Chapter 12

THE SEARCH FOR STRATEGIC STABILITY

Détente lasted for roughly 7 years, from the signing of the SALT I agreements in 1972 until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. During that time, with the exception of the 1973 October War in the Middle East, there were no repetitions of the tense encounters that had been so commonplace in the 1950s and 1960s. From all outward appearances, détente was a huge success. Barely below the surface, however, the situation was different. The Soviet military buildup in both conventional and strategic nuclear forces continued, and with it came increased Soviet activity in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Often employing Cuban "proxies," the Soviets seemed more intent than ever on extending their power and influence into new areas where conditions were ripe for Communist penetration and U.S. interests were most vulnerable.

For the Joint Chiefs, these were exceedingly trying times. With the military's reputation and credibility in tatters after Vietnam, they were hard put to mobilize support for what they considered essential requirements to bolster the country's defense posture. Concentrating on disparities in strategic forces, they saw an especially urgent need for modernization but faced budgetary and political constraints that allowed only parts of their program to go forward as planned. Basically, the country was in no mood for a postwar military buildup. Instead, the approach most people preferred was a lowered profile abroad in line with the Nixon administration's projections under the Guam Doctrine, and further pursuit of reduced tensions with the Soviets through SALT and détente.

THE PEACETIME "TOTAL FORCE"

As they gradually shifted from a wartime to a peacetime footing in the early 1970s, the Joint Chiefs expected demobilization and cutbacks in military spending to take a heavy toll. What they failed to anticipate was a public and congressional backlash brought on by Vietnam which, when coupled with competition for funds from domestic social

programs, would depress military spending for nearly a decade. The result was virtually no real growth in the U.S. military budget, compared to a net annual increase of 3 percent in Soviet military spending.[1] Once the Vietnam "bulge" was gone by the early 1970s, the Defense Department's annual budget authority, as measured in constant dollars, almost steadily declined. By FY80, it was about 1 percent less than what it had been a decade earlier in FY71. During that time, U.S. defense spending dropped from 7.2 percent of the country's gross national product to 5.2 percent. Since the 1970s were a decade of high inflation, the impact on the Services' buying power and their ability to modernize weapons and equipment was more than an inconvenience—it was nearly crippling.[2]

Faced with no-growth and negative-growth budgets, the Joint Chiefs strained to meet obligations abroad which until the end of the 1960s had revolved around a two-and-a-half war planning scenario. Though that was reduced by the Nixon White House to a one-and-a-half war requirement in 1970, the JCS still found themselves facing the possibility of simultaneous conflicts on two separate fronts—a major conflict, most likely in Europe, and a lesser one in Korea or the Middle East. Politically, this change had much to recommend it. Not only did it accord with the administration's desire to improve relations with China, but also it limited overseas commitments, as enunciated under the Guam Doctrine. A further advantage was that it simplified the work of JCS and Service planners (the Army's especially) by allowing them to focus their research and development (R&D) and acquisition policies more closely on supporting NATO.[3] At the same time, the one-and-a-half war strategy allowed air and naval assets deployed in the Far East to be redeployed to Europe or the Mediterranean more readily than in years past. But in the Joint Chiefs' eyes, the new concept still left U.S. forces spread exceedingly thin around the globe and took little or no account of the ever-present danger of unforeseen contingencies.

In keeping with its limited view of U.S. obligations abroad, the Nixon administration also endorsed a peacetime "total force" that was smaller than any the JCS had seen since the 1950s. Two key innovations were an all-volunteer Army (more expensive to maintain than a conscripted force but less politically troublesome) and increased reliance on Reserve capabilities. Once the Vietnam War was over, the administration projected a peacetime defense establishment organized around an Army of 13 active divisions (down from 18 at the height of the Vietnam conflict) and 8 divisions in the National Guard, a Navy of approximately 400 surface ships, 93 submarines, and 16 carriers, a Marine Corps of 3 Active divisions and 1 Reserve, and an Air Force of 21 Active and 11 Reserve wings.[4]

While the Joint Chiefs would have preferred a larger active peacetime force, inter-Service skirmishing over the allocation of resources prevented them from

coming up with firm, prioritized recommendations. Unable to agree among themselves, the Joint Chiefs effectively ceded the determination of force levels to OSD, the White House, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In these circumstances, fiscal considerations invariably triumphed over military ones. Most impacted of all was the Army, which faced a 20 percent cut in strength, compared with 10 percent cuts in the Air Force and Navy. As Admiral Moorer described the scene at one JCS meeting in February 1970, Army Chief of Staff General Westmoreland, was "running scared," disparaging the contributions of the other Services, and "grasping in every direction" for ways to stave off troop reductions.[5]

In fact, the force reductions after Vietnam were no more severe than those the Services experienced after Korea and far less debilitating than the massive post-World War II demobilization. The retention of air and naval power rather than large ground forces also followed earlier patterns and reflected the continuing practice of turning to technology to shore up the country's security in peacetime. Meanwhile, ending the draft allowed the Army to be more selective in the recruitment of personnel, a major step toward creating a more elite, cohesive institution. The net result was a smaller, more professional defense establishment with a lowered overall public profile, which was a distinct advantage at a time of strong skepticism toward the military in Congress and lingering anti-war sentiment in the country at large.

MODERNIZING THE STRATEGIC DETERRENT

The most urgent task facing the Joint Chiefs as the Vietnam War drew to a close was to reequip and modernize the Armed Forces. Hardware worn out in Vietnam had to be replaced, while advances in technology offered the possibility of a refurbished arsenal of more sophisticated and versatile weapons. Much of the attention focused on improving conventional forces: a new main battle tank (the M–1) and a new armored personnel carrier for the Army, new fighter aircraft for the Air Force and Navy, and new ships for the fleet. But as important as these acquisition programs may have been, they paled in comparison to what loomed in the strategic arena—arresting the ongoing decline in U.S. nuclear power through a concerted modernization of the strategic deterrent.

By the early 1970s, the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed that bolstering strategic forces could no longer wait. Decisions taken in the mid-1960s at McNamara's instigation to freeze the number of launchers in the U.S. nuclear arsenal and President Nixon's acceptance of "strategic equivalence" with the Soviet Union in strategic forces, all the while negotiating arms control accords, had unsettling effects on JCS assessments of the military balance. Worried that the Soviets were on the verge

of achieving a decisive advantage, the Joint Chiefs continued to look at a broad range of improvements to bolster the U.S. strategic posture. They realized that these improvements were unlikely to restore the strategic superiority the United States had previously enjoyed. But without them, the chiefs were skeptical of their ability to preserve effective deterrence or stability in future crises.

A tenuous consensus had emerged among the JCS in support of three new strategic systems by the early 1970s—the B–1 strategic bomber, the Trident fleet ballistic missile submarine, and the MX, a third generation ICBM. The oldest of the three, the B–1, dated unofficially from 1961 when the Air Force began exploring alternatives to the cancelled B–70. By the mid–1960s, the project had evolved into a formal request for a supersonic (Mach 2) low–level penetration bomber which Air Force Chief of Staff General John P. McConnell labeled "the top priority program within the Air Force" at the time.[6] Designated to replace older B–52 models, the proposed new plane (then known as the advanced manned strategic aircraft, or AMSA) encountered stiff resistance from McNamara and his civilian advisors, who considered manned strategic aircraft obsolete and less cost-effective than missiles.[7] In place of the AMSA, McNamara insisted that the Air Force make do with the F–111, a medium-range fighter-bomber with limited capabilities. Try as he might, however, McNamara was never able to kill the AMSA, which remained alive as a drawing board concept owing to the combined support of the Air Force and key members of Congress. Weighing the pros and cons, neither the Army, Navy, nor Marines saw an urgent need for the AMSA. All wanted closer study before going into production. But like the ABM issue, they endorsed the AMSA program seemingly in defiance of McNamara, as much as anything, and out of frustration over his persistent refusal to pay attention to military advice and to authorize new systems.[8]

With the advent of the Nixon administration, the AMSA became the B–1 and the Air Force received authorization to develop several prototypes for testing. If all went well, the JCS expected an initial operational capability (IOC) in FY78. Under the division of labor in effect at the time, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird concentrated on Congress and Vietnam, while his deputy, David Packard (cofounder of the computer giant Hewlett-Packard), looked after procurement and administration. In an effort to control costs, Packard adopted a "fly-before-you-buy" acquisition policy which required hardware demonstrations of new weapons at predetermined intervals before the Defense Department would commit to full-scale production and procurement. For planning purposes, the Air Force estimated an eventual force of 241 planes, but could not guarantee the prime contractor, Rockwell International, that the government would purchase that many aircraft owing to the fly-before-you-buy requirement. A complex plane with state-of-the-art

electronics and avionics, the B–1 was an expensive undertaking to begin with and became even more so as the project gathered momentum.[9] With the Vietnam War winding down and money again becoming tight, pressure was growing for the JCS to take a more critical look at the B–1 and other new weapons.

Like the B–1, the Trident program faced chronic criticism and money troubles. Originally known as the undersea long-range missile system (ULMS), Trident was an outgrowth of the Strat-X study, an effort organized by Secretary of Defense McNamara in the mid-1960s through the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) to explore alternative strategic systems of the future. Treated as a follow-on to the Polaris and Poseidon programs, the original ULMS design was for a slow-moving underwater platform carrying up to 24 long-range missiles. To stay within McNamara's cost-effectiveness criteria, the Navy's Special Projects Office proposed using extended range Poseidon missiles and an existing nuclear power plant, but ran afoul of Vice Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, head of the Navy's nuclear propulsion program, who insisted on a new reactor system. By 1970, costs had escalated dramatically as requirements became more sophisticated and as the size of the boat grew to more than twice that of a Polaris submarine. A source of controversy within the Navy, the ULMS project (renamed Trident in May 1972) soon attracted widespread congressional attention as well and became a favored object of attack by Capitol Hill liberals, who considered it a wasteful and redundant drain on resources that could be better spent on other projects.

To distinguish Trident from other submarines and to increase its appeal, the Navy proposed to equip it with two new missiles. Initially, Trident boats would carry the C4 missile (also known as Trident I), virtually identical in size to the Poseidon missile but with up to twice the range. For boats going to sea in the mid- to late 1970s, the Navy proposed to deploy the D5 (Trident II) which would have the range, payload, and accuracy approximating a land-based ICBM, giving Trident a counterforce potential to threaten the highest priority enemy targets. Until then, to avoid charges of duplicating Air Force functions, the Navy had eschewed the development of sea-based missiles that could effectively attack military facilities other than Soviet submarine pens and similar "soft" targets. With Trident, the Navy would be moving into a new realm of military strategy by acquiring a true counterforce capability for the first time, one less vulnerable than the Air Force's ICBMs but no less effective.[10]

Even though the JCS agreed that Trident had unique potential, opinions differed on taking the next step and putting it into production. A majority of the Joint Chiefs—the CNO, the CMC, and the CJCS, Admiral Moorer—saw no reason to hesitate and wanted boats in the water by the mid to late 1970s. In contrast, the CSA and the CSAF, citing the uncertainties of the program and the Nixon administration's determination to negotiate arms control accords, adopted a wait-and-see

attitude and urged that Trident be limited to the R&D phase for the time being.[11] Secretary of Defense Laird initially sided with the Army and Air Force, and in September 1971 he issued a formal public statement indicating that design studies and other work on a new missile submarine would proceed at a measured pace, with a production decision held in abeyance. But under pressure from the White House, he reversed course almost immediately and agreed to accelerate the Trident program, with a view toward strengthening the U.S. negotiating position in SALT and blunting possible conservative opposition in Congress to an arms control agreement.[12]

If Trident thus seemed headed for production and deployment, the same could not be said for the MX, the Air Force's proposed new state-of-the-art ICBM, which ran into one niggling problem after another. Like the B–1, the MX reflected the Air Force's annoyance with McNamara for blocking new programs and for refusing to countenance a strategic posture with predominantly counterforce capabilities. Emerging from design studies done in the mid-1960s, the MX (known at that time as the Advanced ICBM, or AICBM) grew directly out of the Air Force's desire for a weapon that would be larger, more powerful, and more accurate than the Minuteman, with an initial operational capability by the early to mid-1970s. Design specifications stipulated that it should be able to lift a payload of 7,000 pounds and have a range of 6,500 nautical miles and a circular error probable (CEP) of .2 nautical miles. A formidable undertaking in and of itself, the development of such a missile proved to be less of an obstacle than finding a survivable, politically plausible basing mode, an issue that would dog the MX throughout its checkered history and delay its deployment for more than a decade.[13]

During the Nixon administration, the MX had joined the B–1 and Trident as a staple in the Joint Chiefs' inventory of future weapons systems in the JSOP.[14] Even so, assessments of the missile's importance and ultimate role in the strategic arsenal varied from Service to Service. Least enthusiastic of all was the Navy, which saw the MX competing directly with Trident for funds and mission. At issue was whether the United States needed, and could afford, two new strategic systems performing roughly the same functions.[15] To observers with long memories, the situation was analogous to the competition between the Air Force and the Navy during the carrier-B–29 controversy in the late 1940s. In this instance, however, the Navy had the edge with a more versatile weapons system. Perhaps with Louis Johnson's untoward experience in mind, Secretary of Defense Laird and his immediate successors made no attempt to adjudicate the dispute and instead adopted the course of least resistance by allowing both programs to go forward simultaneously, reserving judgment on their relative merits for later. A temporizing approach, this solution avoided what could have been an ugly inter-Service battle. Yet it also left important decisions dangling with steadily diminishing prospect of ever finding a clear resolution acceptable to all involved.

TARGETING DOCTRINE REVISED

As the competition between Trident and the MX heated up, it boiled over into two other areas—arms control and strategic targeting. A moderate-to-low priority since the Kennedy administration tried with limited success to introduce greater flexibility in the early 1960s, targeting doctrine emerged during the Nixon years to become the source of renewed interest and controversy. Shortly after taking office, Nixon and Kissinger visited the Pentagon and received their first formal briefing on the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) then in effect detailing programmed attacks against the Sino-Soviet bloc in the event of a general war. According to published accounts, Nixon was "appalled" by the high levels of death and destruction that a nuclear exchange would cause and by the corresponding lack of flexibility in the SIOP to limit and control attacks. Seeking a remedy, Kissinger secured the President's approval in the summer of 1969 for a reexamination of targeting practices "to meet contingencies other than all-out nuclear challenge."[16]

Several factors reinforced Kissinger's concern that targeting policy needed reform. One was the inexorable increase during the 1960s in Soviet strategic nuclear power, which had gone beyond what most intelligence analysts had predicted. Once the Soviets reached strategic parity with the United States, Kissinger believed, the concept of assured destruction was less likely to deter and the Soviets might be tempted to launch a less than full-scale nuclear attack against the West. The results might not be incapacitating, but without the ability to respond in kind, the President's only practical choice under the existing SIOP would be a suicidal act of all-out destruction—something Kissinger felt no sane individual would seriously countenance. Ever since the revisions introduced under Kennedy and McNamara's subsequent institutionalization of the assured destruction concept, the Joint Chiefs had held the line on all but piecemeal changes to the SIOP.[17] Now, Kissinger argued, the time had come to think in more flexible and creative terms, where nuclear war "is more likely to be limited" and "smaller packages will be used to avoid going to larger one[s]."[18]

The outcome of the ensuing inquiry—NSDM 242—was nearly 5 years in the making. Part of the explanation for why the project took so long was the continuing lack of urgency associated with targeting policy, compared with the immediate demands of other issues such as SALT and Vietnam. Also, there was a widely shared reluctance on the part of JCS planners to grant civilians (other than the President and the Secretary of Defense) access to the inner workings of strategic nuclear war plans and the process by which they were formulated. Highly classified, these plans were rarely discussed outside a restricted circle of uniformed strategic planners who scoffed at the notion that all they had to do was push a button to alter a plan. Initiating even limited changes in the SIOP

was a time-consuming and complex process. To be sure, with the pending introduction of more sophisticated weapons systems like the B–1, the MX, and Trident, and ongoing improvements to command and control capabilities, the amount of time and effort needed to amend a plan and reprogram forces was shortening. But it was still an onerous, difficult, and sensitive technical process that JCS planners guarded with utmost care.

The Joint Chiefs' uneasiness over the whole question of strategic nuclear targeting was further exacerbated by difficulties in determining what Kissinger and the President hoped to accomplish. Even if the United States exercised restraint in launching nuclear attacks, there was no assurance the Soviets would respond in a similar fashion. On the contrary, JCS targeting planners operated on the assumption that any use by the West of strategic nuclear weapons, even in a limited capacity, was almost certain to elicit a wholesale nuclear response from the Soviet Union.[19] At various points during the deliberations surrounding NSDM 242, Kissinger asked the Joint Chiefs for examples of how limited strategic nuclear power might be applied. But according to David Aaron, who served on the NSC Staff, Kissinger rejected every JCS response. Either the proposed uses were excessive, in Kissinger's opinion, or too limited to convey a clear message and serve a constructive purpose.[20]

NSDM 242 had its origins in an intradepartmental study initiated at the Pentagon under the supervision of John S. Foster, Jr., the long-time Director of Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E) and a highly respected figure among military planners. Secretary of Defense Laird had become worried that unless the Defense Department took a firm hand in the matter, Kissinger might unilaterally produce a new targeting directive. Accordingly, in January 1972, Laird gave Foster practically carte blanche to review targeting practices and to explore the feasibility of a more "flexible range of strategic options." While the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Moorer, was a designated member of Foster's study panel, the Director of the Joint Staff usually served in his stead. Until then the Joint Chiefs had done their best to discourage a reworking of targeting doctrine. But with an array of new strategic weapons awaiting the nod for production, they were hard pressed not to cooperate without acknowledging that the new arsenal they wanted would be no better or more versatile than the old.[21]

Throughout the review process, the Joint Chiefs and Foster's task force carried on a brisk exchange of opinions and ideas. Not since the preparation of the first SIOP in 1960 had the JCS played such an active role in shaping targeting doctrine. Drawing on advice from the JCS, the Director of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff, and others, Foster and his colleagues came up with an extensive, but not fundamental, reworking of targeting guidance, which it submitted to the Secretary of Defense in tentative form in May 1972. In late July, Foster briefed Kissinger and members of the NSC on the panel's findings, which one NSC Staffer characterized

as a "radical departure from the current policy."[22] A more accurate description would have been the reaffirmation of assured destruction under conditions of controlled escalation. A final report, reflecting further inputs from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff followed, and Secretary of Defense Laird forwarded it to President Nixon in December. As Laird described it to the President, the purpose behind the proposed changes in targeting doctrine was to satisfy "your expressed desire for useable nuclear options other than mass destruction, and the needs of our basic strategy of realistic deterrence."[23]

On the basis of the Defense Department's report, Kissinger moved the targeting review up a notch to the interagency level in February 1973. Again, Foster took charge of the effort.[24] Though it made minor alterations and additions, the interagency panel essentially concurred in the Pentagon's findings, and by the summer of 1973 a draft Presidential directive had emerged. Approved by President Nixon the following January, NSDM 242 reaffirmed that the assured destruction concept remained basic U.S. strategic doctrine, but with modifications in targeting practices that interjected a greater degree of flexibility into attack plans. The principal innovation was the requirement for "limited employment options" that would enable the United States "to conduct selected nuclear operations, in concert with conventional forces, which protect vital U.S. interests and limit enemy capabilities to continue aggression." Should these limited attacks fail to deter the Soviets from further military action, the United States might then launch large-scale attacks against the Soviet Union that would limit damage to the United States and its allies and cripple enemy recovery for years to come, a concept known as "counter-recovery" targeting.[25]

Translating this guidance into a working doctrine fell mainly to the new Secretary of Defense, James R. Schlesinger, who, as an analyst at the RAND Corporation in the 1960s, had been involved in critiquing the old strategy. Since then, having served as director for national security affairs at the Bureau of the Budget, as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and as Director of Central Intelligence, Schlesinger had come to certain conclusions on his own about what constituted effective deterrence. Sworn in as Secretary of Defense in July 1973, he took charge at the Pentagon too late to have an impact on the content of NSDM 242, but just in time to interpret how the directive ought to be applied. To Kissinger's chagrin, it was Schlesinger's name, not his, that came to be associated with the new strategy.

The public unveiling of the "Schlesinger doctrine" occurred on January 10, 1974, during a question-and-answer period before the Overseas Writers Association in Washington, DC. Though it had been an open secret for months that the administration was conducting a targeting review, Schlesinger's comments were the first official confirmation. The United States, he said, had decided to amend the assured

destruction concept and embrace, on a selective basis, attacks against "certain classes" of Soviet military installations. Missile silos and airfields were among those he specifically mentioned. Realizing that this was an exceedingly sensitive issue, he added that he was speaking "hypothetically" and repeatedly stated that the United States had no intention of using such attacks to attempt a disarming first strike. Rather, the intention would be to convince the other side that the United States was bent on protecting its interests without necessarily resorting to all-out nuclear war. While outwardly similar to the counterforce/no-cities doctrine that McNamara had unsuccessfully pushed 12 years earlier, Schlesinger's approach was more discriminating and restricted, keeping counterforce targeting within reach of current and projected JCS capabilities. Insisting that this was not a fundamental departure from current targeting practices, Schlesinger also affirmed that sufficient forces would be held in reserve to achieve assured destruction goals, should the conflict escalate. But if the United States could achieve its aims without going that far, so much the better.[26]

Reactions to the Schlesinger doctrine were mixed. While some strategic theorists proclaimed it potentially destabilizing to the new era of "mutual" assured destruction, or MAD, that the SALT I agreements had ushered in, others reserved judgment.[27] A key consideration that contributed to muting criticism was Schlesinger's caution and obvious reluctance to use the new strategy as justification for expensive new weapons or other requirements. The Foster Panel had looked into that question but had refrained from making detailed recommendations because it did not believe that weapon systems acquisition policy could be formulated solely or even primarily on the basis of employment policy. Secretary Schlesinger drew a similar distinction. In assessing requirements, he acknowledged the eventual need for the B–1 and the MX, but saw no urgency in proceeding with the acquisition of either pending the resolution of technical problems. Until then, he favored keeping both programs in an advanced state of testing and development. Instead of rushing to deploy new land-based delivery systems, he stressed modest improvements in existing Air Force capabilities—a higher yield and more accurate MIRVed reentry vehicle (the Mark 12A) for the Minuteman III, and two more powerful and sophisticated thermonuclear bombs (the B–61 and the B–77) carried aboard B–52s. At the same time, part of the Poseidon fleet would be fitted with C4 (Trident I) missiles to improve their range and effectiveness. The only new system he envisioned playing a key role under the recently adopted strategy was Trident—first, because it was farther along than either the MX or B–1, and second, because it combined a potential counterforce capability with relative invulnerability.[28]

All in all, the targeting review leading to adoption of the Schlesinger doctrine probably came out better for the Joint Chiefs than they initially expected. While

laying down new targeting priorities, it generally reinforced their preferences, especially in the counterforce category, and provided a strong rationale for completing the strategic modernization program. What it failed to do was establish a specific link between the need for the B–1 and the MX, on the one hand, and on the other, the execution of tasks delineated in NSDM 242, including the additional functions entailed in carrying out limited options. Only Trident emerged with a definite mandate to proceed under the new targeting scheme. But with the foundations thus laid, the chiefs could be reasonably confident that if they continued to press their case, sooner or later resources would catch up with the changes in employment policy.

SALT II BEGINS

Like the targeting review leading to adoption of the Schlesinger doctrine, arms control negotiations figured prominently in the post-Vietnam debate over U.S. strategic modernization. The JCS position was that with or without arms control, modernization should go forward to stay abreast of increases and improvements in Soviet capabilities. But in the wake of SALT I, there was considerable caution, both at the White House and on Capitol Hill, about pressing ahead with new strategic weapons that might poison the atmosphere of future negotiations and provoke, in Kissinger's words, "an explosion of technology and an explosion of numbers" in delivery vehicles.[29] Not everyone agreed that slowing down or postponing modernization was a wise move, certainly not the Joint Chiefs of Staff and certainly not Democratic Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington, who had done as much as anyone to draw attention to the imperfections of the SALT I accords. But from the momentum generated by the earlier talks, there was growing optimism for the prospects of SALT II and a corresponding reluctance to jeopardize those negotiations with hasty spending on new weapons.

The Soviets were less reticent about their programs. Though eager for SALT II, they were not about to let it get in the way of efforts to bolster their strategic forces, an ongoing process since the mid-1960s. While SALT I had "frozen" long-range offensive launchers (ICBMs and SLBMs) at existing levels, it had left both sides more or less free to replace those weapons with newer models and to conduct research and development as needed. During 1973, with the ink on the SALT I accords barely dry, the Soviets began testing four new ICBMs, three with MIRV capability. All had new guidance and reentry systems, making them more accurate and lethal than the missiles they were slated to supersede. According to intelligence sources, the impetus behind developing these new weapons was "almost certainly . . . a desire for improved ability to strike at U.S. strategic forces—a factor long stressed in Soviet strategic doctrine."[30] The disclosure that the United States might be moving in the same direction under

the Schlesinger doctrine—toward an enhanced counterforce capability—met with typically sharp criticism and stern warnings from the Kremlin, which accused the United States of jeopardizing the strategic balance and endangering arms control. What the Soviets conveniently overlooked was that the United States was taking its time in upgrading its capabilities and had categorically ruled out trying to regain strategic superiority or to acquire a disarming first-strike capability.[31]

Begun under Nixon's Presidency in December 1972, SALT II stretched over two subsequent administrations and was supposed to provide a permanent replacement for the temporary SALT I interim agreement on offensive arms. Instead, it yielded only a limited-duration treaty that the United States never ratified. Shortly after the negotiations began (now conducted on a permanent basis from Geneva), Senator Jackson insisted that the Joint Chiefs replace Lieutenant General Royal B. Allison, USAF, as their representative to SALT. His successor, appointed in March 1973, was Lieutenant General Edward L. Rowny, USA. Insisting that Allison had been ineffectual, Jackson wanted someone with tougher negotiating instincts and "dragooned" Rowny, a personal friend, into the job. A West Point graduate with additional degrees from the Johns Hopkins University, Yale, and American University, Rowny had commanded troops in World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam and had served as a nuclear planner at NATO. His friendship with Senator Jackson dated from the 1950s, when Rowny was assigned to the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, and Jackson, then a Congressman, was doing his 2-week obligated tour of duty as an Army Reservist.[32]

At the time of his appointment to SALT, Rowny was deputy chairman of the NATO Military Committee, in charge of organizing the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) Talks. Rowny was personally skeptical whether SALT would ever accomplish much and would have preferred to remain with the MBFR negotiations where he saw more opportunities, both for an agreement and for career advancement. He distrusted Kissinger, who returned the sentiment by lumping Rowny in the category of the "undisputed hawks."[33] Leery of the Soviets as well, Rowny became even more so the longer he was associated with SALT and the more contact he had with them at the negotiating table.

Rowny's appointment was only one of several key personnel changes that affected the JCS role in SALT II. Though not directly engaged in the negotiations, the Joint Chiefs were part of a large and complex arms control "community" in Washington that had grown up over time to develop and assess proposals, evaluate verification measures, and monitor the progress of the talks.[34] In keeping with the pattern of JCS involvement in other areas of national policy, the Service chiefs looked to the Chairman to handle the day-to-day chores connected with SALT, arrange interagency representation, and convey their views to the appropriate

authorities. In other words, arms control work was increasingly concentrated around the Chairman.

With the departure of Admiral Moorer in July 1974, the Chairmanship fell for the first time in nearly a decade and a half to an Air Force officer, General George S. Brown. A bomber pilot in Europe in World War II, Brown's career had been a succession of high-profile command and staff jobs that led him steadily up the ladder to become Chief of Staff of the Air Force in 1973. Though he stayed in that job only a year before Nixon appointed him CJCS, he established himself as a strong proponent of the B–1 and other Air Force interests. As Chairman, he continued to champion the plane, terming it "a virtually indispensable element of our deterrent force."[35] At the same time, he adopted a cautious outlook on arms control and relied heavily on Rowny (a friend from their days at West Point) to help shape JCS positions on SALT.

The Joint Staff acquired a fresh look under Brown. Responding to budget cuts and criticism growing out of the Vietnam War that the JCS organization was inefficient and ineffective, Brown decided to streamline the Joint Staff by abolishing two directorates, Personnel (J-1) and Communications-Electronics (J-6).[36] As part of a Defense-wide effort to reduce costs, he also cut extraneous Joint Staff billets in line with a targeted 25 percent personnel reduction in the OSD-JCS headquarters staff, and supported the consolidation of analytical functions, a process that included the dissolution of the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group (WSEG). Created in 1949 to provide analytical support for the Joint Chiefs, WSEG had grown increasingly independent of and less useful to the JCS. By the mid-1970s, about three-quarters of its work was for non-JCS interests. Ordered abolished by the Secretary of Defense in March 1976, most of WSEG's ongoing projects for the Joint Chiefs transferred directly to the Studies, Analysis, and Gaming Agency (SAGA), a JCS in-house analytical body that operated in conjunction with but separately from the Joint Staff.[37]

Around the same time that General Brown became Chairman, the Joint Chiefs acquired three other new members, making it the most extensive turnover in JCS membership since the end of World War II. Brown's successor as Chief of Staff of the Air Force was General David C. Jones, a B–29 bomber pilot during the Korean War and former aide to Curtis E. LeMay. With Zumwalt entering retirement, Admiral James L. Holloway III, a highly decorated aviator, became Chief of Naval Operations. Finally, in October 1974, General Fred C. Weyand became Army Chief of Staff, succeeding General Creighton W. Abrams, who had died in office the month before. The only holdover was the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert E. Cushman, Jr., a veteran of three wars and one time deputy director at the CIA.

The most dramatic personnel change was at the White House. On August 9, 1974, barely a month after Brown's appointment as Chairman, Nixon finally succumbed

to the pressures of the growing Watergate scandal and relinquished the Presidency to Gerald R. Ford, a former Republican Congressman from Michigan. Appointed Vice President the previous October following Spiro Agnew's ignominious resignation, Ford had little experience in defense and foreign affairs. To maintain continuity, he turned to Kissinger, who was then serving as both Secretary of State and National Security Advisor. "Henry," he said, "I need you. . . . I'll do everything I can to work with you."[38] As a result, the NSC, with its elaborate structure of committees and support groups, all either chaired or overseen by Kissinger to afford the President and his national security assistant maximum control, remained the focal point of interdepartmental deliberations and decisionmaking. Normally, the Joint Chiefs would have welcomed the retention and reaffirmation of what was outwardly a carefully structured and predictable policy environment. But after the discovery of Kissinger's backchannel negotiations with Dobrynin during SALT I, there was a growing awareness at the Pentagon that formal policy mechanisms might not count for much since Kissinger seemed inclined to circumvent them whenever it suited his purpose.

If the Joint Chiefs were by then deeply suspicious of Kissinger, their immediate boss, Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, was even more so. Indeed, not since the days of Louis Johnson and Dean Acheson had a Secretary of Defense and a Secretary of State been more at odds. Following a custom adopted during Laird's tenure, Schlesinger and Kissinger met regularly for breakfast to discuss common problems and to try to narrow their differences. Rarely were they totally successful. As Kissinger described it, the two became locked in a "personal rivalry" that amounted to "an old-fashioned struggle for turf."[39] According to Zumwalt, their differences went deeper and amounted to an intellectual tug-of-war. "In Jim Schlesinger," he claimed, "Henry Kissinger met his superior as a strategic theorist. But since Henry is a superior bureaucrat, he was able to impose his policy positions on Jim most of the time."[40]

VLADIVOSTOK

It was against this background of rivalries, feuds, intrigue, and turf wars that the new Ford administration attempted to carry forward the work begun by its predecessor in shaping a SALT II treaty. Realizing that they had been overly reticent in expressing their views at the outset of SALT I, the Joint Chiefs resolved that in SALT II they would take a more active and prominent role in shaping U.S. policy. All the same, they were in no rush to conclude an agreement and generally worked closely with Schlesinger and his staff to develop common OSD-JCS positions that would give the Pentagon more unity and better leverage in dealing with Kissinger and the White House. According to Admiral Zumwalt, JCS members further sought to

strengthen their position by establishing "backchannel" contacts with Senator Jackson and others in Congress who were sympathetic to military views.[41]

The most critical stumbling block in SALT II was the limitation of multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs), a subject that SALT I had ignored. As SALT II began, Kissinger wanted to constrain MIRV deployment by limiting ICBM throw-weight, but could not convince the Joint Chiefs that such arrangements were sound or workable. Arguing that Kissinger's approach would be too hard to verify, the Joint Chiefs favored equality ("equal aggregates") in numbers of delivery vehicles—missiles and heavy bombers—with each side free to MIRV its missiles to the extent it saw fit. To keep MIRV deployment contained, the Joint Chiefs suggested a maximum of around two thousand strategic delivery vehicles on each side. Actually, the JCS position came closer to that proposed by the Soviets than Kissinger's, but would have required cuts in the number of Soviet launchers to bring them into compliance with the U.S. ceiling, something Moscow was initially loath to accept. In an attempt to bridge differences at home and make the American position more palatable to the Soviets, President Nixon in February 1974 approved a new negotiating offer (NSDM 245) calling for equal overall aggregates (2,350 ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers) and equal ICBM MIRV throw-weight.[42]

Despite the new offer, the talks remained deadlocked, needing something imaginative or dramatic to break the impasse. By the spring of 1974, with the Watergate affair bearing down on Nixon more heavily than ever, the Soviets lost confidence in the President's capacity to lead and for all practical purposes suspended serious negotiations.[43] Efforts by Kissinger to jump-start the talks during a visit to Moscow in March 1974 came up empty.[44] Desperate for a SALT II deal to help resuscitate his reputation and to stave off impeachment, Nixon began exploring further concessions. At the Pentagon there were growing suspicions that the President's judgment had become clouded and that his behavior was suspect. Attempting to make Schlesinger and the Joint Chiefs his scapegoats, Nixon accused them of intentionally sabotaging détente by taking "an unyielding hard line against any SALT II agreement that did not ensure an overwhelming American advantage" in offensive strategic power.[45] The charge was patently untrue and unfair. But it put Schlesinger and the Joint Chiefs on the defensive. They had to justify themselves anew when the Ford administration took over.

Under Ford, Kissinger quickly solidified his position as the President's closest advisor, while Schlesinger and the JCS suffered repeated setbacks that reduced them to marginal roles. Ford had the utmost respect for military power and was inclined to grant the Defense Department modest increases in its budget, the first in several years. But he struggled to mobilize support for the idea after the JCS Chairman, General Brown, delivered a tirade against "Jewish bankers" during a seminar at Duke University

in October 1974. A gross indiscretion, Brown's remarks came at an especially inopportune time when the United States was trying to engage Israel and the Arab states in peace talks and as the new administration sought to establish a working relationship with Congress. Furious condemnations of the Chairman's behavior followed promptly from Capitol Hill. Brown apologized for the gaffe and insisted to friends that he was in no way anti-Semitic, as critics claimed. But his comments remained an embarrassment that reflected poorly on the JCS and the military in general.[46]

The most visible evidence of the Joint Chiefs' limited influence was their exclusion from the Vladivostok mini-summit between Ford and Brezhnev in late November 1974. Hurriedly arranged by Kissinger, the summit's purpose was to breathe new life into the practically moribund SALT II negotiations. Since the agenda at Vladivostok was heavily weighted toward military issues, it would have made sense for the White House to include JCS representation in its party. But apparently there was no room on the plane, even though 140 other people accompanied the President.[47] In preparation for the meeting, Schlesinger and the Joint Chiefs urged Ford not to be hasty but to hold out for equal aggregates. Rather than risk the talks breaking down, Kissinger made a pre-summit trip to Moscow, where he and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko worked a deal.[48] What emerged at Vladivostok was a numerical-parity formula that imposed an overall ceiling of 2,400 on strategic launchers, giving the appearance of strategic equality (as mandated by Congress), and a sub–limit of 1,320 on the number of MIRVed vehicles. The net effect was to reconfirm the status quo by allowing the Soviets to retain their lead in ICBMs and the United States to keep its relative advantage in SLBMs and bombers. But since the Joint Chiefs had no plans to build up to the allowed numbers under the Vladivostok formula, the only side that stood to gain was the Soviet Union.[49]

While there was probably not much that the chiefs' presence at Vladivostok could have done to change the overall outcome, it might have helped avoid later controversy over two issues—cruise missiles and the Soviet "Backfire" bomber. Experiencing a revival, the U.S. cruise missiles under development in the 1970s were updated versions of a technology dating from the German V-1 "buzz bomb" of World War II. Equipped with exceedingly precise guidance systems, the new cruise missiles could fly at low altitudes, carry either a conventional or nuclear warhead, and penetrate existing radar nets virtually at will. While the precise mission of these weapons had yet to be defined, the operating assumption in R&D circles was that they could have both tactical and strategic uses. The Soviets also had cruise missiles, but had not as yet shown any interest beyond tactical applications.[50]

The Soviets knew that one of the variants being developed by the U.S. Air Force was an air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) for deployment aboard B–52s,

and at Vladivostok they sought to curb the program indirectly by proposing range limitations on air-to-surface missiles. The Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed range constraints on cruise missiles, but with no representative present during the talks, they were unable to advise on how to address the issue. Later, while briefing Congress, Kissinger insisted that there had been no agreement to limit the range of ALCMs and that only *ballistic* missiles were affected. The Soviets, however, disagreed, setting off a dispute that lasted for years.[51]

The most serious faux pas committed at Vladivostok that the chiefs' presence might have avoided was the decision to treat the new Soviet Backfire bomber as an intermediate range weapon and not as a strategic one. While there were few details known about the plane in the West, the Joint Chiefs expected it to be deployed in significant numbers within a few years and were convinced from its general design and performance characteristics that it was fully capable of intercontinental missions.[52] The Soviets, however, wanted the Backfire to be accorded the status of an intermediate range bomber, a designation Kissinger saw no reason not to accept.[53] In exchange, Brezhnev offered at Vladivostok to drop previous Soviet demands to bring French and British nuclear forces and U.S. forward-based systems in Europe and the Far East under SALT counting rules. At Kissinger's urging, Ford accepted the tradeoff Brezhnev proposed, only to discover upon his return to Washington that the Joint Chiefs and others thought the Backfire decision had been ill-advised.[54]

Despite imperfections, the Vladivostok accords received a generally favorable reception in the United States. Among those offering their endorsements, albeit somewhat grudgingly, were Secretary of Defense Schlesinger and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Others, like Senator Henry Jackson, would have preferred lower numerical ceilings. But by and large public and congressional opinion welcomed the agreements as a major step toward curbing the arms race. In January and February 1975, both houses of Congress passed resolutions endorsing the Vladivostok accords. SALT II was back in business.

MARKING TIME

Based on the outcome at Vladivostok, the Ford administration estimated that it would be only a few months before a SALT II treaty materialized. In fact, negotiations dragged on for 4 more years. Part of the problem was the lack of formal or authoritative minutes of the decisions taken at Vladivostok. The "official record" comprised a broadly worded joint press release handed out at the end of the conference, a subsequent aide-mémoire, and the conflicting recollections of the participants.[55] Trying to sort out what had been decided at Vladivostok proved beyond the capacity of the negotiators in Geneva. By the summer of 1975, it was clear that the

talks were for all intents and purposes again at an impasse and that key provisions of the Vladivostok agreement needed to be renegotiated.[56]

At the same time, the Soviets showed no sign of being in a hurry to conclude a treaty and seemed content to mark time. Many in Moscow, including some of Brezhnev's top military advisors, thought the General Secretary had been too accommodating at Vladivostok by making needless concessions to the Americans. Seeing the United States as a spent force with its power in decline, they argued that Brezhnev should have held out for better terms. According to one account, Brezhnev had to force his defense minister, Marshal Andrei Grechko, to "eat the Vladivostok agreement." Even though Brezhnev's views prevailed, he remained under intense personal and political pressure, and on the trip home from the Far East he suffered a stroke. Brezhnev recovered and resumed his duties in a short while, but his health deteriorated from that point on, and he was less and less able to keep the hard liners in check.[57]

If waning American military power was apparent to the Soviets, it was even more visible to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In his annual posture statement summarizing the situation at the outset of 1975, General Brown characterized the U.S.-Soviet military balance as being in a state of "unstable equilibrium." Decisions made earlier by Moscow and programs already in progress, he warned, "display massive momentum toward significant force increase and modernization." In contrast, the United States, with its "modest programs," was barely keeping up. Mindful of the President's injunction against openly criticizing the Vladivostok accords, Brown acknowledged the agreement as a stabilizing influence, but pointed out that arms control by itself was no guarantee of security. "Arms control is a means, not an objective," he argued. "The objective is peace."[58]

Without a stronger defense commitment from Congress and the White House, however, the Joint Chiefs saw little chance of turning the situation around. Certainly the most stunning evidence of U.S. decline was the collapse of South Vietnam in the spring of 1975. In early April, with the North Vietnamese offensive in full swing, President Ford sent General Fred C. Weyand, former COMUSMACV and now Army Chief of Staff, to Saigon on a fact-finding mission. Based on what he saw, Weyand returned to Washington convinced that the South Vietnamese were "on the brink of total military defeat," a view shared by Schlesinger, Brown, and senior members of the Intelligence Community.[59] Refusing to give up, however, Weyand recommended immediate emergency assistance to the South Vietnamese totaling over $700 million in military aid. A face-saving gesture at best, Weyand's proposal received grudging approval from the White House but fell on deaf ears when it reached Congress.[60] South Vietnamese resistance collapsed shortly thereafter, and within a few years bases like the sprawling facility at Cam Ranh Bay that had once

played host to American forces were being used by the Soviets to project their air and naval power into the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans.

South Vietnam's demise ushered in a progressive erosion of U.S. power and influence across the Third World. Seizing on American weakness, Moscow launched vigorous efforts to restore its position in the Middle East and the Arab world by shoring up ties with Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, establishing close relations with Libya, and stepping up covert assistance to Palestinian terrorist groups.[61] In Somalia and south of the Sahara, the Soviets made further inroads. Almost as soon as the Portuguese empire collapsed, Soviet advisors and thousands of Cuban military "volunteers" began arriving in Angola and Mozambique to help prop up Marxist regimes. A decade and a half earlier, in 1960–1962, when Communist influence threatened to overtake the Congo, the Joint Chiefs had favored strong countermeasures, including military intervention if necessary. But by the mid-1970s, with the experience of Vietnam behind them, they were far more cautious and reserved and generally urged diplomacy and covert operations to counter Soviet moves rather than direct military action.

An exception to this pattern was the *Mayaguez* affair in May 1975 involving the seizure of a U.S. cargo ship by the Khmer Rouge, who had taken control of Cambodia about the same time South Vietnam collapsed. As news of the capture of the *Mayaguez* reached Washington, it brought back memories of the 1968 *Pueblo* incident when the United States had done nothing more than vent its "outrage" at North Korea's seizure of one of its spy ships and, later, offer an abject apology to secure the crew's release. Resolving not to be put in a similar position, President Ford took a tough line from the beginning and wound up authorizing military action to take back the ship and its crew.

As the debate over what to do unfolded, it became a test of wills between Kissinger and Schlesinger, with the Joint Chiefs caught in the middle. Frustrated by the recent setback in Vietnam, Kissinger encouraged Ford to believe that only a strong show of force would suffice, while Schlesinger adopted a wait-and-see attitude. Schlesinger knew that the Khmer Rouge had detained ships sailing near the Cambodian coast on previous occasions and usually released them without incident within a day or so. So it stood to reason that sooner or later they would let the *Mayaguez* go free. Kissinger, however, disagreed and in making his case convinced Ford that this was too serious a provocation to go unpunished.[62]

Despite the *Pueblo* incident, the Joint Chiefs had no contingency plans for such situations and had to improvise by relying on a hastily assembled operational concept prepared under the supervision of Admiral Noel Gayler, commander in chief of the Pacific theater. Among the options on the table for putting pressure on the Cambodians were air attacks from Navy carriers, punitive raids using B–52s, and the massing of a surface naval force off the Cambodian coast. Eventually, drawing on Gayler's

inputs, the JCS recommended, and President Ford approved, a more limited operation involving a rescue party of several hundred Marines backed by tactical air. While one party of Marines boarded and secured the ship, the others would land on a small island, Koh Tang, just off the Cambodian coast, where the crew was thought to be held. Securing the ship, which the Cambodians had abandoned, went without incident. The landing at Koh Tang, however, was a different matter. Operating from sketchy intelligence, the Marines encountered stronger resistance than expected and suffered heavy casualties. Soon withdrawn under fire, they discovered that the *Mayaguez* crew had been released unharmed 4 hours before they landed on Koh Tang. Small wonder that some historians rate the *Mayaguez* operation as a prominent "military failure."[63]

Still, the *Mayaguez* episode was not without useful lessons. By revealing gaps in JCS planning and organization, the operation stimulated interest in the theretofore neglected field of "special operations" and by extension helped generate support for JCS organizational reform resulting in the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 and the subsequent Nunn-Cohen amendment. Given the heavy emphasis on preparing for large-scale conventional conflict since adoption of the "flexible response" concept in the mid-1960s, the Joint Chiefs and the Services had not paid much attention to developing the necessary doctrine, arms, and forces for rescue missions and other specialized tasks. Nor had the political and budgetary climate at the time been conducive for it. But as a result of the *Mayaguez* affair and the rising tempo of international terrorism during the 1970s, interest in special operations began to grow to the point that by the end of the decade each Service was taking a closer look at its requirements.[64]

A further consequence of the *Mayaguez* incident was to set the stage for a high-level "purge" within the Ford administration, with Schlesinger the primary target. Never comfortable with Schlesinger to begin with, Ford considered him aloof, patronizing, and arrogant; after *Mayaguez*, he lost confidence in Schlesinger altogether.[65] The precipitating event leading to the Secretary's dismissal was Schlesinger's decision to call off a final air strike against the Cambodians once news reached the Pentagon that the crew was free and the Marines had withdrawn from Koh Tang. Secretaries of Defense going back to Forrestal had routinely taken it upon themselves to cancel Presidential orders when they judged them to be "OBE" (overtaken by events). Kissinger, however, seems to have gone out of his way to put it in Ford's mind that Schlesinger had been willfully insubordinate.[66]

With relations between Ford and Schlesinger continuing to deteriorate, the President finally decided in late October 1975 that the time had come to find a new Secretary of Defense. Named as Schlesinger's successor was Donald H. Rumsfeld, then White House director of operations. In what the press called the "Halloween Massacre," Ford also recalled George H.W. Bush from his post as envoy to China to replace

William E. Colby as Director of Central Intelligence and stripped Kissinger of his title as Assistant for National Security Affairs. The ouster of Kissinger from his national security job (his former deputy, retired Air Force Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft, replaced him) was aimed at quieting criticism from Congress that Kissinger had grown too powerful through occupying two major positions. But with his former deputy now managing the NSC, Kissinger's power and influence were little diminished.

The Joint Chiefs, as they were prone to do, took these changes in stride. Like President Ford, they had found Schlesinger's detached manner off-putting at times, but they had the utmost respect for his intellectual ability and his commanding grasp of nuclear strategy. Rumsfeld, in contrast, came from a political background, and his experience in defense affairs was confined primarily to recently serving as Ambassador to NATO. According to the Washington rumor mill, he had his sights set on someday becoming President. Kissinger remembered him as "tough, capable, personally attractive, and knowledgeable."[67] Whatever else, he made a favorable impression on the chiefs and, being well connected at the White House, increased the military's profile where it counted.

Under Rumsfeld, the Joint Chiefs moved several steps closer to realizing the aims of their strategic modernization program. Echoing JCS concerns that the strategic balance was shifting in favor of the Soviet Union, Rumsfeld urged a go-slow approach to further arms control talks until the United States could reassess the full range of its strategic requirements. "The level of deterrence suitable for Brezhnev," he argued, "is not necessarily the level of deterrence suitable for us."[68] Meanwhile, he advocated a modest strategic buildup that included continuation of Trident, acceleration of both the B–1 and MX programs to get them ready for production, and deployment of the Mark 12A warhead (previously authorized but delayed for technical reasons) to enhance the effectiveness of the Minuteman III force. Abandoning the no-growth defense budgets of the past, he proposed modest increases to keep military spending slightly ahead of inflation. Not all of these decisions would survive the scrutiny of the incoming Carter administration in 1977, but at the time they were cause for cautious optimism among the JCS that senior policymakers were aware of U.S. weakness and prepared to do something about it.[69]

While détente survived the stresses and strains of this period, the reasons probably had less to do with the commonality of U.S. and Soviet interests than with the reluctance of either side to admit that this latest version of "peaceful coexistence" was not bound to last. "If détente unravels in America," Nixon warned Brezhnev shortly before he relinquished the Presidency, "the hawks will take over, not the doves."[70] Brezhnev could well have said the same thing about the situation in the Soviet Union. Neither leader liked to think of the Cold War as having become a

winner-take-all or zero-sum game. But that in effect was what it had become—and how increasingly it seemed destined to play out.

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59 Minutes, NSC Meeting on Indochina, April 9, 1975 (declassified), National Security Advisers Files, Gerald R. Ford Library; available at <http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/nscmin/750409.pdf> (accessed July 18, 2011).

60 Willard J. Webb and Walter S. Poole, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and The War in Vietnam, 1971–1973* (Washington, DC: Office of Joint History, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2007), 359.

61 SNIE 11/2-81, "Soviet Support for International Terrorism and Revolutionary Violence," May 1981, in Gerald K. Haines and Robert E. Leggett, eds., *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947–1991: A Documentary Collection* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 2001), 106.

62 Ford, 275–281; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 547–566.

63 See Richard A. Gabriel, *Military Incompetence: Why the American Military Doesn't Win* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), 61–83.

64 David W. Hogan, Jr., *Raiders or Elite Infantry? The Changing Role of the U.S. Army Rangers from Dieppe to Grenada* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), 205–210.

65 Ford, 320–324.

66 Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 570–572. Kissinger incorrectly asserted (ibid., 573) that "in our system" the Secretary of Defense was "not directly in the chain of command," and that Schlesinger therefore had no authority to issue the orders he did. Kissinger was apparently unaware of the 1958 amendments to the National Security Act, which established the chain of command as running from the President, through the Secretary of Defense, to the combatant commanders.

67 Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 177.

68 Minutes, NSC Meeting on SALT, January 19, 1976, 22 (declassified), National Security Advisers' Files, Ford Library; available at <http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/nscmin/760119.pdf>. Library file copy reads "necessary," an apparent typo.

69 Department of Defense, *Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1977* (Washington, DC: Department. of Defense, January 27, 1976), i–vii; U.S. Department of Defense, *Report of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld on FY 1978 Budget, FY 1979 Authorization Request, and FY 1978–1982 Defense Programs* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, January 17, 1977), 123–130.

70 Nixon, *RN*, 1031.

General David C. Jones, USAF, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1978–1982