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MAGTFs AND ADAPTIVE NAVAL EXPEDITIONARY FORCE PACKAGES: OPERATIONAL MASTERPIECES OR FAILURES?

by

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

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

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Abstract of

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PREFACE

The concept of adaptive naval force packages is a relatively new concept. Doctrinally born in ". . . From the Sea," a true test of this concept was conducted during actual deployments in support of CINC requirements for crisis response and forward presence. The first of these two early attempts at adaptive force packaging was the 3+1 special purpose MAGTF; the second, the carrier special purpose MAGTF. The 3+1 deployment took place July 1992 - April 1993 from the West Coast and the carrier special purpose MAGTF February 1993 through August 1993 from the East Coast. Each deployment returned with mixed and sometimes questionable results. The word 'fiasco' was used to describe one! Each of these deployments swayed far from the norm of deploying with the traditional, potent, and inherent flexibility of the venerable MEU (SOC). Nonetheless, relatively little has yet been published after the return of these two experiments not only due to their recent occurrences, but also because of the apparent sensitivity of the less than favorable results. As an example of the degree of sensitivity surrounding the issues, "at a recent CINCs conference, the issue of adaptive force packages was absent from the agenda, though it had been tagged as one of the key topics to come up."[1] Accordingly, in this analysis primary bibliographic references consist of USMC point papers, after action reports, telephone conversations, and selected interviews. In researching this subject it became apparent that the age old traditions of the carrier navy are just now beginning to buckle in light of the new direction articulated in ". . . From the Sea." Each of these two experiments cast aside the existing embodiment of ". . . From the Sea" -- the MEU (SOC) -- and attempt, for different reasons, new less capable combinations. As a participant on two MEU (SOC) deployments, I have seen the MEU (SOC) mature into a respected instrument in the CINCs tool box. More recently, as a Marine on the COMNAVSURFPAC staff, I have witnessed "the ship" slowly

roll in the direction of amphibious operations. The growing pains will continue, but perhaps the lessons of these two pioneering experiments will have significant value to builders of future adaptive force packages. My thanks to Major Mike Minnehan from the U.S. Marine Corps Command Center who provided resources on both innovative MAGTFs. LtCol Mike Carroll, N-5312 at the Pentagon was also helpful in providing top level briefing information relative to the deployments. Finally, Dr. Linda Kelsey, CNA representative for CINCLANT Fleet also provided selective information regarding future efforts to build joint adaptive force packages -- the first attempt to integrate the joint and combined world into ". . . From the Sea."

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States' global security environment has radically changed. No longer is our national security strategy based upon containing the previously perceived ubiquitous and monolithic threat of Soviet sponsored communist expansion. Instead, a more diffused, regional focus is appropriate to deal with the more prominent threats to national security. Things have indeed changed. The Navy and Marine team must also change.[2]

Accordingly, ". . . From the Sea" represents a dramatic shift in direction for the employment of U.S. Naval Forces. This new outlook has addressed two "new looks" at the Navy and Marine Corps' employment of forward deployed Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF). The "3+1 (three amphibious ships and one maritime preposition ship (MPS)) gap filler and the carrier special purpose MAGTF (SPMAGTF) both represent attempts to experiment with the venerable Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEU (SOC)). These variations on the MEU (SOC) theme represent a significant erosion of the commander in chief's (CINC) ability to respond to events in his dynamic operational theater. Notwithstanding, these experiments provide insightful lessons which can be applied to the newly emerging concept of joint adaptive force packages.

The Assumptions.

Before exploring the background and examining the concepts of MAGTFs and adaptive force packages, the following major assumptions frame the context of this paper:

(1) Resources to fund the national military strategy will decline.

(2) Threat from the former Soviet Union has measurably receded.

(3) Emerging democracies and third world countries have become more unstable.

(4) U.S. access to foreign countries and bases will become increasingly restricted.

(5) Naval forces must adapt in order to remain viable in today's rapidly changing environment.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

The National Security Strategy and the National Military Strategy.

The National Security Strategy (NSS) provides the foundation for our nation's future. Although this strategy is currently under review by the Clinton Administration, before leaving office President Bush established the four fundamental elements of the National Defense Strategy as: (1) Strategic Deterrence; (2) Forward Presence; (3) Crisis Response; and (4) Force Reconstitution.[3] The revised Clinton strategy will likely emphasize the new concept of enlargement -- "A blueprint for enlarging the world community of freemarket democracies."[4] The fundamental elements of the existing strategy will likely endure. Moreover, the new NSS rightfully acknowledges the challenges of selective and collective involvement in the face of a new diffused regional focus, 25 percent fewer military forces and reduced access to foreign bases.

From the National Security Strategy comes the National Military Strategy (NMS). The NMS provides CINC's the framework from which they can plan the use of military forces in their areas of responsibility (AOR) and communicate their recommended military options for decision by the National Command Authority (NCA).[5] As the military forces have declined in numbers, the CINC's responsibilities have not. Hence, a smaller total force requires an innovative approach to doing more with less. Adaptive force planning and configuring is the manner in which the CINC's must link the goals of the NSS Strategy with the pillars of the military strategy. Of these pillars, Naval Expeditionary Forces (NEF) -- which necessarily include Marine Corps MAGTF's -- are best suited to the underpinning of forward presence and crisis response. These forces are ideally suited for the

CINC's adaptive planning requirements which include the need for strategic deployability, unrivaled agility, sustainability, and capable of supporting a multitude of force deployment options.[6]

The New Doctrine.

". . . From the Sea" represents the closest thing to naval doctrine that we can put our arms around. Yet, as indispensable as the maritime component of our national strategy is, "a balanced, joint strategy makes the best of what all the armed services can provide."[7] Accordingly, ". . . From the Sea" reflects the world's changes and acknowledges the need to focus our maritime energies away from the antiquated blue water, and instead toward the brown littoral waters of new world realities. "This new direction, derived from the National Security Strategy, will provide the nation: Naval Expeditionary Forces shaped for joint operations, operating forward from the sea, and tailored for national needs."[8] Much like the Marine Corps 'task organizes' its own forces, the Navy has accepted the concept of "continuous(ly) tailoring our forces to anticipate and support national needs."[9] Hence, the new Navy doctrine rightfully emphasizes the need to innovatively adapt selective Naval forces to fulfill necessary requirements in support of the NMS.

The Strategic Landscape.

As previously mentioned, the NSS, NMS, and the Navy's new "doctrine" (". . . From the Sea"), have all refocused upon the changing world environment. Naval Expeditionary Forces are ideally suited to contend with the evolving threats from the transformation of the strategic landscape. Within the range of military operations, the expeditionary capabilities of the Navy/Marine team are best suited to achieve results favorable to national interests primarily in the realm of non-combatant

operations other than war. Figure 2-1 illustrates the context of military operations other than war within the entire range of military operations:

FIGURE 2-1

RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS[10]

Military Opns	General U.S. Goal	Examples
COMBAT WAR	Fight and Win	Large Scale Combat Opns: Attack, Defend Blockades
NONCOMBAT OPNS OTHER THAN WAR	Deter War and Resolve Conflict	Peace Enforcement, NEO, Strikes, Raids, Show of Force, Counter-Terrorism, Peacekeeping, Counter-Insurgency
	Promote Peace	Anti-Terrorism, Disaster Relief, Peacebuilding, Nation Assistance, Civil Support, Counter-Drug, NEO

Relatedly, recent studies and experiences reflect a changing philosophy that regional conflicts will become more prevalent. Historically from 1946-1990 amphibious forces were involved in over 50 percent of the 112 crisis situations in which the NCA decided to respond.[11] Interesting enough, these percentages would have been significantly greater had this study also included missions such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. Looking at more recent events, of the 27 operations that the U.S. Marine Corps has been involved in since 1982, not surprisingly over one-half were conducted from the sea.[12] Notable examples include: non-combatant evacuation operations

such as SHARP EDGE in Liberia, and EASTERN EXIT in Somalia; humanitarian assistance operations such as PROVIDE COMFORT in Northern Iraq, and SEA ANGEL in Bangladesh. While these operations are indicative of America's new role in the "New World Order," they also represent classic opportunities for theater commanders to employ the operational art of war with the inherent flexibility of naval expeditionary forces.

MAGTFs, and Adaptive Force Packages Described.

MAGTFs.

Having discussed the background for this paper, the next step will be to discuss the focus of the subject - MAGTFs and their role in recent experimental adaptive force options. Before doing so, a short discussion of generic MAGTFs and adaptive force packages is necessary. MAGTFs, as the name implies, are 'task organized' to accomplish specific missions with maximum flexibility. They are comprised of four common elements: command element, ground element, aviation combat element, and combat service support element. Regardless of size, all MAGTFs are expeditionary forces. There are four basic types of MAGTFs: Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), and the Special Purpose MAGTF (SPMAGTF).[13] For purposes of this paper, the two smaller MAGTFs are the focus -- the MEU and SPMAGTF. MEU's are normally the workhorse of deploying MAGTFs; Yet, SPMAGTFs comprised the Marine Corps contingent of both the atypical packages yet to be discussed. These two SPMAGTFs were previously integrated into deployed Naval Expeditionary Forces as part of the early genesis of naval adaptive force packages.

Adaptive Force Packages.

The concept of adaptive force packages arouse out of the growing reality that unified commanders' responsibilities (i.e. crisis response and forward presence) would have to be performed with fewer assets. ". . . From the Sea" embraces this concept wherein Naval Expeditionary Forces are tailored to fulfill the CINC's expected capability requirements. According to the "Naval Expeditionary Force Commander DRAFT concept paper," there will be two types of Naval Expeditionary Forces -- the Naval Expeditionary Task Force (NETF), and the Naval Expeditionary Task Group (NETG).[14] The key to this new concept is 'customizing' or tailoring the deployed force based upon the expected threat. Ideally, this tailored force should be comprised of mutually complementary elements which result in increased flexibility and a wider range of employment options. This being the premise, I will now shift to the focal examples wherein earlier attempts to tailor Naval forces were met with less than favorable results for unified commanders.

CHAPTER III

THE MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT (SPECIAL OPERATIONS CAPABLE)

Before diving into the two NEF/MAGTF experiments it is important to briefly evaluate the capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses of the MEU (SOC). Afterall, this MAGTF will be the benchmark upon which the experiments (three plus one MAGTF and carrier Special Purpose MAGTF) will be compared. In response to 1985 congressional legislation, the USMC developed a special operations training capability designed to enhance existing maritime capabilities of forward deployed MAGTFs.[15] By 1989 a total of 18 MEU (SOC) missions were standardized and now comprise the everyday menu of capabilities available to the CINC.[16] These capabilities, included in Appendix I, demonstrate the strength of the venerable MEU (SOC) as a flexible instrument of the National Military Strategy. Subsequent refinement to the MEU (SOC) has resulted in four additional missions being added; they include clandestine reconnaissance and surveillance, airfield seizure, maritime interdiction operations (MIO), and gas and oil platform operations (GOPLAT).

Besides capabilities, the MEU (SOC)'s other major strength is its inherent ability for 15 days of self-sustainability. No other force in the CINCs "tool box"[17] has this enduring capability. This strength adds to the MEU (SOC)'s already existing mission flexibility by reducing reliance on sometimes fickle host nation support and furthering the MEU (SOC)'s expeditionary role as a joint force enabler. Further, this staying power allows the MEU (SOC) to be effectively employed across the full range of military operations.

While the strengths of the MEU (SOC) are readily apparent, the weaknesses are not. Admittedly, the MEU (SOC) has a very limited forcible entry capability. The capability to conduct an opposed amphibious landing is generally reserved for larger MAGTFs which have greater

firepower -- MEBs and MEFs. Further, the MEU (SOC) does not possess a deep strike capability; however, Marine Corps AV-8Bs (on LHA/LHD Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG)) have a limited strike capability (day or night). Finally, the MEU (SOC) is appropriately not a bonified special operations force; instead, its '(SOC)' capabilities can be considered "emergency" special operations forces - employed when the utility of actual special forces are not a viable option available to the NCA. Nonetheless, the MEU (SOC)'s ability to commence any contingency operation within six hours of receipt of a NCA warning order makes it an optimal force deployment option, not only as a CINC's crisis response force, but as a true "9-1-1" theater asset.

Perhaps the most critical limitations posed to the MEU (SOC) are those limitations that are common to the amphibious force as a whole. Aging equipment in a time of reduced resources will make replacement of the Marine's medium lift helicopters and amphibious assault vehicles very difficult. A corresponding concern is replacement of the Navy's aging amphibious fleet. Timely resolution of these procurement concerns are essential to fulfillment of the concept of Operational Maneuver From The Sea (OMFTS) as outlined in the Navy's new doctrine.

Even with these limitations, the MEU (SOC) today remains the "bread and butter" of the USMC's contribution to the NMS. The role of the MEU (SOC) as the capstone of the pillars of forward presence and crisis response is undeniably strong. In summary, there is little justification to disrupt the cohesiveness of such a comprehensive capability that has become increasingly refined, ready and relevant in today's uncertain world. In the eyes of an operational artist, the MEU (SOC) unarguably represents a "contemporary masterpiece."

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPERIMENTS

Having discussed the credibility of the most venerable MAGTF -- the MEU (SOC) -- I will now address the first of the two major experiments -- the 'three amphibious ships plus one maritime preposition ship SPMAGTF' or 3+1 SPMAGTF.

The 3+1 SPMAGTF Option.

The concept of the 3+1 SPMAGTF emerged from the Navy's Operational and Personnel Tempo (OPTEMPO) challenges in the wake of Desert Storm. Instead of the normal five ship (LPH) ARG, it was decided that a two ship task unit would deploy to support CENTCOM requirements. Just months prior to the deployment, a LPD was added to the ship mix which included 1 LPH (USS TRIPOLI), 1 LSD (USS RUSHMORE), and 1 LPD (USS JUNEAU). Unlike previous ARGs, this ship mix certainly represented an economy of force effort, but at a substantive reduction in capability.[18]

Naturally, the amount of gear the Marines could deploy with was measurably less than on a standard MEU/ARG (SOC) deployment. Yet this MAGTF, renamed 15th SPMAGTF, was expected to face normal missions associated with the MEU (SOC). To minimize this shortfall in carrying capacity, a maritime prepositioning force ship (MV LUMMUS) from MPS-3 (located at Guam and Tinian) was earmarked to augment the force if required. This augmentation was eventually required, yet numerous equipment shortfalls quickly translated into reduced operational capabilities. Appendix I provides a composite comparison of the various ARG/MEU/SPMAGTF configurations.[19]

In analyzing the reduced capabilities of the 3+1 SPMAGTF there are key operational art issues to be addressed. The issues will be approached using four elementary principles of war: mass, maneuver, security, and surprise.

The Principle of Mass.

"Mass: to concentrate combat power at the decisive place and time."[20]

As Appendix I indicates, SPMAGTF-15 sailed with less than optimal combat capability to the CENTCOM AOR. As a crisis response element, decisive combat power is an absolute requirement for success. Nonetheless, this SPMAGTF sailed with fewer ships, landing craft, LCACs, troops, vehicles, artillery pieces, and logistic supplies. The operational commander's ability to concentrate what reduced force he had was particularly exacerbated by reduced numbers of landing craft (LCAC and LCU) and reduced vehicles. For example, ground mobility was reduced to a perilous low of 52 percent and ship-to-shore mobility by 25 percent of normal MEU figures.[21] While most forward presence and crisis response missions could be expected to be on the low end of the spectrum, the lack of depth and flexibility, even with MPS, severely restrained the CINCs options to employ SPMAGTF-15 in his theater without substantial risk and the need for speedy reinforcement by other assets. Further, SPMAGTF-15's sustainability was reduced by one-third (10 vs 15 days of supply). Hence, sustainability, normally a major advantage of employing Naval amphibious forces, had a direct, adverse impact upon the principle of mass.

The Principle of Maneuver.

"Maneuver: to place the enemy in a position of disadvantage through the flexible application of combat power."[22]

With reduced waterborne, airborne (no AV-8s), and landborne vehicles the commander's ability to place an opponent at a disadvantage was severely restricted. Typically, expeditionary amphibious forces offer the CINC a highly maneuverable force deployment option. With high speed over-the-horizon (OTH) capable LCACs, AV-8B's, and long range assault support helicopters (i.e. CH-53E) the operational commander is better able to tie down enemy resources and exercise the avowed strengths of operational maneuver. Yet, tieing support requirements to the MPS further constrained the SPMAGTF's geographic employment options and negated the common practice of split-ARG, multi-mission role of complete MEU's.[23] With reduced maneuverability the CINC is left with a force which is less able to apply asymmetrical force and to exploit key gaps in enemy plans.

The Principle of Security.

"Security: Never permit the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage."[24]

One of the greatest vulnerabilities in employing the 3+1 SPMAGTF revolves around employment of the MPS -- its security is difficult to maintain. These vulnerabilities can be enumerated in the following categories: (1) Facility limitations; (2) Environmental factors; (3) Benign environment requirements; and (4) Combat loading.[25]

First of all, under normal conditions the MPS requires a port of sufficient size and depth to conduct an off-load. Correspondingly, this requires the often difficult agreement of host nation port facility support. Secondly, adverse environmental factors may negate the MPS's already limited mid-stream off-load capability, thereby limiting the ARG's ability to transfer supplies other than in sheltered waters or in very calm seas. Thirdly, MPS assets possess no self protection measures. While their greatest point of vulnerability is when located in port, they are also

susceptible during transits from forward deployed bases. These ships carry large amounts of both fuel and ammunition; consequently, their ability to withstand hostile fire is minimal. Furthermore, as Britain experienced in the Falklands, large container ships make lucrative targets for even weak third world adversaries armed with exocet missiles.[26] Finally, MPS ships are not loaded tactically as are amphibious ships. When Maritime Preposition Ships are off-loaded the first gear off is not likely to be that which is first needed to support the theater or even tactical concept of operations. Hence, given these limitations, security of MPS assets will remain a challenge to operational artists much as it was both in Somalia and during Desert Shield/Storm.

The Principle of Surprise.

"Surprise: strike the enemy at a time or place in a manner for which he is unprepared."[27]

As an expeditionary force, surprise is a key element to success. With limited maneuverability, surprise is difficult to achieve even against a modest third world threat. Yet, operating inside the enemy's decision loop is instrumental to this principle of war. Lacking adequate mobility assets, amphibious ships are forced to operate closer to the beach, thereby making their actions clearer to enemy forces. Likewise, with reduced mobility ashore, the inability to maneuver makes the principle of surprise nearly impossible to achieve and exponentially reduces the chances for success against a hostile force. Further, considering the requirement for MPS logistical augmentation, the predictability of our force's strength and disposition is telegraphed to the enemy. When viewed in total, surprise is one operational level force multiplier essential to all amphibious operations.

Fortunate "Success" of 3+1 SPMAGTF.

Given all these limitations, it would be unfair to dismiss the 3+1 SPMAGTF given its apparent success. However, in evaluating its "success" it becomes clear that it was successful only because of a number of factors. Primarily, there was no threat to oppose SPMAGTF-15's landing in Somalia. As seen on CNN, the most significant obstacle to the initial landing was the overwhelming presence of media personnel lining the beaches. Furthermore, due to reduced logistical sustainability, significant external support was rapidly ushered in-country via the established airhead and fly-in echelon. While the long term success of the Somalia relief operation is beyond the scope of this paper, its initial, short-term success can only be described as being very fortunate.

In future engagements we can hardly rely upon good fortune. Sooner, rather than later, our good luck will expire. In conclusion, it is essential that the operational lessons of the "3+1 SPMAGTF" be universally applied to future of Naval adaptive force packages. In particular, that the MPS asset is not an amphib, and that to deploy the 3+1 SPMAGTF again as a replacement for the MEU (SOC) would be to do so at an unacceptable risk, and certainly in violation of critical operational principles of war.

The Carrier SPMAGTF.

The Concept.

While the 3+1 SPMAGTF was deployed in the Central Command (CENTCOM) AOR, the carrier special purpose MAGTF was preparing to deploy in support of CENTCOM and U.S. European Command (EUCOM) theaters. The EUCOM theater is ripe with potential CINC requirements for both crisis response and forward presence. As Admiral Owens said, "The Mediterranean region has been a good laboratory for experiments in force flexibility, and fertile

ground for initiatives in maintaining alliances and building coalitions."[28] In view of the declining force structure and a new doctrinal focus on the littorals, the goal of this adaptive force package "was supposed to give the carrier battle group (USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT) some of the capabilities of the [expeditionary] ARG."[29] Under this new plan, CINCUSACOM is responsible for building and training forces (from the East Coast) which are subsequently deployed to the overseas CINCs' theater of operations.

Carrier SPMAGTF Composition.

With the broad goal established, the 600 Marines of the SPMAGTF represented a 200-man rifle company. The command element of the SPMAGTF was small, yet brought with them the rapid planning expertise that has become the pride of MEU/ARG (SOC) operations. In terms of equipment, the SPMAGTF sailed with limited mobility -- 10 helicopters and only 2 HUMMWVs. Appendix II provides a comprehensive listing of embarked assets.

Carrier SPMAGTF Capabilities.

Of the approximately 21 mission capabilities the normal MEU (SOC) performs, the THEODORE ROOSEVELT SPMAGTF was capable of executing only 13. Of those 13, most mission capabilities had additional limitations. The most notable and assumed limit was that the force would be used only in permissive threat environments. Logistical sustainability was likewise meager and amounted to no more than 5 days of supply and ammunition. Given these constraints, the SPMAGTF's mission statement was surprisingly huge: "To provide quick reaction force and conduct joint operations from the sea against regional threats in littoral or near land/overland environments."[30]

Evaluation of the Carrier SPMAGTF.

In evaluating the success and utility of the carrier SPMAGTF we must consider not only what it was capable of, but also consider what it was unable to do, and what sacrifices the carrier had to make to accommodate it. While many of these issues may appear to be "in the weeds" and perhaps on the tactical level of war, indeed these issues had the potential to impact upon the ability to perform high stakes, high visibility, operational level missions in EUCOM's AOR. While evaluating the carrier SPMAGTF, as when evaluating the 3+1 SPMAGTF, key principles of war will be used to provide a framework based on operational performance.

Economy of Force.

"Employ all combat power available in the most effective way possible; allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts."[31]

Of course, this principle was a major driver behind the genesis of the carrier SPMAGTF. Moreover, ". . . From the Sea" being the other, this attempt to inject limited "amphibious flavor" into carrier operations at least seemed politically correct given the Navy's new direction. On the surface, this experiment attempted to provide inherent expeditionary capability to the carrier battle group (CVBG). For reasons to be discussed, the carrier SPMAGTF was not a successful economy of force package primarily because it detracted from other USMC worldwide commitments, and was composed of a hollow, immobile contingent.

Unity of Command/Effort.

"For every objective seek unity of command and unity of effort."

Unity of command was not a significant problem on this deployment. The SPMAGTF's small, yet acclaimed, rapid planning capability was quickly integrated into the CVBG staff. This marriage melded the strengths of the USS ROOSEVELT which in turn made their actions more responsive to the CINCs objectives.

While unity of command was rarely questioned, unity of effort was frequently compromised as attempts to integrate the SPMAGTF's newfound equipment and expeditionary capabilities continued. In order to absorb the footprint of the SPMAGTF, F-14 strike capability and S-3 anti-submarine aircraft were removed. While the removal of these aircraft was not a "show stopper," when conditions heated up in the former Yugoslavia, preparations and reliance upon allied nation support was required in order to remove the SPMAGTF helicopters. Removal of the helicopters was essential to restoration of the carrier's "full" capability. Furthermore, fixed wing and helicopter interoperability was challenging. Maintenance requirements for SPMAGTF helicopters far exceeded those of fixed wing aircraft on the carrier especially in terms of flight deck availability.[32] Relatedly, helicopter night training was extremely restricted due to priority fixed wing missions. Consequently, very little night vision device (NVD) flight operations were possible. These incompatibilities take on increasing importance when reminded that helicopter lift was virtually the only means of transporting the SPMAGTF.[33]

Unity of effort was further compromised when we consider overall USMC commitments worldwide. "On a daily basis over 23,000 trigger pullers from the Marine Corps are forward deployed;[34] hence, building a carrier SPMAGTF that has so many restrictions and a "permissive label" does not compute when viewed in the grander context. USMC OPTEMPO affects CINC capabilities. The lesson here is to go capable or stay home!

Mass.

"Mass the effects of overwhelming combat power at the decisive place and time."[35]

As previously mentioned, the TR-SPMAGTF was only able to perform a fraction of the normal MEU missions. With size as a major disability, overwhelming combat (or even "non-combatant") power would be difficult to achieve. For instance in the most probable mission, non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO), the SPMAGTF would require augmentation by MEU (SOC) forces or other significant external reinforcement. Without assistance, its role in a NEO would be limited to mere "crowd control, C^3I, and [limited] helicopter support."[36] Relatedly, limited helicopter support assets coupled with lengthy carrier stand-off ranges also make decisive projection of sufficient forces ashore slow and risky. There is no question that violation of the principle of mass significantly reduced the employment options of the TR-SPMAGTF in the EUCOM AOR. Without assets to better mass power ashore the SPMAGTF would quickly approach its culmination. Furthermore, since reinforcements would be required, operational synchronization would pose further challenges for the theater CINC. Without overwhelming combat power, which Clausewitz termed "the most common element in victory,"[37] the CINC's ability to link tactical success to strategic objectives is weakened.

Maneuver.

"Place the enemy in a position of disadvantage through the flexible application of combat power."[38]

As emphasized in ". . . From the Sea," maneuver is critical to expeditionary (amphibious) warfare. The TR-SPMAGTF was limited to 10 helicopters (6 CH-53D, and 4 UH-1N) and two HUMMWV's. With no surface craft, ship-to-shore mobility was limited to helicopters with

less than optimal range. These limits erode elements of speed and surprise, two principle tenets of maneuver warfare. With only 2 vehicles ashore, SPMAGTF forces lacked protection (other than carrier based aircraft) and faced increased risk from even small opposition forces. In fact, without a more accessible maneuver capability, employment of the SPMAGTF in other than an administrative (vs permissive) environment would be risky for the CINC.

As seen, the TR-SPMAGTF was an experiment wrought with many limitations and of questionable value to the EUCOM CINC. After deployment, the executive officer of the SPMAGTF lamented, "There are trade-offs for both services that I believe are not worth the effort. . .I don't think this is a viable option for repetitive deployments."[39] Nonetheless, as the ROOSEVELT SPMAGTF returned from the EUCOM theater, the USS AMERICA and its SPMAGTF was already in EUCOM. Indeed it appears likely that some sort of Marine Expeditionary package (SPMAGTF) will continue.[40] (A comparative listing of USS ROOSEVELT and USS AMERICA's force configuration is provided in Appendix III.[41])

As noted, this carrier SPMAGTF had limited utility; nonetheless, when viewed as a youthful attempt to adapt Marine expeditionary capability into the carrier there were some advantages. Perhaps most notable was the "cross cultural training for all USMC and USN professionals."[42] Spin-offs from this training resulted in recognition of each other's strengths and limitations. Advances in other areas such as operational interoperability and rapid crisis planning were also claimed. Certainly there were other advantages, but they pale in comparison to the previously discussed limitations. In summary, the TR SPMAGTF did not bring realistic expeditionary utility to the EUCOM CINC. On the other hand, inherent weaknesses created potential multiple operational trapdoors for the CINC, while exposing the violation of several key operational level principles of war.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After closely evaluating the changed environment of today and examining the viability of three MAGTFs (MEU (SOC), 3+1 SPMAGTF, and carrier SPMAGTF), there are a number of conclusions that must be drawn. These conclusions are particularly relevant in view of ongoing Naval efforts to construct adaptive force packages in support of CINC requirements.

(1) Neither the 3+1 nor the carrier SPMAGTF can provide the capabilities or operational level flexibility inherent in the venerable MEU (SOC). The MEU (SOC) offers CINCs a wide variety of joint force enabling options that are unattainable with lesser MAGTFs.

(2) MPS should not be used as a routine pre-planned adjunct of ARGs. Instead, MPS should be employed on the operational level as a contingency asset which extends the culmination of expeditionary forces.

(3) Whether it be for MPS offload or to displace SPMAGTF helicopters ashore, dependance on host nation support reduces the inherent advantages of expeditionary forces; normal deployment packages which require this action should be avoided.

(4) Adaptive force packages which do not contain complementary capabilities:

(a) Are wasteful and run the risk of imperiling successful completion of operational objectives and;

(b) Endanger the acceptance of future adaptive force packages as a vehicle for operational change.

(5) In each of these experiments, integration of only one service's constituents presented a formidable challenge. As the military services move toward integration of joint, multi-service adaptive force packages, the challenges will become exponentially greater. Consequently, we should not expect unrealistically high results, nor should we be stifled by minor failures.

(6) The carrier SPMAGTF and the 3+1 SPMAGTF detract from the USMC's overall ability to provide credible forces to the CINC through inefficient and operationally risky use of warfighting assets. Complete MEU (SOC)s provide CINCs with the best expeditionary joint enabling capability.

(7) Elements of future adaptive force packages must have complementary or even synergistic capabilities rather than mutually exclusive characteristics. Successful application of this concept will better allow the CINC to link tactical success to strategic objectives.

(8) Crises, by their very nature, are unpredictable in size, number, complexity, and location. Consequently, attempts to integrate MAGTFs (other than a complete MEU (SOC)) into adaptive force packages long in advance of such crises, must be carefully planned in order to ensure maximum flexibility between the competing concerns of autonomy and co-dependence. Flexibility is a 'must have' element of expeditionary warfare.

(9) Packaging adaptive forces is like piecing the parts of a puzzle together; Nonetheless, when responding to crises we must be careful that in building and sequencing the force we do not create a condition of 'operational paralysis' as we attempt to piece the puzzle together for action.

(10) For Joint Adaptive Force Packages to be of maximum value to CINCs, (particularly during crisis response situations), pre-deployment training must involve all moving parts of the puzzle. Assembling disseparate, untrained parts and expecting them to function as a joint team is akin to expecting operational alchemy.

(11) In the case of expeditionary forces, some degree of capability-redundancy is relevant in order to maximize employment flexibility. Efforts to eliminate redundancy below a certain threshold will erode the CINC's crisis response capability and will do so at considerable risk to operational objectives.

(12) As defense 'right-sizing' continues, the luxury of maintaining a 1.0 continuous presence (in the Med and in CENTCOM) with both a MEU/ARG (SOC) and a CVBG will become an event of the past. Accordingly, now is the time to improve upon potential benefits of adaptive force packaging. The two experiments researched here provide valuable lessons in operational art which must be applied to emerging concepts of joint adaptive force packages.

APPENDIX I

MEU/SPMAGTF CONFIGURATIONS

		BASELINE MEU(SOC)	SPMAGTF (CENT)(SOC)	MEU	SPMAGTF (TR)
SHIPS	LHD/LHA/LPH LPD/LSD/LST	1 2-4	1 LPH 1 LPD 1 LSD	1 LHA 1 LPD 1 LSD 1 LST	1 CV
SHIP TO SHORE	AAVP7 LCAC LCU CH-46 CH-53	13 4 4 12 4	13 3 0 12 4	13 3 5 4 8	0 0 0 0 6
FIRE POWER	105 HOW 155 HOW 81 MORT LAV AV-8 AH-1W	2/4 6 PLT 7 6 4	0 4 PLT 7 0 4	4 6 PLT 7 6(**) 4	0 0 0 0 CVW TACAIR 0
TACTICAL MOBILITY	CH-46 CH-53 AAVP7 HMMWV 5T TRK LAV FAV	12 4 13 105 36 7 18	12 4 13 29 13 7 8	4 8 13 105 36 7 18	0 6 0 0 0 0 0
SUSTAINABILITY	LFORM MLA CLASS-111 MOGAS JP5	15 DOS 15 DOS 29,000 GAL 675,000 GAL	10 DOS 10 DOS 21,000 GAL 575,000 GAL	15 DOS 15 DOS UNKNOWN UNKNOWN	5 DOS UNKNOWN
GCE	BLT	BLT (1300)	BLT (1063)	BLT (1300)	INF CO (REIN) (206)
CE		HQ DET RAD BN DET ITT DET CIT DET FIIU DET TOPO PLT FORECON DET ANGLICO DET COMM BN	HQ DET RAD BN DET ITT DET CIT DET FIIU DET TOPO PLT FORECON DET ANGLICO DET COMM BN	HQ DET RAD BN DET ITT DET CIT DET FIIU DET TOPO PLT FORECON DET ANGLICO DET COMM BN	HQ DET RAD BN DET INT CO PLT DIVRECON

** Alternates landbased/seabased

Source: U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters (SOLIC), "MEU Configuration," Discussion Paper. November 30, 1992, Enclosure 1:

APPENDIX II

CURRENT/ANTICIPATED MEU/SPMAGTF CAPABILITIES/LIMITATIONS

BASELINE MEU(SOC)	SPMAGTFCENT (SOC)	31 MEU	SPMAGTF(TR)
AMPHIB RAIDS	YES	YES	
LIMITED OBJECTIVE ATTACKS	YES	YES	
NEO	YES(1)(5)	YES	YES(1)(3)(5)
MTT	YES	YES	
SECURITY OPS	YES	YES	YES(1)(3)(5)
SHOW OF FORCE	YES	YES	YES(6)
REINFORCEMENT OPS	YES	YES	
CIVIC ACTION	YES(1)	YES	YES(1)(2)(3)(5)(7)
TACTICAL DECEPTION	YES	YES	YES
FIRE SUPPORT CONTROL	YES	YES	
CI OPS	YES	YES	
INITIAL TERMINAL GUIDANCE	YES	YES	YES
SIGINT/EW	YES	YES	YES
RECOVERY OPS	YES	YES	YES
IN-EXTREMIS HOSTAGE RECOVERY	YES	YES	
SPECIALIZED DEMO	YES	YES	
MOUT	YES(1)(5)	YES	YES(1)(3)(5)
GAS/OIL PLATFORMS	YES(4)	YES	
CLANDESTINE R&S	YES	YES	
MARITIME INTERDICTION	YES	YES	
AIRFIELD SEIZURE	YES	YES	

* NOTES: (1) Limited/no ground mobility
(2) Medical support
(3) Reduced/limited logistics
(4) Limited- no RRC's
(5) Reduced GCE
(6) Limited to small flyovers and demonstrations
(7) Limited to disaster relief and humanitarian assistance

Source: U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters (SOLIC), "MEU Configuration," Discussion Paper. November 30, 1992, Enclosure 2.

APPENDIX III

COMPARISON OF FORCE: USS ROOSEVELT/USS AMERICA

Roosevelt (CVN-71)		America (CV-66)
	Aircraft on board	
10	F-14A Tomcats	14
30	F/A-18C Hornets[1]	22
14	A-6E Intruders	14
4	EA-6B Prowlers	4
4	E-2C Hawkeyes	4
2	SH-60F Seahawks	0
4	HH-60H Jayhawks	0
0	S-3B Vikings	6
0	SH-3H Sea Knights	6
	Marine force on board	
26	Expeditionary units[2]	22
600	Marines on board	250
6	CH-53D Super Stallions	0
4	UH-1N Hueys	0
0	CH-46E Sea Knights	4

Source: The Navy Times, "Change in Force." September 20, 1993, p.17.

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1. Margo MacFarland. "Admiral Boorda Protests Use of Miller's Joint Force Packages in Med." Inside The Navy, Supplement, December 6, 1993, p.3.

2. Indeed we must change. Recently, a senior flag officer lamented, "If we don't change directions, we'll end up where we're headed." B. C. Hayes, "Keeping the Naval Service Relevant," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, October 1993, p.53.

3. George Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States. Washington, DC: January 1993, p.14.

4. Margo MacFarland, "DRAFT 1994 National Military Strategy Maintains Two-War Scenario," Inside the Navy, January 3, 1994, p.6.

5. Colin Powell, The National Military Strategy of the United States. Washington, DC: January 1992, p.12.

6. U.S. Marine Corps, "Viability of Amphibious Operations." 1993/1194 USMC Top-Level School Reference Papers. June 11, 1993 (Unnumbered).

7. Geoffrey Till, "Corbett and the 1990s," Lecture, Corbett-Richmond Conference. (Location Unlisted), September 28-29, 1992, p.15.

8. U.S. Navy and Marine Corps White Paper. ". . . From the Sea," January 1992, p.2.

9. Ibid., p.6.

10. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Doctrine For Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0. (Washington: September 9, 1993), p.I-3.

11. Center For Naval Analysis, The Use of Naval Forces in the Post-War Era: U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps Crisis Response Activity, 1946-1990, CRM 90-246, (Alexandria, VA: February 1991), pp.13-14.

12. U.S. Marine Corps. "Marine Corps World-Wide Operational Requirements." 1993/1194 USMC Top-Level School Reference Papers. March 23, 1993 (Unnumbered).

13. Carl E. Mundy. Marine Corps Capability Plan, Volume 1. Department of the Navy. June 26, 1992, pp.7-9.

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14. Naval Doctrine Command, "Naval Expeditionary Force Commander Draft Concept Paper," Norfolk, VA: September 15, 1993, pp.12-13.

15. U.S. Marine Corps. "Capabilities of Forward Deployed MEU (SOC)s." Point Paper (POC-40), August 20, 1993.

16. Fleet Marine Force Atlantic/Pacific. MEU (SOC) Playbook. Norfolk, VA: March 30, 1989.

17. Each service - consistent with its role and assigned functions - contributes to what General Powell describes as a toolbox of capabilities. The CINCs draw from this toolbox to meet the demands in their AOR. Carl E. Mundy, Jr., "Complementary Capabilities From the Sea," Joint Force Quarterly. Summer 1993, p.17.

18. U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters. "SPMAGTF CENT (SOC): SPMAGTF or MEU." HQMC Point Paper (POC-10B), October 22, 1992, p.1.

19. "MEU Configuration." HQMC Discussion Paper, SOLIC 30 November 1992. Enclosure (1), p.1.

20. U.S. Army. FM 100-5 Operations, Washington, DC; June 14 1993, p.174.

21. Information Paper POC-10B, p.3.

22. FM 100-5 Operations, p.2-4.

23. Information Paper POC-10B, p.3.

24. FM 100-5 Operations, p.2-4.

25. Colonel Greg Newbold, USMC. "Three Plus One . . . From the Sea." Briefing to SECNAV and CMC. Washington: DC: April 1993, p.15.

26. Sandy Woodward. One Hundred Days. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1992), p.296.

27. FM 100-5 Operations, p.2-4.

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28. VADM William Owens, USN. "Mediterranean Fleet -- A Test Bed For Navy's Future." Armed Forces Journal International, July 1992, p.32.

29. Chris Lawson. "Home! Six-Month Experiment Laid to Rest as ROOSEVELT Returns," Navy Times, September 20, 1993, p.10.

30. Fleet Marine Force Atlantic, THEODORE ROOSEVELT SPMAGTF After Action Report. (Norfolk, VA: Undated), p.2.

31. FM 100-5 Operations, p.2-5.

32. CH-53Ds require approximately 18 hours of maintenance man-hours per flight hour.

33. Telephone Conversation with Major Mike Minnehan, U.S. Marine Corps Command Center, Washington, DC, December 12, 1993.

34. General Carl E. Mundy, USMC. "USMC Capabilities," Lecture, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 12 October 1993.

35. FM 100-5 Operations, p.2-4.

36. FMFLANT After Action Report, p.3.

37. U.S. Marine Corps. Warfighting FMFM 1. (Quantico, VA: 6 March 1989), p.30.

38. FM 100-5 Operations, p.2-5.

39. Navy Times, September 20, 1993, p.16.

40. Major Dixie Babb, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic (ALD), Indicated the Marine Corps is continuing to plan for subsequent carrier SPMAGTF requirements. (Interview 15 December 1993). Also, discussion with Dr. Linda J. Kelsey, Center for Naval Analysis, CINCLANTFLEET, indicated that when the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recently asked two top Navy Admirals (Unnamed) if they preferred to deploy carriers with or without a SPMAGTF, they both wanted a Marine Expeditionary capability. USACOM (J-3) (LCDR Goff) echoed these facts. He indicated that although no USMC expeditionary forces are planned for the immediate future, if CINC's request expeditionary capabilities, they will likely be included. (Telephone Interview, 4 February 1994).

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41. Navy Times, September 20, 1993, p.16.

42. Linda J. Kelsey. Center for Naval Analysis, CINCLANTFLEET MED 2-93 CNA Field Analysis Briefing: SPMAGTF-TR, p.56. (Dr. Kelsey deployed aboard USS ROOSEVELT as the CNA representative for COMCARGRU EIGHT).

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