

USS Shangri-La

PATTERN FOR LIMITED WAR

By Col J. A. Donovan, Jr.

He that commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much or as little of the war as he will, whereas those that be strongest by land are many times never the less in great straits.
—Francis Bacon, 1615

✿ TODAY, IN THIS ERA OF JET SPEED and the dawn of the space age, Bacon's statement is as valid as it was over 300 years ago. But because of rapidly developing technologies and revolutionary new military concepts we tend to lose perspective of certain such fundamentals.

The current world power struggle has produced three general frameworks within which strategic planners attempt to design our forces and define the battle: the cold war, the limited war, and the general war are the frames of reference. Yet, our planning artists are not in complete agreement on the pictures to be depicted within these frames. There are varied ideas as to the military pattern to fit each design.

This is our problem.

The free world is fortunate that it has had both the time and the imagination to consider and debate and evaluate the structure and nature of the military forces and strategy for each type of war. Unfortunately, time is running against us and we must now settle on basic designs—even if some of the service planners are offended. Life or death may be the rewards of our decisions.

As the mutual deterrence of thermonuclear annihilation in the general war picture becomes more widely accepted, and so general war more unthinkable, increased interest is focused upon the limited war prob-

lem. What should be the pattern of our military organization and posture for limited war? What weapon systems, roles and functions are best suited to the prosecution of a limited war? What theories, concepts and doctrines are most valid and acceptable for the solution of the limited war problem? The answers to some of these questions are to be found in an analysis of the nature of the limited war, the criteria for types of limited war forces, and the organization and command of these forces. The conclusions should give us a pattern for limited war.



Definition of Limited War

Any discussion of limited war must be based upon some understanding and agreement as to what it is. A limited war essentially is a conflict short of general war in pur-

suance of limited national objective and confined to a limited geographical area. Involved are two or more belligerents employing limited military forces. These may be combinations of US and allied or indigenous units against enemy combinations of "aggressors," "volunteers" or armed insurrectionists.

The limited objectives preclude annihilation of the enemy and unconditional surrender. Alternatives, avenues of escape, and hope for a reasonable settlement must be kept evident to the enemy. Such a war may mean a long drawn-out campaign for tactical advantage. It may well become a war of attrition and calculated risk. It must, however, be a war with a National purpose to further a National policy—but it can't be expected to settle a problem fully. Life is a process of living with problems and if we would avoid the "all-out" war, we will have to live with our "limited" problems. Maintenance of a status quo may be sufficient purpose. Such a war may be kept limited, however, only if the Nation is always in a position to fight a general war.

Limited yield, "tactical type" atomic weapons must be held in readiness to employ in the limited war if they are needed. This is a stated National policy. The great unknown factor, however, is the use of tactical atomic weapons in the

limited war. There is yet no assurance that the employment of these weapons can be confined and controlled. The decision to employ any form of nuclear weapons will have to be carefully weighed in terms of risks in balance with the limited objectives. In this definition we will consider that firepower is limited to the conventional weapons necessary to attain tactical objectives in the furtherance of the limited strategic objectives.

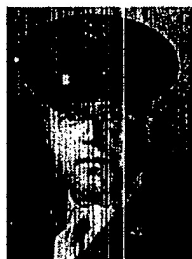
Other than the possible chain reaction of the employment of tactical atomic weapons in the limited war, we can normally expect a limited war to remain limited. Great international wars do not grow out of chance outbreaks of local hostilities. They are the result of the deliberate decisions of governments.

We must, however, continue to prepare for the general atomic war while recognizing, in the case of threat of such war, all existent political, psychological and social forces in the world will almost certainly press action toward a limited war.

The Critical Areas

In the present world political climate, limited war may result from a variety of causes. Insofar as America and its free world allies are concerned, the areas most likely to be the scenes of limited wars are the peripheral countries bordering the predatory Communist bloc. There we find the political, social, economic and geographic environments for Communist-motivated aggression contrary to free world interests. There Communist infiltration, coup d' etat, armed insurrection, "volunteer" liberation forces, guerrillas and invasion by satellite, may call for aid or intervention by the free world forces.

On this so called "periphery" of the Communist World we see certain danger areas that have been generally agreed upon by the military planners as being the most likely locales of limited war. Here we find that the danger is from the cumulative effect of "creeping aggression." Here also, political-military tactics are difficult to deter with a thermonuclear threat. Because of their importance to the free world, and their sensitivity to Communist pressures, and because they lie in the historic direction of expansion of the two



Col Donovan believes the problems of limited war are the "big ones," rate the most attention from military planners. He came into the Marines in '39 after graduating from Dartmouth (PLC), spent all of WWII with Sixth Marines. He was EGP of LEATHERNECK Magazine for two years (1948-50), taught tactics at Junior School and Basic School, commanded 2/9, later became ExO, Ninth Marines. He's now with G-4, HQMC.

major communist powers, the two general areas of the periphery considered most likely scenes for limited war are the Middle East and South Asia. (Figure 1) There are other possible areas but solutions to the limited war problems posed by these two areas should provide us a suitable pattern for the others.

In the Mid-East and South Asia—the "rimlands," the periphery from Syria to Vietnam—we see a region most tempting to Communist limited-liability enterprises. There the Communists have recently been most industrious. This region is vastly important for its hundreds of millions of people and its vast resources in oil and other resources. It is

astride the vital sea and air communications between Europe and the Far East—the Suez, Red Sea, Indian Ocean, China Sea highways which are of such consequence to the trade by which the free world largely lives. It is important to freedom of movement between the Atlantic, the Indian and the Pacific Oceans and their air spaces, and is of interest to a global power whose strategies are based upon freedom of action.

The nature of the Communist threat in these areas takes many forms and Communist aggression is conducted on several fronts: political, economic, social, psychological, and military. Resistance to all of

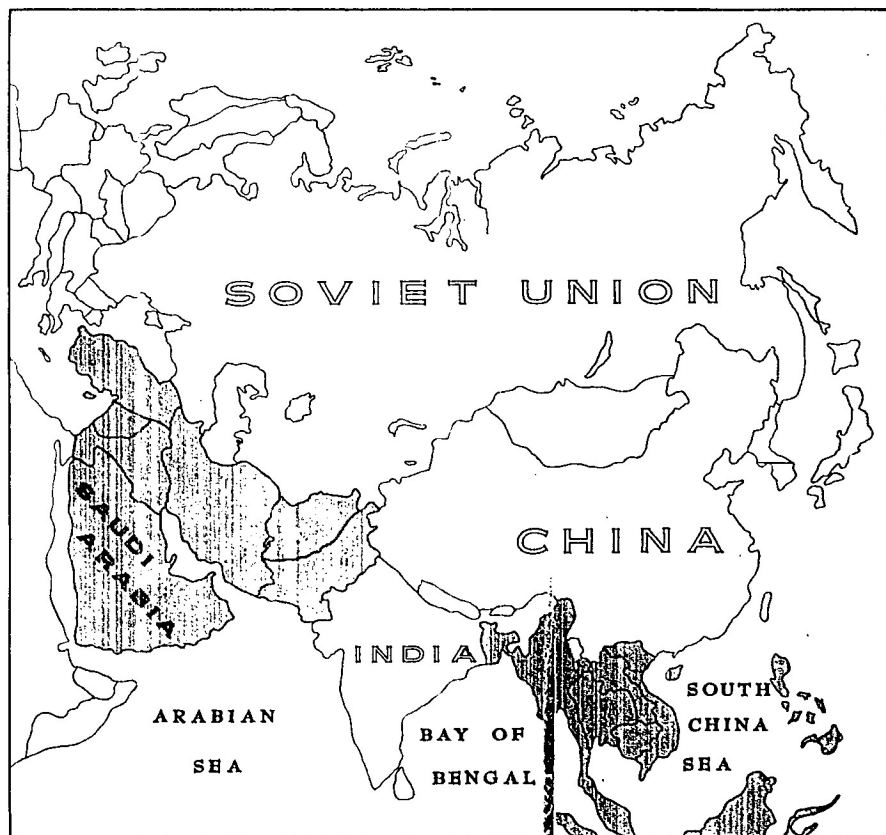


Figure 1



Terrain in the critical areas varies from barren, trackless desert

these fronts is beyond the ken of the military. We are herein concerned with a design for the military aspects of this problem. The essentially military tasks and techniques to consider within the boundaries of limited war should help us establish the criteria and the types of forces to be used.

The missions facing the limited war planner for these critical areas include: (1) the show of deterrent force, (2) protection of American and allied citizens, (3) protection of our national and economic interests, (4) assisting friendly governments to resist civil disorder and armed rebellion, (5) providing logistic, air or weapons support to indigenous ground forces, (6) conducting military operations against enemy forces on a variety of scales, and (7) going to the rescue of any nation "requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international Communism," as authorized in the Eisenhower Doctrine to prevent the creation of new Red satellites.

Limited War Operations

It is then evident that in the limited war we can expect to experience such prosaic military operations as control of civil disturbances and restoration of order, anti-guerrilla actions, defense of vital areas, and the many forms of offensive ground operations.

Throughout the critical Mid-East, for example, we can anticipate that mechanized infantry-artillery and armor-heavy formations in wide open maneuvers, such as were seen

there in the WWII years and as recently as the Sinai campaign, will be the typical operations of an extended campaign. Small airborne and vertical envelopment operations should have tactical value, but the stamina and ground mobility of air-lifted forces in this barren and trackless land is questionable. Most of the vital objectives in this area are approachable from the sea and are also well within range of naval amphibious force operations.

In contrast, the jungles, paddies and deltas of South Asia do not lend themselves to mechanized or armored maneuver. In that part of the world, as it has been in the past, the infantry formation is appropriate. This is the land of patrols, raids and ambush, the perimeter defense and night operations. Aids to mobility would be such ordinary means as trucks, amphibious vehicles, helicopters and the naval amphibious lift. Water is the most available avenue of approach for major maneuvers and also the most common obstacle.

A study of the Mid-East and South Asia areas will also reveal that the sea approaches are not only the most accessible but the most logical for both the deployment and subsequent support of a limited campaign. As long as the naval amphibious task forces are properly deployed there should be no standing requirement for large scale air deployments or airborne assaults in the initial stages of a limited intervention situation. On the other hand, the rapid and timely aerial deployment of relatively small combat formations to a troubled

area may help prevent a sudden situation from deteriorating or may quickly provide the necessary support or build-up for a beleaguered ally. Such a move need not necessarily require an "assault" type landing. A simple administrative air landing may suffice.

By the same token, when considering limited war operations, our naval amphibious forces should not think exclusively in terms of the "assault" landing. There are few fortified and defended beaches in the world today. There are particularly few of them in the under-developed areas being considered. A fortified coast line is a luxury even a major power, fully mobilized, can rarely afford. Our amphibious forces should find many undefended landing sites along the coasts of the critical areas.

When we visualize the nature of a limited war, let us not be distracted by WWII patterns, training habits, or general war doctrine to the point where we automatically see the "assault landing" as the only method of deployment onto a foreign shore. There is no need to parachute all over the country-side or splash in among the bathing beauties if we can simply push an LST up to some dark beach and quietly put the troops and *all* their equipment ashore. The "assault" is actually only a phase of offensive combat we must employ when we cannot accomplish our mission by maneuver or fire. The "assault" is not always a necessary step in the airborne or amphibious operations sequence. This by no means suggests that we should neglect the development and cultivation of our assault skills, either amphibious or airborne. When needed they cannot be performed by amateurs. In our limited war concepts and plans, however, we should recognize that the timeliness of our arrival at the scene, the skill with which we land the right amount and type of combat power, our mobility in the combat zone, and the efficient prosecution of our limited objectives, are all equally as important as the techniques used in landing.

Criteria for Limited War Forces

In the analysis of any problem there must be established certain criteria by which we gauge and test the possible solutions. In the light

of the most probable tasks, character and geographic locales of limited war, the nature of limited war forces can be fairly well defined.

Generally, such forces should be able to operate in any climate and terrain, but specifically we are interested in the Mid-East and South Asia. In the first we are considering a hot, dry desert, barren, underdeveloped and trackless area where oil-fields, ports, pipelines and a few population centers are the vital areas. Most of the key objectives are approachable from the sea.

In the second area we find the hot, humid, lush, underdeveloped, paddy and jungle terrain typical of the littoral civilization of South Asia. This is the terrain of the river barrier and the waterway. The critical localities of South Asia are surrounded by sea approaches.

Limited war forces must be able to operate in these areas independently or, when possible, with friendly indigenous forces and units of other free world allies. They should be able to deal with the complete gamut of limited contingencies including political infiltration, civil riot, armed insurrection, guerrilla and partisan warfare, or military aggression and penetration by a border nation.

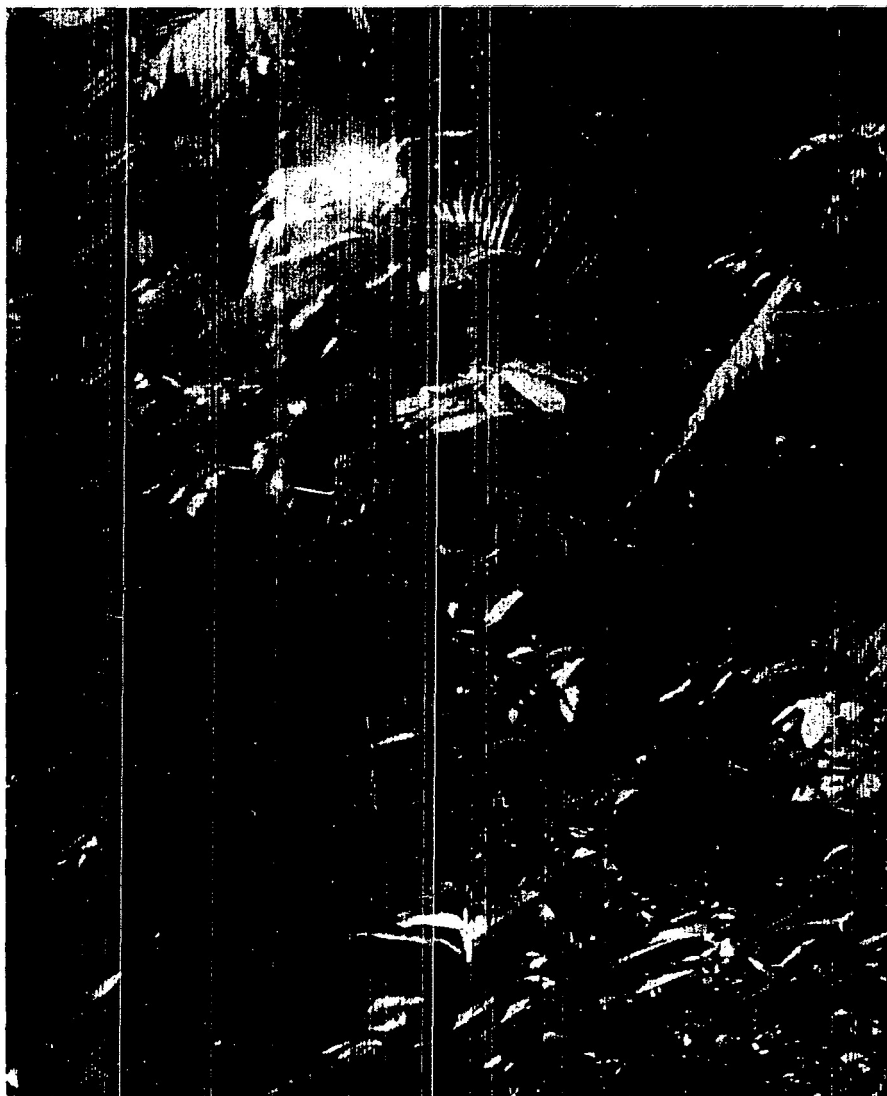
These forces must have both a military and political capability. They should be able to organize and work with the local populace for the common effort.

They should be flexible forces in size and combat power, able to exert the proper type of force at the correct time and place. To do so they must be mobile by land, sea and air.

This sort of precision will require a responsiveness at air speeds in a matter of hours and at sea speeds in a few days. It can be best attained by forces deployed reasonably near the critical areas. Furthermore, these forces must be trained and ready with plans, SOPs, and joint and combined operations capabilities.

To operate in the underdeveloped regions there must be minimum dependence upon land lines of communications and elaborate logistic bases.

Finally, the limited war contingency force must be free of other military commitments and able to speedily focus its entire attention upon its task.



... to hot, humid, lush, underdeveloped paddies and jungles.

Types of Forces

One aspect of limited war planning that usually confuses the issue is the unservice concept of the *type* forces to be employed. The military planner tends to visualize the type of situation which best fits his service's particular characteristics.

The Army thinks in terms of land operations well suited to a two or three division corps including division slices of all the arms and services. This "school solution" is well supported by lines of communication, logistic commands with supply depots, replacement camps, laundry units and motor pools—typical of the field Army. Furthermore much of this, they believe, should be moved by air into battle.

The Marines, on the other hand, like to think in terms of an amphibious assault requiring a Marine divi-

sion or two with Marine aircraft wings under a Marine command in a neat, tight operation including only the supporting Navy.

The Navy planners stress the merits of sea power and surface lift to support a limited war effort but continue to neglect amphibious shipping requirements in favor of the exotic submarines, giant carriers and missiles more pertinent to the strategic deterrent role.

Meanwhile the Air Force has relatively small interest in the limited war, as it does not fit into their jet, nuclear, air power philosophies. They are ready, nevertheless, to deploy a Composite Air Strike Force of fighter-bombers to the critical area at the drop of a hat. This fighter-bomber force is, however, trained and equipped primarily for isolation and interdiction of the battlefield with tactical atomic weapons rather



U.S. Naval aircraft should dominate the skies.

than for close troop support with conventional weapons.

Actually such concepts, plans, and forces are often remote from the specific requirements or even actual capabilities. First, the nature of contingencies in the areas we are considering are more likely to call initially for the deployment of small precision, selected, or token forces. Ground divisions and air forces are needed in expanded situations. Second, there simply aren't enough US military transport aircraft or ships immediately available to move divisions and large support forces quickly and concurrently in an emergency. We have to face up to the facts of numbers and types of forces actually available and their ready transportation means. Finally we should plan to employ only the minimum force required for the task. Practicing economy of force and an objective consideration of the type forces best suited to the task, we can develop sound task forces and operational concepts. The purpose is to design measured types of flexible forces capable of applying truly precise combat power. We must consider the peculiar characteristics of each type of armed force to see how it best fits in the limited war picture.

Air Forces

First, then what is the probable role of air power in the limited war? More and more we appear to be designing ourselves for a type of atomic air war from which there is no return and to which there is no alter-

native. The heavy jet bomber for strategic bombing and nuclear weapon delivery is hardly a tool for limited war. In fact there is some question as to the capability of modern bomber aircraft to deliver conventional bombs. There is no doubt that these strategic bombers are the ultimate force we must have in reserve, the atomic deterrent which gives the enemy good cause to limit the war. By the same token, the latest versions of Mach-2 interceptor aircraft and their counterparts in the family of ground to air missiles have no clear place in limited air war. If the enemy employs the type of offensive weapons that will require these air defense systems, it will be a major air battle and probably an unlimited air war.

Each year our tactical or attack type bombers become faster and more related to atomic weapons delivery concepts and less concerned with the more prosaic role of close support of ground operations with conventional weapons. With the demise of the Navy-Marine AD and F4U type aircraft, American ground forces have lost their last true close support aircraft. Admittedly the aviators can make a good case for jet aircraft in the ground support role—but the fact remains that most jets fly too high and too fast to find battlefield targets. They don't carry the varied firepower and they can't stay on station awaiting the needs of the ground battle. It's understandable that every combat pilot should desire the security of jet power in today's skies—but we must remember

that attack bombers are primarily a means of delivering selective ordnance in support of sea or land operations. The jets of today require practically unlimited air space and obvious ground targets. These are not typical characteristics of the limited war. Certain jet attack types such as the Navy-Marine A4Ds and the planned A2Fs have presumably good tactical support characteristics. This problem of satisfactory close support aircraft types is far from solved, however.

The Navy's aircraft carrier forces should, however, be able to provide most of the combat air support needed in the initial phases of an intervention or limited war. In the critical areas being considered there is no major enemy air power to contend with. US naval aircraft should be able to dominate the skies with little or no contest. If such air dominance is not assured *before* intervention, then there can be no limited ground effort until the air battle is won. Such an air battle would be most difficult to limit. A repetition of the odd pattern of the Korean aerial duels at the Yalu sanctuary is hard to visualize. In Korea there was no real contest for control of the air over the battlefield.

Naval aircraft, in addition to patrol of the air over the limited area, can provide the interdiction and isolation of the battlefield, and tactical air support in conjunction with the precision, close troop support provided by embarked Marine Corps attack squadrons. Direct support of the landing force can also be provided by Marine transport helicopters flying from helicopter assault ships. These are capabilities unique to the Naval amphibious force.

Related to this primarily Navy-Marine air support is the deterrent threat of SAC, poised in the background, and the presence of the Air Force's Composite Air Strike Force in a forward deployment posture. This latter unit of fighter-bomber types may quickly join the air battle if the Navy carrier forces need help or relief and if the Air Force bases are within fighter-bomber range.

If a limited war expands into a prolonged land campaign, as in Korea, Marine Aircraft Wing and Air Force TAC units may be deployed into the objective area and to air fields ashore to support the ground operations and assure con-

trol of the air. It is not visualized, however, that battles for air superiority in terms of past history will be typical of limited wars of the type we are here considering.

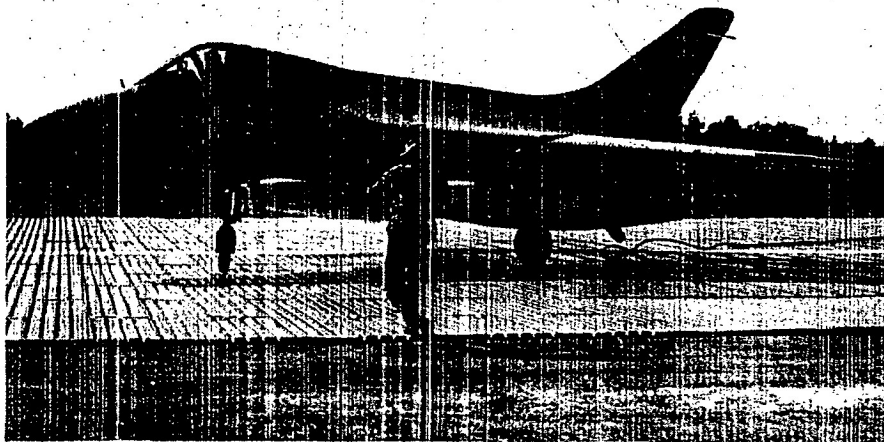
The airplane is, however, the great fact of modern power. In limited war it probably won't be the decisive implement but the nation that can best employ modern air power to limited ends will be dominant. In the limited war, air transport, both fixed wing and helicopter, may provide the responsiveness and mobility that will dictate much of the tactics. The ability to deploy selected ground combat forces by air for intercontinental distances on short notice should be one of the capabilities of a major air power. Precise packages of combat units landed by helicopters from naval task forces or by parachute from far ranging troop carriers upon the sensitive objectives at the periphery of the enemy areas may attain strategic results beyond what their limited size would indicate. In the limited war, speed, precision and technique may well be the primary means of keeping the campaign from deteriorating beyond the desirable limits. So the possibilities of direct air support in limited war operations are almost limitless when we mean close tactical air support, troop transport, supply, evacuation and observation.

Land Forces

Should a limited war contingency indicate a requirement for substantial land combat forces and if a land campaign in the pattern of Korea develops, then we must be able to quickly augment the Navy's amphibious troops with US Army formations. In its traditional role, the Army should provide the sturdy infantry divisions, armored units, medium artillery, engineers and skilled logistic support in the kind of deliberate and powerful effort for which an Army is intended.

The Army's part in the limited war concept is the usual role played throughout history by the Army of a maritime (that is, strategically mobile) power. It is today, with air mobility added to sea mobility, no different in principle than it was when the sailing ship was its instrument.

In any intercontinental deployment of these heavy types of Army forces, most formations will have to



The airplane is the great fact of modern power

move by conventional sea lift. Economy and our military air lift capacity restrict us from moving little other than small airborne or infantry type formations for long distances by air. If our sea forces are kept in proper strength and location there should be no requirement for large scale Army deployment by air.

Although today the tendency of many is to couple mobility of ground forces with airlift, this still is not the most logical way to move large bodies of troops, heavy equipment and supplies. And it is far from being the cheapest. Airlift gains its distinct value when time is counted in minutes—when a small, light force can do the job quickly. The requirement of large units for significant quantities of supplies over longer

periods of time calls for the tonnage carrying capacity of the ship which permits loads to be computed in terms of tons rather than pounds.

As has been noted the assault phase and its technique are not the primary criteria for determining types of ground forces for execution of limited war tasks. More important is the *right type* of force, properly equipped and sustained for the particular requirements of the situation.

Finally the ground force capability for limited war should include in addition to suitable types of combat and support units, such special forces as: Unconventional Warfare units, indigenous support commands, Joint Military Assistance Advisory Groups, Logistic Support Groups, and a Civil



... Deliberate and powerful effort for which an Army is intended

Affairs and Military Government capability.

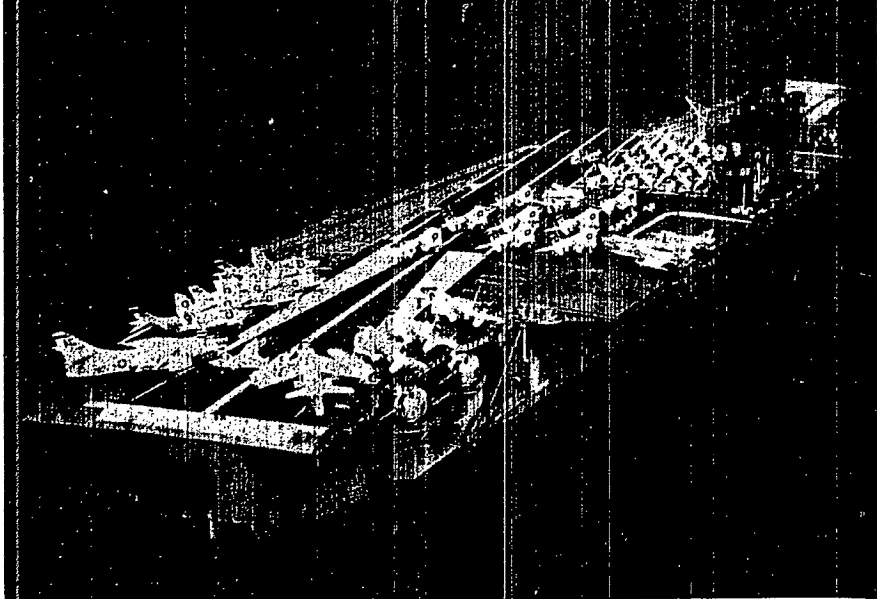
Sea Forces

As most of the critical areas on the periphery of the Communist bloc are approachable from the high seas, our basic instrument for limited war will be our sea borne forces. The initial steps of deterrent show of force, or moderate military aid or intervention are well within the capabilities of the balanced fleets.

The fleets occupy a unique status under international law. Naval forces traditionally represent the sovereignty and independence of their state more fully than anything else can represent it. They enjoy many immunities not customarily granted under international law to aircraft or other units of the nation's armed forces. They operate almost totally in international waters which are available to be used by all nations.

A unique characteristic of the Naval amphibious force is its ability to apply selected and precise force at the sensitive area. It can be deployed to the scene before the war turns hot. There it can show the flag as a deterrent force. It can land liberty parties of sailors and Marines to spend money and further the people-to-people program. Or these same troops can go ashore armed to support a friendly local government. They can launch combat units, including varieties of aircraft, to support embattled indigenous forces. Finally, they can employ the full scope of the air-ground team's combat power, including helicopter and beach landings at vital points, to accomplish limited National objectives. These same forces can be returned quickly to their ships where they can remain as visible reminders of America's determination and authority. The Marine landing forces withdrawn to their ships can remain available in the area for further operations with a good order of flexibility and sustained logistic support. No other type force has this flexibility, this wide choice of techniques for applying its power or the capability of doing it so precisely.

Lebanon again demonstrated the classic role and unique value of modern sea power. The balanced fleet makes possible the forward deployment, close to troubled areas of diversified force—air, Marines and warships, that is poised but not committed to action. Such a task force



Our basic instrument for limited war: seaborne forces.

serves as a visible evidence of "leashed" American strength that can move swiftly. Moreover, such military power is mobile, independent of advance logistic bases on foreign soil and, being on the high seas, its presence cannot be challenged by anyone.

Joint Operations

Once we have accepted the essentially naval character of the initial phases of a limited war operation, we can better evaluate force requirements and command relations. However, there is another current military philosophy affecting our concepts of limited war and the contingency plans for such events. It is based generally upon the tri-elemental theory of the unified operation and the transparent approach of "me too-ism." This is the idea that each Service *must* get in the act. It invokes the doctrine of the joint command of air, ground and sea components in the ideal of a unified effort. This theoretical approach results in plans and operations not designed to precisely apply the *right* force—but rather a compromise to give everyone an opportunity to contribute.

Although President Eisenhower stated, in his Defense Reorganization message of April 1958, that there would no longer be separate air, ground and sea battles and implied that all future operations would be of a joint nature under a unified command, he certainly did not mean that *each* of the four services must participate in every deployment on an equal basis. A joint task force can be two or more services

combined as necessary to accomplish a task.

This does not suggest that limited war planning should not be done on a joint services basis. Quite the contrary. Fortunately the reorganized Joint Staff in Washington and the area unified commands should assure the joint nature of future plans. Nevertheless, there will be a call for greater objectivity in determining the proper types and sizes of forces in the contingency plans and a proper perspective of the limited war picture. The probable phases and evolution of the limited war pattern should be considered in composing the joint military effort and in determining the force requirements.

The unified command plans must not be used as the means for *justifying* each service's new operational concepts or force ambitions. Rather the estimates, concepts of operations and requirements stemming from the area commands should *reveal* the type forces needed, how much, their movement priorities, and the command relations. When and if an emergency situation appears to be developing beyond the capability of the Naval carrier and amphibious forces, Army and Air Force reinforcements must be prepared to enter the fray. Then the operation will evolve from an essentially naval operation to an expanded joint operation with a joint tri-elemental force command being both logical and necessary.

A current deficiency is our readiness to put such joint headquarters into the field on an operating basis. A joint staff is only as effective as its combination of trained personnel,

equipment and procedures. A joint staff cannot be thrown together and expected to function well. The excellent combat forces we have now ready, deserve equally proficient staff leadership in joint operations. A related deficiency is in the area of approved doctrine to guide the joint task force operations and procedures. This is particularly apparent in air operations. Special effort must be made to correct these deficiencies immediately.

Command Organization

Again, if we recognize the logic of the predominantly naval nature of initial limited intervention efforts, we can reach some specific patterns for the controversial aspects of command relations in the limited war picture.

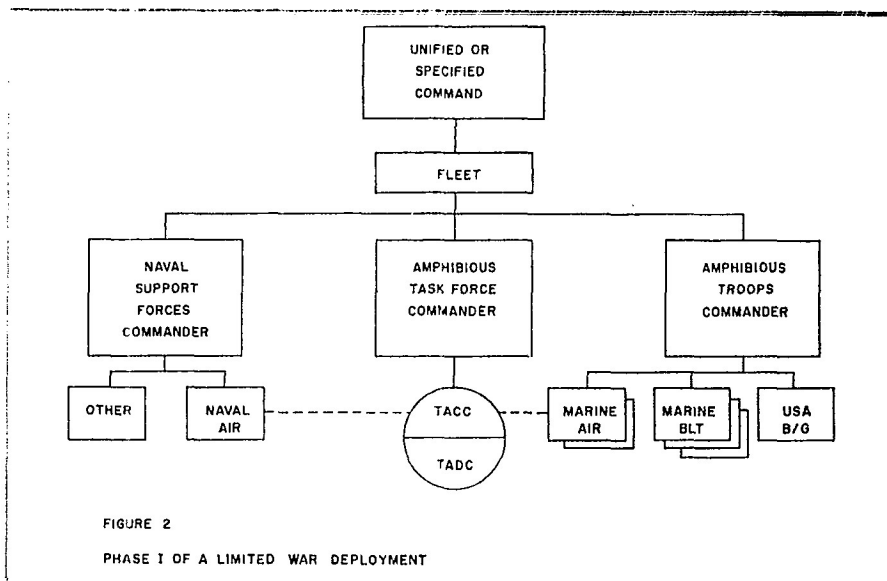
We have seen that deployed and balanced fleets are properly the primary or initial instruments of our foreign policy in the limited war area. The pattern has been established for a fleet projecting its forces ashore under a Specified Command, as did the Sixth Fleet in the Mid East—and have seen the Seventh Fleet and Taiwan Defense Command conducting deterrent deployments and preparations for possible limited support of an ally in the Far East. This time under the Unified Command of CINCPAC.

The questionable aspect of the command pattern is, "At what phase is it necessary to introduce the joint headquarters and the Joint Task Force into the limited war situation?"

An answer would be simply, "When the nature of ground and air operations in the limited war area approach a scope and duration beyond the capabilities of the fleet and its amphibious force."

During the essentially Naval phase of an intervention, dominated by Naval air forces and Fleet Marine Forces, there is certainly no need or logic to complicating a time-proven command relation with the tri-service joint task force organization.

In the initial phase of the intervention or assistance (Figure 2) the Marine landing force commander (Amphibious Troops Commander) should be in command of all US ground forces ashore. All air support will be under Naval command until such time as command is passed ashore, then it will be a Marine air command until such time as Air Force support of the limited war op-



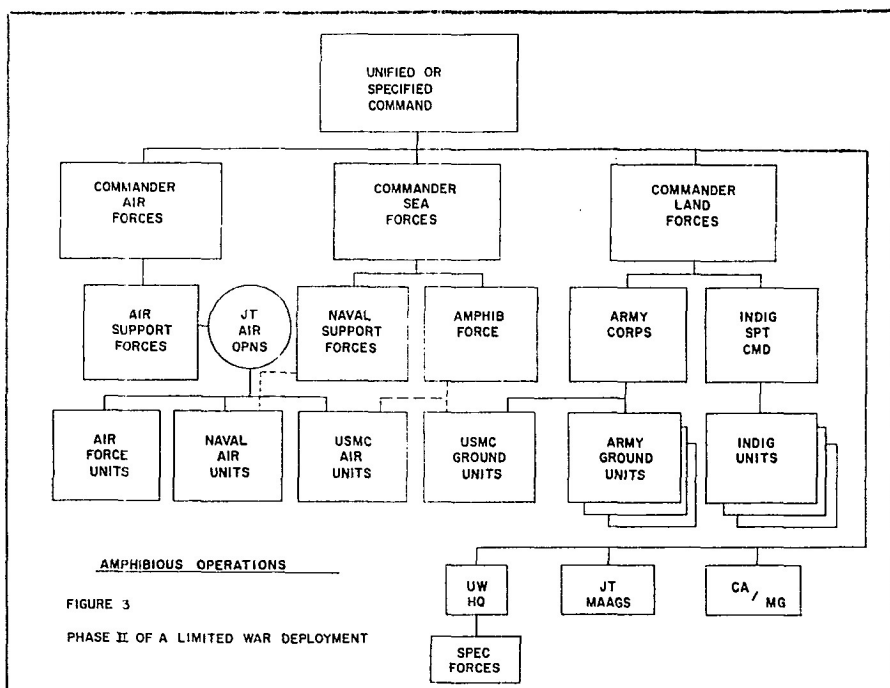
eration becomes the dominant air effort.

The close command and working relations between the Navy and the Fleet Marine air and ground units justifies this type of organization at this phase. The arbitrary and theoretical tri-elemental organization of Air, Ground, and Naval commands as components of a specified or joint task force with the ensuing complexities of coordination and communications is not supportable. At this early and truly limited phase of an intervention the command organization should be kept simple and in consonance with the type and size of forces employed. It is also a proven system based upon experience and well developed Navy-

Marine doctrine.

The Marine Division-Aircraft Wing teams have been specifically tailored and trained for just such precise operations. Furthermore, in the Fleet Marine Force Troops and FMF Headquarters we have the communications and air-ground staff ready to command the situation.

If the deployment and force build-up phase in an expanded situation or prolonged land campaign develops, we might expect a command relations pattern as in Figure 3. Here the Joint Headquarters or joint task force recognizes the participation of all Services in an expanded joint effort. The Army with a corps or field army type headquarters becomes the land forces component.



The Navy reverts to a lesser support role and becomes the sea component. The Air Force furnishes the bulk of the air component. The over-all command is a unified headquarters consisting of a joint staff trained and in existence, as previously suggested, or the joint headquarters can be formed around the nucleus represented by the in-being air-ground team headquarters of the Marine amphibious troops commander.

The fleet's Marines are the logical bridge in this transition from the predominantly naval phase to the joint phase dominated by the Army in a ground campaign. The Marine amphibious troops and air units may then subsequently phase out of the operation to return to their primarily amphibious or reserve posture under the Naval component.

The Pattern

We can then conclude that the proper pattern for limited war is along the following general lines:

1. It will be initially predominantly a naval operation because sea power is the logical and traditional implement of National policy in limited contingencies. The high seas have historically been accessible to maritime powers as avenues of approach to all the strategic littorals of the world. The balanced fleet can move freely in the vicinity of a critical area with no question about violation of a nation's sovereignty.

2. The fleet's amphibious forces are the trained and ready precision forces to be projected ashore for limited objectives.

3. Initial Army and Air Force participation will be to supplement and support the amphibious troops and naval air effort.

4. An expanded and prolonged operation will call for Army reinforcement and build-up of suitable



ground forces for a ground campaign and to conduct civil-military aid programs.

5. A prolonged air contest will require a major Air Force participation and control of the air prior to land operations.

6. The joint character of the operations should hinge upon the nature of the forces actually required and contributed rather than upon a philosophy of equal representation of each service in the plans.

7. Small aggressions and limited objectives do not call for retaliation with nuclear bombs. In the bal-

anced fleet with its unique amphibious components the United States has a highly mobile military force in being that gives us the capability of immediately reacting against small-scale Communist aggression on a graduated retaliatory basis.

8. The forward deployment of alert naval forces is as important as fast transport systems and is the economic means of providing initial combat forces, build-up forces and sustained support of limited war efforts. However, a modern military air transport capability is a necessary supplement of the mobile surface systems and air support will be a substantial logistic factor in limited war.

9. Command organization for limited war is proper when it is simple, flexible, trained and in existence. It should reflect both joint planning and the nature of the dominant type forces executing the initial tasks and subsequently the type forces that may be needed to accomplish the limited National objectives.

Conclusion

One of the dangers facing the military man today is that in his preoccupation with the changing techniques of his profession and with the sacred functions of his service, he may lose sight of his mission, the reason for his existence. No military service, or the concepts of its operational doctrine, is an end in itself. We cannot become so concerned in evolving theories which visualize the type of war most suitable to our function that we lose the perspective required to evaluate the changing scientific, military and political environment in which we live. For only with enlightened perspective can we see the pattern of limited war.

USMC



What Hath Goode Writ

LIMA COMPANY, 9TH MARINES was in process of running a company attack problem in the northern section of Okinawa. The base of fire had lifted, and the assault platoon was on the objective, a craggy peak almost in the center of the island. The company commander was in the process of moving up to supervise reorganization on the objective. He halted long enough to take a field message from a panting runner. Message follows:

Sir:

We have taken the high ground. All Okinawa from the broad Pacific to the East China Sea lies trembling at our feet. Not a "habu" can slide slithering on its stomach but what we see him.

For God, For Country, For Yale & For Connolly,

Y'r most obd't & humble servant

C. J. GOODE

2dLt USMCR

\$15.00 to Capt James P. Connolly II

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