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NAVAL FORCE EMPLOYMENT DURING PEACETIME CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

by

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

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Naval Force Employment During Peacetime Contingency Operations

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Naval force employment is enhanced through joint service operations. Therefore, improvements in the areas of joint doctrine development, training, exercises and employment is required. Development of operational naval doctrine similar to those doctrines of other services is necessary to enhance naval force employment options during PCO. Additionally, establishment of standing Joint Task Force commanders would ensure Unity of Command and as a result, unity of effort among the services and the political, economic, and informational agencies involved in PCO.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"We are the United States of America, the leader of the West that has become the leader of the world. And as long as I am President, I will continue to lead in support of freedom everywhere---not out of arrogance, and not out of altruism, but for the safety and security of our children. This is a fact: Strength in the pursuit of peace is no vice; isolationism in the pursuit of security is no virtue."

President Bush, 28 January 1992
State of the Union Address

The startling world events of the last few years which have precipitated the end of the Cold War through the disentegration of the Soviet Bloc and erosion of the bi-polar world have had tremendous impacts upon the direction of the United States National Security Strategy. As the focus of military planners and decision makers moves towards the 3rd world and the maintenance of global regional stability, the operational role of the various armed services throughout the spectrum of conflict must be examined.\(^1\) Reductions in force structure coupled with a growing perception of more, not less, involvement in 3rd world regional contingencies brings the issue of single service versus joint service operations to the forefront. This is of particular importance within the realm of Low Intensity Conflict as the strategies and doctrines of the armed services adapt to the emerging world order.
The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of naval forces in the Peacetime Contingency Operations portion of Low Intensity Conflict and to address the question of single service versus joint service employment options. Low Intensity Conflict is defined in JCS doctrine as political and military confrontation below the conventional level of war and above the routine peaceful competition among states. This portion of the operational continuum is further broken down into four distinct categories which are Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency, Combatting Terrorism, Peacekeeping, and Peacetime Contingency Operations. In narrowing the scope of the paper, naval force employment considerations will focus on the area where the potential for direct military confrontation is the greatest which is in the area of Peacetime Contingency Operations.

Peacetime Contingency Operations are usually time sensitive operations which occur when military action is needed to enforce or support diplomatic initiatives. JCS doctrine defines these operations as "the short-term, rapid projection or employment of military forces in conditions short of war." These operations encompass a myriad of different actions ranging from disaster relief and shows of force to noncombatant evacuation operations, strikes and raids. The predominant naval forces that would be used during these operations are those of the carrier battlegroup and/or the amphibious ready group. This paper will center on the
employment of these force modules and the advantages/disadvantages of single service versus joint service employment of these forces.

Peacetime Contingency Operations most often occur as crisis response actions and are politically controlled events which may limit force employment options available to the operational commander. These types of operations require a delicate balance among force, time and political factors to be successful. The thesis of the paper is that joint operations enhance naval force employment during the crisis response portion of Peacetime Contingency Operations, however the synergistic effect created by force, time and political factors will determine the level of joint effort required during these operations.

In supporting this thesis statement, this study will begin with a review of the background of Low Intensity Conflict and Peacetime Contingency Operations throughout the 1900's. Following this background discussion is an analysis of the force, time and political factors associated with these operations, their inter-relationships with one another and an examination into the advantages/disadvantages of naval force employment in both single service and joint service operations. This analysis will be followed by some general conclusions with respect to naval force employment and joint service operations indicative of the trends which have developed in recent years. Recommendations which may be of
assistance to operational commanders in planning and execution
operations of this type in the future are put forth to
conclude this study.
CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

"For the world is still a dangerous place. Only the dead have seen the end of conflict."

President Bush, 28 January 1992
State of the Union Address

Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) has been the most prevalent type of interaction armed forces have participated in during the 20th century.\(^1\) The likelihood that this will remain the pattern for force employment is as great, if not greater today, due in part to the proliferation of weapons and technology throughout the developing world, the complex socio-economic inter-relationships which have developed among nations and the continuing expansion of United States national interests. One important factor to consider when examining the historical background of United States LIC involvement is that the perception of the low level of violence associated with LIC is that which is seen from the perspective of the United States and may not represent the perception held by the target state. This characteristic of LIC thus makes it an extremely complex environment within which to develop effective military strategy and operational doctrine.

The United States involvement in LIC after the conclusion of World War II has tripled when compared with the LIC involvement of the United States in the forty years preceding the war. The predominate type of involvement in the LIC arena
prior to World War II involved actions which were characterized by armed conflict. After this period, the increased level of LIC interaction was a result of increased involvement in Insurgency and Counter-insurgency activities and non-combat actions such as Peacekeeping and presence operations. One argument that can be put forth to explain this increased level of activity is that the greater number of LIC events in the post-World War II era are an outgrowth of the United States policy of containment of communism and therefore the United States was more apt to get involved within the developing world to support the containment policy. Certainly, the extent of the amount of LIC involvement in Latin America and East Asia depicted in Figure 1 lend credence to this argument.

However, the recent trend of greater LIC involvement in the Middle East since the early 1970's does not necessarily follow the same reasoning which applied to LIC in other areas of the world. This increased Middle Eastern trend does reflect the desires of the United States to support governments throughout the world which are considered pro-Western, yet of equal importance are the increased global economic relationships which have developed between countries since World War II and the interdependence of many countries where energy resources are concerned. Additionally, the impact of international terrorism cannot be discounted and must be considered when analyzing LIC trends. The increased
involvement of the United States in LIC throughout the world post-World War II is thus a combination of the policy of containment, support for governments sympathetic to the United States and our national interests and increased global economic interdependence throughout the world especially where energy resources are concerned.4

United States LIC involvement is characterized by the limitations imposed on the level of violence which ensues and not necessarily the level of force required to execute the operation. Limited objectives and overriding political control are common to all forms of conflict within the LIC operational continuum. Direct military force involvement is the least preferable alternative in the majority of LIC cases. When direct military force is required, however, political controls are established which impose significant limitations on the scope of the operation as well as the time limit within which to commence and cease operations.5 This is done to reduce the high degree of political risk associated with these types of operations and is readily apparent when historical cases under the LIC subset of Peacetime Contingency Operations are examined.

Peacetime Contingency Operations (PCO) where armed forces are employed and armed combat results account for approximately one-third of all LIC operations. Most of these operations are connected with developing countries and present cases where the direct threats to national security are
somewhat ambiguous. In each instance, there is an extreme amount of control at the political level through the National Security Council and Department of State vice what is seen during conventional war through the Department of Defense. PCO where armed combat takes place occurs most often during the height of global competition among states (World War I, World War II, Cold War) as Figure 2 illustrates.

One of the constants of the post-World War II era is that naval forces have been involved in over two-thirds of the PCO cases, however, joint operations, not single service naval operations, are the normal method within which PCO are conducted. Increased joint activity usually correlates with an increased conflict level of violence or politically allowable level of violence. Recent examples which can be used to support this observation are the operations in Grenada in 1983 (Urgent Fury), the Tripoli Raid in 1986 (El Dorado Canyon) and operations in Panama in 1989 - 1990 (Just Cause).

The roles of Navy and Air Forces have been primarily supportive in nature when the aggregate of PCO are examined with the ground forces of the United States Army and Marine Corps being used as the predominant combat forces. Major exceptions to this have occurred in recent years where mission objectives have been extremely limited, particularly in the areas of limited strikes and raids. Navy and Air Forces were the predominant force during El Dorado Canyon in 1986. In some instances the predominant forces used were those of Navy
Peacetime Contingency Operations
United States Military Combat

Figure 2.
assets, specifically the Gulf of Sidra incidents in 1981 and 1986 and the operations in the Persian Gulf in 1988. However, even in these isolated instances, significant joint service and interagency cooperation and support was required to execute the operations specifically in the areas of intelligence and warning.

The majority of recent PCOs are joint in nature and executed under the command of a Joint Task Force Commander (JTF). The JTF commander ensures unity of effort among the forces involved. This is especially critical in the area of PCO due to the political controls, considerations and constraints that limit the military commander with respect to military means available to execute the mission. Additionally, interagency coordination between the political, economic and informational branches of government complicate the PCO picture and military efforts within each of these areas must be coordinated through a single JTF commander if the operation is to be successful.

Finally, PCOs often take place in areas where the logistics support infrastructure is not established and results in the establishment of long logistics lines of communication. This is a vital consideration which must be addressed in the crisis planning/execution process as force composition is affected by endurance and sustainability considerations. When additional constraints of time and political factors are folded into this complex PCO model,
patience and perseverance are the watchwords which must be pursued by the operational commander. An understanding of force, time and political inter-relationships is essential in the execution of a successful PCO.\textsuperscript{10}
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

'War is a matter of vital importance to the state; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied.'

Sun Tzu

In planning the conduct of a PCO, the operational commander is guided by the three basic operational questions which must be addressed during the conduct of any operation; the conditions which must be produced to achieve the political goal, the sequence of events that will most likely result in the desired conditions, and how the resources should be applied to produce those sequence of events. The three primary factors which underlay these operational questions that must be balanced by the operational commander during the planning process of PCO are those of force, time and political controls, constraints and considerations (political C3). This is a difficult task which confronts the operational commander and failure to achieve the requisite balance can result in mission failure prompting unacceptable political risks. As such, the operational commander must ensure that the planning and execution guidance received is clear and understood as is the guidance issued to those forces which must execute the operation. The inter-relationship of these factors is shown in Figure 3. How naval forces are used with respect to each of these factors and the
Peacetime Contingency Operations

Figure 3.
advantages/disadvantages of single service versus joint service operations is in the analysis which follows.

The first factor that will be examined is that of force. One of the requirements for success in any operation is the determination of the appropriate amount of force required to execute the mission. Three of the Principles of War that are most prevalent in this area are those of Mass, Maneuver and Economy of Force. The concept of employing concentrated superior combat power which has the flexibility to be applied at a decisive place and time is a primary goal when determining force requirements for the conduct of PCO. When developing force composition, just as determining what forces are required to execute a mission is of importance, it is equally important to identify what forces are not required. This allows for follow-on force employment options if need be. If these conditions of Mass, Maneuver and Economy of Force can be met, the enemy is placed at a disadvantage and mission objective accomplishment with decisive results is the more probable outcome. Determining this force requirement is of critical importance within the area of PCO in that political failure from an unsuccessful operation may in fact be more detrimental than not conducting the operation at all.

Naval forces alone can be used in a manner which is non-threatening (i.e. over-the-horizon and within international waters) yet capable of projecting sizable force packages. Naval forces bring with them the attributes of
endurance, sustainability, and flexibility primarily through freedom of movement within international waters and the capability to employ varying force packages each with distinct capabilities. Examples are carrier based air with relatively long range strike capabilities supported by organic strike support packages, Tomahawk capable surface combatants with long range cruise missile capabilities, and Marine Corps forces able to be inserted from distances over the horizon. These attributes of naval forces are consistent with Mass and Maneuver and significantly enhance the options available to the operational commander and political leadership in allowing for resiliency within the PCO planning and execution process. This is of particular importance when situational factors change and force projection is not required. In these instances, naval forces can be committed to an area in preparation for action without committing the political leadership to action thus providing for a method of escalation control.

On the other hand, in those situations where naval forces do not bring with them the requisite projection power to accomplish mission objectives, the operational commander is faced with the task of bringing in other forces which by their very nature may not have the associated flexibility with respect to endurance, sustainability or freedom of movement. Undesirable escalation in the crisis can occur if these force constraints are not adjusted to. If the risk of escalation
negatively impacts the political goals of the operation, concentrated combat power may suffer to prevent escalation and/or mission objectives/tasks adjusted to reflect force capabilities. In determining force size, it is important to identify the intended target for the application of force whether it be the people of a country, the government, a third party or any other organized group. The Objective, another Principle of War, and in particular the political objective, remains the heart and primary focus throughout the conduct of PCO.

Additionally, particular situations may require the use of systems and weapons from other services which may maximize the chances of success, reduce the element of risk, and keep within the political bounds associated with these type of operations. The operational commander must determine the amount and mix required among available forces to accomplish mission objectives. When using forces from multiple services, however, interoperability and doctrinal issues must be considered.

Interoperability among the services will always remain as factor during the force planning juncture and execution phases of PCO. Joint interoperability lessons learned came to the forefront during the operations in Grenada (Urgent Fury) in 1983. As a result of these lessons learned, many efforts have been undertaken in recent years to narrow the gap between the services that exist with respect to hardware associated
interoperability differences. It is important to emphasize that although the hardware incompatibilities that exist are the ones most commonly discussed, interoperability is not just an equipment related term. Operating doctrine and procedures are the key. Operation El Dorado Canyon is an example of the operational dilemma faced by the operational commander when determining force size as it relates to aforementioned factors.

Navy forces alone did not have sufficient combat power to execute Operation El Dorado Canyon in 1986. Air Force forces were required to be used during the conduct of the Tripoli Raid and were employed in conjunction with carrier based air to successfully carry out the mission. However, due to endurance limitations (fuel) and flexibility limitations (freedom of movement restricted due to non-involved country overflight restrictions), additional complex operational planning constraints were introduced to the situation through which the operational commander adjusted to ensure mission objective accomplishment. Many of the actions which were undertaken to preclude escalation and still present overwhelming combat power to ensure mission success, demonstrated the growing operational proficiency which had developed between the services and the narrowing of the gap with respect to interoperability.5

Another critical factor in determining force requirements is an evaluation of the threat with which the force can be
expected to encounter. The volatile nature of potential 3rd world nations has increased due to the proliferation of advanced weapons and support systems. Accurate and timely intelligence about the prospective enemies order of battle, operating characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses is required if the operational commander is to be successful in determining the appropriate force mix required. Additionally, real time battle damage assessment considerations must be factored in when determining force composition. It is therefore incumbent upon the operational commander to obtain accurate intelligence estimates about the intended target of the operation in order to accurately gauge force requirements.

Intelligence is one area where the United States Navy is woefully deficient when organic capabilities are assessed and where operations can be enhanced through joint service support. Naval force organic collections capability can be a limiting factor as systems design and operations have been focused towards a Soviet threat. Particular assets which must be considered are those associated with Special Operations Forces (SOF) and intelligence gathering platforms from other services as well as agencies not under the purview of the Department of Defense. It is important to note that SOF is a valuable force multiplier where PCO is concerned. Without a credible real time intelligence capability, mission success in these highly politically controlled operations is
subject to risk and may in fact be causes for delay or
cancellation of the operations themselves.

The geographic boundaries where a PCO is to be conducted
must also be considered. The carrier battle group which has
been structured towards a blue water threat may not enjoy some
of the advantages it has while conducting blue water
operations, specifically, battle space management through
offense and defense in depth. Operations in littoral waters
and bounded seas present a myriad of complex problems such as
shallow water ASW considerations, mines, land based air and
land based surface to surface cruise missile threats. In blue
water operations, a carrier battle group can control to a
reasonable extent the battlespace within which it is
operating. This is not necessarily true when conducting
operations in littoral waters. Joint service operations may
therefore be required due to geographic constraints that
present operational constraints to naval forces.

Concurrent with determining force requirements are those
of time factors involved with the planning for and execution
of the operation. Security, Offensive, and Surprise are
Principles of War which have the greatest applicability in
this area. PCO during the crisis response portion are
characterized by short lead time planning and on-station
requirements. This is most often done to maintain the element
of surprise and offensive surge to enable the accomplishment
of quick and decisive actions. Informational denial to the
intended target of the PCO as well as force protection through quick offensive action are consistent with the concept of Security.\textsuperscript{7} Overwhelming concentrated combat power which does not meet specific time requirements levied by the NCA is not an acceptable force option through which PCO political objectives can be attained. It therefore follows that force composition and time considerations are intertwined and it is difficult to separate the two during the decision making process.

Frequently, carrier battle groups and an associated ARG/MEU are forward deployed and are available to react to regional crisis which may develop within their area of operations. However, maldeployment of forces can result in situations where the force required may be resident within the naval forces however, these forces are not in a position to respond to short lead time crisis response actions due to time-distance problems. Rapidly deployable alternatives from other services must be considered as alternatives in crisis response situations in the event time-distance constraints prevent the use of naval forces. Factors such as air overflight restrictions, forward staging limitations, and crisis escalation control considerations must be weighed when using forces from other services in a rapid reaction role. These factors may preclude the use of forces other than naval forces due to political considerations which must be considered in each of these areas.\textsuperscript{8} The operational commander
must continually factor in the aspects of time associated with crisis response when determining force requirements keeping in mind the political realities of the situation. Just as overwhelming force without meeting time specifications is unacceptable, so to is underwhelming force within time requirements.

Another subset under time to consider is that of logistics. Endurance versus sustainability matters are of vital import and can not be ignored. Knowing how much force can be brought to bear for how long and how long that effort can be sustained must be factored in with time and force planning considerations. Naval forces bring with them a credible endurance and sustainability capability while forces from other services normally require a long logistics tail. As mentioned previously, PCOs often take place in areas far removed from existing logistics support infrastructures. The self-sustainability of the carrier battle group and amphibious ready group force modules are a definitive plus when considering use of these combat forces.

Political factors in the form of considerations, controls, and constraints (political C3) are the last elements which must be factored into the response formula for crisis response actions. PCOs by their very nature carry with them a high degree of political risk therefore, a high degree of political control to counter-balance this risk results. The Principle of War concerning Objective is the foundation of
political C3 associated with PCO. The objective must be clear and understood. If the triad of crisis response during PCO were to be overlaid on the trinity developed by Clausewitz (Government, Military, and People), the civil-military leg of the triangle would be the dominate link within the triangle. The political aspects of PCO dominate the conduct of the operation and using military force to accomplish specific political objectives requires the operational commander to be sensitive to the political purpose of the operation.

Political considerations are those elements which must be factored in when responding to a crisis response situation which are aimed at political risk factors. Due to adverse consequences which can result in the event of failure in a PCO, the political leadership may place the operational commander in a position where force and time constraints are imposed which may have adverse military impact yet reduce the effects of undesirable political risk. An example of this would be an operation which called for the destruction of a target at a specified time with a particular type of weapon to ensure minimal international fervor in the event the operation failed. This is of greater concern today due to the expanding reach of the media and its ability to disseminate information to a worldwide audience.

Political controls are those elements which are aimed at the escalatory problems inherent with peacetime contingency operations. These most often take the form of force usage
limitations and the rules of engagement. Through the establishment of controls in the form of these two vehicles, the political leadership can limit escalation, but again may impose constraints which limit military effectiveness. Restrictive rules of engagement are the standard when comparing past PCO cases and are a factor that require continual dialogue between the operational commander and the NCA to prevent negative force employment vice restrictive employment of force.

Political constraints are most often those elements associated with time and space. Prohibiting ingress from a 3rd party country, conducting operations only during daylight hours, and specifying operation duration are just a few of the examples where these constraints enter into a PCO. The window for opportunity to conduct a PCO is narrow and must be accurately determined if the gains from conducting the operation are to outweigh the losses associated with not conducting the operation. The operational commander must keep in mind that the political window and the military windows of opportunity are not necessarily one in the same and that the political window will dominate.

Each of the armed services are equally affected when contending with the factors contained within the area of political C3. Naval forces and Air Force forces may have a slight edge in this area in that they are recallable forces much more so than ground forces. It is therefore an
imperative that PCOs are recognized as politically controlled events and operational flexibility is required when conducting these operations.

The two Principles of War which have yet to be mentioned are those of Unity of Command and Simplicity. PCOs are complex operations which require unity of effort if the operations are to be successful. Military leadership in the form of a Joint Task Force Commander (JTF) is the conduit for the successful integration of the political factors into the planning for and execution of PCO. Unity of Command in the form of a JTF is required to achieve unity of effort even in operations which are predominately single service in nature. The reason for this is that other services and/or agencies will always play a role and as the violence level increases and joint operations increase, a single operational commander can ensure unity of effort among the forces involved and maximize chances for success. Simplicity is achieved through the establishment of a JTF commander thereby facilitating cooperation among forces, establishing a clear command relationship and most importantly, allowing for the issuance of concise and clear orders within this extremely complex form of conflict which are consistent with the political objective.  \[10\]
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

'The establishment of this new world-wide, balance of land and sea power, in which the long process of the strategic unification of the globe has finally culminated in our own days, constitutes thus the outstanding event determining the whole political and military development of our world.'

Herbert Rosinski
Brassey's Naval Annual, 1947

The perception that conflict below the conventional level of war is an increasingly new phenomena as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and has more likelihood of occurrence is not consistent with the realities which have existed throughout the 1900's particularly since the conclusion of World War II. That PCOs are more likely due to increased economic interdependence among nations throughout the world, continued expansion of United States national interests and support for governments favorable to the United States with respect to peaceful co-existence is a statement which has greater validity. Joint service operations are the normal method through which these operations are conducted and this characteristic will remain constant due to requirement to balance the elements of force, time and political c3 during the conduct of these operations. As the level of violence increases, so to the level of joint effort.

Force composition is a complex task facing the operational commander and the constraints imposed by time and...
political C3 complicate the situation. Naval forces alone can be used in a variety of different roles within PCO, however naval force employment is enhanced through the conduct of joint operations due to the increasingly dynamic and capable 3rd world threat. Intelligence remains a key throughout all levels of violence and has even more pronounced ramifications within the context of PCO. Failure in the conduct of a PCO can have negative political effects and these effects can be even more pronounced due to the worldwide audience which is accessible through today's media.

The Principles of War have equal applicability throughout PCO. These principles reap their greatest benefits when applied to forces that are conducting joint operations. Ongoing efforts to improve interoperability throughout the armed forces are a step in the right direction and must include common doctrinal and operating procedures as well as hardware fixes to narrow the gap between the services. Joint doctrine development is just one area where improvements have been made. Navy peacetime operations and pre-deployment exercises and training have only recently begun to focus on the 3rd world regional contingency and need increased attention.

The establishment of standing JTF commanders within each of the warfighting CINC's areas of operations should be considered. Standing JTF commanders familiar with the geographic and political environment within which they are
operating would contribute to warfighting excellence. Intelligence gathering operations could be coordinated and pro-active planning, not reactive planning could take place due to increased familiarity about the area. Interservice and interagency coordination would be improved and unity of effort would be achieved through unity of command.

The United States Navy must shift its orientation from the development of a Maritime Strategy and the strategic use of naval forces to a doctrinal approach emphasizing the operational principles through which naval forces are employed. The principle tenets of the Army's AirLand Battle Doctrine of Agility, Initiative, Depth and Synchronization have equal applicability to naval forces and are a starting point for the development of naval doctrine. This is critical when considering the employment of naval forces in PCO. The preponderance of situations where naval forces are apt to be employed are in situations below the conventional level of war.

Forces must be trained and deployed jointly as force modules if possible. Operational readiness is directly related to training readiness and many problems with respect to interoperability which are procedural in nature can be alleviated through joint deployment exercises and training. Just as battle group integrity is a desire among carrier battle group commanders, JTF integrity should be a requirement
of JTF commanders. Innovative operational scheduling amongst the services could go a long way in realizing this goal.

In conclusion, joint force sequencing as envisioned in the revision of the Maritime Strategy is a valid concept and supports the military efforts which will be required in the emerging world order.\textsuperscript{2} Naval strategy has evolved from that of single service force employment to that of joint service force employment. Naval force on naval force battle at sea is a negative proposition and probably accounts for the relatively few instances of naval force on force interactions during the post-World War II era.\textsuperscript{3} Now is the time to recognize the positive enhancements joint operations provide naval forces and the interrelationship between the services within the force, time and political model of Peacetime Contingency Operations as service strategy and doctrine evolve to meet the challenges ahead.
NOTES

Chapter I
3. Ibid., p. xvi.

Chapter II
2. Ibid., p. 18.
3. Ibid., pp. 75-76.
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