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14. ABSTRACT
The United States' 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS) and its subordinate strategies emphasize the building of cooperation amongst the world's militaries as a means to maintain peace. While alliances and partnerships serve an important purpose in ensuring security both at home and abroad, the United States military should be selective in choosing how much cooperation is necessary and with whom to establish these relationships.

Indiscriminately building military partnerships on a global scale to support the larger NSS goals has the potential to create an international environment that is less peaceful and to overextend America's limited military resources, thus inducing insecurity in otherwise stable regions of the world. Therefore, the United States should consider a more standardized approach for vetting potential military partnerships based on two criteria: Stability and Sustainability.

Due to current economic limitations and the consequent reduction of U.S. Armed Forces, Geographic Combatant Commanders may be operating under the assumption (or direction) that more military partnerships with other countries will supplement a smaller U.S. military and increase America's national security. This paper will explore potential faults in that logic and will provide a clear and concise roadmap for how Geographic Combatant Commanders can create more effective partnerships that meet the desired end states outlined in higher-level strategic guidance.

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INDUCED INSECURITY: UNDERSTANDING THE POTENTIAL PITFALLS IN DEVELOPING THEATER CAMPAIGN PLANS

by

Jerris Lee Bennett

Commander, U.S. Navy

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.

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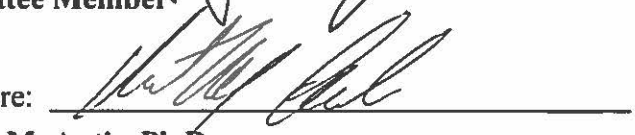
Signature: 
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The United States' 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS) and its subordinate strategies emphasize the building of cooperation amongst the world's militaries as a means to maintain peace. While alliances and partnerships serve an important purpose in ensuring security both at home and abroad, the United States military should be selective in choosing how much cooperation is necessary and with whom to establish these relationships. Indiscriminately building military partnerships on a global scale to support the larger NSS goals has the potential to create an international environment that is less peaceful and to overextend America's limited military resources, thus inducing insecurity in otherwise stable regions of the world. Therefore, the United States should consider a more standardized approach for vetting potential military partnerships based on two criteria: Stability, and Sustainability.

Due to current economic limitations and the consequent reduction of U.S. Armed Forces, Geographic Combatant Commanders may be operating under the assumption (or direction) that more military partnerships with other countries will supplement a smaller U.S. military and increase America's national security. This paper will explore potential faults in that logic and will provide a clear and concise roadmap for how Geographic Combatant Commanders can create more effective partnerships that meet the desired end states outlined in higher-level strategic guidance.

DEDICATION

To the millions of men and women who have served in harm's way in an effort to keep America strong and make the world a better place.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The United States' 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS) and its subordinate strategies emphasize the building of cooperation amongst the world's militaries as a means to maintain peace. While alliances and partnerships serve an important purpose in ensuring security both at home and abroad, the U.S. military should be selective in choosing how much cooperation is necessary and with whom to establish these relationships. Indiscriminately building military partnerships on a global scale to support the larger NSS goals has the potential to create an international environment that is less peaceful and to overextend America's limited military resources, thus inducing insecurity in otherwise stable regions around the world. Therefore, the United States should consider a more standardized approach for vetting potential military partnerships based on two criteria: Stability and Sustainability.

This paper will review current national and military strategies and bring to light their overreliance on military partnerships around the world. Afterwards, an in-depth discussion of the two previously stated criteria for vetting military partnerships will include a thorough review of established international relations theories followed by historical examples. These case studies will show where a failure to understand and apply these criteria caused a breakdown in stability and sustainability, directly leading to costly wars.

While history is a great reference from which to identify trends and draw conclusions, it does not always prove to be an effective means of predicting the outcome of current or future events. In addition, the ability to accurately predict future crises is exceptionally difficult. Therefore, discussing a situation faced today by a Geographic

Combatant Commander (GCC) will help bridge the gap between historical examples and their applicability to the current world. Moreover, doing so will demonstrate how a region's security may become unintentionally corroded by a Commander's Theater Campaign Plan (TCP). Due to current economic limitations and the consequent reduction of U.S. Armed Forces, GCCs may be operating under the assumption (or direction) that more military partnerships with other countries will supplement a smaller U.S. military and increase America's national security. This paper will explore potential faults in that logic and will provide a clear and concise roadmap for how to create more effective partnerships that meet the desired end states outlined in higher-level strategic guidance.

This rational approach to deciding with which countries the United States should establish military-related partnerships and the degree of military support needed to achieve strategic goals is important for two reasons. First, the deepening of existing military alliances and partnerships or the creation of new ones should not upset a region's current stability – no matter how firm or tenuous it may be. Keeping in mind the purpose behind these relationships is to increase U.S. and global security, any change to a region's existing balance of power can become, if not instituted correctly, counterproductive and may increase the level of fear in nearby countries. Stability, therefore, is the combined effect of being able to maintain the existing state of military affairs (status quo) within an area *and* not setting a course for armed conflict. This paper will explore some existing theories on the causes of conflict and how they relate to the deepening and broadening of regional military cooperation.

It is important to note, however, what constitutes stability in one region does not translate consistently to other regions of the world. Since there will always be a certain

level of tension between nations, the status quo (and stability) is dependent upon the local level of tolerance for violence, as determined by either the government or the general population. For example, stability in the Middle East between Israel and its neighbors is very tense and the status quo is often interrupted by smaller, isolated instances of armed conflict (higher tolerance). Meanwhile, stability in East Asia between China and Taiwan is maintained without spurts of armed conflict because both know it could lead to a major regional war (lower tolerance).

Second, increases to the quantity and quality of military partnerships must be sustainable over time. For that to happen, all military relationships must be continuously supported by the United States and its partnered states. However, if America's military becomes overextended and can no longer support all of its assembled partnerships, then its absence may create gaps in regional security. In addition, a persistent global presence by the U.S. military could be viewed by some as hegemonic, giving rise to countervailing alliances or actions. It stands to reason that if military partnerships are as critical to America's national security as the 2015 NSS and subordinate strategies suggest, then an inability to sustain them can result in a reduction of security.

It needs to be stated upfront, however, that there are distinct differences between defense alliances and military partnerships. In general, an alliance can be created by two or more like-minded states with mutual interests in order to advance a common purpose. A trade alliance, for example, allows a group of countries to increase the amount of trade between them through reductions in tariffs or other benefits not offered to non-members. Similarly, a defense alliance is a formal agreement whereby member states will provide aid and/or support to other members in the form of financial assistance, military

equipment, or troops when needed for the defense of its territory or citizens.

A partnership, however, is less formal and is usually established among two or more countries that combine their various national resources for a singular purpose. For instance, a large number of states joined together in a partnership to contain and combat the 2014 outbreak of the Ebola virus. Likewise, a military partnership is an agreement based on the sharing of military resources to increase the interoperability among the group's members through training, information sharing, joint exercises, and (sometimes) weapon sales. This concept of military partnership also includes instances of security cooperation, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, localized training events, and other smaller uses of the U.S. military around the world. Because all of these practices require the commitment of resources (human and monetary) and the physical presence of America's Armed Forces, it is important to understand their collective impact in the larger context of national, regional, and global security.

The key differences between an alliance and a partnership are formality and legality. Whereas an alliance is a binding document usually requiring approval by the country's leadership (e.g., the U.S. Senate), a partnership is less rigid and may or may not be officially sanctioned by the member state's legislative branch of government or equivalent authority. The primary similarities, for the purpose of this paper, are asset allocation and global visibility.

Although the 2015 NSS and subordinate strategies clearly separate *alliance* and *partnership* throughout their pages, the two words are often used together in the same sentence, especially in a military context, because of the similarity of their purpose – military-to-military relationships that promote collective security and unity of effort.

While consistently using the two words together leads to an assumption that they are synonymous, writing them separately reminds the reader of the formality and legality of one over the other. Regardless of their differences, all defense alliances and military partnerships need to be stable and sustainable in order to achieve the goals outlined in higher-level national security and military strategies.

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIES

The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.[1]
– *Carl von Clausewitz*

Due to its complexity, a good strategy is often times difficult to produce, execute, and understand. Colin Gray wrote that one of the reasons why is because it "is neither policy nor armed combat; rather it is the bridge between them."[2] In other words, strategy is the link between what leaders desire as goals and how their subordinates hope to implement them. Harry Yarger added that strategy "provides direction for the state, seeking to maximize positive outcomes and minimize negative outcomes, as the state moves through a complex and rapidly changing environment into the future."[3] A more practical way to describe strategy is through the *ends-ways-means-risk* model, where leaders envision their desired future environment (*ends*), then consider *ways* (actions) to employ *means* (resources) to achieve those desired ends. Any imbalance between these three creates *risk*.

In the 2015 U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS), the President articulates his desired future conditions *(ends)* and describes his concepts for how he intends to use (*ways*) the various instruments of national power (*means*) to achieve the desired end state. When an end state is not achieved, as a result of the objective being unrealistic, a concept is inadequate, or the resources available are insufficient, a gap in the nation's security (*risk*) is created. That opening could be exploited by an adversary through the use of its own instruments of (not necessarily national) power. For example, if the United States is

1. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 99.
2. Colin S. Gray, "Why Strategy is Difficult," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 22 (Summer 1999): 9-10.
3. Harry R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, February 2006), 3.

unable to achieve a stated goal for whatever reason, then an enemy might be able to use its resources to gain the initiative and create a threat to Americans at home or abroad.

Ideally, the various U.S. Government (USG) departments and agencies develop their own respective subordinate strategies based on their own organizational mission that support attainment of the NSS's desired end states. For example, in response to the 2010 NSS (the predecessor to the 2015 version), the Department of Defense (DoD) published the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), signed by the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), and the 2011 National Military Strategy (NMS), signed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). Similarly, the DoD departments and agencies develop their own subordinate strategies that nest with and support the NSS (e.g., the Navy's National Maritime Strategy). The final outcome is a hierarchy of strategies that is broad and generic at the highest level. At each succeeding subordinate level the strategies are refined to be more specific and deterministic – defining the actions and objectives that a specific department or agency needs to execute and attain. This hierarchical approach to strategy attempts to synchronize all elements of U.S. engagement in the world, shaping the strategic environment in pursuit of America's enduring national interests.

The 2015 NSS reiterated the four enduring national interests listed in the 2010 version. First among these is the "security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners."[4] This end state is of primary importance to the President because, as he declared, the "United States government has no greater responsibility than protecting the American people."[5] He continued, however, that America's obligations "do not end

4. Barak Obama, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, February 2015), 2. The others are: economic prosperity, respect for universal values, and stronger international cooperation.
5. Ibid., 7.

at our borders. We embrace our responsibilities for underwriting international security because it serves our interests, upholds our commitments to allies and partners, and addresses threats that are truly global."[6] Of those global threats, he added, none "poses as grave a danger to our security and well-being as the potential use of nuclear weapons and materials by irresponsible states or terrorists."[7] To summarize, while there are additional enduring interests and threats to national security articulated in the 2015 NSS, the President's greatest concern is the security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners from the potential use of nuclear weapons. This, however, is an enormous task and one that he realized cannot be accomplished without help.

To achieve the desired end states, the President emphasized the fact that "there are no global problems that can be solved without the United States, and few that can be solved by the United States alone"[8] Therefore, he stated, America "will continuously expand the scope of cooperation to encompass other state partners . . . to share the burdens of maintaining global security."[9] A way to do this, he asserted, is to posture the U.S. military "globally to protect our citizens and interests, preserve regional stability, render humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and build the capacity of our partners to join with us in meeting security challenges."[10] Applying the *ends-ways-means-risk* model to summarize the key elements contained within the 2015 NSS, the President intends to ensure the national security objectives *(ends)* are met by expanding the scope and capacity of partnered nations (*ways*) using America's Armed Forces (*means*). A significant *risk* exists, however, if the effect an increase in global military partnerships

6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., 11.
8. Ibid., 3.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 7.

will have on regional stability and the sustainability of the U.S. military to meet its increase in obligations is not fully considered.

Similar language is found in all of the subordinate military-related strategies. The 2014 QDR, for example, emphasizes "three pillars: Protect the homeland . . . Build security globally . . . [and] Project power and win decisively."[11] In addition, it stated the DoD "will continue to operate in close concert with allies and partners . . . because no country alone can address the globalized challenges we collectively face."[12] These ambitious goals will be achieved, it declared, despite being "smaller and leaner"[13] – a reference to the mandated reductions in federal spending contained within the Budget Control Act of 2011 and the increasing likelihood of future sequestration-level cuts.

The creation of military alliances and partnerships for defensive purposes is well documented throughout world history and is certainly not new to American history (e.g., the American Revolution, World Wars I and II, etc.). However, the current trend of economic cost sharing (also referred to by some as burden sharing) with other militaries for the purpose of global force projection can be traced to a speech delivered in 2005 by then-Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Michael G. Mullen. In it, his "1,000 ship navy"[14] concept served as the foundation for what would eventually become the 2007 National Maritime Strategy. Later, while serving as CJCS, Admiral Mullen was a key participant in the drafting of the 2010 NSS and personally signed the 2011 NMS.[15]

In his cover letter to the 2011 NMS, Admiral Mullen described his vision as "a

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11. Charles Hagel, *Quadrennial Defense Review* 2014 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, March 2014), v.
12. Ibid., 16.
13. Ibid., v.
14. Michael G. Mullen, "Remarks delivered at the Seventeenth International Seapower Symposium," (lecture, Newport, RI, September 21, 2005).
15. Admiral Mullen served as CNO from July 2005 to September 2007 and as CJCS from October 2007 to September 2011.

Joint Force that provides military capability to defend our Nation and allies, and to advance broader peace, security, and prosperity."[16] To achieve this vision, he listed four national military objectives: to counter violent extremism, to deter and defeat aggression (including WMD), to strengthen international and regional security, and to shape the future force.[17] Strengthening international and regional security is essential to the U.S. military's mission because, as he stated, "the changing security environment requires the Joint Force to deepen security relationships with our allies and create opportunities for partnerships with new and diverse groups of actors."[18] Moreover, he specifically noted that "transnational threats such as . . . proliferation of WMD . . . are often best addressed through cooperative security approaches that create mutually beneficial outcomes."[19]

However, within the 2015 NSS there appears to be an inconsistency in the strategic approach regarding the quantity and quality of partnerships the United States is seeking. As noted above, the President seeks to expand the scope of cooperation with other partners while also building the capacity of partners. To be clear, *building* the *capacity* of a partnership is not the same process as *expanding* the *scope* of partnerships. While the former insinuates a partner will gain a higher quality, the latter denotes a larger quantity of militaries partnered with the United States.

While the old adage that quantity has a quality all its own may have been applicable during the Cold War, its militaristic usage in today's more complex realm of international relations can undermine America's peaceful intentions. Quantitatively expanding the Joint Force's partnerships can create fear in regional power competitors

16. Michael G. Mullen, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 2011), Chairman's Cover Letter.
17. Ibid., 4.
18. Ibid., Chairman's Cover Letter.
19. Ibid., 15.

and lend credence to the often-exclaimed criticism of the United States' imperialistic tendencies and hegemonic goals. In addition, this expansion of the military's global outreach implies an assumption that a Joint Force, currently contracting in size due to economic constraints, will somehow be able to successfully complete an increase in partner building tasks. Conversely, the qualitative approach intends to achieve the President's top national security priorities through deeper and more effective partnerships, which will increase the efficiency of limited military resources.

With this strategic struggle of quantity versus quality in mind, the United States should develop a more standardized approach for vetting potential military partnerships because, as Colin Gray states, strategies can fail when they "apply the wrong solutions."[20] The wrong solution for the United States would be to create numerous military-based relationships around the world that create regional instability and that are unsustainable by a smaller Joint Force. This strategic failure can be easily avoided by ensuring a potential partnership will maintain regional stability and the U.S. military can effectively support all of its partnerships.

20. Gray, 8.

CHAPTER 3: STABILITY

A man unnerved is a highly infectious carrier of fear,
capable of spreading an epidemic of panic.[1]
– B. H. Liddell-Hart

The term *stable environment* is highly subjective and based on perception. The creation of new military partnerships with the intention of producing a stabilizing counterweight might be perceived by some as an aggressively destabilizing maneuver. As defined in the introduction of this paper, stability is the combined effect of maintaining the existing state of military affairs (status quo) within a particular geographic area *and* not setting a course for armed conflict. Therefore, when vetting a prospective military partner, the United States must consider the potentially negative effects such a relationship may cause on the entire region through the eyes of nearby countries. Current theories on international relations that should be contemplated during this process include Balance of Power, Security Dilemma, Conflict Spiral, and Power Transition. While an in-depth discussion of each of these models is beyond the scope of this paper, a brief overview will help GCCs gain a better understanding of the wider impact potential military partnerships might have on U.S. and regional security.

One of the founding fathers of Realist Theory, Hans Morgenthau, wrote that alliances are "a necessary function of the balance of power operating in a multiple state system."[2] Kenneth Waltz later added that "as nature abhors a vacuum, so international politics abhors unbalanced power. Faced by unbalanced power, states try to increase their own strength or they ally with others to bring the international distribution of

1. B. H. Liddell-Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1967), 228.
2. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 4th ed., (New York: Knopf, 1967), 175.

power into balance."[3] Stephen Walt further advanced this line of thought by suggesting "that states ally to balance against threats rather than power alone. Although the distribution of power is an extremely important factor, the level of threat is also affected by . . . perceived intentions."[4] At the heart of the Balance of Power / Balance of Threat (BP/T) theories, Walt declared, is "the belief that states form alliances in order to prevent stronger powers from dominating them."[5] For example, Country "A" forms a military partnership with Country "B" to bolster its defenses against a potential attack from Country "C".

An alternate possibility, called bandwagoning, suggests that a country may choose to align with a dominant state in a "hope to avoid an attack by diverting it elsewhere."[6] For example, Country "A" forms a military partnership with Country "C" so that Country "B" will appear to be a weaker target for "C". The key difference between these two is the perception of the unaligned state regarding whom it believes is the biggest threat to its own security and its decision to either balance or bandwagon is based on many factors, including geographic proximity, aggregate capabilities, offensive power, and aggressive intentions among others.

Whatever the motivation behind a country's decision to enter into a military partnership with the United States, the impact of that relationship on nearby nations will undoubtedly affect the region's stability. For instance, when faced with a military partnership formed between a nearby nation and the United States (a perceived change to BP/T), a regional power essentially has two actionable options: increase its own relative

3. Kenneth N. Waltz, "Evaluating Theories," *The American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (December 1997): 915.
4. Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 5.
5. Ibid., 18.
6. Ibid., 21.

strength or attempt to reduce the threat posed by its adversaries while it is still strong enough to do so. Whereas the former drives towards a Security Dilemma / Conflict Spiral, the latter attempts to prevent Power Transition – both of which can have a destabilizing effect brought on by fear and distrust.

The central point behind a Security Dilemma, as Robert Jervis wrote, is "that an increase in one state's security decreases the security of others."[7] This is because, as Walt added, "a state whose security position is threatened will probably attempt to increase its relative power (i.e., by spending more on defense) while simultaneously seeking an alliance with another state."[8] More recently, Jack Levy and William Thompson explained the steps that lead from Security Dilemma to Conflict Spiral as if "one of the states in a dispute responds by forming an alliance with another state, the probability of war increases . . . [and] if the adversary responds with a counter-alliance, the probability of war increase further still. A build-up of armaments that leads to an arms race increases the probability of war even more."[9]

From this explanation it can be derived that the United States, while attempting to create partnerships with other countries using its military, can unintentionally set in motion a series of events that alter a region's BP/T (status quo) and chart a course leading to armed conflict. Although America's initial intentions may be peaceful, the effect on a region may be made less stable and less secure than it was prior to the creation of the new military relationship. However, conflict is still a possibility even if a regional power decides not to respond by spending more on defense or forming its own alliances.

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7. Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 1978): 186.
8. Walt, 9.
9. Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *Causes of War* (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 61.

Power Transition theory describes the period of time where the relative power of one state is surpassed by that of another state. One possible scenario that leads to armed conflict is when a regional power initiates war prior to being overtaken in strength by a rising challenger.[10] So, as potentially seen through the eyes of an existing regional power, if the United States is viewed as a rising challenger due to its creation of new military partnerships, the incumbent leader might initiate conflict in order to preserve its influence over nearby states and prevent a transition of power.

A second possible scenario that leads to armed conflict is when a rising regional power initiates war once it believes it is stronger than the current leader.[11] Thus, if that reigning leader is in a defensive alliance or military partnership with the United States, then America can once again find itself being dragged into regional hostilities – either directly or by proxy. However, if the United States chose not to engage on behalf of its partners then it could potentially begin to lose its highly-valued military connections around the world. Moreover, recalling the strategy outlined in the 2015 NSS regarding the criticality of military partnerships to national and global security, the United States can ill afford to allow its partnered nations to fail in battle.

Once a BP/T has been disrupted by the formulation of new military partnerships, paths leading towards a Security Dilemma / Conflict Spiral or Power Transition can easily result. Behind these international relations theories, perception and fear provide the spark to any inflamed conflict. Davis Bobrow wrote that "when a nation sharply overperceives the hostility of another and substantially underestimates the hostility

10. Ibid., 46.
11. Ibid.

conveyed by its own intentions and plans, there is little chance for cooperation."[12] The actions of European countries prior to World War I illustrate how regional destabilization can result when a BP/T is changed.

Europe (1900-1914)

Although there are many claims by historians as to the exact causes of World War I, two specific themes are consistent in their writings – the creation of defense alliances and a build-up of armed forces. These new alliances led to an imbalance of power against Germany and Austria-Hungary (Dual Alliance) and heavily in favor of Britain, France, and Russia (Triple Entente). Subsequently, a conflict spiral developed wherein both sides increased their military strength at an alarming rate. As a result, the region's stability was adversely affected and proved to be a major catalyst to the commencement of war.

At the beginning of the twentieth century in Europe, "there were really only two 'core' alliances [between major powers] in existence. One was that between France and Russia, the other a 'Dual Alliance' of Germany and Austria-Hungary."[13] However, "between 1900 and 1914, eight major-power alliances (all of them bilateral) were concluded. . . . [none of which] included either Germany or Austria-Hungary."[14] Membership changes to these defense alliances, "if they still maintained some type of balance, need not be destabilizing. A relatively smaller number of changes which upset

12. Davis B. Bobrow, *International Relations – New Approaches* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, Inc., 1972), 54.
13. Alan Ned Sabrosky, "From Bosnia to Sarajevo: A Comparative Discussion of Interstate Crises," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 19, no. 1 (March 1975): 5.
14. Ibid., 7.

that balance in favor of one of the coalitions, however, could have the opposite effect."[15] Thus, by 1914 an imbalance of power was created because the "Dual Alliance of Germany and Austria-Hungary was opposed by a coalition of at least four[16] (and with Italy, five) other major powers."[17] This significant increase in the amount of defense alliances being assembled that excluded the countries of the Dual Alliance (an imbalance of power), combined with Germany's belief that it could deter Britain from defending other European countries through a show of force, led to one of the largest increases in military spending the world had ever seen to that point.

The ensuing security dilemma initiated by the formation of these new defense alliances created fear (an imbalance of threat) in Germany that set in motion a conflict spiral. As Table 1 illustrates, defense appropriations of the world's major powers in 1900 were mixed, with France and Italy spending less than they had a decade before. Over the next fourteen years, however, military expenditures "more than doubled in Russia,

	Britain	France	Russia	Germany	Italy	Austria-Hungary	U.S.	Japan
1890	157	142	145	121	79	64	67	24
1900	253	139	204	168	78	68	191	69
1910	340	188	312	204	122	87	279	84
1914	384	197	441	442	141	182	314	96

Table 1: Defense Appropriations of the World's Leading Powers ($ millions)[18]

Germany, and Austria-Hungary and almost doubled in Italy, with the largest rises occurring after 1910."[19] Each side, seeing an increase in military spending by the other, felt compelled to match or exceed it with defense appropriations of their own.

Part of the reasoning behind Germany's growing strength, as Chancellor

15. Ibid., 6.
16. Four includes the aforementioned Triple Entente plus Japan.
17. Sabrosky, 7.
18. Quincy Wright, A Study of War, 2nd ed., (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 670-671.
19. Paul M. Kennedy, "The First World War and the International Power System," *International Security* 9, no. 1 (Summer 1984): 7-8.

Bethmann Hollweg stated, was because it "might force England to realize that [the balance of power] principle had become untenable and impracticable and to opt for a peaceful settlement with Germany."[20] German Secretary of State Gottlieb von Jagow alleged that "people in England will seriously ask themselves whether it will be just that simple and without danger to play the role of France's guardian angel against us."[21] In addition, "many Germans believed that 'bandwagoning' with a powerful state rather than 'balancing' against it was the guiding principle in international alliance-formation. Aggressors would gather momentum as they gained power, because opponents would be intimidated into acquiescence and neutrals would rally to the stronger side."[22]

Germany's strategy for expanding its sphere of influence in Europe had three parts: match the power of opposing alliances with domestic military strength, become so strong militarily as to deter Britain from defending France, and encourage smaller countries to join the German advancement towards European dominance. However, reciprocal increases in defense spending by other major world powers undermined this strategy. Therefore, "war was seen as the best route both to gaining expansion and to avoiding drastic loss of influence. There seemed to be no way for Germany merely to retain and safeguard her existing position."[23] As a result, the war produced a conservative estimate of combined military and civilian deaths in excess of 15 million and more than 22 million wounded.

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20. Bethmann Hollweg (December 2, 1914), quoted in Fritz Fischer, *War of Illusions: German Policies from 1911 to 1914*, trans. Marian Jackson (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975), 69. Original source could not be located.

21. Gottlieb von Jagow (February 1914), quoted in Imanuel Geiss, ed., *July 1914: The Outbreak of the First World War: Selected Documents* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967), 25. Original source could not be located.

22. Stephen Van Ezra, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War," *International Security* 9, no. 1 (Summer 1984): 62.

23. Jervis, 191.

The primary lesson learned from this historical case study is that the increase in defense alliances after 1900 caused a severe shift in Europe's balance of power away from the Dual Alliance. In an attempt to rebalance its power against the Triple Entente, scare off France's military partners, and garner support from neutral countries, Germany more than doubled its defense spending. The ensuing conflict spiral set the countries of Europe on an irreversible path towards one of the costliest wars the world has even seen in terms of lives lost. Unfortunately, this example may be repeated in Eastern Europe in the near future unless leaders consider the negative impact multiple defense partnerships can have on regional stability.

Current World Application

In April 1949, the United States and eleven other countries in Western Europe and North America formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for the purpose of "deterring Soviet expansionism, forbidding the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe through a strong North American presence on the continent, and encouraging European political integration."[24] The end of the Cold War, marked by the destruction of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, caused many people to question the future usefulness of NATO.[25] However, instead of reaching a celebratory conclusion, NATO expanded eastward by granting memberships to former Warsaw Pact and Soviet satellite states – a move Russia

24. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "A Short History of NATO," http://www.nato.int/history/nato-history.html (accessed December 7, 2014).

25. John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (Summer 1990): 52.

perceived as threatening and remains "a bone of contention today."[26] That being said, there are two indications that a conflict spiral might have begun. If it has, then the result will be the creation of a delicate situation for the Commander of the United States European Command (USEUCOM) with regards to national, regional, and global security. Moreover, new military partnerships through an aggressive TCP will further tip the balance of power away from an increasingly aggressive Russia.

When placed in chronological order, NATO's enlargement and Russia's aggressive maneuvers combine to provide the first indication that a conflict spiral might have begun.[27] Following the inclusion of three former Warsaw Pact countries[28] into NATO in March 1999, Russia sent troops into Chechnya in September of that year and signed a friendship agreement with China in July 2001. In March 2004, NATO again expanded to include seven more states[29] that were strategically aligned with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Shortly thereafter, Russia agreed to supply fuel for Iran's Bushehr nuclear reactor (February 2005), test fired a long-distance missile (May 2007), and planted its flag on the seabed at the North Pole (August 2007). In addition, Russia suspended its participation in the 1990 Conventional Armed Forces in Europe treaty that limited the deployment of heavy military equipment across Europe (November 2007), conducted Soviet-like navy exercises in the Bay of Biscay off the coast of France (January 2008), and invaded the country of Georgia (August 2008).

More recently, NATO membership increased in April 2009 to include Albania

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26. Bill Bradley, "A Diplomatic Mystery," *Foreign Policy* 174 (Sep/Oct 2009): 30.

27. Timeline compiled from two sources: BBC News Europe, "Russia Profile," http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17840446 (accessed December 7, 2014); NATO, "Member Countries," http://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/index.html (accessed December 7, 2014).

28. Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland

29. Bulgaria, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

and Croatia, which was followed by increased tensions between Russia and Ukraine. This crisis reached a boiling point when Russian forces invaded Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in February 2014. "It was Russia's most aggressive military action in more than 20 years and fueled anxiety in many Eastern European nations that are now NATO partner countries."[30] Afterwards, Russian President Vladimir Putin "told Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko this summer that not only could he be in Kiev [Ukraine] in two days,"[31] but the capitals of five NATO countries near Russia's borders, too.

Further understanding of the linkage between expanding military partnerships and an increase in the number of conflicts is provided by Stephen Van Ezra. He explained that alliances "widen and tighten as states grow more dependent on one another for security, a circumstance which fosters the spreading of local conflicts."[32] Moreover, he added that "each state is more likely to be menaced by aggressive neighbors who are governed by the same logic, creating an even more competitive atmosphere and giving states further reason to seek security in alliances and expansion."[33] In short, the creation of military-based relationships provides an incentive for counter-balancing actions in neighboring states.

As a menacing and aggressive neighbor, Russia's drastic increase in military spending (see Graph 1) since Eastern European countries began joining NATO in 1999 is the second indication that a conflict spiral might have begun. This growth has propelled Russia to third place on the list of the world's largest spenders on domestic defense

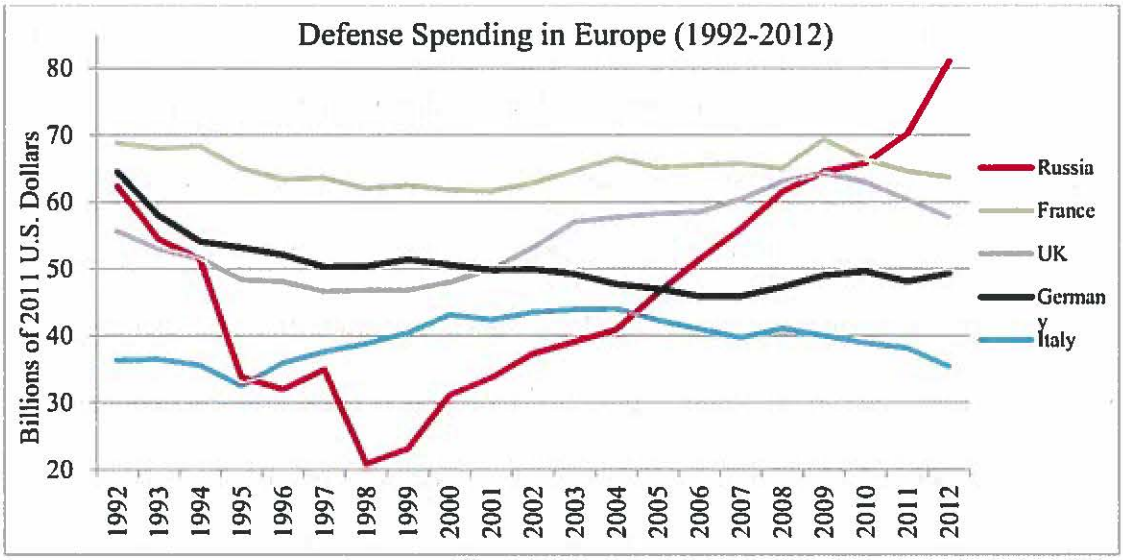
30. Andrew Tilghman, "EUCOM Chief: Time to Stop the Drawdown in Europe," *Military Times*, July 7, 2014, http://archive.militarytimes.com/article/20140707/NEWS08/307070035/EUCOM-chief-Time-stop-drawdown-Europe (accessed December 10, 2014).

31. Mark Seip, "The Cold War May Be Over, But the Fight Against Russia Isn't," *Defense One*, October 27, 2014, http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2014/10/cold-war-may-be-over-fight-against-russia-isnt/97451/ (accessed December 9, 2014).

32. Van Ezra, 64.

33. Ibid.

behind the United States and China. Even though Russia was "one of the countries hit hardest"[34] during the 2008-2009 global economic downturn, its defense spending surpassed Japan in 2008, the United Kingdom in 2009 and France in 2011.



Graph 1: Defense Spending in Europe (1992-2012)[35]

In Europe, there are striking similarities between pre-WWI and today. Whereas the early years of the twentieth century witnessed an imbalance of power through the creation of eight defense alliances that excluded Germany, the beginning of the twenty-first century has seen the same imbalance occur through the inclusion of twelve former Warsaw Pact and Soviet Satellite states into NATO. In addition, Germany's military spending in the 14 years between 1900 ($204 million) and 1914 ($442 million) increased 116 percent (more than doubled) while Russia's military spending in the 14 years between 1998 ($20.8 billion) and 2012 ($81 billion) increased 289 percent (nearly quadrupled). What is currently missing from this comparison of 1914 Germany and 2014

34. Andrew E. Kramer, "Russia Facing Long Recession, World Bank Says," *New York Times*, June 25, 2009, New York Edition, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/25/business/global/25ruble.html?_r=0 (accessed December 8, 2014).

35. Graph created using data provided by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database," http://milexdata.sipri.org/files/?file=SIPRI+milex+data+1988-2012+v2.xlsx (accessed December 8, 2014).

Russia, however, is a corresponding build-up of military forces in Europe by countries other than Russia; a point which Air Force General Philip Breedlove, the dual-hatted Commander of USEUCOM and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, will undoubtedly be asked to provide crucial input on in the near future to the President and Congress.

At the height of the Cold War in Europe, the United States had "more than 250,000 troops who were on high alert for a ground invasion from the Soviet Army,"[36] but that number has decreased to roughly 67,000 since then. In addition, European states "have cut almost 160,000 troops since 2010."[37] These reductions in force size were made primarily due to a lack of any significant threat in the region combined with the economic reprioritizations of individual countries. General Breedlove recently summarized the evolving situation by saying "for the last 12 to 14 years, we've been looking at Russia as a partner . . . Now what we see is a very different situation."[38] However, giving in to the temptation to commit more armed forces to the region by the United States and its military allies and partners will continue the conflict spiral.

In conclusion, the absence of regional stability can result in a reduction of U.S. and global security. Since tension-building partnerships have the potential to detract from a region's current level of stability, they do not add value to a GCC's TCP. Therefore, maintaining or increasing stability must be the first step to vetting potential military alliances and partnerships. Once a region's capacity to tolerate additional military partnerships without inducing instability is assessed, GCCs need to take into account the ability of the U.S. military to sustain all of its alliances and partnerships as a whole.

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36. Tilghman, "EUCOM Chief."
37. Seip, "The Cold War May Be Over, But the Fight Against Russia Isn't."
38. Tilghman, "EUCOM Chief."

CHAPTER 4: SUSTAINABILITY

A state which expends its strength to the point of exhaustion bankrupts its own policy, and future.[1]
– B. H. Liddell-Hart

After it has been determined the impact an additional military partnership will have on a region's overall stability, the next criteria for vetting new affiliations is to ensure America's combined military commitments (old and new) are sustainable by its armed forces. Stephen Walt argues that a military partnership or defense alliance "assumes some level of commitment and an exchange of benefits for both parties; severing the relationship or failing to honor the agreement would presumably cost something"[2] In the context of U.S. national security, that cost will presumably appear in the form of Americans being less safe and secure, a proliferation of WMD, and a spreading of violent extremism around the world. That being said, there are two situations that can force the United States to experience those costs: overextension of its own armed forces or an increased perception by other countries of America's hegemonic tendencies.

The United States must have enough resources available to properly maintain its commitments and exchange benefits with all of its allies and military partners. Since each relationship requires an allocation of human capital and monetary support to continue operating, the more relationships America creates the more resources it must expend to sustain them. Therefore, overextension can become a reality if the United States does not have enough military personnel or the economic endurance to support all of its obligations. Former U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk once warned "that the

1. B. H. Liddell-Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1967), 366.
2. Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 1.

integrity of [America's] alliances is at the heart of the maintenance of peace, and if it should be discovered that the pledge of the United States is meaningless, the structure of peace would crumble and we would be well on our way to a terrible catastrophe."[3] Thus, the absence of people or money will cause the United States to default on its worldwide military commitments, leading to the creation of security gaps. Within those gaps lay opportunities for America's adversaries to exploit weaknesses utilizing their own instruments of power.

However, even if the United States can stretch its limited resources thin enough to meet all of its worldwide military obligations, the perception that such a strategy will convey can be equally self-defeating. By projecting an image of the U.S. military being engaged everywhere, all the time, some countries will undoubtedly take offense and conclude that America has progressed from world superpower to global hegemon. With this perception, as Stephen Walt wrote, "two states whose capabilities are increasing might well form an alliance against a third state that is growing still faster or that appears especially aggressive."[4] Therefore, as history has proven many times over, a perception of aggressiveness can lead to the severing of relationships or the creation of counter-balancing alliances – both of which will reduce national, regional, and global security.

Napoleonic France (1797-1814)

While there are an abundance of historical examples that demonstrate how the lack of sustainability can be the Achilles heel of a national security strategy, the

3. Dean Rusk, "The Role of the United States in World Affairs," Address before the Chamber of Commerce of the United States (May 1, 1967), in *Department of State Bulletin* 56, no. 1456 (Washington, DC: Office of Public Communication, 1967), 771.
4. Walt, 10.

implosion of Napoleon's France is most germane. Beginning with the conquest of Austria in 1797, "Napoleon Bonaparte built an empire greater than those of Caesar, Charlemagne, and Hitler"[5] and was master of Europe by 1808. However, after dominating the regional powers of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, Napoleon realized "that as long as the British continued to buy allies on the continent, he would be forced to fight enemy coalitions every few years."[6] Therefore, in late 1806, he devised a strategy to destroy the British economy by ordering all European ports closed to British goods.

To make this plan work, Napoleon "needed tight control of Europe's ports. Pursuit of this objective led him down the path of committing his two greatest mistakes: the Peninsular War in Iberia and the invasion of Russia."[7] By 1808, only Portugal kept its ports open to British goods. So, after establishing a military partnership with Spain, Napoleon invaded Portugal in an attempt to compel the smaller country to disestablish its trade relationship with Britain. However, the Spaniards revolted violently by commencing a brutal guerilla war that, combined with attacks from the united British and Portuguese armies, eventually caused France to retreat from the Iberian Peninsula and "eroded the belief of French invulnerability."[8] Witnessing this, Russia attempted to reduce its own financial hardships by reopening its ports to Britain. This action caused Napoleon to invade Russia on June 24, 1812 using an army "nearly 600,000 strong with contingents from every continental European state west of the Russian frontier, including Austria and Prussia."[9] Six months later, Napoleon's decimated army retreated and

5. Michael V. Leggiere, *The Fall of Napoleon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1.
6. Ibid., 2.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., 3.
9. Ibid., 4.

"staggered toward the Prussian frontier with barely 7,000 men under arms."[10]

In August 1813, neighboring countries had grown tired of Napoleon's aggressive use of his military infringing on their sovereignty, and "for the first time in Napoleon's career, France faced the combined efforts of Europe's other great powers"[11] – Russia, Prussia, Austria, Britain, Spain, and Portugal. By late November 1813, more than 300,000 troops were making advances towards Paris and "to stop the Allied masses, Napoleon spread approximately 56,000 tired troops in a thin cordon along the length of the Rhine River"[12] However, his exhausted and overstretched army was no match for the enormous anti-hegemon alliance that had been assembled against him. The eventual defeat of his army led Napoleon to abdicate his powers as Emperor in April 1814 and began the decline of France's continental influence.

From this historical case study there are three main lessons that should be observed by today's military leaders. First, when forced to endure national economic hardships by closing their ports to British goods for no purpose other than bowing to Napoleon's order, neighboring states increasingly perceived France to be a hegemon and began to align their collective forces against the aggressor. Second, even though some countries had established military partnerships with France during its invasion of Russia, they quickly turned against the more powerful state as soon as it began to show weakness and vulnerability. And third, even though France was the most powerful country in Europe in the early 1800s, its fall from superpower status was precipitated by the overuse and overextension of its military across the entire region.

In summary, France overused its military to the point of exhaustion while

10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., 8.
12. Ibid., xiii.

imperialistically forcing other sovereign states to comply with its own national security strategy. This procedural and conceptual failure directly caused the severing of previous military relationships and the creation of a counter-balancing alliance that eventually led to France's defeat and Napoleon's dethronement. Or more succinctly, France's strategy was not sustainable internally by its own military or externally by neighboring states. To avoid repeating these mistakes, U.S. GCCs should consider the impact of sustainment before continuing to expand military partnerships around the world.

Current World Application

Taken individually, the creation of new military partnerships by a GCC seems to be a logical way of protecting American interests while developing critical accesses or assisting with partner development within a region. Collectively, however, the global increase of military obligations and engagements with foreign militaries by all six GCCs and three Functional Combatant Commands is straining limited defense resources and raising fears of American imperialistic and hegemonic tendencies in other nations. By focusing solely on their specific region or function without considering the broader impact of global sustainability, GCCs are inadvertently creating gaps in the overall security of the United States. A review of each Commander's posture statement underscores the two main points of this chapter: U.S. Armed Forces are overextended by their current obligations and GCCs have charted a course that can give other countries a perception of America becoming a global hegemon.

There are several similarities in the posture statements the six GCCs provided to Congress in early 2014 – three of which are particularly noteworthy. First, in what

appears to be a competition for limited congressional funding, each Commander promoted the importance of their geographic region over the others. Admiral Samuel Locklear, Commander U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), stated that his region is "critical to U.S. national interests. . . . [and it is] the most militarized region in the world."[13] Similarly, General Philip Breedlove, Commander U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), stated "Europe's strategic importance to the United States . . . cannot be overstated and should not be taken for granted."[14] Meanwhile, General David M. Rodriguez, Commander U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), stated that his region is "an extremely active geographic command . . . despite being one of the smallest combatant commands."[15] He added "Africa is on the rise and will be increasingly important to the United States in the future."[16] The leaders of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), General Charles H. Jacoby Jr., U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), General John F. Kelly, and U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM), General Lloyd J. Austin III, provided testimonials that were equally alarming in content and tone.

The second similarity between the posture statements is the negative effect recent economic limitations have placed on the GCCs' ability to conduct military operations in their respective areas. General Kelly stated that he is concerned "by the impact of budget cuts on [USSOUTHCOM's] ability to support national security interests and contribute to

13. Samuel J. Locklear, *Statement Before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture* (March 25, 2014), 2.
14. Philip Breedlove, *Statement of General Philip Breedlove, Commander U.S. Forces Europe* (April 1, 2014), 2-3.
15. David M. Rodriguez, *Statement Before the House Armed Services Committee Posture Hearing* (March 5, 2014), 2.
16. Ibid.

regional security."[17] General Austin noted that, in USCENTCOM, persistent "fiscal uncertainty hinders efficient and timely implementation of operational, logistical, tactical and strategic milestones and objectives."[18] Regarding the impact sequestration would have on USNORTHCOM in 2016, General Jacoby stated "it would lead to a situation where combat readiness and modernization could not fully support current and projected requirements to defend the homeland."[19]

A third similarity between the six posture statements is the growing importance military partnerships have to regional missions, especially in this era of economic restraint. Admiral Locklear stated that a "sustained effort to build and enhance the capacity of our allies and partners is the cornerstone of [USPACOM's] counter terrorism strategy."[20] In order to keep the Middle East as stable and secure as possible, General Austin stated that USCENTCOM "will pursue stronger relationships with and among our partners and allies."[21] General Rodriguez declared the "primary tools for implementing [USAFRICOM's] strategy are military-to-military engagements, programs, exercises, and operations."[22]

Given these three consistencies, it can be gathered that every region of the world is vitally important to U.S. national security, fiscal restraints are a hindrance to the execution of various military missions, and building and maintaining military partnerships is a key component of every region's strategy. But if the number of global

17. John F. Kelly, *Posture Statement Before the House Armed Services Committee* (February 26, 2014), 2.
18. Lloyd J. Austin III, *Statement Before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the Posture of U.S. Central Command* (March 6, 2014), 35.
19. Charles H. Jacoby Jr., *Statement Before the House Armed Services Committee* (February 26, 2014), 3.
20. Locklear, 8.
21. Austin III, 44.
22. Rodriguez, 6.

commitments in the form of more military partnerships increases and the number of available military assets stays constant or continues to decrease, then the logical result will be an overextended military force. This lack of sustainability, as a group of 95 retired admirals and generals warned in a recent letter to Congress, will lead to gaps in regional and national security. Doing so, they explained, "places national defense, service members, and the stability of the global economy at risk."[23]

Mitigation techniques currently used when the number of available military assets cannot cover all of its obligations worldwide are not sustainable either. One of which is force reallocation – much to the irritation of the losing GCC. For example, Admiral Locklear stated that "the continuing demand to source deployed and ready forces from USPACOM [area of responsibility] to other regions of the world . . . ultimately [degrades] our deterrence posture and our ability to respond."[24] Another mitigation technique is for the U.S. military to increase an already high operational tempo. This plan has taken a heavy toll on the military over the past decade and has drawn scorn from the current CNO, Admiral Jonathan Greenert.[25] Furthermore, neither method solves the overall problem. As General Rodriguez crisply stated in his posture statement, "our expanding operational requirements and their associated opportunity costs make it vitally important that we align resources with priorities across the globe."[26] Therefore, the only real solution is to either increase the overall military force structure or to decrease the number of military obligations.

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23. Lance M. Bacon, "Retired Admirals Warn Lawmakers Against Fleet Cuts," *Navy Times*, November 24, 2014.
24. Locklear, 18.
25. Lance M. Bacon and David Larter, "Shorter Cruises: CNO Demands Drop to Deployment Lengths," *Navy Times* (November 3, 2014), 14.
26. Rodriguez, 3.

However, even if every worldwide military obligation could be covered without creating gaps in national security, the impact would be an atmosphere where America's Armed Forces are seen everywhere, all the time – lending credence to perceptions of America's hegemonic behavior. Collectively, the six GCC posture statements list 876 security cooperation engagements, exercises, and operations that were conducted in the previous year. That equates to more than two for every day of the year and only accounts for the ones listed in those unclassified documents. Essentially, the U.S. military's global engagement with partner nations is non-stop and something that Russian President Vladimir Putin calls America's "desire of eternal domination."[27] He went on to say that unilateral direction and attempts to enforce America's image on others will bring the "opposite result: escalation of conflicts instead of their settlement [and a] widening area of chaos in place of stable sovereign states."[28] This perception, also widely held by violent extremist groups around the world, can only be hardened by increases to the total number of U.S. military partnerships.

In conclusion, the inability to sustain a multitude of military partnerships can result in a reduction of U.S. and global security. Realistically, a shrinking DoD force structure cannot continue to meet an increasing number of military-to-military partnerships. But even if it could, the resulting perception of America's hegemonic ambition may give rise to countervailing alliances or actions aimed against the United States. In essence, having too many partnerships can produce gaps in security and do not add value to a GCC's TCP.

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27. Vladimir Isachenkov, "Putin Accuses US of Undermining Global Stability," *Associated Press* (October 24, 2014).
28. Ibid.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings of the previous chapters, proper vetting of potential military partnerships is critical to national, regional, and global security. For a potential military partnership to be effective, an environment of stability and sustainability must exist. As figure 1 illustrates, if the new relationship is sustainable by the U.S. military but does not maintain or add to a region's existing stability, then it is a tension building partnership.

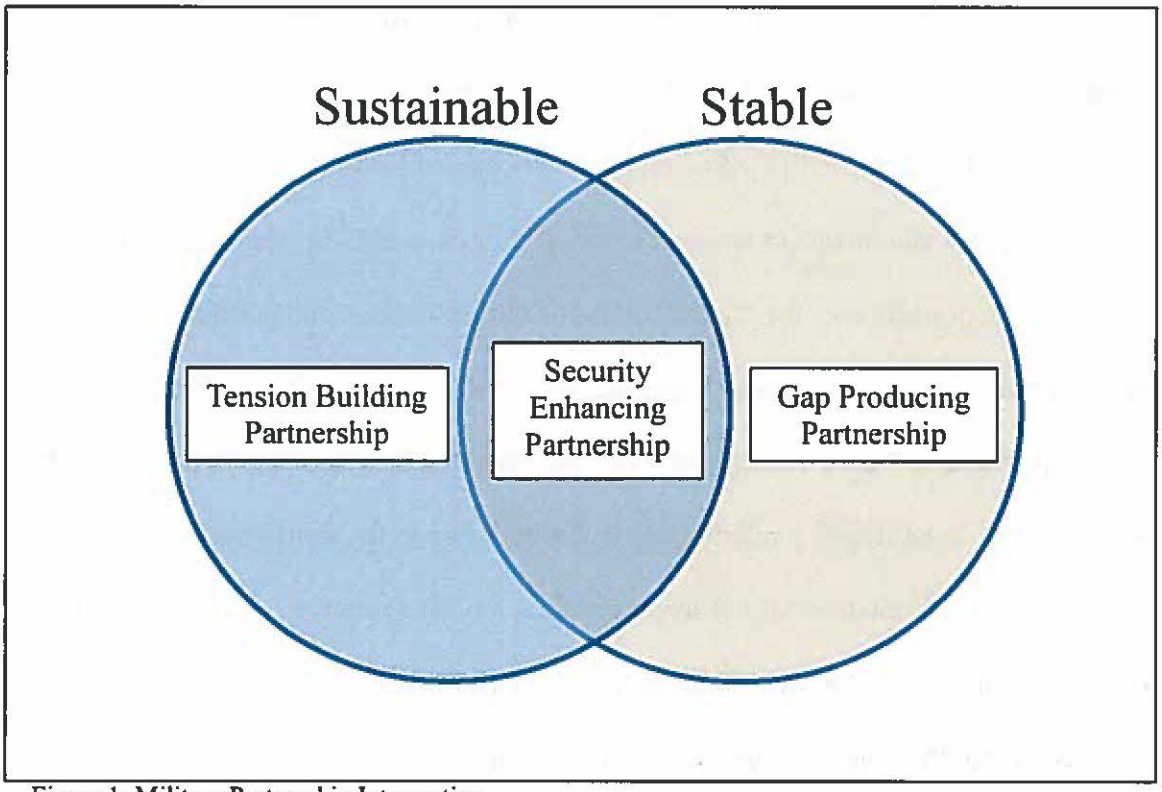

Figure 1: Military Partnership Intersection

Likewise, if the new relationship maintains or increases a region's stability but is not sustainable by the U.S. military, then it is a gap producing partnership.

A true security enhancing partnership is only found at the intersection of both criteria and any additional military partnerships that fall outside of this juncture will reduce U.S. national security and should be avoided. However, in the event a military partnership is needed but the region cannot produce a candidate that meets both criteria,

then an order of precedence must be established. One way to establish that order is by situational need. While it could be argued that stability should have priority over sustainability, the specific order is highly dependent upon the current environment and should ultimately be left up to the Commander's discretion. For example, if the region is already unstable, the GCC may choose to create a new military partnering that is at least sustainable.

Another way to establish an order of precedence is to compare the two vetting criteria against requirements contained within higher-level strategies. As previously discussed, the President's 2015 NSS contains a prioritized list of America's four enduring national interests and threats to national security. For example, the President's greatest concern is the protection of the United States, its citizens, allies, and partners from the potential use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the GCC may choose to establish a new military partnership with a country that can best assist the United States in countering this specific threat, even if such a relationship is destabilizing in the short-term.

Given the limitations of the scope and length of this paper, there should be future research in some areas that expand the discussion before GCCs begin to use the model provided. First, there needs to be an open discussion about how best to handle a situation in which a country requests to become a military partner of the United States. This paper is based on the position that it will always be America that is initiating a potential partnership. However, when asked by another country, a refusal by the United States can have negative effects on national and regional security. Another question that will have to be answered is what to do with any military-based relationships the United States currently has that are not deemed to be stable or sustainable. As with rejecting a request

for military-to-military relations, withdrawing from an existing partnership can also have adverse effects.

Further research should also be conducted in the circular logic created by the combined actions of Congress, the DoD, and the GCCs. As a result of federal legislation directing the DoD to make significant cuts in spending, the 2015 NSS and 2014 QDR have stated that a smaller and leaner U.S. military needs to build military partnership capacity in order to maintain global security. Subsequently, the GCCs increased their engagement with foreign militaries while testifying before Congress that they need more money and more military assets to support their vitally important strategic missions. Essentially, the GCCs are asking for more of what they are being directed to reduce.

One way to potentially solve this quandary is to conduct a cost-benefit analysis that will help determine the most effective balance between indigenous military resources and global partnerships. Without further discussion, the two extremes can be easily eliminated from serious consideration. On one end of the spectrum, an enormously large U.S. military force structure standing alone with no global alliances or military partners would be exceptionally expensive for Congress to maintain. In addition, such an approach would also resemble the previously tried and failed practice of isolationism. On the other end, a minimally sized U.S. military that is highly dependent upon global alliances and military partnerships would reduce America's influence around the world while making its citizens abroad less safe. More likely, the most cost effective means of maintaining national, regional, and global security rests somewhere in between. The true heart of the question for economically-minded military strategists, therefore, is: *What is the proper balance between indigenous military resources and global partnerships?*

Finally, the underlying tone of this paper is that military partnerships are not always beneficial to U.S. national security. This stance, however, does not call for complete isolation from countries that do not meet the recommended criteria of vetting military partnerships. On the contrary, if the DoD chooses to limit its military partnerships abroad, the other elements of national power – Diplomatic, Informational, and Economic – remain effective means to advance U.S. national interests and ensure America's national security around the world. In fact, using those softer means instead of exhausting the military may solve more bilateral and multilateral issues while also undermining any hegemonic perceptions some countries or nations may hold.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

A review of current U.S. national and military strategies revealed how leaders intend to use specific means in ways that achieve the desired end states. But when a desired end state is not achievable due to an inadequate concept or resources, then the resulting risk could be exploited by an adversary through the use of its own instruments of power. The end states the President articulated in his 2015 NSS are America's four enduring interests, of which the security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners are described as the U.S. Government's greatest responsibility. Further, the potential use of nuclear weapons and materials by irresponsible states or terrorists poses as grave a danger to U.S. national security. Since this enormous task would be extremely difficult for the United States to achieve alone, the President stated the need to expand the scope and build the capacity of partnerships using a globally postured military.

However, this paper has revealed critical flaws associated with attempting to establish too many military partnerships. If the establishment of a new military partnership upsets the balance of power in a region, a path towards conflict could result due to the creation of a security dilemma / conflict spiral or transition of power. This type of tension building partnership was witnessed in Europe between 1900 and 1914 and could be repeated today in Eastern Europe if the number of U.S. military partnerships continues to rise in the region. In addition, if the totality of all the U.S. military partnerships proves to be unsustainable due to an overextension of military resources or a rising perception of America's hegemonic tendencies, then gaps in security will be produced as seen with France in 1814. This flaw is being repeated today by the six GCCs due to the expanding number of security agreements they are creating and the collective

effect those plans are having on other countries and nations around the world.

Since national, regional, and global security may become unintentionally corroded if all six geographic TCPs are based on the assumption that the creation of new partnerships is always better, GCCs must take a closer look at the deeper impacts a new relationship will have on security. Indiscriminately building military partnerships on a global scale to support the larger NSS goals has the potential to create an international environment that is less peaceful and to overextend the U.S. military's limited resources, thus inducing insecurity in an otherwise stable environment. Therefore, the U.S. should consider a more standardized approach for vetting potential military partnerships based on stability and sustainability.

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VITA

Commander J. Lee Bennett enlisted in the Navy in 1987, serving aboard the *USS BIDDLE* (CG 34) and *USS AMERICA* (CV 66) before being commissioned via the navy's inaugural Seaman-to-Admiral class in 1995.

Upon graduating from Officer Candidate School and Surface Warfare Officers School, Lee served as the Electrical & Auxiliaries Officer in *USS ARLEIGH BURKE* (DDG 51) and Weapons Officer in *USS THUNDERBOLT* (PC 12).

In the 4 years between his Division Officer and Department Head tours, Lee graduated *summa cum laude* from Old Dominion University with a BS in Political Science, was selected as a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Graduate Scholar, and earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Returning to sea, Lee served a double-length Department Head tour in the Forward-Deployed Naval Forces (Japan) as Chief Engineer in *USS COWPENS* (CG 63) where he received the Navy and Marine Association's 2006 Leadership Award.

Following this sea tour, Lee earned a second Master's Degree in Military Operational Art and Science from the Air Force's Command and Staff College where he won the Dean's Research Award for U.S. and International Security Studies. He then served as a Federal Executive Fellow at the Institute for Defense Analyses prior to being selected as the surface navy's first XO/CO fleet-up officer.

During his tour as Commanding Officer in *USS DONALD COOK* (DDG 75), the ship earned its first ever Battle "E", all 5 warfare area awards, SECNAV's Safety Award, the Golden Anchor for retention excellence, and SURFLANT's unit tactics award. After his successful Command-at-Sea tour, Lee was selected for Command Ashore and served as Commanding Officer of Engineering Assessments, Atlantic prior to attending JAWS.