining the civil-military decisions behind the USCG's declining interoperability and relevance may help guide future recommendations; including the status of the USCG as an Armed Force.

The USCG is not unfamiliar to civil-military challenges and the threat of organizational demise. In 1912, the Coast Guard faced reorganization and elimination under President Taft's administration.<sup>3</sup> Again, at the close of World War II, while all armed forces were drawing down, the USCG faced elimination under the Truman Administration. Six years later, the USCG was not tactically involved in the Korean War, a major rebuke for the service, and perhaps the first significant instance of irrelevancy in service history.<sup>4</sup> In 1967, the USCG was transferred from the Department of Treasury (DoT) into the newly formed Department of Transportation. Soon thereafter, DoT conducted a study to assess the feasibility of a continuing to maintain the Coast Guard, and conducted another similar study just two decades later.<sup>5</sup> Although some studies have pointed to a relevant agency performing inherently governmental tasks, the continued threat of elimination has, at times, compelled the service to diversify its national value by accepting additional missions from DoD and other regulatory agencies. These civil-military challenges contributed to the USCG's debility as a relevant, interoperable partner with the Navy and DoD, as reported in at least two GAO assessments conducted during the Reagan Administration.<sup>6</sup> With the end of the Cold War and a lack of a maritime adversary, attempts to forestall the decline of the USCG's sub-surface warfare lethality ultimately failed. The removal of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) equipment from high-endurance Cutters relegated the USCG's most capable vessels to less-than-lethal service to the nation.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Robert E. Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea, History of the United States Coast Guard 1915 to Present* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987), 17.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, 285.

<sup>5</sup> Johnson, 32–33.

<sup>6</sup> Walton H. Sheley, *Report on the Wartime Interoperability of USCG and USN Vessels*, GAO-120-445 (Washington, DC: Government Accounting Office, 1983), 31, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/200/190749.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Hubert E. Russell, "USCG High Endurance Cutters," United States Coast Guard, accessed July 07, 2017, <http://www.uscg.mil/history/cutters/378/docs/378-FRAM-Docs.pdf>.



However, the resurgence of near-peer nation states, along with rogue states like North Korea, renews the need for additional surface components and combatants. In 2015, USN Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Greenert stated, “The Navy cannot focus on a single threat, but rather must balance the two great powers of Russia and China, two very influential regional powers in Iran and North Korea, and the persistent global counterterrorism challenge.”<sup>8</sup> The peace and security America has enjoyed since the end of the Cold War has effectively ended with the rise of Russia and China as near-peer military competitors. In the event of conflict, Navy warships would be expected to take the fight overseas. Given the proliferation of adversarial sub-surface assets, it can be assumed our homeland is no longer the sanctuary it once was and our ports will become vulnerable. Accordingly, the USCG should prepare for an increased maritime homeland defense role, including a renewed ASW capability.

As the United States enters a more threatening environment, the USCG has an opportunity and an expectation as an Armed Force to become a more relevant and interoperable partner to the DoD. By renewing emphasis on the ASW mission and taking additional measures to improve interoperability with the DoD, the USCG could regain lost relevance and reinforce status as an armed force. However, since inception, the Coast Guard has significantly suffered from civil-military challenges and civilian leadership may not be willing to fiscally, legislatively, or materially improve the USCG’s contribution to the Armed Forces. As the USCG enters a new era of global challenges under an administration committed to “rebuilding” our Armed Forces, USCG leadership should make all preparations to improve the USCG’s commitment and relevance to the Armed Services, or risk losing the standing and status as an Armed Force.

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTION**

To what extent have civil-military challenges and historical contributions to national military objectives affected the current relevance of Coast Guard cutters as an

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<sup>8</sup> Megan Eckstein, “CNO Navy Needs More Agile Procurement to Keep Pace with 4 plus 1,” *U. S. Naval Institute News*, December 12, 2015, <https://news.usni.org/2015/12/07/cno-navy-needs-more-agile-procurement-to-keep-pace-with-4-plus-1-threat-set>.

armed force capable of “guarding the coast” against the asymmetrical advantages of adversarial threats outlined in the National Military Strategy?

### **C. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The historical conduct of flight deck equipped cutters and their contribution to national military strategies, as well as an analysis of civil military relations and their effect on the USCG as an armed force, is paramount to this paper. The USCG is statutorily one of the five armed forces and has carried a significant, yet limited, role in the defense of the nation, both at home and abroad. As the oldest continuing sea going service, USCG major cutters have participated in nearly, but not every, major overseas conflict. There is little controversy or differing opinions with regard to the historical record of USCG contributions as an armed force. The historical research shows the USCG was a capable and force augmenting partner, interoperable with the DoD up to, and including, the Vietnam era, but began falling behind during the implementation of DoD’s Second Offset strategy, which produced technical leaps such as stealth and precision guided munitions technology.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, U.S. military strategic documents and joint doctrine shape the strategic national requirements; ultimately directing the level of USCG contributions to national military objectives. Although the USCG has a long and storied history as a valuable partner to the DoD, the current capabilities of the USCG cutter fleet may not be sufficient to defend the homeland from near-peer nation states intent on gaining a sub-surface asymmetric advantage in the maritime domain.

#### **1. Department of Defense Offset Strategies versus USCG Strategic Growth**

As an armed service, strategic capability growth is paramount to the success of the organization. The literature supporting DoD’s successful offset strategies is readily available and little debate exists as to the success of the strategies. The offset strategies

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<sup>9</sup> Tomes, *U.S. Defense Strategy*, 64.

utilized superior weapons technology and networks to propel the armed services, with the exception of the Coast Guard, into global military preeminence.<sup>10</sup>

For a full and fair comparison, an examination of the USCG's strategic growth over the same period is necessary. For example, some research shows the USCG and the U.S. Navy collaborated on shipbuilding programs.<sup>11</sup> This documentation of the USCG's efforts to capitalize on DoD's strategy could help show some effort of USCG strategic growth as an Armed Force. Based on an article submitted by an active duty USCG officer to U.S. Naval institute *Proceedings*, shipbuilding programs from the 1960s through the 1980s shows Navy investment and support by providing NTNO equipment on the USCG's largest cutters adding great value and interoperability.<sup>12</sup> Yet, during this time, additional research in the form of several Naval War College theses show the USCG was burdened by civil-military challenges, while interoperability with the U.S. Navy, especially with regard to anti-submarine warfare mission areas, lost importance.<sup>13</sup>

## **2. USCG Civil-military Mission Creep and Consequences**

The successes and challenges experienced throughout the history of the Coast Guard have much to do with civil-military relations. Civil-military relations is a field of study mainly originating from Samuel Huntington's seminal works which describe the roles, expectations, and challenges of a military professional soldier under civilian political control.<sup>14</sup> In the Constitutional democracy of the United States, the civilian population via formal and informal institutions controls the military. Both the President and the Congress ensure oversight of the military establishment. Although the United States has never endured a coup or even a serious military challenge to civilian control, a friction often exists between what a military desires, and what civilian elected officials desire of the

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<sup>10</sup> Tomes, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Donald J. Horan, *Report to the Secretary on the Readiness of the USCG*, GAO-B-207216 (Washington, DC: Government Accounting Office, 1978), 23.

<sup>12</sup> Russell, "USCG High Endurance Cutters," 6.

<sup>13</sup> Bruce B. Stubbs, "The Coast Guard's Dilemma," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 113, no. 4 (April 1987): 44-48.

<sup>14</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957).

military. The study of civil-military relations attempts to assess the relationship between the military and the civilian leadership. Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and The State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-military Relations* is the most enduring and classical work on civil-military relations. Published in 1957, Huntington suggests two types of civilian control of the military: objective and subjective. Objective control strives to "professionalize" the service to a point where, while still following the orders of civilian leadership, the service is able to dictate the appropriate measures to be taken for a particular course of action, without the need to enter the politics; while subjective control limits autonomy and compels the service to enter politics to ensure the civilian leadership is appropriately utilizing the service.<sup>15</sup>

According to Huntington, and also accredited to Harold Lasswell, a central skill which distinguished military officers from that of their civilian peers is the "management of violence" and the primary function of an Armed Force is "successful armed combat."<sup>16</sup> For example, an armed forces professional, for which managing violence is the underlying skill, cannot irresponsibly employ this expertise for personal advantage because it would destroy the "fabric of society." As Huntington pointed out, "society has a direct, continuing and general interest in the employment of this skill for the enhancement of its own military security."<sup>17</sup> The Coast Guard has struggled with professionalism in accordance with Huntington's definition.

While serving as America's first Secretary of State, Alexander Hamilton sought and received authorization from a very liberal congress to establish a "fleet of revenue cutters or boats" thereby establishing the Revenue Marine.<sup>18</sup> Having secured independence nearly two decades before the advent of the Revenue Marine, security was presumed, largely due to the distance from European bellicosity; and because security was presumed, Hamilton's "fleet of revenue cutters," found themselves squarely under subjective civilian

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<sup>15</sup> Huntington, 83.

<sup>16</sup> Huntington, 11.

<sup>17</sup> Huntington, 13.

<sup>18</sup> Conservative is not in the modern political sense, but in appreciation of the military function.

control. According to civil-military theorist Samuel Huntington, subjective control can be associated with maximizing civilian power. The greater the power achieved, the less relative power the service could accumulate.<sup>19</sup> Upon inception, the Revenue Marine had little power because nearly all of the relative political power was concentrated between the liberal leaning Congress and the Chief Executive (i.e., the President).<sup>20</sup> Throughout its 227-year history, with rare exception, the service has endured a multitude of civil-military challenges that prevented the service from attaining a measurable level of objective control. However, the Coast Guard's civil-military challenges cannot be fully attributed, nor analyzed, solely by Huntington's framework.

Another lens from which to assess civil-military relations is the principal-agent model, which has been used to analyze the administrative relations within government. Peter Feaver's *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight and Civil Military Relations* appropriately describes many of the Coast Guard's civil-military challenges throughout its 227-year history.<sup>21</sup> In the principal-agent model, the principal (usually congress or the service Secretary), strategically delegates autonomy in the form of funding or authorities to the agent (U.S. Coast Guard) knowing that each will make decisions to maximize their best interests, and takes into account the effects of decisions unto the principal and the agent.<sup>22</sup> The conflict present in a principal-agent relationship can be condensed down to principals limiting autonomy to agents to ensure policies are followed; while agents desire to, maximize autonomy and follow preferred policies.<sup>23</sup> Both frameworks find utility when assessing the Coast Guard's civil-military relationships.

Since the end of the Cold War, much literature is available regarding the armed forces and their relationship with civilian authority. However, as threats change, so does

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<sup>19</sup> Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 80.

<sup>20</sup> Huntington, 81.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

<sup>22</sup> Glenn Sulmasy and John Yoo, "Challenges to Civilian Control of the Military: A Rational Choice Approach to the War on Terror," *UCLA Law Review* 54 (2007): 1819.

<sup>23</sup> Sulmasy and Yoo, 15.

the literature on civil-military relations. Accordingly, this thesis will make use the classic Huntington approach, some examination of a post-Cold War global threats framework, and finally, a return to Huntington as near-peer threats have reemerged, as indicated in the most recent national military strategies. For example, the *Routledge Handbook on Civil-military Relations* outlines a variety of civil-military approaches in the context of a post-Cold War environment, but these approaches may not be suitable in the emerging peer-adversary environment put forth in the 2015 National Military Strategy.<sup>24</sup>

A gap in literature exists compared to other services, specifically concerning USCG and civil military relations. In essence, the lack of literature contextualizing the civil-military relations of a branch of the armed services actually provides a unique data point in and of itself, but does not sufficiently address the larger issues of relevancy and organizational effectiveness. Through Huntington's lens, it would appear the USCG has not enjoyed objective control, but rather has been under significant subjective control for many, many decades, and a lack of professionalism as an armed service may have contributed to the condition. Supporting this case will require an analysis regarding the professionalism of USCG as an armed service while under subjective control. Recent literature examines the concept and organizational definition of armed service professionalism, including *the Routledge Handbook on Civil-military Relations*. In concert with professionalism, a review of the Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) requirements is necessary and a review of the Coast Guard's position as the only armed service that does not require JPME for promotions.

Commencing in the early 1970s, many events directly and indirectly affected the USCG. Externally, the DoD pursued their 2<sup>nd</sup> Offset Strategy with great success.<sup>25</sup> Additional Literary examples include the GAO reports that assert the USCG and Navy were not operating at an effective level of interoperability during this period.<sup>26</sup> Congress

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<sup>24</sup> Florina Cristiana Matei, "A New Conceptualization of Civil-Military Relations," in *The Routledge Handbook of Civil-Military Relations*, eds. Thomas Bruneau and Florina Cristiana Matei (New York: Routledge, 2013), <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203105276>.

<sup>25</sup> Tomes, *U.S. Defense Strategy*, 64.

<sup>26</sup> Horan, *Readiness of the USCG*, 9.

reorganized DoD under the Goldwater-Nichols Act.<sup>27</sup> In the mid-1980s, U.S. Custom's Air and Marine enforcement branch was legislatively proposed and funded by Congress, essentially creating a redundant federal maritime law enforcement agency in competition with the Coast Guard.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, a 1982 change in legislative language enabled the DoD to engage in counter-narcotic activities, which may have altered the USCG's ability to achieve additional funding and support to effectively combat narcotics networks. Internally, the analysis of the USCG through the lens of civil military relations could prove insightful as the cumulative effect of these activities clearly extended into what had been primarily Coast Guard responsibilities.

Throughout the 227-year history of Coast Guard existence, the service has accrued many missions atypical of an armed force including pollution response, marine safety, bridge administration, and fisheries enforcement; bringing to total number of statutory missions to eleven.<sup>29</sup> Adding to the complexity of USCG civilian military oversight, due to the USCG's eleven statutory missions, the service falls under the purview of a wide variety of extensive congressional oversight. Accordingly, service level strategic decisions have likely been impacted by purely political pursuits. Government Accountability Reports during this period are available and shed light towards the USCG's dwindling focus on DoD related activities, thereby reducing the USCG's effectiveness as an armed force.<sup>30</sup> For example, a 1978 GAO report clearly outlined USCG and U.S. Navy failures to adequately plan for interoperability.<sup>31</sup> As research continues, congressional hearing and

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<sup>27</sup> Martin J. Gorman and Alexander Krongard. *A Goldwater-Nichols Act for the U.S. Government: Institutionalizing the Interagency Process* (Washington, DC: Defense Technical Information Center, 2005).

<sup>28</sup> David A. Masiero, "A Critical Assessment of the Effectiveness of the U.S. Customs Service/U.S. Coast Guard/Department of Defense in Joint Counternarcotics Air Interdiction" (master's thesis, Naval War College, 1992).

<sup>29</sup> "USCG Missions," accessed July 7, 2017, <http://www.overview.uscg.mil/Missions/>.

<sup>30</sup> *Coast Guard Resources: Hearing before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Navigation Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries*, 100 Cong. (testimony of Victor S. Rezendes, Associate Director of Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division) (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, 1988), <http://www.gao.gov/products/T-RCED-88-28>.

<sup>31</sup> R. W. Gutman, *Planning for USCG Mobilization under Navy Command in Wartime*, GAO-B-146896 (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, 1978), 4.

congressional budget documents will likely bring out additional civil-military affects worthy of analysis.

One unique period of Coast Guard history requires closer examination. From 1986–1990, Admiral Yost served as Commandant of the Coast Guard. During his tenure, he focused on improving the military culture of the Coast Guard and the service’s defense readiness mission. Admiral Yost also fiercely fought many civil-battles, often winning. The U.S. Naval Institute has transcripts of Admiral Yost’s memoirs during this period and provide a keen insight into the Coast Guard’s civil-military challenges and cultural aversion to some of the militarizing efforts.

In the post-Cold War Era, differing schools of thought existed the concerning correct level effort for armed services in the absence of a near-peer threat. In the early 1990s, the USCG abandoned its long-standing ASW capabilities on major cutters. In addition, some suggested the DoD should embrace non-traditional missions and literature published by active duty Navy officers suggested the Navy began to act more like a USCG.<sup>32</sup> Conversely, material exists which document the need for the USCG to find relevancy with DoD, including Admiral James Loy’s 1998 Joint Forces Quarterly article titled, “Shaping America’s Joint Maritime Forces: The Coast Guard in the 21st Century.”<sup>33</sup> Additional research remains in this area.

In support of the commonly held belief that “all is well in the USCG,” a 1999 report titled “Report of the Interagency Task Force on U.S. Coast Guard Roles and Missions - A Coast Guard for the Twenty-First Century” was published and provided an excellent outside look at the utility of the USCG following three decades of major changes. This report included highly validating analysis from a third party reviewer.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Jonathan Brown, “Non-Traditional Missions of the Military: Past, Present, and Prospects” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1998).

<sup>33</sup> James Loy, “Shaping America’s Joint Maritime Forces: The Coast Guard in the 21st Century,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* (Spring 1988): 9–19.

<sup>34</sup> Loy, 14.



As a result of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the USCG underwent significant changes. Additional authorities, capabilities, roles, and regulatory responsibilities were legislated into laws designed to enhance the governance and protection of the maritime transportation system. However, these authorities actually did little to enhance the Coast Guard's standing as an armed force—during which time the DoD has continuously been at war and near-peer concerns have emerged into peer-like adversarial challenges, bringing an existential threat the U.S. has not faced since the Cold War.

The 2015 National Military Strategy should have served as a wake-up call for the sea services. Peer-like adversaries are gaining a subsurface asymmetric advantage. Unlike the venerable 378' WHEC cutters built in the 1960s, the Coast Guard's newest, largest cutters do not have anti-submarine warfare capabilities. Meanwhile, the Navy has advertised the need for 355 ships, yet has no viable plan to achieve such a fleet. Up-arming USCG Cutters with an ASW capability could bridge a gap in our maritime homeland defense posture. Accordingly, literature was analyzed pertaining to Navy assets, equipment, and capabilities that could enhance both USCG contributions and interoperability against this existential subsurface threat.

#### **D. RESEARCH DESIGN**

This thesis researches and explains the Coast Guard's many civil-military challenges, which have led to additional non-military missions and potentially decreased the contributions as an Armed Force to the DoD. This thesis also researches and analyzes the USCG's ASW mission. For many decades, the USCG capably augmented and contributed to the U.S. Navy, especially the ASW mission. However, following the end of the Cold War, and other civil-military related issues, the USCG abandoned the mission and the service's contributions to the DoD have been curtailed.

This thesis will cover the USCG's major cutter contributions to defense of the nation as an Armed Service, which may include noteworthy DoD participation and contributions in major conflict. This thesis also analyzes the USCG's lack of participation and the limitations of the USCG as an Armed Force (as compared to the other Armed

Forces). While some USCG service contributions have been made by select units (such as Port Security Units), I intend to limit the scope of this thesis to USCG Cutters (armed vessels over 65 feet).

The primary sources for this thesis are Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports, Office of Inspector General (OIG) reports, published literature, service reports, Naval War College/Naval Postgraduate School theses, and published articles from service related periodicals including and the U.S. Naval Institute's *Proceedings*, as well as peer-reviewed academic journals like *Armed Forces and Society*, *Military Review*, and *Strategic Studies Institute* monographs.

This thesis is a historical study and a policy analysis. For example, in the mid-1980s when the USCG was under the leadership of a particularly zealous Commandant intent on bolstering the Coast Guard's image as an Armed Force, Officer Evaluations were redesigned to include warfighting categories and ship-to-ship missiles were installed on Cutters. However, upon confirmation of the next Commandant the service promptly ended both initiatives.

This thesis is a formative analysis of the USCG value to the DoD as an armed force. In addition, this thesis addresses potential civil-military challenges that places the USCG in a position to lose focus on contributions to the DoD. I profile the ASW mission as an example of this devaluation and propose a way forward for the USCG to improve service contributions to the DoD as the United States navigates adversarial challenges from China, Russia, North Korea and Iran.

## II. MAJOR CUTTER CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL DEFENSE

### A. ORIGINS

As the nation's first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton's concept of a Revenue Marine was approved by the Congress on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1790, and authorized, "so many boats or cutters, not exceeding ten, as may be necessary to be employed for the protection of the revenue."<sup>35</sup> While President Washington had the authority to acquire up to ten armed cutters, the President did not have the authority to establish a "cutter service."<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the United States would not have a standing Navy until 1794, so the cutters, known as the "Revenue Marine," were placed under the direction of the Treasury Department. As a result, the Revenue Marine officers were ineligible for military commissions, so personnel assigned to the Revenue Marine were considered, "officers of the customs," because of their authority to enforce customs.<sup>37</sup> This distinction (or lack thereof) placed Revenue Marine personnel serving as America's only Navy, but without actual naval commissions. An effect of this distinction was that at least two officers personally nominated by President George Washington and Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton to serve as the first "Cuttermen" declined the position due to an insufficient salary, marking the first of many civil-military challenges in what would eventually become the U.S. Coast Guard.<sup>38</sup> In less than a decade after the creation of the Revenue Marine, the U.S. began constructing a more robust naval force as France began challenging U.S. maritime and sovereignty rights in the lead up to the Quasi-War.

In 1797, as the Quasi-War with France appeared inevitable and the protection of America's coast became paramount. The Revenue Marine answered the call and assumed

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<sup>35</sup> "U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office Time Line 1700–1800," U.S. Coast Guard," accessed January 14, 2018, <http://www.history.uscg.mil/Complete-Time-Line/Time-Line-1700-1800/>.

<sup>36</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 1

<sup>37</sup> Johnson, 1.

<sup>38</sup> Barney was later offered, and accepted, the Captainship of a U.S. Navy frigate *Federalist* in 1794. "To George Washington from Joshua Barney, 15 September 15, 1790," Founders Online, last modified November 26, 2017, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-06-02-0210>.

the mission of guarding the coast and commerce.<sup>39</sup> Upon declaration of war, President John Adams placed the entire Revenue Marine fleet at the disposal of the recently appointed Secretary of the Navy.<sup>40</sup> The result was a Quasi-War for a quasi-armed service. Eight Revenue Marine cutters had taken 18 armed French vessels as prizes, and ten American ships were repatriated from French control.<sup>41</sup> Throughout the conflict, the Revenue Marine showed admirable qualities. Despite their contributions, the Navy ordered the Revenue Marine cutters and crews back to the Department of Treasury upon the conclusion of hostilities, “for lack of speed and size.”<sup>42</sup>

The Navy’s actions were justified. The differences between the Revenue cutters and naval ships at that period were significant. The U.S. Navy had recently constructed six frigates, including the famous *Constitution*, a 2200-ton, 44-gun, ship of the line. By contrast, although records are incomplete, the lightly armed Revenue cutters were locally constructed, and likely of the “Virginia-built Schooner” design composed of a single deck, two masts, and displacing 70 tons.<sup>43</sup> Despite their stature, the squared-stern revenue cutters could, “take almost any weather and outsail anything afloat.”<sup>44</sup> Having demonstrated their value in battle, Hamilton’s successor, Secretary of Treasury Oliver Wolcott, realized that a stronger more capable vessel would better align with naval objectives and met with Boston shipbuilders. However, the Secretary cautioned it, “ought to be recollected that Congress are providing a Naval force for the defense of commerce, and that a principal—though not a sole—object of the Cutter establishment is the protection of the revenue.”<sup>45</sup> The Service’s second Secretary of Treasury had defined, and established, the primary

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<sup>39</sup> Stephen H. Evans, *The United States Coast Guard, 1790–1915: A Definitive History* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1949), 7.

<sup>40</sup> Cong. Rec., Act of March 2, 1799 (1 Stat. L. 627, 299); Irving H. King, *George Washington’s Coast Guard: Origins of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, 1789–1801* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press), 162–165.

<sup>41</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 2.

<sup>42</sup> Johnson, 3.

<sup>43</sup> Evans, *United States Coast Guard*, 13.

<sup>44</sup> Evans, 13.

<sup>45</sup> Dudley W. Knox, *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi-War between the U.S. and France*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Navy, 1935), 56; Evans, *United States Coast Guard*, 15.

(maritime law enforcement) and secondary (naval defense support) considerations for the service.

Although slighter than naval vessels, the cutters augmented the U.S. Navy in several additional 19<sup>th</sup>-century naval conflicts and concerns. President Jefferson ordered the Cutters to enforce the prohibition on the import of slaves.<sup>46</sup> During the War of 1812, the service recorded the first maritime capture of the war and was involved in five maritime battles against the British Navy.<sup>47</sup> Later, the Revenue Cutters successfully engaged pirates throughout the Gulf of Mexico and significantly contributed to national objectives during the Seminole Indian Wars.<sup>48</sup> Eleven cutters were dispatched to serve in the Navy in the Gulf of Mexico during the Mexican War and contributed to assaults at Alvarado and Tabasco.<sup>49</sup> During one particular engagement in 1835, the U.S. Revenue Cutter (USRC) *Ingham* fought the Mexican navy's *Montezuma* until the *Montezuma* capitulated. Despite the victory, the commanding officer of the USRC *Ingham* was compelled to message Washington and call for upgrading the weapons for both his ship and crew.<sup>50</sup> This recommendation was not taken for action, and for most of the war, the Revenue Cutters were used in non-combat roles such as delivering supplies and providing shallow water capabilities to the Army and Navy.<sup>51</sup> According to historical records, the armament of the Revenue Cutters was non-standard and haphazard. A late 1840s assessment found many cutters carrying weapons captured during the War of 1812, and some had weapons dating back to the 1777 Battle of Saratoga.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 3.

<sup>47</sup> "U.S. Coast Guard Timeline 1700–1800," United States Coast Guard, accessed January 12, 2018, <http://www.history.uscg.mil/Complete-Time-Line/Time-Line-1700-1800/>.

<sup>48</sup> United States Coast Guard.

<sup>49</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 16.

<sup>50</sup> William R. Wells, *Shots That Hit: A Study of Coast Guard Marksmanship 1790–1985* (Washington, DC: United States Coast Guard: 1993), 10.

<sup>51</sup> United States Coast Guard, "Timeline 1700–1800."

<sup>52</sup> Wells, *Shots That Hit*, 12.

Decades later, as the nation descended into Civil War, armament standardization had not improved. Some vessels were so lightly armed they were quickly captured and repurposed for the Confederacy.<sup>53</sup> For the Union, the remaining Revenue Cutters augmented the U.S. Navy throughout the Civil War, some with distinction. USRC *Harriet Lane*, a modern steam powered vessel armed with howitzers and large caliber guns supported naval squadrons in the Gulf of Mexico and Mississippi River to destroy logistics for Confederate blockade-runners.<sup>54</sup> Another vessel, a prototype ironclad, the USRC *E.A. Stevens*, was a unique semi-submersible iron-skirted vessel, in company with USS *Monitor*, and USS *Galena*, attacked the Confederate Capitol city of Richmond, Virginia.<sup>55</sup> On May 9<sup>th</sup> 1862, USRC *Miami* provided transport for President Lincoln from Washington, and then supported an amphibious landing at Ocean View, Virginia.<sup>56</sup>

By the end of the Civil War, the service reported having 27 steam and 9 sailing cutters.<sup>57</sup> However, then U.S. Revenue Service Commandant McCulloch felt many of those vessels too “inefficient and uneconomical as cutters,” and preferred, “cutters of light draught, manned by a small crew, and able to navigate shoals ... but of sufficient tonnage to perform efficiently and safely the duties of a coast guard at sea and to furnish succor to vessels in distress.”<sup>58</sup> McCulloch’s comments were surprising for two reasons. First, furnishing “succor” was not yet a specified mission for the Revenue cutters; and second, the noteworthy exclusion of war duties, especially so soon after the highly combative Civil War. It can be inferred by the words and actions of the Revenue Marine Commandant that armament and warfighting duties as an armed force were distant considerations, reiterating Secretary Wolcott’s sentiments seven decades earlier and setting the tone of the service throughout the remainder of the century.

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<sup>53</sup> Donald L. Canney, *U.S. Coast Guard and Revenue Cutters, 1790–1935* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 30.

<sup>54</sup> Canney, 31.

<sup>55</sup> Canney, 31.

<sup>56</sup> Canney, 31.

<sup>57</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 10.

<sup>58</sup> As quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 14.

By 1873, the Revenue Cutter Service had grown to 28 ships with three under construction.<sup>59</sup> The service continued to focus on smaller vessels as congressional appropriations “declined to keep pace with the increasing costs of shipbuilding.”<sup>60</sup> More, the service continued to exhibit a highly dedicated interest in the life saving missions, rather than national defense. According to USCG historian William Wells, this can be attributed to a strong national interest in heroic rescues performed by the service, which appeared in many popular journals and newspapers during that period.<sup>61</sup>

The cutters of the Revenue were again absorbed into the Department of the Navy upon the commencement of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Weak weaponry again hindered service contributions. According to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, the cutters were, “inadequately or completely unarmed.”<sup>62</sup> Once augmented with additional U.S. Navy weaponry, the service supported Naval blockades in Havana, Cuba; and the USRC *Hugh McCulloch* fought with Commodore Dewey in the Battle of Manila Bay.<sup>63</sup> Demonstrating bravery and vigor as had previous cutters in previous wars, the commanding officer of USRC *Hudson* received a Congressional Gold Medal (a civilian award) for heroism on May 11, 1898 when the Hudson, engaged in battle in Cardenas Bay, Cuba, rescued the a stricken U.S. naval vessel from certain destruction.<sup>64</sup>

In 1911, the service reported an inventory of 36 cutters, now mainly constructed of steel and propelled by machinery bringing a top speed of nearly 12 knots.<sup>65</sup> By comparison, the U.S. Navy’s recently constructed “Great White Fleet,” heavily influenced by Alfred Thayer Mahan’s theories which connected national greatness with seapower, incorporated advances in propulsion and weaponry to produce massive warships exceeding 14,000 tons

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<sup>59</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 14.

<sup>60</sup> Johnson, 12.

<sup>61</sup> Wells, *Shots That Hit*, 21.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Acting Secretary of the Navy Charles H. Allen to Secretary of Treasury (August 12, 1898), as quoted in Wells, *Shots That Hit*, 21.

<sup>63</sup> Evans, *United States Coast Guard*, 166.

<sup>64</sup> Evans, 169.

<sup>65</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 12.

and capable of speeds up to 19 knots.<sup>66</sup> The Revenue Cutter Service had neither the political nor the service capital necessary to keep pace with the incredible naval advancements of the period.

Six years later on April 6, 1917, the U.S. Coast Guard was again transferred to the Navy upon the declaration of war against Germany.<sup>67</sup> Although the U.S. Congress appropriated funds for the construction of five additional cutters, the nation did not have any surplus shipbuilding capacity due to U.S. Navy and merchant marine shipbuilding requirements.<sup>68</sup> Inadequate shipbuilding capacity would not be the only civil-military challenge to affect the Coast Guard in this war. A joint U.S. Navy and Coast Guard report on “measures necessary to facilitate the efficient functioning of the Coast Guard within the Navy,” found the cutters to be, “lacking endurance and range,” and would be best suited for “local duties” such as mine laying and sweeping in coastal waters.<sup>69</sup> In coastal waters, many cutters found themselves assigned as training vessels for Naval Reservists. This arrangement awkwardly placed Coast Guard officers, with significant training and experience, in positions junior to the far younger Naval Reservists they were training. Adding to the affront, naval officers received a 10 percent bonus for sea duty that was not afforded to Coast Guard officers.<sup>70</sup> In effect, the inferior cutters deemed unsuitable for the war effort, contributed to placing Coast Guardsman in a position of being subordinated to those junior rank, as reflected by their wartime duties and compensation.

Despite the grievances of the smaller cutters, a shortage of vessels and the slow speeds of British convoys from Gibraltar into the Mediterranean placed the cutters *Algongquin*, *Manning*, *Ossipee*, *Seneca*, *Tampa*, and *Yamacraw* fully into the war effort.

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<sup>66</sup> Robert Gardiner and Randal Gray, *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships, 1906–1921* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1985).

<sup>67</sup> The Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Lifesaving Service were combined in 1915 and called the U.S. Coast Guard.

<sup>68</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 43.

<sup>69</sup> Elmsworth Bertholf to Secretary of the Treasury, “Cooperation with the Navy: Plans and Orders,” (March 20, 1915), as cited in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 45.

<sup>70</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 61.



Upon arrival in Gibraltar, escort duty placed the cutters in an active submarine zone.<sup>71</sup> After nearly eight months of successful operations in theater, the *Tampa* was sunk by a single torpedo fired from German U-boat UB-91 with the loss of 111 Coast Guardsman.<sup>72</sup> The war ended six weeks later.

## **B. THE ERA OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Following the experiences of World War I, the Coast Guard appeared to understand the need for cutters that could adequately perform alongside the Navy in support of national objectives. The first cutters designed in the post-World War I environment were the multi-mission cutters *Tampa*, *Haida*, *Mojave*, and *Modoc*. With an overall length of 240', these stoutly constructed vessels were designed for all missions and were weaponized with two 5-inch 51-caliber guns; and 3-inch 50-caliber antiaircraft gun.<sup>73</sup> However, with a top speed less than 14 knots, they were economical, but not fast.

While the Navy enjoyed a post-war peace dividend, the Coast Guard received monumental tasking following the passage of National Prohibition (Volstead) Act. The Department of the Treasury's Bureau of Internal Revenue commenced enforcement of the Act, and the Coast Guard, being under the same Secretary, was tasked with a very difficult, and highly unpopular, maritime enforcement of the legislation. Alcohol was being smuggled in great proportions from all vectors. Rum from Cuba and the Bahamas was as common as whisky from Canada.<sup>74</sup> In the 1923 Annual Report to congress, Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon recommended the service be "enlarged considerably" in order to combat "rum running."<sup>75</sup> The recommendation included a request for over 300 vessels, additional officers and enlisted forces for support, and a budget increase from \$10,000,000 to nearly \$30,000,000.<sup>76</sup> However, the congress was not as fervent; enacting legislation

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<sup>71</sup> Johnson, 55.

<sup>72</sup> Johnson, 55.

<sup>73</sup> Johnson, 66.

<sup>74</sup> Johnson, 80.

<sup>75</sup> Johnson, 81.

<sup>76</sup> Johnson, 81.

for just over \$13,000,000, the transfer of up to 20 surplus World War I Navy vessels currently not in service, and the temporary authorization for 52 officers above the rank of Lieutenant, but without increasing their pay and allowances.<sup>77</sup> While the enforcement of prohibition increased the size and scope of the Coast Guard, it also clearly placed the service as a law-enforcement agency.

During the Prohibition enforcement era (1920–1933), the Coast Guard was operating eight repurposed Navy destroyers and tensions in Cuba began to boil over. In August of 1933, President Roosevelt ordered the Navy to major Cuban ports to protect American lives and property. The Navy was only able to spare a small cruiser and two destroyers, so the Coast Guard operated destroyers in a task force with the Navy. After nearly two months in Cuba, the repressive violence simmered and the task force was disbanded. Task Force Commander Rear Admiral Freeman reported the Coast Guard “operated with the associated vessels of the Navy smoothly and efficiently...and showed a high order of administrative and professional ability among the officers in command and a commendable state of training among all of the personnel.”<sup>78</sup> While deservedly lauded for naval interoperability, the Coast Guard did so with hand-me-down destroyers; while still performing the unpopular prohibition mission. Despite the difficulty of enforcing prohibition and maintaining naval interoperability, the Coast Guard was operating with purpose and was enjoying operational success. Coast Guard historians reported that during the 20 years following World War I, the Coast Guard, “surpassed all other periods of growth and became a well-armed, well-organized, military service.”<sup>79</sup> Given the high operational tempo, the service was again in need of major cutter recapitalization.

In May 1933, the Coast Guard submitted a need for up to nine major cutters and funding was secured under the National Industrial Recovery Act. During the same time, the Navy was designing and building vessels of a similar tonnage and the Coast Guard was directed to modify the Navy design for their use and for the vessels to be built in Navy

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<sup>77</sup> Johnson, 81.

<sup>78</sup> Letter from Charles S. Freeman to Chief of Naval Operations (November 1, 1933), as quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 132.

<sup>79</sup> Wells, *Shots That Hit*, 56.

yards.<sup>80</sup> These cutters were commissioned with a length overall of 327' and named for Secretaries of Treasury. The enduring result was the construction and acquisition of a highly respectable class of cutters. The 327s displaced over 2,200 tons, achieved a speed of 20 knots, and were weaponized on par with similar Navy vessels, especially when enhanced with ASW weapons added during wartime service.<sup>81</sup> In comparison, the U.S. Navy constructed very similarly sized vessels in the early 1940s under the Destroyer Escort class.

### C. WORLD WAR II—MAJOR PARTICIPATION FOR MAJOR CUTTERS

Following the fall of France to Germany, the Battle of the Atlantic reached a fevered pitch. The U.S. was frantically building combatants and the famous “liberty ships.” It was time to “up-arm,” the Coast Guard. Major cutters received more guns, depth charges, degaussing equipment and sonar gear.<sup>82</sup> As in previous conflicts, on 01 November 1941, the Coast Guard was officially transferred to the Department of the Navy by Executive Order 8929. Initially, the Navy was only interested in the larger Treasury Class cutters, which were well suited for ocean convoy duty; but other cutters found duty conducting ASW patrols.<sup>83</sup> Anti-submarine warfare assets were in high demand, and the remaining major cutters, when outfitted properly for the mission, actively contributed to the war effort and produced outstanding results.

Germany had over 100 submarines in the Atlantic in 1942. In November of that year, German submarine efforts culminated with over 700,000 tons of Allied shipping falling victim to the “wolfpacks.”<sup>84</sup> However, using convoys and anti-submarine vessels, Allied vessels, and especially U.S. Coast Guard Cutters, began scoring victories. On December 15, 1942, Cutter *Ingham* sank U-626 with depth charges.<sup>85</sup> Cutter *Spencer*

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<sup>80</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 144.

<sup>81</sup> Paul H. Silverston, *U.S. Warships of World War II* (New York: Doubleday, 1968), 373.

<sup>82</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 179.

<sup>83</sup> Johnson, 195.

<sup>84</sup> Samuel E. Morison, *History of U.S. Naval Operations in World War II* (Boston: Little Brown, 1962), 334.

<sup>85</sup> Morison, 143.

destroyed U-225 on February 21, 1943 and U-175 on April 17, 1943. Closer to shore, Cutter *Icarus*, a 175' vessel, destroyed U-352 off Cape Lookout, North Carolina while Cutter *Thetis* located and sank U-157 off the coast of the Bahamas.<sup>86</sup> Off Greenland, Cutters captured the naval auxiliary ship *Externsteine*, the only German surface naval vessel taken at sea by the U.S. during World War II.<sup>87</sup> In 1943, *Spencer* identified, tracked, and destroyed a U-boat through a convoy. This feat was quickly incorporated into U.S. Navy ASW doctrine.<sup>88</sup> Overall, by 1943, U.S. warships had sunk 11 U-boats; with six of those 11 destroyed by Coast Guard cutters.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, it was determined the cutters conducting convoy duty had, "proven themselves far superior in fuel economy, maneuverability, and sea kindliness, while speed and armor were quite adequate."<sup>90</sup> However, these efforts did not occur without loss. The cutter *Escanaba* was sunk off Newfoundland, *Acacia* sunk by U-161 in the Caribbean, and cutter *Alexander Hamilton* was sunk by U-132 with a loss of 26.<sup>91</sup> As the war continued, ships were needed for Pacific duty, so the cutters were ordered to prepare for the Pacific Theater. A testament to the value provided by the cutters, U.S. Navy Commander-in-Chief Atlantic (CINCLANT) and other naval officers strongly objected to the transfer of cutters to the Pacific because they felt the cutters were, "unmatched as escort group leaders."<sup>92</sup>

In the Pacific, the operational art of naval warfare had shifted. The center of gravity had transitioned from the battleship to the support and use of the aircraft carrier. Along with this strategic shift, the design and construction of naval combatants changed as well. Speed was prioritized to support carrier task group operations and each class of naval

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<sup>86</sup> Morison, 155.

<sup>87</sup> Malcolm F. Willoughby, *The U.S. Coast Guard in World War II* (Annapolis: MD, Naval Institute Press, 1957), 176–179.

<sup>88</sup> Robert Bennet, *The Coast Guardsman's Manual*, 7th ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1983), 125.

<sup>89</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 238.

<sup>90</sup> Johnson, 238–240.

<sup>91</sup> Johnson, 238–242

<sup>92</sup> Cutter *Taney* served in support of the Pacific Theater, augmenting naval vessels in the Philippines, Okinawa, and Borneo. E. C. Nussear and Al L. Slover, memorandum for engineer in chief and chief finance officer, June 1, 1944, as quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 239.

vessels brought capabilities such as ASW, Anti-Air, and Anti-Surface warfare capabilities in support of the groups. This concept left little room for all but the largest USCG Cutters, and even those vessels were nearly unsuitable for sustained carrier operations. This shift in operational art, among other civil-military differences highlighted during the war effort, led to a joint U.S. Navy and Coast Guard discussions on how to best use the Coast Guard in future conflicts.

The Korean War commenced just five years later. Unlike previous conflicts, the Coast Guard was not wholly transferred to the Navy. Although, as the fear of communist subversives swept the nation, the Navy directed for the Coast Guard to assume responsibility for U.S. Port Security and to maintain additional ocean stations to assist as navigational aids during transatlantic flights.<sup>93</sup> Interestingly, for the first time since the Tripolitan War of 1801–1806, no major cutters took part in the effort; although some cutters had their ASW equipment temporarily reinstalled in anticipation of convoy duty.<sup>94</sup> The ASW components were removed after the signing of the cease-fire armistice.

Despite major cutters clearly performing an important homeland defense role in World War II, the lack of combatant engagements by major cutters led to the accumulation of non-military missions, just as they had with the 1913 commencement of Ice patrol duty and the 1940 ocean station requirements. Because the Navy appeared too confrontational, the State Department desired Coast Guard vessels to assist in rebroadcasting Voice of America radio programming. From 1952 through 1964, the Coast Guard manned and operated a 339' oceangoing radio station in and around the harbor of Rhodes in the Greek Islands until the duty was taken over by a shore-side radio station.<sup>95</sup> Despite accumulating a portfolio of non-military missions, the rise of the USSR into a peer-competitor capable of striking the U.S. mainland required all armed services to refocus their national security efforts.

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<sup>93</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 281.

<sup>94</sup> Johnson, 285.

<sup>95</sup> Johnson, 286.

#### D. EXISTENTIAL THREATS

The USSR developed into a naval threat capable of striking our coast and disrupting the U.S. maritime transportation system. In response to Soviet aggression, the U.S. Navy would be expected to expeditiously deploy to confront the adversary in a “Mahanian” fleet engagement. Accordingly, the U.S. Navy began to revolutionize their surface combatants. In the late 1950s, the Navy was commissioning the *Forest-Sherman* class and *Farragut* class destroyers. Displacing nearly 5,000 tons and capable of speeds up to 33 knots, these vessels were a formidable ASW component and fit nicely into the carrier battle group.<sup>96</sup> By comparison, the Coast Guard was operating former U.S. Navy seaplane tenders (the *Casco* class) and the venerable *Treasury* class cutters, both classes having been constructed in the 1930s.<sup>97</sup>

Assistant Secretary of the Treasury David W. Kendal realized the recapitalization for the Coast Guard coincided with a national interest to combat a growing Soviet threat. Also considered was the decreasing desire for the Navy to include the Coast Guard in major offshore operations, as was the case in the Korean War. It became apparent to Assistance Secretary Kendall that “long range plans” be prepared for a “renovation of the cutter fleet.” A comprehensive report was compiled and submitted in 1959 as a result of this positive civil military cooperation.<sup>98</sup>

Civil-military support for recapitalizing the Coast Guard continued to flourish under the Kennedy Administration and the 1960s saw unprecedented growth in cutter inventory and additional mission expansion. The 210’ WMECs were innovatively designed with the first combined diesel and gas (CODAG) engine room on U.S. vessels, making them

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<sup>96</sup> “Forrest Sherman (DD 931),” Naval Vessel Register, accessed October 15, 2017, [www.nvr.navy.mil/SHIPDETAILS/SHIPSDETAIL\\_DD\\_931\\_4843.HTML](http://www.nvr.navy.mil/SHIPDETAILS/SHIPSDETAIL_DD_931_4843.HTML).

<sup>97</sup> “Ships and Aircraft,” United States Coast Guard, accessed September 29, 2017, [www.history.uscg.mil/Historic-Ships/](http://www.history.uscg.mil/Historic-Ships/).

<sup>98</sup> Walter C. Capron, *Coast Guard* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1965), 199–201, as quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 312.

both fast and efficient.<sup>99</sup> Later that decade, the 378' WHECs also carried CODAGs and were fully outfitted for ASW missions on par with U.S. Navy vessels including 40 mm mounts, 5-inch 38-caliber dual-purpose gun, ASW torpedoes, and sonar.<sup>100</sup> Of interest, the Coast Guard had planned for thirty 210' WMECs, yet only constructed 16. Likewise the service planned for 36 WHEC's, yet completed just 12.<sup>101</sup> Although the Coast Guard major cutter fleet was reduced from planned requirements, it was impressively constructed, and clearly outfitted with U.S. Navy interoperability in mind and metal.

Also during this decade, the icebreaking requirement brought additional inventory and missions to the Coast Guard cutter fleet. Conducting ice missions had traditionally been a mission for both the Navy and Coast Guard. The Coast Guard utilized some service designed icebreaking vessels, primarily for the Great Lakes. In addition, the Coast Guard utilized leftover Navy ships from World War II which had dilapidated beyond their acceptable service life. Again demonstrating noteworthy civil-military cooperation, Secretary of Treasury Henry Fowler, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and Assistance Secretary James Reed worked to formalize an agreement regarding the transfer of five "nearly obsolescent," U.S. Navy icebreaking ships and a memorandum specifying the responsibilities of the two services in the Arctic and Antarctic.<sup>102</sup> In truth, the Navy was not interested in its service members conducting ice missions which it determined were not a "military function."<sup>103</sup> Consequently, this 1963 arrangement made the Coast Guard the Nation's only icebreaking service, and yet again, as with the ocean station and ice patrol missions, the Coast Guard had acquired a determinedly non-Navy mission. Although ice breaking was now, "uniquely Coast Guard," it carried the potential to dilute focus on interoperability and performing the defense readiness mission during the height of a Cold

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<sup>99</sup> The Combined Diesel and Gas Engine room (CODAG) was later simplified to just diesel engines due to operational complications with the CODAG clutch arrangement. CODAG remained on the 378s and became a standard design which continues in many ships.

<sup>100</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 327.

<sup>101</sup> Johnson, 328.

<sup>102</sup> Johnson, 329.

<sup>103</sup> Johnson, 239.

War involving a legitimate maritime threat to the homeland, and an escalation of proxy conflicts, especially in Southeast Asia.

In the mid-1960s, there emerged a need for a maritime presence in Vietnam to stem the flow of weapons and supplies arriving by sea. The concept of “Operation Market Time” was developed to stop the flow of weapons being use to supply Viet Cong forces throughout the Mekong Delta. The Navy initially assigned destroyers, which also assisted in navy gunfire support for shoreward forces, and 54’ aluminum “swift” boats. Sensing another “Korean” situation, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Roland had been trying to, “devise a way to get the Coast Guard involved in Vietnam, fearing that the service were limited entirely to a support role, and its prized status as one of the nation’s armed forces might be jeopardized.”<sup>104</sup> The opportunity was presented when, after a month into the operation, the Secretary of the Navy inquired about the availability of Coast Guard vessels.

The Coast Guard quickly responded with the availability of seventeen 82’ patrol boats. The 82’s were stoutly built, but lightly armed. In preparation for combat duty, the vessels were outfitted with five .50 caliber machine guns, 81-mm mortars, and shipped to Subic Bay, Philippines. These vessels found instant utility, saw a tremendous amount of action, and quickly proved their worth.<sup>105</sup> Just four months later, Coast Guard Commandant Roland directed the preparation and transfer of nine additional 82’ vessels, bringing the total to 26 vessels and over three hundred officers and crew.<sup>106</sup> Although the 82’ vessels did well in the near Coastal and river region, additional offshore presence was required. The Coast Guard answered the call and agreed to send three 311’ cutters, altogether forming Coast Guard Squadron 3.<sup>107</sup> As the conflict endured, the Coast Guard began sending larger cutters on rotational deployments to support the effort, including the newly constructed 378’ WHECs. Of note, reports from the field in Vietnam show troops

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<sup>104</sup> Johnson, 331.

<sup>105</sup> Johnson, 332.

<sup>106</sup> Johnson, 333.

<sup>107</sup> Johnson, 334.



in combat that had requested naval gunfire support against the enemy overwhelmingly preferred the USCG WHEC 378's for this mission because the USCG had 5-inch guns installed compared to the inshore Navy vessels which only carried 3-inch guns.<sup>108</sup> In total, the Coast Guard can be attributed to the destruction or interdiction of nearly 2,000 enemy vessels and the killing or wounding of 1,827 enemy combatants.<sup>109</sup> These efforts also forced the enemy inland on the notoriously brutal Ho Chi Minh trail, making enemy resupply much more difficult. Other efforts, including navigation support, port security and hazardous materials handling were conducted by Coast Guard personnel. In sum, nearly 8,000 Coast Guard personnel supported the efforts from 1965–1972.<sup>110</sup>

#### **E. MISSED OPPORTUNITIES**

Having heavily recapitalized in the major cutter fleet throughout the 1960s, aside from the acquisition and construction of two heavy icebreaking vessels, the Coast Guard did not award contracts for the construction of any new cutters for nearly a decade. In 1977, the service announced the contract to construct a new class of 270' cutters. With naval interoperability in mind, the 270' WMEC was designed to be large enough for an ASW helicopter to be hangared and had a 76-millimeter gun of the same design used on the Navy frigates.<sup>111</sup> Although part of the original design, space and weight for additional armament and sonar if the need were to arise was not included in the final product.<sup>112</sup> Also, these vessels could not achieve 20 knots top speed, lacked endurance, and were altogether not well received.<sup>113</sup> The 270' cutters, although still in use today, are firmly unfit for service on the West Coast (except near calmer equatorial regions) and are operationally limited in

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<sup>108</sup> Paul Yost, interview by Paul Stillwell, May 2001 (transcript, Oral History Collection, U.S. Naval Institute), 287.

<sup>109</sup> Eugene Tulich, *The United States Coast Guard in South East Asia during the Vietnam Conflict* (Washington, DC: U.S. Coast Guard Public Affairs, 1986), 55; James W. Moreu, "The Coast Guard in the Central and Western Pacific," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 99 (May 1973): 286–289.

<sup>110</sup> Moreu, "Coast Guard in the Central and Western Pacific," 286.

<sup>111</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 354.

<sup>112</sup> Bernard Edward, "Organizational Design Considerations for the New USCG WMEC 270," (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1981).

<sup>113</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 355.

comparison to other major cutters, such as the venerable WHEC 378' *Secretary*-class cutters.

In the mid-1980s the Navy and Coast Guard established a command and control structure for defending the U.S. coastline. Originally named Maritime Defense Zones, but commonly called MARDEZ's, the concept employed USCG coastal capabilities and authorities to ensure the defense of America's coastline from near-peer threats.<sup>114</sup> To ensure the Coast Guard maintained an effective coastal warfare capability, a joint Navy-Coast Guard working group assessed the USCG's ASW capabilities. The 378' WHEC was designed with ASW capabilities and was determined to be a useful ASW component, at that time.<sup>115</sup> The WHEC's had hull mounted SONARs, acoustic processing equipment, vessel torpedo tubes, chaff, nixie, sonobuoys, Vulcun/Phalanx launchers, and were fully interoperable with U.S. Navy ASW helicopters.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, the Commandant of the Coast Guard from 1986–1990 was a Vietnam veteran and understood the need to reinvigorate the Coast Guard's status as an Armed Force. One of the many initiatives brought forth, in conjunction with the enhanced Coast Guard defense role in the MARDEZ concept, was the installation of Harpoon missiles on the 378' WHEC vessels; bringing an anti-ship missile capability to the Coast Guard.<sup>117</sup> It was a zenith for the major cutters and, perhaps for the first time since World War II, the Coast Guard's major cutters carried a capability that put them in a position to truly “guard the coast” against a peer adversary.

While the addition of anti-ship cruise missiles significantly enhanced USCG major cutter offensive capabilities, the effort was short lived for a variety of civil-military and geopolitical circumstances, including the Coast Guard's service wide role in response to the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and the downfall of the USSR., which all but eliminated the Cold War era threat to America's coastline from near peer adversaries. In February 1992, the Joint Navy and Coast Guard advisory board (NAVGUARD) decided not to continue

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<sup>114</sup> Yost, interview by Paul Stillwell, 126.

<sup>115</sup> Andrew Gerfin, “United States Coast Guard Anti-submarine Warfare in the Maritime Defense Zone—A Strategic Approach” (master's thesis, Air War College, 1989), 22.

<sup>116</sup> Gerfin, 22.

<sup>117</sup> Yost, interview by Paul Stillwell, 212.

installation of Harpoon missiles on Coast Guard WHECs.<sup>118</sup> In addition, a July 31, 1992 message from Coast Guard Headquarters announced the discontinuation of the Coast Guard's ASW mission due to, "an absence of a Global ASW threat."<sup>119</sup> However, the Coast Guard also stated, "there will be enough time to regenerate the ASW capability if needed for future global scale conflicts."<sup>120</sup>

A 1992 Naval War College thesis surveyed many high level Navy and Coast Guard officers, concluded, "Given the collapse of the Soviet Union and huge reductions in defense budgets, non-use of Coast Guard forces ... undermines the continued rationale for providing Coast Guard cutters a military capability."<sup>121</sup> Adding weight to this theory, Operation Desert Storm was conducted from 1991–1992, and for the first time since the Korean War, no major cutters were involved.

Efforts to refocus USCG and USN interoperability reemerged six years later. In 1998, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Coast Guard Commandant signed the National Fleet Policy Statement which stated, "Surface combatants, major cutters, boats, aircraft, and shore-side command and control nodes that are affordable, adaptable, interoperable, and have complementary capabilities; designed, whenever possible, around common equipment and support systems; and capable of supporting the broad spectrum of national security requirements."<sup>122</sup> However, "the idea of a national fleet has foundered due to lack of aggressive departmental advocacy and murkiness in congressional oversight," according to noted author Bruce Stubbs.<sup>123</sup> Adding credibility and weight to Stubbs's assertion,

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<sup>118</sup> Bruce Stubbs, "The U.S. Coast Guard's National Security Role in the Twenty First Century" (master's thesis, Naval War College 1991), 56.

<sup>119</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Future Status of WHEC Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Mission and Sonar Technician Rating*, ALCOAST 055/92, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Coast Guard, 1992).

<sup>120</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Future Status of WHEC Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Mission and Sonar Technician Rating*, ALCOAST 055/92 (Washington, DC: U.S. Coast Guard, 1992).

<sup>121</sup> Stubbs, "U.S. Coast Guard's National Security Role," 133.

<sup>122</sup> Mike Mullen and Thomas Collins, "National Fleet: A Joint USN/USCG Policy Statement," U.S. Navy, accessed October 27, 2017, [http://www.navy.mil/navydata/cno/2006\\_national\\_fleet\\_policy.pdf](http://www.navy.mil/navydata/cno/2006_national_fleet_policy.pdf).

<sup>123</sup> Bruce Stubbs, "Whither the National Fleet?" *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 127 (May 2001): 72.

former USCG Commandant James Loy stated, “In the era of the 600-ship Navy, 40 or so cutters were a virtual afterthought.”<sup>124</sup>

In less than a decade, it appears the Coast Guard had become all but irrelevant to the Navy. As the 1990s came to a close, the newest medium endurance cutters, the underwhelming 270s, were approaching ten years of service while the majority of the major cutter fleet had been in service since the 1960s. The Coast Guard knew its aging assets were becoming liabilities and had begun a major recapitalization process in the early 2000s. The service had attempted a major acquisition program designed to replace many systems and assets under the umbrella of a single multi-billion dollar contract. However, for a variety of civil-military reasons well beyond the scope this analysis, the program failed and was reshaped under a new, more limited contract, and the replacement to the venerable 378 WHEC was finally under construction.

The first replacement for the long-serving 378' WHEC cutters was commissioned on August 4, 2008, and labeled the National Security Cutter (WMSL). At 418' feet and propelled by both gas and diesel engines, the cutter is capable of transiting over 12,000 nautical miles, has a top speed of nearly 30 knots, and a flight deck large enough for two MH-60 Sikorsky helicopters.<sup>125</sup> For weaponry, the cutter is outfitted with the Bufores Mark 110, 57 mm deck gun, Phalanx close-in weapon system (CIWS), and an impressive C4ISR<sup>126</sup> suite. By many accounts, the National Security Cutters are highly comparable with the U.S. Navy's Littoral Combat Ship.<sup>127</sup> As of late 2017, nearly seven of the planned ten National Security Cutters of this class have been delivered. The vessels have inarguably proven themselves valuable in a variety of maritime security missions. However, their

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<sup>124</sup> James Loy, “Shaping America’s Joint Maritime Forces,” 15.

<sup>125</sup> Despite the size of the flight deck, the cutter rarely embarks USCG MH-60 aircraft because USCG aircraft do not have the required tail-folding assembly which enables the aircraft to hangar. The WMSL thus deploys with the limited MH-65 helicopter, significantly reducing the capability of ship-helo operations.

<sup>126</sup> C4ISR is Command, Control, Computers, Communications, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance.

<sup>127</sup> “National Security Cutter Factsheet,” U.S. Coast Guard Acquisition Directorate, accessed October 27, 2017, [www.uscg.mil/hq/cg9/nsc/pdf/nsc.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg9/nsc/pdf/nsc.pdf).

applicability or relevancy in the maritime defense environment is debatable as they lack weaponry compared to U.S. Navy warships.

Although intended to replace the aged 378' WHEC vessels, the National Security Cutters were designed and constructed in the post-September 11 security environment, with a focus on conducting law enforcement missions against transnational organized crime in the maritime domain. While necessary and capable in many maritime governance situations, such as intercepting drug smugglers, the parameters, which guided the requirements for the National Security Cutter, have now changed. The 2015 National Military Strategy identified advances of peer-like nations that have effectively eroded the U.S. military capability in the maritime domain, and so it appears the Coast Guard built a class of cutters that are incapable defending America's shoreline from peer-like naval competitors, especially in the coastal undersea domain. In short, the Coast Guard built a class of vessels that may prove incapable of "guarding the coast," against adversaries described in the National Military Strategy.

In 2007, author Robert Kaplan authored, "America's Elegant Decline" which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. He stated, "During the Cold War, our 600-ship Navy needed to be in only three places in force—the Atlantic and Pacific flanks of the Soviet Union and the Mediterranean .... Now we need to cover the Earth with less than half that number of ships. Decline can never be admitted as such until a rival makes demonstrable inroads into your power. But naval trends now appear to buttress political and economic ones that suggest that we are indeed headed for a world with multiple competing powers."<sup>128</sup> Less than a decade after this article was published, the threats that a clairvoyant Kaplan then described already exist in the maritime domain, and present an existential risk to the United States.

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<sup>128</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, "America's Elegant Decline," *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2007), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2007/11/america-s-elegant-decline/306344/>.

## F. THE EXISTENTIAL THREAT REEMERGES

As a result of peer-nation advances, the sea control enjoyed by the United States following the end of the Cold War has been erased, especially in the coastal ASW and mine-countermeasure (MCM) warfare missions. According to estimates, non-NATO nations are operating more than 50 percent of the known 135 nuclear submarines, 315 diesel or air-independent propulsion submarines, and an “unnumbered yet growing” amount of mini and macro subs.<sup>129</sup> In comparison, the United States has 70 submarines.<sup>130</sup> The decisions which led to producing a National Security Cutter with no ASW or MCM capability, especially when reflecting upon the pedigree of a service that successfully confronted subsurface existential enemies in World War II, severely threatens the ability of the Coast Guard to function as a capable armed service component and question the credibility of the civil-military backbone of the Coast Guard. Simply put, if the Coast Guard cannot “guard the coast” against the surface and subsurface threats most likely to arrive along our shoreline, and the U.S. Navy must assume the maritime defense role, the Coast Guard’s status as an armed force should be questioned. Put another way, if Coast Guard cutters are unable to credibly “guard the coast,” it may behoove the service to simply rebrand itself as the “Port Guard,” and focus on port security.

Although heeding Kaplan’s warning would not have changed the acquisition or production of a less-than-lethal National Security Cutter, the responsibilities outlined under the Joint Publication 3-27 Homeland Defense should have. As envisioned under the Maritime Defense Zone (MARDEZ) construct over three decades ago, for Homeland Defense purposes, the Coast Guard would be counted upon to maintain sea control along the U.S. Coastlines under the command of the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander, Northern Command (NORTHCOM).<sup>131</sup> It remains unknown and unproven how a non-ASW or non- MCM force can accomplish this mission. From a homeland

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<sup>129</sup> Barbara Rome, “Israel Elbit Unveils USV for Anti-sub, Anti-mine Missions,” *Defense News*, February 8, 2016, <https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2016/02/08/israels-elbit-unveils-usv-for-anti-sub-anti-mine-missions/>.

<sup>130</sup> “Total Submarine Strength by Country,” Global Firepower, accessed October 27, 2017, <https://www.globalfirepower.com/navy-submarines.asp>.

<sup>131</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Maritime Homeland Defense*, JP-3-27 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2014), <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=742874>.

defense perspective, due to civil-military challenges and misguided priorities, today's Coast Guard cutters are less capable than the crews and cutters that guarded our coast in 1941.

U.S. Navy Cruisers, Destroyers, Littoral Combat Ships, and submarines are prepared for combat. They are expected to deploy and take the fight to the enemy using weapons such as Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs) and advanced weaponry. However, if these warships are unable to deploy because of peer-like threats to the homeland, the entire combat force would be weakened and America's National Military objectives jeopardized. Although dire, if conflict arrived along U.S. shores, blame for constructing a homeland security cutter rather than a homeland defense cutter is not fully attributable to the Coast Guard. Ample evidence exists that shows that enduring civil-military challenges facing the Coast Guard have historically defined what the service can, and cannot, do for the U.S.

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### III. COAST GUARD CIVIL-MILITARY CHALLENGES

#### A. IMPERATIVES, PROFESSIONALISM, AND OBJECTIVE CONTROL

The Coast Guard's civil-military challenges have been multifarious and complex. Since inception in 1790, the Coast Guard has been marginalized, overwhelmed, threatened with abolishment, amalgamated with unlike agencies, and chronically underfunded. These civil-military challenges, along with an enduringly questionable level of military professionalism, have systemically led the Coast Guard down a path which threatens the ability to function as may be expected of an armed service.

The Coast Guard has succumbed to a large number of impositions, which, at many points since 1790 to this day, have prevented the service from gaining a measure of objective control on par with the other armed services. The small Revenue Cutter Service was relatively rudderless when navigating the politics of service self-determination. According to civil-military theorist Samuel Huntington, for the service to achieve a measurable level of objective control, as the other four armed services have achieved, the relative power shift must come from the professionalism of the service itself.<sup>132</sup> Very recently, USCG Commandant Paul Zukunft has expressed concern for the Coast Guard's ability to obtain objective control. During a recent speech at National Defense University, the Commandant stated, "With the U.S. Coast Guard's authorities, competencies and partnerships, our men and women address threats in ways the other services cannot, and we are leveraged by Combatant Commanders accordingly. Amid growing challenges, it is incumbent on us to best utilize our combined assets to secure and defend our Nation."<sup>133</sup> The incumbency of the Coast Guard to best utilize the service's "authorities, competencies, and partnerships," rather than having this decisions placed upon the service by the Executive or Legislative branches exemplifies the Coast Guard's desire for an increased level of objective control.

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<sup>132</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 83

<sup>133</sup> Paul Zukunft, "Speech at National Defense University," Facebook, October 17, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/ADMZukunft/?nr>.

A multitude of civil-military challenges have prevented the Coast Guard from attaining a measurable and sustainable level of objective control. From Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton, President Taft, President Kennedy, and the President G.W. Bush Administrations, the Coast Guard has found itself challenged under the subjective civilian control from multifarious civilian groups set on maximizing their power through the acquisition, amalgamation, or outright abolishment of the smallest of the Armed Services.<sup>134</sup> The result has produced an armed service that remains challenged to conduct functions essential to the performance of the statutorily required defense readiness mission, which potentially jeopardizes the service's standing as an armed service.

According to Huntington, the military institutions of any society are shaped by the, “functional imperative, stemming from threats to the society's security,” and a “societal imperative, arising from the social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society.”<sup>135</sup> Huntington explained, “The state is the active directing element of society and is responsible for the allocation of resources among important values including military security. The social and economic relations between the military and the rest of society normally reflect the political relations between the officer and the state.”<sup>136</sup> Today's Coast Guard is, in effect, the result of the many functional and societal imperatives placed upon it throughout the history of the service; and the accumulation of non-military imperatives and missions have diluted focus and resources away from the defense readiness mission, and conflicted with the service's armed forces status.

## **B. SOCIETAL AND FUNCTIONAL IMPERATIVES**

In 1832, Secretary of Treasury McLane ordered cutters to conduct winter patrols in an effort to save life and property (up to that point the cutters simply aided mariners in distress as any vessel would).<sup>137</sup> This directive effectively established the service's search and rescue culture, and established a social imperative for the Coast Guard to be a search

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<sup>134</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 84.

<sup>135</sup> Huntington, 2.

<sup>136</sup> Huntington, 3.

<sup>137</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 4.

and rescue force, above all else. Unlike other armed services, which must obtain authorization to assist during disasters under the Defense Support for Civil Authorities (DSCA) construct, the societal imperative for the service to conduct rescues has continued to grow and was exhibited during Hurricane Katrina, and most recently, during the government's disaster response to Hurricane's Irma, Harvey, and Maria, in which the Coast Guard reportedly saved or assisted more than 15,000 people.<sup>138</sup> Proving the societal imperative at the expense of other missions, the Coast Guard's "disaster response" mission is actually not one of the Coast Guard's 11 specified statutory missions, compared to the Coast Guard's defense readiness mission, which has been codified for over a century under Titles 10 and 14.<sup>139</sup> Disaster response is just one of many extra duties placed upon the Coast Guard as a result of principal-agent or societal-functional imperatives.

Additional imperatives were pressed upon the cutters upon the purchase of the Alaska from Russia in 1867. Cutters were directed to conduct coastal surveys, hydrographical surveys, protection of Bering Sea Seal fur, prevention of gun and liquor smuggling, protection of salmon fisheries, and search and rescue for distressed whaling ships.<sup>140</sup> In a testament to the fortitude and adaptability of these unique duties, one particular mission in 1897–1898 deserves special attention due to the unusual heroics involved and the consequences thereafter. The Revenue Cutter Service was responsible for patrolling and surveying the harsh Alaskan waters and had received reports that whaling crews had become beset in ice and would succumb to the elements if help did not arrive. The USRC *BEAR* dispatched three officers to locate and procure a herd of reindeer; using sled dogs, the three intrepid cutterman drove the herd 1,500 miles north to Barrow. The cutterman saved the whaling crews and received the Congressional Gold Medal for their heroism.<sup>141</sup> The well-publicized mission, among others, served to strengthen the societal

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<sup>138</sup> Todd Beamon, "Trump Praises Coast Guard for Saving 11,000 Harvey Victims," *Newsmax*, September 2, 2017, <https://www.newsmax.com/US/Trump-Coast-Guard-thanks-Harvey/2017/09/02/id/811338/>.

<sup>139</sup> Beamon.

<sup>140</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 4.

<sup>141</sup> "U.S. Coast Guard Overland Expedition," Alaska Office of the Governor, March 23, 2016, <https://gov.alaska.gov/newsroom/2016/03/united-states-coast-guard-overland-expedition/>.

imperative for search and rescue to be the primary mission for the Revenue Cutter Service, and continues to do so. While societal and functional imperatives pockmarked the service, many principal-agent challenges presented themselves throughout the same period.

In 1859, Secretary of the Treasury Howell Cobb wanted the Revenue Marine transferred to the Navy.<sup>142</sup> At that time, the service reported to the Secretary of Treasury, making this one of the more amazing principal-agent challenges presented. Although unsuccessful, the concept of service transfer did not disappear. In 1889, 198 of 206 Officers petitioned to the Secretary of the Treasury William Windon to have the service consolidated with the Navy.<sup>143</sup> Both Secretaries desired the merger; however, the primary “non-military missions,” of the cutters prevented their consolidation as they would distract the Navy from their primary mission.<sup>144</sup> The temptation of a transfer produced both civil-military and principal-agent challenges to the service. While the service members wavered and waited for potential absorption into the Navy, professionalism in both the acquisition of assets and talented personnel were challenged; and Huntington described professionalism as a key component toward obtaining a measure of objective control.<sup>145</sup>

### C. PROFESSIONALISM AND THE ACCUMULATION OF IMPERATIVES

Hamilton’s Revenue Marine was originally staffed from Continental Navy veterans. However, as the pay for merchant duty increased and a new U.S. Navy was being outfitted, skilled officers left the service. By 1799, to improve recruitment and retention, the service adopted naval ranks such as Captain and Lieutenant, to replace the unpopular and underpaid master and mate system.<sup>146</sup> Still, incompetency and political appointments remained rampant until Congress mandated appointments based on “competent proof of

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<sup>142</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 3.

<sup>143</sup> Johnson, 3.

<sup>144</sup> Johnson, 3.

<sup>145</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 7. Military Professionalism is defined through a framework of “recruitment, education, training, and promotion,” as found in Matei, “Reforms in Professional Military Education.”

<sup>146</sup> King, *George Washington’s Coast Guard*, 153.

proficiency and skill in navigation and seamanship.”<sup>147</sup> Even then, as late as 1869, the service appointed an “examining committee” to test 130 officers, of which 39 were forced to resign their commissions.<sup>148</sup> In the 1880s and 1890s, the service began “acquiring third lieutenants from the Naval Academy at Annapolis whom had graduated too low in their class to obtain a Navy Commission.”<sup>149</sup> Professionalism was not improving, and, as a result, any hope of attaining a level of objective control remained unlikely.

In 1904, service-wide professionalism was at its lowest low. In a statement to Congress, Secretary of the Treasury Shaw stated, “The service is suffering for the entire lack of legal authority to properly control its ship’s crews in the matter of discipline and order, from which the lack of morale of the service is threatened daily.”<sup>150</sup> Exhibiting a severe lack of professionalism and, as a result, a dearth of objective control, the service was apparently unable to correct the deficiencies.

It took Secretary Shaw and congress two years to approve the “Regulations for the United States Revenue Cutter Service,” which enabled the service to “regulate enlistments and punishments.”<sup>151</sup> In 1908, service professionalism was again bolstered when congress approved legislation for a “captain commandant” for the service to a four year term, and, of paramount importance to the cutterman, all pay and allowances were paralleled with the U.S. Navy including pensions and retirements.<sup>152</sup>

Through positive principal-agent engagement starting with Secretary Shaw’s advocacy sparking Congressional action, the service gained professionalism in the areas of promotion and recruitment. However, the expense of equalizing pay and parity with the Navy may have contributed to another existential civil-military challenge. By 1912, a wave of cost-cutting and efficiency euphoria had gripped Washington, and the Revenue Marine,

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<sup>147</sup> Evans, *United States Coast Guard*, 28.

<sup>148</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 14.

<sup>149</sup> Johnson, 14.

<sup>150</sup> Johnson, 17.

<sup>151</sup> Johnson, 16.

<sup>152</sup> Evans, *United States Coast Guard*, 199–200.

now a superfluous, expensive, and potentially redundant “second navy,” faced certain abolition under the Taft Administration<sup>153</sup>

President Taft’s Commission on Economy and Efficiency had recommended abolishment of the Revenue Cutter Service to the President.<sup>154</sup> The commission stated, “After a careful study of the work now being performed by the service, the commission is convinced that the service has not a single duty or function that cannot be performed by some other existing service, and be performed by the latter at much smaller expense on its part.”<sup>155</sup> This recommendation also took into account the opinions of the affected Secretaries including the Secretary of the Navy who minimized the military status of the Coast Guard and stated, “It is true the chief functions of the Revenue Cutter Service can be performed by the Navy, but this cannot be done as stated in the report in the regular performance of their military duties. All duties which interfered with the training of personnel for war are irregular and in a degree detrimental to the efficiency of the fleet.”<sup>156</sup> In addition, the Secretary of the Navy strongly objected to the inclusion of the officers into the Navy by stating, “The Revenue Cutter service officer corps would be of no possible advantage to the Navy, but a serious menace to the harmony of the personnel.”<sup>157</sup> This rebuke from the Navy to the Revenue Cutter Service concerning the many non-military duties and lack of officer professionalism paints a clear picture. Despite a “mildly emotional” plea from the Secretary of Treasury and a passionate defense by the Service’s famous Captain-Commandant Bertholf, the President recommended passage of the legislation, and the service would be abolished.<sup>158</sup> However, despite the lack of objective

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<sup>153</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 17.

<sup>154</sup> The Taft Commission was formed under President Taft and called the Presidential Commission on Economy and Efficiency. The purpose was to study and recommend administrative reforms and develop the first Presidential Budget. See Harvey C. Mansfield, “Reorganizing the Federal Executive Branch: The Limits of Institutionalization,” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 35, no. 3, (Spring 1970): 461–495, <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/lcp/vol35/iss3/4/>.

<sup>155</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 17.

<sup>156</sup> Secretary of the Navy Meyer to President Taft, on February 7, 1912, quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 17.

<sup>157</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 17.

<sup>158</sup> Johnson, 21.

control and an ineffective principal-agent relationship, the sinking of the Titanic just ten days later provided a lifeline for the subjected service.

Following the Titanic disaster in 1912, the U.S. Navy swiftly answered the functional and societal imperative to patrol for icebergs. Navy cruisers *Birmingham* and *Chester* patrolled until the summer of 1912, recommending recommencing the mission next winter. However, displaying impressive civil-military acumen, Captain Commandant Bertholf believed the mission to be “remarkably similar” to the work being performed by the Revenue Cutter Service in Alaska, and stated his service should assume the responsibility, rather than the Navy.<sup>159</sup> Bertholf’s argument was effective and the service avoided abolishment. The Revenue Cutter’s inherited the societal and functional imperative to conduct iceberg patrols. The Navy determined their warships were needed elsewhere.<sup>160</sup> While the Coast Guard avoided abolishment, it did accrue another non-military mission, which competes against the already diversified missions of the service. The Coast Guard continues to oversee the search for icebergs to this day.<sup>161</sup>

After avoiding abolishment, Congress reorganized the service and established the United States Coast Guard from an amalgamation of the Revenue Marine (Revenue Cutter Service) and U.S. Lifesaving Service. Signed into law on January 20, 1915, the statute stated the newly formed Coast Guard was to, “constitute a part of the military forces of the United States ... under the Treasury Department in time of peace and to operate as part of the Navy, subject to the orders of the Secretary of the Navy, in time of war or when the President shall so direct.”<sup>162</sup> Personnel from the former Revenue Cutter Service were likely unaffected by the creation of the Coast Guard due to their historical Navy contributions and similar rank, pay, and benefits. However, as historian Robert Erwin

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<sup>159</sup> Commandant Bertholf to Secretary of Treasury MacVeagh, January 4, 1913, quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 23.

<sup>160</sup> Secretary of the Navy Meyer to Secretary of Treasury MacVeagh, February 28, 1913, quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 24.

<sup>161</sup> “International Ice Patrol,” U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Center, January 15, 2017, <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=IIPHome>.

<sup>162</sup> Establishment of Coast Guard, Title 14 U.S. Code 1, accessed October 28, 2017 <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/14/1>.

Johnson stated, “Personnel of the Life Saving Service, on the other hand, found themselves made part of a military organization.”<sup>163</sup> Civilians were instantly made commissioned officers and petty officers in an armed service. This created a significant challenge to overall effectiveness of the Coast Guard as an armed force due to the dilution of non-military personnel instantly added to the service. According to a U.S. Coast Guard publication, since the 1915 amalgamation, the service has endured with an “organizational split personality.”<sup>164</sup>

Following the creation of the modern Coast Guard in 1915, many non-military maritime duties were placed upon the service. A succession of deadly mishaps at sea had occurred, including the Titanic, and President Wilson approved the Seamen’s Act which required 65 percent of the crew of a ship carrying passengers to be competent at handling lifeboats. However, at that time, the U.S. Steamboat Inspection Service was unable to properly examine such a large number of applicants so the Secretary of Commerce requested the assistance of the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard readily accepted the request and within one year 16,028 men had been examined with 11,408 receiving certification.<sup>165</sup> This event eventually contributed to the absorption of the very non-military U.S. Steamboat Inspection Service into the Coast Guard during the Franklin Roosevelt Administration. To this day, the Coast Guard continues to issue maritime credentials under the enterprise of Marine Safety, one of Coast Guard’s 11 statutory missions.<sup>166</sup>

Looking back to 1915 and the formation of the Coast Guard from various civilian agencies, the benefits and retirement may have been welcome. However, the added duties and responsibilities of national defense coupled with the required discipline of being an armed force would have been unsettling. The venerable Captain-Commandant Bertholf addressed the issue, much like Secretary Wolcott did over a century before, when he stated,

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<sup>163</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 33.

<sup>164</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Coast Guard 2020: Ready Today...Preparing for Tomorrow* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1998), 17.

<sup>165</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 41.

<sup>166</sup> Scott Price, “225 Years of Service to Nation: Marine Safety,” U.S. Coast Guard, June 9, 2015, <http://coastguard.dodlive.mil/2015/06/225-years-of-service-to-nation-marine-safety/>.



“The Coast Guard occupies a peculiar position among other branches of the government, and necessarily so from the dual character of its work, which is both civil and military.”<sup>167</sup> However, “peculiar,” the service was required to “manage violence” upon the outbreak of World War I.<sup>168</sup> The Coast Guard was transferred to the Navy for the duration of World War I, and while the service performed well under the Navy, especially the major cutters in the European Theater, it would be post-war civil-military challenges that tested the fabric of the service.

#### **D. POST–WORLD WAR I DISSONANCE**

As World War I concluded, post-war dissonance existed among many Coast Guard officers. An estimated 90 percent of Coast Guard officers favored a service under the direction of the Navy, rather than returning to the pre-war Coast Guard.<sup>169</sup> Reasons for their opinion were based on poorly constructed vessels in the pre-war period, and the increase of military efficiency and economy experienced while a part the Navy.<sup>170</sup> Commandant Bertholf and his supporters at Coast Guard Headquarters obviously disagreed, but looking back at the precarious history of the service which had repeatedly faced absorption or abolishment; Coast Guard leadership had reason to be concerned. It was during that time that Commandant Bertholf, in a private letter, essentially stated the role of the service, which has continued to guide the Coast Guard to this day:

The fundamental reasons for the two services are diametrically opposed. The Navy exists for the sole purpose of keeping itself prepared for war. Its usefulness to the Government is therefore to a large degree potential. If it performs in peace time any useful function not ultimately connected with the preparation for war, this is a by-product. On the other hand, the Coast Guard does not exist solely for the purpose of preparing for war. If it did there would then be, two navies—a large and a small one, and that

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<sup>167</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 33.

<sup>168</sup> According to Huntington, and also accredited to Harold Lasswell, a central skill which distinguished military officers from that of their civilian peers is the “management of violence” and the primary function of an Armed Force is “successful armed combat.” Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 11.

<sup>169</sup> P.H. Harrison to Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the U.S. Coast Guard, 19 April 1919, copy to Glass to Daniels, June 24, 1919, Daniels Papers, quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 59.

<sup>170</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 59.

condition, I am sure you will agree, could not long exist. The Coast Guard exists for the particular and main purpose of performing duties which have no connection with the state of war, but which, on the contrary, are constantly a necessary as peace functions. It is, of course, essentially an emergency service and it is organized along military lines because that sort of an organization best enables the Coast Guard to keep prepare as an emergency service, and by organization along military lines it is invaluable in time of war as an adjunct and auxiliary to the Navy, it is war time usefulness that is a by-product of the Coast Guard.<sup>171</sup>

If not for the dedicated efforts of civilian leadership, the Coast Guard, or at the very least the major cutters and their crews, may have been absorbed into the post-World War I Navy. Again needing positive principal-agent engagement, Secretary of Treasury Glass pressed Secretary of the Navy Daniels for a joint meeting with President Wilson to finally settle the matter via an Executive Order. Daniels agreed, yet could not find time for the meeting, so while Daniels was in Hawaii, Glass met with President Wilson and convinced the President to issue an Executive Order.<sup>172</sup> On August 29, 1919, the Executive Order stated, “It is hereby directed that the Coast Guard shall on and after this date operate under the Treasury Department.”<sup>173</sup> However, rumblings persisted and over the next two years. A revised law was brought into Congressional Committee, and a renewed effort to issue an Executive Order reversing the August 29<sup>th</sup> order were attempted, both without success.<sup>174</sup> Once again, the sanctity of the service appeared secure.

As the U.S. attempted to weather the Great Depression, the Roosevelt Administration sought to increase efficiency and reduce costs and the Coast Guard’s future was again in doubt. Just one month after Roosevelt was inaugurated, Congressman Carl Vinson proposed closing the newly constructed Coast Guard Academy, and combining the Coast Guard with the Navy.<sup>175</sup> A committee was formed to “consider the question of administration of the Coast Guard, if the latter should be transferred to the jurisdiction of

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<sup>171</sup> Bertholf to Richard O. Crisp, April 18, 1919, Bertholf Correspondence, quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 60.

<sup>172</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 61.

<sup>173</sup> Jim Dolbow, *The Coast Guardsman’s Manual* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2017), 5.

<sup>174</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 62–63.

<sup>175</sup> Johnson, 128.

the Navy department.”<sup>176</sup> While the nation grappled with a struggling economy, this clear case of subjective control and principal-agent challenge was just as dire, if not more so, than previous attempts at service consolidation or abolishment. The committee comprised of 16 naval officers, nine Coast Guard officers, and two civilians from Coast Guard headquarters and within a week they published a unique recommendation to have the Coast Guard reformed under the Navy Department with its own Commandant much like the U.S. Marine Corps.<sup>177</sup> The matter of transfer compelled North Carolina Congressman Lindsay C. Warren to form a delegation of three other members of Congress and met with President Roosevelt to discuss the issue.<sup>178</sup> The President made no decision on the matter but a two year transfer of all Coast Guard communications stations from Cape May, New Jersey, to Maine to the Navy was agreed upon. However, that’s as far as the highly debated transfer progressed, and the Navy returned the stations to the Coast Guard two years later.<sup>179</sup> The persistent civil-military challenges undermined the ability for the Coast Guard to assert any significant amount of objective control; placing the service in a weak position, and willing to accumulate non-military missions, if only for the survival of the service.

Rather than transferring the Coast Guard to the Navy, the Roosevelt Administration took a reciprocal course of action. On July 1, 1939, under President Roosevelt’s Reorganization Plan II, the nation’s oldest government agency, the U.S. Lighthouse Service was folded into the U.S. Coast Guard. At that point the Coast Guard had 10,164 Coast Guardsman and the Lighthouse Service comprised of 4,119 full time and 1,156 part time civilians.<sup>180</sup> Few of the Lighthouse Service employees had any desire to accept military discipline, making the amalgamation yet another significant civil-military challenge for the fledgling armed service.<sup>181</sup> The transfer was difficult for the Lighthouse

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<sup>176</sup> Report of Committee on Transfer of Coast Guard from Treasury Dept to Navy Dept, January 2, 1934, quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 130.

<sup>177</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 132.

<sup>178</sup> Johnson, 131.

<sup>179</sup> Johnson, 132.

<sup>180</sup> Johnson, 162.

<sup>181</sup> Johnson, 163.

Service employees; however, instantly accepting a group comprising nearly 50 percent of the service as “military professionals” undoubtedly diluted the ability for the Coast Guard to effectively respond as an armed force.

Although former Commandant Bertholf’s letter and guidance to the Coast Guard following World War I essentially labeled the Coast Guard as an “emergency service,” the major cutters had performed well under wartime conditions and would continue their significant efforts, as the next World War loomed over the horizon. Prior to entering World War II, the Coast Guard was working with the Navy enforcing Neutrality Laws at sea when, despite reluctance from then-Commandant Waesche due to funding and asset limitations, the Coast Guard was ordered to commence weather patrols to assist transatlantic aviation. This monotonous effort required a cutter to maintain station between the two continents in a 10 by 10 mile box for up to 30 days per patrol (not-including travel time). The Coast Guard maintained this functional and societal imperative for over 30 years after the war in order to support trans-ocean aviation.<sup>182</sup>

## **E. WAR PREPARATIONS AND CONCERNS**

In June 1940, as war became more likely, a joint Navy and Coast Guard committee developed plans for the Coast Guard to transfer from the Department of Treasury to the Navy. Interestingly, both the Navy and the Coast Guard leadership had no interest in a permanent arrangement because the committee’s charter included a desire that, “the contemplated plan be acceptable to the Coast Guard Administration and insofar as conditions of emergency will permit, fulfill the obvious desirability of ready reestablishment for the Coast Guard as a peace time administrative entity.”<sup>183</sup> Even as war loomed over the horizon, it appeared the societal imperatives of the Coast Guard’s peacetime missions outweighed the value of the service in direct support of the national military objectives. Through the lens of Huntington’s “management of violence” criterion, the Coast Guard’s value as an armed service was beginning to fade well before the War

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<sup>182</sup> Johnson, 176.

<sup>183</sup> Chief of Naval Operations to Commandant, June 24, 1940, Military Readiness Division, World War II, RG 26, quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 189.

commenced. Also telling of the service's peacetime character was then-Commandant Waesche's efforts to prevent repeat of the administrative absconding of Coast Guard personnel desiring to remain in the Navy following the war.

To prevent a repeat of post-World War I Navy absolution, Vice Admiral Waesche directed the dissemination of "Function of the Coast Guard and its place in the Scheme of Government." In essence, this report emphasized the non-military nature of the missions performed by the Coast Guard and put forth reasons to dissuade the Navy from retaining the Coast Guard after the war. This tactic found obvious approval from both the Navy and Treasury departments because it ensured the Navy would not adopt unwanted missions and guaranteed the Treasury Department would not lose the Coast Guard to the Navy. One of the many non-military tasks emphasized was maintaining the "ocean station" mission to report meteorological conditions for transatlantic flights. While Vice Admiral Waesche demonstrated a large measure of objective control, he did so at the expense of the Coast Guard's statutorily required Defense Readiness mission. By promoting the non-military missions of the service, Vice Admiral Waesche opened up the service to accumulating additional non-military duties.

The accumulation of non-military duties created additional civil-military consequences that further distanced the Coast Guard from the other armed services. In 1949, President Truman established a "U.S. Commission Report on Organization of the Executive Branch of Government." Herbert Hoover was the Chairman of the commission that sought to increase efficiencies throughout government.<sup>184</sup> The Coast Guard was specifically singled out as being, "obviously misplaced in the Treasury Department," and following a list of non-military missions, the report concluded the service's functions are, "more closely related to transportation than to the activities of any other major department of Government."<sup>185</sup> The report concluded the Coast Guard would be more appropriately placed if it were under the Department of Commerce alongside Highway Transportation

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<sup>184</sup> Herbert Hoover, *The Hoover Commission Report on Organization of the Executive Branch of Government* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1949).

<sup>185</sup> Hoover, 310.

and the Weather Bureau.<sup>186</sup> Despite the compendium of research put forth by the Commission, the Congress did not take the recommendations for action, but they were not forgotten.<sup>187</sup>

Having succeeded the civil-military challenges of post-war abolishment and non-action on the Hoover Commission recommendations, the Coast Guard quickly found itself in dire need of civil-military support in order to perform all of the non-military missions it had accumulated in the effort to avoid absorption into the Navy. For example, the Coast Guard's absorption of the Bureau of Navigation and Marine Inspection, signed into law under Roosevelt's Reorganizational Plan Number Three on July 16, 1946, effectively combined all U.S. maritime safety regulations under the direction of the Coast Guard.<sup>188</sup> As War in Korea approached and fears of communist subversion of U.S. ports persisted, these highly administrative marine safety functions rapidly rose to crisis levels in order to meet the national and industrial maritime shipping demands, requiring the Coast Guard to take drastic action in order to meet national objectives. To accomplish administrative tasks associated with the emerging Korean conflict, the Coast Guard requested \$4,000,000 to fund the call-up of the Coast Guard Reserve. Congress authorized just \$1,000,000.<sup>189</sup> In addition, in concert with the new Marine Safety mission, the Coast Guard was directed to screen merchant seaman for subversives due to fears of communist infiltration and maritime infrastructure vulnerabilities. From 1950–1952, the Coast Guard screened nearly 500,000 applicants, denying clearances to nearly 3,700 causing the service to receive the greatest level of unpopularity it had known since Prohibition.”<sup>190</sup> All the while, with no major cutters involved in the Korean War, the Coast Guard's contribution as an armed force was limited to administrative tasks and port security.

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<sup>186</sup> Hoover, 305.

<sup>187</sup> Nearly two decades later, the U.S. Coast Guard would be transferred to the newly created Department of Transportation.

<sup>188</sup> Price, “225 Years of Service to Nation.”

<sup>189</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 285.

<sup>190</sup> Johnson, 283.

Along with the decline of major cutter activity in support of national defense, the 1950s saw the promotion of boating safety and lifesaving over small arms proficiency. According to historian William Wells, the lack of focus on both person and defense readiness, “caused the service to question its military history and future.”<sup>191</sup> Perhaps a lack of participation in the Korean War, or the accumulation of non-military missions, but in just a few short years following impressive contributions to the effort in World War II, the service had effectively diluted their defense readiness mission. However, the noticeable decline in defense readiness was perhaps fortuitous because it would soon bring attention to the service through the form of positive principal-agent interaction and support. As a result, the major cutters of the service would soon enjoy nearly a decade of growth and prosperity.

#### **F. PRINCIPAL-AGENT PROMINENCE AND THE ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVE CONTROL**

The 1960s were a defining decade for the Coast Guard; mainly due to effective civil-military cooperation between the Kennedy Administration and the Assistant Secretary of Treasury, David W. Kendall. Demonstrating positive principal-agent relations, Kendall brought forth his concerns regarding the status of the Coast Guard. As a result, the Kennedy Administration concluded a study in 1962 that offered 80 recommendations for the Coast Guard to improve efficiency and operations, of which 76 were implemented.<sup>192</sup> In addition, Commandant Alfred Richmond, a recipient of the Bronze Star for his efforts in World War II’s “Operation Overlord,” issued an instruction to improve small arms readiness among the service. Taking aim at many officers who downplayed the Coast Guard’s military status, Commandant Richmond clearly stated, “Proficiency with small arms is a professional requirement of all military men.”<sup>193</sup> The Coast Guard was on the verge of regaining military professionalism, and along with it, perhaps additional levels of objective control. The Coast Guard also benefitted from the

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<sup>191</sup> Wells, *Shots That Hit*, 91.

<sup>192</sup> Capron, *Coast Guard*, 199–201.

<sup>193</sup> Wells, *Shots That Hit*, 94.

congressional funding and acquisition of two major classes of cutters throughout the decade, the 210' Reliance Class medium endurance cutters and the 378' Hamilton Class high-endurance cutters. Operationally, the service saw significant duty in Vietnam.

While the conflict in Vietnam kept nearly 1,000 of 35,000 Coast Guardsman in Southeast Asia, functional and societal imperatives in the continental U.S. began changing the nature of the service. Along with a massive rise in maritime commerce, missions involving oil spills, search and rescue cases, fishery activities, and merchant marine oversight all grew in scope and complexity, all at hereto previously unseen levels. Also, during a State of the Union Address, perhaps influenced by the Hoover Commission's findings, President Lyndon Johnson had sought legislation to create a cabinet-level Transportation Department. Despite initial opposition from the Coast Guard Commandant, the Coast Guard was wholly transferred to the newly created Department of Transportation.<sup>194</sup>

The civil-military contexts of this transfer are of interest from both a principal-agent and subjective control framework. In true subjective form, the Commandant did not vociferously fight the transfer because he feared the service's "dismemberment" of missions if he did not accept and support the transfer.<sup>195</sup> From a principal-agent perspective, the Secretary of the Treasury was opposed, but President Lyndon B. Johnson was undeterred and stated he had the authority to transfer the service regardless.<sup>196</sup> The Coast Guard was transferred to the newly created Department of Transportation on April 1, 1967, where it remained until the formation of the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. The odious transfer from Treasury to Transportation left an indelible mark on the service and fears of "dismemberment" persist in the service to this day.<sup>197</sup> This palpable fear of dismemberment, abolishment, or amalgamation certainly affected strategic decision

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<sup>194</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 341.

<sup>195</sup> CAPT Mark Whalen to RADM Paul TrimbleADM, March 28, 1966, as quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 341.

<sup>196</sup> W. J. Smith, interviewed by U.S. Naval Institute, as quoted in Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 341.

<sup>197</sup> Brendan McGarry, "Coast Guard to Congress: Don't Move Us to Pentagon," Military.com, April 1, 2017, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2017/04/01/coast-guard-to-congress-dont-move-us-to-pentagon.html>.



making, often times compelling the service to accept incompatible missions, debilitating budget cuts, or announce a, “do more with less,” campaign to Coast Guardsman.<sup>198</sup>

## **G. MOVING AWAY FROM MILITARY**

As the Coast Guard and the nation emerged into the 1970s, the drawdown of Vietnam coincided with a massive expansion of non-military duties for the Coast Guard. The Fisheries Conservation Management Act of 1976 increased the U.S Coast Guard’s enforcement area tenfold, an increase in oil spills resulted in additional pollution response responsibilities, and an alarming rise in the number of migrants and contraband arriving on U.S. shores from the Caribbean all fell to the Coast Guard. In addition, in the early 1970s, the Coast Guard had accepted responsibility for the national bridge administration program. Previously performed by the Army Corps of Engineers, this mission coordinated the permitting for bridges across navigable waterways throughout the United States. The Coast Guard continues to perform this administrative “mission” to this day.<sup>199</sup> Above all the missions acquired or expanded upon in the 1970s, the most prolific and enduring mission accumulated during this time was counter-narcotics.

The additional missions came with additional administrative authorities; for counter-narcotics, the Coast Guard was designated as, “the lead agency for maritime drug interdiction,” under the National Drug Control Strategy.<sup>200</sup> This designation, and the authorities which underpinned it, served to reshape the Coast Guard into a law enforcement agency as an unending flow of narcotics arrived along our shoreline. In a rare occurrence in Coast Guard history, some missions were discarded, such as the “ocean station” requirement, having lost importance due to the increased reliability and speed of passenger jet aircraft.<sup>201</sup> Also during this period, showing a desire to be apart from the other armed services, the Coast Guard formed a uniform board which recommended the service

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<sup>198</sup> Trevor Brown, Matthew Potoski, and David Van Slike, *Complex Contracting Government Purchasing in the Wake of the Deepwater Program* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 74.

<sup>199</sup> Yost, interview by Paul Stillwell, 308.

<sup>200</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Fiscal Year 2000 Performance Report: Fiscal Year 2000 Budget in Brief* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2001), 13.

<sup>201</sup> The Ocean Station mission ended in 1977.

abandon the Navy uniforms, instead designing an entirely new uniform for the Coast Guard.<sup>202</sup> In total, the introduction of non-Navy uniforms, emerging law enforcement priorities, expanded area of domestic operations, and increasing responsibilities outside of defense readiness, it would appear the Coast Guard's contribution as an armed service were decreasing, especially when compared to other service priorities. Ironically, as the service exhibited levels of objective control; embracing non-military missions, bold uniform decisions, and accumulation of non-military missions, the service was unknowingly deepening the level of subjective control placed upon it by the Department of Transportation. These actions would befoul the service for future decades because the service actions that created distanced from DoD also moved the service away from a reliable funding stream. Under Transportation, the Coast Guard was, "relegated to the backwaters of the congressional funding process and struggled to secure funding to replace gaining assets even as its mission responsibilities grew."<sup>203</sup>

Another factor to consider when assessing the Coast Guard's armed service contributions during this period was the unrivaled progress made during DoD's Second Offset Strategy, which effectively placed weaponry on U.S. naval combatants the Coast Guard could never afford. However, according to Huntington, "The resources which a **service** is able to obtain in a democratic society are a function of the public support of that **service**. The **service** has the responsibility to develop this necessary support, and it can only do this if it possesses a strategic concept which clearly formulates its relationship to the national security."<sup>204</sup> As Huntington pointed out, it is the service's duty to develop the necessary support to ensure it maintains a national security relationship. The civil-military challenges, including the accumulation of additional missions and the transfer into a decidedly non-military Transportation Department, during the period of DoD's Second Offset strategy, all but ensured the Coast Guard was not in a position to benefit from DoD's second offset strategy. The implications of being severely outpaced by the other armed

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<sup>202</sup> Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea*, 345.

<sup>203</sup> Brown, Potoski, and Van Slike, *Complex Contracting*, 75.

<sup>204</sup> Samuel Huntington, "National Policy and the Transoceanic Navy," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* vol. 80, no. 5 (May 1954): 484.

services carried through to the Goldwater-Nichols era, compounding the Coast Guard's non-military stature, served to erode the Coast Guard's relevance as an armed service. Looking back, the lack of emphasis on the defense readiness mission, especially during this period of fantastic technological growth, surely contributed to the Coast Guard becoming the only armed service not officially represented among the Joint Chiefs of Staff after Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, the largest military reorganization legislation since World War II.

The need for military reorganization was a result of a series of failed, or less than ideal, joint operations in the early 1980s. Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act to emphasize the need for joint operations. Enacted in 1986, the legislation incentivized joint assignments by requiring a joint assignment prior to promotion to flag rank, detailed the responsibilities of the Chairman and Vice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and asserted control over their confirmation, and instituted the Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) programs.<sup>205</sup> Noticeably absent in the deliberations, or outcome, was the U.S. Coast Guard. Although a statutorily titled armed force, the Coast Guard was not included in the Joint Chiefs of Staff reorganization, nor is the Coast Guard subject to the requirement of JPME or a joint assignment for the attainment of flag rank. Despite the later addition the National Guard to the JCS, the Coast Guard remains the only armed service not formally represented on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>206</sup>

To this day, the ability for the Coast Guard to contribute effectively as a member of the armed forces is hampered by the service's distorted interpretation of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Although the Goldwater-Nichols Act required JPME for U.S. Code Title 10—Armed Forces; the Coast Guard determined the JPME requirement, “pertains to language in U.S. Code Title 10—Armed Forces; Subtitle A-General Military Law, Part II which discusses the requirements of managing officers specifically trained in joint matters. The USCG is not included as this article specifically addresses the Secretary of Defense and

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<sup>205</sup> Goldwater Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-433 § 404 (1986).

<sup>206</sup> National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, Pub. L. No. 112-81 § 512 (2012), <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-112publ81/pdf/PLAW-112publ81.pdf>.

Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps officers.”<sup>207</sup> Among the reasons factored into the determination was “the lack of resources to send numerous officers to the Phase I JPME training (currently the USCG has only nine funded quotas for this training per year).”<sup>208</sup> Given the Coast Guard annually sends over 150 officers to a fully funded post-graduate school per year, the decision not to require JPME based on resources is incongruous and illogical for a service so quick to promote statutory authority as an armed force, and questions the Coast Guard’s armed service commitment.

This lapse in JPME support or promotional requirement is highly paradoxical. By law, the Coast Guard is technically eligible to have flag officers appointed as CJCS and VCJCS, per 10 U.S.C. 152(a)(1) and 154(a)(1), respectively—because those statutes use the term “armed forces.” instead of “DoD components” in the statute.<sup>209</sup> Of course, the likelihood of the Coast Guard ever serving in these positions is near zero because the Coast Guard has not objectively placed itself in a position to achieve official membership or leadership among the upper echelons of the Joint Staff. In contrast, the U.S. Army requires its rank of Major/O4 level officers to attend and complete JPME Phase I prior to promotion or assignment.<sup>210</sup> In accordance with CJCS Instruction, “JPME provides the body of knowledge to enhance performance of duties consistent with Joint Matters and in the context of joint functions (command and control, intelligence, fires, movement and maneuver, protection, and sustainment).”<sup>211</sup> From both an objective control and principal-agent perspective, the Coast Guard fails to benefit by not fully supporting the requirement for Joint Professional Military Education for its officers. While the Coast Guard put definitive distance away from DoD in the post-Vietnam and Goldwater-Nichols era, an

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<sup>207</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Joint Professional Military Education (JPME)* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009).

<sup>208</sup> Rosemary Firestine, “United States Coast Guard: Officer Corps Military Professional Education” (master’s thesis, Army Command and Staff College, 2011), 20.

<sup>209</sup> Establishment of Coast Guard, Pub. L. No. 94–546 § 1 (1915), <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/14/1>.

<sup>210</sup> Firestine, “Officer Corps Military Professional Education,” 20.

<sup>211</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Officer Professional Military Education Policy*, CJCSI 1800.01E (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2015), [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/education/officer\\_JPME/cjcsi1800\\_01e.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/education/officer_JPME/cjcsi1800_01e.pdf).

effort to pivot back to the Coast Guard's military traditions occurred in 1986 upon the nomination of Admiral Paul Yost as Commandant.

## **H. THE "YOST GUARD"**

Although the Coast Guard appears to have been left out from the benefits of DoD's Second Offset Strategy and the Goldwater–Nichols Act, Commandant Yost attempted to swing the momentum of the service back towards that of an armed service during his tenure as Commandant from 1986–1990. Upon swearing in as Commandant, Admiral Yost was on a mission to reinvigorate the service's military mission. Perhaps driven by his Vietnam heroics while serving as a riverine commander, or having seen a decline in relative military readiness during his tenure as Chief of Staff, Commandant Yost immediately sought to correct the deficiencies. Among his first actions was to prohibit beards, and he remains infamous to Coast Guard veterans for this unpopular decision. However, Yost's logic was sound. As Yost put it, "I didn't want to be looked at by any other military service as a second-class citizen, and part of that was looking sharp, being sharp, being well groomed, getting rid of the beards .... All that was part of military service."<sup>212</sup> More importantly, looking military and acting military made the budgetary process more amenable to Coast Guard wants and needs. Admiral Yost determined the Coast Guard's budget is "dependent on being a military service," and, "if the Coast Guard were demilitarized, either in fact or by law, it would negatively affect the budget."<sup>213</sup> Personnel wise, Admiral Yost altered the Officer Evaluation Form to include a "Warfare" category; for the first time compelling officers to demonstrate efforts to improve both the service and themselves in a more military manner. Admiral Yost went on to define the service in a new light, stating he wanted the Coast Guard to be, "foremost a military service that has peace time responsibilities."<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> As of January 01, 1985, the Navy issued an order for personnel to stop wearing beards. Yost, interview by Paul Stillwell, 448

<sup>213</sup> Yost, interview by Paul Stillwell, 448.

<sup>214</sup> Yost, 448.

As Commandant, Yost also improved the Coast Guard's arsenal. He was instrumental in the aforementioned installation of Harpoon anti-ship cruise missiles on the 378' WHECs. He also reinvigorated cutter deployments to tense regions, including the Persian Gulf. In addition, through lobbying and public interest, Admiral Yost was able to acquire E-2C surveillance aircraft from the Navy to the Coast Guard. These aircraft immediately found a role in the counter drug fight, and important to Yost, the aircraft did not go to U.S. Customs service.<sup>215</sup> According to statistics and the personal history of Commandant Yost, the E-2Cs were a major factor for the reduction in drug smuggling in the Caribbean. According to Yost, "We shut them down."<sup>216</sup> A major motivator for acquiring the E-2C's was that during the previous Commandant's tenure, U.S. Customs had begun exploiting drug interdiction as a means to grow their organization. As a Vice Admiral, Yost saw this occur and was determined not to cede ground in what was clearly a statutory mission for the Coast Guard.

In 1983, Customs decided to procure a fleet of small interdiction vessels. Months later, the U.S. Navy offered the USCG a number of P-3 Orion surveillance and detection aircraft. The airplanes were "tired and beat up," according to Admiral Yost.<sup>217</sup> USCG Commandant Gracey (USCG Commandant from 1982–1986) had decided not to accept the P-3s from the Navy because he felt the USCG would not have the budget to support the additional aircraft. Shortly thereafter, U.S. Customs accepted the P-3's and obtained the necessary funding from Congress. In a span of months, U.S. Customs had acquired a fleet of boats and aircraft. Also telling, during this period of growth for the U.S. Customs, the USCG was under pressure from the Secretary of Transportation(s) to reduce the size of the USCG. In effect, U.S. Customs gained enviable levels of objective control, and the Coast Guard very clearly had not. Three years later when Yost became Commandant, he was fully prepared for civil-military challenges he would be facing.

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<sup>215</sup> Yost, 481.

<sup>216</sup> Yost, 483.

<sup>217</sup> Yost, 485.

Although the efforts to improve the Coast Guard's military readiness were largely underpinned by budget concerns, Commandant Yost took on many civil-military challenges with aplomb. At that time, the Secretary of Transportation was Elizabeth Dole and Yost worked to ensure a positive principal-agent relationship. According to Yost, Secretary Dole was, "a great boss."<sup>218</sup> One particular example of the successful, supportive climate was over counter drug funding that was, yet again, close to being directed into U.S. Customs account. Commandant Yost asked Secretary Dole to take up the issue and her efforts culminated in a White House showdown with Yost, Secretary of Treasury, Director of Customs, White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker, and Secretary Dole. The efforts prevented Customs from receiving all of the funding.<sup>219</sup>

Another example of civil-military challenges overcome by Yost exists. Senator Frank Lautenberg, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, significantly trimmed the Coast Guard's budget and informed Commandant Yost that, in effect, his election was dependent on funding received for New Jersey's subways and highways, so the Coast Guard would have to do with less.<sup>220</sup> As a result, Commandant Yost determined the service would need to close operational units, including certain less-utilized small boat stations, of which one was located in the Senator's hometown. After further conversation and consideration by Lautenberg, additional funding was received and the small boat station was reopened.<sup>221</sup>

Some civil-military challenges were more complicated than others. Straddling between the Department of Transportation and the Department of Defense created issues. For example, The President's budget would call for a certain amount allocated to the Coast Guard, but because the funding was Function 400 (Transportation) and not under Function 050 (national defense), Senators would reallocate the funding to infrastructure and then pull money from Function 050 to rebuild the Coast Guard's budget, in effect, robbing DoD

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<sup>218</sup> Yost, 449.

<sup>219</sup> Yost, 449.

<sup>220</sup> Yost, 458.

<sup>221</sup> Yost, 458.

to fund the Coast Guard.<sup>222</sup> To this end, Commandant Yost received an upsetting call from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who felt the Coast Guard was acting in bad faith by taking money from DoD.<sup>223</sup> Similar civil-military challenges continue to this day for the Coast Guard under the Department of Homeland Security.

The funding functions posed additional problems. In a budget battle not dissimilar to the “budget sequestration”<sup>224</sup> of 2013, two years into Commandant Yost’s tenure, the effects of the Gramm-Rudman Commission were uncomfortably felt by nearly every agency, including the Coast Guard.<sup>225</sup> Once again, building on positive principal-agent relationships, Commandant Yost expressed the inability to run the Coast Guard on that budget, and was supported by then Secretary of Transportation Burnley. The issue then went to OMB, and soon thereafter arrived in the Oval Office of President Reagan.<sup>226</sup> In a significant moment of objective control, Commandant Yost firmly defended his need for increased funding to the President and was awarded with everything he had asked for. According to Yost, this was the first time this had been done.<sup>227</sup>

As Commandant, Yost stressed the operational and military aspects of the service and commenced a bold transformation of the Coast Guard to build up the defense readiness mission.<sup>228</sup> His vision propelled the Coast Guard through from Department of Transportation obscurity into a more military organization capable of attaining measurable levels of objective control. However, functional and societal imperatives rapidly changed the focus of the service on the momentum shifted overnight on March 24, 1989 when the Exxon Valdez ran hard aground on Bligh Reef, Prince William Sound, Alaska.

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<sup>222</sup> Yost, 460.

<sup>223</sup> Yost, 460.

<sup>224</sup> Sequestration is the common term for austerity measures enacted as a result of provisions included in the 2011 Budget Control Act. See Budget Control Act of 2011, Pub. L. No. 112-25 § 365, 240 (2011), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/02/20/the-sequester-absolutely-everything-you-could-possibly-need-to-know-in-one-faq/?utm\\_term=.20fa61af7760](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/02/20/the-sequester-absolutely-everything-you-could-possibly-need-to-know-in-one-faq/?utm_term=.20fa61af7760).

<sup>225</sup> Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, Pub. L. No. 99-177, Title II (1985), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/99th-congress/senate-bill/1702>.

<sup>226</sup> Yost, interview by Paul Stillwell, 484.

<sup>227</sup> Yost, 484.

<sup>228</sup> Yost, 2.



The oil tanker *Exxon Valdez* had just departed Valdez, fully laden with Alaskan Crude oil. The grounding sliced the tanker and the oil spill quickly spread to over 3,000 square miles and over 350 miles of coastline.<sup>229</sup> The President directed the Secretary of Transportation to serve as the coordinator of “whole of government” response and directed Commandant Yost to go to Alaska and assume “personal oversight” of spill response efforts.<sup>230</sup> At the direction of the President, it was clear the Coast Guard’s primary responsibility was now pollution response. By April 24, 1989, the Coast Guard had more personnel working in remote Valdez, Alaska than the service had fielded at any point during the Vietnam War. The Coast Guard’s pivot to pollution response far eclipsed all other statutory missions and effectively ended Commandant Yost’s efforts to increase the Coast Guard’s defense readiness. His tour as Commandant ended on May 31, 1990.

## **I. MILITARY MOMENTUM SHIFT**

The efforts made by Commandant Yost to “militarize” the Coast Guard were highly criticized. Many in the Coast Guard, including senior leadership, believed the Coast Guard is a life-saving service, and dismissed Admiral Yost’s efforts as misguided. As a result, upon his relief as Commandant, Admiral Kime, Yost’s successor as Commandant, declared, “The Yost Years are over,” and went about undoing nearly all of Yost’s efforts to improve the service’s military enhancements, clearly conveying the culture of a service resistant to efforts to promote the Coast Guard’s armed service status.<sup>231</sup> Due in large part to the coincidental collapse of the Soviet Union and the Coast Guard’s emphasis on pollution response, the civil-military consequences of abandoning Yost’s approach were not immediately noticeable. Commandant Kime, a career marine safety and maritime environmental response officer, succeeded Admiral Yost and the change in Coast Guard leadership brought forth significant organizational change. Coast Guard Historian David Helvarg summarized this major course change by stating, “Strong personalities compete to

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<sup>229</sup> Samuel Skinner and William Reilly, *The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill: A Report to the President* (Washington, DC: National Response Team, 1989).

<sup>230</sup> Skinner and Reilly, 7.

<sup>231</sup> Thomas Ostrom and John Galluzzo, *USCG Leaders and Missions: 1790 to Present* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 2015), 125.

leave their imprint on the institution and sometimes lead erratic course corrections,” examples included, “the shift from the militarizing mission of Admiral Yost (1986–1990) to the environmental corporate management ethos of his successor, Admiral Kime (1990–1994).”<sup>232</sup> Although most of Commandant Yost’s initiatives were quickly recalled, the Maritime Defense Zone concept endured and provided a unique nexus for the Coast Guard and their contribution to national defense.

Established in the mid-1980s, and strongly championed by Yost, the Maritime Defense Zone (MARDEZ) provided the impetus to push the service into closer alignment with the other armed services. Title 14 of the United States Code requires the Coast Guard to, “Maintain a state of readiness to function as a specialized service in the Navy in time of war.”<sup>233</sup> MARDEZ commands were initially established as a result of a 1984 memorandum of agreement between Secretary of Treasury Elizabeth Dole and Secretary of the Navy John Lehman in an effort to “correct combat deficiencies in our National Military Strategy force structure along the coasts of the United States.”<sup>234</sup> Accordingly, Commandant Yost stated, “The establishment of maritime defense zones will help secure our sea lanes of communication and provide the Coast Guard with a clear focus for improving its military readiness through planning, exercising, and training of reserve and active forces.”<sup>235</sup>

The Command and Control Structure of the MARDEZ commands has been, and continues to be, unique. Despite Title 10 authorities that place the Coast Guard under the Navy at the President’s discretion, the MARDEZ places the Navy in overall Command as the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander, and then delegates MARDEZ authority to a Coast Guard flag officer. According to a 1989 thesis on Maritime Defense Zones by

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<sup>232</sup> David Helvarg, *Rescue Warriors, The U.S. Coast Guard, America’s Forgotten Heroes* (New York: St Martin’s, 2009), 120.

<sup>233</sup> U.S. Coast Guard Primary Duties, Pub. L. No. 87-396, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/14/2>.

<sup>234</sup> James Watkins, “The Maritime Strategy,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 112 (January 1986): 154.

<sup>235</sup> Paul Yost, “Coast Guard Has Key Role in Major Elements of National Security,” *Reserve Officers Association National Security Report* 6, no. 8 (August 1988): 7.

CDR Gerfin, “the Coast Guard is responsible for developing expertise in contingency planning, exercising, interoperability with the Navy and other forces as required in the conduct of missions including: ports and coastal security, mine warfare and countermeasures (MCM), inshore undersea warfare, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), surveillance & interdiction, search and rescue, harbor clearance & salvage support, offshore asset protection, antisubmarine (ASW) and anti-surface warfare (ASuW) out to the 200 mile EEZ limit.”<sup>236</sup> Although, as CDR Gerfin stated, this mission set seems far too ambitious for the Coast Guard to assume, especially considering the Coast Guard’s limited assets and nearly zero EOD or MCM expertise. As the MARDEZ concept matured, general guidelines were issued which stated, “Plan for, and when directed, conduct, coordinate, and control operations in the area designated as the maritime defense zone, as required, in order to ensure the integrated defense of the area, to protect coastal sea lines of communications, and to establish and maintain necessary control of vital coastal sea areas including ports, harbors, navigable waters, and offshore assets of the United States.”<sup>237</sup> Retired Rear Admiral Wallace, USCG defined the MARDEZ objectives, as ensuring: “(1) U.S. submarines successfully sortie in accordance with contingency plans; (2) battle groups, amphibious groups, submarines, and support ships deploy unimpeded from U.S. ports when hostilities are imminent; (3) reinforcement and resupply shipping, in support of forward deployments, departs U.S. ports and coastal areas safely; and (4) safe and secure water transport of economic cargos continues from U.S. ports and coastal areas.”<sup>238</sup>

Today command and control for MARDEZ duties and authorities are referred to as “Defense Forces” or DEFOR. As stated in Joint Publication 3-27, *Homeland Defense*, the DEFOR commands are held by USCG flag officers and echelon under the NORTHCOM or PACOM Combatant Commander via the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC). Duties include, but are not limited to, MCM, Sea Lines of Communication

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<sup>236</sup> Gerfin, “Anti-submarine Warfare,” 11.

<sup>237</sup> Sidney Wallace, “Coast Guard: The Role of the Coast Guard within the Maritime Strategy Must Not be Overlooked,” *The Almanac of Sea Power* 31, no. 1 (January 1988): 24.

<sup>238</sup> Wallace, 24.

(SLOC) and chokepoint operations, and maritime intercept operations.<sup>239</sup> In the event of a maritime homeland defense scenario, the DEFOR responsibilities placed upon a USCG Flag Officer would include tactical control of Coast Guard and Joint DoD forces and, depending on the experience of the USCG flag officer, could be overwhelming. While the USCG has, “unique authorities and capabilities,” the weaponry and personnel prepared to “manage violence” against an enemy may not exist. As a result of the dilution of the defense readiness mission, the design and construction of a national security cutter without MCM or ASW capabilities, and the lack of JPME trained personnel, personnel in today’s Coast Guard may not be suitable for a DEFOR command and control role in support of maritime homeland defense, unless changes are enacted to rectify the aforementioned issues.

## **J. POST YOST**

The 1990s proved challenging for the Coast Guard as it foundered in the Department of Transportation. In a 1991 Naval War College thesis titled, “U.S. Coast Guard’s National Security Role in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” then CAPT B. Stubbs very thoroughly researched the role of the Coast Guard in a post Warsaw Pact and decremented budget environment. He asserted, “With the end of the Cold War, the calculus for justifying the Coast Guard’s current military capability has dramatically changed .... The Coast Guard may be in the process of losing its military capability, and without that status it will inadvertently position itself to become a civilian agency.”<sup>240</sup> CAPT Stubbs’s assertions were underpinned by survey responses including one retired USCG Admiral who stated, “Some of the Secretaries of Transportation have not been interested in their responsibilities to the Coast Guard as an armed force and in the Coast Guard’s national security role,” and stressed this as a severe handicap.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Maritime Homeland Defense*.

<sup>240</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, xlvii.

<sup>241</sup> Stubbs, “U.S. Coast Guard’s National Security Role,” 130.

While the Coast Guard drifted in DoT, DoD had benefitted from the massive Second Offset investment and reorganization under Goldwater-Nichols. In the post-Cold War environment, the Coast Guard saw little construction of major cutters and provided little utility as an armed service. The Coast Guard had a diminutive, port security and pollution response role in the Persian Gulf War (Operation Desert Storm) to expel Iraq from Kuwait. Much like Korea, no cutters were requested or provided. As one Coast Guard Officer stated, “Given the collapse of the Soviet Union and huge reductions in defense budgets, non-use of Coast Guard force undermines the continued rationale for providing Coast Guard cutters a military capability.”<sup>242</sup>

Despite the limited role in national defense, some efforts to define the Coast Guard’s military role gained momentum and an effort to solidify the role of the Coast Guard in support of the National Military Strategy took root. The result was a formal Memorandum of Agreement, signed by the Secretaries of the Department of Transportation and the Department of Defense. This Memo identified the Coast Guard’s “capabilities and resources in support of the National Military Strategy,” and listed maritime interception operations (MIO), port operations security and defense (POSD), coastal sea control, peacetime military engagement (now known as Theater Security Cooperation), and military environmental response (MER).<sup>243</sup> Furthermore, in 1998, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Coast Guard Commandant signed the National Fleet Policy Statement. This policy stated, “Surface combatants, major cutters, boats, aircraft, and shore-side command and control nodes that are affordable, adaptable, interoperable, and have complementary capabilities; designed, whenever possible, around common equipment and support systems; and capable of supporting the broad spectrum of national security requirements.”<sup>244</sup> Although the National Fleet Plan was last updated in August 2015, the

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<sup>242</sup> Stubbs, 133.

<sup>243</sup> This 1995 document has been periodically reviewed resigned, with the latest version signed in 2008 with little changes to the Coast Guard’s missions in support of a dynamically changing National Military Strategy. “Memorandum of Agreement between the DOD and DOT on the Use of Coast Guard Capabilities and Resources in Support of the National Military Strategy” (official memorandum, Washington, DC: Department of Defense and Department of Transportation, 1995), 1.

<sup>244</sup> Stubbs, “Whither the National Fleet,” 72.

plan makes no mention of the (4+1) challenges and remains a very limited attempt at coordination that has rarely brought forward substantial savings or meaningful interoperability, other than “bolt on” Navy-type-Navy-Owned (NTNO) equipment. As of 2017, the USCG still operates “one of the oldest fleets in the World,” with many cutters still in service having been commissioned in the 1960s. Little has changed since 2001 when author Bruce Stubbs stated, “The idea of a national fleet has foundered due to lack of aggressive departmental advocacy and murkiness in congressional oversight.”<sup>245</sup> Although the Fleet Plan has achieved limited success, its value endures as a viable vehicle to immediately institute meaningful fleetwide advances in support of the National Military Strategy.

Despite memoranda, operational concepts, and plans defining the Coast Guard’s contribution as an armed service, the Coast Guard essentially coasted through the final decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on fumes. As late as 1999, the Coast Guard was in dire straits with one analyst stating, “Under DOT, Coast Guard acquisition funding is woefully out of touch with reality.”<sup>246</sup> Even the Coast Guard’s highest ranking officer opined shortly after retirement, “Although Congress and its members love the Coast Guard; they love the votes the transportation system garner even more.”<sup>247</sup> Budget data supports this claim. From 1997–2000, the Coast Guard’s budget decreased by 12 percent, and the Coast Guard was not included in a 1998 Presidential Supplemental Funds to Congress to improve military readiness.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Stubbs, 72.

<sup>246</sup> John G. Roos, “The White Hull Navy,” *Armed Forces Journal International* 136, no. 9 (April 1999): 35.

<sup>247</sup> Paul Yost, “Response to ‘Toss the Coast Guard a Life Ring,’” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 127 (September 2001): 18.

<sup>248</sup> Colin Gray, “Time for a National Fleet,” *Naval War College Review* LIV, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 27–29, <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=550>; Scott C. Truver, “The U.S. Coast Guard: Still *Semper Paratus*?” *Sea Power* (August 2001): 40.

## **K. A NEW IMPERATIVE—PORTS, WATERWAYS, AND COASTAL SECURITY**

After September 11, 2001, the Coast Guard was compelled to address the vulnerabilities then inherent along the ports and waterways of the United States. The Coast Guard was designated the Lead Federal Agency for Maritime Homeland Security (MHLS), so Adm. Thomas Collins, USCG Commandant from 1998–2002, refocused the efforts of the Coast Guard toward this end. “We directed over 50 cutters that were deployed on fisheries and counter-drug mission into most of the major ports around our country for a number of weeks.”<sup>249</sup> However, as the scope and identity of the terrorist threats became clear, the terrorist threat to offshore installations was not a viable threat and the cutters eventually resumed to their pre-September 11, 2001, duties of counter drug and migrant patrols. The Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security (PWCS) mission (formerly known as Ports and Environmental Security), ambitiously attempts to, “protect the maritime domain and the U.S. maritime transportation system and those who live, work or recreate near them; the prevention and disruption of terrorist attacks, sabotage, espionage, or subversive acts; and response to and recovery from those that do occur. Conducting PWCS deters terrorists from using or exploiting the MTS as a means for attacks on U.S. territory, population centers, vessels, critical infrastructure, and key resources. PWCS includes the employment of awareness activities; counterterrorism, antiterrorism, preparedness and response operations; and the establishment and oversight of a maritime security regime.”<sup>250</sup>

The broad scope of this mission was reflected in USCG operation hours (OPHOURS). Following September 11, PWCS OPHOURS far outpaced all the USCG statutory missions and the PWCS mission has endured to become a defining mission that has anti-terrorism, counterterrorism, and homeland defense lines of effort.<sup>251</sup> However,

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<sup>249</sup> Thomas Collins, interview by Peter Capelotti (transcript, U.S. Coast Guard Oral History Program, 2002), 4.

<sup>250</sup> “Office of Counterterrorism and Defense Operations Policy,” U.S. Coast Guard, accessed January 15, 2018, <http://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Response-Policy-CG-5R/Office-of-Counterterrorism-Defense-Operations-Policy-CG-ODO/PWCS/>.

<sup>251</sup> Lawrence E. Greene, “U.S. Coast Guard Reorganization: Why Merging the Field Units Is not Enough to remain Semper Paratus” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2005), xv.

the PWCS mission does not include, support, or promote the use of major cutters in the execution of the national military strategy and does not typically include the capabilities or assets necessary for the homeland defense mission in accordance with Joint Publication 3-27, Homeland Defense. The renewed and enduring emphasis on anti-terrorism aspects of the PWCS mission, along with the formation of a new cabinet level department focused on homeland security, drove the USCG into a major internal reorganization, and refocused efforts away from traditional major cutter national defense missions.<sup>252</sup> In essence, the post-9/11 Coast Guard transformed into a “Port Guard,” with major cutters, the traditional backbone of USCG defense contributions, severely discounted from the plans to defend America’s coastline.

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 created the Department of Homeland Security, and included the Coast Guard into the new department. It is worth noting that prior to the transfer, Commandant Collins and five retired USCG Commandants met with President George W. Bush at the White House. The experienced leaders discussed homeland security, defense, and acquisition concerns, and unanimously endorsed the transfer of the Coast Guard from the Department of Transportation to the Department of Homeland Security, underscoring the lack of support the service endured under DoT.<sup>253</sup> Interestingly, of the 22 agencies comprising DHS, the Coast Guard was one of only three of the agencies not divided by missions and remained wholly constituted throughout the transfer, despite incongruity among the Coast Guard’s 11 statutory missions. However, it would not be the Coast Guard about which DHS leadership would be overly concerned.

In 2005, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff ordered a, “systematic evaluation of the Department’s operations, policies, and structures,” and summarized the results into six objectives:

1. Increase overall preparedness, particularly for catastrophic events.

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<sup>252</sup> Exceptions include the USCG’s contributions to Operation Iraqi Freedom, which were requested (and funded) by DoD under contingency operations funding.

<sup>253</sup> Ostrom and Galluzzo, *USCG Leaders and Missions*, 141.



2. Strengthen border security and interior enforcement and reform immigration processes.
3. Enhance information sharing with our partners.
4. Improve DHS financial management, human resource development, procurement and information technology.
5. Realign the DHS organization to” maximize mission performance.<sup>254</sup>

Secretary Chertoff’s strategic review was primarily focused on FEMA. In fact, the entire review mentioned the Coast Guard just four times compared to 40 for FEMA. At a 2005 congressional hearing, the DHS Secretary stated,

What the restructuring proposes to do is to take out of FEMA a couple of elements that were really not related to its core mission, that were more generally focused on the issue of preparedness in a way that I think was frankly more of a distraction to FEMA than an enhancement to FEMA .... We want to make sure that FEMA was, as an operational agency, capable of focusing on its core mission, it was a direct report to the secretary so that it gets the direct attention that it needs. And we wanted to make sure the leadership of FEMA was not torn between its need to focus on the FEMA role the additional, rather more strategic, preparedness functions, which [I] think that we are now seeking to unify and put together in a coordinated fashion.<sup>255</sup>

While likely the result of a post-9/11 fog and flush with anti-terrorism funding, the Coast Guard once again found itself in a civil-military quagmire. Despite constituting the largest percentage of people and funding in DHS, as in previous Departments throughout service history, neither the Coast Guard’s status as an armed force, nor the military contributions to the National Military Strategy, were included in DHS objectives. The objectives, and lack of armed service mentioning, are especially telling because when they were published, the Coast Guard had six cutters and a large support contingent deployed in Bahrain and Kuwait operating in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Department of Homeland Security was clearly not overly concerned with the unique “split personality” of the Coast Guard.

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<sup>254</sup> Harold Relyea and Henry Hogue, *Department of Homeland Security Reorganization: The 2SR Initiative*, CRS Report RL33042 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2005), 1.

<sup>255</sup> Relyea and Hogue, 12.

Hindsight shows a clairvoyant Chertoff. Less than four months after the review, FEMA was given notoriously poor marks for their lackluster response to Hurricane Katrina. Aside from a service history riddled with threats of outright abolishment or U.S. Navy assimilation; A similar initiative, in which a Cabinet Secretary takes a vested interest in the focus and mission of a component agency, has yet to occur for the Coast Guard. Yet, from a principal-agent perspective, the Secretary of DHS would have no cause, because from a homeland security perspective, the Coast Guard was a jewel. The Coast Guard's response to Hurricane Katrina was met with great flexibility, initiative, and leadership by Vice Admiral Thad Allen, whose efforts in New Orleans led to his selection and confirmation as Commandant in 2006. In fact, Commandant Allen's response was so well regarded, he was again appointed by the President to lead the national response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.<sup>256</sup> However, from a homeland defense perspective, while hurricanes and terrorist vulnerabilities were addressed, peer-like threats were rebuilding capabilities with the potential to restart a Cold War that existentially threatens America's coasts. Rather than focus on USCG rebuilding with capabilities to address these peer-like threats, the Coast Guard was focused on rebuilding for homeland security, not homeland defense.

As mentioned previously, the USCG's Deepwater Acquisition project commenced in 1999 and was a multi-billion dollar initiative to recapitalize cutters, boats, and aircraft simultaneously, but it failed miserably. Commenced during Commandant Collins' tenure and concluded after eight years, DOJ investigations, many congressional oversight hearings, and an unflattering *60 Minutes* special report.<sup>257</sup> The end result of this civil-military morass (which did not affect the Coast Guard's post DHS reorganization nor was emphasis on PWCS missions) was Commandant Allen's sad summary, "We have to manage with the Fleet we've got, and not the Fleet we want."<sup>258</sup> The Coast Guard's *fait accompli* in this regard can be traced back to the dismantling of Admiral Yost's initiatives and a hyper-focus on homeland security at the expense of homeland defense.

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<sup>256</sup> Ostrom and Galluzzo, *USCG Leaders and Missions*, 144.

<sup>257</sup> Ostrom and Galluzzo, 150.

<sup>258</sup> Ostrom and Galluzzo, 152.

Aside from occasional statutory updates to drug enforcement authorities and a resurgent major cutter acquisition effort, the USCG has seen very few significant major civil military changes since the post Hurricane Katrina era. Rather, changes have been largely internal with a renewed focus on shoreside prevention and response reorganization. Of particular significance, the reorganization efforts included all facets of the USCG enlisted and officer corps, with the exception of career cutterman, for which assignment at the revamped shoreside command is unlikely. These changes have led to a perceivable level of disenchantment from the sea going cutter community—and has potential future civil-military consequences, as cutters have historically been the backbone of the USCG’s defense readiness mission, and the Coast Guard’s *raison d’être* as an armed service.<sup>259</sup>

Soon after Admiral Zukunft became the service’s 25<sup>th</sup> Commandant, the Coast Guard published a Western Hemisphere Strategy (WHEM). Essentially restating what has been a long-term counter drug commitment, the Commandant was determined to promote maritime governance through the interdiction of illicit cargos in the transit zones of the Western Hemisphere.<sup>260</sup> During this same period, American forces were fighting land wars against terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. Navy had decommissioned the Oliver Hazard Perry Frigates (the U.S. Navy’s primary counter drug platform when paired with USCG Law Enforcement Detachments), and “pivoted to Asia.”<sup>261</sup> The result left the maritime security of the Western Hemisphere (WHEM) to the major cutters of the Coast Guard. The Western Hemisphere counter drug fight entered a new phase when Colombia entered a peace agreement with the “Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarios Colombia” (FARC).<sup>262</sup> The peace agreement included a provision to halt the eradication of cocoa

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<sup>259</sup> Brian Smicklas, “Demise of the Cutterman,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 141, no. 8 (August 2015): 55–62, <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2015-08/demise-cutterman>.

<sup>260</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Western Hemisphere Strategy* (Washington, DC: U.S. Coast Guard, 2014), [http://www.overview.uscg.mil/Portals/6/Documents/PDF/CG\\_West\\_Hemisphere\\_Strategy.pdf?ver=2016-10-13-123053-130](http://www.overview.uscg.mil/Portals/6/Documents/PDF/CG_West_Hemisphere_Strategy.pdf?ver=2016-10-13-123053-130).

<sup>261</sup> “DOD Focus on the Asia-Pacific,” Department of Defense, accessed November 05, 2017, [https://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0415\\_Asia-Pacific/](https://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0415_Asia-Pacific/).

<sup>262</sup> Nicolas Casey, “Colombia’s Congress Approves Peace with FARC,” *New York Times*, November 30, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/30/world/americas/colombia-farc-accord-juan-manuel-santos.html>.

plants—and now drug flow has reach decades high levels with the fewest American maritime assets available to prevent their movement via maritime means. While the Coast Guard has valiantly fought to prevent narcotic smuggling, the result has been less than optimal, thus requiring additional USCG Cutters to deploy in support of the counter drug effort in levels not seen since the 1980s.

As described in the annual Review of Coast Guard’s FY2016 Drug Control Summary Performance Report, “According to the interagency Consolidated Counter Drug Database (CCDB), the known cocaine flow through the transit zone via non-commercial means increased in FY 2016 to 2,834 metric tons from 1,254 metric tons in FY 2015. The Coast Guard removed 201.3 metric tons of cocaine from the Transit Zone in FY 2016 equating to a 7.1 percent removal rate for non-commercial maritime cocaine flow. While the Coast Guard did not meet its performance target of removing 11.5 percent of non-commercial maritime cocaine flow, the Coast Guard removed more tonnage of cocaine in FY 2016 than it did in FY 2015 or in any fiscal year prior.”<sup>263</sup> In other words, despite a dedicated WHEM Strategy and effectively committing nearly the entire major cutter fleet to the effort, the Coast Guard removed more cocaine than ever before in service history, but the effort amounted to just 7.1 percent of total flow. Moreover, because of the myopic use of the major cutter fleet, the opportunity cost in terms of defense readiness and armed forces interoperability must also be taken into account. While the DoD continues to rebalance toward Asia, and the Coast Guard emphasizes efforts in support of the WHEM Strategy, the overlooked maritime homeland defense mission has rapidly regained importance due to the rise of asymmetric naval capabilities in Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran, adversaries mentioned in the 2015 National Military Strategy.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> John Kelly, *Review of Coast Guard’s FY2016 Drug Control Summary Performance Report*, OIG 17-33 (Washington, DC: Officer of Inspector General, 2017), <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2017/OIG-17-33-Feb17.pdf>.

<sup>264</sup> Andrea Shalal, “NATO Sees Growing Russia, China Challenge: Higher Risk of War” *Reuters*, November 28, 2017, [https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http3A\\_\\_news.trust.org\\_item\\_201711282237022Ddmv8y\\_&d=DwICAg&c=0NKfg44GVknAUXkWXjNxo&r=tteaDqcJ8OxGaxLKz8MHYT5wyVM1qznGRea6vBxwh94&m=czzpnaSDHGJMaGaR67soCpmgzvEIqihOUjVH7qY4&s=Ywmql0yb3dC4b1RxnSrZF\\_Si6ntdu4E3OkRfpUxvBmM&e](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http3A__news.trust.org_item_201711282237022Ddmv8y_&d=DwICAg&c=0NKfg44GVknAUXkWXjNxo&r=tteaDqcJ8OxGaxLKz8MHYT5wyVM1qznGRea6vBxwh94&m=czzpnaSDHGJMaGaR67soCpmgzvEIqihOUjVH7qY4&s=Ywmql0yb3dC4b1RxnSrZF_Si6ntdu4E3OkRfpUxvBmM&e).

During the Cold War, Coast Guard major cutters were a significant portion of the National Fleet and were counted upon to defend the maritime domain. As peer-adversaries faded away, land wars and drug wars filled the void. Security of ports from terrorist threats and coastal law enforcement missions and counter drug mission rightly assumed the highest priorities of the service; in addition to major pollution incidents and disaster responses, for which the major cutters only played a minor supporting role. However, peer-adversaries have reemerged and the Coast Guard has a societal imperative to “guard the coast.” This expectation has been enhanced by the Coast Guard’s focus on the protection of the maritime transportation system under the Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security (PWCS) mission.

On November 22, 2002, Commandant Collins addressed concerns regarding the Coast Guard’s ability to manage mission expansion in the Post-September 11 environment. Specifically, Commandant Collins stated that expanded national security and defense missions would not affect the Coast Guard’s ability to carry out traditional domestic missions, and referenced the 1999 Inter-Agency Task Force on Coast Guard’s Roles and Missions which concluded, “the transfer of some service duties to other agencies would be “inefficient, costly, and counterproductive.”<sup>265</sup> A more applicable statement to the Coast Guard’s major cutter fleet would have been, “Looking ahead, would the accumulation of domestic law enforcement missions affect the Coast Guard’s ability to perform as an armed force and carry out initiatives against peer-like adversaries as outlined in the 2015 National Military Strategy?”

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<sup>265</sup> Ostrom and Galluzzo, *USCG Leaders and Missions*, 142.

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## **IV. THE REEMERGENCE OF PEER ADVERSARIES AND COUNTERING THE UNDERSEA ASYMMETRIC THREAT TO MARITIME HOMELAND DEFENSE**

### **A. THE EXISTENTIAL THREAT—A RETURN TO PEER ADVERSARIES AND A COLDER WAR**

Naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan warned, “A peaceful, gain-loving nation is not far-sighted, and far-sightedness is needed for adequate military preparation, especially in these days.”<sup>266</sup> Mahan’s words remain as prescient as the day they were written. In the Cold War against the Soviet Union, the United States Maritime Strategy focused on the challenge put forth by the Soviet Union and their subsurface capabilities.<sup>267</sup> Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the degradation of their undersea capabilities, the military strategies of the United States drifted away from the anti-submarine warfare doctrine that had been so prevalent up through the 1980s.<sup>268</sup> However, the peaceful, gain-loving period of undersea dominance enjoyed by the United States could soon end. The 2015 National Military Strategy outlined the reemergence of traditional state-actor threats facing the U.S. homeland.<sup>269</sup> China and Russia, North Korea, and Iran all possess an undersea capability, which they would use against the United States in the hopes of obtaining an asymmetric advantage in the maritime domain. Peer adversaries, such as China, are building submarines at a rapid pace. As was the case in World War II, and throughout the Cold War, the major cutters of the Coast Guard have both an opportunity and a responsibility to support the United States national military objectives and protect the maritime homeland domain from undersea adversaries. In order to address the challenges presented by these peer adversaries, adequate military preparation is necessary.

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<sup>266</sup> Alfred Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1890), 26.

<sup>267</sup> James Stavridis, “Creating ASW Killing Zones,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 113 (October 1987): 36–44.

<sup>268</sup> Stavridis, 37.

<sup>269</sup> “The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 2015,” Joint Chiefs of Staff, June 2015, [http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015\\_National\\_Military\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015_National_Military_Strategy.pdf).

The Coast Guard has enjoyed a storied history of support to the national military objectives of the United States; and at the same time, the service has endured many civil-military challenges. These challenges have significantly affected the Coast Guard's standing as equals among the armed services, most recently evidenced by suggested budget cuts to the Coast Guard. While the U.S. Navy continues rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region, and the other armed forces focus on winning conflicts against Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) in Iraq and Afghanistan, the growing void in the maritime domain creates an opportunity for the Coast Guard to exhibit indispensable value and relevance as an armed service while simultaneously addressing relevancy concerns as an armed service.

In 2014, the Coast Guard promulgated a strategy for the Western Hemisphere. While specifically addressing challenges to maritime safety, efficiency and security in the Western Hemisphere due to “the rise of adaptive transnational criminal organizations networks and the future impacts of climate change,” it appears to have been prematurely promulgated because it fails to mention the threats posed by state actors, as outlined in the 2015 National Military Strategy.<sup>270</sup>

Every Coast Guardsman knows the Coast Guard is “at all times an armed force of the United States.”<sup>271</sup> In addition, U.S. Coast Guard Publication 3-0, *Operations*, states, “As part of the Joint Force, the Coast Guard maintains its readiness to carry out military operations in support of the policies and objectives of the U.S. government.”<sup>272</sup> The first and foremost military operation and objective of the United States is defense of the homeland.

The adversarial nations outlined in the National Military Strategy, especially Russia and China, present a complicated subsurface threat to America's maritime defense that is compounded by the lack of ASW deterrence in the littorals.<sup>273</sup> In addition, these nations

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<sup>270</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Western Hemisphere Strategy*.

<sup>271</sup> Establishment of Coast Guard, Title 14 U.S.C. 1, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/14/1>.

<sup>272</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Operations*, Coast Guard Publication 3-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Coast Guard, 2012), 5.

<sup>273</sup> Dave Majumdar, “Could the U.S. Navy Really Hunt down Russian or Chinese Submarines?,” *National Interest*, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/could-the-us-navy-really-hunt-down-russian-or-chinese-17346>.



are unlikely to ever fully develop a naval force capable of fleet on fleet engagement; so an asymmetric threat, such as attacking the relatively unprotected U.S. coastline, is a strategically possible enemy course of action that would bring about significant consequence to the United States. The Coast Guard should begin preparations for using major cutters to reconstitute the anti-submarine warfare (ASW) mission in order ensure coastal sea control, support expeditionary deployment, and protect United States economic prosperity via the Marine Transportation Sector.

Despite decades of safety derived from DoD offset strategies and vast oceans buffering the distance between potential adversaries, the 2015 National Military Strategy pointed out, the safety of the United States may be jeopardized by the “4+1” challenges (Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and Violent Extremist Organizations). Two of the four have an undersea capacity that is capable of reaching the United States homeland and have shown peer-like weapons capability.

In recent congressional testimony by naval researcher Ron O’Rourke, “Russia, because of its submarine force, is a major country of concern due to its increased naval activities.”<sup>274</sup> Recently, a Russian diesel electric submarine launched a missile into Syria and that lone-Russian submarine was pursued by an entire U.S. carrier battle group, at times eluding the most powerful navy on Earth.<sup>275</sup> More, “An unexpected resurgence in Russian submarine development, which deteriorated after the breakup of the Soviet Union, has reignited the undersea rivalry of the Cold War” according to a recent *Wall Street Journal* article.<sup>276</sup> However, Russia, with 42 very high quality submarines, is not the only “4+1” state-actor with global undersea capabilities.

China has emerged as the most concerning adversary, “because of the scale of its military forces, the pace and breadth of its naval modernization effort, its ability to continue

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<sup>274</sup> *Options and Considerations for Achieving a 355 Ship Navy: Hearing before Senate Committee on Armed Services and Subcommittee on SeaPower*, 155 Cong. 2 (2017) (Statement of Ronald O’Rourke, Congressional Research Service Analyst).

<sup>275</sup> Julian Barnes, “A Russian Submarine, its U.S. Pursuers, and a New Cold War,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 20, 2017, <http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/a-russian-ghost-submarine-its-us-pursuers-and-a-deadly-new-cold-war/ar-AAAtLTc1?li=BBmkt5R&ocid=ientp>.

<sup>276</sup> Barnes.

financing that effort, and the increasingly global scope of its naval operations.”<sup>277</sup> Furthermore, despite initial documentation outlining limited, regional emphasis, “China may have recently decided to pursue a more ambitious goal of developing a navy with more extensive capabilities for global operations.”<sup>278</sup> Adding evidence to the shift is the nearly completed the world’s largest nuclear submarine construction facility which encompasses two parallel production lines, “large enough to build four nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) simultaneously.”<sup>279</sup> This facility builds upon PLAN’s already robust non-nuclear submarine fleet. The Chinese People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) has rapidly amassed over 70 submarines, making China’s undersea arsenal is potentially more lethal than Russia.<sup>280</sup> Exponentially compounding the potential threats, Russia and China have recently conducted joint naval exercises.<sup>281</sup>

## **B. THE RELEVANT SOLUTION: WARSHIPS DEPLOY AND CUTTERS “GUARD THE COAST”**

The undersea threat is more compelling and complex than most realize. The rise of provocative action by the same nation states outlined in the NMS have subsurface capabilities that could degrade, deter, or disrupt the ability of the United States to achieve national and military objectives. The Under Secretary of Defense recently chartered a Defense Science Board working group to further analyze these threats.<sup>282</sup>

While the vulnerabilities to America’s ports could be mitigated by “friendly” sub-surface assets, the reality is the “high demand, low density” of friendly submarines would likely be consumed with protecting offshore surface assets and sea lines of communication

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<sup>277</sup> O’Rourke, *Options and Considerations*.

<sup>278</sup> Ryan Martinson and Katsuya Yamamoto, “How China’s Navy Is Preparing to Fight in the ‘Far Seas,’” *National Interest*, July 18, 2017, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-chinas-navy-preparing-fight-the-far-seas-21583>.

<sup>279</sup> O’Rourke, *Options and Considerations*.

<sup>280</sup> Majumdar, “Russian or Chinese Submarines.”

<sup>281</sup> Andrew Higgins, “China and Russia Hold First Joint Naval Drill in Baltic Sea,” *New York Times*, July 25, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/25/world/europe/china-russia-baltic-navy-exercises.html>.

<sup>282</sup> Frank Kendall, “Defense Science Board Task Force on the Role of DoD in Homeland Defense” (official memorandum, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2016).

(SLOCs). According to Donald Henry from the Pentagon Office of Net Assessment, “because of new surveillance measures, you could have whole zones of the ocean where you are unable to operate safely on the surface,” and the risk of unconventional attacks “could drive navies underwater, unless carrier strike groups are protected by something we don’t have yet.”<sup>283</sup> Due to emerging surveillance technologies, there is likely to be an insufficient number of sub-surface assets for both homeland defense and expeditionary warfare. Making matters worse, the United States is on pace to realize a deficit of subsurface assets in the coming decade. The 355 ship Navy hopes to include 66 submarines. However, according to O’Rourke, a more pressing issue will occur before 66 could be achieved. The issue, a major concern for the Navy since at least 2006, is an impending submarine inventory “valley” in which, due to current acquisition, decommissioning, and construction rates, a low of 41 boats will inevitably occur during the period between FY2025-FY2036. According to O’Rourke, this could lead to a period of “weakened conventional deterrence against potential adversaries, particularly China.”<sup>284</sup> Proving the concern, China addressed this “valley” in a November 2014 edition in a Chinese Military Journal and questioned the ability to meet requirements of the Asia-Pacific Rebalance.<sup>285</sup>

A capable sub-surface deterrent must be established to un-tether U.S. Navy submarines from potential coastal defense operations; Enabling U.S. naval combatants to conduct military objectives overseas and protect American expeditionary warfare capabilities. The failure to engage the enemy overseas increases the likelihood of the next conflict being conducted along U.S. shores and inside U.S. ports, creating an existential threat to the Marine Transportation System and America’s livelihood.

The Marine Transportation Sector comprises over 90 percent of the commerce flowing through the United States. As one of the world’s leading maritime and trading nations, the United States is depended on a safe and secure MTS to facilitate commerce

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<sup>283</sup> Robert Kaplan, “America’s Elegant Decline,” *The Atlantic* (November 2007), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2007/11/america-s-elegant-decline/306344/>.

<sup>284</sup> O’Rourke, *Options and Considerations*.

<sup>285</sup> O’Rourke.

and protect national security.<sup>286</sup> Much more than just economic imports, American manufacturing and agriculture relies on this network to ensure American products reach overseas buyers—keeping millions of American’s employed and fueling layer upon layer of supporting business like trucking, restaurants, gas stations, auto parts, and service, etc. The loss, or even slight reduction, of our national maritime transportation network would be calamitous to the national economy, or worse, create a global crisis. Furthermore, protecting the maritime domain ensures the flow of forces.

Developing a homeland defense ASW capability is more than just protecting U.S. ports and coastlines from a subsurface threat to the maritime economy. The problem is raised to existential levels because an unmitigated subsurface threat severely jeopardizes the ability for America to defeat enemies overseas and secure the interests of the United States. The U.S. Navy is not currently designed, nor sufficiently resourced, to defend the homeland maritime domain and deliver a decisive victory against a peer-like overseas adversary. U.S. Navy warships are manned, trained, and equipped to the take violence to the enemy and a vulnerable MTS threatens both the deployment and the sustainment of forces.

The vast majority of U.S. Navy warships are missile shooters, capable of launching an untold number of Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs) which have employed 2<sup>nd</sup> Offset technology since the Reagan Administration.<sup>287</sup> These weapons are expensive and effective, but useless when attacking an enemy while compelled to patrol America’s coastline conducting ASW missions. There does not exist a TLAM capable of hitting a “4+1” overseas adversary while conducting an ASW patrol off the coast of California. In addition, the highly technical RADARs installed on these ships render them capable of protecting U.S. allies and interests from ballistic missile strikes—making them a necessary force protection component and must remain within RADAR range of the enemy. As such, utilizing these assets in a coastal defense situation is a gross mismatch that endangers the

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<sup>286</sup> Committee on the Marine Transportation System, *National Strategy for the Marine Transportation System* (Washington, DC: Department of Transportation, 2008), [http://www.cmts.gov/downloads/National\\_Strategy\\_MTS\\_2008.pdf](http://www.cmts.gov/downloads/National_Strategy_MTS_2008.pdf).

<sup>287</sup> “United States Navy Fact File: Tomahawk Cruise Missile,” U.S. Navy, accessed December 7, 2017, [http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact\\_display.asp?cid=2200&tid=1300&ct=2](http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=2200&tid=1300&ct=2).

ability to fight and win. Defending the homeland maritime domain is a vital Coast Guard-like mission, and keeping the Coast Guard to “guard the coast” enables U.S. Navy assets designed to attack the enemy the ability to do so without tethering them to a homeland mission that unnecessary constrains their combat capabilities. The threats have reemerged which compel the Coast Guard to consider how effectively they are “guarding the coast” and contributing to the defense of the homeland from peer adversaries.

The United States homeland has never endured an existential attack. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a shocking event which limited the ability to counter attack, but not for very long. The attacks on September 11, 2001, were undeniably devastating, but the damage was limited and reparable. As difficult as these events were to endure, recovery was rapidly accomplished, and the overall economic and military capability of the United States remained largely unaffected and undeterred. It is entirely possible that, if attacked, the U.S. may realize the marine transportation system (MTS) is our “Clausewitzian” center of gravity. The Coast Guard has assumed a national responsibility for coastal sea control and security of the Marine Transportation System (MTS). The undersea threat is a vulnerability the Coast Guard is currently unable to address. An attack on a major port would be devastating; a coordinated attack on many ports on both coasts could be existential. In accordance with an USCG ALCOAST written published in 1992, the ASW threat is reemerging and, it is time to heed the warnings written by Mahan. In order to ensure the defense of the MTS and the maritime domain, the USCG should begin reconstituting an ASW capability.<sup>288</sup>

### **C. COUNTERING SUBSURFACE THREATS AND RECONSTITUTING USCG ASW CAPABILITY**

Defending America’s interests against the challenges outlined in the National Military Strategy requires staggering amounts of expeditionary logistical coordination. Under no circumstance can the United States sustain action against an enemy without resupply from the United States homeland. Troop transport ships, weapons resupply ships, and refueling ships are vital assets necessary to ensure the sustained fight against an

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<sup>288</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, *Future Status of WHEC*.

adversary. The ability to flow forces to sustain the fight obviously requires the absolute protection of ships and waterways. The ability to protect, or “guard the coast,” is a functional and societal imperative for the Coast Guard. The current undersea vulnerabilities along the U.S. coastline seriously threaten expeditionary military objectives and America’s livelihood and the requirement to maintain a deterrent against adversarial asymmetric warfare to ensure coastal sea control has reemerged. An ASW capability is again necessary based on the threats outlined in the National Military Strategy.

Over the past decade, the Coast Guard has been recapitalizing their aging offshore cutter fleet. These new ships were designed in the early 2000’s for a post-Cold War threat environment which did not foresee the “4+1” challenges outlined in the National Military Strategy. As currently designed, unlike the WHEC 378s during the Cold War, the Coast Guard’s newest cutters are currently unsuitable for maritime homeland defense against subsurface threats. However, these cutters are highly capable platforms and they possess the potential to reconstitute an ASW capability and capably contribute to the ASW defense of the maritime domain. In order to credibly deter an enemy with a subsurface capability, the Coast Guard will need to modify the existing National Security Cutters and the planned Offshore Patrol Cutters. The modifications may not be as substantial as many perceive and the costs associated with modification are certainly less than the acquiring the amount of Navy vessels necessary to bring the U.S. Naval fleet up to the 355 ships, as requested by the Navy Force Structure Assessment and endorsed by the Trump Administration.<sup>289</sup> All told, outfitting 10 National Security Cutters and 22 Offshore Patrol Cutters for ASW would result in substantial savings compared to the Navy procuring, constructing, and manning a similar sized addition to their fleet. In addition, by mastering the current ASW technology, the Coast Guard will be well positioned to effectively employ a wide array of unmanned underwater systems currently under development.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> O’Rourke, *Options and Considerations*.

<sup>290</sup> Megan Eckstein, “Navy Racing to Test, Field Unmanned Maritime Vehicles for Future Ships,” *USNI News*, September 21, 2017, <https://news.usni.org/2017/09/21/navy-racing-test-field-unmanned-maritime-vehicles-future-ships>.

The ability for the Coast Guard to effectively conduct the ASW mission is dependent on the capability of the ASW assets compared to the capability of the subsurface threats facing the homeland. To address the former, the Coast Guard already utilizes a significant amount of Navy Type Navy Owned (NTNO) equipment including Link data systems, point defense weaponry, and similar tactics and training. However, to bring the cutters up to speed in the ASW domain, additional modifications are necessary. To reconstitute the ASW capability on cutters, an active and passive sonar processing system must be installed. NTNO equipment can be utilized for cost effectiveness and interoperability. The U.S. Navy currently utilizes the Variable Depth Sonar (VDS) and Multi-Function Towed Array (MFTA), both of which can be post-construction modular add-ons, potentially making the Coast Guard ASW capable in a matter of months.

As indicated in a recent Naval Postgraduate School thesis focused on the ability to detect and identify subsurface threats, the greatest subsurface threats facing the United States come from China, Russia, and North Korea.<sup>291</sup> Each of these adversaries possesses both the capability and potential will to utilize subsurface assets to challenge U.S. maritime homeland defenses. To detect a subsurface threat, passive sonars are utilized to identify acoustic anomalies, and if detected, are further analyzed using active sonar capabilities which can then determine the course and speed of the subsurface threat. However, the first significant challenge in the identification of subsurface threats is the reduction of “self-noise.”<sup>292</sup>

The ability to detect a subsurface threat is directly tied to the level of “self-noise” created. Therefore, the less “self-noise” created, the greater the range of subsurface detection.<sup>293</sup> By not planning for the ASW mission, the Coast Guard’s newest cutters were not designed for limiting the acoustical output. However, this can be corrected by reducing the noise created by the hull and propulsion plant, as well as noise created by machinery and personnel inside the ship. Employing NTNO noise reduction systems such as Propeller

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<sup>291</sup> Victor Valerio et al., “Evaluation of Littoral Combat Ships for Open-Ocean Anti-submarine Warfare” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2016), 10.

<sup>292</sup> Valerio et al., 20.

<sup>293</sup> Robert Urick, *Principles of Underwater Sound*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1983), 11.

Air Internal Emission (PRAIRIE) and Masker Air Systems, currently in use on Navy destroyers would effectively address this issue.<sup>294</sup> Having reduced “self-noise” the focus on detecting the noise of a subsurface threat becomes possible. Moreover, ASW capabilities are vastly improved flight deck equipped cutters are paired with a MH-60R helicopter outfitted for ASW search and destruction.

The U.S. Navy currently outfits their MH-60R helicopters with the AQS-22 “dipping” sonar along with Airborne Low-Frequency Sonar (ALFS).<sup>295</sup> The data accumulated by these detection devices is processed by Mission Package Application Software (MPAS) that is fed data via existing tactical data links such as Link 16 and a Ku-band Tactical Common Data Link (TCDL). Operationally, the MH-60R, a variant of the current MH-60 currently in use by the Coast Guard for Search and Rescue is a critical asset in the ASW mission due to the effectiveness of the AQS-22 Sonar and the speed with which the “dipping” sonar can be utilized. Even in the interim, until a USCG capability is fully sourced, enhancing the flight deck equipped cutters and ensuring their interoperability with U.S. Navy MH-60Rs would provide a near instant force multiplier. In sum, the additions of these NTNO systems to existing cutters would rapidly reconstitute an effective ASW capability. Furthermore, outfitting Coast Guard cutters may prove more useful than the Navy’s contested Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) due to range and endurance issues.

A recent Congressional Research Service report identified a surprising, and potentially mission-limiting problem for the LCS. Although the U.S. Navy requirements for the LCS were for a 3,500-mile range at 14 knots, the actual operating range at that speed has been measured at just 1961 nautical miles.<sup>296</sup> Conversely, the Coast Guard, always concerned with operational economy and efficiency due to historic budgetary limitations, designs cutters with endurance being a primary concern. Accordingly, the LCS-like National Security Cutter (WMSL) has a range of nearly 12,000 nautical miles at 12 knots;

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<sup>294</sup> Valerio et al., “Evaluation of Littoral Combat Ships,” 10.

<sup>295</sup> Valerio et al., 25.

<sup>296</sup> Ronald O’Rourke, *Navy Littoral Combat Ship/Frigate Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report No. RL33741 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2016), 27.



making the NSC an ideal, if not more desirable, fit for sustained ASW operations.<sup>297</sup> Furthermore, the Coast Guard's unique Title 14 law enforcement and regulatory authorities, combined with the NORTHCOM and PACOM Navy and Coast Guard DEFOR Command and Control structure, enables the service to both maintain regulatory authorities while simultaneously conducting ASW missions in ways which would likely prove difficult for the Navy, especially prior to a known conflict; which is the most likely time an adversary may conduct an asymmetric, undersea attack on our MTS.

For example, assume the USCG reconstituted the WMSL and was conducting ASW exercises off the coast of Los Angeles (the busiest port on the West Coast). The WMSL, accustomed to operating among commercial shipping and familiar with coastal operations, could functionally maneuver to reduce disruptions to the maritime transportation system while carrying out both Title 10 (military) and Title 14 (law enforcement) missions. Conversely, a Navy warship would not enjoy the same familiarity of commercial operations and would likely cause undue disruption and hardship to the commercial operators due more stringent force protection standoff distance and less familiarity with commercial operations during peacetime. More, if a commercial operator failed to follow established maritime rules, the Coast Guard has the regulatory authority to act while the Navy would be unable to do so under *Posse Comitatus* constraints.

#### **D. AN EFFECTIVE DETERRENT**

Subsurface asymmetric adversaries present the most dangerous threats to the United States. Equipping major cutters for ASW duty and conducting ASW patrols demonstrates deterrence that could have additional positive effects on maritime homeland defense against an asymmetric threat. In 1950, General Douglas MacArthur was winning in North Korea until an asymmetric threat nearly cancelled his campaign. The North Koreans, in concert with the Russians, rapidly deployed 3000 naval mines in the approaches to Wonsan. Within one hour, two U.S. minesweepers, USS *Pirate* and USS

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<sup>297</sup> "National Security Cutter Fact Sheet," U.S. Coast Guard, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Portals/10/CG-9/Acquisition%20PDFs/Factsheets/NSC.pdf?ver=2017-04-24-142526-023>.

*Pledge*, were sunk by mines. A third minesweeper, USS *Magpie* was also sunk and the destroyer USS *Mansfield*, was damaged and forced out of theater for repairs. A 250 ship amphibious landing force was unable to land in support of MacArthur for over two weeks, until a path through the mines could be cleared.<sup>298</sup> This event could be replicated due to the glaring vulnerabilities of America's largely undefended maritime homeland domain. A 2015 article in *The National Interest*, stated that China's People Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is capable of fielding over 100,000 sea mines, with over 14,000 mines laid in less than two weeks, "easily" laying more than 2,000 per day.<sup>299</sup> Presenting a credible and persistent ASW deterrent along America's maritime domain could prevent the deadly asymmetric mine warfare scenario from occurring along our shoreline.

The ability for a "4+1" adversary to utilize subsurface assets to challenge the U.S. along its coastline and wreak havoc in or near America's ports and waterways is not out of the realm of possibility. As stated previously, America's maritime homeland defense posture has continued to enjoy tranquility since the end the Cold War, or perhaps even as far back as the German U-Boat threat. However, as the National Military Strategy discussed, the emerging (4+1) challenges threaten the current level of military superiority America has enjoyed since the end of the Cold War. Therefore, presenting a credible ASW capability without degrading the U.S. Navy's expeditionary combat effectiveness would provide a significant level of deterrence; ensuring protection of America's Maritime Transportation System and access for America's military and commercial use of vital waterways.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

As an armed service, the Coast Guard has actively contributed to America's military objectives and defended the nation, largely through the actions of major cutters. The cutters distinguished themselves as a force multiplier in a variety of maritime operational domains and conflicts. However, as a result of civil-military challenges ranging

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<sup>298</sup> James Alexander, *Inchon to Wonsan: From the Deck of a Destroyer in the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1996), 58.

<sup>299</sup> Lyle Goldstein, "Old School Killers: Fear China's Sea Mines," *National Interest*, October 14, 2015, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/old-school-killers-fear-chinas-sea-mines-14069>.

from ineffective Secretary sponsorship to the accumulation of non-military duties, the service has been subjectively compelled to conform to an array of societal and functional imperatives, such as the administration of bridges or ocean station keeping. This has served to dilute the resources necessary to fully contribute as an armed service to the point of questionable armed service status. In April 2017, while speaking at the Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space conference, Commandant Zukunft stated, “Oftentimes, our identity as an armed service is forgotten.”<sup>300</sup> Weeks prior, the Coast Guard was advised of a potential \$1.3 billion budget cut, while DoD would see an additional \$51 billion.<sup>301</sup>

The existing threat environment points to increased state-actor threats to U.S. national security, necessitating a renewed emphasis on major cutter contribution to maritime homeland defense against peer-like adversaries. The benefits of increased Coast Guard cutter interaction against undersea threats would provide a significant level of adversarial deterrence, enable more Navy warships to deploy towards the enemy, and place the Coast Guard in a position to fulfill societal and functional imperatives, thereby increasing the relevance and importance among the armed services and likely providing a layer of budgetary security. Despite the many benefits of reconstituting ASW capabilities, the Coast Guard may still face challenges regarding professionalism and subjective control.

Huntington provides guidance to these issues when he stated, “subjective civilian control is, indeed, the only form of civilian control possible in the absence of a professional officer’s corps.” Due in large part to the inability to professionalize in the same way as the other armed forces, the Coast Guard is a victim of, “civilian groups enhancing their power at the expense of other civilian groups.”<sup>302</sup> As renewed emphasis points toward peer-like adversaries and existential threats, the Coast Guard’s lack of JPME emphasis hinders the professionalism of the service, and without adequate levels of professionalism, the Coast Guard will not attain a sufficient level of objective control. With 11 major statutorily

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<sup>300</sup> “Zukunft: After Budget Scare We Need to Keep Shouting,” Military.com, April 4, 2017, <https://www.military.com/dodbuzz/2017/04/04/zukunft-coast-guard-budget-scare-need-keep-shouting>.

<sup>301</sup> Katherine Blakely, “Overview of the 2018 Defense Budget Request” Center for Strategic Budgeting Analysis, August 3, 2017, <http://csbaonline.org/reports/overview-of-the-fy-2018-defense-budget-request>.

<sup>302</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 80.

defined missions, many of which have been determined to be non-military by other services, one immediately effective way the Coast Guard could address concerns of professionalism would be to advocate, or perhaps require, the completion of JPME. This curriculum, mandated in other armed services, would help shape the Coast Guard as a member of the joint forces and serve as a common thread among the disparate missions, enhancing the professional status and a shared mental military purpose of the service to national military objectives.

The maritime homeland defense challenges brought forth by peer like adversaries present an opportunity for the Coast Guard to regain lost armed service relevance. A viable path forward to return the Coast Guard into a militarily relevant armed service by establishing an ASW capable cutter fleet would be to influence the Navy they are needed for expeditionary warfare and should not be left with “guarding the coast” from peer like adversaries. This approach actually worked well for the Navy in previous decades.

In a 1954, U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* article, Samuel Huntington provided a course of action for the Navy that would help explain their relevance in what appeared to be a coming land war with the Soviet Union.<sup>303</sup> Huntington stated the Navy would be vital for troop transport and firepower from the sea. This line of reasoning worked with Congress and the American public and enabled the Navy to maintain a large fleet throughout the Cold War. Without a distinct and effective maritime homeland defense role for major cutters against peer-like adversaries, the Coast Guard may find itself lacking justification for remaining a member of the armed forces. Rather than fade into another decade or two of subjective control languishing in a Department of Homeland Security more focused with FEMA than maritime homeland defense, the Coast Guard should preeminently assert itself into an effective and indispensable maritime homeland defense role much like Huntington proscribed to the Navy. Looking back to the example set by Commandant Yost provides the course upon which the Coast Guard should navigate. Asserting ASW as a service priority will ensure relevancy as an armed service, and just as Yost demonstrated, relevancy brings resources.

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<sup>303</sup> Huntington, “National Policy and the Transoceanic Navy.”

Due to the functional and societal imperative of deterring peer-like adversaries from conducting an undersea attack, the Coast Guard will find itself with both constituent and congressional support; bringing a level of objective control rarely enjoyed by the often-subjected service. Outfitting the service's flight deck equipped cutters with an ASW capability would enable the Coast Guard to assume greater responsibility for maritime homeland defense. By doing so, the Coast Guard is providing a vital service to the homeland and the joint force by freeing up the Navy for expeditionary warfare against peer threats.

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