

# Is the Pen Really Mightier than the Sword?

Naval Influences on 19th Century American Diplomacy

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Paper

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## **Process Paper**

Militaries play a major role in diplomacy. Though Russian troops have yet to take the capital Kyiv, Putin's massive 100,000-troop mobilization flexing Russia's military might still endows his government with impressive bargaining power against Ukraine and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Russia's still formidable conventional and nuclear arsenal have left the West with their hands tied, only able to resist in the form of weapons donations and strongly worded statements while peace talks continue to stagnate given Putin's significant demands. Though diplomacy is traditionally thought of as a process requiring skillful communication and conversation, an otherwise successful and efficient diplomatic initiative can be rendered unfeasible without a strong military to both deter and coerce action.

This essay adopts nascent, post-Revolutionary America as an example of a nation confronted with overwhelming military might that influenced the terms of several landmark treaties the U.S. signed with foreign nations. I correlated U.S. naval success with diplomatic outcomes during the Jay Treaty, XYZ Affair, War of 1812, and the Perry Expedition, and concluded that renewed investment in the naval budget was a key contributor to U.S. power expansion on the world stage while also suggesting national governments include assessments of their military capability in their strategies of diplomacy.

I composed this essay as part of my World-History independent study project under the guidance of my History teacher, selecting this topic because militaries have long had a broad impact on geopolitics across the world and throughout history. This paper also uses its findings about the impact of U.S. naval power on its diplomatic effectiveness as the basis for case studies applicable to global perspectives. A U.S.-centric viewpoint was also adopted because of the ready availability of sources both in terms of geographic proximity and language. Given this

project's political ties, I found many sources within Congressional legacy databases preserving historical acts and legislation. I also turned to some personal biographies of prominent late eighteenth-century political and military figures in the late 18th to enhance this paper's narrative with applicable primary source perspectives. There were also some challenges, however, in accessing sources behind paywalls, so many times, further web browsing was required to find the same sources on free platforms.

The conclusion of the paper, though drawn from events from the 19th century, even has modern ramifications relating to not just the Russian invasion of Ukraine but also the Taiwan Strait Crisis, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the ongoing international dispute with North Korea and its nuclear arsenal.

## Introduction

Thousand-pound warheads and nuclear submarines may be one of the last things that comes to mind when picturing diplomatic strategies. Yet today, the Navy plays a crucial role in American political flashpoints all across the globe, from securing international shipping against Iranian hostility in the Strait of Hormuz all the way to deterring Chinese expansionism by conducting freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea.<sup>12</sup> However, at its infancy, the United States was slow to realize the potential of a navy to not only defend its expansive Atlantic coastline but also to project power across the oceans that surround her. The United States came to acknowledge the importance of a navy to both security and diplomacy, investing in it only after repeated European military coercion and a disastrous military campaign against Napoleon's French Empire.

## European Navies in the Late 18th Century

Old-world European nations relied heavily on maritime routes to not only trade, but also to project their power to distant locales, including the Americas. Many key European players in American politics maintained large naval fleets to secure their trading routes and interests, including Britain and France.

### *Established European Navies*

The founding and history of the United States is intertwined with the British Royal Navy, from their role in protecting the American colonists and defeating France during the French and Indian War to attempting to quash the rebellion of those colonists by ferrying thousands of British troops across the Atlantic during the American Revolution. Naturally, the British Empire

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<sup>1</sup>Luke Coffey, "Securing the Strait of Hormuz: Five Principles for the U.S.," The Heritage Foundation, July 30, 2019, <https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/report/securing-the-strait-hormuz-five-principles-the-us>. On the South China Sea, see Ankit Panda, "US Conducts Freedom of Navigation Operation near China-Held Features in Spratlys," The Diplomat (Diplomat Media Inc, July 16, 2020), <https://thediplomat.com/2020/07/us-conducts-freedom-of-navigation-operation-near-china-held-features-in-spratlys/>.

<sup>2</sup>Appendix A



had always prized their navy, with Member of Parliament Sir William Blackstone touting “the Royal Navy of England [as] its greatest defense and ornament...it is its ancient and natural strength.”<sup>3</sup> An analysis of the Royal Navy’s fleet in 1790 reveals why their navy was so revered: their vessel count of 661 ships was second only to the Russian Empire, and the fleet’s complement of over 12,000 cannon and 100,000 sailors easily dwarfed the historically influential Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch navies.<sup>4</sup>

America’s chief ally during the Revolutionary War also maintained a respectable naval force, and though internal tensions in Revolutionary France were high, the French still possessed over 290 vessels, 14,000 cannon, and 78,000 sailors in 1790.<sup>5</sup> Understanding the advantages of naval superiority, major European seafaring nations began to associate their navies as invaluable tools for power projection and diplomacy. One of Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord’s first acts as Napoleon’s Foreign Minister was to recommend that “the First Consul holds in his hands everything relating directly to politics, that is...my ministry for external affairs, as well as the two principal means of implementing policy, War and the Navy.”<sup>6</sup> Instead of being regarded as separate from the ministry of external affairs (France’s principal diplomatic agency), France’s Department of War and Department of the Navy were seen as critical tools to ensure the execution of policy, suggesting that pure diplomacy is ineffective without naval support.

Britain’s Horatio Nelson sympathized with the French viewpoint of complementing diplomacy with naval assets, with the Admiral proclaiming that “a Fleet of British ships-of-war are the best negotiators in Europe,” an assessment which revealed British confidence that she and her massive Empire could resort to their expansive Navy to achieve almost any foreign policy

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<sup>3</sup>William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England in Four Books*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia, PA: J. P. Lippincott Company, 1893), 387.

<sup>4</sup>Robert Fulton, *Torpedo War, and Submarine Explosions* (New York City, NY: William Abbatt, 1914).

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, letter from Talleyrand to Napoleon, 1799, in *Talleyrand*, ed. Philip G. Dwyer (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2002), 85.

initiative.<sup>7</sup>

### *America's Continental Navy*

In the midst of a political environment that increasingly associated naval force with achieving diplomatic goals, an examination of the nascent Continental Navy reveals alarming disparities between the fledgling nation's naval strength and that of the established European powers, highlighting American inability to resist the naval forces of Europe in the event of war. The Naval Act of 1794, which created a permanent naval force, authorized the purchase of "four ships to carry forty-four guns each, and two ships to carry thirty-six guns each," amounting to a grand total of six ships and 248 cannon pieces.<sup>8</sup> The debate over significant expansion of Naval Strength was also a heavily one-sided one at the time, with Vice President John Adams lamenting that "the present government has not strength to command, nor enough of the general confidence of the nation to draw the men and money necessary" to create or maintain any sizeable military force.<sup>9</sup>

### **A Weak Navy's Impact on American Diplomacy: The Case of the Jay Treaty**

The consequences of a weak American Navy echoed beyond the halls of Congress. In an effort to normalize relations with Britain, put a stop to their impressment of American sailors, and remove remaining British outposts in the Northwest territory, the United States signed the Jay Treaty with Britain in 1794.<sup>10</sup> Though this treaty was intended to ease tensions between the two nations, it was immensely unpopular with the American public: not only did the two parties fail to end British impressment and to address most the American concerns, but the treaty

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<sup>7</sup>Horatio Nelson, letter to Alexander Davidson, 1801, in *Famous Battles of the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Charles Welsh (Madison, WI: University of Madison, 1907), 17.

<sup>8</sup>Act to Provide a Naval Armament, ch. 12, 1 Stat. 350 (Mar. 27, 1794). Accessed February 24, 2022. <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/new-us-navy/act-draft.html>.

<sup>9</sup>John Adams, letter to George Washington, 1790, in *The Works of John Adams*, ed. Charles F. Adams (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1853), 42.

<sup>10</sup>In an effort to strengthen the depleted manpower of the Royal Navy, Britain resorted to forcibly pressing American civilian sailors into service on Royal Navy ships.

also granted Britain additional economic privileges, including Most Favored Nation status and the right to seize U.S. cargos bound for France.<sup>11</sup>

Even the State Department itself admitted that Jay had little bargaining tools during these negotiations, with the mighty Royal Navy dwarfing the fledgling Continental Navy on her very coastline.<sup>12</sup> American leaders at the time echoed this sentiment, with George Washington<sup>13</sup> admitting the “not favorable” conditions, but conceding “that it is better to ratify it...than to suffer matters to remain as they are, unsettled.”<sup>14</sup> In other words, with few avenues to respond to Britain’s aggressive Naval coercion and their strategy of impressment, the American people chose between the lesser of two evils and signed the Jay Treaty to alleviate tensions with Great Britain and enable international trade. This instance of a seafaring European power using its overwhelming naval force to coerce the United States into conceding the unequal political terms was but a start to a string of such cases.

### **Subtle Coercion to Full-On War: The XYZ Affair**

Not only did the Jay Treaty anger the United States’ citizens, but it also angered America’s Revolutionary War ally, France. Perceiving the passage of the Jay Treaty as shifting the United States into Britain’s sphere of influence, the French Directory issued a proclamation permitting the seizure of U.S. merchant ships, leading President Adams to send three envoys (codenamed X, Y, and Z in a report to Congress) to Paris in 1796.<sup>15</sup> Far from going smoothly, the

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<sup>11</sup>Treaty of Amity Commerce and Navigation, between His Britannick Majesty; and The United States of America, by Their President, with the advice and consent of Their Senate., 2 Stat. [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/jay.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/jay.asp).

<sup>12</sup>“John Jay’s Treaty, 1794–95,” U.S. Department of State (Office of the Historian), accessed October 25, 2021, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1784-1800/jay-treaty>.

<sup>13</sup>Even George Washington, who stressed his isolationist ideals in his farewell address, approved of signing the Jay Treaty, highlighting the desperate the U.S. was facing.

<sup>14</sup>George Washington to Edmund Randolph, July 22, 1795, in *George Washington Papers, Series 2, Letterbooks 1754 to 1799: Letterbook 30, - Oct. 11, 1796*, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw2.030/>.

<sup>15</sup>Richard N. Rosenfeld, *American Aurora: A Democratic-Republican Returns: The Suppressed History of Our Nation's Beginnings and the Heroic Newspaper That Tried to Report It* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998), 67.

talks failed to even formally start, with the American delegates refusing to pay the £50,000 bribe French foreign minister Talleyrand had demanded.<sup>1617</sup> Tensions unsurprisingly flared up after this diplomatic mishap, and the “X.Y.Z. Affair” initiated the two-year Quasi-War, so-named because neither nation formally declared war.

France began seizing American merchant ships, and both sides began preparing for an armed confrontation on the high seas. Historian Morton Borden describes the hostilities: “French corsairs boldly attacked American shipping as far north as Long Island...The United States appeared weak and vulnerable, certainly no match for a mighty European power such as France.”<sup>18</sup> Other sources at the time paints an equally bleak picture: in fact, a postwar Congressional assessment estimated that between 1793 and 1800 alone, the French seized over 444 U.S. ships, amounting to over \$15 million of financial damage to the U.S. economy, a figure exceeding the entire federal budget at the time.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, a consortium of American sea captains addressed a letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering which reveals the massive scope of French seizure operations, reporting that ships from the southern port of Charleston, SC all the way to the northern harbor of Boston, MA, being captured.<sup>20</sup> The absence of a meaningful naval deterrence for the United States not only hampered smooth execution of U.S. foreign policy, but its failures in diplomacy also threatened the country’s economy and society.

Although a victim of military intervention, even the United States tried to use the tactic on her more powerful European rivals. A recent study from the Stimson Center, a non-partisan

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Appendix B

<sup>18</sup>Morton Borden and Otis L. Graham, *The American Profile* (Lexington, KY: D.C. Heath and Co., 1978), 85.

<sup>19</sup>For total ship seizures, see: Department of State, “List of Spoliations and Other Injuries on the Property of American Citizens by the French from the Year 1793 to 1800”, H.R. Rep. No. 19th-453, 2d, at 15 (Jan. 22, 1827). For 1800 U.S. budget, see: Christopher Chantrell, ed., “Federal 1800 Government Spending,” GovSpending, accessed February 23, 2022, [https://www.usgovernmentspending.com/fed\\_spending\\_1800USIn](https://www.usgovernmentspending.com/fed_spending_1800USIn).

<sup>20</sup>Daniel Green et al., Letter from American Ship Captains to Secretary Pickering, 1797, in *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi-War between the United States and France*, ed. Claude A. Swanson (Government Printing Office, 1935), 33-34.

American think tank focused on international relations, details the clear linkage between U.S. foreign policy and military coercion, noting over 100 incidents during the course of her history when the United States resorted to at least military show of force to parry challenges to U.S. interests—America’s response to French intimidation was no exception to this trend.<sup>21</sup> In response to the Gallic bluster, John Adams signed Bill no. 561, ordering naval commanders to “seize, take and bring into any Port of the United States...any armed Vessel sailing under Authority or Pretence of Authority from the Republic of France” in May 1798.<sup>22</sup> However, Adams’ paper tiger threat could not carry the fight onto the water, through these bureaucratic means, Adams attempted to assert his authority among the world’s great powers. Unfortunately, signing strongly worded bills into law proved an insufficient response to the reality of the French fleet.

America’s strong retaliatory stance against French diplomatic coercion was contrasted by local reports depicting a continental navy ill-equipped for such an undertaking. The Continental Navy at the time consisted of a only six vessels, and when reporting on the ability of America’s early fleet, Naval Agent Stephen Higginson describes how he “should tremble for the issue should [the *USS Dolphin*] meet a French Cruiser of equal force,” how the captain of the *USS Congress* has “not had much experience in a naval war [and]...has seen very little actual service,” and that the *USS Herald* is obsolete, as “the [Navy] cannot be promoted by [it].”<sup>23</sup> Responding to the XYZ Affair, the United States learned that without an effective military, conducting

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<sup>21</sup>Melanie W. Sisson, "Military Coercion and US Foreign Policy: The Use of Force Short of War," Stimson Center, last modified May 13, 2020, accessed February 16, 2022, <https://www.stimson.org/2020/military-coercion-and-us-foreign-policy-the-use-of-force-short-of-war/#:~:text=Military%20Coercion%20and%20US%20Foreign%20Policy%20reveals%20that%20despite%20its,as%20often%20as%20they%20succeeded.>

<sup>22</sup>An Act more effectually to protect the Commerce and Coasts of the United States., ch. 48, 1 Stat. (May 28, 1798). Accessed February 16, 2022.

[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Statutes\\_at\\_Large/Volume\\_1/5th\\_Congress/2nd\\_Session/Chapter\\_48.](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United_States_Statutes_at_Large/Volume_1/5th_Congress/2nd_Session/Chapter_48.)

<sup>23</sup>Stephen Higginson, Letter to the Secretary of War, June 12, 1798, in *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi War*, ed. Dudley W. Knox (Washington, D.C.: Office of Naval Records and Library, 1935), 111.

diplomacy that will secure national interests is extremely difficult. Since the European powers traditionally conducted diplomacy through their military, the world's newest nation came to the negotiation table with a weakened hand. All states were keenly aware that a head-on military confrontation with a Navy plagued by shortfalls in logistics, shipbuilding, and personnel training would also be disastrous for the United States.

### **Realization to Modernization**

Recognizing the importance of an effective military to resolve diplomatic incidents and conduct international negotiations, the United States began a rapid transformation of her navy: in a period of only 5 short years, the Navy's budget rose fivefold, from \$769,000 to over \$3.8 million in 1799.<sup>24</sup> With the aforementioned budget increase and the passage of the Naval Additional Armament Act of 1798, the Navy's fleet tripled in size and doubled in firepower (gaining 12 new vessels, each outfitted with 22 guns). As a result, the next time a major European power used its navy to coerce the United States into granting diplomatic concessions during the War of 1812 with Britain, the Continental Navy's performance demonstrated the United States' newfound capability to more than hold their ground, not only halting British offensives in the Battle of Lake Erie but also giving rise to the seafaring legends of ships like the *USS Constitution*—"Old Ironsides." America's spirited response to renewed European belligerence even caught the attention of the famed Admiral Nelson, who observed that "There is in the handling of these Transatlantic ships a nucleus of trouble for the Navy of Great Britain."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Konstantin F. Wild, "Budget of the US Navy: 1794 to 2014," Naval History and Heritage Command, last modified August 23, 2017, accessed February 16, 2022, <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/b/budget-of-the-us-navy-1794-to-2004.html>.

<sup>25</sup>Horatio Nelson, Speech during Royal Navy expedition in the Atlantic, 1800s, *The Royal Navy : Its Influence in English History and in the Growth of Empire*, University of Cambridge Press, Cambridge, UK, 149.

As America's military and naval influence grew in the subsequent decades, so did its diplomatic ambitions. Driven by the emerging imperialist ideology and wanting to expand its economic trading partners, the United States adopted the same diplomatic technique they themselves fell victim to over a century ago: using their now formidable navy as a political bargaining tool. Commodore Matthew Perry was dispatched to Japan to urge the reversal of their isolationist policies, with the help of four steam-powered frigates complemented by 150-pounder guns in 1853. The Japanese defenders, unprepared to defend against what were characterized as "giant dragons puffing smoke" and "black ships of evil mien," watched on powerlessly as Perry's fleet engaged in an intimidation campaign to demand Japan's engagement with American trade by encroaching upon and surveying Japanese coastal waters.<sup>26</sup>

Japan's response to American diplomatic coercion from its navy mirrored America's own response when faced with the same predicament against the French during the XYZ Affair—the island nation began purchasing from the Dutch "1 steam corvette; 56 sailing corvettes; 2 steamships; books on ship-building techniques and experts on warship building; a copper-made carronade [and] 3,000 percussion-capped army muskets"<sup>27</sup> just a month after Perry's departure and opening its first modern-day naval training center in Nagasaki just two years later. In both cases where a more powerful nation resorted to naval acts as a form of diplomatic coercion, the outcome was a rapid modernization and expansion of the weaker power's military both as a form of deterrence from future coercion as well as a gradual realization of the potential of utilizing their own naval strength to achieve policy objectives. Japan, for instance, relied on their formidable navy to not only during their victory over Russia in the Battle of Port Arthur but also

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<sup>26</sup>Appendix C

<sup>27</sup>Seiho Arima, "The Western Influence on Japanese Military Science, Shipbuilding, and Navigation," *Monumenta Nipponica* 19, no. 3 (1964): 131, accessed February 16, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2383177>.

to rapidly annex many Southeast Asian territories and launch the devastating surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, which ultimately drew America into full-scale war.<sup>28</sup>

## Conclusion

Initially developed as a way to secure a country's porous coastlines, navies quickly transformed into a Swiss Army Knife of sorts, able to secure distant colonies while also projecting power on a global scale. They also functioned as either an invaluable asset or an unintentional impediment to diplomatic relations. A fleet of a hundred ships-of-the-line provided power to deter undesirable diplomatic activity or to coerce cooperation; in contrast, the early Continental Navy's measly dozen boats were only seen as a weakness, subjecting the new nation as a whole to diplomatic coercion and military coercion, damaging its economy and society in the process. The United States, with its 2,000-mile eastern coastline, saw its economic and political fortunes rise once it could take control of her waters. The land and naval War of 1812 saw the revitalized American military bring heretofore overwhelming British naval and marine forces to a stalemate, and even successfully demanded the complete withdrawal of British troops from American territories as stipulated by the 1812 Treaty of Ghent. Japan's rapid modernization of her naval forces after the Perry expedition also demonstrates the gradual and cyclical realization by nations around the world that a navy is key to political deterrence and negotiation. With 90% of international trade and over 180 still unresolved maritime disputes across the world's oceans, the century-old adage "whoever rules the waves rules the world" seems to still hold true today.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Richard Connaughton, *Rising Sun and Tumbling Bear: Russia's War with Japan*, rev. ed. (London: Cassell, 2004), 8.

<sup>29</sup>For modern-day maritime disagreements, see: Andreas Østhagen, "Troubled Seas? The Changing Politics of Maritime Boundary Disputes," *Ocean and Coastal Management* 205 (May 1, 2021). For adage, see: Henry George Hahn, "Mahan's Influence on Naval Strategy Has yet to Ebb," *The Baltimore Sun*, last modified August 23, 1995, accessed February 21, 2022, <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1995-08-23-1995235180-story.html>.



## Appendix A



U.S. Navy *Ticonderoga*-class cruisers and *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers conduct Freedom of Navigation operations in the South China Sea, displaying their naval prowess to deter foreign territorial expansion.

Holmes, James. “South China Sea Showdown: What Happens If a U.S. Navy and Chinese Vessel Collide?” The National Interest. The Center for the National Interest, October 6, 2018.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/south-china-sea-showdown-what-happens-if-us-navy-and-chinese-vessel-collide-32612>.

## Appendix B



Political cartoon depicting the French coercing the United States into giving bribes and other concessions to the French Directory. The weakness of the United States navy at the time made the country it serves an easy target for powerful, established European powers.

Rust, Randal. "XYZ Affair, Scandal, Summary, Significance, Citizen Genet, Quasi-War."

American History Central. R.Squared Communications, LLC, October 2, 2015.

<https://www.americanhistorycentral.com/entries/xyz-affair/>.

## Appendix C



A Japanese drawing depicting Commodore Perry's fleet as intimidating black metal ships spewing fire off the coast of Japan.

Peterson, Stephen. "The Forced Opening of Japan in the 1850s by the US Navy's Commodore Perry." JapanBNL, May 12, 2018.

<http://japanbnl.com/forced-opening-japan-1850s-us-navys-commodore-perry/>.

## Annotated Bibliography

### Primary Sources

An Act more effectually to protect the Commerce and Coasts of the United States., ch. 48, 1 Stat. (May 28, 1798). Accessed February 16, 2022.

[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Statutes\\_at\\_Large/Volume\\_1/5th\\_Congress/2nd\\_Session/Chapter\\_48](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United_States_Statutes_at_Large/Volume_1/5th_Congress/2nd_Session/Chapter_48).

This act instructed U.S. Naval Commanders to seize French vessels operating in American waters as retaliation to French coercion during the XYZ Affair.

I used this act to demonstrate that the United States wanted to present a forceful deterrent towards French aggression, but that initiative was ultimately rendered ineffective by weak U.S. Naval infrastructure.

Act to Provide a Naval Armament, ch. 12, 1 Stat. 350 (Mar. 27, 1794). Accessed February 24, 2022. <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/new-us-navy/act-draft.html>.

This Congressional act allocated about \$600,000 for the construction of some frigates and other warships for the United States Navy and stipulated which weapons they should be equipped with. This source helped me understand the miniscule amount of investment on the U.S. Navy when compared to their European counterparts.

Adams, John. Letter to George Washington, 1790. In *The Works of John Adams*, edited by Charles F. Adams. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1853.

This letter was written by founding father John Adams to President Washington discussing the American strategic situation near their border with Spain on the Mississippi River. I used this source to discuss the unwillingness of the American public to maintain and sustain a permanent fighting force even in the face of potential European encroachment or hostility.

Blackstone, William. *Commentaries on the Laws of England in Four Books*. 1. Vol. 1. 2 vols. Philadelphia, PA: J. P. Lippincott Company, 1893.

This book by member of Parliament William Blackstone provides legal commentary for the British laws at the time. This primary source was used to show that even career politicians like Blackstone acknowledged the superiority of the Royal Navy over their adversaries.

Department of State, List of Spoliations and Other Injuries on the Property of American Citizens by the French from the Year 1793 to 1800, H.R. Rep. No. 19th-453, 2d, at 15 (Jan. 22, 1827).

This postwar Congressional damage assessment was completed by Senator John C. Calhoun. This source lists more than 400 ships as well as their owners, value of goods on vessel, as well as their location of seizure by the French.

Green, Daniel, et al. Letter from American Ship Captains to Secretary Pickering, 1797. In *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi-War between the United States and France*, edited by Claude A. Swanson. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1935.

This letter was sent by a group of ship captains whose ships were captured by the French to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering. The graph table enclosed within this letter provides an example of the great reach of the french navy over the American shoreline, with operations occurring in both the Northern and Southern coastlines.

Higginson, Stephen. Letter to the Secretary of War, June 12, 1798. In *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi War*, edited by Dudley W. Knox. Washington, D.C.: Office of Naval Records and Library, 1935.

This primary source was a letter sent by a local naval official to the Secretary of War describing the fleet readiness of the United States Navy, including the sailors, condition, and capabilities of each ship. I used this source to further elaborate that not only was the Continental Navy numerically outnumbered by their European counterparts, the miniscule fleet was also dangerously outdated to be effective.

Nelson, Horatio. Letter to Alexander Davidson, 1801. In *Famous Battles of the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Charles Welsh. Madison, WI: University of Madison, 1907.



This was a letter composed by British Admiral Horatio Nelson to one of his best friends, Alexander Davidson, about his experiences at the Battle of Copenhagen.

This primary source was useful to understand how the British political and military ruling class viewed their armed forces and their diplomatic efforts as an intertwined entity.

Nelson, Horatio. Speech during Royal Navy expedition in the Atlantic, 1800s. In *The Royal Navy : Its Influence in English History and in the Growth of Empire*, edited by John Leyland. Cambridge, U.K.: University of Cambridge Press, 2014.

This quote was attributed to famed British admiral Horatio Nelson talking about the prowess of the new American navy sometime in the early 19th century located into a book on the larger history book of the British Royal Navy.

Having the same historical figure responsible for defeating the Spanish Armada during the Battle of Trafalgar acknowledge the massive improvements of the Continental Navy shows the usefulness of renewed investment into navies.

Talleyrand-Périgord, Charles-Maurice de. Letter from Talleyrand to Napoleon, 1799. In *Talleyrand*, edited by Philip G. Dwyer. United Kingdom: Routledge, 2002.

This letter was sent to Napoleon by Talleyrand when Talleyrand was still working for the Directory government of France, advising Napoleon how to consolidate power of government should he take over. I used a quote from Talleyrand from this quote to demonstrate that he, along with many other European leaders, viewed the military and diplomatic branches of government as one.

Treaty of Amity Commerce and Navigation, between His Britannick Majesty; and The United States of America, by Their President, with the advice and consent of Their Senate., 2 Stat. (Feb. 29, 1796). [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/jay.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/jay.asp).

This Treaty, known as the Jay Treaty, was signed by the U.S. on 1796 aimed to curb some of the tensions between the two parties existing since the Revolutionary War.

This primary source was used to demonstrate the unfair terms that were biased towards Britain because of their overwhelming naval superiority.

Washington, George. Letter to Edmund Randolph, July 22, 1795. In *George Washington Papers, Series 2, Letterbooks 1754 to 1799: Letterbook 30,- Oct. 11, 1796*.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw2.030/>.

President Washington's letter to the Secretary of State Edmund Randolph details Washington's perspective on the terms of the Jay Treaty. This letter presents an ideal example of the desperation of American diplomats to curb British violations of their trade routes and impressment of American sailors.



## Secondary Sources

Arima, Seiho. "The Western Influence on Japanese Military Science, Shipbuilding, and Navigation." *Monumenta Nipponica* 19, no. 3 (1964): 352-79. Accessed February 16, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2383177>.

This journal article depicts the European and American role in the rise of the Imperial Japanese Navy, including mentioning how ships, sailing techniques, and weapons originated from Europe and how the Japanese adapted many American tactics to fit their culture and geography.

I used this source to highlight how Japan's inability to mitigate U.S. encroachment during the Perry Expedition catalyzed the rapid modernization of their own naval forces.

BBC. "Strait of Hormuz: US Fires Warning Shots at Iranian Boats in Gulf." British Broadcasting Service. Last modified May 11, 2021. Accessed February 24, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-57066277>.

This 2021 story done by the BBC details the strategic objectives of the United States in the Strait of Hormuz and how the U.S. is employing their navy to achieve those goals.

This source was used as an example of the continuation of the importance of the U.S. Navy in the country's diplomacy, namely, using their navy to secure global trading routes and stopping potential hostilities.

Borden, Morton, and Otis L. Graham. *The American Profile*. Lexington, KY: D.C. Heath and Co., 1978.

This book by Morton Borden provides an expansive view of American History, from the founding era to contemporary history. This secondary source was used to provide an overview of the impacts of French aggression on the U.S. coastline.

Chantrill, Christopher, ed. "Federal 1800 Government Spending." GovSpending. Accessed February 23, 2022.

[https://www.usgovernmentspending.com/fed\\_spending\\_1800USln](https://www.usgovernmentspending.com/fed_spending_1800USln).

This site presents a comprehensive glimpse of US national spending, breaking down how much was spent on military and other sources.

I used this site as a comparison reference for the economic devastation caused by the French seizure of American merchant ships during the X.Y.Z. Affair.

Connaughton, Richard. *Rising Sun and Tumbling Bear: Russia's War with Japan*. Rev. ed. London: Cassell, 2004.

This book gives a detailed account of the happenings of the Russo-Japanese War, focusing on the bloody siege of Port Arthur and the ultimate Japanese victory. I used this source to demonstrate that a powerful maritime force opened up the doors of many new possibilities for the newly reformed Japan, with this island nation even being able to defeat an established European power in a conventional war.

Fulton, Robert. *Torpedo War, and Submarine Explosions*. New York City, NY: William Abbatt, 1914.

Though this book was focused on the potential role submarines would play in modern warfare, this piece does provide insightful historical analysis on European fleets. In particular, a chart summarizing the naval strength of 1794 European naval fleets provided useful information for ranking the prowess of different navies.

Hahn, Henry George. "Mahan's Influence on Naval Strategy Has yet to Ebb." The Baltimore Sun. Last modified August 23, 1995. Accessed February 21, 2022. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1995-08-23-1995235180-story.html>.

This source consists of an opinion piece written by a Towson University professor analyzing theories made by noted 19th-century military strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan and how his philosophy translates to modern-day politics and diplomacy. I used this source to prove that many elements of naval power on global dominance are still relevant today in my conclusion.

"John Jay's Treaty, 1794–95." U.S. Department of State. Office of the Historian. Accessed October 25, 2021. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1784-1800/jay-treaty>.

This official State Department webpage summarizes the causes and events of the Jay Treaty with Great Britain. I used this source to gauge the official U.S. perspective on the outcome of the Treaty and whether they considered it diplomatically successful.

Østhagen, Andreas. "Troubled Seas? The Changing Politics of Maritime Boundary Disputes." *Ocean and Coastal Management* 205 (May 1, 2021).

The journal article by a Norwegian strategic fellow summarizing many modern-day geopolitical disagreements and conflict resolution options for those issues.

This article was used to demonstrate the continued importance of maritime affairs and deterrence in our 21st-century world.

Panda, Ankit. "US Conducts Freedom of Navigation Operation near China-Held Features in Spratlys." *The Diplomat*. Diplomat Media Inc, July 16, 2020.

<https://thediplomat.com/2020/07/us-conducts-freedom-of-navigation-operation-near-china-held-features-in-spratlys/>

This contemporary news article details the recent freedom of navigation operations undertaken by U.S. Navy destroyers in the South China Sea against Chinese territorial disputes. This article helped me appreciate the modern uses of our navy to achieve diplomatic objectives.

Rosenfeld, Richard N. *American Aurora: A Democratic-Republican Returns: The Suppressed History of Our Nation's Beginnings and the Heroic Newspaper That Tried to Report It*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998.

This book by Richard Rosenfeld details the journey of a Philadelphia newspaper reporting on and after the American Revolution. This source was used to provide a brief overview of the causes of the XYZ Affair that preceded the Quasi War.

Sisson, Melanie W. "Military Coercion and US Foreign Policy: The Use of Force Short of War." Stimson Center. Last modified May 13, 2020. Accessed February 16, 2022.

<https://www.stimson.org/2020/military-coercion-and-us-foreign-policy-the-use-of-force-short-of-war/#:~:text=Military%20Coercion%20and%20US%20Foreign%20Policy%20reveals%20that%20despite%20its,as%20often%20as%20they%20succeeded.>

This report from the American think tank Stimson Center highlights the many cases where a superpower like the United States took advantage of its military prowess to achieve its policy goals.

I used this source to highlight that the U.S. dependence on force to assist in its national interest during the War of 1812 was not an isolated incident, but instead part of a pattern on the same reliance on her military throughout history.

Wild, Konstantin F. "Budget of the US Navy: 1794 to 2014." Naval History and Heritage Command. Last modified August 23, 2017. Accessed February 16, 2022.

<https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/b/budget-of-the-us-navy-1794-to-2004.html>.

This publication provides an annual figure on U.S. Navy spending from the early period to the modern times in 2014, compiled from several annual governmental budget publications.

I used this source as a helpful scope of reference of the gradual increases on Naval spending and correlating the figures with historical events.