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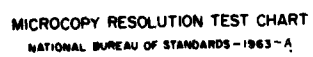
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The Role of the Marine Corps in Rapid Deployment Forces

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David A. Quinlan

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The Role of the Marine Corps in Rapid Deployment Forces



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*The Role of the Marine Corps
in
Rapid Deployment Forces*

by

**Colonel David A. Quinlan, USMC
Associate Research Fellow**

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FOREWORD

Quick strike force. Strike Command. Unilateral intervention force. Quick reaction force. Rapid deployment joint task force. These are just some of the names used over the years to describe a US rapid deployment force (RDF), a force capable of moving quickly and in strength to anywhere in the world. In a brief review of the evolution of the RDF concept, this essay demonstrates that the idea is not a new one, but rather an issue that has ebbed and flowed variously for over twenty years.

Colonel David A. Quinlan, US Marine Corps, avoids advocating any specific RDF incarnation, focusing instead on the concept itself. He profiles the general characteristics that any RDF ought to possess, as well as the various political and logistical constraints upon such a force.

Colonel Quinlan explains that the RDF concept is not foreign to Marine Corps organization, doctrine, training, equipment, and current deployments. He argues, in fact, that the Marine Corps is an existing force traditionally well-suited to many rapid deployment missions. By stopping short of promoting any specific force as *the* RDF, and by adhering to a conceptual approach, Colonel Quinlan helps place this often controversial issue in useful historical and analytical perspectives.



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INTRODUCTION

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Since 1 October 1979, when President Carter announced that 'rapid deployment forces' would be used to meet contingencies anywhere in the world, the sense of urgency surrounding such forces has become more pronounced. On 1 March 1980, the headquarters for the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force was established at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, with forces assigned from all the services. In early 1983, this task force took on the status of a unified command when it became the US Central Command (CENTCOM), with the mission of directing rapid deployments of elements assigned from the various armed services.

At each stage, the concept of rapid deployment forces has been controversial. The creation of CENTCOM, although significant, did not necessarily mean the resolution of the many issues surrounding the worldwide rapid deployment concept. Although written before the establishment of CENTCOM, this essay remains valuable for its addressal of rapid deployment issues from a US Marine Corps perspective. After analyzing the evolution of the concept and the characteristics of and constraints on rapid deployment forces, the essay concludes that the Marine Corps is uniquely qualified for certain rapid deployment missions.

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Chapter 1

THE RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE CONCEPT

Observers who followed US defense programs throughout the 1970s know that the "one-and-one-half-war strategy" emphasized the "one" more than the "one-half." Indeed, a persuasive case can be made that the United States pursued a NATO-only rather than a NATO-first strategy.¹

The Initial Carter Examination of National Security Strategy

As is usual with new Administrations, shortly after taking office, President Carter ordered a far-ranging review of the United States' national security commitments and capabilities.² Conducted principally within the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the effort resulted in a series of Presidential Review Memorandums (PRMs).³ The memorandum describing US force commitments worldwide, which was the foundation for a Presidential decision (Presidential Directive 18) in August 1977, was PRM 10.

Then Secretary of Defense Harold Brown described several of the highlights of PRM 10 when he addressed the National Security Industrial Association on 15 September 1977. Dr. Brown noted the need for rapid deployment forces:

We must continue to maintain a defense posture that permits us to respond effectively and simultaneously to a relatively minor as well as to a major military contingency.

The needs of such a posture, over and above the forces we program for Europe, are basically:

- a limited number of relatively light land combat forces (such as the three Marine divisions and some light Army divisions);
- moderate naval and tactical air forces; and
- strategic mobility forces with the range and payload to minimize our dependence on overseas staging and logistical support bases.⁴

Once it had been enunciated, however, the rapid deployment force concept at first received little attention in the new Administration. As far as OSD was concerned, the top priority was NATO. In his first report to the Congress, 2 February 1978, Secretary of Defense Brown made only brief, general reference to rapid deployment forces.⁵ Then in late February, the press began to discuss the concept of a rapid deployment force. The *US News and World Report* described the creation of "an elite military strike force to rush to any trouble spot in the world." Attributing its information to Secretary Brown, the article noted that the "core of the strike force initially will consist of the Army's 82nd Airborne and the 101st Air Assault Divisions and one Marine division."⁶

Five months later, Jan Austin and Banning Garrett, writing in *Inquiry*, said of Presidential Directive 18,

The Pentagon still has not given out any details about the mobile strike force, but from press leaks and interviews with informed military analysts, the following picture emerges: the strike force will consist of about 100,000 troops, including two army airborne divisions and a marine amphibious force. In addition, the Pentagon has been directed to beef up its strategic airlift and sealift capacity so that it can quickly transport these forces to potential combat zones. The strike force will apparently be backed up by two to four aircraft carrier task forces and by up to three air force air wings, totaling about 200 planes.⁷

In his second annual report to the Congress, 25 January 1979, Secretary Brown again spoke of rapid deployment forces, saying that "we must have sufficient capabilities to permit ... the rapid movement of substantial forces to threatened theaters." In the section of the report that described mobility forces, he added, "In particular, we want to have the capability to deploy quickly at least a small force to distant locations without reliance on foreign bases or overflight rights."⁸

The Growing Sense of Urgency: Maintaining an Intervention Capability

Also in January 1979 the Shah of Iran was forced to step down from the Peacock Throne. The man who had become the showpiece of the Nixon Doctrine was no longer in power in his own country, much less in control of the Persian Gulf region.⁹ During the spring of 1979 the internal situation in Iran deteriorated almost daily. The specter of Soviet intervention, always present, seemed even more threatening in light of the then less conspicuous, but nevertheless expansionary, Soviet activities in Afghanistan.¹⁰

The central pillar in our strategy for the Persian Gulf had cracked. The future became more uncertain, and the oil supplies of the Western world were anything but secure. In these circumstances the creation of a force that could deploy rapidly to this site of vital interest seemed prudent.¹¹

Some observers would argue that emphasis on a rapidly deployable military force means a policy shift away from collective security and from the Nixon Doctrine of noninvolvement in Third World contingencies. Quite the contrary. Security alliances usually depend on stability.¹² Because of global economic interdependence, destabilizing events abroad often affect the United States. That the United States sometimes does not feel effects immediately is deceptive. Prudence would seem to demand, therefore, that the United States maintain an intervention capability, to be used unilaterally if necessary.¹³

Further, in an age of weapons of mass destruction, limited measures to maintain minimum order may be perfectly legal. The argument for intervention can be quite compelling from the standpoint of custom as well as international law, as long as certain criteria, such as necessity and proportionality, are satisfied.¹⁴

For the remainder of 1979, the media and official Washington sources referred to the rapid deployment force variously as the "Quick Strike Force," the "Unilateral Intervention Force," and the "Unilateral Intervention Corps." Eventually, the term *unilateral intervention* disappeared from official use because it smacked too much of Neocolonialism.

Euphemisms and legal pronouncements aside, it is clear that instability in distant parts of the world threatens the economic and security interests of the United States. In an age of global interdependence, we must protect our access to critical economic resources. Numerous presidential policy statements and post-World War II doctrines have espoused the objectives of stability and continued access to resources.¹⁵

In response to these realities, Secretary Brown described the initial programs for enhancing rapid deployment capabilities on 13 December 1979 when he addressed the Senate Armed Services Committee. Previewing the fiscal year (FY) 1981 budget and highlighting the 5-year defense program, the Secretary said:

We are undertaking two major initiatives to help the US cope with crises outside of Europe. The first will be a force of Maritime Prepositioning Ships that will carry in dehumidified storage the heavy equipment and supplies for three Marine brigades. These ships would be stationed in peacetime in remote areas where US forces might be needed. The Marine personnel (and other equipment not well-suited to prepositioning) would be airlifted to marry up with their gear, and be ready for battle on short notice.

The other major initiative will be the development and production of a new fleet of large cargo aircraft able

to carry Army equipment, including tanks, over intercontinental distances. These aircraft would be used initially to deliver the outsize equipment of the advance forces necessary to secure airbases or the ports or beaches needed by the Maritime Prepositioning Ships to deliver their heavy gear.¹⁶

Thus the capabilities first described in 1977 were by now taking the form of specific programs. In his third annual report (29 January 1980), Secretary Brown further described the rapid deployment force (RDF). There, in addition to the hardware programs already described, the Secretary reported the creation of a rapid deployment joint task force based in the continental United States under a Marine lieutenant general. According to Brown, the RDF would not be a separate force of a given size; instead, the existing forces designated for the RDF would constitute a joint reservoir from which to draw a specifically tailored capability. For example, the Army's contribution could vary in size from a platoon of rangers to a multidivision corps.¹⁷

In his State-of-the-Union address delivered on 23 January 1980, President Carter flexed some RDF muscle, perhaps prematurely, in enunciating the "Carter Doctrine," which designated the Persian Gulf as an area of vital interest to the United States. Clearly, if the United States would have to actively defend that interest, the rapid deployment force would be the agent.¹⁸

Flexible Response Revisited

To people who had been around the defense establishment since 1960, the RDF concept seemed vaguely similar to the strategy of flexible response which President Kennedy enunciated shortly after he took office. At that time Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara created an organization, subsequently renamed Strike Command, with a mission to "furnish rapidly deployable, combat-ready forces in an emergency situation calling for response on a scale less than all-out nuclear

war."¹⁹ Strike Command eventually comprised the 100,000-man Strategic Army Corps and some 50,000 additional personnel from the Air Force's Tactical Air Command, but no Marines. As will be discussed later, the mission of Strike Command closely paralleled the mission described in the 1952 legislation that amended the National Security Act of 1947 and established a statutory structure for the Marine Corps.²⁰

To support the mission of the Strike Command, the Defense Department planned to develop the long-range C-5 cargo aircraft and forward-deployed logistic (FDL) ships. The C-5/FDL program was so long in taking shape, however, that by the time it was presented to Congress, the United States was deeply involved in Vietnam and national sentiment was rising against overseas deployment of US forces.

Senator Richard Russell, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, torpedoed the FDL concept with the argument that the United States could not afford to be the world's policeman. In a precursor of what came to be labeled the "Utgoff Principle" during the Carter administration, the Senator argued that the ships would create an overpowering temptation for a President to intervene.²¹ However, he apparently recognized that airlift alone would not suffice for intervention.²²

The House of Representatives, responding to pressure from the merchant marine lobby, eliminated funds that had been authorized for construction of the FDLs on the dubious ground that the ships would be used for point-to-point cargo transportation, to the detriment of private operators. In fact, the House implicitly tied funding for the fourth C-5 squadron to the cancellation of the FDL program. Thus the FDL program became a casualty of US involvement in Indochina, among other factors.²³ The Vietnam War, followed by a reemphasis on NATO, would put worldwide intervention forces in limbo for a decade. It was not until the late 1970s, in the context of the events already described, that the spotlight shifted back to the RDF concept in a political arena that had changed considera-

bly since 1960. In any event, by the spring of 1979, when it was clear that President Carter meant what he said regarding the creation of an RDF, the services began to jockey for position.

Service Initiatives and Reactions

The Army was the first to publicly acknowledge its interest in the RDF. General Bernard Rogers, during his final press conference as the Army's Chief of Staff on 22 June 1979, described the forthcoming creation of a Unilateral Corps (ULC). The keystone of this organization was to be the XVIIIth Airborne Corps made up primarily of the 82d Airborne and the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Divisions. The ULC was to be a joint force with the other services assigning units to it.²⁴

The total force would number some 110,000 people. Considering that there would be about 60,000 combat troops, the 50,000 for combat support and service support represented a relatively high "tail-to-tooth" or support-to-combat ratio. Given, as General Rogers suggested, that this mobile strike force was being created in response to President Carter's desire for a specialized force to handle conflicts in the Third World, it is not remarkable that this ratio would be high. The force would be primarily responsible for going into areas lacking any but the most rudimentary forms of logistical infrastructure.²⁵

General Rogers stressed that the forces assigned to the ULC would come from those that were not currently committed as NATO reinforcements. In this regard it was clear that General Rogers was not describing the creation of a new military force. The military would be obliged to take this new striking power out of its own hide, that is, to make do with units that were already in existence rather than build new ones. Sealift and airlift shortages were to a degree waived away in the process of creating the "new" force. Speculation abounded that this force was being created specifically to deal with crises in the Middle East/Persian Gulf area. General Rogers countered by saying that it would be a "go anywhere" force

rather than one specifically targeted on the Persian Gulf or any other area.²⁶

The principal topic of discussion during General Edward C. Meyer's first press conference in September 1979 was the establishment of the headquarters and planning units for the new 110,000-man mobile strike force. General Meyer, General Rogers' successor, said, "It [the force] contains in it a pot-pourri of forces all the way from very limited war-type forces up through a corps consisting of both armored and light infantry units." He also decided that the force would conduct highly visible training exercises "to indicate to the world that we do have the capability of projecting power."²⁷

Not everyone was enthusiastic about the creation of the strike force. For example, Don Cook, the *Los Angeles Times* correspondent in Paris, warned that by creating the 110,000-man mobile strike force "the Army prepared to fight in the past" and that the "emergency force of 110,000 for the Middle East is gravely out of proportion."²⁸

Compared with the Army, the other services, particularly the Marine Corps, downplayed rapid deployment during the summer and early fall of 1979. On 5 July 1979, at his first press conference after becoming the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert H. Barrow set the tone for the Marine Corps. One of the correspondents, using as a reference point the press conference in which General Rogers had described the Army's Unilateral Corps, asked General Barrow to describe the role of the Marine Corps in the Unilateral Corps. General Barrow responded,

Well, to begin with, we're not engaged in any active planning related to that per se....

I look at it this way. I'm not sure what exactly we might be called upon to do, but it's well within our roles and missions and capabilities, and readiness.²⁹

In a later interview General Barrow described more of the philosophy of rapid deployment as he saw it:

The totality of combat power that can be delivered by sea is so great compared to the linear kinds of delivery that you get out of airlift that I think, clearly, the sea is the way to go.

The big problem—I've said this publicly and I've said it many times, not as criticism but just an observation—relates to when those forces move forward in a crisis situation. I haven't seen one of these crises yet that didn't have a lot of indicators saying that it was getting worse. If we could somehow act before the period of extremis—the eleventh-hour kind of thing, when perhaps it's too late for anyone to do too much about it—then naval forces, meaning this great Navy and Marine Corps force projection capability, could be moved forward to these areas in a timely manner, and perhaps not even have to be employed.³⁰

While each service was delineating its rapid deployment concept, the Office of the Secretary of Defense had its own ideas.

Initiatives and Response From the Office of the Secretary of Defense

As the programming phase of the FY 1981 Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System cycle was coming to a close, some people in the Office of the Secretary of Defense were dusting off their 15-year-old plans for the combination of the C-5 aircraft and the FDL. The FDLs, loaded with military supplies, could steam on short notice to the vicinity of a trouble spot. If the situation deteriorated, C-5s would ferry the troops to the crisis area to man the equipment.³¹

The new program, called Maritime Prepositioning, once again encompassed a combination of airlift and sealift. A new intercontinental transport aircraft, the CX, would be purchased, as would 14 Maritime Prepositioning Ships (MPSs). The new program departed from the old C-5/FDL concept in that these ships would carry the equipment and supplies for

three 16,500-man Marine Amphibious Brigades. This new program was first articulated during August 1979 in DOD's Amended Program Decision Memorandum, the Defense Department decision document that specifies the programs to be translated into the budget for the next fiscal year and the following 4 years. Three months elapsed before the program was made public.

In his 1 October 1979 address to the Nation, President Carter referred to the rapid deployment force, but not to the specific program by which it would become a reality. In fact, despite the President's reaffirmation of the importance of quick-reaction forces, the *New York Times* noted on 4 October, "Government officials report that little has been done to organize such a unit." Finally, on 27 November, the *Washington Post* reported that Administration officials had just described how the new defense budget would request planes and ships needed to deliver a quick-reaction force to places such as the Persian Gulf.³²

The pace quickened during December 1979. At a press conference on 5 December, Major General P. X. Kelley, USMC, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Requirements and Programs at Marine Corps Headquarters, revealed that the Secretary of Defense had ordered the Marine Corps to organize a 50,000-man spearhead for the rapid deployment force. He also discussed the Maritime Prepositioning program and underscored the glaring deficiency "in strategic mobility assets, particularly airlift."

In his defense policy speech of 12 December 1979, President Carter defended his maritime-prepositioned rapid deployment force, saying, "We must understand that not every instance of the firm application of power is a potential Vietnam." The rapid deployment force was next prominently featured in the Secretary of Defense's Annual Report to the Congress. In the interim, the Department of Defense disclosed that it was seeking facilities to support deployments in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea. A delegation led by Robert J. Murray, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle

East and Africa, was negotiating with officials in Oman, Somalia, Djibouti, and Kenya to permit the increased use of ports in those countries by US forces.³⁴

On 18 February 1980, in what turned out to be one of his more controversial decisions about command relationships, Secretary Brown ordered the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF), under command of the newly promoted Lieutenant General P.X. Kelley, to open its headquarters and begin operating as of 1 March 1980. General Kelley's task force headquarters would come under the command of Readiness Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, unless it was actually in the field conducting an operation, at which time General Kelley would come under the direct command of the National Command Authority (NCA) through the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Aware that the earliest possible deployment date for new prepositioned ships would be FY 1983, the Administration developed the Near-Term Prepositioning Ships program. On 5 March 1980 Deputy Secretary of Defense W. Graham Claytor, Jr., announced that the Pentagon would deploy to the Indian Ocean seven existing cargo ships with enough equipment and supplies for a 10,000-man Marine Amphibious Brigade plus several squadrons of Air Force fighters. He said, "Our objective is to start loading these ships in May, and to have them loaded and on their way to the selected anchorage before the end of June." The interim MPS fleet would comprise three roll-on/roll-off (RO/RO) ships, two break-bulk ships, and two tankers.³⁵

In less than nine months, the focus on quick-reaction forces had shifted from the Army's Unilateral Corps to the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. The Secretary of Defense had once again asserted himself in translating a policy statement into a military strategy and had taken steps to provide appropriate capabilities. Although the directorship no longer belonged to the Army and the focus of media attention was on the Marine Corps, the role of Army forces in rapid deployment was in no way diminished. Lieutenant General

Kelley, the newly designated commander of the RDJTF, underscored this when he indicated that the force would be joint in fact as well as in name.³⁶

Chapter 2

THE POLITICAL AND LOGISTICAL CONSTRAINTS ON RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCES

The term rapid deployment force (RDF) is much abused. Armed services and Defense Department officials mean different things when they speak of forces that can be relocated quickly—and the term *quickly* is at best relative. Some viewed the RDF as a six-and-one-third division force. Others described it as a force of three-and-one-third divisions. This latter force would be made up principally of Airborne and Marine divisions. With either force, however, a scarcity of strategic mobility assets precludes deployment in mass. Only with unlimited mobility assets would it be possible to list all deployable forces as RDFs, and the United States cannot afford this luxury. It is therefore necessary to be selective about which forces, particularly which ground forces, are described as rapid deployment forces.

RDFs: One Part of Power Projection

The point most often overlooked is that "rapid deployment forces" is not a synonym for projection forces; RDFs are but one part of the combat power projection system of the United States. The whole system comprises four different sets of forces which can be categorized as *rapid deployment*, *rapid* or *light reinforcement*, *deliberate* or *heavy reinforcement*, and *sustainability forces*. Although the dividing lines among them are not distinct in some cases, basic functional differ-

ences do exist. Many of the forces that have been labeled RDF, for example, actually have the function of reinforcement.

The rapid deployment forces are the cutting edge of the total projection system. They consist principally of the following:

Naval forces—Carrier Battle Groups, Surface Action Groups, Amphibious Forces and Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs)

Tactical Air Forces—Air Force Tactical Fighter Wings.*

Land Forces—Airborne Division, Air Assault Division*

Mobility forces—Military Airlift Command

These forces must be capable of independent group combat operations of limited duration (30 to 60 days) within 50 to 100 miles of a seaport. The emphasis is on speed of deployment rather than mass.

The rapid (light) reinforcement forces (RRF) differ from RDFs principally by virtue of the fact that they do not possess a forcible entry capability. Army infantry and air assault divisions on prepositioning ships or inserted by follow-on shipping fit into this category, and RDFs can be used in this role as well.

The deliberate (heavy) reinforcement forces (DRFs) comprise heavier land forces (e.g., armored and mechanized divisions). They require more time and mobility assets for deployment than the RDFs or RRFs. For any extended intervention or campaign they are the forces of decision. They provide the momentum behind the rapid deployment spearhead. Because they have considerably more combat mass than RDFs or RRFs, the heavy reinforcement forces have less strategic velocity.

*To be considered as RDFs, these forces must be deployed to assembly areas adjacent to the objective area and must be able to conduct combat operations on D-Day at H-Hour.

The sustainability forces are primarily oriented toward support. They operate ports, airheads, and facilities within the communications zone and provide transportation to and from the combat zone. They are predominantly Army and Navy forces whose commitment usually takes place along with that of the RRFs.

Rapid deployment forces must have the flexibility of organization, tactical mobility, and firepower necessary to defeat heavier opponents without imposing unacceptable penalties in strategic mobility on the more equipment-laden deliberate reinforcement forces. The RDFs alone, however, should not be construed as capable of independent operations for indefinite periods of time. This capability is embodied only in the total projection system. The deployment of the sustainability forces, in particular, reflects a deliberate national commitment of indefinite duration.

Unique political, military, and particularly logistical problems are associated with these forces. For example, comparing RDFs with rapid reinforcement forces earmarked for NATO, one sees that the latter forces are lighter of "tail" because of reliance on the already existing logistical infrastructure and host-nation support. Clearly one must assess the capabilities and limitations of RDF in the context of contingency environments where combat and logistical components must be built up from a zero base. As a result we should expect to find relatively high "tail-to-tooth" ratios in an RDF.

Political Constraints

Within the past 10 years two pieces of legislation have had a profound influence on rapid deployment forces: the War Powers Resolution and the 100,000-man call-up authority. Several years ago, in what some people believe was overreaction to Vietnam, the Congress passed the War Powers Resolution over a presidential veto. The War Powers Resolution charges the President to consult with Congress prior to

introducing US forces into hostilities or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances. The President is required to report to the Congress should he introduce forces into a hostile or potentially hostile environment. Further, he must remove US forces from hostilities within 60 days, unless Congress either takes certain actions to affirm the commitment or is unable to act.¹

According to 10 US Code 673b, the President may authorize the Secretary of Defense to call-up not more than 100,000 members of the Selected Reserve for a period of up to 90 days. The statute contains no restrictions on the overseas deployment of personnel so called-up. The President must, however, report to the Congress within 24 hours that he has exercised his authority under the statute, and he must state the anticipated use of the activated reservists. This reporting requirement is independent of reporting requirements under the War Powers Resolution. The call-up authority is of particular importance to rapid deployment forces, since the Military Airlift Command must activate its affiliated reserve units in order to sustain its maximum sortie rate.

An additional consideration, and a very important one for force projection, is that the President must weigh the implications of the War Powers Resolution in his deliberations. Even without that resolution, however, there are sound reasons for the National Command Authority (NCA) to withhold movement of forces until the last possible moment. The preservation of options is highly desirable. Diplomatic means must be tried thoroughly. And delaying the movement of US units may prevent the appearance of provocation.²

Conventional wisdom holds that once a decision has been made to commit US forces, particularly ground combat elements, speed will be of the essence. If we rely on sealift alone, starting from the continental United States, we may be too late to do an adequate job. This is not to say, however, that we should forget existing sealift capabilities, especially the forward-deployed amphibious forces.³

For example, a large-scale amphibious exercise was scheduled for late April 1975. During a routine relief of forward-deployed ships, there was an amphibious squadron overlap in the western Pacific, resulting in there being twice as many amphibious ships as normal in that area. Thus, sufficient ships were available for use by the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade in Operation FREQUENT WIND, the evacuation from Saigon. Even with the fortuitous overlap, however, it was only because the attack carrier USS *Hancock* had been ordered separately to the western Pacific that two large deck helicopter carriers were on the scene.⁴

Less dramatic uses of forward-deployed amphibious forces have perhaps been more numerous in the recent past than many people realize. In their well-known study, Blechman and Kaplan noted that between 1946 and 1975 there were 215 occasions when the United States employed its armed forces as political instruments. Furthermore, they point out, naval units participated in more than 80 percent of the incidents involving the threat or use of force. Amphibious forces were used in 71 incidents; during 56 of these, carrier battle groups were also employed.⁵ The primacy of naval forces in the intervention role is quite understandable: they are mobile, they can be as unobtrusive as the NCA desires, and they are accustomed to this role by tradition and training.⁶

Logistical Constraints

The delay of an NCA decision to commit forces, putting a premium on speed once the order to move has been given, implies a reliance on airlift. But how much reliance? Ideally, the United States would possess sufficient capability to move a credible force into an objective area with strategic airlift alone. However, the author of a Congressional Budget Office Paper, after assuming full availability of existing airlift resources, including the Civil Reserve Air Fleet, concluded that as long as 5 weeks could be required to deploy completely a two-division (airborne and mechanized) force to the Persian

Gulf region. There simply is not enough airlift available to move a credible force in a reasonable time.⁷

Further, from studying the problem of early reinforcement of NATO, the United States has learned that it is necessary to preposition heavy equipment in order to realize the best advantages of speed offered by airlift. Prepositioning in NATO, where the vital region to be protected is well-defined, is not overly difficult; but what of the rest of the world? In addition to contravening a longstanding policy of reducing overseas bases, prepositioning unit equipment in or near all the potential trouble spots would take more resources than the United States has available.

Recognition of the inadequacy of our resources to meet all requirements prompted creation of the maritime prepositioning program. Unit equipment will be embarked in mobile logistic ships. The initial ships containing the heavy equipment and supplies for a 12,000-man Marine Amphibious Brigade will be deployed to Diego Garcia. The embarked equipment will support ground combat operations, the essential functions of Marine aviation, and the air-ground logistic system. In addition, a 30-day contingency block of consumables, spares, and replacements will be included.

As more of these ships become available, they could be based in other places such as Norway, England, the Philippines, the Mediterranean, or friendly ports along the Indian Ocean littoral. They would be able to sail separately on a routine basis, or in company with the forward-deployed amphibious-ready groups. In the event of a crisis, the personnel to operate the equipment could be flown in Military Airlift Command aircraft to the region to join the waiting prepositioned ships. Such a force posture would enable a brigade-size force to be in position in a few days rather than weeks. The buildup rate would be faster than any that can be achieved with existing means. Alternatively, if a "mount-out" order were given with adequate time (30 to 60 days), there could be as many as two Marine Amphibious Brigades aboard amphibious ships in the Arabian Sea. If this was the situation when the order to

land was issued, the amphibiously-landed Marines, or parachute-landed airborne infantry, could be reinforced by the rapid deployment brigades. The total force built in this way would be the largest possible in the shortest period of time.

Best of all, perhaps, from the standpoint of both diplomat and tactician, this force could remain out of sight until the landing actually takes place. Our amphibious forces have analyzed the matter of over-the-horizon capability as it applies to the 40-knot, air-cushion landing craft, amphibian tractors, and helicopters. A close-to-home example is useful: 20-knot amphibious ships lying some 50 miles off the Virginia Capes can put their landing force ashore overnight anywhere from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to Montauk Point on Long Island and all the time remain hull- and top-down over the horizon. The same could hold for maritime prepositioning ships—provided they have the proper logistical capabilities.⁸

But the maritime prepositioning program will not solve all logistical problems. Let us consider now some of the additional problems that a logistician must solve in order to deploy a more sizable RDF to its most difficult-to-reach potential operating area—the Persian Gulf region. Just providing the airlift is a staggering undertaking. A C-5A aircraft burns 6 tons of fuel to transport each ton of supplies from the East Coast to the Persian Gulf. This is a high price to pay for being 25 times faster than a ship.

Even if we ignore fuel inefficiency, though, the existing long-range transport fleet simply cannot do the job. For example, it is estimated that it would take 252 C-5 flights, 829 C-141 flights, and 166 flights of 747 cargo planes to fly in 30 days' worth of supplies for just one Marine Amphibious Brigade. If the fleet of US cargo aircraft had no other mission to which they had to respond, 19 days would be needed to complete this airlift. If only 20 percent of the aircraft were available—as in the event of a simultaneous NATO contingency—the mission would take 96 days.⁹

The total supply requirements for an RDF of 100,000 troops deployed to the Persian Gulf area would be enormous.

It is estimated that each person will require 12 gallons of water per day. The estimated daily fuel requirement, when computed on a per capita basis, also is 12 gallons. The Marine Corps estimates that it requires 214 pounds of supplies per day to sustain a rifleman in combat. This amounts to more than 4,000 tons per day for a Marine Amphibious Force. A tank battalion can consume 60 tons of ammunition and 6,000 gallons of fuel per day. An artillery battalion equipped with 155mm howitzers can fire 200 tons of shells per day. Aviation organizations have more voracious appetites. On an average day, an all-weather attack squadron can burn 175 tons of fuel delivering 200 tons of ordnance. It would take an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 tons of supplies per day to support and sustain a 225,000-man RDF in the field. This total requirement exceeds the delivery rate of both Military Airlift Command and the Civil Reserve Air Fleet. Therefore it becomes essential to open a sea line of communication (SLOC) at the earliest possible moment.

If the Suez Canal should be closed, we would face a 12,000-mile trip from the East Coast of the United States to the Persian Gulf. If we calculate on a sustained speed of 20 knots and 5 days in port, the round trip would take approximately 60 days. Depending on the intensity of combat, an average of two or three ship arrivals per day would be needed to support the RDF. This means 120 to 180 ships in the SLOC at any given time. It is no longer possible to remove enough Victory ships from the National Defense Reserve Fleet and use them to meet the sealift requirement. Today, that fleet has shrunk to about 150 ships, and those remaining are so old it is doubtful that 1 in 10 would be able to meet the sailing requirements. Unless we were willing to replace these aged ships in our reserve merchant fleet, we would be dependent upon foreign flag shipping to support our forces in the field in such a scenario. We would find ourselves in the position of reducing the size of the RDF spearhead to match a thinner SLOC shaft. Maritime prepositioning does not solve the problem of support shipping for the SLOC.¹⁰

A highly attractive solution would be to build the cargo ship that has been designated the "TAKX." This ship, formerly described as the PD-214, originally was designed by the Maritime Administration and the Military Sealift Command as a multipurpose mobilization ship; it has been described as "a ship for all reasons."¹¹

The TAKX, or mobilization ship, is an intermodal combination breakbulk, container, and RO/RO ship. The plans describe a ship of some 17,000-ton capacity, a speed of 20 knots, and a range of 12,000 miles. Most important, it has a capability to load and discharge its own cargo quickly and efficiently using only the ship's cargo-handling equipment of up to 140 tons capacity (a World War II "Victory" ship could handle only 50 tons). Since it does not need a highly sophisticated port infrastructure, this ship can anchor off a beach and discharge cargo into its own landing craft for movement ashore. Furthermore, it offers access to cargo and equipment simultaneously in both the horizontal and vertical planes. Assuming that discharge speed is of the essence—and it will not always be permissible or desirable to bring the logistic ships into port—it will be necessary to have a self-contained capability to get the tanks, self-propelled artillery, logistic units, and aviation support elements from ship to shore. Assault landing craft, of which there are enough already in the fleet or programmed, can be deck-mounted on the TAKX and offloaded when the ship-to-shore capability is required. The Navy and Marine Corps would like to have 12 of the ships, enough to store the equipment for a Marine Amphibious Force equivalent (i.e., three Marine Amphibious Brigades).¹²

Manpower is another RDF constraint. General Volney Warner, US Army, the former Commander in Chief of Readiness Command, has estimated that for every person in the RDF there must be another in a combat service support function. Considering the fact that the RDF may have to land and operate in an area with no port infrastructure, either aerial or ocean, the one-to-one ratio may be somewhat optimistic. General Warner is reported to have said that to support the RDF it

would be necessary to go beyond the 100,000-man call-up that the President is authorized. The "bare" base and lack of infrastructure point toward a heavy, deliberate engineering requirement for port facilities, roads, and installations to store and maintain the sinews of war.¹³

An especially difficult part of the manpower problem has to do with expeditionary medical support. In the years since formulation of the Nixon Doctrine, the services have reduced their levels of field medical capability. Two factors contributed to this situation: (1) The Nixon Doctrine described an era in which the United States would forgo the option of engaging large numbers of ground combat troops in a "minor" contingency. (2) The drive to reduce "tail" to make "teeth" larger in the NATO arena led to the reliance on host nations for logistical support, including medical. As a result it is not difficult to understand how service programmers could put medical units on the margin. By the beginning of the 1980s, the United States had a field medical capability that could fully support a force of little more than two divisions operating outside the NATO theater. In the early 1970s the US Navy had two hospital ships in commission; by 1980 there were none. Like other functions of logistics, medical support cannot be created overnight with a snap of the logistician's fingers.

Chapter 3

THE MARINES' UNIQUE QUALIFICATIONS FOR RAPID DEPLOYMENT

Having examined the evolution, some characteristics, and several constraints of an RDF, let us consider the qualifications of US forces to perform RDF missions. First, let us recall those criteria which many observers have suggested for evaluating a force's utility as an intervention force. As noted in our chapter 1 discussion of the RDF concept, these criteria can be readily applied to an RDF. To review, they are: readiness; balance and flexibility; responsiveness; expeditionary capability; forcible-entry capability; strategic mobility; sustainability; controllability; and consistency with other missions.¹ With these in mind, how well are Army forces suited for a rapid deployment role?

The Army's Rapid Deployment Division

Only one Army division, the 82d Airborne, is capable of forcible-entry operations, a capability which we noted as essential to any RDF. Unquestionably the 82d Airborne displays the majority of the characteristics necessary to constitute an RDF. The airborne forces are clearly part of the first echelon of rapid deployment forces. The other divisions, including the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division, have more combat power than the 82d, but they cannot conduct an assault directly from the means of strategic mobility. These other divisions must have secure reception facilities to deploy overseas.

The 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division presents a special case. Technically it is not capable of forcible entry. If, however, it were possible to airlift this force to a benign environment adjacent to the objective area where it could assemble and then launch its organic aircraft, it too would meet the forcible-entry criterion. This division probably will be used in a reinforcing or follow-on role.

By virtue of their weight and organization, other Army armored, mechanized, and light infantry divisions, together with their respective supporting increments, should be considered as rapid reinforcement forces—that is, as part of the follow-on or second echelon of deployment. They are deployable forces and are just as much a part of the total ground combat power projection system as are the lighter rapid deployment forces. The major disadvantage of the heavier forces is their slower speed of strategic movement. Even if the United States could afford to double or triple the size of the strategic airlift force, most of the ground forces would have to deploy and be sustained by sealift. Furthermore, these heavier divisions are neither organized nor trained for forcible entry operations. While one can also question whether the divisions assigned to NATO should be included as reinforcement forces for worldwide commitment, as a matter of practicality it is realistic to plan that all divisions based in the continental United States can be available to reinforce or exploit an advantage gained by an RDF.

Although it is possible to imagine a conflict in which only Army RDF or only Marine RDF units would be engaged, most senior officials today would agree with Major General Trainor that it is "more than likely any serious intervention effort in the future will see both Army and Marine units involved."² The same point has often been made by General Barrow, who says that he has fought in such wars and has not yet seen a crowded battlefield. The point is not whether a given force is going to be committed, as B.H. Liddell Hart said:

In tackling emergencies two hands are better than one.
While it is desirable to have an airborne force, which

enables quicker intervention where its use is possible, it is essential to have a marine force, and better than this should be the bigger of the two.³

The Marine Corps in Rapid Deployment: A Fitting Role

The Marine Corps has all of the characteristics of an intervention force, particularly in terms of balance and flexibility, expeditionary nature, strategic mobility, sustainability, and controllability. The Marine Corps has the unique capabilities to provide a balanced force of combined arms in a variety of crisis situations.

For example, it is Marine Corps policy that the Fleet Marine Forces normally will be employed as integrated Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs). These forces have not only the flexibility to perform across the spectrum of combat situations, but also the capability to satisfy the national requirement for a military intervention force.⁴ This inherent flexibility has not been appreciated by some observers who view the Marine Corps only as a rigid proponent of the amphibious assault capability, too light to fight on the modern battlefield, and "an under-gunned, slow-moving, monument to a bygone era of warfare."⁵ Such criticisms, however, tend to overlook the MAGTF concept (Appendix A). The MAGTF concept acknowledges that old (and not-so-old) distinctions among land, sea, and air operations are no longer suitable. The operational problems may be different but the differences can only be resolved if they are addressed in an integrated way. The MAGTF concept represents an innovative approach to solving the problem of integrating land, sea, and air operations.

Some observers have argued that if the Marine Corps emphasizes its expeditionary quality, it will denigrate its traditional amphibious mission. Quite the contrary. In the context of tradition, "amphibious" is both an end and a means. An amphibious capability can be both a tactical end and a strategic means by which the Marine Corps continues to assure its

greatest utility to the Nation as its expeditionary force in readiness. It is a matter of emphasis.

Marine forces reveal all the characteristics necessary for a rapid deployment force. The Fleets and their Fleet Marine Forces (FMF) clearly are in being. Forward-afloat deployments in four oceans, "mount-out" boxes, operational readiness tests, "climbing up on the step," and numerous other aspects are all ingrained in the Marine Corps way of life and fundamental operational concepts, and indicate Marine Corps suitability for an RDF role. Marine Air-Ground Task Forces are designed to fight as combined arms teams. Amphibious forces organized in consideration of joint doctrine, supported by other fleet deployments, and directed by an integrated command and control system are sufficiently flexible to absorb other forces into a unified whole that provides the capability to effect a forcible entry. A truly expeditionary tactical aviation package that includes a complete air command and control capability is an integral part of these forces. Furthermore, the MAGTFs are supported by an integrated logistics system that will assure more efficient combat service to the FMF and readily accommodate the maritime prepositioning ship concept. Most important, MAGTFs, with their organic helicopters and amphibious vehicles embarked in amphibious ships and supported by carrier battle groups, provide the most reliable—and under most circumstances, the only—forcible-entry capability in the US arsenal.

The capability is even more impressive if the airborne forces are committed as part of the total amphibious operation. Elements of the FMF are poised to carry out the rapid reinforcement mission as well. Besides their primary mode of strategic mobility (amphibious lift), Marines are capable of deploying by all other means of strategic lift. Continuously maintained Air Contingency Battalion Landing Teams in each Marine division have demonstrated their ability to make long-range reinforcing deployments, with only a few hours' notice, by way of Marine Air Contingency airlift.

Furthermore, the California-based personnel of the 7th Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB) stand ready to join their heavy equipment aboard near-term prepositioning ships in the Indian Ocean. Given that the pacing items in any deployment are the major items of equipment, the 7th MAB when deployed in the Indian Ocean area could be committed to rapidly reinforce an ally or other US forces in the Southwest Asia-Indian Ocean littoral.

In addition, the Marine Corps has formalized a Seaborne Mobile Logistic System (SMLS) to provide the commander with additional options and flexibility in supporting operations ashore. The SMLS minimizes dependence on established facilities ashore.⁶

Adding afloat prepositioning to the Nation's amphibious capability means that the naval forces offer a full range of options for deploying units rapidly. With afloat prepositioning, strategic airlift gains credibility. A balanced, expeditionary Marine Air-Ground Task Force can deploy into a permissive environment in the shortest time possible; or, it can drive an amphibious spearhead onto a hostile shore. (Appendix B is a thumbnail sketch describing the hypothetical use of Marine rapid deployment forces in both benign and hostile environments. It also contains a summary of a planning exercise.)

As a rapid deployment force, the Marine Corps is a self-contained entity directly responsive to the demands of the National Command Authority. The strategic importance of rapid deployment, embodying as it should, forward-afloat forces, highlights the utility of rapidly reinforceable amphibious forces and validates the requirement for specific mobility and logistic assets—airlift, sealift, and amphibious shipping and craft.

In summary, rapid deployment describes all that Marines have performed traditionally and could perform with improved capability in the future. Various-constituted RDFs might continue to be discussed, but rapid deployment itself is not a revolutionary concept. It is a recurring, serious business which the Marine Corps is uniquely qualified to conduct.

Appendix A

THE MARINE AIR-GROUND TASK FORCE CONCEPT

Marine forces are always formed into Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) for combat operations and exercises, and, whenever possible, for training. These combined arms forces exploit fully the combat power inherent in integrated air-ground operations, under the direction and control of a single commander.

An MAGTF is a task organization tailored to accomplish a specific mission. There are three basic types of MAGTFs: a Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU); a Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB); and a Marine Amphibious Force (MAF).

The composition of an MAGTF may vary considerably, but it will include these main components: (1) a command element, (2) a ground combat element, (3) an aviation combat element, and (4) a combat service support element, including Navy support elements.

The three Marine divisions, aircraft wings, and force service support groups constitute the pools from which the MAGTFs are made. The MAGTF is configured specifically for amphibious operations.

The Marine aircraft wing is designed to operate in conjunction with the Marine division. It provides a full range of tactical aviation capabilities as well as enough helicopters to lift one-third of a division in a heliborne assault.

Organic combat service support is provided to the MAGTF by units and detachments drawn from one of the force service support groups.

The MAU is a task organization that is normally built around a battalion landing team and a composite helicopter squadron, including two or more types of helicopters. In some situations the composite squadron may also include vertical/short take-off and landing (V/STOL) attack aircraft. Normally employed to fulfill routine forward-afloat deployment requirements, the MAU provides an immediate reaction capability to crises and is capable of relatively limited combat operations. Because of its comparatively limited sustainability, the MAU will not routinely conduct amphibious assaults. When committed, the MAU is normally supported from its seabase, usually an amphibious-ready group of three or four ships. The MAU is considered to be the forward-afloat deployed element of a larger landing force, such as the MAB, which would be constituted as required from forces based in the continental United States or from forward-based combat-ready Fleet Marine Forces.

The MAB is a task organization that is normally built around a regimental landing team and a provisional Marine aircraft group. It is capable of conducting limited amphibious operations. During situations that threaten to develop into crises, a MAB may be forward-deployed afloat for an extended period in order to provide immediate response and may serve as the leading element of a MAF. Under these conditions, MAB combat operations may be supported from the seabase or shore facilities, or a combination of the two.

The MAB is the combined arms task force around which one of the major mobility enhancement initiatives has been designed. The equipment suites that are already embarked in the Near-Term Prepositioning Ships and will be embarked in the Maritime Prepositioning Ships have been structured around an MAB.

The ground combat element of the MAB, an RLT or regimental landing team, comprises four maneuver battalions—three infantry and one tank. (The tank element could vary in size from one 17-tank company to a full 53-tank battalion.) The organic tactical mobility support is provided by one or two companies of assault amphibians equipped with the LVTP-7s, an amphibious armored personnel carrier that carries 20 combat-equipped Marines. (One company can lift an infantry battalion.) Organic fire support is provided by a reinforced direct-support artillery battalion comprising five or six batteries of 155mm howitzers. The infantry battalions are equipped with a total of 51 mortars of the 60mm and 81mm types. In addition to the tank

battalion, organic antitank capability is provided by the 32 Dragon missile trackers and 72 TOW missile launchers.

The aviation combat element, a provisional aircraft group, consists of two fighters/attack (F-4), one light attack (AV-8), and one medium attack (A-6) squadrons of fixed-wing aircraft. Detachments of photo reconnaissance (RF-4B) and electronic warfare aircraft (EA-6B) are included. Tactical lift is provided by two medium (CH-46) and two heavy (CH-53) squadrons. Additional antitank capability is provided by a squadron of attack helicopters (AH-1). A Hawk battery plus a forward-area air defense platoon (Redeye) account for a local air defense capability.

The combat service support element, a brigade service support group, is capable of supporting the MAB in combat for 30 to 60 days depending on the level of supply that is prepositioned. This element is tailored to provide supply, maintenance, transportation, engineering, and medical service to all elements of the MAB.

The command element, the brigade headquarters, provides a single headquarters for command and coordination of ground, air, and combat service support forces essential for effective operation.

The MAF, largest of the MAGTFs, is normally built around a division/wing team. However, its size may range from less than a complete division/wing team up to several divisions and aircraft wings, together with an appropriate combat service support organization. The MAF is capable of conducting a wide range of amphibious operations and sustained operations ashore. It can be tailored for a wide variety of combat missions in any geographic environment by adjusting the number and type of combat support battalions (e.g., tank) and combat service support units that are attached.

Two MAUs are continuously deployed afloat, one in the Pacific and one in the Mediterranean. The remaining forces of all three active MAFs have the capability to deploy MAGTFs by any or all of the available strategic transportation modes as the situation dictates. The command element (the brigade headquarters) provides a single headquarters for command and coordination of ground, air, and combat service support forces essential for effective operation.

Appendix B
HYPOTHETICAL
RAPID DEPLOYMENT OPERATIONS

General Situation

The underlying assumption is that the United States is responding to a call for military assistance from an ally. The ports in the country are open roadsteads with only lighterage capacity. Airfields exist within 10 miles of the coastline. The recognized government, perceiving an imminent threat to its security from a neighboring state, requests that the United States honor a treaty commitment by supporting it with ground combat units.

Special Situation Alpha: Benign Environment

US rapid deployment forces are ordered to the country. The first units to deploy are an Army Airborne Brigade, a Marine Air Contingency Brigade comprising three Air Contingency Battalion Landing Teams (ACBLTs), and a Marine Amphibious Brigade whose equipment is aboard prepositioned ships. These ships simultaneously would be ordered to a selected rendezvous point off shore and adjacent to the airfield into which the airlifted element would arrive.

Even though the airfield is in friendly hands in this scenario (i.e., a benign or permissive environment), the airborne units would be parachuted onto the airfield to demonstrate the capability. Likewise, the Marine ACBLTs would make a demonstration air assault landing in C-130 aircraft, expand the airhead, and secure access routes to the beach or port landing sites for the Marine Prepositioning Ship

(MPS) equipment. In rapid succession the helicopter component, combat, combat support, and combat service support units making up the MPS brigade would be landed. Flown in C-141s and C-5s, these latter elements would then join the equipment offloaded from the prepositioned ships. Meanwhile, fixed-wing tactical aircraft would be flight-ferried into the crisis area. In the shortest possible amount of time, a joint task force that would have a fully integrated air-ground capability (i.e., an airborne brigade plus two amphibious brigades) would be organized and equipped to operate as a combined arms team in an expeditionary environment.

Special Situation Bravo: Hostile Environment

In this case the situation in the vicinity of the selected airfield is in doubt. An amphibious-ready group with its embarked Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) could be ordered to the scene in company with a carrier battle group and the maritime prepositioned ships. If the forces are alerted soon enough and the amphibious ships with Marines embarked are moved forward to the objective area, one or two Marine Amphibious Brigades or a Marine Amphibious Force could be lying hull-down over the horizon from the country. Here precise timing would be of the essence. The MAU commander, who would have carrier aircraft flying in direct support, could schedule his landing by helicopter at the selected airfield to precede and neutralize antiairborne defenses, or to coincide with the airborne assault and seize blocking positions around the airfield. These initial landings would be so scheduled to allow just enough time to seize, occupy, and defend the main runway before the initial C-130 carrying the leading elements of first ACBLT touched down. Meanwhile the amphibious forces would be seizing a lodgment into which the MPS equipment could be landed and from which the forces could link up with the air-delivered forces. With the air and beachhead secured, the sequence of events would follow as described in Special Situation Alpha.

An operation of the situation-bravo type was once planned in March 1975. At that time one of the options the NCA considered in order to evacuate the maximum number of people from Phnom Penh involved the use of Pochentang Airfield as a major evacuation site. The airfield would have had to be occupied and defended by ground combat forces, perhaps seized as well. The 11th MAB was activated

for this mission. The concept of operation was to involve a finely tuned air assault plan under which helicopter-borne infantry from BLT 2/4 flying from the ships of Amphibious Ready Group "Alpha" (comprising an assault helicopter carrier plus three other amphibious ships) in the Gulf of Thailand would land and seize the main runway at Pochentang. Right on their heels would come the first C-130 load of infantry from BLT 1/9 operating out of airfields in Thailand. The third BLT in the brigade, 3/9, would arrive in trace of 1/9. The plan, of course, was never ordered into execution and although it can be argued that it differs considerably from the scenario hypothesized here, the plan was a precedent. Quite clearly the amphibious element was not an end in itself, but the means by which the air assault would be conducted. The same applies today.

ENDNOTES

Chapter 1

1. See, for example, Congressional Budget Office, *US Projection Forces: Requirements, Scenario, and Options*, April 1978, p. 2.
2. Since Franklin D. Roosevelt's Administration, every newly inaugurated President has called for a wide-ranging review of US national security within the first 3 months in office. President Carter was no exception, even though the defense plank of his platform could be traced to a review of defense policy by the Members of Congress for Peace through Law.
3. Within the Office of the Secretary of Defense the review was coordinated by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Planning in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Most people see this review as the genesis of a renewed interest in rapid deployment forces. (The RDF concept, if not the terminology, can be traced back to 1960.) Richard Burt, then with the *New York Times*, credited a study by Professor Samuel P. Huntington as stimulating interest in RDF (*New York Times*, 25 January 1980, p. 6).
4. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), News Release No. 430-77, 15 September 1977, pp. 7 and 8.
5. There was some foot-dragging at the Pentagon and in the State Department over the creation of the RDF. As Richard Burt noted in the *New York Times* on 25 January 1980, "Although the general idea of such a force was approved by Mr. Carter in August 1977, the plan was opposed in the Pentagon, where there was concern it would divert resources from Western Europe, and in the State Department

where it was felt that the intervention unit would be politically provocative." See Burt, "How US Strategy Toward Persian Gulf Region Evolved," *New York Times*, 25 January 1980, p. 6, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Main Ed., Part II, 25 January 1980, p. 1-F.

6. *US News and World Report*, 27 February 1978, p. 24.

7. Austin and Garrett, "Quick Strike," *Inquiry*, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Main Ed., Part II, 24 July 1978, p. 1-F.

8. US, Department of Defense, *Annual Report Fiscal Year 1980*, Report of Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to the Congress on the FY 1980 Budget, FY 1981 Authorization Request, and FY 1980-1984 Defense Programs, 25 January 1979, pp. 14 and 202.

9. The Nixon Doctrine, also known as the "Guam Doctrine," had been enunciated at Guam in 1969. The doctrine eschewed the involvement of US military personnel in Third World imbroglios; it called for the United States to provide weapons or other military aid, but said that the host nation must provide the fighting manpower.

10. See, for example, Juan Cameron, "Our 'What-If' Strategy for Mideast Trouble Spots," *Fortune*, 7 May 1979, p. 155; see also *Middle East Economic Digest*, vol. 23, nos. 37 (14 September 1979), 38 (21 September 1979), and 39 (28 September 1979), pp. 24-26.

11. Forcible intervention and other self-help remedies have been available in customary international law for centuries as legitimate grounds to address grievances otherwise left unsatisfied. See, for example, William V. O'Brian, *US Military Intervention: Law and Morality*, Center for Strategic and International Studies Paper No. 68, Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 1979.

12. Myres McDougal and Florentino Feliciano, *Law and Minimum World Public Order: The Legal Regulation and International Coercion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 224-28.

13. Several military theorists and writers, among them Alfred T. Mahan and Morris Janowitz, have described how military force contributes to maintaining public order long enough for other social forces to take root and flourish. See, for example, Janowitz, "Beyond Deterrence: Alternative Conceptual Dimensions," in *The Limits of*

Many writers have suggested criteria for evaluating a given force's utility as an intervention force. These criteria, which are equally applicable to rapid deployment forces, may be summarized as follows:

- **Readiness**—Organizational, material, and psychological preparation for immediate deployment by any available means for employment in a hostile environment anywhere in the world.
- **Balance and flexibility**—Ability to cope with the complexities of modern combat in a variety of environments; tailored for offense, defense, logistics, command control, and cooperation with allies.
- **Responsiveness**—Ability to move quickly to a crisis area or to be close to it at the critical time.
- **Expeditionary capability**—Short-notice capability to go where ordered, do what is required with little or no dependence on others at the outset, en route, or at the destination.
- **Forcible-entry capability**—Ability to enter in the face of resistance.
- **Strategic mobility**—The ability to accommodate to the strategic lift assets made available (sea, air, amphibious, and prepositioned).
- **Sustainability**—Capability to provide independent, flexible, continuous logistic support.
- **Controllability**—Capability to take precise, measured action under the close control of the National Command Authority.
- **Consistency with other missions**—Capability to meet other commitments and to accommodate to a changed mission.

Chapter 3 evaluates various forces against these criteria.

14. W. Thomas Mallison and Sally V. Mallison, *Studies in the International Humanitarian Law of Armed Conflict*, 1978, p. 16.

Several international jurists have recently argued that certain provisions of the U.N. Charter formerly perceived to prohibit intervention or self-help unqualifiedly are not in fact so restrictive. Professor Myres McDougal of Yale, in "Authority to Use Force on the High Sea," *Naval War College Review*, vol. 20, no. 5, 1967, pp. 28-29, says:

Article 2(4) and Article 51 must be interpreted differently.... In the absence of collective machinery to protect against attack and deprivation, I would suggest that the principle of major purposes requires an interpretation which would honor self-help against prior unlawfulness. The principle of subsequent conduct certainly confirms this. Many states of the world have used force in situations short of the requirements of self-defense to protect their national interests.

15. President Carter reiterated these objectives in his State-of-the-Union address on 23 January 1980.

16. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), News Release of the Secretary's testimony, 13 December 1979, p. 8.

17. US, Department of Defense, *Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981, Report of Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to the Congress on the FY 1981 Budget, FY 1982 Authorization Request, and FY 1981-1985 Defense Program*, 25 January 1980, pp. 9 and 115-117.

18. Several commentators and journals have expounded on this theme. See, for example, *Business Week*, 25 February 1980, p. 124.

19. William Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 51-56 and 191.

20. *US Code Congressional and Administrative Notes*, 82d Congress, 2d Session, p. 1767. Also see Richard Halloran, *New York Times*, 16 December 1979, p. E-5.

21. See Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "The Utgoff Principle," *Washington Post*, 17 April 1978, p. 21.

22. US, Senate, 90th Congress, 1st session, Senate Report 666, 20 March 1967.

23. US, House of Representatives, 91st Congress, 1st Session, House Report 522, 26 September 1969. The audit trail of the FDL program before the Congress is as follows:

FY 1966 (89th Congress, 1st Session)

- The President's budget requested funding for construction of the first four FDL ships of a prospective 30-ship force.
- The Senate authorized construction of the two FDLs (Senate Report—144, 2 April 1965). *Rationale:* Construction should begin at a moderate pace until the total requirement is more precisely estimated. An alternative in the form of commercial roll-on/roll-off ships was raised.
- The House authorized construction of four FDLs (House Report 271, 28 April 1965).
- In conference, the House, citing the Senate's rationale, agreed to fund two FDLs (House Report 374, 25 May 1965).

FY 1967 (89th Congress, 2d Session)

- The question was not raised.

FY 1968 (90th Congress, 1st Session)

- The President's budget requested funding for five FDLs.
- The Senate disapproved construction of any FDLs (Senate Report 666, 20 March 1967). *Rationale:*
 - (1) It would be necessary to provide protection from submarine and air attack for deployed FDLs;
 - (2) FDLs would create the impression that the United States was assuming the function of the world's policeman; and
 - (3) the C-5A was capable of carrying 98 percent of the heavy equipment required for maximum ground combat effectiveness.

- The House authorized construction of two FDLs (House Report 221, 2 May 1967).
- In conference, the House agreed to strike the two FDLs from the FY 1968 bill and to apply the \$67 million authorized and appropriated in FY 1966 to the cost of construction of other ships in the FY 1968 program (House Report 270, 22 May 1967).

FY 1969 (90th Congress, 2d Session)

- The President's budget requested funding for four FDLs.
- The Senate authorized four FDLs (Senate Report 1087, 10 April 1968).
- The House eliminated the FDL program (House Report 1645, 5 July 1968).
- In conference, the Senate eliminated the four FDLs without prejudice (House Report 1869, 5 September 1968).

FY 1970 (91st Congress, 1st Session)

- The President's budget requested funding for three FDLs.
- The Senate eliminated the program (Senate Report 290, 3 July 1969). *Rationale*: The program had lower priority than other programs.
- The House eliminated the program (House Report 522, 26 September 1969). *Rationale*: The House was concerned that the FDLs would be used in competition with the private merchant marine.

FY 1971 (91st Congress, 2d Session)

- FDLs did not appear in the President's budget—a casualty of the Nixon Doctrine?

24. James B. Agnew, "Unilateral Corps: Is the US Turning a New Strategic Corner?" *Army (Magazine)*, September 1979, pp. 30-33.

25. The logistical problem of an RDF is underscored by a comparison of numbers of available developed ports per mile of coastline between the south coast of England and the east coast of Africa from Capetown, South Africa, to Berbera, Somalia. Along the English

coastline there is one port every 6 miles. Along Africa's east coast there is one port every 120 miles. See US, Naval Oceanographic Office, *World Port Index* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1977), pp. 185-88.

26. George C. Wilson and Jim Hoagland, "Army Is Drafting Plans for Quick Strike Force," *Washington Post*, 22 June 1979, p. 2, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Early Bird Ed., Part I, 22 June 1979, p. 2.

27. Norman Kemptser, "Army's Strike Force on Way to Reality," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 September 1978, p. 9, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Main Ed., Part II, 20 September 1979, p. 8-F.

28. Don Cook, "The Army Prepares to Fight in the Past," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 September 1979, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Early Bird Ed., Part I, 25 September 1979, p. 8.

29. Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) Press Release, News Conference by General Robert H. Barrow, USMC, 5 July 1979, p. 5.

30. James D. Hessman, "A Conversation with General Barrow," *Seapower*, November 1979, p. 32.

31. US, Department of Defense, *Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1966*, Report of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara to the Congress on the FY 1966 Budget.

32. George C. Wilson, "Carter Budget Envisions a Quick Reaction Force," *Washington Post*, 27 November 1979, p. 8, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Early Bird Ed., Part I, 27 November 1979, p. 1.

33. See George C. Wilson, "Marines to Form Rapid Reaction Force," *Washington Post*, 6 December 1979, p. 15, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Early Bird Ed., Part I, 6 December 1979, p. 1.

34. Henry Bradsher, "US is Seeking Port Expansion in Indian Ocean," *Washington Star*, 19 December 1979, p. 1, as reproduced in *DOD Current News*, Main Ed., Part II, 19 December 1979, p. 3.

35. W. Graham Claytor, Jr., Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee as reported by Vernon A. Guidry, Jr., "Rapid Deployment Force to Get First Components," *Washington Star*, 6 March 1980, p. 12.

36. Interview with Lieutenant General P.X. Kelley, USMC, the Pentagon, 8 March 1980.

Chapter 2

1. See 50 US Code 1541, et seq.; *The War Powers Resolution* (Public Law 93-148) is applicable when:

- a. US Armed Forces are introduced into hostilities or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, or
- b. US Armed Forces are introduced into the territory, airspace, or waters of a foreign nation, while equipped for combat, except for deployments which relate solely to supply, replacement, repair, or training of such forces, or
- c. US Armed Forces are introduced in numbers which substantially enlarge the US Armed Forces equipped for combat already located in a foreign nation.

2. Several writers have analyzed these phenomena. See, for example, David B. Bobrow, "Communication, Command, and Control: The Nerves of Intervention," and Joseph J. Kruzal, "Military Alerts and Diplomatic Signals," in *The Limits of Military Intervention*, Ellen P. Stern, ed. (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1977), pp. 109 and 84, respectively.

3. At any given time there are at least three and often four amphibious-ready groups with embarked Marine landing forces forward-afloat deployed in the Atlantic, Indian, or Pacific oceans, and the Mediterranean Sea.

4. See Richard E. Carey and David A. Quinlan, "Operation FREQUENT WIND," *The Marine Corps Gazette*, February 1976, p. 22.

5. Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, et al., *Force Without War: US Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington, DC:

Brookings Institution, 1978), pp. 23, 40, 43. As the authors point out, the frequency with which amphibious forces with embarked Marines have been used during the past decade is greater than the historical average, that is, 75 percent as compared with 40 percent. See also Michael McGwire, "Changing Military Operations and Military Intervention" in *The Limits of Military Intervention*, Ellen P. Stern, ed. (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1977), pp. 151-78, especially pp. 168 and 176.

6. See Alfred T. Mahan, *The Influence of the Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812* (New York: Greenwood press, 1968).

7. See John J. Hamre, *US Airlift Forces: Enhancement Alternatives for NATO and Non-NATO Contingencies*, Background Paper, Congress of the United States, Congressional Budget Office, April 1979, especially p. 55.

8. B. E. Trainor, *Intervention—What, How and Who?* Paper presented at the Congressional Research Service/Congressional Budget Office Workshop, Washington, DC, 8-9 January 1980, p. 24.

9. Patrick Oster, "Can US Forces Patrol the Globe?" *Chicago Sun Times*, 8 June 1980, p. 8.

10. An alternative exists in the form of the Sealift Readiness Program under which a liner operator pledges up to 50 percent of his ships to be made available for a contingency in return for carrying Government cargo in peacetime. The program would no doubt provide some ships, but not enough. Furthermore, depending on the duration of the contingency, the liner operators who live up to the bargain may suffer irreparable damage in the keenly competitive ocean-liner marketplace.

11. James D. Hessman, "A Ship for All Reasons," *Seapower*, January 1979, p. 24.

12. Ibid.

13. As quoted in John J. Fialka, "Rapid Deployment Meaningless Without Fuel, Water," *Washington Star*, 9 April 1980, p. 1.

Chapter 3

1. See chapter 1 and endnote 13 to that chapter.
2. B. E. Trainor, *Intervention—What, How and Who?* Paper delivered to the Congressional Research Service/Congressional Budget Office Workshop, Washington, DC, 8–9 January 1980, p. 15.
3. B. H. Liddell Hart, "Marines and Strategy," *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 1960, p. 31.
4. Commandant of the Marine Corps White Letter 1–80, 17 January 1980.
5. William S. Lind and Jeffrey Record, "Twilight for the Corps?" *Naval Institute Proceedings*, July 1978, p. 38.
6. See James J. Harp, "Amphibious Logistics," *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 1974, p. 55.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACBLT	Air Contingency Battalion Landing Teams
BLT	Battalion Landing Team
DRF	deliberate (heavy) reinforcement forces
FDL	forward-deployed logistic (ship)
FMF	Fleet Marine Forces
FY	fiscal year
MAB	Marine Amphibious Brigade
MACBLT	Marine Air Contingency Battalion Landing Team
MAF	Marine Amphibious Force
MAGTF	Marine Air-Ground Task Force
MAU	Marine Amphibious Unit
MPS	Maritime Prepositioning Ship
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA	National Command Authority
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PRM	Presidential Review Memorandum
RDF	rapid deployment force
RDJTF	Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force
RLT	regimental landing team
RO/RO	roll-on/roll-off
RRF	rapid (light) reinforcement forces
SLOC	sea line of communication
SMLS	Seaborne Mobile Logistic System
ULC	Unilateral Corps
V/STOL	vertical/short take-off and landing

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