Introduction

A country's national security is the product of many intertwined elements, including internal ones such as its economic strength, the scientific, technological, and industrial skills resident in its population and infrastructure, the sturdiness of its governmental institutions, and the competence of its military forces. Yet external factors also come into play. The context of a state's geography influences its geopolitical perceptions of security. For example, does it share a contiguous border with neighboring countries that are friendly (or at least neutral toward it) and which possess stable national governments? Or does it instead border on states with hostile or expansionist intentions or ones that are in the throes of revolution or large-scale political unrest? Similarly, the presence or absence of allies elsewhere in the world and the existence of real or perceived threats from potential enemy countries in other portions of the globe or from transnational actors such as terrorist organizations significantly affect the perceptions of a country's leaders regarding the level of its security.

American historians and political scientists, as much as government decision makers, have wrestled with the concept of national security since the end of World War II. In part because of its somewhat amorphous nature, the mantle of national security can be wrapped around almost any topic one wishes. For the purposes of this book, though, national security is taken to be those aspects of U.S. policy having to do specifically with the interaction of national defense and foreign relations (including military assistance) at the highest governmental levels. Some theoretically minded observers no doubt will find this working definition too broad in scope. This may well be because they view national security policy simply as military policy writ large and, as such, a subject separate and distinct from foreign policy.[1] I would argue, however, that a country's national security policy emerges at the nexus of defense policy and foreign policy and therefore, although it may be concerned predominantly with military matters, it contains substantial elements of each.

For the United States in the decade after the end of World War II, the effort

seen as necessary for maintaining national security expanded tremendously in size and cost over what initially had been envisioned by its leaders. Indeed, by early 1947, recognition that in a period of emerging geopolitical conflict with the Soviet Union the country needed to maintain an ongoing involvement with world political and military events largely had supplanted the isolationist impulses present in prewar America.

During 1945 and 1946, however, the U.S. government lacked the organizational means to allow it to control effectively its vastly increased overseas responsibilities in a world that was swiftly becoming polarized into Western Democratic and Eastern Communist blocs. The organizations required for producing, supporting, and managing American national security policy first emerged with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, which established a National Security Council to advise the President regarding "the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security"; a Central Intelligence Agency that, among other things, could "correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to national security, and provide for the appropriate dissemination of such intelligence within the Government"; and a National Military Establishment, consisting of the Department of the Army, the Department of the Navy, and the Department of the Air Force and other named agencies, and headed by a Secretary of Defense who would not only exercise "general direction, authority, and control" over these departments and agencies but who also would serve as the President's principal assistant "in all matters relating to national security."[2] These organizations were changed and strengthened in subsequent years by the actions of both the President and the Congress. Nonetheless, it took a substantial period of time for national leaders to learn how to use these new organizations to better serve its defense and foreign policy needs.

As one of the country's two military departments at war's end in September 1945, the Navy Department was actively engaged in the creation and the functioning of these national security organizations during this decade when one international crisis followed another in a seemingly unwavering fashion. It is because the service had a prominent role in the country's defense during the early Cold War that focusing on American national security affairs through the lens of the U.S. Navy provides a useful way to examine the complexities that were at all times in play.

Specifically, this study investigates how the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO)—the service's senior uniformed leader—and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) operated within the increasingly centralized postwar security structure to influence U.S. defense policy during the first postwar decade. During this period, the responses of the Navy's senior officers were heavily shaped by two pivotal events—the fight over service unification that culminated in the passage of the National Security Act and the subsequent controversy

over the roles and missions of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The outcomes of these events taught Navy senior flag officers and service planners the importance of being thoroughly prepared to contest each issue in whatever forum was necessary and to recognize that the fight over service prerogatives was not a short-term battle but instead an ongoing struggle. This study attempts to explain how the Chief of Naval Operations, as assisted by OPNAV, was able to maneuver effectively within this structure in order to promote and defend Navy viewpoints on strategy and policy. Providing an accurate analysis of the Navy's role requires examining not only how it interacted with the other military services, but also with the Secretary of Defense and the Defense Department, the National Security Council, and the President of the United States.

In the past twenty-five years, several federal military history offices have published chronological volumes as part of an ongoing effort to detail the roles that their organizations played in the development of postwar American national security policy. The Historical Office of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), for example, has published to date four volumes of OSD's history, covering the years from 1947 through 1960.[3] Similarly, the Office of Joint History in the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has released seven volumes of its continuing history of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and national policy.[4] To date, however, the individual armed services' history offices have not published studies detailing the actions of their services in the making or prosecuting of U.S. national security policy in the years since 1945. This is unfortunate because it thereby denies us a chance to see how the Army and the Air Force during the Cold War individually developed their high-level positions and how their interactions with other organizations served to modify or otherwise shape the defense policies adopted by the United States at particular points in time.

As noted above, in writing about the U.S. Navy's role in national security affairs, I have chosen to focus on the decision-making process as seen from the vantage point of the Chief of Naval Operations and secondarily from the perspective of members of key sections of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations that supported him, including the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, the Deputy Chiefs of Naval Operations, the Strategic Plans Division, and the Office of Naval Intelligence. Thus, while I discuss the working relationships of particular CNOs with their respective Secretaries of the Navy during these years, I have made no attempt to provide as detailed an examination of the efforts of the Secretaries in the events analyzed as I have for the Chiefs of Naval Operations.

In the interwar years of the 1920s and 1930s, the War and Navy Departments had served largely as independent actors within the Executive Branch. Although each had been vital in ensuring the country's security against outside military threats, the departments had been separately administered and thus directly answerable only to the President for the execution of their responsibilities. Co-

operation between the two services during these years had been effected only through the relatively circumscribed activities of the Joint Board of the Army and Navy, an organization established in 1903 to facilitate the senior representatives of the Army and Navy reaching common conclusions on "all matters calling for the cooperation of the two services."[5] Given the widely differing perspectives of the Army and Navy staffs on most substantive issues during these decades, it is not surprising that "common conclusions" had been agreed upon all too infrequently during these years.

The initial step toward the increasing centralization of national security decision-making had been taken in July 1939, just two months before war broke out in Europe. President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a Military Order under his power as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, which transferred the Joint Army and Navy Board, the Army and Navy Munitions Board, and several additional agencies into the recently created Executive Office of the President.[6] Roosevelt had carried out the initiative in order to assume personal oversight over many of the myriad activities connected to American rearmament.[7] Since the senior service members of the Joint Army and Navy Board were the Army Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations, the President's administrative fiat effectively had removed the two service chiefs from the direct control of their Secretaries with regard to certain important matters such as joint war planning. Prior to this change, the Chief of Naval Operations had performed his duties "under the authority of the Secretary of the Navy" and his orders had been considered as "emanating from the Secretary."[8] In a similar fashion, the Army Chief of Staff had been "charged by the Secretary of War with the planning, development, and execution of the military program."[9]

In the wake of the ARCADIA Conference in Washington, D.C. (December 1941–January 1942) following the United States' entry into the war, President Roosevelt had agreed to the creation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) organization as a counterpart to the British Chiefs of Staff on the newly formed Combined Chiefs of Staff Committee, although he had not granted it a formal charter. The new organization had further centralized defense decision-making by making wartime members of the JCS not only the President's personal military advisers but also his instruments for developing strategy and for waging global war. From July 1942 onward the membership of the JCS had consisted of Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, Commander in Chief, United States Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations Ernest J. King, Army Air Forces Commanding General Henry H. Arnold, and Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief William D. Leahy.

Because the service secretaries had been excluded from having a part in the larger strategic direction of the war, Admiral King had been able to control many of the operational aspects of the Navy's wartime combat participation independent of the Secretary of the Navy's oversight once he had been given the

combined responsibilities as Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations (COMINCH/CNO) in March 1942. In the postwar period, under a departmental reorganization, most of the responsibilities of the combined COMINCH/CNO position were carried over and assigned to the officer designated the Chief of Naval Operations, but now the Navy's senior admiral, as in the years before 1939, performed his service duties, including command of naval operating forces, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy.

Even though President Roosevelt had refused to provide statutory authority for the JCS system during World War II, its legal status was formally codified with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947. Congressional passage of the 1949 Amendments to the National Security Act established the formal position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It also established the Department of Defense as an Executive Department of the Government. The adoption of President Eisenhower's Reorganization Plan No. 6 in 1953 further centralized the national security decision-making process. It strengthened the Defense Secretary's position by clarifying the lines of authority within the Defense Department and added additional civilian Assistant Secretaries. It also increased the power of the JCS chairman over the Joint Staff at the expense of the corporate body of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These changes meant that most of what the Chief of Naval Operations accomplished in the period from 1945 through 1955, apart from duties performed specifically within his service, he did as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

It should be noted that because the book's focus is on national security affairs rather than on high-level policies and programs internal to the Navy, there are many topics of interest related to the service that either are not covered in these pages or receive only passing mention. Indeed, I would argue that there are many such topics that would be worthy of detailed treatment in a volume of their own.

In the decades since 1945, naval historians and policy analysts have studied a number of the subjects that are being examined in this study. By and large, however, their published volumes have focused on discrete issues rather than on a broader sweep of the U.S. Navy's actions. It is this larger arena on which the present study focuses. While I have used published accounts to good advantage in the present work, in cases where it was possible I have gone back to the original primary documentation used in these earlier works to form the basis for my judgments regarding both the events that occurred and the parts that individual officers played in them. In addition, I have been fortunate in having had the opportunity over the years of interviewing a significant number of retired senior officers about their personal experiences during this hectic decade. Their recorded comments often furnished me with information that was unavailable in the extant documentary record.

I should note at the outset that the unsuspecting reader is likely to find the book a curious amalgam of several different types of history, including administrative history, naval and military history, and diplomatic history. No doubt some naval historians will look at it and say that it contains too much about American foreign policy and not enough about the naval and military subjects of greatest concern to them. I also am certain that many American diplomatic historians who read it will remonstrate that it contains altogether too much military history and that the author has not paid enough attention to particular Cold War foreign policy issues. To some extent I have to agree with both viewpoints. Yet, given the size of the existing volume, I shudder to imagine the magnitude of a study that would be required to cover both topics as completely as subject specialists would like.

Another matter that needs addressing at the outset is the study's chronological time frame. Although indeed most of the volume is specifically directed toward events that took place from the end of World War II through mid-1955 (when Admiral Robert B. Carney retired as Chief of Naval Operations), the first several substantive chapters return to an earlier period. Chapter 1 on the organizational development of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations goes back to 1939, when Admiral Harold R. Stark became the CNO, just before the outbreak of the war in Europe. It then provides a detailed look at the wartime organizational changes to the combined position of Commander in Chief United States Fleet/Chief of Naval Operations occupied by Admiral Ernest King from March 1942 until the war's end and finally at the reversion in the immediate postwar period to a strengthened CNO acting under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy—a position that was retained in the years that followed. Chapter 2 examines OPNAV's experience in postwar planning from 1943 through 1945. Chapters 3 and 4 detail the Navy's involvement in the fight over unification of the services. An examination of the 1940 antecedents to the unification fight is necessary so that the reader fully understands the Navy's later wartime and postwar opposition to what it considered a pernicious idea. While the time period covered in the study might have been more clearly delineated by assigning it a starting date in the title that predated 1945, this would have given the reader a false impression that the book would address many other topics from the earlier period. For this reason, I have kept the original 1945–1955 time frame in the title.

One conclusion about the Navy's role in national security affairs that became evident to me as I conducted research was that despite the ad hoc quality of some of the service's responses to particular events, OPNAV possessed both an effective decision-making organization and a cadre of extremely competent senior officers during these years. While the naval officers chosen to be CNO during the years examined in this study varied widely both in their interest in and ability to handle larger national security issues, the overall skills possessed by the higher-

level officers in OPNAV—the deputies and planners—compensated to a great extent for a particular CNO's individual shortcomings.

During the early years of the first postwar decade, the development of American national security policy was a hesitant, piecemeal process, as the Truman administration responded to foreign crises in Europe and Asia by establishing incremental programs designed to alleviate the matters at hand rather than attempting to block out long-term responses to the perceived dangers in the larger international arena. Nonetheless, the administration's declaration of the Truman Doctrine for Greece and Turkey, the establishment of the Marshall Plan to facilitate Europe's economic recovery, and its role in creating the North Atlantic Treaty Organization were major steps in stabilizing the situation in Western Europe in the face of the dominant Soviet conventional military power on the Continent. Unfortunately, as the Communist Chinese takeover in China in 1949 and the North Korean invasion of South Korea in 1950 demonstrated, American policy in Asia—apart from the one successfully carried out in the postwar occupation of Japan—proved inadequate for preventing unwanted changes to friendly political regimes in the region. Although the advent of the Eisenhower administration in 1953 brought with it new international challenges, the death of Joseph Stalin and the armistice in Korea that same year gave renewed hope to American policymakers for strengthening the security of the United States and its allies. The U.S. Navy played an important part in both helping to formulate national security policy and carrying it out.