

Vice Admiral John G. Morgan, Jr.
Luncheon Address
IFPA-Fletcher Conference

VICE ADMIRAL JOHN G. MORGAN, JR.: All along, the Naval War College was instrumental as the lead institution for the maritime strategies developments and brought considerable resources to bear in this critical task. Jake, I cannot thank you enough and the stellar members of your staff who have worked tirelessly for the last 15 months to help us to where we are today. Jake, thank you very much. [applause]

So if you'll permit me in the few minutes I have remaining, I would like to briefly describe the process we used to get where we are today. We started with a thorough review of the strategic environment. We wanted to identify key trends and uncertainties for the next 20 years. First, we turned to existing work that was already done on the strategic environment. That included the National Intelligence Council 2020 Report, the Joint Operational Environment, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies Seven Futures Project. This enabled us to create a baseline of agreed upon trends and uncertainties without duplicating existing, incredible insights.

After surveying the strategic environment, we moved next to a discussion of this key uncertainty. This was really a big deal. This key uncertainty, and that is what will the next U.S. grand strategy be in foreign policy? I can't think of a better group of people than the people gathered here today to ask that question and to help us find the answers.

Instead of looking for a specific answer, what we did is we considered a range of options well known to all of you: primacy, cooperative security, selective engagement, and offshore balancing. We added two other alternative futures. One was the idea of a concert of power. Let me describe that briefly. A concert of power whereby all the major players agree that the current global status quo is in their best interests and needs to be preserved.

The other idea was a coalition of denial. Simply put, if the United States wanted to turn left, everybody else would want to turn right. We then began to talk about representative maritime strategies that would fit in all six of those alternative futures. From that vantage point, five maritime strategy options emerged. We looked at all five, and while they all represented excellent work, we reduced the field to three, and those three we felt were best suited to our national identity and consistent with the foreseeable directions that our foreign policy might take.

We next took the three surviving maritime strategy options and staffed them around the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard. First, we asked our staffs to look at each option, and improve it as if it was to emerge as the strategy. Inputs from every corner of the globe came back to Washington, and a core team composed of writers from each of the three services gathered to adjudicate and incorporate the suggested enhancements into the existing options. This task complete, the options were sent back out to the fleet, or back out to the field, this time asking several direct questions.

First, which option best corresponds with your view of the world? Second, what have we left out of the option you chose? Third, which aspects of the other options do you wish to see incorporated into the option that you chose? No one knew for sure what the outcome of this process or these questions would be, but most of us involved believed that the final product would reflect the wisdom of the crowd. And today, I'm happy to tell you that one strategy now sits in front of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Commandant of the Coast Guard for their approval.

As I mentioned earlier, this has been an open and inclusive process. We are creating an unclassified document, one with significant international flavor informed by constructive dialogue with friends around the world, not to mention a level of cooperation among the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard not seen in this town for some time. The credit belongs to the creative vision of Admiral Mullen who sought to blend different approaches with different emphasis in different places, and in different times. That line is borrowed from Secretary Gates' superb speech that he gave earlier this week at William and Mary.

In addition to the work done at the Naval War College, we traveled around the country. The CNOs spoke to that briefly this morning. We wanted to pulse the American people on what role they thought sea power should play in their lives. We did this in a series of dialogues, as the CNO told you, called the conversation with the country. In seven geographically dispersed sessions with Americans from all walks of life, what rang through loud and clear was that our citizens expect us to protect them and their way of life. We've been all across the country, and we're going to do more traveling starting this fall. We will start the second round of the conversation with the country in November in Miami. And this process has allowed us to listen to a thousand different voices, as the CNO said, and we want to listen to a thousand more.

I opened this afternoon with a quote from President Kennedy, himself a former naval officer and maritime enthusiast. President Kennedy was no stranger to the importance of sea power, employing it in a naval blockade of Cuba to narrowly avert nuclear war back in 1962. Additionally, I've talked just a little bit about President Reagan and his mastery of the link between sea power and national power. As a University of Virginia graduate myself, I'm fond to recall Thomas Jefferson as one of the first presidents to employ sea power against the Barbary pirates. Jefferson, Kennedy, Reagan, no one in this room knows the nature of future presidents who will call on maritime forces, but everyone in this room knows that they surely will.

You see my friends, sea power endures and it will continue to be the lynchpin to address the needs of this nation while standing together with our other nations around the globe. We have one common goal, and that is stability and prosperity and the security of this world order and of our nation's vital interests.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for listening here at lunch today. I'd be happy to answer any of your questions about the New York Yankees, about the maritime strategy or anything else that's on your mind. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. [applause]

Q&A

___: Okay, that's a wrap. Yes, sir?

AUDIENCE: Well, I got the first question this morning, too. Eric McVadon, the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis.

ADMIRAL MORGAN: There you go, Eric.

AUDIENCE: I read your article on the thousand ship navy, global maritime partnership and I wonder if you would help me—For those who raise the issue, how does this fit with the U.N. and regional organizations and so forth? I guess they're expressing some apprehension, or maybe they're expressing some enthusiasm. But however it goes, that would you tell them about how these two things mesh?

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Well, I think it's a good point and it gives me an opportunity. I'd really like to set the record straight. Candidly, I didn't appreciate the characterization of a thousand ship navy this morning as a ploy for hegemony for the United States interests. I think if you carefully study the article, what it really is acknowledging is perhaps one of those alternative futures that we talked about. And that is perhaps an approach to cooperative security. With respect to the United Nations, I think the IMO plays a critical role. I was with the Secretary General just a few months ago, and I can tell you in my discourse with the Secretary General at IMO, we're getting some very enthusiastic support. There are limits to what the United Nations can do, and one of the key things about the thousand ship navy, and we're beginning to distance ourselves from that moniker, if you will, it really is an approach that we're all best served by maintaining security in the maritime commons.

I think the United Nations appreciates that. In my travels not only around the country but around the world, I think there's some disagreement about what some people perceive the meaning of the thousand ship navy. I think some people like that title, some people didn't like it. But it was clear, in my mind as one of the two authors of that article, is that this was a common approach. This was an approach that did not depend so much on traditional organizations, but allowed a more freeform approach to what our common interests were in respect to maritime security.

So I think the CNO mentioned this morning that he's been surprised at how enthusiastic it's been received. How time and time again, it's brought back to our attention. I predict that when you read the maritime strategy, you'll never see that phrase. But you'll see the concept, the concept about general maritime partnership, and I think that concept will endure. Sir?

AUDIENCE: Admiral, you mentioned about the Russians planting the flag on the Pole. And maritime security operations, maritime strategy is in large part protection of American and national interests. We have national interests in the polar regions. My question, Sir, is when Congress when they read the strategy will they be able to see clearly and unambiguously that the United States requires a polar capability to, in fact, protect those national interests?

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Yeah, I think it was by no mistake that I mentioned the opening of the Northwest Passage or by the planting of a flag. I think what you're going to find is increased competition for resources offshore. I think countries around the world are going to say, "I need to explore the resources that are near my coast, I need to extend that further and further." And all the more reason why I think your question leads to support of unclause (?). We have to have a mechanism that's based on the rule of law to be able to resolve competing and conflicting claims for resources. And that's what the Russian flag on the Arctic floor is. It's a legitimate question that we have to pose, that we have to answer, I think I should say. And so I think you'll find the notion of what does the opening of that Northwest Passage mean to us? How does that impact how we operate, where we operate, what kind of resources we have to operate in places that we're not accustomed to?

But that's also why we have to refresh this view periodically. Because we may not see the next surprise, we may not see the next disruption, and we have to step back and see whether we've gotten it right. Sir?

AUDIENCE: Hi, Stan Weeks, Spectrum Group. Admiral, how difficult has it been in the process of a strategy development to craft it in such a way that when you go for resource allocation to Congress, and ultimately the American public, they understand the distinction between those new common, nontraditional threats that we can work cooperatively and the need

to at least hedge and maintain the high end war fighting capabilities that are really our unique comparative advantage in the global context? How hard was it to balance that?

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Stan, it's a great question and some key insights. I can tell you when you see the document, this is what we have attempted to do. Whether we succeeded or not, you can be the judge. We attempted to write the document for two groups: one, the American public, and two, the American Congress. Not to try to win over somebody's influence or minds, but we felt we had an obligation to talk about the role of sea power in simple terms that Americans can understand, that they can translate it to what I talked about earlier, their way of life. Why is it important to maintain that global supply chain? Why is it important to maintain energy security? What threatens that? What could cause a global disruption? Why must it be incumbent upon us to try to prevent an unwinnable war?

We recognize that conflict may break out, but then it needs to be limited and kept regionally contained, if we can. And so that all translates then, Stan, to what kind of resources do we need? And quite honestly, when you look at what we contribute to pay for our maritime services today, it's about 1 percent of GDP. But if you understand what that 1 percent of GDP brings you, I don't think many Americans will turn away from that. In fact, in our conversations with them, they say, "Listen John, we expect that of you." So we then, and that's when the CNO talked about those three documents, the maritime strategy, the operational concept and then the Navy strategic plan, I've always said that every budget is a strategy. Well, what we're trying to do is lend some strategic thinking into that budget formulation so the American people can understand why we need to do what we do and what we need to do what we do. Yes?

AUDIENCE: Joe Gas. When you go through an intellectual process, such as you've done for the last 18 months, you learn a lot about what something is, but you also learn what something is not. And perhaps some of the most valuable lessons, I don't know, I'd be interested to hear, are those things which are clearly not part of the future maritime strategy. I appreciate you can't talk to us about what's in it, but can you talk to us about what's not in it? [laughter]

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Bravo, Joe. It's a terrific question. There are two things about this. What does the maritime strategy say no to? And then you take that to the resource discussion, what do we say no to that we can't afford to buy because we don't have the resources? And how in a disciplined way do you arrive at an intelligent determination of what to say no to? Let me tell you I think what the maritime strategy will say no to. I think it's something the CNO has mentioned for some time now. And that is, it will say no, we cannot do it alone. And ergo, I return to this notion of global maritime partners. It's in everybody's interest that we prevent that unwinnable war. If major powers now go to war, the impact on this interdependent global economy will be in nobody's interests. And so I think what this will say no to is we're not going to go this alone.

There are a couple of other things that it distinctly says no to. Unfortunately, I'm not going to tell you that. [laughter] I hope when Admiral Roughead takes office on Monday that I've still got a job. [laughter] Yes, ma'am?

AUDIENCE: Admiral, thanks very much. I'm Joan Bondareff, former chief counsel of the Maritime Administration, also now with the Spectrum Group. And perhaps from my former title, you can tell where the question's going to come from. But, what are your plans to bring in the private sector to discuss this strategy perhaps before you finalize it? I mean, we have the maritime security fleet, we have the ports, a lot of which have privately owned. We have all the recreational vessels and commercial vessels in this country and they all play a big part in maritime awareness and commercialization and I think it would be a good idea, perhaps, if they're part of the final strategy.

ADMIRAL MORGAN: You bet. Here's what we've done so far, and I'll take your point that we probably need to do an even better job. One of the things we did, we had sort of three processes running at the same time. We had Jake's terrific effort up in Newport, where he gathered scholars from around the world. He held war games, he brought in the private sector, and he brought in shipping companies. I think Jake, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think there was an economic war game where he even invited China to be there. But then, so we had that

process running. We had the conversations with the country running, and we were talking with the private business sector during those conversations.

But then we did a third thing that was really pretty interesting. We actually, and I skipped over it in my processing, and thank you for reminding me, but we actually held what we called executive seminars in three locations. We went out to Omaha, we went down to Texas A&M and we went to the Naval Academy. And those were smaller groups of about 15, 16, 17 people, but they were CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, there were defense industry CEOs there, there were all the major shipping lines CEOs attended one of the three. We brought in public relations folks to see what plays, how the message is formulated. And who sat there was the Secretary of the Navy, was present down at Texas A&M, the CNO, all three of the service chiefs attended the seminar together at the Naval Academy, and Admiral Allen was out in Omaha.

So we're reaching out to the private sector to say we don't have a monopoly on good ideas, we need your insights. And so when we start our next round with the conversation with the country, what we're going to do is target even more of those key associations and companies that have maritime interests. So we know we've got work left to do, and it was a great point. Sir? This table's getting too much questions. [laughter]

AUDIENCE: Commander Pat Burns. Sir, how will this impact, or will it impact, 30 year shipbuilding plans, SECNAV's vision for strategic Navy QDR, already existing documents?

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Well, first of all we had to learn from existing documents. We looked closely at national level security documents, strategy documents. We looked closely at the last QDR, and Pat, what this is all geared to is to be refreshed every two years just prior to the next Palm, and on the next Palm will be just prior to the next QDR so that when we get into those discussions, we can say, "Listen, we've got the strategic context for why we're placing our bets the way we're placing them. We can explain to you why we've done this. We had different paths we could have chosen, but we said no to those paths for these good reasons."

And so we think once we get into this two year cycle, and that's what the maritime strategy will really kick off, is that constant refreshing will be able to inform the documents that you've talked about. You had a question there, I won't pick on this table. Go ahead?

AUDIENCE: Allen Zeman.

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Great to see you again, Allen.

AUDIENCE: Nice to see you, Sir. The strategy and the speakers today talked a lot about jointness and combined operations. And your role on the Joint Staff and now supporting a new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, do you intend to kind of extend this out to more interagency cooperation? And in particular, would you work toward a kind of second Goldwater-Nichols Act to kind of work on the interagency operations going forward?

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Boy, tough question. I don't know if I'm the expert to talk about a new Goldwater-Nichols Act, but I can tell you I'm a big fan of all elements of national power. And so I personally think in this new maritime era that naval officers, and I'm not going to single out just naval officers, but we as an officer corps are getting—We accept jointness. We're now looking into interagency and even almost beyond interagency to the sort of notion of how do we get into the private sector? How do we benefit from that? How do we bring all those elements of national power to bear? And so that's going to be a key notion.

I'll tell you, it stimulates a topic that I'll just briefly mention, but I would love-- If I had my way I would have spent an hour with you talking about this—I think based upon our strategic review, and Jacque Davis and Paul Bracken have done some remarkable early work on this. I think there needs to be a new way we look at escalation and de-escalation in our military strategies and our national security strategies. And I think that also speaks to why when you bring in all elements of national power, we've got to broaden our horizons that we used to enjoy escalation dominance in the Cold War. It was only two super powers, and whether we got it right or not, you could argue that.

But now in this much more fluid, multi-polar world, how do you approach to whether to escalate a crisis, or how can you deescalate it? When you look at Secretary Gates' speech last Monday, there are lots of solutions other than hammers, and then that gets you right into the interagency thing. So whether that calls for having to go to re-look Goldwater-Nichols, I haven't studied that enough. Yes, sir?

AUDIENCE: John, you mentioned regional engagements—

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Right.

AUDIENCE: --particularly in your answer to Joe. You mentioned that this strategy is now on the desks of clearly CNA desig (?) and of both the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Marine Corps. But from our perspective around the world, it's going to be the engagement of the regional commanders that buy into the strategy which is going to be key. And clearly, the engagement of state and others because it's only then that you'll probably actually get this delivered on the ground.

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Right. Well, Philip, what we did, and once again I apologize for galloping across the process that took us close to 16 months, one of the other things that we did is we went to the Joint Staff and acknowledged your point. And we said, "Listen, here's what we're thinking about the maritime strategy, but this plane is not going to fly unless we ship this out to our combatant commanders and get their view." And we went out to every regional combatant commander in the world and got their views as will. So I think we're on safe grounds there.

But your regional question implies something even larger. I think it is significant that the new CNO will unveil the maritime strategy along with the two other commandants at the War College in the middle of October, I think it's the 16th, 17th and 18th, at the International Sea Power Symposium. And that's going to be a remarkable gathering, ladies and gentlemen. I mean, I asked Kid Donegan yesterday in my office, and we now have 91 or 92 heads of navies,

Marine Corps and Coast Guards going to assemble in Newport next month. Think of that, 92 heads of Coast Guards, navies and Marine Corps all in one place.

And what we're seeing is we're very enthusiastic, one, that that level of participation. The last time we held an International Sea Power Symposium was two years ago, and I think the number was on the order of 52, 53. So we're now seeing this—And that's why I sometimes—I don't sometimes, I claim that there's a new maritime era upon us. there's this growing interest that something about the sea that's important to my own national security interests. And so we're seeing regional symposiums pop up around the world. There's a regional symposium in Africa, there's a great regional symposium in the western Pacific. There's a terrific symposium in Europe. Jim Stavridis is leading one down in South America. We're not seeing one size will fit all, but we're seeing the intersection of common interests, and I think regionally, we reflect that in here. Yes, sir?

AUDIENCE: Eric Kulisch, *American Shipper* magazine. I was wondering if the strategy addresses this, or maybe you could just talk more generally about the intersection of national security and homeland security. Is there any change in the roles of the Navy and the Coast Guard rather than power projection? Is there more thought of the Navy supplementing the Coast Guard in protecting the ports and other of the homeland security duties that it's already strained with? So, you know, some of that changing role there between the two services?

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Indeed. I think if I'm proud of one accomplishment here, it's not anything that I contributed, but the fact that the Navy, the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard did this together. It is a remarkable accomplishment, I think the first time in history that you've seen a document like this. And so embedded in that is this discussion of how do all there of those services contribute to homeland security? And we have to better understand where we can be interdependent upon each other, where I can do this part of the mission and the Coast Guard must do that. Where does the Marine Corps come into play? And I think we certainly have created the effort to answer those questions.

I think I've never seen greater cooperation among the three services than I've seen on this document. And so I think it'll speak to that. I trust that'll it'll satisfy you. Yes, sir?

DR. PFALTZGRAFF: This is perhaps an outstanding note on which to thank you for this wonderful presentation. And again, to thank you for all that you've done to bring us together in this meeting, Admiral Morgan.

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Thank you. [applause]

DR. PFALTZGRAFF: I realize that there are many more questions that you could ask Admiral Morgan, but we should now move back to begin session 3, and then we have session 4 promptly at 2:00 where we were earlier today. So we have a lot on the agenda for this afternoon and this evening. But we thank you very much, again, for being with us and making this happen.
[applause]

ADMIRAL MORGAN: Thanks, Bob.

END