The Wave of the Future

By FRANK B. KELSO II

U.S Navy photo

The Cold War is over, but in its wake we are left with an uncertain world. Although the risk of global war is greatly reduced, the United States and its allies still face threats. As we have just begun to realize, these new threats are often difficult to predict. In response to this challenge, our national security policy is shifting from deterrence of global conflict toward regional, littoral contingencies and conflicts, often in coalition with other nations.

With no credible, global naval threat, today's strategic environment has a very different meaning for our maritime forces. The need for separate, independent naval operations at sea for indirect support of the land war has been greatly reduced, and as a result our maritime operational focus has now shifted to littoral warfare and direct support of ground operations.

Operation Desert Storm reemphasized the need for the Armed Forces to operate effectively together and to acquire equipment which is compatible. Because joint operations involving all the services provide the greatest range of capabilities for the smallest investment, the Navy and Marine Corps launched an extensive, year-long study of future naval roles and capabilities, in terms of their relevance to the 21st century and a joint warfare environment. The results of that study are known as ". . . From the Sea."

The Navy's new strategy represents a fundamental shift away from emphasis on open-ocean warfighting *on the sea* toward joint operations conducted *from the sea*. By exploiting naval access to littoral regions, military planners can realize the power projection strength of naval forces while complementary capabilities of other services punctuate their impact and effectiveness.

Admiral Frank B. Kelso II is the twenty-fourth Chief of Naval Operations. Previously he served as Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic; much of his early career was spent on board nuclear-powered submarines.

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE **1993**	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED **00-00-1993 to 00-00-1993**
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **The Wave of the Future ...From the Sea**		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
		5b. GRANT NUMBER
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER
		5e. TASK NUMBER
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **National Defense University,Institute for National Strategic Studies,260 Fifth Ave SW Fort Lesley J. McNair,Washington,DC,20319**		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release; distribution unlimited**		
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
14. ABSTRACT		
15. SUBJECT TERMS		

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**Same as Report (SAR)**	**4**	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18

Naval operations in littoral regions transform the classic AirLand battle into a unified sea-air-land-space engagement, but dominance over an enemy in the littoral environment cannot be assumed. Likely adversaries enjoy the advantage of concentrating and layering defenses. Mines, diesel submarines, high-speed tactical aircraft, fast patrol boats, sea-skimming missiles, and tactical ballistic missiles launched from shore batteries are typical littoral threats. Such complex challenges demand specialized skills that only are provided by a completely integrated joint force.

Joint Forces

In the brief time since ". . . From the Sea" appeared efforts to implement this new strategic direction have accelerated and expanded to all levels in the sea services with special emphasis on the issues of joint integration and interoperability. The Navy and Marine Corps are aggressively redefining naval roles in joint exercises.

In 1992 U.S. Atlantic Command (LANTCOM) demonstrated improved integration of joint forces and naval doctrinal changes in Exercise Ocean Venture. For the first time the Navy deployed a flexible and robust command and control facility ashore permitting the naval force commander to collocate with the joint force commander and other component commanders.

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Last year in Exercise Ellipse Bravo, U.S. European Command (EUCOM) tested the ability of the services to assemble a joint task force to conduct a rapid emergency evacuation operation. Established within 48 hours, a 22,000-strong Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force task force demonstrated effective continuity of command as its headquarters was relocated from land to sea.

During Exercise Tandem Thrust, mounted by U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) in 1992, a 15,000-man joint force consisting of land, sea, and air forces concluded its training with amphibious landings and Army airborne assaults. The joint task force staff embarked in the Third Fleet flagship to maintain overall control of the exercise as the Joint Force Air Component Commander (JFACC) coordinated all air operations remotely from the continental United States.

Model for Joint Interoperability

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) operations have attained new levels of joint understanding, cooperation, efficiency, and combat effectiveness. In the Persian Gulf an Air Force composite wing operates on a daily basis with its Navy and Marine Corps counterparts to enforce no-fly zones. Army, Marine Corps, and special operations forces exercise together routinely. Navy ships enforce U.N.-imposed sanctions with the assistance of maritime surveillance provided by Air Force Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft. The CENTCOM environment is ideal for developing joint concepts and conducting joint training. In a recent exercise also in the Persian Gulf, for example, an afloat JFACC successfully developed, planned, and executed a mini-air campaign including a simulated strike mission with over 70 Navy and Air Force aircraft.

In the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific, Navy-led counterdrug joint task forces offer another example of joint operations. They exploit naval air and open-ocean surveillance capabilities as well as command, control, communications and intelligence (C^3I). Navy ships, maritime patrol aircraft, and airborne radar aircraft operate with assets from the other services and Federal agencies. A Coast Guard squadron commander and staff embark aboard the Navy task group commander's flagship to monitor and control surface activity. Coast Guard law enforcement detachments operate from Navy ships to board, search, and if necessary seize vessels smuggling narcotics.

Joint Communications

During the past decade significant progress has been made in standardizing procedures and procurement of interoperable systems for joint communications. Nonetheless problems still occur, especially in highly specialized communications systems. One example was the format and medium used to send Air Tasking Orders (ATOs) during Operation Desert Storm. They were incompatible with naval communica-

U.S. Navy photo

Admiral Kelso with the fleet.

tions systems and as a result carrier-based aircraft were dispatched daily to pick up one-hundred page documents from Riyadh for delivery to ships in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea. Converting the ATO into mission assignments was very time-consuming.

Finding the permanent solution to this problem became a joint, post-war priority project that is now well in hand. In recent joint exercises ships at sea have received and transmitted Desert Storm-sized ATOs electronically in less than five minutes. All deployed aircraft carriers have this capability while other carriers have been partially modified to allow complete installation in less than 24 hours. Procurement plans have been altered to ensure that all amphibious assault ships and aircraft carriers are permanently equipped with this vital capability.

Navy Organizational Changes

Since Operation Desert Storm the Navy has taken additional steps to improve its ability to work in the joint arena in operations, planning, procurement, and administration and to improve communications between the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) and the Joint Staff and between the Navy Department and Department of Defense.

In July 1992, the OPNAV staff was reorganized to mirror the structure and functions of the Joint Staff. As part of this change, the new Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Resources, Warfare Requirements, and Assessments established six joint mission assessment areas: joint strike, joint littoral, joint surveillance, joint space and electronic warfare/intelligence, strategic sealift and its protection, and strategic deterrence. Under this system, Navy procurement programs are scrutinized and evaluated against their specific contributions to joint warfighting. If they fail this test, they are not included in the Navy budget.

In March 1993 the Naval Doctrine Command was formally established. As the primary authority for developing both Navy and naval doctrine, it will provide a coordinated, integrated sea service voice in joint and combined doctrine. Priority will be given to doctrine development that addresses the new geostrategic environment and its changing threat, and to enhancing the integration of naval forces in joint and combined operations. This is fundamental to naval contributions to joint warfighting in the future.

In a significant departure from traditional single-service deployments, the Navy and Marine Corps are working closely with the Joint Staff to improve ways to organize, train, and deploy joint forces. The goal is to provide unified commanders with forces specifically tailored, trained, and deployed to satisfy regional operational requirements.

Interservice boards such as the Navy-Air Force-Marine Corps Board and the Army-Navy-Marine Corps Board have been established to encourage formal cooperation and increase efficiency among forces across a broad range of areas. These boards have succeeded in transforming several single-service air-to-ground weapons programs into one joint program and expanding interservice cooperation in land-based refueling for naval aircraft. Progress can also be noted in both the Joint Tactical Information Display System and the Global Positioning System acquisition programs.

Redirecting Spending

Funding represents the ultimate organizational indicator of priorities and a measurable sign of change. The redirection of spending has already been discussed, namely, in modifying systems and ships to accommodate joint staffs and operations and in expanding cooperation in joint acquisition programs. The Navy and Marine Corps have also instituted a deliberate organizational process to redirect funding priorities to enhance naval contributions to joint warfighting capabilities.

Furthermore, with the publication of "...From the Sea" in September 1992, the Department of the Navy dissected and examined its budget line-by-line against the guiding principles of our new strategic direction. This process examined how well the overall budget supported that new direction. As a result some investment plans were

redirected to strengthen joint littoral warfare including the following changes:

- increasing procurement of precision-guided munitions to support the joint land campaign;
- accelerating enhancements in joint command, control, and communications systems to support a JTF commander and his staff afloat; and
- renewing the commitment to satisfy the Marine Corps requirement for sufficient medium lift capability to permit rapid movement ashore in support of an amphibious ground campaign.

Overall, the Navy and Marine Corps redirected $1.2 billion within their budgets to support the new naval strategy and joint warfighting operations.

Recognizing the value of well-equipped, highly mobile forces to meet various challenges, unified commanders regard sealift as a critical ingredient of warfighting success. As we reduce manpower and material overseas, strategic sealift will be more vital to providing required heavy equipment and sustainment to forces in all parts of the world. Consequently, we have raised the priority of sealift in procurement planning, conveying to Congress its importance to our Nation's defense capabilities.

In the past year Military Sealift Command ships proved their value in joint peacetime operations almost as dramatically as they did during the Gulf War. Navy ships carried relief supplies to Florida, Guam, the Baltic nations, and Russia for distribution by U.S. units ashore. Marine Prepositioning Squadron ships were the first to arrive in Somalia, and by January 14, 1993, nearly thirty were operating in direct support of Operation Restore Hope.

Our operating forces are on the cutting edge of joint warfighting. All naval staffs and shore support establishments are committed to the concept of jointness. The Naval Doctrine Command will ensure that our focus remains on finding ways to improve the efficiency of joint warfare. The Navy-Marine Corps team is committed to joint operations and the pursuit of innovative means for employing our forces in support of joint warfighting. JFQ