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MARITIME STRATEGY FOR REGIONAL CONFLICT

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: *John F. Thornell III*

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Abstract of MARITIME STRATEGY FOR REGIONAL CONFLICT

Our naval and military leadership has determined that regional conflict will replace the Soviet Union as the threat facing the global stability in the next century. To meet the challenges of regional stability will require a new maritime strategy which must be successful across the spectrum of conflict and geography. It must also reflect the defense policy of deterrence, crisis response, forward presence and force reconstitution. Naval forces, the linchpin in any future strategy, must develop a regional maritime strategy with global application. To respond to the reality of the new threats facing the world those naval forces must be expeditionary in nature. This paper will review the past maritime strategy, the new regional focus, the regional threats and the manner in which regional maritime forces can be used to project forward deployed power to attain U.S. goals.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
ABSTRACT	ii
I INTRODUCTION	1
MAHAN'S NAVAL STRATEGY	2
MAHAN'S ERRORS	4
II THE MARITIME CHALLENGE	7
THE NEW REQUIREMENT	8
REGIONAL CONCERNS	9
III THE THREAT	13
CHANGE IN THREAT	13
TERRORISM	14
RESOURCES	14
NATIONALISM	15
DRUGS	15
IV MARITIME STRATEGY AND REGIONAL CONFLICT	17
PRESENCE	17
SEA CONTROL	18
GEOGRAPHICAL SETTINGS FOR CONFLICT	18
LITTORAL WARFARE	19
V CONCLUSION	23
NOTES	25
BIBLIOGRAPHY	28

MARITIME STRATEGY FOR REGIONAL CONFLICT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

*"Success in battles may not alone assure the achievement
of national security goals, but defeat will guarantee failure."*

--FM 100-5

As the nation prepares for entry into the Twenty-First Century, the forces that protect our vital interests, the missions assigned to those forces, and the perceived threat facing the nation are under scrutiny. If there can be one thread running throughout political, economic, diplomatic and military discussions, it is the uncertainty of what the future will bring. The optimism that first gripped the nation with the onset of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the end of the Cold War, has been transformed into caution. The realization that there are other threats to our nation and international stability--apart from Soviet influence--has been unsettling to those who prematurely bought into the "peace dividend" theory. Dealing with the uncertainty facing the nation and the world will require a reappraisal of our national interests, national strategy and, in support of both, the regional strategy to help arrive at global stability set by the national leadership as the nation's goal. Theater commanders must be prepared for the most challenging period in our nation's history. To help meet the challenges will require a new regional maritime strategy applicable across the spectrum of geography; to attain success across the spectrum of conflict, naval forces, expeditionary in

nature, will be required. Because we currently lack a realistic regional maritime strategy, a change is overdue.

Today's maritime strategy is the product of the strategy first proposed by Alfred Thayer Mahan, an American naval captain, who arrived at a concept of naval force in opposition to that of Julian S. Corbett, an English lawyer. Essentially, Corbett proposed that wars would be won on land with naval forces best utilized in defense of an insular nation, in wars of limited objectives and in wars of intervention. Whatever maritime strategy was developed should direct the part the fleet would play in relation to the army. In other words, the army was the decisive force in action¹ with the naval forces a necessary, but not wholly sufficient, adjunct. For Corbett, the three uses of sea *control* were defense against invasion, protection of one's own commerce, and use of the sea as a bridge to land campaigns.

To Mahan's thinking, Corbett failed to consider allies as a source of support and his indirect naval strategy seemed to demonstrate a failed analytical method. Mahan felt that a deductive system was needed to fully validate naval power and more fully satisfy any critical analysis on naval force. Jomini had written that offensive action with massed forces at decisive points would allow the victor to control the shape of war. Mahan saw this as the beginning of his principles of naval power. The four principles he espoused were: concentration of force, that wars are won by economic strangulation of the enemy, fleets must be used as offensive weapons, and that a primary concern of navies was the control of commerce and *command* of the sea. Navies were meant to fight navies. Command of the sea would ensure economic success for a nation, particularly a mercantile nation desiring trade. "Great Powers" needed global commerce which required a global maritime fleet for global markets. To survive a

nation needed a fleet. Sea power was *necessary* to becoming a "Great Power."² By 1916, Mahan's theories of sea power were embodied in our national interest and objectives. "We must have a navy so strong and so well proportioned and equipped, so thoroughly ready and prepared, that no enemy can gain command of the sea and effect a landing in force on either our western or our eastern coast."^{*} No matter what happened to our other services, the navy would be "second to none." It has been the central theme behind our maritime strategy since 1916.

In the decades since Mahan's strategy was embraced as the *cause celebre* for our navy, the realities of the world have undergone changes. Most remarkable is the containment policy first described by George F. Kennan in his now famous "X" article.³ Successive presidents have sought containment of the Soviet threat. Global containment required a global navy in the finest Mahanian principles; it was necessary to ensure political and economic pressures were brought to bear against Soviet power world-wide.

But things changed in 1985. Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev assumed power in the Soviet Union and actually seemed willing to talk to President Ronald Reagan and his successor, George Bush. Tensions between the two "super powers" diminished. By 1989, Gorbachev announced the end of the Brezhnev Doctrine⁴ and, in London later that year, he announced the end of the Cold War. The remarkable changes in Eastern Europe, the reunification of Germany and less totalitarianism in the Soviet Union seemed to legitimize Gorbachev's desire for change. By drawing in his horns, Gorbachev and the Soviet Union seemed finally to understand that the military power of the Cold War era had been replaced by *economic power* as the currency

^{*} Republican Party platform, 1916.

of influence.⁵ The Soviet Union turned inward to solve the multitude of problems facing the national infrastructure and people. Containment had been won, not by battle, but by default.

While I suppose jubilation is in order that the U.S. prevailed through the containment policy, the euphoria is dampened by the knowledge that our maritime strategy was rapidly becoming a changed strategy--Mahanian based but, nevertheless, changed. Certain aspects of Mahan were open for disagreement, if not found totally unworkable. From history, Mahan postulated that an *a priori* set of immutable principles was derived that drove maritime strategy. Immutable principles are unchangeable; Mahanian strategy is, therefore, unchangeable. But if the tenets were wrong, or the old strategy is shown to be wrong, then a new one must take its place. Without spending an inordinate amount of time on the errors of Mahan, it should suffice to say that, for the purposes of this paper, his errors were in four areas: the success of the defense, violation of Mahan's immutable laws, the nature of war, and the loss of general maritime shipping.

Mahan loved the idea of a concentrated fleet.⁶ The fleet was the offensive aspect of the Navy. In his theory, the offensive was the proper province of war; the defense was an ineffective strategy to follow for naval forces. Mahan states that command of the sea is "wrung from a powerful navy only by fighting and overcoming it."⁷ Battle was the central act of war; destruction of the opponent's fleet in offensive action through decisive battle was the goal of correct naval strategy. But what happened to the decisive battle against the only opponent we had planned to meet? The opponent withdrew from confrontation for non-military reasons despite having an impressive fleet. There was no offensive action to end the Cold War; to achieve containment required a defensive strategy⁸: deny the adversary the advantage

of gathering countries to its orbit. Protection of the sea lines of communication is also a defensive act. If we pursued a defensive strategy to victory then the antithesis of Mahanian strategy was utilized. Our "victory" was in violation of immutable principles.

Mahan, through his enchantment with Jomini, teaches that war is an absolute with battle the central act of war. War was Mahan's way of acquiring colonies and markets. If war is an absolute, then it must exist in and of itself; it is a universal constant in the philosophical sense. The concept is absurd, if not defeatable, by showing that it is a product of tension produced by many factors; it is not produced *ex nihil*.

An important, but little noticed, Mahanian concept is the use of general maritime shipping contributing to naval power. A large commercial fleet, plying the world's oceans in international trade, is necessary for economic strength as well as naval strength. But American shipping has been allowed to atrophy while avowedly pursuing Mahanian maritime strategy. Unbelievably, there are no oceangoing merchant ships under construction in the United States today.⁹ General Duane H. Cassidy, the former Commander in Chief of the U.S. Transportation Command, stated that ". . . the largest trading nation in the world, now has a merchant marine that carries only 4% of our foreign oceangoing trade."¹⁰ If our naval leadership has espoused Mahanian principles, then fully half of the strategy has been non-existent!

Today's maritime strategy is predicated upon an unworkable and incomplete theory. Mahan's theory of naval power lacks philosophical cohesiveness and violates some the immutable principles he established. Through neglect or economic factors, a good portion of the total requirement for naval power is missing (in the form of general shipping). If the strategy is currently unworkable and philosophically wrong, then the strategy should be

considered inappropriate for now and the next century. A change in the maritime strategy is overdue.

CHAPTER II

THE MARITIME CHALLENGE

A highly recommended reading regarding our naval strategy is "The Way Ahead," an article by the current Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. It discusses an evolving strategy *focusing on regional contingencies* shifting ". . . the national security strategy from containing the Soviet Union to maintaining global stability.¹ The reason we are in a quandary today is because of our overarching focus upon a particular threat--the Soviet Union. Their perceived retirement from potential conflict has created a "threat vacuum." We have postulated that, in their absence, regional instability is the threat to global stability.

True maritime strategy must reflect an inductive process--for induction is about the orderliness of the world. From Bertrand Russell we learned that the relationships between general laws and particular cases demonstrates ". . . if the general law is true, the particular case must also be true, whereas the particular case may be true without the general law being true."² In short, *global stability includes regional stability but you can have regional stability without global stability*. No matter which level of strategy is pursued, national or operational, the regional maritime strategy has application.

The problem with arriving at maritime strategy to now has been based upon its reliance upon the analytical process; it required the same deductive process that formed the basis of Mahanian strategy. Pursuit of a maritime strategy using the inductive rationale pursues the basic order of the world whether it exists or not. The mere assumption of world order produces

generalizations which allow predictions about that order; it assumes the world is ordered and that events can be used to arrive at the solution. *The purpose behind inductive inference is prediction.* What is required is the ability to predict what will be required for global stability and develop a maritime strategy to arrive at that prediction. The same is true for the regional case. The process is applicable throughout the strategic and operational chain for prediction is about reasonable expectations.

To be most correct at this juncture in our maritime strategy we must construct a theory which achieves reasonable expectations of long-term success through predictive decision-making addressing probable (in the philosophical sense) threats. To achieve regional stability we must produce a regional strategy. Our maritime strategy for the future must be both global and regional in outlook for, by logic, they are not mutually inclusive and the same forces must achieve both ends. Further, the strategy must be interest-based predicated on the enduring interests of this nation in the face of unknown future threats. The "New World Order" can be achieved provided our vision of the future meets the challenge of prediction.

The future policy of this nation was outlined by President Bush in an address given 2 August 1990 in Aspen, Colorado. The President described a policy based on deterrence, forward presence, crisis response and, new to most people, force reconstitution. The policy outlined by the Commander-in-Chief must be supported by the naval forces working in concert with the other services. To do this, *our maritime strategy must contain all four aspects of the policy as well as contain the capability to participate in joint and combined operations.*

Because of our almost-island geographical design and strategic outlook, we have long relied on world-wide lines of communication for our well-being. Vulnerability of those lines

of communication must be addressed and their use protected. For this reason, the framers of our Constitution determined that naval power must be *maintained* for that purpose. Maritime strength will protect our lines of communication for the international commerce upon which our economy, and that of much of the world, depends. Sea control is required to attain the levels of commerce desired by this nation as well as preclude assault upon our shores. What will be required will be globally capable maritime power with emphasis on regional application. Maritime strategy must contribute to the President's overall "gameplan."

Since the end of World War II the policy of containment has dictated our strategy. It created the forces in place today. The mission has been containment of the Communist threat. But the reality of today sees a change in the containment theory for the threat facing the "New World Order" is not so much the Communist threat from the Soviet Union or China as the global economic effects, cultural friction, nationalism and instability caused by Third World countries in regional situations. If, as noted earlier, the containment strategy was defensive and, by definition *reactive*, then what we must establish is a strategy that emphasizes *limited proaction* which may be considered defensively offensive. According to Linton Brooks, the "hole" in our current strategy is non-Soviet threats with the "hole" becoming larger as time passes.³ We cannot continue to operate as before. The focus of our interests has changed and our response must reflect that change. The maritime strategy must become proactively oriented.

Regional concerns are not solely restricted to the Third World. The vast disparity of wealth, opportunity, cultures and resources strike most continents of the world. Regional unrest, or in some cases, the propensity for unrest, can be found in the Middle East, East

Asia, South Asia, South America, Africa and Europe. *Each region faces different stressors to its stability; there can be no one solution or panacea for resolution of conflict.* In some cases it is merely an economic problem; in others it is the growth of democratic movements and cultural disparities. The United States is faced with a multitude of dilemmas in meeting or assisting with these problems. We can no longer underwrite economic changes without foregoing domestic assistance. The simple bi-polar world of yesterday has given way to a world of interests pulling in opposite ways to achieve purely national desires.

What will be required is an adroit and vigilant use of national power regionally applied. The political instability long confronting the world is now of a new character; it is a politico-religious instability exacerbated by demographic concerns. The nations of the world are becoming members of only two camps: the "haves" and "have-nots." For many nations, survival will only be achieved through tumultuous change with little regard for the consequences for life cannot be worse after conflict than it was before. American diplomatic, economic and military power will be needed to overcome the greatest threat to the world--instability and economic pressure. Naval forces must be suitable for the political and military confrontations of the future.

The President's policy statement for the future determined that forward presence would be a requirement. However, negotiated treaties such as the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) will impact upon our long held ideas of forward defense through forward basing. Further, the same nationalistic fervor that drives a nation to seek self-fulfillment will drive U.S. forces from their bases. The reduction of forward bases, whether by domestic or foreign pressure, produces the same result--the inability to have forces located where possibly needed

to properly meet time constraints imposed for their use. The reduction in bases, without a reduction in commitments, necessitates the use of *forward deployed* and *forward deployable* forces. According to Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery, "It is essential to relate what is strategically desirable to what is tactically possible with the forces at your disposal."⁴ For the operational commander to achieve regional stability through forward presence he must forward deploy forces in an expeditionary manner. This can only be achieved through naval capability.

Likewise, to meet the requirement for regional crisis response entails forces capable of rapidly intervening in areas of potential conflict to stabilize or restrict budding crises or, failing that, to quickly achieve national interests through the use of force. "There will be no 'central' front."⁵ The ability to reinforce regional alliances directly or indirectly, or protect American interests in a specific country or region, requires a mobile, credible, and sustainable force. Such a force must be expeditionary by nature. The only forces logically capable of such action are naval forces.

Force reconstitution is the ability to draw upon forces-in-waiting and achieve the mass required in protracted theater warfare. It will be particularly important as we drawdown our current force levels to the Congressionally mandated levels. There must be a method to reconstitute forces engaged by a combination of reserves and/or National Guard units. It also entails the capability to transport, protect enroute, and supply the forces necessary to achieve national objectives. The forces of tomorrow must rely on ocean transport for heavy equipment and logistical support, as well as naval support for operations ashore. In Operation Desert Storm, for example, 96 percent of U.S. equipment traveled by sea. Further, according to our naval

leadership, fully half of the world's population lives within fifty miles of a coastline.⁶ It will be naval power that will bridge the littoral areas of the world allowing the armed forces of the United States to properly respond to future regional crises.

Naval forces and naval strategy are the linchpin in achieving the President's future policy objectives. Our nation's future regional focus places an *emphasis upon mobility over fixed installations*. Forces available to the regional commander must be capable of world-wide function, efficient in their construct, and capable of force projection across the spectrum of warfare. What will be required is dedication to the ". . . missions and roles which exploit joint capabilities . . ." ⁷ The rising cost of fielding technologically advanced and well maintained forces necessitates our future maritime strategy ". . . have a fundamental appreciation for what other services can bring to the fight." ⁸ Truly mobile forces can resolve timing and synchronization problems taking advantage of "windows of opportunity" afforded by events. Much as the German army lost Kursk because of its delay to reinforce⁹, so too can the regional commander lose the initiative waiting for the proper force to arrive from a fixed installation. Regionally oriented joint forces will be required capable of meeting conflict over the spectrum of conflict, ensuring stability necessary for properly channeled change and growth throughout the world. It will be a unique challenge for the threat has few historical precedents.

CHAPTER III

THE THREAT

For those used to identifying "the threat" as some tangible, menacing visage garbed in the uniform of a Soviet bloc nation, the future will indeed be unsettling. The threats facing the world of tomorrow are not so neatly wrapped nor easily explained. Because of their new nature, the maritime strategy must be capable of reacting to what may seem nebulous concepts for the use of naval force. Basically, the threat we face is the product of *change*. The threats will be ideological, social, demographic, economic and environmental. Each will be multiplied in severity by geographic concerns which affect our capability to respond in a timely and efficient manner.

Since the mid-1930's we have posited the causes of internal conflict upon intolerable gaps between the distributed social and political power within a culture. Today it is change that creates conflict. "The more rapid the rate of social change becomes, the greater the likelihood of intrasocietal violence."¹ Poverty exacerbates the situation. The benefit of the communications revolution has given the world a polarity between the "haves" and "have-nots." It has created a gap which ". . . constitutes the most important single necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the occurrence of internal social conflict on a large scale."²

The threat facing U.S. interests is not so much the Soviet Union as the instability caused by growing pains within various regions of the world. The effect of the growing pains can close vital seaways necessary for commerce, depriving the nation of vital resources necessary for our survival, terrorism for propaganda advantage, territorial aggrandizement to ease over-

population and insufficient resources for self-support, and the rise of nationalism. Nations, which to now have seemed minor players on the world stage, have the potential to economically hamstring the Industrial World. The proliferation of modern weapons has given underdeveloped nations the capability to wage war on scales unheard of ten years ago. The days of putting down an insurrection with impunity have gone. The next millennia will see advanced weaponry across the spectrum of conflict.

A nation in turmoil cannot help but have an effect upon trade, particularly if the strife torn area controls or threatens a vital chokepoint. Trade infringements or market closure caused by strife can hamper the transfer of valuable resources we need for survival. Forecasts of future trade indicate that ". . .the U.S. dependence on oil imports is projected to increase from 38 percent today to 55 percent by the year 2000."³ Further, ". . . the United States is dependent on third-world sources for certain critical elements such as cobalt, chromium and silicon . . ."⁴ We are an internationally dependent nation.

The control of terrorism is a never-ending theme. Terrorism will remain a tool for those groups or individuals lacking the funds for conventional armed conflict or desiring instant media recognition. The destabilizing effects of terrorism are a threat to regional and world peace. As populations grow, so do the tools and targets of terrorism.

Unchecked population growth will quickly strip nations of their capability to sustain themselves within their borders. Within the next century, non-renewable resources such as oil, water, and arable land will become the *raison d'être* for war. Nations overtaken by the burden of starving, disadvantaged populations have nothing to lose through wars of territorial gain. Nations that experience little or no increase in wealth but sustain large increases in

population are doomed to increasingly austere lives. Despots seeking a resolution to internal stressors have little to lose and much to gain through wars of opportunism.

The recent rebirth of nationalism seems almost reminiscent of pre-World War I Europe. While pride in one's nation is a good thing, rampant nationalism fosters tension. The increasingly international nature of communications and social interaction, economic interdependence, and cooperative security arrangements are threatened by nations with improperly channeled nationalism. While we have negotiated the closure of bases in Europe to accommodate the chance of peace between the two superpowers, other countries have asked us to leave because of their nationalistic desires to "go it alone" or attempt growth without the "overwatch" of the U.S. In both cases, the net result has been the closure of bases affording us a *forward presence* through forces located where possibly needed to properly meet time constraints imposed for their use. While the bases have gone, the threats remain.

The threat created by the proliferation of drugs, and the cartels responsible for their life-cycle, affects the moral and social fiber of a nation, its economy through flight of capital, and the undermining of the infrastructure of a nation through graft, corruption and intimidation. All nations face the threat of this regionally based but globally transmitted disease. While not portrayed as a "real war" in the Clausewitzian sense, it presents a "clear and present danger"⁵ to the future of all nations--their younger generations.

None of the threats elucidated above are what we have prepared ourselves to meet over the last four decades. Somehow we neglected the advice of such people as George F. Kennan who stated in 1954, "The day of total war has passed . . . From now on limited military operations are the only ones which could conceivably serve any useful purpose."⁶ B. H.

Liddell Hart may have been ahead of his time when he stated, "Campaigns of this kind are likely to continue because they fit the conditions of the modern age and at the same time are well suited to take advantage of social discontent, racial ferment, and nationalistic fervor."⁷ The next four decades present challenges which we have never faced before. The military response must become appropriate to the particular conditions and aims to be achieved within a region or country. Regional forces will be required to meet conflict and ensure stability allowing properly channeled change. For tomorrow's theater commander, it is naval forces which will be the most responsive and capable of meeting the spectrum of conflict across the spectrum of geography. Naval forces are the key to successful joint force operations.

CHAPTER IV

MARITIME STRATEGY AND REGIONAL CONFLICT

The maritime strategy must be redefined in terms of naval presence, sea control, power projection and interoperability protecting our national interests globally and regionally. There are three settings in which one can fight limited wars or suppress conflicts. In general terms these are in the *maritime setting* (mostly at sea), the *littoral setting* (land and sea), and the *continental* (mostly on land). Every Commander-in-Chief of a unified command has all three settings within or abutting his area of responsibility. Each area should be met with a strategic view of how we perceive the threat to unfold and the response to meet that threat. But the interesting manner in which the three settings evolve lend themselves to be dealt with by naval forces, joint forces, and continental forces. The maritime strategy should deal with the maritime setting, share in the littoral setting and support the continental setting. The spectrum of warfare is thus covered by a spectrum of naval options through a spectrum of geography.

Within the maritime setting, the current use of American battle groups for naval presence remains an enduring mission. "Naval forces have been the 'force of choice'," said former Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Carlisle A. H. Trost, "because they enjoy the unique advantage of being able to signal commitment and intent--and, if necessary, menace--without violating other nations' sovereignty and, once the need is past depart without signalling retreat."¹ The deployed nature of the fleet ensures a naval presence wherever the regional commanders so dictate. Tied to diplomatic efforts, naval forces have historically demonstrated their utility. According to Senator John S. McCain, "We have used military force well over

200 times since the end of World War II. . . Between 1945 and 1989 . . . we used seapower 187 times."² There is nothing to lead us to believe that the future will be less dependent on naval presence. Our maritime strategy must continue to provide this valuable capability to the nation.

Sea control is the province of naval forces. The recent addition of U.S. Air Force B-52G aircraft to the maritime mission is an important adjunct to the maritime setting but it is a supporting role for the naval forces. We must remember that we are a maritime nation. We have long held to the principle that "without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive."³ The world's sea lanes, the highways of international commerce and communication, are the lifeblood of our nation. As a nation that relies on all points of the compass for its trade, it must rely on its lines of communication for economic and material well-being. As stated earlier, our founding fathers mandated we maintain a navy for that purpose. The Navy/Marine Corps team is that naval power.

The maritime strategy for the future must utilize the available naval expeditionary forces as the forward deployed element of the nation's power for *operations mostly at sea*. It is most effective in the traditional sea control role and capable of unsupported operations against island or peninsular nations. Regions such as Oceania, are conducive to application of naval power in a maritime strategy. For such conflicts the Navy/Marine Corps team needs to continue to operate as a single unit as the force of choice in the maritime setting.

Littoral warfare is the bridge between land and sea. To be successful, it must exploit full combat power should continental wars develop. For the operational commander to realistically achieve strategic success, he must have ". . . the widest possible variety of solid, capable

tactical possibilities from which to choose."⁴ The maritime strategy must effectively *share the joint capability* available to regional commanders. Naval power applied to littoral areas, establishing forward air and naval bases, will permit the building of combat power and mass, as well as logistic support areas for extended operations ashore. If, as stated earlier, over fifty percent of the world lives in littoral areas, and our strategy must reflect the reasonable expectation that certain events will occur, *the propensity for future conflict will exist in the littoral regime*. Littoral warfare must be a balanced action or operation bridging land and sea. Because the bridge is "constructed" by forward deployed sea-borne forces, the maritime strategy should be the basis for the development of a joint littoral doctrine and strategy.

Most of this nation's interests lie in littoral areas.⁵ It would seem if operations in the littoral setting require balanced action between land and sea, the key to any future success lies in our ability to solve the problems of littoral warfare. The ability to focus deployed power of a credible nature serves to deter precipitous action leading to instability or conflict. Proactive force that serves to deter meets the tenet of Clausewitz that in cases where "results have been produced by the mere possibility of an engagement; the possibility has acquired reality."⁶ In any conflict, the operational commander must constantly strive for the successful termination of that conflict on terms favorable to the U.S.⁷ "Ultimately, for such termination to be successful, there must be ground forces on the scene or clearly perceived as potentially available by the enemy."⁸ The ability to field tailored forces, capable of rapid adjustment, operating from secure sea-based installations, is the solution to vulnerable, dwindling, and often politically counter-productive bases ashore. Properly designed expeditionary forces can provide the sought after deterrent strength as well as a tool available to the operational commander for conflict

termination. In littoral areas the initial ground forces are the Marine Corps: a tailored maritime force without equal.

Naval warfare must design the operational art and platforms to support littoral operations. There must exist the capability to produce a seamless continuum of target detection, command and control, air support, naval and artillery gunfire, and logistical support throughout the littoral boundary. These systems must be able to blend into the capabilities of joint forces assigned as the operation progresses. The growing sophistication of weapon systems in Third World nations requires littoral forces to be covered by accurate, long range, responsive and lethal naval weapons; the littoral forces must, in turn, shield sea-based platforms from land-based attacks.

The extension of the lethality of naval power into the littoral will be a combination of technologically advanced weapons and sensors coupled with maneuver warfare and ground-based guidance. As crisis intervention, limited conflict, or small wars are manpower-intensive operations, technology must be pursued to support the strategy and offset the reduction of combat power historically provided by large numbers of Marines. Technology has made it possible for smaller numbers of troops to occupy larger areas of space.⁹ Because of the mobility required, fewer fixed installations or large troop concentrations will be provided for opposing forces to attack. The combination of long-range lethal guided weapons, small units in maneuver warfare, and technologically superior sensors, communications and short-range weapons, will provide the opposing forces a dilemma. Any massing of opposing forces will draw his destruction; failure to mass forces requires combat at a numerical disadvantage overcome only through long-range weapons; and long-range weapons are ineffective against

small maneuvering units while use of those weapons, through their launch signatures, attracts lethal counter-fire. As joint forces are integrated into the scenario, the dilemma increases. Introduction of joint forces, capitalizing on what they bring to the fight, allows the seizure of more terrain and, eventually, the transition to continental warfare.

Joint force littoral operations have endless capabilities and options. For just a quick example, vertical assault by MV-22 or helicopter-borne Marine Corps forces and Army parachute units, such as the 82nd Airborne Division, operating concurrently with amphibious operations and naval air and gunfire, can quickly seize key objectives. Once uncovered, Army light divisions and Air Force squadrons can move to exploit the advantage. The use of prepositioned material can allow the quick entry of Army mechanized or armored forces further increasing the combat power ashore. Timed correctly, shock, surprise, mass, force and the spirit of attack will overwhelm hostile defensive forces allowing forward deployed units to be augmented and relieved by forward deployable units regionally available. A joint balanced action bridging land and sea is the culmination of national forces tailored for future conflict and led by an expansive maritime strategy.

Transition to continental warfare is a transition from an active role to supporting role for naval forces. Thus, the maritime strategy must subscribe to the *support of armies engaged*. Various methods of support are available. For Navy units, fast sealift and protection of the sea lines of communication will certainly be required; the use of naval aviation and cruise missiles against high value targets to support fire and maneuver ashore may be required. For Marine Corps forces it may be support through service as a strategic reserve, blocking force, or aviation support, or use of the amphibious capability to tie down forces through the

threat of use. For naval forces, as a whole, it may require use of the fleet as a blocking force, the imposition of a blockade, or use as a maneuver element to strike as the commander may dictate to exploit gains or relieve pressure on engaged continental forces. "To maintain stability, we must be able to influence events on land. . . ." ¹⁰ The maritime strategy must be capable of supporting our national objectives in a continental setting.

The current reduction of U.S. forces means we must use our naval forces in smarter and more visionary ways. It further places a greater burden on force reconstitution for all services, particularly the naval element. Force reconstitution entails sufficient assets to enable the regional commander to rotate forces deployed as well as a viable means to replace casualties. Because of the rapid pace of modern warfare, it may no longer be feasible to do "man-for-man" or ship-for-ship replacements; what will be required is the capability to replace units. This method of force reconstitution places a great reliance upon a *trained* reserve. For the naval element which will be responsible for the bulk carriage, maritime protection, and delivery of the activated Reserve and National Guard units augmenting the regional forces engaged, fully prepared reserve vessels must be ready to assume theater duties in a timely manner. The naval expeditionary forces must have a "spread-loaded" *total force concept* to meet these future demands. Power and force can be applied in the future through sharper focus on our naval forces and acceptance of the capabilities inherent within the other services and reserve structure. Naval power, as defined in a future maritime strategy, can thus achieve success across the spectrum of warfare as fought across the spectrum of geography through a spectrum of naval options.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

As the United States prepares to enter the third millennia, new threats are emerging which require the reappraisal of the method in which we respond to conflict. Our global strategy, developed through the concept of containment, must give way to a regional focus. Campaigns of the future will be centered on countering threats in regional scenarios with specific regionally unique problems. The maritime strategy must be broad enough for global application but specific enough to deal with the emerging reality of the "The New World Order." Highly focused conflicts, conducted with limited forces in limited geographical regions achieving limited aims, are the *avant garde* arenas for tomorrow's warriors. The emerging threats of cultural friction, economic change and instability--tied to rising nationalism, demographic problems and non-renewable resources--are the sparks of change which will ignite conflict.

Because of the change in forward basing brought about through diplomatic and political action, as well as change in foreign sentiment regarding American presence, the future will require forces to be forward deployed and forward deployable to meet threats to U.S. interests. The only foreseeable method this can be accomplished is through naval presence. Once deployed, the response to regional conflict can be met through a maritime strategy that is capable of capitalizing on the expeditionary nature in the application of military power. But our current maritime strategy is a global orientation flowing from a Mahanian vision of naval power. Reality, and the future nature of conflict, requires a new vision for maritime force. Our maritime strategy must capitalize upon the unique nature of our maritime forces which

must remain "...strong, flexible, mobile, and ready to carry out a broad spectrum of missions virtually anywhere in the world."¹

The maritime strategy for the future must, therefore, be capable of the following: devised to meet reasonably expected events, regionally applicable, globally capable, and devised to support warfare in the maritime, littoral, and continental scenarios. The operational commanders of our regional commands must be able to draw upon the naval forces to meet threats without historical precedent as they occur in their theaters of responsibility. It is a challenge without parallel for our naval leadership. It requires a vision not unlike that of Corbett and Mahan as we embark upon the Twenty-First Century. Maritime strategy with a regional focus is not only realistic but, more importantly, truly reflective of the policy presented by President Bush in providing deterrence, forward presence, crisis response and force reconstitution in meeting the "threat vacuum" we have been bequeathed from the demise of the Cold War. It is the bridge to the future and the bridge to a regional focus from a global mindset. It would be well for us to remember the words of Michael Carver:

"The sad fact of life is that, if evil is not resisted, it will prevail. That is the justification for the use of force to deter, and if necessary, defeat those who turn to it to further their own ends, the justification for maintaining in the service of the community and the state, forces who are trained, skilled and well-equipped to meet that challenge when and wherever it arises."²

NOTES

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