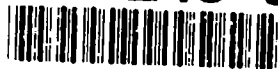


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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, RI

NONCOMBATANT EVACUATION OPERATIONS--PLAN NOW OR PAY LATER

by

Kirk S. Lambert

Major, United States Marine Corps

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

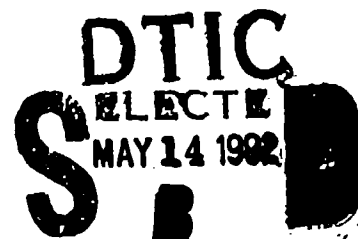
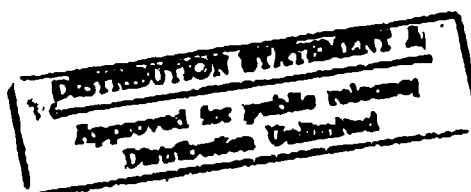
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NONCOMBATANT EVACUATION OPERATIONS--PLAN NOW OR PAY LATER

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Unfortunately, the need for evacuation or hostage rescue operations has not decreased. Indeed, in a peacetime environment, such military operations are the most likely contingency facing planners.

Background. Past experiences in Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) and exercises conducted since the early 1970s have shown that the United States has executed NEO with a high degree of success and a minimum number of casualties. However, much of the credit belongs to the initiative, competence, and good luck of the evacuating forces and evacuees alike. The breakdowns or weaknesses in NEO have occurred behind the scenes among those responsible for planning and preparing for NEOs, and less often with the executors at the tactical level. The most common deficiencies are captured in the types of questions asked whenever more than one person, agency, or department are required to work together on any project.

Who was responsible for _____?

Why didn't we find out sooner?

When did the plan change?

What were you supposed to do?

What was I supposed to do?

What were our options?

Why were our procedures and techniques inappropriate, dated, or unrealistic?

What could we have done to improve the planning and execution?

The significance of the same types of questions and their recurrence in the classified Joint Universal Lessons Learned System serve to confirm that unacceptable deficiencies exist in understanding the roles, responsibilities, and coordination required to successfully plan and execute NEOs.

These questions must not go unanswered, especially in light of increased civil and revolutionary wars, nationalist-inspired civil unrest, and an overall denigration of the security environment in many parts of the world. In the volatile world in which we live the likelihood of the U.S. having to conduct evacuation operations is great. One only has to look at the unrest in the republics of the former Soviet Union, Algeria, and Peru to get an idea of the potential danger to U.S. interests and citizens that could escalate to the point requiring a partial or full-scale evacuation.

When a situation arises that results in an ambassador contemplating a NEO, every participant from every agency must not only know what his responsibilities are, but those of the representatives from agencies and departments with which he must interact and coordinate. More importantly, these responsibilities must have been exercised prior to any hint of crisis.

Once a decision has been made to commence the preparations for a NEO the Commander-in-Chief (CINC) is faced with the additional task of deciding what forces are to be employed. His options are defined by a myriad of factors such as existing plans, capabilities, limitations, availability of forces and location of the objective area. Effective and timely execution of a NEO is dependent on the CINCs ability to select the best option and to deploy the most appropriate force in a minimum of time.

Problem. The lack of attention or lipservice paid to NEO in the past by U.S. government (USG) departments and other participating agencies will result in failure or a significant loss of American lives in future NEOs. No longer can the USG afford to rely on the initiative, competence, and good luck of the evacuating forces and evacuees to execute a successful NEO.

Purpose. In order for USG agencies and departments, as well as operational commanders, to avoid the pitfalls and reduce the friction likely to be encountered in planning, preparing and executing NEO, a thorough understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key USG departments and options available to the CINCs of unified commands is essential. The purpose of this paper is to address these critical elements of NEO.

Scope. The scope of this paper is limited to key USG departments and sub-elements. Special emphasis is placed on the role of the Emergency Evacuation Assistance Element because it is a crucial and relatively unknown link between civil and military

participants in NEO.

CINC force composition options are limited to comparisons between the U.S. Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEUSOC) and the U.S. Army Ranger Ready Force-1 (RRF-1). The RRF-1 is representative of U.S.-based Army contingency force capabilities. Developments in future force structure and resultant changes in requirements that could effect NEO are beyond the scope of this paper. The options, recommendations, and conclusions are supported by current force structure.

CHAPTER II

NONCOMBATANT EVACUATION OPERATIONS--BEHIND THE SCENES

Plans must balance the requirement for flexibility with the need for sufficient detail to satisfy the myriad requirements for organizing disparate organizations and personnel.

Coordinate and integrate planning with the country team and other agencies (including...other government representatives).

These statements from the planning guidance for NEO are unclassified extracts from Annex O, *Military Operations in Support of Peacetime Engagement to the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan for calendar year 1993-1995* (JSCP CY 93-95).

It is apparent that the Joint Chiefs of Staff are concerned with the complexities and difficulties of NEOs, and believe that prior planning and adequate preparation are prerequisites for a successful NEO. These prerequisites are tied to cooperation and coordination between countless federal agencies and departments that range from the Departments of State and Defense to the Commanders-in-Chief (CINC) of unified commands. Interface and liaison functions are provided through a system of committees, groups, and elements. In order to maximize the potential of these many organizations, an understanding of their roles and responsibilities as founded in law or directives is essential. An examination of the principal participants and subelements of Department of State (DOS), Department of Defense (DOD), and Department of Transportation (DOT) highlight the

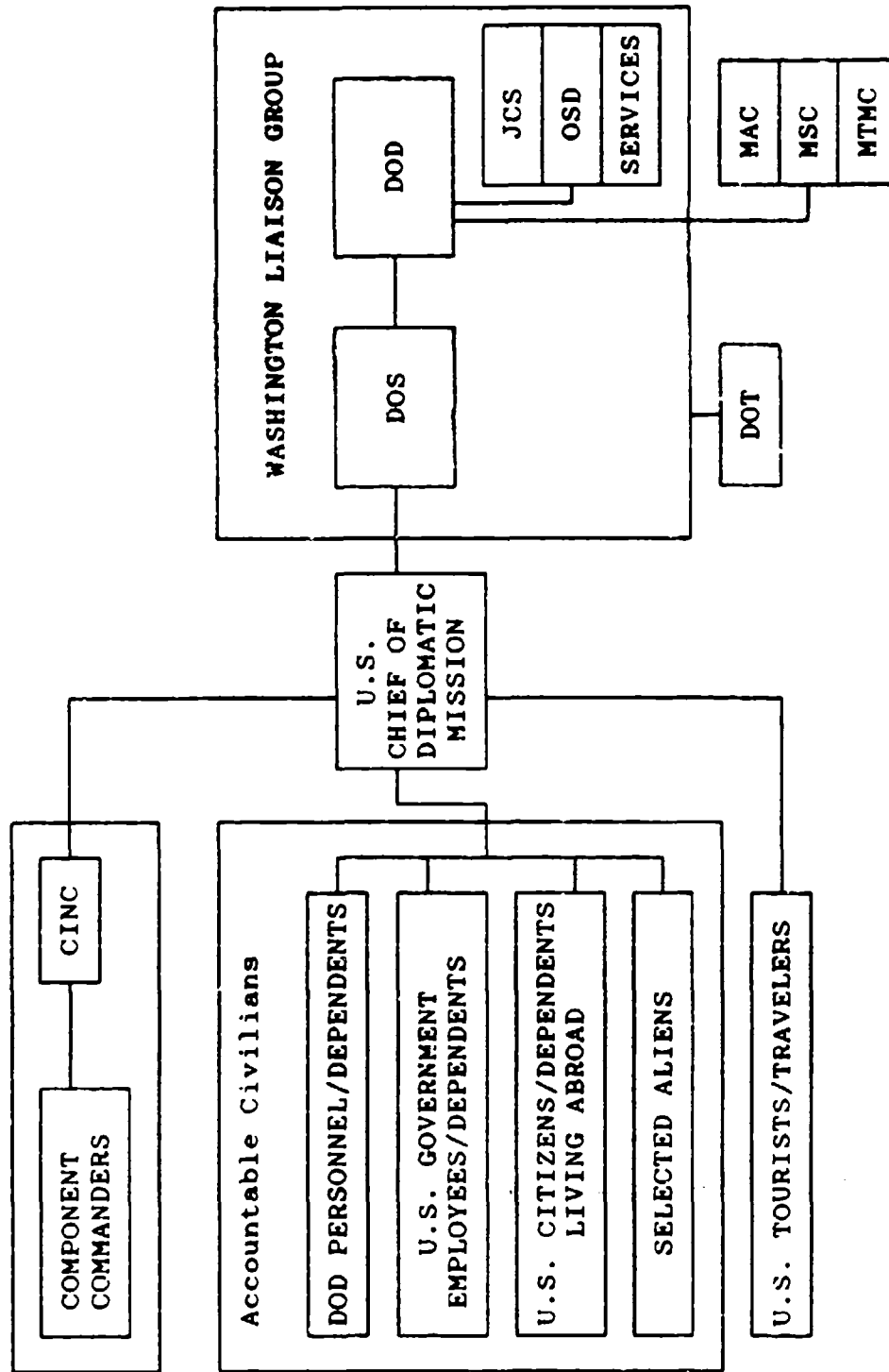
interrelationships and the complexities and friction that is inherent in any multi-level bureaucratic organizational structure. As the layers of the various departments are peeled back it becomes clear that although they are designed to facilitate decision-making, communications, and action, the propensity for complicating the planning and execution of timely and effective NEOs is ever-present. Figure 1 portrays the organizational relationships for NEO.

Department of State. Executive Order 11490 "Assigning Emergency Preparedness Functions to Federal Departments and Agencies" and the Foreign Service Act of 1980 provide the statutory basis for assigning responsibilities. Section 210 of Executive Order 11490 states that "Secretary of State shall develop policies, plans, and procedures for carrying out his responsibilities in the conduct of the foreign relations of the United States under conditions of national emergency, including, but not limited to...protection or evacuation of American citizens and nationals abroad and safeguarding their property."²

Therefore, the Secretary of State is responsible for the overall planning for the protection and evacuation of U.S. citizens and certain designated aliens abroad in the event of "imminent or actual hostilities or civil disturbances"³ and to ensure that their presence does not interfere with the combat effectiveness of U.S. and allied military commanders.⁴ The Secretary of State monitors developing situations and informs

Figure 1.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS FOR NONCOMBATANT EVACUATIONS



Source: Patricia Insley Hutzler and James H. Drennan, *A Guide to Interagency Support for DOD: Military Force Deployment, Civilian Noncombatant Repatriation, and Military Patient Regulation* (Bethesda, MA: Logistics Institute, October 1986), p. 5-7.

interested federal departments and agencies of critical events and DOS intentions.⁵ He further must determine which part of the Emergency Action Plan to implement based on the seriousness of the situation, prospects for diplomatic resolution of the crisis or reduction of existing tensions, and the impact on possible future military operations.

Washington Liaison Group. "The basic responsibility of the Washington Liaison Group (WLG) is to ensure that the emergency evacuation plans of DOS and DOD are full coordinated and executable." ⁶ Established and chaired by DOS, the WLG provides a permanent forum for DOS and DOD representatives to coordinate the preparation and execution of plans for the protection and/or evacuation of noncombatants abroad in emergencies. In addition to representatives from DOS to the WLG, representatives from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), the Military Departments, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Transportation (DOT), and observers from other government agencies function as the points of contact for all NEO matters and serve as the conduit through which information flows between departments and agencies.

The WLG meets periodically to execute statutory planning functions. It recommends to the Secretary of State establishing Regional Liaison Groups (RLGs), advises the established RLGs, U.S. diplomatic and consular posts, and military commands regarding plans for NEO. The WLG's key role, however, is acting as the USG's highest level Crisis Action Team during NEO. For

instance, during NEO the WLG will designate intermediate and final safehavens and coordinate transportation arrangements beyond the routine capabilities available to a diplomatic post during evacuation operations.⁷ The WLG also provides a forum for DOS Regional Security Officers and unified CINCs to "prepare and evaluate evacuation plans, operations, and training programs."⁸

Regional Liaison Group. Regional Liaison Groups (RLG) "provide a continuous liaison among diplomatic posts and the WLG, [and] ... review and approve emergency evacuation plans which are coordinated with all diplomatic posts in the area to ensure that they conform to U.S. national policy."⁹ Once the RLG reviews and approves the plans they are forwarded to the WLG.

A representative of the DOS permanently chairs each liaison group and includes representatives designated by the CINC from unified and component commands.

Current RLGs are configured as follows:

Washington Liaison Group, Washington, D.C.

Chair. DOS.

Composition. Includes U.S. Commander-in-Chief Atlantic Command (USCINCLANT) and subordinate command representatives.

Mission. Serves as the regional group for all unassigned countries (excluding the U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay), Canada, and the Caribbean insular area of Latin America.

European Liaison Group, Stuttgart, Germany.

Chair. U.S. Ambassador to Germany. (This function has been delegated to the American Consul General, Stuttgart).

Composition. Includes U.S. Commander-in-Chief European Command (USCINCEUR) and subordinate component command representatives.

Mission. Serves as the regional group for all of Europe, Africa west and south of Egypt, Sudan and Kenya, Mediterranean littoral countries of Syria, Lebanon and Israel in the Middle East.

South American Liaison Group, Panama.

Chair. U.S. Ambassador to Panama.

Composition. Includes U.S. Commander-in-Chief Southern Command (USCINCSOUTH) and subordinate component command representatives.

Mission. Serves as the RLG for all noninsular countries of Latin America, including Mexico.

East Asian Liaison Group, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Chair. Foreign Policy Advisor to the CINC.

Composition. Includes U.S. Commander-in-Chief Pacific Command (USCINCPAC) and subordinate component command representatives.

Mission. Serves as the PLG for all countries east of the Pakistan-India border and the insular countries of the Indian

Ocean.

Central Liaison Group, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

Chair. Political Advisor to the CINC.

Composition. Includes U.S. Commander-in-Chief Central Command (USCINCCENT) and subordinate component command representatives.

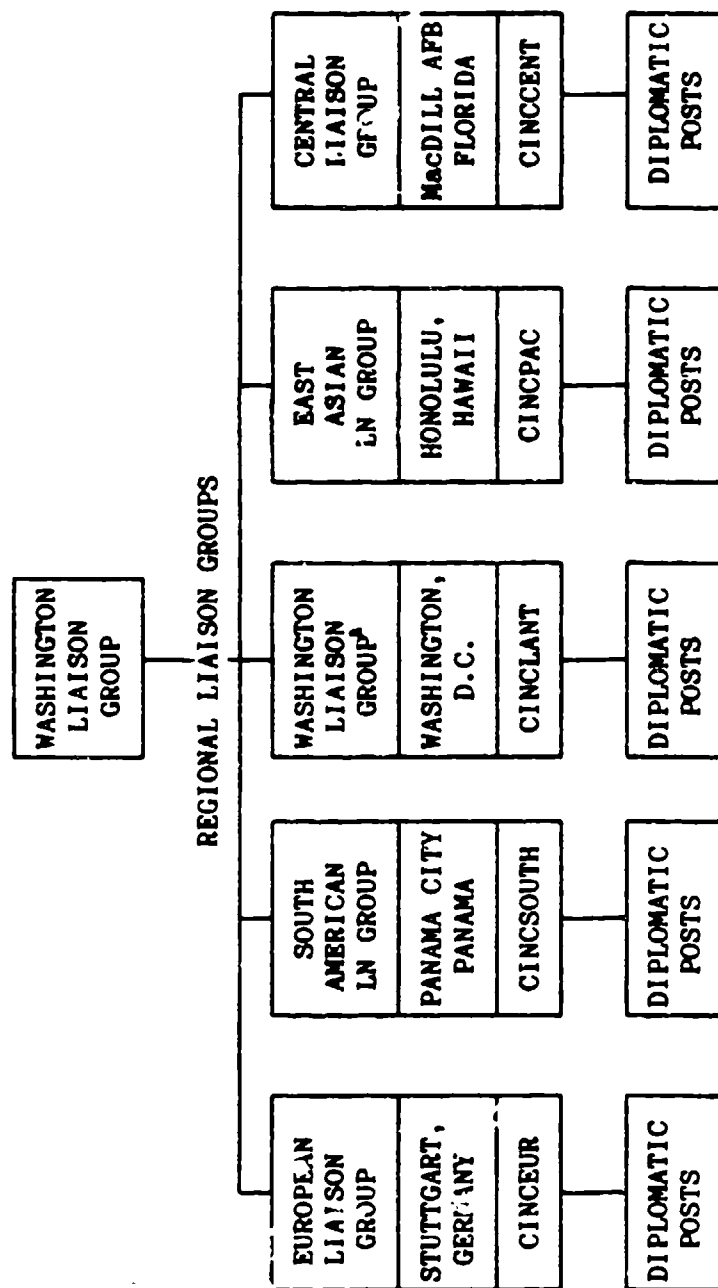
Mission. Serves as the RLG for all countries in Africa east of the areas covered by the East Asian Liaison Group (ELG) in the Middle East, south and east of the ELG as far as and including Pakistan.¹⁰ (See Figure 2.)

U.S. Chief of Diplomatic Mission. Section 207 of the Foreign Service Act states that "the chief of mission to a foreign country shall have full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all government employees in that country (except for employees under the command of a United States area military commander)."

The thrust of the Foreign Service Act compels the U.S. Chief of Diplomatic Mission (hereafter referred to as ambassador) to prepare and maintain Emergency Action Plans (EAP) for his embassy and to provide timely information to the Secretaries of State and Defense, the JCS, CINCs of unified commands, and other commanders as necessary. The EAP is an omnibus plan held at each embassy that contains mission actions and responses to many contingencies including bomb threats, fires, and evacuations. Information in

Figure 2.

REGIONAL LIAISON GROUP STRUCTURE, LOCATIONS,
AND PARTICIPATING CINCS



^aThe Washington Liaison Group also serves as a Regional Liaison Group for all unassigned countries, Canada, and the Caribbean insular areas of Latin America (excluding the U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay).

Source: Major K.S. Lambert, USMC.

the EAP includes the number of potential evacuees and resources available at the mission in the event that imminent or actual hostilities or civil disturbances may require evacuation, and the current emergency phase when evacuation appears imminent.

Emergency Action Committee. The Emergency Action Committee (EAC) exists in virtually all diplomatic posts and typically includes the deputy chief of mission, country team representatives from administration, security, the military assistance group, communications, and public affairs.

The EAC is responsible for drafting the mission's EAP, and forwarding it to DOS for review, comment, and approval. Additionally, the EAC publishes, updates, trains personnel having duties under the plan, and tests the plan through periodic rehearsals and exercises.¹¹

To guide the ambassador's team in dealing with a wide range of crises and emergencies, including the planning and conduct of his mission's EAP, the DOS has published the Emergency Action Handbook (EPH) to assist the committee perform their duties. The EPH addresses important issues involved in writing their EAP by providing formats, checklists, and recommendations that can be modified to meet the requirements of individual diplomatic missions.¹²

Department of Transportation. "The Department of Transportation [DOT] is required to prepare emergency plans and to develop

programs to determine the proper apportionment and allocation for the control of the total civil transportation capacity to meet all essential civilian and military needs".¹³

Movement requirements in support of national defense will be met by DOT plans that must provide a system of civil transportation controls for the movement of essential personnel and materiel. The priority system allows for DOS to negotiate directly with commercial carriers to move evacuees if DOS has been given a movement priority.¹⁴

Department of Defense. The Secretary of Defense is tasked with cooperating with and assisting the Secretary of State within the guides of military feasibility in carrying out his responsibilities. The means by which the Secretary of Defense provides this cooperation and assistance are the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), JCS, the military services, and most importantly, the unified commands.

To ensure that the political and military implications of NEO are reviewed and considered, the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD)/International Security Affairs for non-NATO countries, and the ASD/for International Security Policy for western Europe and NATO countries, will be contacted by DOS when a NEO appears imminent. The NEO is not considered in isolation, but in the context of current and future military operations in the theater.

In large scale emergency evacuations it is probable that

sufficient commercial and diplomatic mission transportation assets will not be available. DOS will request support from DOD. In determining the allocation for DOD transportation assets, the JCS, through the Joint Transportation Board will assess the needs of NEO, giving priority to military operations. Transportation that DOS requests from DOD will be provided by the military department through the appropriate Transportation Operating Agencies (TOA). The JCS or CINC may direct the TOAs to support NEO. "The TOA is responsible for planning and control of both military-owned resources and commercial air, ocean, and continental U.S. (CONUS) land transportation under its mission contract."¹⁵ The TOAs are:

- Military Airlift Command (MAC)
- Military Sealift Command (MSC)
- Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC)¹⁶

Joint Chiefs of Staff. Direction to participate in a NEO is provided to unified CINCs by the JCS. The JCS will direct the CINC to use military forces, sealift, and airlift necessary to conduct the NEO within the context of the overall theater military mission.¹⁷ The number and types of forces, transportation, and equipment required to meet NEO contingencies should be delineated in existing Conceptual Plans (CONPLANS)/ Operation Plans (OPLANS).¹⁸

Military Departments. The Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air

Force are responsible for organizing, coordinating, and executing their respective service's missions in NEO. This responsibility is performed primarily by providing to the CINC trained and equipped forces and support required to meet service obligations for NEO. Reporting systems, functional area designation and directives are developed by each Service Secretary in conjunction with the unified CINCs to ensure unity and clarity of purpose.

Commanders-in-Chief, Unified Commands. The CINCs of the unified commands "will be prepared to assist in any evacuation of American citizens and other designated personnel"¹⁹ from posts located in his Area of Responsibility (AOR). In order to assist posts in their evacuation planning the CINCs may dispatch teams to work with the diplomatic mission's Emergency Action Committee (EAC). This opportunity to assist diplomatic missions prepare their EAP provides the unified CINC an ideal position to orchestrate the many details and military aspects of evacuation plans.

Emergency Evacuation Assistance Element. The Emergency Evacuation Assistance Element (EEAE), known by different names in various unified commands, is an element or team on the staff of the joint unified command that provides assistance in emergency evacuation planning, site reconnaissance, and liaison between the CINC and the diplomatic mission EAC. The EEAE is the CINC's key tool for supporting diplomatic missions in both planning and

executing NEO.

Pre-NEO responsibilities include country visits to assist the post EAC prepare and review their EAP. Teams conduct reconnaissance of embarkation/debarkation points, airfields, assembly areas, helicopter landing zones, routes of ingress/egress, safehaven locations, and other sites necessary for evacuation planning and implementation.²⁰

The EEAE is available to participate in the DOS EAP inspection which is conducted every two or three years depending on post personnel rotation and other circumstances, and in Crisis Management Exercises (CME) that allow rehearsal of the EAP.

Participation of the EEAE in CMEs is a point of contention in some diplomatic posts, but their participation is logical since they more than likely assisted in the preparation of the plan, or in writing the plan, as is often the case. Their participation is also invaluable because they will often be present during the conduct of the post's NEO, and their military expertise and familiarity with all aspects of the plan will lend itself to successful execution of the NEO.²¹

When a situation develops suggesting the need for U.S. military assistance the ambassador may request the dispatching of an EEAE to his post to provide liaison functions between the post and the CINC in whose AOR the post is located. The unified CINC will send an EEAE, often comprised of the same personnel who conducted the planning/writing of the post's EAP.

On arrival the EEAE will work side-by-side (under the

direction of the ambassador) with the post's EAC to provide a dedicated element to assist in dealing with the military aspects of NEO, as well providing crucial and continuous communication with the CINC.

The size of the EEAE depends on many variables including the scope of the operation, time available, and needs of the diplomatic mission. The EEAE may be as small as one person or it may expand to 40 individuals or more. The arrival may be overt or clandestine and may be a singular or phased insertion.²²

All unified commands are required to maintain EEAEs. Some, like Southern Command, maintain permanent, primary duty, rapidly deployable EEAEs; others have on-call EEAEs. Regardless of the permanency, the composition of the EEAE has representatives from the CINC's joint staff, including expertise in joint planning, intelligence, medicine, civil affairs, logistics, communications, and transportation.

Once the order is given to execute a NEO and the commander of the joint task force (CJTF) arrives in the objective area, the EEAE dissolves and no longer works for the chief of mission, but is usually absorbed by the JTF and becomes an integral part in assisting the CJTF accomplish the NEO.²³

CHAPTER III

EVACUATION PHASES AND CORRESPONDING ACTIONS

As emergency conditions evolve and the security environment deteriorates DOS uses a system of phases to indicate the severity of the situation and the corresponding actions to be taken by the diplomatic mission and the CINC. In order to determine the level of emergency the U.S. diplomatic mission uses the following guidelines.

Phase I. Standfast Precautionary. A country's political/security environment has deteriorated and the possibility exists that American personnel or installations are at risk. Due to the situation the U.S. diplomatic mission recommends that Americans remain in their homes.

Diplomatic Mission Actions.

1. Activate the mission EAC.
2. Review the EAP.
3. Consider options and resources required.
4. Consider requesting military assistance.²¹

CINC Actions.

1. Prepare to direct deployment of EEAE.
2. Review/update applicable Operation Plans and Concept Plans.

Phase II. Reduced American Presence. The gravity of the situation in the country has deteriorated to the point that non-essential Americans depart as soon as possible by commercial

transportation.²⁵

Diplomatic Mission Actions.

1. Begin detailed EAP review.
2. Request additional DOS and/or additional Marine Security Guards.
3. Request CINC dispatch all or part of the EEAE.

CINC Actions.

1. Dispatch EEAE support requested by the ambassador.
2. Alert forces required to execute evacuation operations.

Phase III. Evacuation. The environment exists such that the welfare of U.S. citizens and post personnel are directly threatened or that such a threat is anticipated.²⁶

Diplomatic Mission Actions.

1. With DOS approval, the ambassador orders evacuation of all but a skeletal staff.
2. Assemble and document American citizens and designated persons/selected aliens to begin movement to designated safehaven locations by commercial surface, air, and sea transportation. Evacuation movement options in order of preference are commercial transport, commercial charter, and U.S. military charter. Commercial and U.S. military charter require coordination with the WLG.²⁷
3. Request military assistance if the post possesses inadequate means to evacuate personnel or if the

gravity of the situation warrants such action.

CINC Actions. Once requested by DOS and ordered by the National Command Authority and subsequently the JCS:

1. Provides military transportation.
2. Commences military evacuation operations.²⁸

Phase IV. Post Closure. The situation has deteriorated to the point that the U.S. government orders closing of the post.²⁹

Diplomatic Mission Action.

1. Continues evacuation operations.
2. Request military assistance if not previously requested.

CINC Actions.

1. Continues providing assets and forces to include full-scale evacuation.³⁰

CHAPTER IV

AUTHORITY TO INVOKE EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

Chief of U.S. Diplomatic Mission. When an emergency situation has developed, or is anticipated, the ambassador will inform DOS of his intentions to initiate the EAP. In fast-moving situations where the security environment has deteriorated with unexpected rapidity and severity, the ambassador may initiate all or portions of the plan, including requesting military assistance from the unified CINC without prior notice or approval of DOS.³¹

Principal U.S. Military Commander. Under normal circumstances the principal U.S. military commander, the unified CINC, must request authorization to employ forces in a foreign country for security and evacuation operations. However, when the urgency of the situation dictates he may respond to a request from an ambassador without authorization from the JCS to the "extent he deems appropriate and militarily feasible."³²

In determining the appropriate military force and equipment to be employed the ambassador and the military commander "shall give due consideration to the probability of grave international repercussions that might follow ..."³³ the introduction of U.S. military forces.

Command Relationships. Once the order to execute the NEO has been given, the conduct of the operation is the "sole

responsibility of the military commander, who will, where time and communications permit, act in coordination with and under the policies established by the Chief of Mission or Principal Officer."³⁴ This does not mean that the ambassador abdicates his ambassadorial authority and prerogatives or his role as the chief diplomatic representative of the U.S. government, but that his authority is limited to functions apart from command of the NEO. Deploying the CINC's EEAE to work with the ambassador to establish command relationships for NEO during development of the EAP will minimize potential problems.

CHAPTER V

CINC FORCE OPTIONS

The order to conduct a NEO in a CINC's AOR results in a variety of critical decisions, not the least of which is determining the forces to be used to execute the NEO. His principal options are in many cases made simpler by the existence of operation plans (OPLANS) and concept plans (CONPLANS). If an OPLAN/CONPLAN exists for a NEO in a given country, the recommended forces to be employed are often listed. In any case, the existence of a listing of recommended forces is no more than that--a recommendation. The recommendation serves as a starting point for selecting a force composition that is suited to the operation at hand.

Factors that the CINC must consider when determining the force to be employed include capabilities, limitations, and availability of forces. Based on past experience and current planning, he is typically limited to three principal options: organic forces in the region, naval forces in the form of an embarked Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEUSOC), and U.S. Army Ranger Ready Force-1 (RRF-1) with their associated U.S. Air Force support. If possible, the CINC will use organic forces, but in most cases scarcity of available organic forces, overcommitment, and on-going regional military requirements leaves the CINC with two remaining choices: the MEUSOC and the RRF-1.

Responding to crises has been historically associated with embarked Marine forces. NEOs conducted in the Dominican Republic in 1965; Cypress in 1974; Cambodia and Saigon in 1975; and Liberia and Somalia in 1991 have established a precedent for force composition set in 1805 when Marine Lt. Presley N. O'Bannon rescued American seamen from the Barbary pirates. The perceptions and signals sent to the international community by employing the Marines in crisis response was described in 1931 by then Secretary of War Patrick J. Hurley:

the Marine Corps can land on foreign territory without it being considered an act of war, but when the Army moves on foreign territory that is an act of war, and that is one of the reasons for the Corps.

More recently, then Army Chief of Staff, General Frederick C. Weyand told the Senate Armed Services Committee on 2 February 1976 that "...in greater degree perhaps than the other services, if and when the Army is committed, the United States is committed."

It is clear that in the conduct of evacuation operations the U.S. desires minimum interference in the internal affairs of other nations. In the case of a civil war or war between two countries which place the safety of U.S. citizens at risk, the use of Marines deployed from ships at sea demonstrates U.S. resolve to conduct the evacuation with a minimum of force, in a minimum of time, while remaining neutral.

Selection of the force or forces to be employed in crises, generally, and in NEOs specifically, cannot be made based solely on precedent or on any sense of historically-based romanticism. The capabilities and limitations must be the overriding consideration in force selection.

In 1987, the report of the Commission on Long-Term Strategy, *Discriminate Deterrence*, recommended the creation of highly flexible and mobile forces. Sustainability must be added as a requirement for such forces because NEOs have the potential to become lengthy evolutions as in the case of the 1991 evacuation of Liberia which lasted seven months. An examination of the capabilities and limitations of forces available to execute NEOs will allow the CINC to determine which forces best meet these criterion.

Mobility. The necessity to have a highly trained, properly equipped, and suitably organized force is met by both the Marine MEUSOC and the Army RRF-1. "Consideration of employment of any of these forces is limited not by a lack of willingness or capability by the force at the objective but by means of employment to the objective."⁵

Mobility is a limitation of Army forces because they are U.S.-based and require air transit from CONUS to the objective. Landing rights must be obtained from the host country or adjacent states. The availability of U.S. overseas bases has decreased from more than 450 in 1947 to less than 120 today. Access to overseas bases will continue to diminish in the future and access

to suitable civil airfields, particularly in times of crisis, may be severely restricted. Overflight rights have similarly diminished, resulting in the requirement to use circuitous routes to the objective.

Army forces have the capability to offset landing rights complications by forcibly seizing an airfield if that option is permitted. The ramifications and possible adverse affects of forcible entry must be carefully considered in exercising this option.

In contrast, MEUSOCs are forward deployed in the Mediterranean and the South Pacific which means they can be employed without extraordinary measures, and have the ability to remain in international waters off of the objective area for an indeterminate amount of time. This capability was demonstrated in 1975 when embarked Marine forces stayed off the coast of Phnom Penh, Cambodia for 44 days before conducting evacuation operations. Later, that same force participated in the evacuation of Saigon.

Unlike Army forces aboard USAF aircraft, a MEUSOC does not rely on existing bases, host nation support, or foreign agreements for landing and overflight rights. A Marine Corps study conducted in the early 1980's revealed that "of 113 countries considered significant to U.S. interests, 80 are within 75 miles of the sea."³⁶ An embarked MEUSOC possesses a significant ability to take advantage of this fact.

Sustainability. The RRF-1 does have the ability to

initially sustain themselves for three days. An additional two days of supplies that can be deployed in a self-contained package if the requirement is anticipated prior to the RRF-1 deploying from CONUS.¹⁷ Resupplying the force becomes an issue when the likelihood of operations extending beyond five days are considered--especially if a forced entry has been executed. The additional burden of having to feed evacuees for a short duration is a conceivable problem that would not be easily addressed within the capabilities of Army evacuation forces.

Once ashore, a MEUSOC has the ability to sustain itself for 15 days of combat operations. Unless a NEO deteriorates to all out combat, sustainability would not become an issue until after two weeks, by which time reinforcement and resupply would have been effected. Helicopter assets organic to the MEUSOC can provide logistic support to a deployed evacuation force from ships offshore. However, in most cases this is not an issue because Marines remain aboard ship when not engaged in active evacuation operations.

Flexibility. The issue of flexibility encompasses many areas, including some aspects of mobility. Here the focus will be on the range of responses prior to, during, and after a NEO.

When a crisis situation has developed to the point where conducting a NEO with military forces is considered, military forces will often be called upon to deploy to the objective area in order to be in place to commence evacuation operations with little warning. The intensity of crisis situations often

fluctuates depending of the degree of success of diplomatic efforts. As the level of violence and threats against U.S. citizens similarly subside, increase, or shift between the two, so too will the proximity to issuing the NEO execute order fluctuate.

It is a given that diplomatic efforts to diffuse a dangerous situation is the ambassador's preferred option--evacuation his last. However, the presence of U.S. forces in close proximity is not only a prudent precursor to possible evacuation operations, but also an indication of the U.S. resolve to interject forces to protect its citizens.

The MEUSOC has the flexibility to deploy to the objective area, maintain a presence, and ultimately, to depart or conduct a NEO. If the decision to execute is questionable and the MEUSOC's presence off the coast is not judged to be in the best interests of diplomatic efforts, they can steam in close proximity (over the horizon) ready to launch on short notice.

Army forces aboard USAF aircraft can deploy to the objective area, but as the situation and likelihood of conducting a NEO fluctuates, very possibly while enroute to the objective area, their ability to adjust to last minute changes is limited unless their arrival closely coincides with receipt of the execute order. The alternative is to return to CONUS or land in a neighboring country awaiting further developments. They may have to wait days or weeks before a decision is made to execute a NEO. Waiting in a neighboring country negates any value of

presence, and sustaining the force for any length of time becomes a major problem. The arrival of Army forces in a neighboring country may also have operational security implications or international repercussions whereas an embarked MEUSOC steaming in international waters reduces the chances of such implications.

In a scenario where a NEO is executed upon arrival in the objective area, the degree of flexibility of Marine and Army forces is disparate. Assuming the host or neighboring country has airfields that will accommodate C-130, C-141, or C-5 aircraft, and that the environment is permissive (i.e., not hostile), Army forces would land, or in a nonpermissive environment be inserted their forces by conducting airborne operations (parachute in) and secure the airfield. In both cases they would await the subsequent arrival of internally loaded helicopters and/or wheeled assets.³⁸

The forces would move by helicopter or wheeled assets to secure designated assembly areas and to await the arrival of the evacuees. Evacuees would be transported to the waiting aircraft, either in the host country or neighboring country. The neighboring country may or not be a safehaven. If not, the evacuees would have to be transported to a safehaven by C-130, C-141 or C-5 aircraft. Depending on the capacity of the airfield, sufficient aircraft may not be able to be on the ground simultaneously to transport the evacuees. In that case aircraft would have to be cycled into the airfield or from the airfield to the safehaven. Simultaneously the helicopters or ground

transportation would be shuttling passengers from the assembly area to the C-130, C-141, or C-5s.

Great distances and large number of evacuees may result in the deployed forces remaining on the ground for an extended period of time, often in a hostile, dangerous environment, thereby complicating survivability and sustainability.

If the RRF-1 were to secure a port rather than an airfield, forces would deploy to the assembly area, which may or may not be the port itself, and move the evacuees to waiting U.S. Navy or MSC ships. The ships would provide an immediate safehaven for the evacuees. A major consideration in a port seizure operation is whether the port facilities can accommodate pier-side boarding of evacuees. If such facilities exist and the environment is permissive, the operation would be considerably easier than having to move evacuees from the port to ships at anchor, or worse yet, having to conduct in-stream uploading of the evacuees. In a non-permissive environment pier-side evacuation would place the ships at great risk.

Although the RRF-1 is capable of executing a port seizure mission, this mission is rarely practiced. Additionally, the RRF-1 and the U.S. Navy and MSC rarely conduct³⁹ interservice exercises, thereby increasing potential command and control and movement problems and the appeal of this option.

Regardless of the option chosen by the RRF-1 (airfield or port seizure) the NEO would be completed in a similar fashion. The evacuation process would be repeated in reverse from the

assembly area to the airfield/port, transportation to the safehaven, and subsequently movement to CONUS for repatriation of the evacuees.

A MEUSOC afloat in the objective area in the same scenario, whether in a permissive or nonpermissive environment, would embark in their helicopters and/or amphibious vehicles, depending on the situation and proximity of the assemble area to the beach, move to and secure the assembly area, board the evacuees and fly them or transport them in landing craft⁴⁰ to the waiting ships--safehavens. In-stream recovery of helicopters and landing craft are mission essential tasks that are practiced often and are entirely within MEUSOC capabilities.

Extended operations ashore would also be less complicated due to time and distance factors, that is, flight time and distance to the ships, and the base of support they provide.

Third country involvement and associated potential problems would be avoided. After completing evacuation operations forces remaining on the ground would board their helicopters and landing craft and return to the ships. Transportation to CONUS for repatriation of the evacuees would follow.

Availability. The capabilities of forces to conduct NEO are of little value to the CINC if the forces are not available. With MEUSOCs deployed in the Mediterranean and the South Pacific CINCEUR, CINCCENT, CINCLANT and CINCPAC can be reasonably certain that a MEUSOC will be available and responsive for their use in NEOs unless it is in transit to or from CONUS and sufficient

closure time is not available.

What options does CINCSOUTH have? If MEUSOCs are in transit to the Mediterranean or the South Pacific they can be diverted for employment in NEOs in Southern Command's AOR. If they are already steaming on station and if there is enough warning the MEUSOCs can transit to CINCSOUTH's AOR. Without sufficient warning time, CINCSOUTH can be supported by the MEUSOCs just returning from deployment if they are still intact, or if not, by the MEUSOCs in predeployment training if they have been certified in NEO. If a MEUSOC is not available or a fast-breaking crisis precludes the MEUSOC from executing the NEO, CINCSOUTH can call on the RRF-1 that can respond within 18 hours from notification, to "wheels up" on their aircraft.⁴¹

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions that can be drawn from this discussion can be expressed in terms of alternatives and choices available to the participants in NEO. One alternative is to maintain the current organizational structure, the same level of interest and involvement at the highest levels, and the same degree of understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the participating agencies. This alternative will result in facing the possibility of unacceptable casualties or even mission failure.

A second alternative is to create new layers of bureaucracy by adding more agencies or organizations to oversee the current structure in order to increase levels of training, preparedness, and interaction among existing agencies. However, adding new elements to a structure that is sufficiently cumbersome would only complicate the problem.

A third alternative is to maintain the current organizational structure but to increase the awareness and interest at all levels and among all participants. Command interest at the CINC and ambassador levels is paramount because it is they who will be most intimately involved in invoking and supporting NEO.

The third alternative will most effectively address the means of avoiding the pitfalls and reducing the friction that

plagues the planning and preparation of NEO. The one thing that is absolutely essential, and difficult, is change--not in the organizational structure, but in the attitudes of the members of the organizations that have roles and responsibilities in NEO. Paying lip-service to NEO planning and preparation or just going through the motions would not only be irresponsible, but potentially criminal, if the lives of U.S. citizens are lost due to apathy or negligence. It is very unlikely that any of the participants in NEO planning and preparation would purposely risk the lives of U.S. citizens. But the possibility exists that a crisis situation could develop virtually overnight, when least expected, or when the situation has deteriorated with such rapidity that reaction time is limited or nonexistent. Then, anything short of a well-prepared and rehearsed NEO and a similar lack of exercised coordination and interagency cooperation may result in catastrophe.

Naturally, the last option an ambassador desires to exercise in a crisis is an evacuation of his diplomatic mission. The perception that a NEO is an admission of the failure of diplomacy is understandable, however, in a volatile, often hostile security environment, prudent diplomats must prepare for the worst case scenario, while diligently pursuing U.S. interests through diplomacy.

In light of the security environment, the potential for the U.S. military becoming involved in NEO is great. It comes as no surprise that the CINCs of unified commands must be proactive in

preparing for NEO in his AOR. Force composition, OPLANS, and CONPLANS must be continually updated and wargamed to ensure acceptability, feasibility, and suitability.

Balancing NEO responsibilities with a multitude of other mission and contingency requirements is a formidable task for the CINC, but tasking, deploying, and exercising his Emergency Evacuation Assistance Element will not only help to maintain a high degree of mission readiness, but also will result in the diplomatic missions in his AOR being better prepared for potential NEOs.

Contrasting the capabilities and limitations of the force options available to the CINC underscores the need for highly mobile forces that have the flexibility to respond to a wide range of crises and to sustain themselves once in the objective area. The MEUSOC gives the CINC such capabilities; moreso than the RRF-1. Unless availability becomes an overriding consideration, the MEUSOC is the CINC's force of choice for conducting Noncombatant Evacuation Operations.

NOTES

1. Thomas P. Odom, *Dragon Operations: Hostage Rescues in the Congo, 1964-1965* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1988), p. x.
2. U.S. President. Executive Order 11490. *Assigning Emergency Preparedness Functions to Federal Departments and Agencies*. Federal Register 28 October 1969, p. 17567.
3. U.S. Department of State, *Emergency Planning Handbook, Foreign Affairs Handbook*, (Washington: 1988), p. 1511.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Patricia Insley Hutzler and James H. Drennan, *A Guide to Interagency Support for DOD: Military Force Deployment, Civilian Noncombatant Repatriation, and Military Patient Regulation* (Bethesda, MA: Logistics Management Institute, October 1986), p. 5-8.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 5-7.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Richard L. Jaehne, *Evacuation Operations. The State Department-Military Interface*, Marine Corps Gazette. March 1988, p. 48.
9. Hutzler and Drennan, p. 5-8.
10. U.S. State Department, *Emergency Planning Handbook* Appendix II, pp. 1-8, 2-8 and p. 032.3-2.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
12. Jaehne, p. 49.
13. *Assigning Emergency Preparedness Functions to Federal Departments and Agencies*, p. 17567.
14. Hutzler and Drennan, p. 5-10.
15. *Ibid.*
16. DOD directive 3025.14, 5 November 1990, *Protection and Evacuation of U.S. Citizens and Certain Designated Aliens in Danger Areas Abroad*, outlines current DOD policies and procedures in greater detail.

17. Marlene Ausen et al., *Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) and Repatriation. How Can the Process be Improved?* (U.S. Air University. War College. 1988), p. 18.

18. Interview with LtCol Richard W. Roan, USMC, Newport, RI: 17 December 1991.

19. U.S. Department of State. *Emergency Planning Handbook*, p. 1615.2.

20. U.S. State Department, *Emergency Planning Handbook*, p. 1615.2 and Interview with LtCol Richard W. Roan, USMC, Newport, RI: 9 January 1992.

21. Roan interviews 17 December 1991 and 9 January 1992.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Roan interview 9 January 1992.

24. Jaehne, p.49.

25. Hutzler and Drennan, p. 5-6.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 5-60.

27. U.S. State Department, *Emergency Planning Handbook*, p. 1511 (e).

28. Jaehne, p. 49.

29. Hutzler and Drennan, p. 5-6.

30. Jaehne, p. 49.

31. U.S. State Department, *Emergency Planning Handbook*, pp. I-3.3 - I-3.4.

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. U.S. State Department, *Emergency Planning Handbook*, p. 1533.4.

35. Hays W. Parks, *Evacuation by Military Force*, Marine Corps Gazette, September 1978, p. 26.

36. Paul F. Pugh and Thomas C. Linn, *Rediscovering the Force-in-Readiness*, Armed Forces Journal International, August 1989, p. 64.

37. Interview with CPT Daniel B. Allyn, Assistant Operations Officer, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Bragg, NC: 7 February 1992.

38. Interview with LTC Lane Toomey, War Plans Office, G3 Plans, 18th Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC: 7 February 1992.

39. Allyn interview.

40. Primary landing craft include the amphibious assault vehicle (AAV), air cushioned landing craft (LCAC), utility landing craft (LCU) and medium landing craft (LCM).

41. Allyn and Toomey interviews.

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