



Command Commentary

... From the Sea: A New Direction for the Naval Services

By

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"... From the Sea" is a Navy and Marine Corps White Paper. It defines a combined vision for the Navy and Marine Corps. The Navy Policy Books and the Marine Corps Master Plan describe internal policy issues and serve to complement the task of articulating the shape and size of our Service for the next century.

INTRODUCTION

The world has changed dramatically in the last 2 years, and America's national security policy has also changed. As a result, the priorities of the Navy and Marine Corps have shifted, leading to this broad assessment of the future direction of our maritime forces.

The fundamental shift in national security policy was first articulated by the President at the Aspen Institute on 2 August 1990. The new policy is reflected in the President's National Security Strategy and the "Base Force" concept developed by the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

This National Security Strategy has profound implications for the Navy and Marine Corps. Our strategy has shifted from a focus on a global threat to a focus on regional challenges and opportunities. While the prospect of global war has receded, we are entering a period of enormous uncertainty

in regions critical to our national interests. Our forces can help to shape the future in ways favorable to our interests by underpinning our alliances, precluding threats, and helping to preserve the strategic position we won with the end of the Cold War.

Our naval forces will be full participants in the principal elements of this strategy—strategic deterrence and defense, forward presence, crisis response, and reconstitution.

With a far greater emphasis on joint and combined operations, our Navy and Marine Corps will provide unique capabilities of indispensable value in meeting our future security challenges. American naval forces provide powerful yet unobtrusive presence, strategic deterrence, control of the seas, extended and continuous on-scene crisis response, precise power projection from the sea, and sealift if larger scale warfighting scenarios emerge. These maritime capabilities are particularly well tailored for the forward presence

and crisis response missions articulated in the President's National Security Strategy.

Our ability to command the seas in areas where we anticipate future operations allows us to resize our naval forces and to concentrate more on capabilities required in the complex operating environment of the "littoral," or coastlines, of the earth. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the free nations of the world claim preeminent control of the seas and ensure freedom of commercial maritime passage. As a result, our national maritime policies can afford to de-emphasize efforts in some naval warfare areas. But the challenge is much more complex than simply reducing our present naval forces. We must structure a fundamentally different naval force to respond to strategic demands, and that new force must be sufficiently flexible and powerful to satisfy enduring national security requirements.

The new direction of the Navy and Marine Corps team, both Active and Reserve, is to provide the Nation:

Naval Expeditionary Forces
Shaped for Joint Operations
Operating Forward From the Sea
Tailored for National Needs

This strategic direction, derived from the National Security Strategy, represents a fundamental shift away from open-ocean warfighting *on* the sea toward joint operations conducted *from* the sea. The Navy and Marine Corps will now respond to crises and can provide the initial "enabling" capability for joint operations in conflict—as well as continued participation in any sustained effort. We will be part of a "sea-air-land" team trained to respond immediately to the Unified Commanders as they execute national policy.

In addition to our new direction, the Navy has a continuing obligation to maintain a robust strategic deterrent by sending nuclear ballistic submarines to sea. As long as the United States maintains a policy of nuclear deterrence, our highly survivable nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines will remain critical to national security. We also need to turn our attention and explore potential naval contributions to other forms of conventional strategic defense. In particular, we are carefully examining the naval capabilities which could contribute to theater missile defenses.

Beyond the shift in emphasis for the naval forces, there are some tradition-

al naval missions for which we must redouble our efforts to improve our capability. Of particular importance, sealift is an enduring mission for the Navy. Our Nation must remain capable of delivering heavy equipment and resupplying major ground and air combat power forward in crisis. Sealift is the key to force sustainment for joint operations, and we are committed to a strong national sealift capability.

DEFINING THE NEW DIRECTION

Naval Expeditionary Forces

The restructured naval forces must expand on and capitalize upon their traditional expeditionary roles. "Expeditionary" implies a mind set, a culture, and a commitment to forces that are designed to operate forward and to respond swiftly. Specifically, naval expeditionary forces are:

- *Swift to respond, on short notice, to crises in distant lands.* Naval forces.

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deployed overseas, are poised to respond to national tasking. Recent examples include the initial rapid response to meet the requirements for DESERT SHIELD and provide assistance to storm battered Bangladesh and the war-torn Kurds following DESERT STORM.

• *Structured to build power from the sea when required by national demands.* The Navy and Marine Corps sea-air-land team is capable of a full range of action—from port visits and humanitarian relief to major offensive operations. Even as DESERT SHIELD intensified, tailored naval forces responded to evacuation requirements in both Liberia and Somalia.

• *Able to sustain support for long-term operations.* Ships at sea in remote areas of the world have a healthy self-sufficiency. Naval forces can remain on station for extended periods. Amphibious forces remained off Liberia for 7 months. The USS *Eisenhower* task force remained in the Indian Ocean at sea for 5 months during the

Iranian hostage crisis.

• *Unrestricted by the need for transit or overflight approval from foreign governments in order to enter the scene of action.* The international respect for freedom of the seas guarantees legal access up to territorial waters of all coastal countries of the world. This affords naval forces the unique capability to provide peaceful presence in ambiguous situations before a crisis erupts.

In sum, naval expeditionary forces provide unobtrusive forward presence, which may be intensified or withdrawn as required on short notice.

Shaped for Joint Operations

The Navy and Marine Corps are full partners in joint operations. The battlefield of the future will demand that everyone on the field be teammates. Such teamwork "enables" joint combat operations. Some examples of how naval forces will implement this concept include:

- As a highly sustainable force on scene, a naval force commander can command the joint task force while the operation is primarily maritime; and shift that command ashore if the campaign shifts landward at the discretion of the Unified Commander.
- Focusing on the littoral area, the Navy and Marine Corps can seize and defend an adversary's port, naval base, or coastal air base to allow the entry of heavy Army or Air Force forces. The success of modern U.S. military strategy depends on forces organized, trained, and equipped for this division of combat labor.
- Sealift will provide the maritime bridge to ensure heavy joint forces can arrive and fight effectively in major crisis.

Operating Forward From the Sea

As the United States withdraws from overseas bases, naval forces will become even more relevant in meeting American forward presence requirements.

The Navy and Marine Corps operate forward to project a positive American image, build foundations for viable coalitions, enhance diplomatic contacts, reassure friends, and demonstrate U.S. power and resolve. Naval forces will be prepared to fight promptly and effectively, but they will serve in an equally valuable way by engaging day-to-day as peacekeepers in the defense of American interests. Naval forces are unique in offering this form

of international cooperation.

Operating forward, naval forces demonstrate U.S. commitment overseas and promote American interests. A scheduled, coalition-building multinational exercise involving U.S. Navy and Marine forces provides visible assurance to friends and a warning to potential enemies. Humanitarian assistance and nation-building efforts have similar effects.

Naval forces also contain crises through forward operations and rapid responses with flexible and sustainable sea-based forces. The seeds of conflict will continue to sprout in places where American interests are perceived as vulnerable. The art of managing crises in these areas is delicate and requires the ability to orchestrate the appropriate response and to send precisely tailored diplomatic, economic, and military signals to influence the actions of adversaries.

Naval forces provide a wide range of crisis response options, most of which have the distinct advantage of being easily reversible. If diplomatic activities resolve the crisis, naval forces can withdraw without action or buildup ashore.

If diplomacy fails, naval forces operating forward, as part of a joint U.S. military team, can project U.S. combat power as required.

Operating forward means operating in the littoral or "near land" areas of the world. As a general concept, we can define the littoral as comprising two segments of the battlespace:

- Seaward: The area from the open ocean to the shore which must be controlled to support operations ashore.
- Landward: The area inland from shore that can be supported and defended directly from the sea.

The littoral region is frequently characterized by confined and congested water and air space occupied by friends, adversaries, and neutrals—making identification profoundly difficult. This environment poses varying technical and tactical challenges to naval forces. It is an area where our adversaries can concentrate and layer their defenses. In an era when arms proliferations means some Third World countries possess sophisticated weaponry, there is wide range of potential challenges.

For example, an adversary's submarines operating in shallow waters pose a particular challenge to naval forces. Similarly, coastal missile batteries can

be positioned to "hide" from radar coverage. Some littoral threats—specifically mines, sea-skimming cruise missiles, and tactical ballistic missiles—tax the capabilities of our current systems and force structure. Mastery of the littoral should not be presumed. It does not derive directly from command of the high seas. It is an objective which requires our focused skills and resources.

Tailored for National Needs

As naval forces shift from a Cold War, open-ocean, blue-water naval strategy to a regional, littoral, and expeditionary focus, *naval organizations will change*. Responding to crises in the future will require great flexibility and new ways to employ our forces. As an example, the Naval Services will make

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available to Unified Commanders a notional expeditionary force package from among the following:

- Aircraft carrier and air wing
- Amphibious ships with embarked Marines
- Surface combatants
- Navy special warfare forces
- Submarines
- Maritime patrol aircraft
- Mine warfare forces.

Under the aegis of the Unified Commander, these forces would be available for tasking in the full range of joint operations with the other Services, thus providing a cohesive joint team capable of rapid and decisive action—from peacetime presence and exercises to joint strike in major crisis.

The expeditionary force package can operate with other elements of joint or combined task forces, including:

- Air Force composite wing
- Army infantry, airborne, or air mobile forces
- Special operations forces
- Surveillance, refueling, air defense assets
- Coast Guard assets

- Reserve forces in contributory support
- Allied forces and assets

Naval forces can be continuously tailored to developing events. The answer to every situation may not be a carrier battle group. It may be an amphibious readiness group and a surface action group with Tomahawk missiles. It may be a group of minesweepers with several guided missile frigates for defense. Or it may be the overwhelming power of a carrier battle group and an amphibious ready group with embarked Marines, operating with Air Force and Army forces. The key is continuously tailoring our forces to anticipate and support national needs.

Forces can be "shared" across theater boundaries to demonstrate capabilities, signal commitment to local leaders, and promote opportunities for regular exercises and exchanges with air, sea, and ground forces of our allies and coalition partners. Rapid movement of these forces across unified command boundaries will occur to forestall or respond to crises.

OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES

All Services are enhancing and streamlining their capabilities to maximize efficiency, particularly in joint and combined operations. The Naval Service will focus on complementing the capabilities of the other Services, examine ways to minimize duplicative capabilities, and thereby efficiently meet the challenges of the new security environment. The shift in focus to littoral operations requires a corresponding shift of emphasis toward accelerating the adaption of existing forces to counter littoral threats.

In addition to our traditional operational capabilities of forward deployment, crisis response, strategic deterrence, and sealift, four key operational capabilities are required to successfully execute the new direction of the Navy and Marine Corps:

- Command, Control, and Surveillance
- Battlespace Dominance
- Power Projection
- Force Sustainment

Command, Control, and Surveillance

The Navy and Marine Corps will continue to structure command and control capabilities to promote efficient joint and combined operations as part of an overarching command, control, and communications architecture that can adapt from sea to

shore. We will also exploit the unique contributions which naval forces bring to littoral operations.

Our surveillance efforts will continue to emphasize exploitation of space and electronic warfare systems to provide commanders with immediate information, while denying and/or managing the data available to our enemies. Integrated information and netted sensors will allow us to use surveillance data from all sources—national and combined—and to target and strike from a variety of land, sea, and air platforms.

The naval force commander will have the capability to command a joint task force and function as, or host, a joint force commander. Command and control system capabilities enable domination of the battlespace and power projection, and are central to the precise application of power.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the ability to collect intelligence through covert surveillance early in crisis. Naval intelligence efforts will be directed to a regional focus.

Battlespace Dominance

The battlespace is the sea, air, and land environments where we will conduct our operations. The dominated battlespace expands and contracts and has limits. Dominating the battlespace presupposes effective command and control capabilities and serves as the logical prerequisite for the projection of power ashore. Battlespace dominance means that we can maintain access from the sea to permit the effective entry of equipment and resupply. This dominance implies that naval forces can bring to bear decisive power on and below the sea, on land, and in the air. We must use the full range of U.S. coalition and space-based assets to achieve dominance in space as well.

Naval forces must also have the capability to deny access to a regional adversary, interdict the adversary's movement of supplies by sea, and control the local sea and air. For the Naval Service, then, dominating the battlespace means ensuring effective transition from open ocean to littoral areas, and from sea to land and back, to accomplish the full range of potential missions. This is the essence of naval adaptability and flexibility, which are the keys to contingency response. Battlespace dominance is the heart of naval warfare.

Power Projection

Naval forces maneuver from the sea using their dominance of littoral areas to mass forces rapidly and generate high-intensity, precise offensive power at the time and location of their choosing, under any weather conditions, day or night. Power projection requires mobility, flexibility, and technology to mass strength against weakness. The Navy and Marine Corps team supports the decisive sea-air-land battle by providing the sea-based support to enable the application of the complete range of U.S. combat power.

Power projection from the sea means bombs, missiles, shells, bullets, and

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bayonets. When Marines go ashore, naval aviation aboard aircraft carriers and—if required—land based expeditionary aircraft will provide them sustained, high-volume tactical air support ashore to extend the landward reach of our littoral operations. Rugged naval aircraft are well suited for expeditionary airfield operations. These capabilities—the ability to generate high-intensity power projection from the decks of our carriers and expeditionary airfields—are critical. They must continue to be sufficiently available and ready to contribute to joint warfare and decisive victory.

Our carrier and cruise missile firepower can also operate independently to provide quick, retaliatory strike capability short of putting forces ashore. Remaining ready indefinitely to strike, this potential force from the sea is a critical tool for diplomacy and influence. The mere arrival of naval strike forces into an area of heightened U.S. interest sends a clear signal.

Joint operations between Naval and Air Force strike assets—including carrier-based aircraft, land-based naval expeditionary aircraft, land-based Air Force aircraft from both local and distant bases, and Tomahawk missiles

from surface forces and attack submarines—have become standard.

Finally, forces projected ashore can maneuver and build up power rapidly deep in the objective area to disorient, divert, and disrupt the enemy.

Force Sustainment

America's influence depends on its ability to sustain military operations around the globe. The military options available can be extended indefinitely because sea-based forces can remain on station as long as required. Naval forces encompass the full range of logistics support that is the critical element of any military operation. It requires a comprehensive and responsive logistics support system, including air and sealift, replenishment ships, mobile repair facilities, and advanced logistic support hubs. It requires open sea lanes of communication so that passage of shipping is not impeded by an adversary.

In peace, naval logistics forces support the day-to-day forward operations of naval forces. During crisis, warfighting materiel afloat in maritime prepositioning ships enables the near-immediate projection of credible military power. Finally, during war, strategic sealift ships will deliver heavy equipment and resupply heavy ground and air combat forces. Forward logistics, pre-positioning, and strategic sealift, coupled with strategic airlift, are the keys to force sustainment.

CONCLUSION

The Navy and Marine Corps Team is changing in response to the challenges of a new security environment. The shift in strategic landscape means that naval forces will concentrate on littoral warfare and maneuver from the sea. Maneuver from the sea, the tactical equivalent of maneuver warfare on land, provides a potent warfighting tool to the joint task force commander—a tool that is literally the key to success in many likely contingency scenarios.

The new direction of the Naval Service signals changes in doctrine, education, service integration, training, acquisition, infrastructure, operations, risk reduction, and other areas. Amplifying documents and policy statements will follow on these subjects.

Naval forces must be both capable and affordable, supported by relevant concepts, doctrine, and training. These changes will refine and implement the

operational capabilities of expeditionary warfare so that naval forces can help provide the Nation's leaders with a full range of options to preserve regional balances, lay the foundations for coalition operations, provide assistance to Americans in danger, respond to crises of every type, and project decisive power ashore in conflict.

IMPLEMENTATION

Naval Doctrine Command

We are establishing a Naval Doctrine Command. Integration on the battlefield starts with integration of doctrine and training. The regional and littoral warfighting environment requires new doctrinal thinking to get the most out of integrating the Navy/Marine Corps and the joint sea-air-land team. The new Naval Doctrine Command, alternately commanded by a Navy rear admiral and a Marine Corps major general, will provide for smooth integration of naval forces into joint operations at any level, close the gap between the air-land battle and amphibious warfare, and translate "operational maneuver from the sea" into naval doctrine. Above all, it will build doctrine for expeditionary warfare.

Examining Our Current Force

We will examine functions and capabilities, seeking to eliminate areas of redundancy and enhancing areas considered deficient in light of this shift in strategy. Navy and Marine Corps equipment design, tactical training, logistics support, and task force structure will be optimized for taking and holding objectives on or near the enemy's coastline. We specialize in maneuver warfare from over the horizon, using the ocean to project force at soft points in the enemy's defense. Our job during a regional conflict is to control the ocean adjacent to the littoral battlefield, the ground from the shore to our objectives, and the skies above both. We rely on Navy and Marine Corps strike assets to neutralize enemy threats that may engage us from outside of established defense perimeters. Our goal is to focus our procurement strategy on systems that best support the unique capabilities of the Navy and Marine Corps.

Immediate Tasks

Fiscal realities and a newly defined regional, littoral naval focus require new thinking, significant changes, and

a commitment to undertake challenging tasks. The Navy and Marine Corps will:

- Restructure to accommodate the strategy outlined in this document.
- Link, air, land, and naval warfare to ensure truly joint warfare.
- Develop naval doctrine consistent with new direction and focus—including an examination of functions and capabilities.
- Organize, train, and implement new naval force packages for expeditionary operations. Train commanders and man their staffs for joint operations.
- Configure, train, and man numbered fleet and Marine expeditionary staffs to be able to command a joint task force and function as, or host, a joint force air component commander.
- Enhance communications, command, and control on naval flag ships to the degree necessary to host the commander of a joint task force.
- Establish commander U.S. Naval Forces Central Command as a vice admiral billet; provide additional permanent staff billets and communications command and control capabilities necessary to execute his responsibilities.
- Provide the Marines with the medium-lift they require.
- Increase emphasis on generation of high-intensity power projection, support of forces ashore, and weapons necessary to fulfill the mission.