THE FALCON AND THE TRIDENT: AIR FORCE-NAVY AIRPOWER COORDINATION AND THE NEW MRC MODEL

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DISCLAIMER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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INTRODUCTION

> . . . each service, in the fields of its primary missions, must have exclusive responsibility for planning and programming and the necessary authority. In the execution of any mission of the armed services, all available resources must be used to the maximum overall effectiveness. For this reason, the exclusive responsibility and authority in a given field do not imply preclusive participation . . . the service having the primary function must determine the requirements, but in determining those requirements must take into account the contributions which may be made by forces from other services.[1]

With those words Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal, in the Newport Agreement of 21 August 1948, attempted to clarify the consensus reached at the Key West Agreement of 21 April 1948 concerning roles and missions of the Armed Services within the newly organized Department of Defense. While emphasizing jointness and unity of United States effort in the common functions of providing for the defense, maintaining security, and advancing the policies and interests of the nation, the two 1948 Agreements were merely the opening salvos in a long-term struggle for position among the Armed Services in the post-World War II era.

The world of 1948, in which two antagonistic superpowers had emerged from a global conflict ended by atomic weapons, contrasts sharply with the world of 1994, where only one superpower has survived the Cold War into a world where a wide array of sources of conflict exists, with few seemingly resolvable by nuclear force. However, for the United States Air Force and United States Navy, which have struggled for status, if not for outright preeminence since the end of World War II, the "New World Disorder" has provoked a new struggle for roles and missions. The two highest of the high-tech services, each equipped with the most elaborate, effective and expensive aircraft in the

world designed primarily to deter or defeat an enemy now in decline, are now facing the combination of an expanding mission and shrinking budget.

This study will examine the changing missions and forces of the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy since the 1947 National Security Act, with special emphasis placed on several periods of drawdown. The thesis will analyze these periods as well as several specific examples of joint operations in war and in crisis. It will then determine, in view of the post-Cold War drawdown, what changes should be made to the forces, roles and missions within the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy to increase warfighting effectiveness, improve synergy and enhance coordination between the two Services.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The disagreements regarding airpower between the Air Force and Navy have roots which go deep into history, almost as far back as powered flight itself. Since the interwar years of the 1920s and 1930s, when Billy Mitchell led the charge for an independent air force (using bombers against the obsolete but supposedly unsinkable German battleship *Ostfreisland* as his media centerpiece) and William Moffett took charge of the Navy's new Bureau of Aeronautics, the two services have been rivals as often as partners in the sky.[2] The early assertions that air forces would replace all naval forces except for submarines, and that bombers were the supreme strategic defensive weapon, did nothing to endear airmen to sailors.[3] The Navy, for its part, embraced the air weapon as an important aid to gun-laying and fleet reconnaissance, and with the advent of aircraft carriers, as a potent striking force. The efforts by Mitchell and his supporters to consolidate all aviation (Army and Navy) under one independent Air Force led to a strengthening of Navy resolve to keep their newly-gained technology under their own control, and to fit it initially into their existing ship-of-the-line strategy.[4] Thus, as Colonel Phillip A. Meilinger, Dean of the School of Advanced Airpower Studies, has put it: ". . . Mitchell was the father of both naval aviation and interservice rivalry." As the

airmen came to grips with the traditional Army about the value of the air weapon in the next war, and fought the bureaucratic and doctrinal war of independence against the backdrop of the aftermath of the Great War, an isolationist public and soon the Great Depression, the advocates of naval aviation had to fight a similar, but less violent, battle against the "battleship admirals."

With the onset of World War II, both services quickly learned the value of airpower which the advocates had so long argued. The Navy, with its capital ships shattered and sunk at Pearl Harbor, met the Japanese fleet with carrier battle groups first in strikes and raids on enemy outposts, then in the great air battles of the Coral Sea, Midway and the Marianas. The Army Air Forces, surprised also by the first Japanese attacks in the Pacific, had meanwhile laid out a great battle plan to defeat Hitler in Europe. The development and maturation of that plan of strategic attack by heavy bombers led painfully but directly to the subsequent success of the Normandy Invasion and eventually to the unconditional surrender of Germany. With the full attention of both services applied to Japan, the combination of naval blockade and strategic bombing brought the enemy to the brink of capitulation. Finally, with the apparent choice of mounting a full-scale invasion at the feared cost of some 500,000 American lives or of dropping the experimental atomic bomb, President Truman chose the bomb.[5]

The bomb changed the view of the world on warfare in general and on air warfare in particular forever. The effects and coercive power derived from its initial use by the U.S. led to its acquisition by the USSR, People's Republic of China (PRC), Britain and several other enemies and allies. The entire world's economic, industrial, political and social fabric for the next 46 years was to some degree affected by the Cold War waged between the two rival superpowers and the uneasy alliances they formed. While brief proxy wars continued almost non-stop somewhere on the globe during the entire period, and both superpowers faced several crises with varying degrees of severity, there were only two major armed conflicts between the U.S. and allies of the USSR, in Korea and

Vietnam. In both these conflicts, Air Force and Navy airpower played a significant role. Aircraft designed to meet the "monolithic" Soviet threat were employed in these two cases (and in various crises, both lethal and non-lethal, during the last 48 years) in a variety of ways. Throughout the entire post-World War II period, however, the driving force behind the U.S. budget, doctrine and weapon systems was the Soviet threat.

In the present, post-Cold War, post-Desert Storm, world there are numerous factors at work: the U.S. is facing declining military budget shares, shrinking forces and expanding worldwide commitments while at the same time dealing with allies as well as potential adversaries who learned a variety of lessons from the war in the Gulf. Allies in Europe and the Pacific saw stockpiles stripped and forces moved to the Gulf, some of which had been scheduled for drawdown and redeployment to CONUS under previous plans. Allies in the Gulf hesitated, even when threatened by a possible Iraqi invasion, before allowing coalition forces to be based on their territory. Potential adversaries, large and small, all over the globe saw the effects of declining U.S. presence and infrastructure in Europe, the political complexities of gaining U.S. access to bases and infrastructure in the Gulf region, the value of possessing theater-oriented ballistic missiles (especially with possible chemical or nuclear warheads), the value of space and its availability via commercial sources, the effectiveness of mining critical waterways, and, perhaps most importantly, the importance of denying the U.S. and its allies sufficient time to mobilize and deploy.[6]

With the current situation, there is as much need as ever for the two services to cooperate, consolidate and communicate to enhance the nation's deterrence and combat effectiveness should deterrence fail. In contrast to a world looking at an "end of history" while planning to spend the "peace dividend," the world of the 1990s and beyond is instead one full of uncertainty and political conflicts, into which the United States as the only remaining superpower may find itself being drawn. Equipped with a force of superior capability to fight a technically capable adversary, the U.S. must in the future

find ways to adapt that force to smaller but more numerous and diverse adversaries, some of which may be armed with weapons of mass destruction. As forces shrink but remain technologically superior, imagination and creativity on the part of planners will be required to develop forces which have a wide range of capabilities to deal with a wide range of contingencies.

A major portion of this thesis will address the effects of previous drawdowns on Air Force/Navy relations and combat effectiveness. While a certain amount of interservice rivalry is always present and probably a morale-boosting influence, there is some evidence to suggest that apparent rivalries are even more virulent during periods of drawdown. The danger is that military force reductions, especially in the wake of a perceived lessening of tensions (as happened after World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Cold War) can lead to a spirit of bitterness which then carries over into the next conflict. At the same time, the drawdown itself can result in a chilling effect on weapons research, leading the services to procure weapons that are just short of the cutting edge of technology because those on the cutting edge are too expensive or risky to pursue, especially in significant numbers. A vicious circle of unknown threat, drawdown, research cut, inadequate weapon system deployment, new threat and conflict results. This thesis will analyze the Air Force and Navy during several periods of drawdown and conflict, and will make specific recommendations for changes to force roles and missions in order to enhance coordination and combat effectiveness during joint air operations in the conflicts of the future. With ongoing force structure reductions and personnel drawdowns, and in the face of an uncertain threat, the two services must join forces both in terms of emphasizing their own core competencies and in ensuring that their views of the world and of each other do not prevent the coordination necessary for effective deterrence and effective warfighting.

LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

For the purpose of this thesis, I will focus on conventional warfighting, assuming a nuclear deterrent force of ICBMs, SLBMs and strategic bombers under current and near-term projected arms control agreements. I will assume START I and START II ratification among the affected states, and continuation of the drawdown of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles under the START conversion or elimination protocols. Likewise, NATO, Partnerships for Peace and other alliances are assumed to remain robust and effective, although U.S. forward basing locations and rights will remain at issue.

I will also assume a stable force of 20 Air Force fighter wing equivalents and 12 carrier battle groups for the long run. Making these assumptions in terms of raw numbers of units (Air Force Wings and Carrier Air Wings) and associated numbers of aircraft allows me to focus more on the force mix in terms of types of weapon systems, mission and function specialization, core competencies and the creativity and innovation which will be required to coordinate Air Force and Navy airpower to provide both effective deterrence and superior warfighting in the twenty-first century.

NOTES

1. Richard I. Wolf, ed., The United States Air Force: Basic Documents on Roles and Missions. (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1987), 181-182.

2. Interestingly, two authoritative naval histories scarcely mention Mitchell or Moffett and also fail to note the *Ostfreisland* by name. See Kenneth J. Hagan, This People's Navy (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 272-273 and 282, and; E.B. Potter, Sea Power (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986), 237.

3. William Mitchell, Winged Defense (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1925), 109.

4. Thomas C. Hone, "Navy Air Leadership: Rear Admiral William A. Moffett as Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics" in Air Leadership. Wayne Thompson (ed.) (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1986), 94-95.

5. Haywood S. Hansell, The Strategic Air War Against Germany and Japan: A Memoir. (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1986), 265-266; Hagan, 327-328.

6. Jacquelyn K. Davis, Aircraft Carriers and the Role of Naval Power in the Twenty-First Century. (Cambridge, MA: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1993), 8.

CHAPTER 2

POST-WORLD WAR II DRAWDOWN

The immediate aftermath of World War II brought a near-crisis situation to the War and Navy Departments, which had to deal with several simultaneous problems: slashed budgets, shrunken forces and a new threat on the horizon in the form of the USSR. The newly-independent Air Force had for the most part succeeded in its long-advocated mission of strategic bombardment, waging important campaigns in both the European and Pacific Theaters of Operations. One study indicated that the war in the Pacific could have been over by the end of 1945, even in the absence of the atomic bomb, an Allied invasion of the home islands, or the Soviet entry into the war.[1] The use of the bomb, however, not only brought the war to a sudden conclusion, but brought a new weapon to the American arsenal which theoretically could not only deter wars in the future but win them quickly, before traditional land and naval forces were deployed. The Air Force was the only service with the means to deliver the bomb, and in its plans preparing for conflict with the USSR it combined the principles of strategic attack on the enemy's war-making capacity together with the possibilities of atomic deterrence to create its new mission of strategic nuclear attack.[2]

The Navy, for its part, had witnessed the complete operational and tactical dominance of carrier aviation in the Pacific, as well as the ascendancy of the submarine as a weapon of war in both theaters. Battleships had been relegated to AAA support and preparatory shore bombardment for the amphibious campaign, and in a portentous role, to supporting assaults on Japanese-held islands so they could be turned into bases for strategic heavy bombers. In a single 4-year conflict, revolutionary changes had occurred. Dreadnoughts had become nearly anachronistic and other surface warships were used to support island-hopping campaigns rather than to engage the enemy fleet. Submarines nearly brought the enemy to surrender through commerce-raiding, naval aviation grew

from infancy to full maturity, and finally the Air Force struck the coup de grace with atomic weapons. The small coastal-defense Soviet Navy, hardly a serious threat, was left as the only remaining enemy on the horizon.[3] The Navy's world was literally turned upside down. On top of all that, the call from both Army Ground Forces and Army Air Forces to unify the services became ever-louder as the post-war force reductions commenced.

Naval leaders were especially reticent about any attempt to unite the armed services. They had vivid memories of the Mitchell arguments of two decades before, as well as the example of British army and naval aviation being combined into the Royal Air Force in 1918. In the Navy's view, the traditional first line of the nation's defense, sea power, would suffer from unification with other services and from leaders who did not understand its application.[4]

The unification of the armed services into one Department of Defense was a drawn-out, acrimonious process which sowed many of the seeds of dissent we still see today in relations between the services. The move toward unifying the services came at a time of scarce resources and of the seeming absence, at first, of a clear strategic threat, which made each of the services suspicious of the others' motives. Political positioning also played a part, as the Truman administration had to deal with domestic calls for disarmament and post-war prosperity at the same time it was attempting to deal with Stalin internationally. Secretary of State George C. Marshall advanced the Marshall Plan for rebuilding western Europe while simultaneously building an alliance against the USSR. He also was the prime advocate of universal military training (UMT) as a solution to the problems of maintaining deterrence and a growing economy at the same time. As a former Army Chief of Staff, drawn out of retirement since the end of the war, Marshall sought to avert the unpreparedness of the U.S. military of 1938 by having a large body of trained servicemen in reserve to back up a much smaller force of active-duty volunteers. Eventually, the UMT proposal was defeated, as Congress chose the less-expensive

Selective Service option in 1948. The bulk of the $800 million-plus which had been planned for UMT went instead toward building a seventy-group Air Force. In the view of much of the Navy leadership during the "great unification debates" of 1945-1949, placing unification of the Armed Forces at such a high position in the hierarchy of problems facing the United States during the post-WWII years was a mistake. Demobilization, the atomic bomb, the USSR, peacetime prosperity, Europe, China, the Far East and the Middle East were just a few of the pressing problems which, in the opinion of such leaders as Admiral Arthur W. Radford (who was to lead the official Navy efforts on unification policy), were complicated if not exacerbated by the rush to unify the armed forces.[5]

The argument carried out in public over the B-36 Peacemaker strategic heavy bomber versus the CV-58, USS *United States*, was only the tip of the iceberg of the Air Force-Navy roles and missions debate. The dispute over airpower became the subject of formal hearings at the same time the first Secretary of Defense, James V. Forrestal, took office in 1947. President Truman's blue-ribbon Air Power Commission, headed by Thomas K. Finletter, met late in the year to determine a roadmap for the nation's rapidly-expanding civil and military aviation capabilities. In these closed hearings, the Air Force argued for the six-engined pusher-propeller B-36 as the long-range successor to the B-29, while the Navy argued that the huge, slow B-36 could never penetrate the USSR's air defenses, and that carrier-based Navy bombers attacking from several directions at once were the proper way to deliver atomic bombs.[6] The hearts of the public had been captured by strategic aviation, however, and the Air Force's vision of the atomic bomb as the ultimate weapon to ensure a peaceful, prosperous, post-war world was a powerful image for the voters and the Congress. The Navy, while opposed to unification of the services, saw clearly the ramifications of atomic weapons, and had sought before the end of 1945 to include them in its own war plans. They worked with North American Aircraft to develop the AJ-1 *Savage*, a large aircraft which could handle the five-ton atomic

bombs in the U.S. inventory.[7] In addition, the Navy demonstrated carrier launches of P-2 Neptune patrol aircraft followed by long-range flight profiles, suggesting to Congress, the public, and, most importantly of all, the Air Force that the junior service should have no monopoly on the atomic attack mission.[8]

The Navy had performed very little bombing against any nation's vital centers in the past -- except for Doolittle's raid by Army Air Forces B-25 Mitchell medium bombers in 1942, the only strikes against an enemy homeland from a U.S. carrier were late in 1945 -- and as the roles and missions debate continued, the Navy adapted its traditional sea control and power projection strategies to include atomic warfare. The Navy had emerged from World War II as the premier fleet in the world, larger than all the others combined. Its only adversary after 1945, the Soviet Navy, had been confined mostly to coastal operations during the war, but had acquired German submarine and V-2 rocket technology and had its own plans for post-war expansion. This dovetailed neatly with the U.S. Navy's dilemma. With a small but menacing Soviet fleet, armed with potentially deadly commerce-raiding submarines, the Navy turned its attention and that of the nation toward its concept of strategic air warfare -- precision atomic bombing of enemy military installations, to include submarine bases. The early planning for the coming NATO alliance also revived interest in the protection of sea lines of communication to Europe. In these ways, the aircraft carrier could guarantee the Navy a mission, even if there was no enemy fleet to engage.

Through the post-war years of roles and missions and atomic strategy debates, Secretary of Defense Forrestal was the man on the spot. As a former naval aviator and Secretary of the Navy, Forrestal was concerned from the beginning about the future of the post-war Navy, and especially about the role of the aircraft carrier in the atomic age. He was very much in favor of a balanced Department of Defense, realizing that, along with a strong atomic deterrent in the form of the Air Force, the nation would need an Army to hold territory against Communist expansion and a Navy to protect its vital sea

lines of communication against Soviet submarines as well as surface ships. In the chaotic days of the spring of 1948, Forrestal did daily battle on Capitol Hill with the Congress over what he preferred to call the "functions" rather than "roles and missions" of the armed forces.[9] He also did daily battle with Air Force Secretary Stuart Symington over the 70-group Air Force the latter supported, which in Forrestal's mind would upset a balanced Defense Department in both budget and force structure. In the public opinion polls of that election year of 1948, however, support for a 70-group force or one still larger was strong, and the expansion passed easily in both Houses, though it was never adequately funded.

While still Secretary of the Navy, Forrestal had approved initial plans for the 65,000 ton, flush-deck supercarrier USS *United States*, but construction had not begun. By 1948, with the functions of the armed services under unification still unclear, Stalin making threats in Berlin and the Soviet (Eastern) zone of Germany, and the Czechoslovakian government undermined by Soviet-supported local Communists, Forrestal called the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to Key West, Florida, to resolve the debate at least long enough to agree on an emergency war plan. While *United States* was not directly at stake at Key West, the conference did resolve for the time being the issue of "primary" and "collateral" functions of each of the armed services, as well as the functions of the JCS and of all the forces in common. Thus, the Air Force was assigned the primary function of "strategic air warfare," defined as "systematic application of force" to "vital targets" to cause "the progressive destruction and disintegration of the enemy's war-making capacity to a point where he no longer retains the ability or the will to wage war." The Navy was likewise assigned the collateral function of participating "in the over-all air effort as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff."[10] The Navy saw this as justification for its own role in strategic air warfare (which by its definition would have to be an "over-all air effort") and therefore a valid rationale for constructing the supercarrier.

Events in Europe soon overshadowed the debate in Key West, however, as Stalin closed down all surface traffic to Berlin on 24 June 1948. General Curtis LeMay, the Air Force commander in Europe, organized the Berlin Airlift to keep the city's occupants supplied. The JCS had attempted earlier to finalize plans for Operation HALFMOON, designed to counter a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, but could not agree on missions and costs. HALFMOON ironically called for massive U.S. ground forces involvement in Europe even as the Navy/Air Force dissension over the "decisive" strategic air offensive delivered by heavy bombers or carrier-based aircraft continued. As the airlift commenced and President Truman reaffirmed his commitment to Berlin (as an extension of the Truman Doctrine declared the previous year), B-29s were deployed to Great Britain and the American zone in Germany as a warning to the USSR not to extend its reach into Western Europe. The bombers were not equipped to carry atomic weapons, however, which served to emphasize to American leadership the U.S.'s lack of a true atomic deterrent in 1948.[11]

The Navy's broad interpretation of the strategic bombing mission as defined at Key West continued to fuel dissent in the Pentagon and on the Hill. By this time, Forrestal had come to the conclusion that the continuing arguments over primary and collateral functions were at the heart of the problem. He convened the JCS once again for another off-site meeting, this time at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. With the advice of General Carl A. Spaatz and Admiral John H. Towers, two retired officers of exceptional distinction, Forrestal tried again the gain acceptance for his concept of "functions" under a unified Department.

In the opinion of Spaatz and Towers, the Key West agreement as written was "a satisfactory document," needing only the recognition by all the armed services that primary responsibility for any particular function did not preclude participation in a unified effort by any other service.[12] Therefore, the emphasis at Newport was on compromise, first on the issue of strategic bombing and second on measures to prevent

future disagreements over the introduction of new types of weapons. In order to avoid "duplication and wastage of resources," the agreement stated, "the service having the primary function must determine the requirements, but in determining those requirements must take into account the contributions which may be made by forces from other services."[13] In language rare for its bluntness, the agreement also stated the following in relation to the primary functions debate:

> It was agreed that the effectiveness of the foregoing decision would depend upon: 1) the spirit in which it was carried out; 2) general acceptance of the view that the decision was not in any wise [*sic*] a victory or defeat for any service, and; 3) mutual acceptance on the part of all concerned to work amicably to settle any differences arising under the decision, and to anticipate, and resolve in advance, any prospective differences.[14]

"It was also suggested that an effort should be made to secure newspaper cooperation in making clear the precise consequences of the decision, putting it up to the various journalist protagonists that this program could only work with their cooperation."[15]

Thus Secretary Forrestal had made one final attempt, on his "watch," to achieve a truly unified Department of Defense with redundancy but without duplication. On paper there was agreement, but in the months to come there was to be more squabbling than before. In an era of sufficient military funding, the services could have had competing but co-existing strategies, but, in the zero-sum budget years of the late 1940s, it appeared that no matter what the Defense Department had gotten the service secretaries and Chiefs to sign up to, only one strategy would outlast all the rest.

The continuing fights over the budget and Forrestal's other troubles with the services led President Truman to ask for his resignation as Secretary of Defense on 1 March 1949. Forrestal was replaced by Louis Johnson, who on 23 April canceled construction of USS *United States*, which had just had its keel laid five days earlier.[16]

Navy Secretary John L. Sullivan, who had not been consulted in the decision, resigned in protest. Forrestal did not live to see the next chapter in Air Force/Navy strife, as personal and professional stress led to his suicide on 22 May. To the Navy, the supercarrier's abrupt cancellation was perceived to mean the Air Force and its Army brethren, having failed to gain control of naval aviation during the unification debates, were now going to kill it in the battle of the budget.

When the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Louis E. Denfeld, took the naval aviation case around the civilian leadership and directly to the press, the celebrated "Revolt of the Admirals" was on. The cancellation of the *United States* had led the Navy leadership to court Congress more fervently than before, and one naval aviator, World War II carrier executive officer and at that time JCS staff officer "took the ball" and ran with it.[17] Captain John G. Crommelin believed that naval officers below flag rank were the best people for persuading Congress to fund carrier aviation in the face of the "anti-Navy propaganda."[18] He began by recommending that Congressman (and Naval Reserve captain) James Van Zandt read to the House an anonymous letter charging Secretary of Defense Johnson and Secretary of the Air Force Symington with serious conflicts of interest in the B-36 procurement process. The charges were later withdrawn, and the letter's author (a special assistant to the Undersecretary of the Navy) was revealed and forced to resign, but special committees were called and met for the majority of the remainder of 1949 to revisit the issues.

Crommelin next released a statement to the press in which he claimed to speak for the entire Navy, saying the supercarrier cancellation and the B-36 controversy were but "superficial manifestations" of the critical problems, the "general staff concept," which left the Navy outvoted two to one on the JCS, and the Secretary of Defense himself, who was making "dangerous decisions which are gradually stripping the Navy of vital offensive power and greatly imperiling the security of the United States."[19] While Crommelin's comments caused an immediate uproar in the press, the more important

effect was that caused in the Navy. Secretary of the Navy Francis P. Matthews sent a confidential message to senior naval commanders asking for their opinions of Crommelin's statement, and Crommelin clandestinely obtained their replies. He then carefully sanitized the documents, making sure they were unclassified, and then released the comments of the CNO; Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Commander-in Chief, Pacific Fleet; Vice Admiral Gerald F. Brogan, Commander of First Task Fleet, and; retired Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, to the press.[20]

Crommelin insisted on anonymity at first to give the flag officers' comments full impact. With headlines such as “Navy Big Brass Blasts Defense Setup” and “Morale Shot, U.S. in Peril, Admirals Say,” the impact was everything the Navy could have hoped for.[21] The House Armed Services Committee announced an immediate investigation into the effects of unification on morale and combat efficiency. Crommelin, who had since revealed himself as the source of the admirals' comments, was suspended from duty and restricted to the city of Washington.

The following week, Admiral Radford led the parade of witnesses. Calling the B-36 “a billion-dollar blunder” and “a 1941 airplane,” he said the “bomber generals” plan to conduct national defense by heavy bombers with atomic weapons, at the expense of the other services, was “a fallacious concept.”[22] Ten more admirals and two captains, including future CNO Captain Arleigh Burke, followed. Admiral Denfeld came last to summarize.

The Air Force, in testimony by Secretary Symington and Generals Vandenberg, LeMay, Kenney and others both defended its own roles and missions and made the case that the Navy's charges had damaged U.S. national security and military morale. Further, the Air Force convinced the committee and its pro-Navy Chairman, Carl Vinson, that it had no intention of trying to absorb naval aviation. The Chief of Staff, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, was particularly effective at refuting Admiral Radford's testimony, pointing out that SAC had only 29 percent of the Air Force's combat and combat support aircraft,

and, of that total, only 5 percent were B-36s. He further stated that, regarding the Revolt of the Admirals, “serious problems of official and personal relationships have been added to the serious military problems with which we were already faced.”[23]

Vandenberg's low-key presentation at the hearings and influence over some of his more hot-headed subordinates (especially Kenney and LeMay), while refuting the Navy's various charges, had a major impact on the committee. He turned aside arguments that the Air Force had neglected close air support to concentrate on strategic bombing, that his service was still trying to absorb naval aviation, and that the Army was a partner in an anti-Navy conspiracy. His testimony was a marked contrast to that of Navy witnesses.[24]

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Omar N. Bradley, was perhaps the most effective speaker against the Navy position. Giving what he described as his “personal views” on the controversy, General Bradley summarized the growth of the Soviet threat in economically, militarily and politically challenging the U.S. and the rest of the free world. In terms which would come to represent the core of Cold War strategy for the next forty years, he spoke of the U.S. inability to field ground forces to match those the Soviet Union could field, and of the critical need for the strategic air offensive, since “our greatest strength lies in the threat of quick retaliation in the event we are attacked.” He stated that the Navy's complaint was obviously not really the B-36, but rather the loss of the *United States* and other funding cuts. General Bradley summarized by saying that when the Navy challenged the authority of the President and his Secretary of Defense, it amounted to “open rebellion against the civilian control.” He further chastised the Navy brass as “...'fancy dans' who won't hit the line with all they have on every play, unless they can call the signals.”[25] Thus, the real cause of the acrimony was revealed to be not the B-36 or the supercarrier in and of themselves but instead the issues of unification and the economic situation facing the U.S. after the war.

The House Armed Services Committee B-36 investigation concluded in January 1950 and was a vindication of the Air Force's view of intercontinental strategic bombing

both as a deterrent and a method for winning war. The Navy, fearing for the loss of its Fleet Air Arm and more importantly its long-held role as the nation's first line of defense, had brought out its big guns and alleged ethical if not criminal wrongdoing in B-36 procurement; called the entire range of missions and doctrine for the newly-independent Air Force into question, and; attacked the just-signed National Security Act amendments of 1949 as a continuation of a general staff system which, in their view, would eventually destroy the Navy.[26]

The Committee, in its final report issued 1 March 1950, found none of the services without blame in the unification and roles-and-missions debates. It stated that joint exercises were needed to properly train the services in all their complementary missions, but that the services themselves would continue to be the experts in each of their respective roles, with the responsibility to assess accurately new weapons and present them to the Congress for funding approval. Congress thus reestablished itself as the controller of the budget and possessor of oversight authority for the still-new Department of Defense.[27]

For the Navy, the results of the Revolt of the Admirals were manifold. Though it lost the tactical battle for the supercarrier, in what could be termed a strategic victory, the Navy retained control of its aviation components, and eventually saw the Commandant of the Marine Corps added to the JCS, leveling the playing field against the Army and Air Force. Admiral Radford was to become the first Navy Chairman of the JCS, a position which had been singled out in particular by Crommelin as representing the despised general staff concept. Admiral Denfeld was summarily dismissed by Secretary Matthews, who also retired Vice Admiral Bogan and tried to redline Burke's promotion to rear admiral. Crommelin received a letter of reprimand from the new CNO, Admiral Forrest Sherman, and was sent to San Francisco to end his career. He retired as a Rear Admiral on 1 June 1950, on the eve of the Korean War.[28]

The roles and missions debate was still in full swing, although with a few new players since the Revolt of the Admirals, when North Korea attacked across the 38th Parallel on 25 June 1950. The Truman Administration had budgeted for 48 Air Force groups and over 1.6 million men in uniform at the end of fiscal 1950, as the war began. In fact, there was only a total of 1,465,000 men and women in the three services.[29] The U.S. Commander in the Far East (CINCFE), General Douglas MacArthur, had three subordinate commands: Far East Air Forces (FEAF), under USAF Lieutenant General George Stratemeyer; Naval Forces Far East (NavFE), under Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, and; Army Forces Far East (AFFE), consisting primarily of General Walton H. Walker's Eighth Army. While technically a joint command, MacArthur's staff was in actuality set up along Army lines. He also was the combined commander of Allied occupation forces in Japan, and would soon wear the UN commander-in-chief hat as well. On 25 June, however, MacArthur's fighting forces were spread far and wide across a large part of the Pacific.

The conflicts between the Air Force and Navy over the supercarrier and air atomic warfare had to be put aside (but were not forgotten) during the Korean Conflict. This “limited” war, launched as a surprise by a Soviet satellite state in a little-known corner of the world, seemed to many containment-policy strategists as a feint designed to lure U.S. forces away from NATO. Consequently, Strategic Air Command B-36s and B-50s remained on atomic alert in the U.S. and Europe[30], and the Navy's three newest carriers, the *Midway*-class ships, were assigned to the East Coast and the Mediterranean.

Command relationships in Korea, primarily due to the fact that a carry-over command structure from World War II was largely still in place, were an immediate obstacle to effective Air Force/Navy airpower coordination. MacArthur's long history as the five-star general in command of the region and his all-Army staff were in immediate conflict with a concept of truly joint air operations. The FEAF force structure had served MacArthur superbly in the southwest Pacific in World War II, and in the first days of the

crisis he depended upon its commander, General Stratemeyer, and the Fifth Air Force commander, Major General Earle E. Partridge, who controlled the lion's share of FEAF's combat aircraft and was the senior Air Force officer in-theater when the invasion began.[31]

The Navy's fighting force in the region was the Seventh Fleet, spread among several ports on the Sunday morning of 25 June. Its mission since 1945 had been the rebuilding of Japan and mine-cleaning operations around its home islands. Admiral Joy and General MacArthur, in Tokyo as the invasion began, ". . . agreed that opposing the invasion was the correct action, but we were surprised that it happened. As a consequence, we had no plans for this type of war."[32] The main fighting force of the fleet, Carrier Division Three, put to sea on 27 June from Subic Bay, and headed for Okinawa where it could provide support for Korea, Japan or Formosa in the event of a wider war. Though war plans had not been specifically prepared, exercises had been held the previous month in the East China Sea during a major fleet turnover of ships, and the British carrier *Triumph* and its own battle group were still in possession of U.S. code books and combined operations publications. The British force, and other ships from Australia and New Zealand, quickly placed themselves at NavFE's disposal. At the same time, MacArthur received orders from the JCS placing Seventh Fleet under his operational control, to be exercised through NavFE. This was the first time that MacArthur had ever had such control over large carriers.[33]

The Air Force had successfully executed a mass evacuation of U.S. non-essential personnel from 26-29 June, flying from Japan to Seoul and back with C-47 and C-54 transports. The Air Force also flew top cover over Seoul, Pusan and Inchon during the evacuation and escorted the Norwegian freighter *Reinholte* to Japan. On 27 June, USAF Lt William G. Hudson, flying an F-82 Twin Mustang, scored the first air-to-air kill of the war, shooting down a North Korean Yak fighter over Seoul.[34] Thus, in the week before the carriers arrived on station in the Yellow Sea from Okinawa, the Air Force had run the

air war for MacArthur, flying P-51s, F-80s, F-82s, B-26s and even B-29 "medium bombers" in strikes against the invading North Korean forces, and establishing air superiority over the weak North Korean Air Force.

When the Seventh Fleet carriers (USS *Valley Forge* and HMS *Triumph*) and their associated battle group arrived on station, they were designated Task Force 77 (TF77) and prepared the first naval air strikes against North Korean forces. MacArthur, Stratemeyer, Joy and the Seventh Fleet commander, Vice Admiral Arthur D. Struble, had met and determined that the most effective use of naval airpower in the opening week of the war would be strikes against the North Korean capital of Pyongyang. With their battle group on guard against submarine or air attacks in a still-feasible wider war, *Triumph* launched Seafire and Firefly piston-engined aircraft against Haeju airfield, while *Valley Forge* AD Skyraiders and F-4U Corsairs launched against Pyongyang itself. In the first use of Navy jets in combat, eight F-9F Panthers then launched to overtake the attack planes and provide a fighter sweep in the target area. Lieutenant (junior grade) Leonard Plog and Ensign E.W. Brown each scored an aerial kill, and Major Edward F. Connor, USAF, flying as an exchange pilot, got an aircraft on the ground.[35]

As naval air operations began in early July, so did coordination difficulties. The initial naval air strikes had been carefully coordinated at the five-star level, but the follow-on strikes planned for the very next day caught FEAF by surprise, and resulted in the scrubbing and standdown of B-29s scheduled to hit Pyongyang. General Stratemeyer had been setting up an effective FEAF command and control system since the war's beginning, with the goal of massing <u>all</u> combat airpower in the most productive way possible. He modeled his command after that of Generals Kenney and Whitehead, who served the same five-star CINC in World War II. When the carriers arrived, Stratemeyer sought operational control over their air groups, as well as Navy planes based in Japan, when they were engaged in any operations other than mining or anti-submarine warfare.[36] Admiral Joy did not like the idea of "operational control" over his carriers

(which had only officially been subordinated to NavFE on 27 June, coming from Admiral Radford's control as Commander-in-Chief, Pacific [CINCPAC] and Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet [CINCPACFLT]) being given to an Air Force general. Joy had additional responsibilities in the region, including naval defense of Formosa and Japan itself. He preferred a geographic separation of the combat area between the Navy and the Air Force for air attacks. Eventually, the differences were solved on paper by an agreement called "coordination control," which came from MacArthur's headquarters. Though coordination control ostensibly gave Stratemeyer the authority to designate air taskings for all the services in Korea, in fact the Navy took the policy to mean the FEAF commander could request naval aircraft to fly particular missions. The unclear directive had the net effect of allowing NavFE to accept those missions it deemed suitable, when they did not interfere with its other responsibilities and force posture, and to reject those it did not want to fly.[37]

In the face of the invasion, the concept of a Joint Operations Center (JOC) arose to coordinate all air-to-ground support and eventually all tactical air operations. The JOC was set up first at Taejon, then moved to Taegu and further south as the North Koreans pushed toward Pusan. It was set up first as a joint Eighth Army-Fifth Air Force center, but eventually the Navy began to use the JOC as a coordination tool as well. The Air Force had the vast majority of combat aircraft in theater, but also had to do the most adjustments to both doctrine and tactics. The Air Force view of close air support (CAS) was what the Navy and Marines called "deep support," so even doctrinally the two services were not speaking the same language. In addition, the Air Force adhered to the concept of the T-6 aircraft as a forward air controller (FAC), dubbed "Mosquito" after their early radio call signs. The Navy and Marines, on the other hand, insisted that only Tactical Air Control Parties, on the ground with the Marine forces, could control the air strikes. When Marine aircraft arrived in August 1950, yet another wrinkle in coordination occurred. In an early manifestation of the Marines' Guadalcanal memories, their Corsairs

flew missions from the escort carriers *Sicily* and *Baedoeng Strait* exclusively in support of the First Provisional Marine Brigade in Korea, when the brigade was engaged in operations. When the Marine brigade was not in action, the JOC tasked the Marine aircraft for CAS and interdiction missions as required throughout the combat area.[38]

Part of the confusion and lack of coordination throughout the war was due to the inclusion of formerly "very heavy" bombers in the "tactical" role. Less than five years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, B-29s were again in combat, but this time as "medium bombers." They were used from the very first days of the war until the very end. We have seen how the 4 July 1950 missions were scrubbed because of the Navy's late scheduling of their second strikes from *Valley Forge* and *Triumph*. The use of B-29s in carpet-bombing attacks on enemy troops in a CAS role was less successful than air interdiction strikes. All in all, however, the participation of early Strategic Air Command crews and aircraft was exemplary. General Stratemeyer pointed out early in 1950, nevertheless, numerous erroneous lessons which could be drawn from FEAF Bomber Command's B-29 effort. He pointed out that the Superfortresses were being diverted from their primary mission of atomic deterrence and strategic air warfare; that they were old even by 1950 and such propeller-driven aircraft would not long be appropriate for the global strategic mission; that air superiority was easily won in Korea but might not be so easily obtained elsewhere, and, most importantly; that in all-out war strategic units would not be available for tactical operations. He also predicted that Air Force and Navy tactical aircraft would likely have a tough fight against enemy fighters in the future, and that the Navy would have far less freedom in operating its carriers close to shore. Certainly, Stratemeyer said, any attempt to build an Air Force based on Korean War requirements would have fatal consequences for the U.S.[39]

The concept of unity of command in theater suffered due to the previous interservice bickering, the lack of a truly joint (as in unified command) staff, and adherence to individual service doctrine by each individual service. True joint operations

were not achieved until June 1953, when a naval officer with authority similar to the Fifth Air Force Director of Operations was permanently assigned to the JOC, and a cryptologically secure radio teletype was set up between the JOC and TF77. Thus, according to the joint board on Korean air-ground operations which met after the war, the last month of the three-year conflict finally produced an example of "the integration of all services" which would be a "definite requirement" in future wars.[40]Although the same CINC was in charge, the Korean air campaign, especially where the Navy and Air Force were concerned, was not as singleminded of purpose or of mission. The Navy insisted on answering only to the CINC for strategic taskings, and the CINC obliged, especially when the Inchon landing was set up using a special Joint Task Force with Marine and Navy air cover neutralizing enemy airfields as far away as 150 miles from the landing itself. The CINCs GHQ staff itself meddled in Stratemeyer's target selections and force structuring. All the services, at one time or another, wanted to have a geographic partitioning of target and combat air patrol areas. The Air Force preferred to emphasize "strategic" attacks north of the 38th Parallel or interdiction missions over CAS. The Navy wanted to fly its own interdiction packages and its own brand of CAS. Only the Marines wanted no larger a share of the pie than to support Marines and Army troops on the ground.[41]

Both the Air Force and Navy were taught, but did not necessarily learn, valuable lessons in adapting aircraft from their planned uses to other uses as required by the situation. The P-51 performed valuable service in its new incarnation as the F-51, and the P-47 would have done the same, but most had been scrapped or sold to allies by 1950. The new jet F-80s were effective but fuel-inefficient, and when all FEAF aircraft evacuated to Japan as the enemy closed in on the Pusan perimeter, the F-80s found their endurance in the target area after flights across the sea of Japan somewhat lacking. For its part, the B-29 served admirably in its role as a medium bomber, though true "strategic" targets were located in sanctuaries across the Yalu. The Navy had similar difficulties in

adapting its hardware to the limited conflict in Korea. Although its carriers operated closer to the target areas while FEAF had moved to Japan, its jet fighters had similar loiter time problems. The nature of cyclic carrier flight operations, with mass launch into the wind, maneuver, then turning again into the wind to recover the aircraft led to only small numbers of aircraft being available for CAS taskings which took longer periods of time. In addition, the carriers had to periodically suspend operations for replenishment. When the Navy peculiarities were added to the Air Force jet problems, and the poor early functioning of the JOC and tactical and operational communications difficulties were factored in, the best that could be hoped for was an inefficient compromise.[42] Similar to the Air Force experience in fighting a limited war after years of gearing up its strategic bomber force to fight an atomic war against the Soviet Union, the Navy found no use in Korea for its prototype Savage and adapted Neptune atomic bombers. They provided a deterrent force, however, deployed aboard the *Midway*-class carriers in the Mediterranean.

The effect of the post-World War II drawdown in military forces, when combined with the doctrinal differences between the Air Force and Navy, and the failure to develop a true joint doctrine as a result of Korea, helped cause some of the initial problems we were to face ten years later in Vietnam. Both services had proven themselves to be surprisingly flexible and adaptable to changing requirements in the face of hostilities, and used their newest equipment as well as some of their oldest with great effect. However, the success of much of the war was personality-dependent, with Air Force leadership in particular willing to adapt USAF doctrine and methods to the crises of the initial invasion and the retreat in the fall of 1950. Communication and coordination problems were only solved as the war was coming to a close. Even at the time of the armistice of August 1953, the war was being viewed by many if not most as an aberration, a limited conflict at the edge of a wider Cold War, and one which held few lessons which would ever need to be applied in the future.[43] For the Navy, the conflict provided a new mission for the

aircraft carrier in the form of power projection (which had previously been seen only at the very close of World War II). The performance of the *Essex*-class carriers off Korea, combined with the funding of the "prototype" supercarrier USS *Forrestal* in 1951, led the Navy to continue building more supercarriers as the ideal weapon for fighting the Soviet Union, even though that potential adversary was and would remain a continental power without a great fleet.[44] Naval aviation, therefore, went down two parallel tracks--with nuclear weapons for deterrence or massive retaliation and conventional weapons for power projection against lesser potential enemies.[45] Meanwhile, at the operational and tactical levels, Air Force/Navy airpower coordination remained a problem for the generations of servicemembers yet to come.

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CHAPTER 3

POST-VIETNAM DRAWDOWN

The Vietnam War was the defining period for most of today's Navy and Air Force leadership, as it was for a whole generation of Americans. Once again a small nation on the Pacific rim, with Communist neighbors to the north, came under pressures which seemed to require U.S. assistance. And once again the Air Force and Navy had to respond with aircraft, ordnance and doctrine developed in the main to fight the Soviet Union on the plains of Europe and in the seas surrounding the continents of the Northern Hemisphere.

Like General MacArthur in Korea, Generals Westmoreland and Abrams, as successive Commanders, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV), each wanted control over all air assets to support his ground operations in the theater. Like Generals Stratemeyer and Partridge in Korea, General William W. Momyer (7th Air Force Commander) was the man with the responsibility of supporting his commander in theater, with whatever air assets were available. Unlike the Korean Conflict, however, the air component commander had to answer “up the chain” to his Major Command (Pacific Air Forces, or PACAF), which in turn answered to CINCPAC, Admiral U.S. Grant Sharp. While MacArthur had been his own CINC Far East, Westmoreland and later Abrams now reported to a CINC in Hawaii who was also a Navy Admiral. All the ramifications of the Navy's responsibilities throughout the Pacific, political direction from the White House down, and the lack of joint doctrine and training since Korea were to complicate the issue of airpower coordination.

The establishment of COMUSMACV as a subunified command was an important, if flawed, first step in creating a command hierarchy in Southeast Asia. General William C. Westmoreland, who took command in June 1964, set up his staff along Army lines, and, using the same concept as MacArthur fourteen years earlier, double-hatted his

MACV staff as his ground component staff. His naval component command, U.S. Naval Forces Vietnam, consisted primarily of the ships in TF77, exactly as in Korea. The task force, in turn, reported to Seventh Fleet, and up to CINCPACFLT, the naval component command of Admiral Sharp as CINCPAC. Thus, CINCPAC had control over both the Navy and Air Force airpower assets which could be brought to bear in Southeast Asia. This concentration of power was quite logical in that it reflected the overall U.S. position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union in the Pacific, but it complicated command and control issues to a huge degree in Vietnam.[1]

As in Korea, SAC bombers were called in to provide heavy bombardment in interdiction and CAS missions, while the true "strategic" targets lay north of the border between North Vietnam and the People's Republic of China (PRC). Unlike Korea, however, SAC maintained operational control of the bombers "because the B-52s also had a nuclear mission for general war. . . the Air Force argued that in an emergency valuable time could be lost in debate over pulling the forces from CINCPAC's control."[2] Operational allocation and targeting of the B-52s remained tightly controlled throughout the war. Momyer and his successors "had no control over the targeting, timing, or attack profile of the bombers".[3] Given the political constraints throughout the entire war, and the other overarching coordination problems between the four services in theater, the lack of operational control by COMUSMACV or even by the 7th Air Force (over B-52s) was not as significant a problem as it might have been.[4] Taken as but one part of the overall problem, however, the lack of control of the heavy bombers by on-scene commanders was symptomatic of the lack of preparation to fight a war which did not fit the doctrine of nuclear deterrence.[5]

The Marines had meanwhile taken a stake in I Corps, the northernmost Corps in South Vietnam, with Marines on the ground and the 1st Marine Air Wing in the air. Early agreements between Seventh Air Force and the Marines gave General Momyer responsibility for overall air defense, including Marine interceptors.[6] This mission was

accomplished without difficulty, because there was little if any air threat to South Vietnam during the entire war. The mission of supporting ground forces in I Corps, however, was a microcosm of the coordination difficulty in the entire theater. The Marine air-ground team was again to try to fight its own combined-arms war with its own air control system and its own targeting. The Commander, III Marine Amphibious Force was to maintain operational control over all his organic air assets unless a major emergency was to occur, when COMUSMACV could direct them to Seventh Air Force control. General Westmoreland recognized early on that the numerous competing tactical air forces in the northern sector were a detriment to his overall command. In early 1968, while both the Tet Offensive and the seige at Khe Sanh were being fought back, Westmoreland attempted to get operational control for his air component commander, General Momyer, but fought both the Commandant of the Marine Corps and his own Chief of Staff on the issue. The Army chief, General Harold K. Johnson, was concerned about Army helicopters being placed under Air Force control, and so worried about the precedent of Marine aircraft falling under MACV control.[7] The CINCPAC, Admiral Sharp, compromised by giving Seventh Air Force "mission direction" over aircraft in I Corps. Like the earlier "coordination control" in Korea, however, "mission direction" could be interpreted by commanders, staffs and aircrews to mean whatever suited them at any given time in the conflict. The Marines effectively maintained control over their organic air assets.[8]

Contrasting with the Korean experience, and with relations with COMUSMACV and the Marines, the Air Force/Navy relationship was almost cordial. The services recalled their problems in coming to agreement on joint airpower in Korea, and that the only satisfactory (not to say combat effective) solution had been representation in the JOC by both services and maximum communication between headquarters, air bases and carriers. Consequently, and in light of the even-greater political control over the Vietnam War, the services came to an informal agreement on geographic separation of the air

campaign. The concepts of "route-packs" and "coordination control" for Air Force and Navy missions were carried forward from Korea. There was a certain method to the madness -- the Navy was assigned coastal packages within close reach of its Yankee Station carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin, while the Air Force targets were somewhat closer to its Thailand-based fighters. A subsequent 7th Air Force Commander, General John W. Vogt, Jr., noted that the route-pack system did save time on routine mission coordination.[9] Yet, the lack of a truly unified air campaign controlled by an effective air component commander was a reflection on the lessons not learned in the years since the Korean War.

The war in Vietnam was once again a "come as you are" affair, with the Air Force and Navy showing varying degrees of success in adapting Cold War weaponry to fighting a limited war in the jungle. The Air Force, treating Korea as an aberration, returned to its strategic deterrent emphasis as soon as that conflict was over, fielding the B-47, B-52 and B-58 bombers and a succession of more powerful and longer-ranged ICBMs. As a consequence, the service had to modify its F-105 from the nuclear strike to the air interdiction mission, field supersonic interceptors such as the F-102 against possible North Vietnamese airstrikes, and acquire FAC aircraft from the Army. The effort, though arduous, was a success, and these weapon systems, along with such others as F-5s, AT-37s and gunships of all types were effective in their newly-acquired roles in limited war.

The Navy, for its part, came to the conflict well-prepared to fight a limited rather than nuclear war, for the most part because of its own multibillion dollar investment in nuclear deterrence -- the submarine-launched ballistic missile. This investment in one third of the strategic nuclear Triad by the submarine service allowed Naval Aviation to shift its emphasis away from strategic nuclear attack to conventional air strikes, and to develop such aircraft as the A-4, A-6, A-7, F-8, and the ubiquitous, multimission F-4.

In an interesting sidelight to the separation of missions by both doctrine and geography during Vietnam, the two services came to share several aircraft: the A-1

Skyraider, A-7 Corsair II and F-4 Phantom II were all originally developed as carrier aircraft but were used by both the Navy and Air Force. Some of this sharing of aircraft types was pushed upon the services for the sake of standardization and economy by Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara (who also conceived the TFX under the same concept), but in fact all three were outstanding aircraft and most appropriate for the Vietnam conflict. The TFX was never to be procured by the Navy, but was to become the F-111 Aardvark of the Air Force. After initial mechanical problems leading to high losses in Southeast Asia, the F-111 became the mainstay night and all-weather penetrator of the 1980s and 1990s.

Coordination, command and control, and unity of effort issues surfaced repeatedly during America's longest armed conflict. Both the Navy and Air Force entered the war adhering to their own doctrines and aircraft. The political difficulties inherent in COMUSMACV's subordination to CINCPAC, the separate naval and air chains of command leading up to that same CINCPAC, and the management of the air war from the White House served to mask some of the differences and lack of coordination between the two services. As in Korea, capable commanders and aviators adapted as required to the situation with which they were faced. But after America's long experience in Southeast Asia, the problem of combat-effective coordination of Air Force and Navy airpower had still not been solved.

By 1979, with the fall of the Shah of Iran, U.S. resolve in the face of a crisis from an unexpected source was being tested once again. In February, the Shah was ousted from power by Muslim extremists. In November, the new Islamic Iranian Republic supported the storming of the U.S. embassy in Tehran and the taking of 53 Americans as hostages. Almost immediately, plans began for Operation Eagle Claw, a joint task force designed to rescue the hostages from the heart of the capital city of a hostile nation. The force eventually grew to nearly 200 personnel; Army Delta Force commandos and

Rangers, anti-aircraft experts, Farsi-speaking truck drivers, a Combat Control Team, Air Force C-130 crews, Marine helicopter crews, and even some Iranians.[10] The mission launched on the night of 24 April 1980, with three MC-130 Combat Talons, three EC-130s configured for ground refueling, and eight Navy RH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters with Marine crews participating. A combination of helicopter mechanical failures and bad weather caused only six helicopters to arrive at the intermediate Desert One refueling site, only five of these being judged on the scene as fully mission-capable. The mission was scrubbed because the minimum number of helicopters required for the most dangerous, close-in portion was previously determined to be six. In the blacked-out refueling operations and preparations to abort the mission and return to the carrier *Nimitz*, a helicopter collided with an EC-130 on the ground and both exploded, killing eight servicemen. The remaining C-130s departed, leaving the burning wreckage, their dead comrades and five RH-53s in the desert.[11]

The investigation which followed was headed by former CNO James L. Holloway, III. His report found 23 separate problem areas with the failed mission, most particularly in the areas of command and control, tactical communications and interservice coordination. Command and control was excellent at the top, but weak, decentralized and unclear below the commander, JTF level. The secrecy of the entire operation, the elements drawn from four services, the appointment of various “experts” in several aspects of special operations to consult with the commander(s), and, not least in significance, the question of what individual was really “in command” in the air, at sea and on the desert floor contributed to the confusion, if not to the actual failure of the mission. Communications at the upper echelons were also effective and appropriate, but again at the tactical level equipment limitations and the need for operational security (OPSEC) created problems. Rangers at Desert One couldn't talk to the inbound C-130s or helicopters due to radio limitations, and the helicopters wouldn't talk to each other due to OPSEC and radio silence procedures. The last helicopter to abort, which also carried the

spare parts for helicopter repair, would have continued the mission had its aircraft commander known the landing site was clear at the other side of a massive sandstorm.[12] Had he done so, six operational helicopters might have been able to launch from Desert One, and history might have been changed.

Air Force Colonel James H. Kyle, the air operations commander on the ground at Desert One, points to four significant reasons the mission failed: lack of USAF Special Operations or Rescue helicopter flight crews teamed with the Marine crews, poor helicopter abort criteria which were used to scrub the mission, low-level tactics which were based on an erroneous intelligence report of possible Iranian radar activity in the area, and lack of adequate helicopter communication systems. Colonel Kyle finds fault not with what the Holloway Commission says, but how it is said.[13]

Colonel Kyle believes "in-house" Special Operations forces, specially trained and equipped for such missions, could have made all the difference at Desert One. He cites the failure to use Air Force helicopter pilots, at least in a co-pilot role, as one of the major reasons the mission failed, and he believes that their experience should have been put to use during both the planning and execution of the operation. Further, he believes the responsibility for the mission's failure cannot be laid on President Carter, nor can it be said that "no one was to blame, it was all bad luck." He states the failure "rests squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. military and more specifically on those of us who were given the responsibility to develop the plan and make it work."[14]

The Iranian hostage rescue mission served in many ways as a symbol of everything wrong with coordination between services. The largely unfounded perceptions of meddling from the White House, service parochialism and lack of cooperation between forces overshadowed the long months of preparation, the dedication to duty and the plain bad luck which attended the operation. The failure at Desert One did provide the impetus to improve Special Operations equipment and training during the next decade.

The years of military cutbacks since the end of the Vietnam War had seen battling both between and within the Air Force and Navy. President Jimmy Carter had canceled the B-1 strategic bomber in 1977, and had continued Presidents Nixon's and Ford's policies of detente with the USSR to reduce nuclear tensions. The SALT II treaty was signed by Carter and Soviet President Brezhnev, and, although it was never ratified due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the U.S. continued to abide by its requirements. Many aircraft found their way to the "boneyard" at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, and personnel drawdowns and pilot training cutbacks marked the Air Force of 1973-1980. On the plus side of the ledger, such weapon systems as the F-15, F-16, A-10, E-3 and Peacekeeper missile came on line during the period to replace the Vietnam veterans.

On the Navy side, the drawdown endangered plans for the fourth *Nimitz*-class carrier, *Theodore Roosevelt*, but Congress persisted and added the ship to Carter's 1980 defense budget over his objections and threatened veto. The rest of the Navy continued to downsize, as the late '70s continued to emphasize strategic deterrence, parity and limitation. *Ohio*-class nuclear-powered missile submarines began to come on line to replace the earlier original 41 "boomers." Clearly, the Navy was based on supercarriers and submarines, and other ships were retired and not replaced. New naval aircraft included the F-14 Tomcat, F/A-18 Hornet and E-2 Hawkeye.

This combination of strategic arms control, shrinking conventional forces, drawdowns of personnel, Soviets in Afghanistan and Americans held hostage in Iran faced Ronald Reagan when he took office on 20 January 1981. He approved plans to build the Air Force's B-1 bomber, expand the Navy from 456 to 600 ships and strengthen forces across the board.[15]

The Reagan years were marked by both a continuation of previous policies of arms limitation, negotiation and strategic deterrence and by military response to aggression by Third World powers. While President Carter's peace initiatives helped improve Israeli-

Egyptian relations, other states in the Mediterranean and Mideast continued to sponsor terrorism against the U.S. and its allies.

El Dorado Canyon, the U.S. airstrike against Libya on 15 April 1986, was in many respects a model for both the type and size of joint Air Force/Navy air operations of the future. The strike came as a result of years of terrorist aggression sponsored by Libyan leader Moammar Khaddafi. It capped months of freedom of navigation operations and destruction of Libyan warships and surface-to-air (SAM) sites by Navy ships and aircraft, and could also be traced to the summer of 1981, when F-14 Tomcat fighters shot down two Libyan Soviet-built Fitter jet attack aircraft. Libya, in addition to its worldwide terrorist activities, was fomenting a civil war in neighboring Chad, and had on several occasions threatened Egypt, the U.S. ally to its east. *El Dorado Canyon* seemed a model operation for U.S. airpower against the despots who would soon seek to acquire territory and fortune in the post-Cold War world. It also marked a step in the right direction for true jointness in coordinated air operations.[16]

The attack was directed by the Commander in Chief, United States European Command (CINCEUR), and target sets and strike plans were put together by the Sixth Fleet and United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) staffs. After approval in Washington, the Air Force strike at Tripoli was planned at the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) at Royal Air Force Base Lakenheath in the United Kingdom (UK), while the Navy targets at Benghazi were planned by TF60 aboard USS *America* in the Mediterranean. From the beginning, the two planning staffs worked together to ensure all details were covered and mutual support was achieved. What ensued was a form of "route-pack" very similar to Korea and Vietnam, but set up with mutual consent rather than distrust.[17]

The mission was successful due to meticulous planning by operations staffs, with oversight from senior commanders and a minimum of interference (but a sufficient

amount of guidance) from Washington. The Naval suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD) missions, combat air patrol, jamming and airborne early warning supported both sides of the package. The Air Force flew its own tanker support and EF-111 jammers. A single air commander was never placed in charge of the entire operation. The Commander, Sixth Fleet (future CNO Vice Admiral Frank Kelso) was the CINCEUR-designated commander of the Mediterranean operations, but he was not intimately involved in planning or execution of *El Dorado Canyon*.

The success of *El Dorado Canyon* points out that small, one-time missions can be accomplished best when simplicity and cooperation are emphasized. Each service had its limitations: the Air Force with its air refueling-intensive 3000-mile flight from the UK, and the Navy with its inevitably limited numbers of A-6E Intruder precision attack aircraft on one or two carriers. But each service had its own service-specific tactics and techniques to surmount those limitations. In that respect the route-packaging-style split of the mission "down the middle" made a great deal of sense, because neither service was forced, either explicitly or implicitly, to bend its own particular doctrine, training or systems to the requirements (or whims) of the other. It has been argued that a joint mission may have been unnecessary and that the Navy or Air Force alone could have (or should have) flown strikes against one or both targets. Political considerations (including British support in the form of the UK-based F-111s), desired levels of target destruction, and the desire for Navy SEAD support for the Tripoli package were all factors in planning a joint operation.[18] Ultimately *El Dorado Canyon* served as counterpoint to the Iranian rescue mission.

The operations of the Reagan buildup years, in Grenada, Lebanon and Libya, led in part to the 1986 Defense Reorganization Act, which in its own turn led to changes in joint operations which were the keys to victory in the Persian Gulf. The Act's

empowerment of the warfighting CINCs and the Chairman of the JCS was a reflection of both successes and failures in joint operations.

From the onset of Desert Shield planning in August 1990 (though Central Command [CINCENT] and its predecessor, the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force of the Carter years had planned for such an eventuality for years) an air campaign was conceived to give the National Command Authorities a theater airpower option against Saddam Hussein. At the same time, Air Force, Navy and Marine aircraft began deployments to the region. The Joint Forces Air Component Commander (JFACC), Lt Gen Charles A. Horner, was given the responsibility of planning, coordination, allocation and tasking of air forces under the direction of the Joint Task Force (JTF) commander. (General Horner himself had been the JTF commander, "CINCCENT forward," in the opening days of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; he was then replaced by General Schwarzkopf, CINCENT, who initially served as his own JTF as well as ground forces component commander, as had MacArthur.)

General Horner exercised his authority via "tactical control" of air forces, a concept which, due to JCS joint doctrine revisions since the Defense Reorganization Act and Omnibus Agreement of 1986, gave the JFACC responsibility to task airpower in accordance with the CINC's apportionment decisions. While the JFACC explicitly did not have command or operational control over forces, his central coordinating authority via air tasking orders (ATOs) was directive in nature from the CINC.

This centralized decision-making in support of the overall campaign gave the JFACC the power lacking in Korea and Vietnam to effectively used the mass of airpower available. The Navy air component representative at the headquarters in Riyadh served as the conduit for coordination between the JFACC and the embarked carrier battle groups. The carrier aircraft were tasked (although ponderously using aircraft delivery) via the ATO. The Marine aircraft located in Bahrain which were "excess" to those required by the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), maintaining the Marine air-ground team

concept laid out in the 1986 Omnibus Agreement, were tasked for operations via the ATO.[19] Strategic Air Command B-52s were included from the very beginning in the air campaign plan. Unlike in Korea and Vietnam, SAC's heavy bombers were placed under the operational control of the in-theater CINC, tasked under the JFACC's ATO, "and two generations of command and control problems went away nearly overnight."[20] The primary difference in SAC participation between the earlier conflicts and Desert Storm was the fact that SAC's B-52s had been increasingly involved since the early 1980s in conventional and contingency mission training. While the Soviet threat still existed and aircraft were still on nuclear alert in early 1991, the lessening of that threat through years of arms control, diplomacy, and outright deterrence allowed for a major difference in SAC employment. Allied forces' air operations were similarly coordinated by the JFACC and tasked via the ATO.

Desert Storm was a major victory for the allied coalition, and a major success for American airpower. The victory was complete, in that it accomplished the United Nations objectives for a free and independent Kuwait. Air Force and Navy airpower had been coordinated effectively, providing a synergy that had been achieved very rarely in previous conflicts. As in all campaigns, successful or not, valuable lessons can be learned from the Gulf War experience. These lessons can be used to form the core of improvements made to joint Air Force/Navy airpower campaigns of the future.

NOTES

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14. Ibid., 340.

15. Potter, 386.

16. Winnefeld and Johnson, 1993, 83.

17. Ibid., 84-85.

18. Ibid., 90.

19. Ibid., 119; John E. Valliere, "Stop Quibbling: Win the War," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, December 1990, 45. Valliere is an Air Force major, former F-111 WSO, and C-130 pilot.

20. Winnefeld and Johnson, 1993, 121.

CHAPTER 4

POST-COLD WAR DRAWDOWN

Desert Storm demonstrated the value of unity of control of air operations, which under current and projected force structures may be all that is needed. Under a unified, joint command structure, professional soldiers, Marines, airmen and sailors soundly defeated the enemy. However, several factors more or less peculiar to the Gulf War must be noted in any discussion of lessons to be learned for future service coordination and force structuring decisions.

The enemy was generally incompetent, both in military execution and strategic planning. He allowed the U.S. and coalition forces to build up, unhindered by serious threat of attack or interdiction, for five and one-half months. His actions, both militarily and politically, served to alienate his erstwhile allies, enrage his enemies and help provide global public support for the UN and coalition response.

The terrain was outstanding for both air and ground combat. Armor, lines of communication, bases, command and control facilities and other vital targets were easy (for the most part) to find and to strike. Coalition air and ground forces took great advantage of this.

Finally, the nature of geopolitics, domestic politics and coalition leadership during the period of the war was such that it allowed the coalition to fight when, where and how it chose to do so (and even to tell the enemy when the air war would begin).

Though too much can be made of the uniqueness of the Gulf War, factors such as these must be considered and compared to corresponding factors facing the U.S. and its allies in future scenarios. Indeed, appropriate parallels have already been drawn regarding UN and U.S. operations in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Almost simultaneously with the success in the Gulf came the final dissolution of our Cold War adversary for over 45 years, the Soviet Union. Over the Christmas holidays of 1991, the USSR ceased to exist, replaced by a series of confederations and informal alliances, and treaty agreements between its former republics. The relatively quiet dissolution itself was almost an anticlimax to the previous two years of breakup, with the Berlin Wall falling, the Warsaw Pact unraveling, and President Gorbachev's temporary overthrow by force of a coup the previous August. On the U.S. side, the official end to the USSR had already been preceded by deep defense cutbacks and personnel drawdowns, planned to eventually total about 20 per cent of the 1990 (and 1980) force levels.[1] Strategic bombers on both sides had already been taken off alert and some ICBM forces and Naval nuclear forces stood down as of late September. In short, the USSR's demise came with a whimper, and (fortunately for both sides) not with a bang, capping force structure and budget decisions which had been made long before.

The current Administration has conducted its "Bottom-Up Review" as a guide to force sizing and acquisition streamlining. The plan calls for the military to be able to fight and win two major, nearly-simultaneous regional conflicts. On the budgeting and acquisition side, the Air Force will be downsized to thirteen active and seven reserve fighter wings, 100 conventional-conflict deployable bombers, twenty B-2s and 40 C-17 transports. The Navy will see its fleet trimmed to 346 ships, including eleven active and one reserve carriers, with ten active and one reserve air wings.[2] Money has been appropriated for completion of USS *John C. Stennis*, launched in 1993. In addition, 48 years after its namesake's cancellation, USS *United States* is scheduled to be commissioned in 1997. These two supercarriers, plus the planned-for CVN-76, will bring the total carrier fleet to two conventional and 12 nuclear-powered by 2002.[3]

In view of the new major regional conflict model, and with the latest look at roles and missions during the Bottom-Up Review (as well as the new Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces, due to report next year), there is a possibility that the

services may be victims of their own successes in the Gulf. The previously stated environmental factors regarding our adversary and the region's geography, when combined with the stunning success of the air campaign and four-day ground war, may have led Congress and the public to believe the military really can do much more with much less. As we continue our "build-down" to projected force structures, the Air Force and Navy in particular must work on improving their combat effectiveness and synergy to fight the wars of the future.

The Post-Cold War United States finds itself in a position somewhat analogous to its position in 1947. In the previous two years we have seen our principal enemy, the Soviet Union, all but disappear, with its own internal problems taking precedence over whatever plans it may have had for global hegemony or high-tech weapons development. In much the same way as occurred at the end of World War II, the Navy, and to a lesser extent the Air Force, is finding itself without a viable potential enemy on the horizon. At the same time, in the wake of the Gulf War, a feeling exists both within the services and among the U.S. and world public in general that the U.S. and its partners in the Gulf, NATO and elsewhere should be all but invincible against the less-capable foes that do remain.

With the emphasis on jointness that attended the victory in the Gulf, Congress and the American people expect a continuation of joint planning and operations in future conflicts, big and small. The operations in Somalia were a microcosm, with forces from all four services playing a part. The ongoing situation in Bosnia and Iraq, with carriers on station, Navy and Air Force jets enforcing no-fly zones and the continuing threat of greater ground force involvement, serve as models for both the kind of "limited" conflicts in which we may be involved in the future, as well as the likely end states for MRCs which may be just over the horizon.

At this critical juncture, a key to avoiding the "Pearl Harbor syndrome" (or "Korea syndrome") of unpreparedness for the next war, and at the same time gaining the support

of a sometimes unwilling and often shortsighted Congress and public, is to foster coordination rather than competition between the two services which operate the most sophisticated and most expensive weaponry. Only by coordinating effort emphasizing synergy and warfighting effectiveness over redundancy, duplication and rivalry will the nation be best served.

NOTES

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for change to improve coordination, synergy and the warfighting effectiveness of Air Force and Navy airpower center on two principal areas. The first, the force structure or "hardware" area, deals mostly with the weapons of war and how they can be most effectively (and efficiently) used in future major regional conflicts. The second area deals more with the very different views of the world and of warfare itself, which have colored the two services' views of themselves and of each other since the dawn of aviation, and especially since the end of World War II.

As high-tech, high-cost weapon systems are canceled or trimmed back from levels the services would want to have, both the Air Force and Navy need to cooperate more**,** rather than less as has usually occurred with a shrinking defense budget. The Chairman of the JCS during the Gulf War, General Colin Powell, led the jointness fight before, during and after that conflict. Accordingly, the United States Atlantic Command (USACOM) received a new mission in 1993, "to provide military forces where needed throughout the world, and to ensure those forces are trained as joint units capable of carrying out their assigned tasks."[1] USACOM is no longer a "Navy-owned" combatant command (the former LANTCOM) with responsibility for the Caribbean, Latin America and the Atlantic. It is now, in addition to bearing that geographic responsibility and also the responsibility for the land defense of CONUS and Canada, charged with writing joint doctrine and planning and exercising joint operations, with particular emphasis on Air Force/Navy cooperation.

In today's atmosphere of deficit reduction, drawdown and the lack of a superpower threat on the immediate horizon, Congress and the American people will not likely approve of interservice battles of the type which took place during the seventies over the F-14 through F-18. The backlash against the commonality which had been forced upon

the services by Secretary McNamara (and epitomized in the TFX) led to the Air Force and Navy each going down its own path for high-technology fighter aircraft development and procurement. While competition does often yield innovation and improvement, in the future shrinking budget shares will likely insure the competition takes place before weapon systems are purchased ("fly before you buy"). In addition, the constraints on budgets and calls for both jointness and flexibility will likely require more commonality between the services in order to reap the benefits of economies of scale in large unit purchases of aircraft, as well as spares, training systems, avionics and ordnance. The aircraft types procured by the Air Force and Navy in the seventies are all outstanding in their own ways and served well in the Gulf and in several lesser conflicts. The challenge of the future is to integrate these existing weapon systems with emerging technologies and to emphasize the core competencies of the two services.

A particular core competency of the United States Navy (alone among the world's navies) is in the operation of the supercarrier. New responsibilities in the post-Cold War world have led the new USACOM to develop Adaptive Joint Force Packages (AJFP) which may serve as prototypes for aircraft carrier employment in future MRCs as well as contingency operations. These packages, built around a supercarrier but varying widely in their assigned naval, air, Marine and even Army forces, are tailored to meet the needs of a JTF commander. The concept has been tested in two deployments as of mid-1994.

Joint Task Force 93-1, built around USS *Theodore Roosevelt*, embarked on a 600-man Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) with helicopters aboard the carrier to supplement a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) aboard other ships. Real-world contingencies provided the best test for this AJFP, as requirements in both Somalia and Bosnia forced the Marines to split off to Africa while *Roosevelt* took a second F-14 squadron and the remainder of the air wing aboard to operate in Operation Deny Flight in the Adriatic.[2]

Joint Task Force 93-2 used USS *America* as part of a Special Operations ARG with Marine helicopters aboard, with planned JTF exercises of Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAM), USAF airlift and air refueling, as well as submarine operations. Although effective pre-deployment training took place, the AJFP was again diverted to Somalia and Bosnia.[3]

Future AJFPs will emphasize such diverse missions as Patriot deployments, combat search and rescue, port seizure and security, Army Ranger deployments and strategic bomber operations. These JTF exercises (including those which turned into real-world deployments, and another off Haiti) demonstrate the many capabilities of a platform as large (and fast) as an aircraft carrier.[4]

The key to these packages is that they emphasize the unique capabilities of the supercarrier, not only as a power projection or sea control weapon as originally envisioned by the World War II-era Navy, but as a force enhancer and multiplier in the joint arena, working with Air Force and Army units as well as with the Marines. The carrier can not only enable the Navy to perform its own fleet air arm missions of airstrike, anti-submarine warfare, minesweeping and self-protection in hostile areas, but in a joint force package it can support requirements for force application or force enhancement from any of the services in either an MRC or contingency operation. The nuclear-powered carrier has the capability to remain either on the high seas or on station for long periods, though limited by its need for replenishment of ordnance, aircraft fuel and spares, and food for the crew. For the initial period of a conflict, forward-deployed carriers can bring their own airpower, airfields, and logistics support, allowing the U.S. to react to aggression or launch initial strikes before basing privileges are granted in the region or forces deployed from the CONUS or other forward bases. The Navy core competency of supercarrier operations should be emphasized in planning an MRC to complement the core competencies of the Air Force.

A particular core competency of the Air Force at present is precision, stealthy, night and all-weather attack. The F-117, F-111 and F-15E performance in the Gulf was outstanding, delivering ordnance into Iraqi centers of gravity. The addition of the B-2 and continuing upgrades to the B-1 and B-52 to make them versatile PGM carriers will improve the Air Force's long-range precision delivery capabilities as well.

For the Navy's part, its A-6E Intruder aircraft will be retired by 1997. The newest 210 F-14D Tomcats are being upgraded to be strike-capable, with avionics hardware and software installations to bring the "Bombcat" up to the "range of an A-6, accuracy of an A-7E and payload of a B-17."[5] The F-18, now being upgraded, will have much-improved combat radius and endurance, but not appreciably better bombing equipment. In the words of one force planner, "It's a good airplane, but no A-6E."[6] The Navy's standard mix of "strike fighters" in the future will be 36 F-18s and 14 F-14s. In short, the Navy has lost the limited precision strike capability it had with the A-6E, and with the cancellation of advanced attack aircraft programs for the future (the A-12), it will not regain it in the near term.

The Air Force can best provide warfighting effectiveness, synergy and coordination to the forces required in the new MRC model by focusing on its expertise in stealth and precision. It should maintain and improve its precision attack capability for the near term by incorporating Joint Advanced Strike Technology (JAST) designs and concepts into the F-22. The service needs to maintain its technological edge in active weapon systems as well as in research and development for those of the next century. Possibly, the best way to do this amid tight budgets is to "double-up" newly emerging strike technology and stealth technology in a single airplane rather than by fielding two (or more) new weapon systems simultaneously. Instead of having different future JAST airplanes for the Air Force and Navy, the service with the existing core competency in stealth and precision strike should build upon that expertise. The resulting aircraft may be less-than-optimum for all its functions, but will remain an effective weapon nonetheless. These

efforts, combined with the Navy's improvements to the F-18 and F-14, will result in a spectrum of coordinated combined strike capability in a future MRC. A CINC or JFACC will enjoy a high-low mix of aircraft capabilities provided by both services which can meet the requirements of a particular phase of the conflict. If precision is required, a CINC can plan on deployed Air Force aircraft. If immediate and sustained presence is required, a CINC can plan on less-sophisticated carrier-based Navy aircraft. As a conflict continues, the CINC can tailor his carrier battle groups to carry a wide variety of forces as land bases are established and reinforcements brought into the theater.

Navy aircraft will continue to be deployable to MRC areas in AJFPs as required by the JTF commander and warfighting CINC. Once on station, they will be responsive to immediate requirements. The carrier battle group will continue in its forward presence role during times of peace as well as increased tensions, providing a platform from which to launch short-notice airstrikes, combat air patrol, reconnaissance or show-of-force missions.

The Air Force brings superior precision attack to the mix by employing F-117, F-15E, F-111 and F-22 aircraft, in addition to B-52s, B-1s and B-2s which, though they must operate from forward operating bases or cover long distances enroute to the target area, provide the penetration and precision capability which the public, Congress and our allies have come to expect.

Another Air Force core competency in the MRC arena is the capability to air-to-air refuel practically every aircraft in the U.S. and allied inventory, anywhere in the world. The tanker force of KC-135s and KC-10s was stretched to the maximum in the deployment to the Gulf and subsequent air campaign. Nevertheless, it ably served both the Desert Storm and strategic nuclear alert commitments at the same time.[7]

A key to maintaining Air Force/Navy coordination in the future, especially under the requirement to conduct two nearly-simultaneous MRCs, is to maintain and build tanker capability. The Navy has only emergency air-refueling capability in its S-3B

multimission aircraft and is wholly dependent on Air Force tankers for sustained medium-range strike and combat air patrol operations. The air-to-air refueling mission, as perfected during the early Cold War and used heavily in Vietnam and the Gulf and in contingencies such as El Dorado Canyon in between reflects the ultimate in interservice coordination. The Navy's carrier-based aircraft are given an added dimension in range and loiter time when Air Force tankers are in the area. The tanker mission becomes even more vital as U.S. presence shrinks back toward the CONUS, with fewer than three tactical fighter wing equivalents forecasted in Europe in the near future, and fewer carriers available on station.

These are some of the basic core competencies of the Air Force and Navy today, developed over several decades of preparation for war with the Soviet Union, which can now be applied most directly to future major regional conflicts. The challenge in the smaller, cheaper force structure of the future is to integrate these core competencies into a combat-effective whole, emphasizing synergy rather than competition between the two services. By emphasizing the high-low mix of aircraft capabilities, by planning employment of aircraft carriers to support joint operations rather than only as floating airfields for power projection, and by using Air Force stealth and precision in combination with Navy SEAD, CAP and other force enhancement missions, the two services can best serve the nation in the conflicts of the future.

The history of the Air Force and Navy since the end of World War II has been largely one of the services looking and talking past one another, and eyeing each other's share of the budget and mission of defending the United States, all the while facing a common enemy.

The Navy, with its long tradition as a separate service and as the nation's first line of defense dating back before the Revolution, developed from the small commerce-raiding and coastal defense fleet of John Paul Jones, through the 19th Century era of

gunboat diplomacy (and gunboat warfare in the Civil War) to finally embrace the big ocean, big fleet, big gun ideals of Alfred Thayer Mahan. These ideals have guided the Navy for the last hundred years, with the only real modification being the emergence of the attack aircraft carrier to replace the battleship in the premier role as ship of the line since 7 December 1941. The Navy has placed greater or less emphasis on its sea control or power projection missions depending on world events, politics, and who was sitting in the CNO's or Secretary of the Navy's chair, but the emphasis has always been on the dominant big fleet and capital ship since Mahan.[8]

When Japan was defeated in 1945, the Navy found itself without a big-ocean capital ship enemy. The Soviet surface fleet was never to be much more than a coastal defense force, lacking true battleships or large aircraft carriers. The real threat to the U.S. came from Soviet bombers, and later ICBMs and SLBMs. The Navy, seeing its traditional defense of the homeland role in mortal danger (as Douhet and Mitchell had predicted) seized upon atomic strike from carriers as its new power projection mission, perceiving it to be the logical extension of its limited role in bombing the Japanese homeland at the end of World War II.[9]

The newly-independent Air Force, which had dropped the only two atomic weapons ever used in anger, successfully maintained its claim on the strategic air warfare mission during the turbulent early post-war years. In roles and missions debates which are similar to but dwarf today's turf battles in both publicity and bitterness, both services were fighting for their lives as independent armed forces amid declining budget shares, personnel drawdowns, and calls for unification.[10]

The “limited war” in Korea was in many ways a sidelight to the Cold War, seen as a possible feint before the beginning of World War III, which eventually developed into a stalemate. The Air Force and Navy both developed new weapons and tactics, especially those involving the first use of U.S. jet aircraft in combat. Carriers eschewed their inherent mobility and became floating stationary airfields, operating extensively for the

first time in a low anti-ship threat environment. Sea control was not an objective in this war. World War II "very heavy" bombers were used for interdiction. The concept of centralized control of the joint air effort was revived, with the experience of World War II as a model, but still lacked complete success. The Navy still clung to its independent operations and concept of power projection for CINCPAC back in Hawaii rather than as part of a unified U.S. effort under MacArthur and Stratemeyer.

Vietnam was a similar story, with a "separate but equal" air effort flown by both services. Heavy bombers participated once again, but this time were controlled and executed by headquarters in the CONUS. Geographic separation of Navy and Air Force missions, used as a last resort for deconfliction in Korea, was refined and used more effectively in Vietnam. Carriers were once again used as fixed floating airbases in contradiction of Mahan's principles.[11]

Both these conflicts against Soviet client states were fought against the backdrop of the Cold War and ongoing strategic deterrence provided first by SAC bombers and later by the strategic Triad. The Air Force views of strategic bombardment and the Navy's view of power projection and sea control as their reasons for being were shaken by these limited wars in far-off corners of the world. The enemies in these wars had neither vital centers suitable for strategic bombardment nor big-ocean navies suitable for a Mahanian engagement.

In the last two decades of the Cold War, both services developed high-technology fighter aircraft to fight the Soviet adversary. However, at the same time serious efforts were being made to limit and then reduce the nuclear arsenals on each side. New bombers and carriers were funded more slowly as the strategic threat was perceived to decline and as technology matured. The Navy put more effort into ballistic missile and attack submarines and less into power projection and sea control by carriers and other surface ships. The Air Force put effort into space, missile, and stealth technology.

Now the Soviet Union has disintegrated, leaving the U.S. without its most recent threat but not without potential enemies as the only remaining superpower. The Air Force's keystone mission of strategic bombardment has to a great extent been modified (but not wholly replaced) by a mission of precision strike against an enemy's centers of gravity by a smaller number of smaller aircraft. The Navy's traditional mission as the nation's first line of defense has been constantly modified since 1945, with emphasis on power projection and sea control against large enemies with large fleets being shifted first toward nuclear strike and now toward smaller engagements against enemies with small fleets or no fleets.

Both services are currently engaged in the latest round of roles and missions debates, with the Air Force threatening the Navy's role of forward presence by suggesting the use of long-range bombers instead of aircraft carriers,[12] the Navy returning to the theme that the Air Force's justification for existence has eroded since the end of the Cold War,[13] and both services attempting to modernize and replace aging weapon systems in the most economical way possible.

We have come full circle since 1947. The U.S. is militarily dominant on the world scene. We have a host of allies who served well with us in the Cold War and the Gulf War, and we also have a host of potential enemies that could face us in future major regional conflicts. Budgetary pressures force the services into difficult choices regarding weapon system development, force structuring and sizing, and personnel issues. The Air Force and Navy must recognize that a major change has taken place in the world requiring a quantum leap in creativity, innovation, and thinking about effective coordination of American (not Air Force or Navy) airpower to face the challenges that lie ahead.

NOTES

1. Major George Farrell, USAF, Plans and Policy Division, Intelligence Directorate, USACOM, interviewed by author during visit to HQ USACOM, Norfolk, VA, 31 March 1994.,

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Captain Timothy E. Prendergast, USN, Chief, Strategy Division, Plans and Policy Directorate, USACOM; and Colonel John Langdon, USMC, Chief, Regional Plans and Policy Division, Plans and Policy Directorate, USACOM, interviewed by author during visit to HQ USACOM, Norfolk, VA, 31 March 1994. CAPT Prendergast was an early advocate and planner for F-14 air-ground capability.

5. Ibid. CAPT Prendergast is also the man who proudly coined the term "Bombcat". He argues that the F-14D should have been built to F-15E standards, but was not due to its primary mission as a fleet air defense fighter taking priority.

6. Ibid.

7. It could in fact be said that SAC's tankers and bombers fought and won two simultaneous wars -- the Cold War and the Gulf War -- in the same calendar year.

8. Hagan, 271, 390.

9. Ibid., 344-345.

10. Rearden, 422.

11. Hagan, 368.

12. Steven Watkins, "Bombs away! McPeak eyes Navy's air mission," Air Force Times, 7 March 1994.

13. Noel Gibeson, "Who should control air and space?," Air Force Times, 30 May 1994.