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COALITION WARFARE:
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NAVAL OPERATIONAL COMMANDER
IN THE WAY AHEAD

by

Mark S. Woolley

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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: *Mark S. Woolley*

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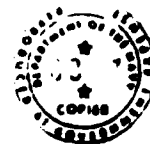


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
ABSTRACT	11
I INTRODUCTION	1
II ELEMENTS OF COALITION WARFARE	5
Political Objectives	5
Command and Control	9
Interoperability	12
Summary	15
III IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NAVAL OPERATIONAL COMMANDER	16
Pax America	16
A Different World Order	20
IV CONCLUSIONS	23
NOTES	26
BIBLIOGRAPHY	29

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COALITION WARFARE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The new National Security Strategy states:

Increasingly we may find ourselves in situations in which our interests are congruent with those nations not tied to us by formal treaties. As in the Gulf, we may be acting in hybrid coalitions that include not only our traditional allies but also nations with whom we do not have a mature history of diplomatic and military cooperation or, indeed, even a common political or moral outlook.¹

These ad hoc hybrid coalitions will be as much a necessity as they are a choice, because in future conflicts it will be important to win regional as well as international support. The former type of support will be required if we are to be afforded the opportunity to deploy from advanced bases. The latter support will be important not only to gain international legitimacy, but also to take focus away from U.S. involvement through the involvement of other forces. Additionally, as we draw down U.S. naval strength, we will need support from our traditional allies to supply the assets which we are unable to buy in the breadth and depth which are required to meet the spectrum of possible conflicts. Case in point is the recent Persian Gulf conflict. Not only did we rely on Saudi Arabia for advance bases at which to stage forces, but we also sought international legitimacy and support through the U.N. resolutions, and required the minesweeping assets and expertise from Great Britain and other Western European nations.

If then, these ad hoc hybrid coalitions are to be



increasingly characteristic in future conflicts, as our national strategy shifts from global commitment against a single threat to a global commitment against a number of regional threats, what are the implications for the naval operational commander?² Are there any underlying elements of coalition warfare and how do they pertain to maritime forces in an ad hoc coalition?

There is a abundant amount of material concerning coalition warfare as it pertains to land forces. However, when researching naval aspect of coalition warfare the material tends to be much more fragmented. I perceive two reasons for this. First, the coordination of combined land forces is a much more complicated and difficult business. Just the sheer magnitude of forces involved tends to be greater when dealing with multinational land forces than with maritime forces. Second, the consequences for coalition land forces failing to effectively coordinate their military, as well as political, economic, and diplomatic strategies is usually much more severe.

It would be tempting to just examine the recent Gulf conflict and draw conclusions about naval coalition warfare. Nonetheless, U.S. Naval history is replete with examples of naval coalition warfare, and it has yet to be determined whether the Gulf War was an aberration or a harbinger for future conflicts.

Indeed the U.S. Navy has its roots in coalition warfare. During the War for American independence, having the French as an ally tipped the scales for the Americans by eventually forcing the British to contend with the French, Spanish, and Dutch naval



forces, as well as the American Navy and privateers.³ And, in the Quasi War with France from 1798 to 1801, the American Navy found itself cooperating closely with the British Navy to counter the French privateering of American ships.

But, it was the involvement of American Naval forces with the eight nation multinational force during the Chinese Boxer Rebellion in 1900 that really marks the genesis of our navy's participation in ad hoc hybrid coalitions. This experience, our subsequent involvement in two world wars and the Korean War, and our experience operating within alliances during the Cold War, provides us with a basis for examining coalition warfare.

Although the Iran and Iraq Tanker War and the recent Gulf War has surfaced the problems of naval coalition warfare, these are not new or unique problems. However, they have been minimized since World War II by our participation in N.A.T.O. and other multinational/bilateral alliances where agreements and doctrine are well established. Therefore, rather than concentrate on the lessons learned from the recent Gulf conflict, history provides a basis for establishing underlying elements of coalition warfare as they pertain to U.S. Naval forces. For as is more often the case than not, the U.S. Navy's involvement in multinational conflicts has been characterized by ad hoc coalitions vice formal alliances, and unity of purpose vice unity of command (Table I).

TABLE I

U.S. NAVY INVOLVEMENT IN COALITION CONFLICTS/WARS

CONFLICT/WAR	COALITION	OPPOSITION	ALLIANCE	UNIFIED (a)
American Revolution	France Spain Netherlands	Britain	Only with France	NO
Quasi War	Britain	France	NO	NO
Boxer Rebellion	Britain France Italy Japan	Austria Germany Russia China	NO	NO
World War I	Britain France Italy	Germany Austria Japan	NO	NO (b)
World War II	ALLIES: Britain France U.S.S.R	Axis: Germany Italy Japan	YES	YES
Korean War	U.N. Forces	North Korea	YES (UN)	YES (UN)
Cuban Missile Crisis	O.A.S	Cuba USSR	YES (OAS)	YES
Iran-Iraq Escort/ Minesweeping Ops	Britain France Italy Belgium Netherlands	Iraq Iran	NO	NO
Desert Shield/Storm	Argentina Australia Belgium Canada Germany Greece Kuwait Netherlands Norway Portugal Britain Denmark France Poland Saudi Arabia	Iraq	NO	NO

*Refers to unified command for naval forces

°There was a unified command for U.S. and British operating in European Waters.

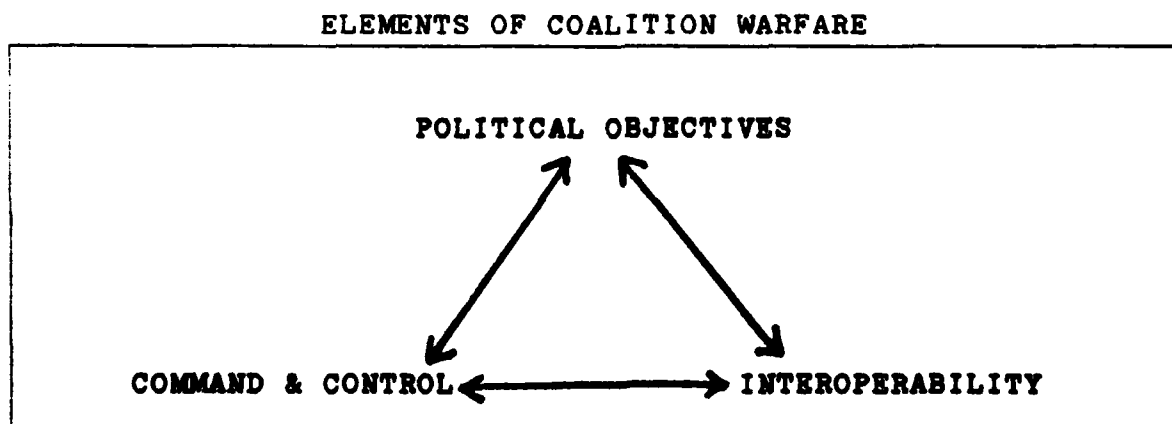
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CHAPTER II
ELEMENTS OF NAVAL COALITION WARFARE

Examining the combined naval operations in both formal alliances and ad hoc naval coalitions three major elements appear to continuously interact with each other and influence the operational commander: The political objectives of the coalition members; the command and control structure; and interoperability.

Figure 1



POLITICAL OBJECTIVES.

The primacy of politics in war is well established and must be remembered at the operational level as well as the strategic level. Clausewitz tells us policy "will permeate all military operations and, in so far as their violent nature will admit, it will have a continuous influence on them."⁴ The implication here is that not only must the operational commander consider the national objectives of his own country, but he must consider the



national objectives for each coalition member. General Jacob Devers points out when discussing combined operations in World War Two, "No two nations will ever have aspirations so similar as to develop no conflicts of views."⁵

Our participation in the Boxer Rebellion is an example of this. As closely as we cooperated with the seven other foreign powers in China to rescue the Peking legations and protect foreign lives and property, there was nevertheless a divergence of views due to different aspirations.⁶ While acknowledging foreign "spheres of influence" in China, the U.S. viewed many of the foreign actions surrounding the response to the Boxer rebellion as subversive to our "Open Door Policy."⁶

Nonetheless, Admiral Kempff, the senior U.S. commander, in responding to the threat posed by the Boxers was able to minimize the jealousies between the foreign powers themselves, and the differences between the U.S., who wanted to preserve an independent China, and the foreign powers that wanted to use the Boxer Rebellion as a means to increase their territorial gains in China. Realizing the protection of all the foreign legations in Peking would require a combined action, he (and later Captain

⁵The seven other nations that had forces in China were: Britain, Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia.

⁶The "Open Door Policy" recognized spheres of influence, but in order to preserve an independent China requested foreign powers acknowledge continued administrative control from Peking in these areas. Additionally this policy aimed to minimize discriminatory trade practices in these spheres. William Reynolds Braisted, The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1897-1909 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958), p. 78.



McCalla, head of the U.S. landing party) convinced the foreign commanders to agree that in case of emergency they would act together to relieve the Peking legations.⁷

Thus an appeal to the "common broad objective" or unity of purpose can minimize differences in the political objectives of coalition members.⁴ The appeal to a "common broad objective" can also minimize, though not eliminate, the extent to which political differences permeate the operational forces.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Rear Admiral Tyree, commander of the combined quarantine task force astutely demonstrated this. When warships from Argentina and Venezuela arrived to participate in the quarantine operations, recognizing that their respective governments had severed diplomatic relations with each other, the Admiral suggested at the reception conference that, "Seamen need not concern themselves with politics but could fight together as free men in the defense of the hemisphere."⁸

Even where the "common broad objective" is readily accepted by all the coalition members, differences in national objectives will affect operational aspects, particularly: the size and type of naval forces contributed; and the degree to which a foreign naval force contributes to the overall objective. Although the

⁴General Devers in discussing major problems in combined operations suggests that although there may be conflicts in views, "Allied Forces in war will accept the common broad objective without question,..." Jacob L. Devers, "Major Problems Confronting A Theater Commander In Combined Operations," Military Review, October 1947, p. 5.



Gulf War immediately comes to mind, especially when discussing the limited contributions of the Germans and the Japanese forces due to constraints imposed by their constitutions, the Italian contribution to combined naval effort in the Mediterranean during World War One also provides a worthwhile example.

The Italian Navy accepted the fact that the destruction of the Axis submarine threat was essential to winning the naval war in the Mediterranean. However, throughout the war she was unwilling to contribute crucial destroyers and torpedo boats to the Ortranto anti-submarine barrage at the mouth of the Adriatic (an Italian zone of responsibility); she felt to do so would damage her other interests. Specifically Italy wanted to hold her fleet ready to destroy the Austrian fleet in the case of an eventual break-out, and to support her army's drive toward the East along the Gulf of Trieste. Italy believed that these two conditions must be met if she was to achieve her national objectives of being the preeminent post war power in the Adriatic, and expanding her eastern frontier.⁹

This demonstrates that unity of purpose in and by itself is not sufficient--unity of effort is also required to support the 'common broad objective.' The American Planning Section at the London headquarters of Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Operating in European Waters, which was organized with the express purpose of increasing allied cooperation certainly recognized this. In a memorandum in 1918 they specifically discussed the importance of 'concentration of effort and unity of action':



These conditions are necessary for the successful prosecution of war, and are especially so in the anti-submarine campaign, where the maximum effort of all allies is essential, and where escort requirements have led to a great dispersal of force.¹⁰

Command and Control.

The command and control organization and process will be determined principally by the political objectives, both domestic and foreign, of the individual coalition members. Although a unified command usually minimizes coordination problems and promotes unity of effort as well as unity of purpose, for two major reasons it may be in the best interests of coalition members to retain national control of their forces.

First, especially in the case of smaller third world countries, a government may want to avoid appearing as a 'puppet' of a larger country. Arab nationalistic pride certainly was factored in the Gulf War command structure which was based on cooperation and mutual support vis-a-vis a unified command.

Another reason countries may be hesitant to relinquish operational control of their forces to a unified commander is that nations maybe fearful that their national objectives could be jeopardized in such an arrangement.

Surely the Italian refusal to submit to a unified naval command in the Mediterranean during World War One was predicated on a desire not to compromise her own national objectives. Each time the suggestion was made at an allied naval conference, Italy perceived this as an attempt to supplant her influence in the



Adriatic region and nullify territorial assurances granted by the Treaty of London.¹¹ This perception was still prevalent some 20 years later after World War Two, when Captain A. Ginocchetti, Royal Italian Navy, wrote:

Above all it was desired to take command of the Adriatic out of our [Italy's] hands...., the Allies probably intended to take from us the preeminent position that we had been allowed to assume in the Adriatic and, once our prestige and participation in the final victory had been diminished, to create a situation which would justify ample revision of the solemnly sanctioned pact.¹²

Given that there is unity of purpose and effort, is there a requirement for unity of command when participating with multinational naval forces in a hybrid ad hoc coalition? Is unity of command even feasible given the potential diversity of interests and the forces involved?

There is no simple answer to this. Colonel Summers in his critical analysis of the Gulf War argues that 'unity of effort' is what the principle of unity of command is all about.¹³ However, I would suggest that the answer largely depends on nature of the conflict and the threat. In a low conflict environment such as the Boxer Rebellion, Iran-Iraq tanker escort operations, or the Maritime Interception Force (MIF) during Operation Desert Shield, close cooperation can achieve the objectives just as well as a unified command. This is supported by Admiral Mauz, Commander Naval Force Central Command, who indicated the maritime interception operations were working very effectively without a common commander.¹⁴

But, as Captain Richard Sharpe, R.N. points out in the



foreword to Jane's Fighting Ships 1991-1992, although workable for a blockade scenario this is a somewhat inefficient command system that could have disastrous consequences in war.¹⁵ In high-intensity conflicts, such as Desert Storm, or when there is the potential for dramatic escalation, as was the case in the Cuban Missile Crisis a unity of command should be sought.

But even though there was not a unified naval commander in the Gulf, Lieutenant General John Cushman points out, the U.S. provided by far the largest share of the assets and was the 'de facto drafter and coordinator of political and strategic directions.'¹⁶ Therefore even though a unified command may not be formally agreed to by the coalition members, there maybe a 'de facto operational commander' by virtue of one country providing the lion's share of the naval assets.

The 'de facto operational commander' situation is also evident in the Mediterranean in World War One. It had been formally agreed that the French would have overall responsibility for coordinating the naval operations in the Mediterranean, while the British would direct naval operations in all other areas.¹⁷ However, it was the British who were providing the majority of the patrol and escort ships in the Mediterranean by 1917, and throughout the war the British steadily chipped away at French command. 'They did so first in the Aegean at the Dardanelles

¹⁷This agreement was made at a naval convention in August 1914. At a subsequent naval convention concluded in May 1915 the French retained control of the Mediterranean with the exception of the Adriatic, which was to be under Italian command.



campaign in 1915, and then with the establishment of a British commander in chief at Malta to play a leading role in anti-submarine warfare." 17

INTEROPERABILITY.

Effective combined operations, be they under a unified command or based on close coordination and mutual support, require a high degree of interoperability. Without it the danger exists of erroneously attacking friendly forces, wasting valuable and perhaps scarce resources through diversity of effort, and violating the principle of economy of force.¹⁷

Interoperability involves much more than resolving equipment incompatibility or attempting commonality in signals and communications. It also involves: Rules of Engagement (ROE) and doctrinal differences; the level of training and experience of other forces and their commanders; cultural differences, such as language, customs, religion, and ethics; logistical support; and personalities of the commander."¹⁸

¹⁷"At the operational and tactical levels, the principle of economy of force requires that minimum means be employed in areas other than where the main effort is intended to be employed." Department of the Army, Headquarters, FM-100-5: Operations (Washington, 1986), p. 175.

¹⁸Lieutenant Colonel Hixson and Dr Cooling define the following factors as mitigating against interoperability: time; mind set; differences in military organization doctrine, equipment and methodology; inexperience; personalities; national characteristics; language; and commonality of objective. John Hixson and Benjamin Franklin Cooling, Combined Operations in Peace and War, U.S. Army Military History Institute Publication, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army Military History Institute, 1982), p. 353.



Historically these problems have been solved 'on the battlefield' and/or over time.¹⁸ In Desert Shield and Desert Storm the U.S. Navy had a considerable amount of time to work out interoperability problems. Additionally, our experience in the reflagging and escort of Kuwaiti tankers in 1987-88, and the subsequent mine clearing operations, had enabled us to at least recognize important interoperability problems that might arise when coordinating multinational naval operations without having operational control.

One area of particular concern during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm was the compatibility of Rules Of Engagement (ROE). Would the various national ROEs allow the naval forces of one nation to prevent or respond to an attack other nations' naval forces that were in the vicinity? This question had previously been precipitated during the tanker escort operations and ultimately led to an expansion of the ROE by several nations to authorize commanders to respond to an attack in such a situation.¹⁹ Recognizing that there would be differences in ROE during Operations Desert Shield and Storm ships were assigned missions compatible with their ROE.²⁰

In World War One interoperability problems were worked out both over time and 'on the battlefield. Doctrinal differences with respect to the conduct of the anti-submarine warfare delayed the allies from effectively countering the submarine threat earlier. While the British favored a system based on convoy, escort, and dispersed routes, the French favored a system of



fixed patrolled routes. These differences along with the British view that more escorts could not be relieved from duty with the Grand Fleet, prevented the allies from adopting the convoy system until late 1917.

Another interoperability problem is the level of training and experience of the various naval forces. This will influence the extent to which these forces can be integrated into a unified command or be expected to cooperate in the absence of a unified command.

A contemporary example of this, in which third world navies were successfully incorporated into a unified command, is the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Here we realized the dividends of the UNITAS exercises. These annual multinational exercises had been established and coordinated by Commander Southern Atlantic Force (ComSoLant) to 'foster the spirit of cooperation, friendship, and exchange of ideas among the navies of Latin America.'²¹ The confidence endued in these navies by these exercises made it politically, as well as militarily, possible for six Latin American navies to volunteer 11 ships to participate directly in the combined quarantine of Cuba.²² Thus interoperability not only influenced the degree that these foreign navies could be incorporated into a unified command, but also influenced the political objectives of these countries: '[to] take all measures individually and collectively, including the use of armed force' to counter the Soviet-Cuban threat.²³

From this we see that, the closer navies resemble each



other in organization, doctrine, culture and equipment, the less likely they are to have major interoperability problems.²⁴ This may be one reason the British and the American navies seem to have worked so well together in both unified and non-unified commands.

SUMMARY.

Hence, it can be deduced from the above discussion that the political objectives, the nature of command and control, and the degree to which interoperability can be achieved, are all interdependent on each other. The greater the degree of diversity in the political objectives of the individual coalition members, and/or the greater the magnitude of interoperability problems, the harder it will be to achieve unity of purpose, unity of effort, and unity of command. Conversely in the absence of unified command, there tends to be a diversity of effort, and a lesser degree of interoperability.



CHAPTER III
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NAVAL OPERATIONAL COMMANDER
IN THE WAY AHEAD

If the ad hoc hybrid coalition in the Gulf War is to be a harbinger of tomorrow's security arrangements, complementing long range treaties such as NATO, what then are the implications for the naval operational commander?²⁵ Although history may provide a model, it is a model of the past, and not necessarily a blueprint for the future.

Pax America.

President Bush emphasized in the State of the Union Address on January 29th, 1991, that the U.S. will bear a major share of the leadership in collective resistance efforts to meet aggression and brutality.²⁶ U.S. naval forces will continue to play a major part in that multinational response. For the naval operational commander this means that he will most likely be the 'de facto' commander of the coalition naval forces.

During the cold war the U.S. Navy was driven to respond to a specific threat in a bi-polar environment. Now regional concerns and political objectives are much more diverse--a situation reminiscent of pre-World War II. This will make combined naval operations a lot more problematic.

The implications are that not only does the operational commander need to be more conscious of the different political



objectives of coalition members, but his staff must be knowledgeable so these differences can be taken into account during the planning and execution phases of a operation. This is easier said than done especially when response time may be minimal. In Desert Shield we had five months to work out the details and work out sensitivities--a luxury we should not expect in the future.

Political differences and interoperability problems may make a unified command infeasible or even undesirable. Nonetheless, it should not be written off as an impossibility or as unnecessary. Nations may be willing to subordinate their forces to a greater degree of unified control than they publicly admit--especially the more serious the threat at hand.

In the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Organization of American States unanimously approved a resolution condemning the Soviet-Cuban action and calling upon its members to take all measures to protect the Western Hemisphere. They also indicated that all non-U.S. forces should be under an OAS command. However, they did not appear to object to a U.S. led combined task force, and owing to the seriousness of the threat, and the sensitivities involved with one Latin American country controlling the forces of another, these navies were quickly integrated into a combined task force, led by a U.S. commander.²⁷

In the Gulf War the British naval forces submitted to a



greater degree of control than was formally recognized.¹ The exact agreement has never been officially publicized. But, as Casper Weinberger points out when discussing cooperation in AWAC operations in the Gulf, not every arrangement should be publicized: 'To many of the Gulf leaders, a gentlemen's agreement should remain a gentlemen's agreement--it simply did not need to be advertized.'²⁸

Interoperability problems continue to be one of the hardest areas to resolve, even when competing political objectives are complementary. Combined exercises and liaison officers go a long way to identifying and working out problems. However, some problems, especially those that arise as a result of different cultures, do not easily lend themselves to a solution. For instance, if and when women are incorporated into our combatant ships, some foreign commanders may refuse to negotiate directly or indirectly with women commanders. Could we reasonably expect a commander of an Arab ship to 'take orders' from a woman commanding officer who just happened to be a warfare commander in our integrated Composite Warfare Commander (CWC) organization? There may come the day when we have a woman as a battle group commander! Do we compromise our professionalism, standards, and ethics in order to accommodate foreign naval commanders?

¹Analyst Norman Friedman claims that the U.S. had operational control of all ships in the northern Persian Gulf. Captain Richard Sharpe, RN (Ret.), supports this claiming: 'Only those navies which were prepared to assign operational control to a unified command [NAVCENT] were deployed to the northern Gulf.'



Unfortunately we don't have 'lessons learned' (as they pertain specifically to naval forces) to answer these questions.

When political objectives are too varied, interoperability problems too diverse, and unity of command unachievable are we driven to the 'zone solution'? Such a solution assigns different areas of operation to individual countries or alliances. In World War One initially 18 zones were assigned to the three different countries in the Mediterranean. Eventually this was redistributed to 11 different zones. This arrangement, however, was extremely inefficient. Differences in nationality, language, and objectives combined with an insufficient number of escorts led to gaps in convoy coverage and patrol areas especially at boundaries between zones. The end result was a significant increase in allied shipping losses in the Mediterranean in 1917.²⁹

In the Gulf War a 'zonal solution' was also developed. The U.S. Navy assumed control of forces in the Northern Persian Gulf. The Southern Gulf and Strait of Hormuz area were divided into five patrol zones by the British, Dutch, French, and Italians at a series of meetings between 10 and 14 September.³⁰ Although Admiral Mauz recognized this as a workable arrangement during for the maritime interception operations, he suggested a more formal command arrangement might be called for if a land war commenced.³¹ In this day and age of supersonic missiles, and prolific cheap high tech weaponry in the inventory of third world navies, response and cooperation have to be instantaneous. When



command authority is retained through national channels, ROE and doctrine must be complimentary to ensure effective mutual support. If this falls into the "too hard" category then the operational commander will be driven to the "zone solution" to mitigate interoperability problems.

A Different World Order?

There are both analysts and statesmen who are of the opinion that the United States can not be expected to be the world's policeman. This is supported by those who suggest that the U.S. should adopt a more semi-isolationist role, so it can concentrate on domestic and economic problems. It is beyond the scope of this paper to analyze the underlying arguments to these opinions or to debate the validity of such views. However, whether we remain in the role of "Pax America" or assume a more isolated position, there could come a time when it is to our advantage to not accept the role of the "de facto" unified commander. As multiple regional alliances emerge to replace the Cold War bipolar balance it might be in our interests, both domestic and foreign, to assume a supporting or subordinate operational position in an ad-hoc coalition. Realizing that since World War Two the United States has dominated every multinational operation in which it has participated, this would require a major change in the way the operational commander conceptualizes his role in such a combined operation.

One scenario in which a secondary role vice primary role



might be apropos for U.S. naval forces, is in an ad hoc coalition led by Confederation of Independent States (CIS) to meet aggression or respond to a threat in one of the Baltic or former Soviet Union states. Another scenario in which a secondary role for U.S. Naval forces may be appropriate would be in support of a European led coalition. As analyst Norman Friedman points out:

Indeed there is no particular reason to think the United States will continue to head a cohesive Western alliance. It is a telling, for example, that several of the European allies have suggested that command of their warships remaining in the Gulf after the war be transferred to the Western European Union...³²

In such situations, how could we ensure our interests are protected (i.e. exact a cost for our cooperation), and at the same time avoid the entanglements that are not to our interests?

One way might be by providing sea control vice power projection type forces when we participate in this capacity. This would allow us more freedom of action with respect to avoiding entanglements while also ensuring that our interests are incorporated into in the war termination.

This would be somewhat analogous to the Japanese contribution in the Mediterranean in World War One. Not having a direct interest in the Mediterranean, but wanting to expand her empire by maintaining control of former German colonies in the far east, she contributed 14 destroyers, primarily for convoy escort and anti-submarine patrol, to the former area when requested by the British. Although the Japanese government instructed the commander of these ships, Rear Admiral Kozo Sato, not to take any orders from any of the allied forces in the



Mediterranean, he was directed to work in close cooperation with the British C-in-C at Malta.³³ This assistance came at a critical time and although the Japanese only provided a small number of the escorts in the Mediterranean, post-war analysis concluded the assistance of the Japanese naval forces was critical.³⁴ This contribution of sea control type forces vis-a-vis power projection type forces, avoided unwanted entanglements on the European continent, and put Japan in good stead and served her political objectives during the post war negotiations.³⁵



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Hybrid ad hoc coalitions will be increasingly characteristic of future conflicts in which U.S. naval forces are committed. History does provide us a framework which we can use to envision the role of the U.S. Navy in these coalitions. But as we have learned with our growing pains over the last 50 years with joint operations, a practical understanding of the inter-dynamics of the elements of coalition warfare can only be attained through practice.

We currently hold numerous annual bilateral exercises and combined operations with our traditional allies, but more must be done to exercise with those navies we do not have a history of operating with--especially navies of countries whose importance is established by the national interests their countries represent to the United States (e.g. The Gulf Cooperation Council nations). In order to mitigate the possible negative domestic repercussions that some of these countries, particularly in Southwest Asia, could experience, coordination for these exercises could be achieved through an intermediary. In the case of Southwest Asia, the British or the French who have historical ties to the Arab world might be in a more advantageous position to fill such a role.

Another way to "break the ice" with countries we traditionally have not operated with is to foster a spirit of



cooperation by using U.S. naval forces to assist foreign navies in disaster relief or humanitarian assistance, and non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO). These type of operations do not require a unified commander, and yet at the same time provide a means to identify possible interoperability problems prior to entering into a hybrid ad hoc coalition with them in the future.

Although U.S. naval forces could potentially be used in a secondary role to support an ad hoc coalition, in the near term they will continue to be the 'de facto' leader in multinational maritime operations. As President Bush has pointed out the U.S. can be expected to play a major leadership role in countering brutality and aggression because, 'Among the nations of the world, only the United States of America has both the moral standing and the means to back it up.'³⁶ And Admiral Kelso Chief of Naval Operations also has outlined this role for U.S. Naval forces:

While the international security environment, the nature of alliances, and the size of our force all will change in the future, geography will not. The United States is an island nation that will always rely on maritime forces to protect its interests. We remain the worlds only economic and military superpower, and with that role comes tremendous responsibility.³⁷

When participating in ad hoc coalitions the commander must be conscientious not only of his own country's political objectives but also the political objectives of the other members of the coalition. These objectives will not only determine the extent to which interoperability problems can be minimized and the nature of the command and control organization, it will



determine the degree to which these countries provide mutual support and the nature of this cooperation.

Not only must the commander beware of the different political objectives, but his staff must incorporate these into both the deliberate and crisis planning process if the campaign plan or operational plan is to have any validity. Additionally the commander and his staff must have a firm grasp of the coalition organization, and the operational doctrines of the different members if sources of confusion in the planning and conduct of operations is to be minimized.³⁸ Incorporating this type of thought into the planning process will not provide a guaranteed formula for success, but should minimize additional sources of 'friction' in the 'fog of war.' This conclusion was reached by General Sir Frederick Maurice's study of the development of naval, military and air cooperation in World War One:

The operations of allied armies and fleets and the operations of armies and of fleets composed of contingents from the armies and navies of different countries are commonplace in the history of war. In the past such difficulties in obtaining cooperation as have arisen have been chiefly due to political differences arising out of divergent interests of the allied countries and differences of opinion between allied commanders....in the War of 1914-1918, the number of allied nations, and the numbers of widely separated theaters of war, and the nature of the fighting produced complications which no one had foreseen and for which no one was prepared.³⁹

Now is the time for the U.S. Navy to prepare.



NOTES

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