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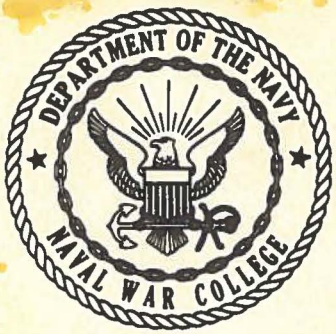

NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES IN LIMITED WAR

by

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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
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ABSTRACT OF NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES IN LIMITED WAR

The Communist nations are set upon an ultimate goal of world domination. Their strategy is one of planned protracted conflict--coups, rebellions, exploitations, aggressions and limited war or the threat of limited war--rather than general war. These crises or conflicts shall be confined generally to the underdeveloped nations of the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America. They will occur usually in areas where there are few United States bases, few formal alliances and few, if any, forces.

In developing a force to combat the limited war threat, the United States must look seaward for an answer. Seapower can provide the answer since the sea forms a general dividing line between the Free World and the Communist Bloc.

The Naval amphibious force, as an element of total seapower, is a useful weapon for limited war employment. This usefulness lies in the value of the Naval amphibious force as a deterrent or counter to limited war.

Today, as it has for the past 22 years, the Naval Amphibious Force has a job to do. This mobile amphibious force, a force comprising ships, troops and integrated aviation to support the surface and land operations is essential to the U.S. in the fulfillment of her world-wide leadership and the responsibilities that go with it. Obviously, any

professional military group could be trained to do this job. This is not necessary however when the force already exists.

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INTRODUCTION

World War II ended as the nuclear age was ushered in and amphibious warfare was subjected to close scrutiny by experts, military and civilian alike. Two basic questions arose and as stated by General Shoup, these were: "Can amphibious warfare survive in the nuclear age; and, if so, does it deserve to survive?" (30:13) To the first question he stated:

> Massing forces at the point of a main effort has been a standard combat tactic for centuries. The advent of nuclear weapons placed Commanders on the horns of a dilemma. Massing forces, whether they be aircrafts, ships, or men, creates a lucrative target for nuclear attack by an enemy. Conversely, if a commander disperses his forces over too great an area he subjects them to defeat in detail by an alert and mobile enemy. The secret of success in this age lies in the ability to remain dispersed except for brief periods when forces must be massed to accomplish a given mission, immediately after which they must again be dispersed before being subjected to nuclear attack. (30:13,20)

In answer to the second question he said:

> The continued existence of amphibious warfare as a practicing art can be justified only if it meets the requirements of national strategy. It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine the objectives of our defense program. Simply stated, these objectives are: first to deter general war; and second, to deter limited war or to win or contain limited wars without delay if they should once start. (30:20)

The views concerning amphibious warfare have gone from one end of the spectrum to the other. At the end of World War II some military experts made positive statements that

there would never be another amphibious operation. There are others who believe that possibly the greatest emphasis, or at least a far greater emphasis, should be placed on the amphibious capability of our fleet. Both of these are extremes, of course. However, if we ever have to land on a hostile shore, then we have the requirement for an amphibious operation.

It is not the intention of the writer to deal with general war or to become overly involved in nuclear warfare since this paper is concerned only with limited war. In this respect limited war can be considered essentially a conflict--short of general war--in pursuance of limited national objectives and confined to a limited geographical area. Involved are two or more belligerents employing limited military forces and not employing nuclear weapons.

The Navy and Marine Corps are jointly charged with the responsibility for the development and maintenance of an effective amphibious warfare capability in the Defense Establishment. This capability, despite our living in the so-called "space age" has never been of greater importance. Quemoy, Lebanon and Cuba have emphasized the vast spread of active and potential "trouble spots" and the vital importance of global deployment of our amphibious forces to deal with events which could well spread into major, even all-out general or total war. Tomorrow's headlines may signal even

new areas where the United States must be prepared to move in order to be in a position to counter any aggression immediately before it can spread.

In this setting it is contended that the Naval Amphibious Forces of the United States Navy have constituted, and will continue to be a valuable weapon in the limited war arsenal of the United States. To support this an attempt will be made to analyze recent and current events in order to examine the aspects of limited war. Investigated will be the threat of limited war, the most likely areas, and, the best deterrent to limited war.

Next a brief examination of the history and development of the Naval Amphibious Forces will be undertaken. This will include a look at the development of the United States amphibious doctrine, and, in the broadest sense, in evaluation of today's doctrine. This paper will then move to an examination of certain characteristics of the Naval Amphibious Force in detail in order to determine the overall value of the Naval Amphibious Force as a weapon for limited war purposes. In this connection, the characteristics of the Naval Amphibious Force--mobility, readiness, balance, self-sufficiency, and flexibility--are discussed in turn as they relate to the characteristics required for an effective limited war force. Finally, an examination is made of the Naval Amphibious Force capabilities and limitations as they exist

today. This information will then be summarized and conclusions drawn.

NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES IN LIMITED WAR

CHAPTER I

LIMITED WAR

Threat of Limited War. During the first few years immediately following World War II, the Communist expanded their territory rapidly. They absorbed the now so-called satellite nations in Eastern Europe and, in the Far East, they seized control of mainland China and its 700 million inhabitants. They next applied pressure in Turkey, attempted major breakthroughs into the Middle East and precipitated a full scale civil war in Greece.

As a result of this rapid Communist expansion and the threat it represented to the security of the Free World, the United States and the Free World began to align together to prevent further Communist expansion. For awhile alliances appeared to be successful at preventing overt Communist expansion. However, alliances did not deter the Communist from attempts at covert expansion. Instead Communist strategy shifted to one of calculated, planned and protracted conflict--a strategy which has precipitated a series of small or limited wars.

The history of the years since 1950 reveal that there have been more than 30 instances of these small or limited

wars--coups, rebellions, aggressions and infiltrations. Some of these wars arose from purely local causes and involved only indigenous forces such as in Argentina (1955), Egypt and Suez (1956), Angola (1961), Haiti (1961), and Algeria-Morocco (1963). In others, such as the Korean War (1950-1953), Hungarian revolt (1956), Quemoy/Taiwan Straits (1958), Congo (1960) Cuba (1962), and Panama (1964), the Communist participated either directly or indirectly. However, in all of these wars, whether they participated or not, the Communist have been able to exploit these conflicts to their advantage. (2:14)

Most Americans agree that the Soviets will not suddenly on some quiet day decide to fulfill their ambitions to bury us by unleashing a massive thermonuclear attack on the United States. At the same time these same Americans are generally agreed that the Soviets still intend to bury us but by the more subtle forms of attack--the limited war. (7:18) Herbert Rosinski in 1947 visualized and stated the Soviet threat thusly:

> This idea of eliminating at one fell blow the entire offensive and defensive power of a prospective victim or opponent may appear absolutely compelling if viewed from the point of view of hypothetical 'aggressor' guided exclusively by abstract inferences derived from the physical characteristics of the bomb itself; it becomes markedly more questionable--not to say dangerous--the moment an attempt is made to apply it to the concrete realities of the present world situation.

> First and foremost, it one-sidedly focuses all apprehensions of a possible Russian aggression . . . upon such an atomic surprise attack and thus completely obscures the far more profitable and, in the long run, far greater danger of a successful Russian infiltration into the crucial key areas in the global balance of power. Far more probable, because such infiltration tactics would be infinitely more in accord with the whole strategic position, peculiar strength, and imperialistic tradition of the Russians; far more dangerous, because being a political rather than a military form of action it would be capable of infinite gradations, even if necessary to complete temporary suspension without undue loss of prestige, until such time as a relaxation of watchfulness on the part of the Western democracies gave it the chance to success and thereby to decide in advance the issue of a final atomic showdown. (26:111,112)

In March 1961, fourteen years after Rosinski made the above statement, Harvey B. Seim in his article "Are We Ready to Wage Limited War," said:

> Nearly all of the responsible leaders in American life--political, military and academic--have expressed the view that limited military action, cleverly designed to be obscure and ambiguous, is the most likely form of military challenge to be expected from the Communist bloc in the future. (28:27)

Today, seventeen years later, Russian aggression tactics in the form of limited war remains the greatest danger of our time. One only has to reflect for a moment to realize that the problems of Suez, Korea and Congo of yesterday are the problems of Panama, Zanzibar and Tanganyika of today.

Limited wars or the threat of them are the most fertile areas of Communist activity at present. That these tactics shall continue is readily apparent when one notes the

Communist inspired crises of the first few weeks of 1964. A quick review indicates Communist activity in Panama, Cyprus, Zanzibar, Tanganyika, Congo and Vietnam with trouble threatening in Israel, Malaysia, Italy and Angola. Surely, if this is any indication of what can be expected of the Communists for the next few years, then limited wars and the threat of them will remain for some time.

Most Likely Areas of Limited War. The most likely areas of limited war are generally agreed to be those areas of Southeast Asia and the Middle East bordering the Communist periphery. These are the so-called "trouble spots" or "critical areas" of the world today. There we find the political, social, economic and geographic environments for Communist-motivated aggression contrary to free world interest. There Communist infiltration, propaganda, subversion, aggression, "volunteer" liberation forces and invasion by satellites may call for aid or intervention by the Free World's forces. (13:10)

None the less vulnerable except that they do not lie along the Communist periphery are the underdeveloped nations of Africa and Latin America. Conditions are equally ripe in these countries for Communist exploitation and aggression with the Communists leap-frogging into Africa and Latin America in recent months. This leap-frogging was quite evident

in the Congo in 1960 and in Zanzibar most recently where the Communists took full advantage of the poverty, turmoil and confusion that existed as these nations sought to adjust to self rule. Also, Communist activity in Cuba in 1962, Bolivia in 1963 and Panama this year have emphasized that even our own hemisphere is not invulnerable to Communist aggression. (21:107)

For several reasons the Communists are testing the Free World's resolve against the underdeveloped nations of Asia, Africa and South America rather than against the highly developed nations. First, limited wars in the underdeveloped areas are less likely to develop into general war. Second, aggression against underdeveloped lands can be carried out under the alias of a proxy nation. Third, the more developed nations, particularly those in Western Europe, are politically, economically, socially and militarily strong. Finally, the strength of the alliances, particularly NATO; the fixed bases of the United States in Europe, Japan, the Philippines and Korea; and, the presence of the Sixth and Seventh Fleets; are definite proof that the United States intends to stem the tide of communism in those areas.

On the other hand, in the Middle East and Southeast Asia--the "rimlands," the periphery from Syria to Vietnam--there is a region most tempting to Communist limited war strategists. This region is vastly important to the Free

World for its hundreds of millions of people and its vast resources in oil, rubber and other raw materials. It is astride the vital sea and air communications between Europe and the Far East--Suez, Red Sea, Indian Ocean and China Sea highways which are of such importance to the trade by which the Free World lives. It is important to freedom of movement between the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans and their air spaces, and is of vital interest to a global power, whose strategies are based upon freedom of action. (13:11)

Equally important strategically is the continent of Africa. Communist control of Northern Africa would hamstring the Sixth Fleet and certainly subject the southern shores of Europe to additional nuclear blackmail. In addition, Communist control of Africa south of the Sahara would rob the Free World of the vast resources--tapped and untapped--of this area and subject additional millions of people to Communist slavery.

Today, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the continent of Africa contain over 40 new nations which present a vast area and great opportunity for communism or Communist-inspired troublemaking. As these nations struggle for survival--through political and economic chaos, through poverty, turmoil and confusion--Communist attempts at exploitation, infiltration and aggression will be widespread.

Admiral Burke stated in appraising the Soviet threat in 1961:

> Barring the remote possibility of war by miscalculation between the United States and the USSR, the power struggle in the coming years will be in the underdeveloped areas--from the Asian periphery, through the Middle East and Africa into Latin America. (9:18)

Simply by a review of current events it is evident that this is as true today as it was then.

The Best Deterrent to Limited War. As a result of increased activity by the Communist bloc, and as indicated previously, the threat of limited war will remain with the Free World indefinitely. Moreover, these wars will generally be confined to the underdeveloped areas. Since this is true then the United States and the Free World must find some method of countering this threat.

The most obvious and probably the best deterrent to limited war is the American soldier, sailor, airman or marine stationed in sufficient force at the scene of possible or likely aggression. As Hanson W. Baldwin has stated, "/American/ soldiers on the scene are the best evidence of American determination to fight for freedom." (2:22) Whereas, this fact is doubted by very few persons, military or civilian, Americans cannot be stationed in every area of possible limited war. The reasons are obvious. The first reason for this is obviously the political impracticability

of establishing bases in so many nations. In the Afro-Asian Ocean area, for example, the United States has few bases, few formal alliances and few, if any, forces. This area is unfriendly both politically and geographically for the construction of fixed bases on land, as these new nations prize their sovereignty, quite highly. Too, even if some of these nations should permit the United States to establish fixed bases, the charge of colonialism--a most sensitive subject--would certainly be raised. (36:107) Another reason, of course, is that even if the United States did possess base rights in every probable area of limited war, the cost of maintaining so many bases would be astronomical. That the American public would bear such extreme defense burdens is unthinkable. Yet, the value of overseas bases, adequately manned, as a deterrent to limited war remains unquestioned when one realizes that West Germany and South Korea probably would not exist as free nations today except for the presence of American troops.

Since American military men cannot be stationed on bases throughout the world in every probable area of limited war, then it is obvious that the next best deterrent to limited war must lie in a mobile military force. This force must be capable of projecting military power ashore rapidly and in sufficient force to quell a limited war threat.

To counter a limited war threat Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, USN, once said:

> We must have forces ready near the possible trouble spots--forces which can respond quickly to any threat which endangers world peace. These forces must be capable of applying the proper amount of power to bring any conflict to a rapid conclusion. This power must be applied precisely, with regard to the degree as well as accuracy, so that a conflict of limited scope does not expand into general war. Fast application of measured force is vital. (29:642)

Admiral Sharp however was only re-emphasizing Admiral Burke who in writing specifically about naval amphibious forces two years earlier had said:

> Swift and adequate response is vital to these limited war situations. This requires flexible, highly mobile forces, capable of moving quickly to the scene of the disturbance in adequate strength to repel it. (6:9)

The advent of multi-megaton weaponry has not altered the primary mission of warfare. If we are to impose our will on the enemy, our ground forces, inevitably must close with, and destroy, his. The foot soldier or marine is the means by which direct pressure is brought to bear on the enemy. Missiles, bombers overhead, carriers off the coast, economic sanctions, and political maneuvering, all make our desires known to an enemy, but the personalized pressure of a bayonet in the belly is the most positive form of expressing our will. (21:107)

Finally, in these days of limited war--when force is needed--prompt action is most important. Timely action by comparatively small forces may at times preclude the need for larger forces later. Therefore, by exploiting the quick

reaction capability of naval forces, we can either prevent hostilities or contribute greatly to keeping them confined.

As previously stated, the best deterrent to limited war is the American military man on the scene. However, the next best deterrent is a mobile military force which is capable of swiftly projecting military power ashore. The amphibious task force is one force which provides this capability. In the United States, an amphibious capability and doctrine has been developed which is second to no other nation in the world today. This capability and doctrine have been tested under fire. Let us see how they were developed.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCES

The Amphibious Forces, United States Navy, will celebrate its twenty-second birthday in March 1964, having been created only a few short months before the first American amphibious assault in World War II. During the intervening twenty-two years, this force has developed from an unorganized and poorly equipped unit in 1942 into today's fighting force of over 120 ships and 30,000 men. (1:8)

Despite the apparent youthfulness of the Amphibious Force, the United States Navy engaged in many successful amphibious operations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These include the first amphibious assault made by American sailors and marines. This assault was conducted at Nassau, New Providence Island, Bahama Island, on March 3, 1776, and carried out by a force of marines and 250 sailors. Covered by the guns of the schooner Wasp and sloop Providence this force successfully stormed and captured Forts Montague and Nassau along with a valuable quantity of British stores and ammunition. (37:62)

In American history there is record of more than a hundred sea-to-shore assaults conducted by forces of the United States which took place after this first assault and prior to World War II, most of them on a small scale. During

the Mexican War a major United States amphibious operation was recorded when the United States Navy landed 11,000 troops and their equipment on March 9, 1847, outside Vera Cruz, Mexico, prior to an assault on Mexico City. This was indeed an enormous undertaking in those days and would have been impossible except that the United States Navy had undisputed command of the seas. When Vera Cruz fell, General Winifred Scott, USA, marched inland to Mexico City, carrying with him 300 U.S. Marines who fought their first inland battle at Chapultepec. (23:286)

During the Spanish American War additional landings were recorded at Guantanamo, Cuba on June 10, 1898, when a marine battalion of 650 men was landed ashore. This battalion, consisting of five rifle companies and a battery of three-inch artillery organized specifically as a fleet landing force, had undergone specialized training in the techniques of landing ashore from forces afloat. These were the first Americans to fight on Spanish soil. (23:409) Later, on July 22, 1898, 16,000 army troops were landed from ships at Daiquiri and Siboney to the east of Santiago. Four days were consumed in the landing operations at Daiquiri with the Navy standing by to lend support and providing boats to carry the troops to the beach. Included with the landing forces was Theodore Roosevelt and the colorful Rough Rider cavalry. (23:409)

With such a fine tradition of successful landings as these it would appear that the Navy would have developed techniques and doctrines for amphibious operations at an early date. However, this did not happen as the lessons of Vera Cruz and Guantanamo were quickly forgotten and it was not until about 1934 that sound techniques and doctrines were formulated. This hesitancy to develop techniques and doctrines in support of amphibious operations can easily be understood, however, when one realizes that it was not until about 1925 that amphibious developments became purely a naval mission. (23:583)

Developing a Doctrine. Amphibious warfare can be defined as the conduct of military operations in which sizable forces are transferred from sea to a hostile, or potentially hostile shore for the purpose of initiating sustained land combat. Amphibious warfare is inherently naval in character and integrates virtually all types of ships, aircraft, weapons and landing forces in a concerted military effort against a hostile shore.

The amphibious operation is a form of military combat in which an attacker commences on water and projects military power ashore against a defender. This is the assault. It differs from conventional ground operations only in that the amphibian advances from the sea. He commences his attack and comes under enemy fire while he is still waterborne, then

he steps ashore to come face-to-face with the defender. This difference, however, is so significant that amphibious combat has always been the most difficult of military operations and has become increasingly difficult since technology began to complicate war.

Since early in World War II the United States has had the most significant amphibious capability in existence and is generally credited with having developed much of the body of strategy and tactics, and much of the specialized equipment, currently used in amphibious operations. This capability, primarily the result of amphibious doctrines evolved by the U.S. Marines during the period 1922-1935, remains unsurpassed in the world today.

The amphibious doctrine of the eighteenth and nineteenth century of American naval history varied among three different patterns. These were:

1. Army-centered amphibious forces whose ships were commanded by an Army General--such as during the Civil War when Brigadier General A. E. Burnside led an army-centered amphibious assault on Roanoke Island in 1862.

2. Navy-centered amphibious forces where infantrymen came under the command of a navy flag officer--such as Commodore Perry conducted up several Mexican rivers during the Mexican War.

3. Combined amphibious forces with command responsibility

resting upon a committee of at least two men--such as Commodore Perry and Lieutenant General Winfield Scott employed in the operation against Vera Cruz during the Mexican War. (23:577)

With the advent of steam however the requirement for a string of bases where warships might be replenished forced the United States Navy to develop a systematic method for making such bases available as well as denying them to a potential European enemy. As stated by E.B. Potter:

> So the steam navy's first amphibious problem--seizure and defense of an advanced island base--required it to develop naval infantry of a sort the United States had never possessed. This set of circumstances forced on the United States its first important amphibious decision: reliance upon a navy-centered amphibious force. (23:577,578)

Shortly after 1880 navy officers began to give special attention to the problem of creating a force of naval infantry as many of them desired a bluejacket landing force. But in 1894 Congress, after a heated naval controversy, assigned to the Marine Corps the mission of providing the troops that would establish and defend outlying bases. Assignment of this mission to the Marine Corps was the first significant step towards the evolvement of an effective amphibious doctrine.

Key Navy and Marine Corps officers continued to develop the art of amphibious warfare during the early parts of the Twentieth Century. Developments were slow, for the most part,

except that the Marine Corps began to recognize the need for the Navy's new infantry-type force to attack as well as defend. However, the Navy was not yet ready to experiment with the special transports required.

In 1921 a Lieutenant Colonel Ellis, USMC, a pioneer amphibian of the advanced base period, developed a plan for seizing fleet bases westward from Pearl Harbor through which the United States could project naval power as far as the Philippines. This plan was tested and ultimately adopted by the naval service. More significant however were experiments during the Hawaiian maneuvers to test the British doctrine of "combined operations" which had been utilized at Gallipoli. The Hawaiian exercise proved disappointing. Yet if it did nothing else, the maneuver convinced key officers from all services that the British doctrine would not produce an amphibious force capable of implementing the United States basic Pacific War plan. As a result the purely American doctrine of a navy-centered amphibious force with marine infantrymen was confirmed.

By 1930 amphibious developments, as a result of intensive study at the Naval War College and the Marine Corps School at Quantico, had produced a well-rounded problem in amphibious assault. Concurrently, work was proceeding on an amphibious manual and on a force to implement it. Success was gained on the latter project first when the Fleet Marine Force was

established on December 8, 1933. Then, late in 1934 a tentative manual on amphibious doctrine was published. (15:36) During the next seven years, tests, fleet exercises and training sessions were conducted in an attempt to refine the 1934 doctrine. However, budgetary limitations precluded revolutionary action in amphibious developments.

World War II began with an untested 1934 amphibious doctrine and without an effective amphibious force. Yet, despite this handicap the history of World War II is in large measure the story of successful amphibious warfare. In the Atlantic theater the first crack in Hitler's armor was the North African landings in November 1942 with the climax being reached on June 6, 1944 when the Allied Expeditionary Force stormed the Normandy beaches under the cover of naval gunfire. The war in the Pacific from Guadalcanal to Okinawa, through the Gilbert and Marshall Islands and from New Guinea to the conquest of the Philippines was a series of amphibious operations unprecedented in history. Island after island felt the impact of amphibious assault with the Okinawa operation--where the Navy amassed nearly 1400 ships as a combined force of army and marine troops stormed ashore --being probably the greatest offensive in the Pacific. (1:9)

Throughout World War II improved techniques were developed, however, the basic doctrine set forth in 1934 underwent no major change. This doctrine had stood the test of

battle --sixty-seven significant assaults, none of which failed to achieve the objective of the amphibious operation --and had proven its capability to project sea power ashore. On this note the United States ended World War II with an amphibious force unparalleled in history.

Today's Amphibious Doctrine. World War II ended as the nuclear age was ushered in and for a while the amphibious forces and other kinds of military power were overshadowed by the development of nuclear power, conveyed by air. But, nuclear power--the awesome atomic weapon--was too powerful and dangerous for use except as a last resort, even while it remained a monopoly of the United States. Thus in many respects the atomic weapon was unsuitable as a counter to limited forms of aggression so the military began to look anew towards conventional forces and weapons. As a result amphibious forces became at least one of the primary means for curbing aggression against the free countries on the Eurasian land masses. (19:126) As Liddell-Hart stated in 1960:

> Now that Russia has produced nuclear weapons in large quantity to match America's, and taken the lead with intercontinental missiles, a nuclear stalemate has developed. In these circumstances, local and limited aggression becomes more likely, while amphibious forces become more necessary, both as a deterrent and as a counter to it--a counter which can be used without being suicidal, and a deterrent which is therefore credible. (19:126)

Amphibious assaults in World War II were characterized by huge concentrations of men, ships and aircraft which were launched against the enemy to exert the maximum shock possible. Heavily populated battle areas were the order of the day, just as it had been for centuries. However, with the advent of nuclear weapons, massing of men, ships and aircraft was believed to be a lucrative target for nuclear attack by the enemy. At the same time, if a Commander disperses his forces over too great an area he subjects them to defeat by an alert and mobile enemy. "The secret of success" said General Shoup, "lies in the ability to remain dispersed except for brief periods when forces must be massed to accomplish a given mission, immediately after which they must again be dispersed before being subjected to nuclear attack." (30:20)

Modern amphibious assault techniques therefore exploit dispersed formations and rapid precise concentrations of force at the objective. In the face of atomic weapons opposition, the mass landing techniques and concentrations of shipping such as were employed in World War II can no longer be used. The need for dispersion has made it essential that only the shipping required for a relatively short period after the landing forces gain a foothold ashore be landed with the initial assault. The remaining logistical support is phased into the area at regular intervals thereafter.

This has come to be known as the sea echelon concept.

The sea echelon plan is a plan for reduction of concentration of amphibious shipping in the transport area, to minimize losses due to enemy attack by nuclear weapons and to reduce the area to be swept of mines. This plan provides for a sea echelon area--an area to seaward of a transport area from which assault shipping is phased into the transport area, and to which assault shipping withdraws from the transport area--which may extend a considerable distance from the beach. Distance from the beach to the sea echelon area may be as great as 50 miles, depending on the hydrography and the enemy's defensive mining capability. As ships in the sea echelon area are to be unloaded they are called into the inner transport area to discharge troops and cargo according to the loading plan and progress of the landing. Ships in the inner transport area are sent to the sea echelon area when they are unloaded or not needed for some period of time. Ships in the sea echelon area are normally underway with great distances between them. Similarly, the ships in the inner transport area are widely dispersed.

Modern amphibious assault also envisions capture of initial objectives by helicopter-borne troops in a vertical envelopment which overflies beach obstacles and enemy defenses, penetrating deep inland. After critical terrain features are secured from inland positions, additional marine

combat and support forces will be landed in the conventional manner.

The most critical phase of an amphibious operation is the concentration of forces at the shore line. This is the major limiting characteristic of an amphibious assault--this requirement that combat power ashore must be built from an initial zero to maximum striking power. Today, combat power must still be built from an initial zero but it does not have to be built on the coastline necessarily. The helicopter has solved this problem. Now by vertical envelopment hostile shores may be stormed and power projected farther inland more rapidly than ever before. At the same time should the Commander desire, he can still mount a surface assault across the beach as a two pronged attack. Or, if the tactical situation requires, he can remain well outside the immediate area and land well inside the enemy's hostile coastline. Also, long stretches of coastline which were not practical for a major landing because of hydrography, beach gradients and coastline terrain are now quite useful as our forces are able to fly over and around certain of the enemy forces.

Certain new techniques in the logistics field have also contributed greatly to vertical envelopment. The helicopter itself has been most useful in providing light, urgently needed supplies and equipment. With the development of the

new and larger helicopters even material of considerable weight, such as trucks, bridge components and even field pieces can readily be moved. Additionally, in the logistics field, the refinement of the assault with fuel handing systems and the tactical airfield fuel dispersing systems, which reduce fuel resupply problems for aircraft and vehicles ashore, have completely altered the major logistics burdens of world war.

In summary, today's amphibious doctrine relies on dispersion and rapid precise concentrations of force at the objective. Dispersion is attained by employment of the sea echelon concept whereas rapid precise concentrations of force at the objective is attained by helicopter-borne assault. Today's doctrine also relies upon the conventional over-the-beach assault which will permit a two-pronged attack, if desired. Therefore, today's doctrine is simply a combination of World War II doctrine modified by the concept of vertical envelopment.

World War II operations were conducted before the advent of the atomic weapon. Today such operations as the Normandy invasion, the amphibious assault at Okinawa, or the assault of Iwo Jima, with massive concentrations of shipping, men and material, are not feasible with the threat of the employment of nuclear weapons. Yet, the purpose of an amphibious operation--land the landing force--remains the same. So, today's

doctrine must be a combination of the old and new concepts of operations. It must include careful and detailed planning; precise timing in air; naval gunfire and artillery fire support; effective command relations; effective and timely logistic support; and, careful command and control of the tactical air support as well as assault helicopters. It must emphasize dispersion of individual units in the objective area; separation of landing beaches; and, mobility at all levels of operation. However, lest one forgets, amphibious success will still depend on concentration, since the forces landing ashore must be sufficiently massed to overcome the enemy entrenched ashore.

The naval amphibious capability of the United States has become an important military factor in the years since World War II. During the Korean War, an amphibious assault at Inchon, Korea on September 15, 1950, was a decisive contribution to the success of a drive northward on the Korean peninsula by the United States and United Nations forces. Also during the Korean War, the amphibious withdrawal which took place at Hungnam was a significant amphibious operation. During a two-week period Task Force 90 evacuated approximately 100,000 troops, 90,000 Korean refugees, 17,500 vehicles, and 350,000 tons of bulk cargo. (23:914) Unlike Dunkirk, Hungnam did not represent a military rout. This was a successful military operation which was carried out with a minimum

of confusion and loss. (22:869)

Since the Korean War, the amphibious task forces have been alerted many times. On 15 July 1958, elements of the amphibious force of the United States Atlantic Fleet were landed at Lebanon. When the Suez Crisis erupted in 1956, the U.S. had a ready answer. Marines were embarked in ships in the Atlantic Fleet and sent to sea. They were prepared to stay or to fight. On March 5, 1961, a four vessel U.S. Naval task force carrying 500 Marines was ordered to the Congo but was recalled and ordered to continue its voyage to Capetown. On June 2, 1961, U.S. naval amphibious forces were ordered to the Dominican Republic to be prepared to evacuate American citizens should it be required. In the crisis of October and November 1962 which was occasioned by the discovery of Russian intermediate-range ballistic missiles in the island of Cuba, the amphibious force of the United States Atlantic Fleet, reinforced by elements of the amphibious force of the Pacific Fleet and their embarked Marines, was marshalled near Cuban waters, and was prepared to conduct a large scale assault if directed. Finally, during the recent Panama Crisis, a Marine Battalion Landing Team embarked in ships of the Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet, were known to be in the area--ready to respond with the means to counter communist aggression.

The manner in which the amphibious forces responded to

each of the above crises indicate the suitability of these forces for limited war operations. That the amphibious forces were directed to respond in each case indicates the importance the United States attaches to these forces. The question which then must be answered is: What are the characteristics of an amphibious task force that makes it particularly suitable during limited war?

CHAPTER III

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCE

> It was through sea-power and its 'companion'--the power to carry by sea a force that can be thrown ashore whenever desired or needed--that for centuries Britain helped her friends on the continent to resist aggression, and averted its domination by any single nation or tyrant. The same coupled power also enabled this small island country of very limited strength to maintain a world-wide network of colonies and protectorates.
>
> In World War II this coupled power, immensely reinforced when the United States came into the war alongside Britain, was basically the decisive factor in liberating Europe from Hitler's tyranny, as well as in liberating the Far East from Japan's. (20:490)

Today, the United States is to the modern world what Great Britain was to the world in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its position as a sea power in relation to the other countries of the world is one of pre-eminence. Intelligent application of this sea power in international affairs will always be a governing factor in the security and prosperity of the United States.

The primary role of sea power in United States national military strategy is to contribute to the national readiness by the projection of military power ashore. With vast sea areas--the Atlantic to the east and the Pacific to the west between the United States and our friends in Europe, Africa and Asia--extensive use of these seas are necessary for their support as well as our own.

Through sea power and its military component, naval power, it has been demonstrated many times since World War II that ready, deployed seaborne forces can be a convincing deterrent to aggression and a powerful stabilizing element to friendly countries threatened by aggression. Today, amphibious task forces, deployed in the free oceans of the world, represent a powerful instrument of American military strength. These forces stand ready to act for the preservation of freedom, wherever it is threatened. (6:9)

The basic purpose behind the deployment of our Fleet today is the prevention of war. These forces deployed at sea in areas of likely conflict communicate to our friends and allies our ability to resist the Communist colossus. Their presence demonstrates to our friends that we are in a position to assist them and that we can respond swiftly. Their visible presence also serves to deter any nation that may have aggressive intent.

The basic limited war strategy of the United States is reliance upon a reasonable degree of resistance by indigenous forces during the early stages of an aggression and upon the capability of the United States to intervene before the allied indigenous forces are overpowered. The success of this strategy hinges primarily on the capability of the indigenous forces to resist until the United States forces can arrive. Secondarily, the success of this strategy depends obviously on

the timely and effective intervention of United States forces. Only the second of these requirements will be discussed herein.

Timely and effective intervention by a limited war force requires certain characteristics that are considered inherent in a Naval amphibious force. These characteristics also represent those attributes which are directly responsive to a limited type of warfare. They are:

Mobility--The amphibious task force is highly mobile. It is capable of employment anywhere in the world.

Readiness--The amphibious task force is a ready force--in being--capable of movement in an extremely short time.

Balance--The amphibious task force has the necessary weapons and combat support required to successfully counter the threat.

Self-sufficiency--The amphibious task force is capable of sustaining itself logistically for a considerable period of time.

Flexibility--The amphibious task force is capable of fighting not only a war of high explosives, but also capable of engaging in combat wherein tactical nuclear weapons are actually used or exist as a threat. (24:56)

Each of these shall be discussed in turn.

Mobility. The naval amphibious forces are mobile troop bases and staging areas which can be deployed near or at the

possible trouble spots. This force can be rapidly shifted and can strike any area contiguous to or accessible from the sea. It is free to anticipate and preposition accordingly. Fixed bases are unnecessary since it operates from the sea. In addition, no international agreements are required to permit its movement.

One of the most profound changes in the history of warfare has been the extended inland reach from mobile bases at sea. A glance at a world map will quickly show that virtually no spot on earth is beyond attack from the seas and that the major portions of the peripheral territory of the Communist Bloc nations are well within the striking range of amphibious forces.

An amphibious task force enjoys a high degree of strategic mobility in that it can deliver a fighting force to a trouble spot without delay. Arrival at the potential trouble spot, however, does not signify an irrevocable commitment of a landing force. The amphibious task force can either pose a threat by hovering just over the horizon or it can land its landing force--in part or complete--should the situation deteriorate and their presence be required ashore. (30:40) In addition, because the amphibious task force is mobile, after posing the threat in one area the complete limited war package can be moved to strike another area in a matter of hours or it can be moved to the scene of other trouble spots

in a matter of a few days. Thus, staying power and freedom of movement are prime factors favoring employment of amphibious task forces as well as prime factors emphasizing the value of the strategic mobility of these forces.

Obviously, when one thinks of mobility he thinks first in terms of speed which then automatically causes one to think in terms of airborne. Whereas airborne forces can move quickly to a trouble spot in an emergency and may be the only answer in some limited war situations, these forces have limitations. Liddell-Hart sums up the limitations on airborne mobility thusly:

> On a superficial view, airborne forces may appear to be a better counter, as being quicker to arrive. But their speed of strategic movement, and effect on arrival are subject to too many limitations.
>
> Many of the spots where an emergency may arise are far distant, and cannot be reached by air without flying over foreign territory or making a long circuit to avoid it. Most of the Asiatic and African countries are acutely sensitive to any infringement of their recently acquired independence, resentful of Western interference in those regions, and insistent in preserving neutrality, or apt to side with the opponents of the West. A circuitous air approach, even where possible, increases the need for immediate bases, where aircraft can be refueled and serviced, while their establishment and maintenance are subject to similar political difficulties.
>
> Strategic movement by air is so liable to be blocked or impeded by countries in its path that it is becoming strategically <u>unreliable</u> as a way of meeting the world-wide problems of the Atlantic Alliance--which, more truly should be called the Oceanic Alliance. (19:126,127)

Readiness. To forestall Communist aspirations in the waging of limited wars it is mandatory that the United States maintain forces in readiness to deter and fight all types of limited conflicts. These forces must be ready, in being and capable of quick reaction time in emergencies.

The nature of limited war today is such that a force in being must be capable of movement in an extremely short time and must be capable of employment anywhere in the world. The initial action is so fast that there will not be time to mobilize. Time will be of great importance both in the deterrence of war and actual intervention.

Deterrence to be effective means that a friendly force must get to the trouble spot before it can turn hot and before the enemy can present us with a fait accompli. William W. Kaufmann in his article, "Limited Warfare" stated the problem as follows:

> Certainly a first requirement during peacetime is that forces be available to cope with an attack, and that they be able to move into the battle area with great rapidity and strength. Speed and power are important for obvious reasons. They ensure a stabilization of the military situation at the earliest possible moment and thereby prevent the enemy from obtaining an advantageous bargaining position for subsequent negotiations. One reason for the costliness of the Korean War was precisely that we did not have sufficiently well-trained, supplied, and numerous contingents in the Far East to stabilize the front near the Thirty-Eighth Parallel at the onset of the war. As a consequence, our own bargaining position during the summer of 1950 was exceedingly weak, and there could be no serious thought of terminating the

> conflict. Furthermore, in order to restore the military situation, we had to suffer heavy human and material loses. A capacity for rapid and powerful intervention especially if indigenous forces are weak, thus is a necessary prerequisite to an effective policy of limited warfare. Since such a policy is equally important to a policy of deterrence there is a double advantage in developing it. (27:114)

Another example of a lack of readiness was the Suez crisis. In this case the British were not able to bring sufficient force to bear in time to stop Egypt from blocking the Suez Canal. In a limited war a nation must act quickly. It must be able to put adequate forces into the combat area quickly and be able to sustain these forces until they have achieved success. As Liddell-Hart said:

> /Britain/ having taken the fateful decision, all hope of a successful result depended on quick success. The first essential was to secure the whole stretch of the Canal before the Egyptians had time to block it. The second was to achieve complete success before world opinion hardened against Britain and France, or Russia had a chance to intervene.
>
> But the method of action, the tempo of action, the type of forces, and even the bases were unsuited to the purpose. That should have been obvious beforehand to the Government and its service advisors.
>
> The method was too like a miniature repetition of the Mediterranean landings in the last war, when time mattered less than careful and massive preparation. In the Suez operation the British habit and motto 'slow but sure' was all too sure to prove unsure--by being too slow. (29:28)

The deployment of United States forces signals to friend and foe alike the readiness of these forces to deter war or

to fight if necessary. The swift effective intervention of the Sixth Fleet in behalf of the independence of Jordan against attempts at subversion by Egypt and the Soviet Union is only one example of what readiness and quick reaction means in limited war. Quemoy, Lebanon and Haiti are other examples where readiness--a force in being which was capable of quick reaction time--showed our friends and gave concrete evidence to the aggressors that the United States is prepared to defend its friends.

Balance. The Navy's answer to limited war has always been the "balanced fleet" and certainly an amphibious task force is a balanced naval machine--constituted specifically for the prosecution of offensive operations across the seas. This force can be "built" of a large number of ships which includes carriers, destroyers, cruisers, submarines and varied amphibious types for a large-scale shooting limited war or it can be composed of a smaller number of ships for a show of force.

Limited war situations can be reasonably graded to size and duration. The amphibious task force can be similarly graded and the force then built so that it is able to apply just the proper amount of power to the specific limited war situation. If it is desired to conduct an amphibious assault then an amphibious squadron with a marine battalion

landing team can be made available as was used in Lebanon. If a smaller or larger area is involved then the forces can be decreased or increased as needs dictate. In any event, as soon as it is determined what the size of the expected threat will be, then the response can be tailored to the threat and the tailoring can be done while the force is sailing to the troubled area.

The amphibious task force contains a balanced cross section of all the weapons necessary to effectively and decisively engage any aggression force and it is able to do this in a minimum of time. (24:60) The ships, aircraft and weapons in the amphibious force are designed to give this force the ability to fight its way into the objective area, to land the fighting forces, and, to protect them while they are establishing ashore. (33:37) Thus the amphibious force is a balanced fighting force ideally suited for fighting in a limited war environment.

Self-sufficiency. Admiral Burke in an article written specially for the 1960 amphibious Warfare Seapower Symposium program stated:

> In 1958, in response to a plea for help from the government of Lebanon, our Marines were landed on foreign shore by the Navy. This /amphibious/ task force was ready for any action, ready for the orderly landing that actually took place, ready for minor skirmishes, or major battles. It was logistically prepared to stay, to fight, or to maintain order, which it did. (6:9)

The vast amount of supplies, food, vehicles, heavy weapons and other equipment required for a landing on most of the areas of probable limited wars can be carried no other way. During the aforementioned landing at Lebanon 10,000 tons of supplies were unloaded over the beach during the first seven and a half days of operation. The Battalion Landing Team that landed initially was prepared to stay at least 30 days without any outside assistance. (38:23) That a considerable portion of this vast amount of material and equipment could have been airlifted is realized. But, where massive tonnages are required, there is no real substitute for sealift particularly when large distances and lack of fixed bases are involved.

Along the Eurasian periphery and in Africa, the United States has access to a very few fixed bases on land. Those that we do have available are few and far between and totally inadequate for the purposes for which we would have to use them. The amphibious forces can provide an answer to this problem. By their very mobility, staying power, and freedom of movement, the amphibious task force can fulfill the requirements for a certain number of fixed bases on land. They can augment these fixed bases with mobile bases at sea. These mobile bases can be deployed in the probable limited war areas without the need for negotiating for base rights. Furthermore, this force can provide all the components of a

fixed base on land--repair facilities, hospitals, barracks, communications facilities, stores, fuel and ammunition. It can carry essential, heavy equipment such as tanks, bulldozers, graders, and artillery in adequate quantity to support not only the initial landing but a definite period of prolonged "occupation." As stated by Liddell-Hart:

> An amphibious force of modern type operating from the sea and equipped with helicopters is free from dependence on airfields, beaches, ports, landbases, with all their logistical and political complications. (20:492)

Flexibility. Amphibious flexibility has been called by Liddell-Hart, "the greatest strategic asset that a sea power possesses." (20:492) He also said:

> The Pacific Campaign in World War II has been long recognized as a superb demonstration of the strategic value of amphibious flexibility. It is very clear that without the distribution and the by-passing power it conferred--the ability to vary the thrust-point while keeping the opponent on the stretch--the penetration of Japan's successive outlying defense line would have been a far slower and more costly process. (19:110)

This is as true today as it was in World War II. Amphibious operations give a Commander tremendous flexibility because the enemy never knows where he will be hit next. Thus he is forced to spread his defensive power over a large area. This, of course, reduces his overall effectiveness at any one point. It has been stated that during the Korean War, the North Koreans, fearing another amphibious

assault similar to Inchon, redeployed 300,000 men along the coast of North Korea. (39:32) Certainly this forced the North Koreans into a disproportionate distribution of their forces in order to meet what they considered a possible amphibious threat. It also decreased their ability to adequately defend this vast expanse of coastline at any one point.

The wide variety of tasks which can be performed by an amphibious task force is further evidence of its flexibility. These tasks can vary from a show of force or a show of the flag up to the spectrum of limited war to a full scale amphibious assault.

Because the amphibious task force is flexible, its power can be varied from the largest weapons at one extreme, to small landing parties with rifles. It can include not only every type of naval vessel but every type of naval weapon. In addition, the landing force is equipped with the latest weapons of land and air warfare.

In order to control some limited war situations it will be essential to place a Landing Force ashore of suitable size, and to support it in the area for a sufficient length of time to restore order. Opposition to such landing operations may be met, particularly when local aggression or political upheaval has commenced. Ports in the objective area will seldom be available. Therefore, forces must be able to land

over the beach. Amphibious flexibility--freedom of choice of the objective area--makes this over-the-beach capability even more important since such freedom of choice may permit landing against little or no immediate military opposition rather than in an area where heavy losses might result.

In both cold and limited war types of incidents, such as those that have happened in the recent past and which may well occur in the future, speed in the application of limited force is important if the incident is to be controlled before it gets out of hand. Naval amphibious forces are therefore ideally suited for the conduct of limited war operations, which in almost every instance must take place on the periphery of the oceans, usually thousands of miles from our shores.

Summary. The most recent outstanding example of the value of a naval amphibious force in limited war took place with the 1958 landings in Lebanon. This crisis is a case study in the characteristics of a naval amphibious force--mobility, readiness, balance, self-sufficiency and flexibility.

Early in 1958 internal pressures encouraged by outside influence brought growing tension in Lebanon. In May these tensions increased into an armed rebellion against the government. President Chamoun then appealed to the Security Council of the United Nations which sent an Observer Group

to Lebanon to determine the seriousness of the situation. However, this Observer Group accomplished little and the situation worsened.

As the rebellion fermented President Chamoun then alerted the United States and stated that as a last resort he would ask for assistance from the United States. Plans were made to assist President Chamoun by the United States and the amphibious elements of the Sixth Fleet were alerted to prepare for possible landing in the Lebanese area.

The request was received from President Chamoun for assistance and less than twelve hours later on July 15, 1958, at 1500 Beruit time the United States Amphibious Forces landed the first wave of marines in the Beruit area. Within one hour after landing--no opposition was encountered--the primary objective, the Beruit International Airport, was secured. (36:23)

For the next two and one-half months the situation in Lebanon remained static but it finally improved in October to the extent that American forces could be withdrawn. Needless to say this timely deployment of amphibious forces had assisted in maintaining the stability of the Lebanese government. (36:23) At the same time this force had undoubtedly assisted in the deterrence of at least a limited war in the Mid East.

When the Communists strike, they have to be hit fast

and they have to be hit hard. Like fighting fires, the effort to quench the blaze when it is first flaring up is far less than that required after the flame has gained headway. The swift, effective intervention by the United States in Lebanon demonstrated with dramatic swiftness the capability of U.S. naval power to stabilize troubled situations everywhere.

It is axiomatic that today's military forces must be mobile, ready, balanced, self-sufficient and flexible to meet the many challenges imposed upon the United States. Deployed naval amphibious forces meet all of these prerequisites.

CHAPTER IV

NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCE CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

The suddenness with which grave crises can develop to threaten even the insecure truce which today we call peace emphasizes more than ever the essential and growing contribution of seapower to our national security. Flare-ups recently in Africa, Latin America and Asia have underscored the vast spread of active and potential trouble spots and have reemphasized the vital importance of control of that 71 per cent of the earth, the sea, and the vital importance of global deployments of U.S. forces to deal with events which could well spread into major,even all-out, war.

It has been demonstrated many times since World War II that ready deployed amphibious forces add a necessary arm to the fleet in providing a convincing deterrent to aggression and a powerful stabilizing element to friendly countries threatened by aggression. The quick reaction capability of the Sixth and Seventh Fleet amphibious forces as has so forcefully been brought out in various crises, is an extremely valuable tool in the limited war arsenal.

The United States Navy and Marine Corps are charged jointly with the responsibility for the development and maintenance of an effective amphibious warfare proficiency in the defense department. This Navy-Marine Corps team is

exceptional in history since its mobility and flexibility permit it to make a contribution to virtually every medium of warfare; land, sea, and air. By long traditional and operational association these two services provide a force unprecedented in modern military conflict. (37:312) The primary functions of the Navy and Marine Corps directly relating to their responsibilities for amphibious doctrine, training, techniques, tactics, equipment and forces are:

> . . .
>
> b. To maintain the Marine Corps, having the following specific functions:
>
> > (1) To provide Fleet Marine Forces of Combined Arms together with supporting air components, for service with the Fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and for the conduct of such land operations as may be essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign. . . .
> >
> > (3) To develop in coordination with other Services, the doctrines, tactics, techniques, and equipment employed by landing forces in amphibious operations. The Marine Corps shall have primary interest in the development of these landing force doctrines, tactics, techniques, and equipment which are of common interest to the Army and the Marine Corps.
>
> . . .
>
> c. To organize and equip, in coordination with the other Services, and to provide naval forces, including naval close air-support forces, for the conduct of joint amphibious operations, and to be responsible for the amphibious training of all forces assigned to joint amphibious operations in accordance with doctrines established by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
>
> d. To develop, in coordination with the other Services, the doctrines, procedures, and equipment

> of naval forces for amphibious operations, and the doctrines and procedures for joint amphibious operations. . . . (27:A-7,A-8)

The naval amphibious forces are deployed in the three major geographical areas--ocean areas--of the world today. There is an amphibious squadron and a marine battalion landing team deployed in the Mediterranean with the Sixth Fleet at all times. This squadron has approximately 2000 marines embarked with all their equipment, helicopters, tanks, bulldozers, cranes and artillery. The second area is the Caribbean where there is a comparable amphibious squadron maintained in a training status. The third major area, of course, is the Western Pacific where there is an augmented squadron--larger than the squadron in the Sixth Fleet--which is also fully equipped. (31:108)

The basic ships of the modern amphibious force are the amphibious assault ships (LPH), the amphibious transport dock (LPD), the landing ship dock (LSD), the large, fast attack cargo ships (AKA), and the attack transport (APA). The LPH and the LPD are the newest ships of the force having been designed specifically for use in vertical envelopment.

The LPH is probably the key ship of the amphibious operation. It is essentially a helicopter platform from which the vertical assault is launched. This ship has facilities for exercising limited control of helicopters and their supporting aircraft. It is also capable of providing command

facilities for an amphibious squadron commander and helicopter assault force commander. The capacity of this ship is 20 large or 30 small helicopters and a combat loaded BLT of approximately 2000 men. The converted Essex class and Iwo Jima class amphibious assault ships are capable of 20 knots.

The LPD is the direct descendent of the LSD of World War II but is larger, carries more troops and has a built-in helicopter capability. It is also faster than the World War II LSD. The LPD incorporates the best features of the attack transport (APA), attack cargo ship (AKA) and the dock landing ship (LSD) and includes a wet-well which permits rapid loading and unloading of amphibious craft and vehicles in a ready to go condition. The capacity of the LPD is 930 combat loaded marines. In her docking wells she can transport one LCU and three LCM-6's or six LCM-6's or four larger LCM-8's. In addition, the LPD will be capable of transporting 12 helicopters and 2500 tons of cargo at speeds in excess of 20 knots.

The landing ship dock (LSD) loads landing craft, transports them to an objective area and launches them during the assault. This ship also provides drydocking and repair services to landing ships and craft. In addition, it can serve as a hospital evacuation ship and a fast troop transport. Like the LPD this ship has a wet-well which carries three LCU's or 21 LCM-6's. There are several classes of these

ships however the greatest difference is found by classifying them according to when they were constructed. Those built during World War II are found to be smaller and slower than those built after World War II. The Thomaston Class, post World War II, has a helicopter capability and sustained speed of more than 20 knots.

The AKA and APA have heretofore provided the mainstay of the waterborne landing capability. These ships are the work horses of the amphibious forces. Combat loaded, an attack cargo ship (AKA) lifts 2,000 tons of assault cargo. An attack transport lifts a BLT and 1,200 tons of equipment and supplies. As stated earlier, however, the LPD was designed to combine the best features of attack transport and attack cargo ship. Therefore, since most of the AKA's and APA's--except for one or two in each fleet--are World War II ships capable of only about 15 knots, it is anticipated that these ships will be phased out of the active amphibious forces.

The remainder of the force consists of various ship types, predominantly of World War II vintage. These are the amphibious command ships, (AGC), high speed transport (APD) and the landing ship tank (LST), about 75 per cent of which are World War II. These ships are slow, have seen much hard and arduous duty and are becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to keep combat-ready. There is a pressing need to

replace these old ships with modern, fast amphibious units capable of speeds in excess of 20 knots. In a limited war situation where speed of response is at a premium, an additional ten knots over World War II speeds could easily mean the difference between an opposed and unopposed landing. The Navy is well aware of this and has requested additional fast transports.

In the 1964 shipbuilding program the Navy requested four large amphibious ships, however, only three were approved. As reported by Navy Times:

> The amphib that was cut was an amphibious transport dock capable of carrying 930 troops, all their equipment, and helicopters and landing craft. She would be capable of 20 knot speeds. . . . Speed is a big factor in quelling 'brush fire actions' such as Lebanon, Cuba and Vietnam. The Navy is now operating landing ships that can barely make their designed 11 knots. In addition, troops deployed to the Mediterranean and Far East in these ships must live for months aboard ships designed to carry assault troops--without lockers and dress uniforms--for two weeks at most. (32:14)

The amphibious forces are faced with additional major problems concerning new ships. One major problem is that of maintaining adequate command ships. The amphibious command ships (AGC) presently in commission are slow and obsolete. They are converted merchant hulls capable of about sixteen knots which will not allow them to keep pace with the fast amphibious task force. (21:109)

The amphibious command ship serves as flag-ship and headquarters for the amphibious task force commander and landing

force commander. During the amphibious operation, this is the unit from which all orders originate. At the objective area, all communications with forces external to the amphibious task force are provided initially from the flagship by the amphibious task force commander. This function is retained by him until installation of facilities ashore is completed by the landing force commander, who then assumes responsibility for external communications for the units based ashore. The importance of the amphibious command ship is obvious. Just as obvious is the need for command ships which can operate at speeds that will permit them to keep up with the remainder of the force.

The lack of adequate gunfire support for the amphibious forces poses an additional important problem. Only yesterday the gun was the king of naval conflict. Today there are no really heavy guns in commission except for possibly a few six and eight inch guns in cruisers. Neither are there any new models of guns being produced for shipboard use. Nor are ships being built to replace the rocket ships (LSMR's) of World War II. As guided missiles replace guns on most of our cruisers and destroyers, the fire support capability of navy ships is on the decline and the problem of fire support becomes more acute.

Admiral McCain, Commander Amphibious Forces, Atlantic Fleet, has stated that both of the above problems could be

solved by converting the four Iowa-class battleships to commando ships. In this connection he has said:

> During conversion, number three turret and some 5-inch batteries could be removed to make way for a large helicopter flight deck-aft. The space below the flight deck could be used for the storage of helicopters. A number of LCM-6 landing craft could be carried on each side of the superstructure aft. By utilizing the space required by the removal of the guns, and by a corresponding decrease in the ship's crew, living accommodations could be provided for a battalion of men.
>
> The commando ships would have five functions--command, gunfire support, over-the-beach assault, vertical envelopment, and logistic support. The Iowa-class battleship is suited ideally as a command ship. She has the necessary space for living accommodations for a large staff and for the installation of required communication facilities and surveillance equipment. Her 30 knot speed, of prime significance would allow her to operate with any seaborne striking force.
>
> The 16-inch guns are recognized as the best fire support weapons ever developed. The accuracy and reliability of these guns are well known, and their projectiles can penetrate 30 feet of reinforced concrete. The marines have a profound respect for their capability.
>
> The landing craft and helicopters embarked in the commando ship would give the landing force a very valuable, two-pronged attack capability. With her tremendous storage capacity for fuel, this ship could be counted on to refuel elements of the task force when necessary. (21:109)

The vertical envelopment capability provided by the helicopters is an invaluable asset to the amphibious forces in both the landing and operations ashore. The two prime features of the helicopter's influence on tactics are: first,

it adds considerable depth to the battlefield, forcing the enemy to fight on two fronts; and second, it increases the tactical element of mobility on a scale commensurate with the atomic weapon's increase of the tactical element of firepower. (34:398) Also, the logistic support capability of the helicopter adds to mobility of landing forces.

Logistically the helicopter has many uses in the amphibious operation. Transportation of high priority supplies to the hard to reach areas; delivery of high precedence message traffic which might be delayed on overcrowded or jammed communication nets; resupply of patrols; evacuation of casualties and prisoners of war; salvage of priority equipment; administrative movement of troops behind the lines; and, rapid transportation of messengers; are only a few of the many logistical uses of the helicopter.

Despite the many advantages and the additional mobility and flexibility that helicopters contribute to the amphibious assault, vertical envelopment is no panacea. The use of helicopters presents many problems in both control and support. Helicopter formations require full and complete support by fixed wing aircraft and every other possible means as they are vulnerable to both air and ground opposition. As a result, vertical envelopment should not be attempted when the calculated risk is too great.

Vertical envelopment has not been tested in combat by a first rate enemy. It is true that the French used helicopters in Indo-China and North Africa and the British against the Communists in Malaya. However, in none of these cases did the enemy possess more than a guerrilla capability. During the Korean War, the United States used helicopters to great advantage on supply type missions. But here again, the enemy opposition was slight and the United States possessed an air superiority bordering on air supremacy. Quite often helicopters are shot down in Vietnam by Communist snipers. Only a few days ago a helicopter pilot suffered a supreme insult when he was shot down by a Communist terrorist in the Congo with a bow and arrow. (35:3) Therefore, it is doubtful if the amphibian will ever become completely helicopter-borne. (35:3)

In the final analysis however, an amphibious force capability will far out-weigh any apparent limitations such a force might have in the limited war arena. George Raring in his article "The Atom, The Navy and Limited War" appearing in the February 1962, United States Naval Institute Proceedings points out that:

> Our amphibious assault capability, which proved to be a decisive weapon in World War II and Korea, is now taken for granted and comparatively neglected. (25:56)

Continuing, he says:

> In the particular limited war threat faced by the United States, an amphibious capability is indispensable, and must be preserved and increased to the maximum extent practicable. (25:52)

David S. Bill recently summed up this capability quite well when he said:

> Our amphibious capabilities may not have the glamour of our space program, but it may well prove to be our most potent weapon in the global arena of cold war conflict and local aggression. If you disagree, ask yourself how much impression our missile muscle has made on Dr. Castro. (3:48)

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The foreign policy of the Communist nations is fundamentally one of expansionism. These nations intend to dominate the world and they will employ any means at their disposal--short of general war--to achieve these ends. Since World War II this policy has been doggedly followed as Communist activity has been responsible for or has exploited more than thirty instances of limited war during this period.

Beginning with the first of 1964 Communist inspired crises, particularly in Africa and and Latin America, have highlighted Communist desire to leap-frog the Free World's alliances and boundaries. As a result small scale aggressions, rebellions, coups, exploitations and limited wars or the threat of limited wars appear to continue to be the primary threat to world peace as communism seeks to broaden its sphere of influence.

The areas selected for Communist activity most frequently will be those where newly formed nations are struggling for recognition. It is also most likely that there will be few, if any NATO, or Western forces in the immediate area. In other words, the area selected by the Communists for the scene of aggression or subversion will be an area with few effective military forces.

The Communists, of course, will have the advantage over the Free World in being able to select the sight of a limited war. Needless to say, the site selected will provide the greatest advantage to the aggressor and the most disadvantage to the Free World. Whereas, it is obviously an impossible task to predict accurately the site of the next limited war, one can be absolutely certain that Communism will strike. when and where conditions are favorable.

In these areas of most likely Communist activity the United States has few, if any, bases and few alliances. Additionally, it is extremely doubtful if it would be possible to establish bases in these areas. Therefore, the only alternative is to look seaward for the answer to the base problem. Seapower can provide an answer since the sea forms a general dividing line between the Free World and the Communist bloc.

It must be recognized here, however, that all of the military services contribute to the overall defense posture of the United States and therefore to the general deterrent capability of our nation and the Free World. Should a general war occur it is clear that the role of our strategic forces--regardless of service--is to deter such a war. Should a limited war occur it is similarly clear that deterrence of such a war is the responsibility of all the armed services. To be sure, no one service or branch service

for that matter would be alerted only should limited war occur. There is a requirement for each of the services in limited as well as general war.

The Naval amphibious forces which were first developed as an effective force during World War II has become an ideal instrument for the execution of a defense policy of limited war deterrence. In World War II the naval amphibious force had one mission. That mission was simply the projection of military power ashore by amphibious assault. This involved the invasion or seizure of hostile land masses from an enemy with the intent to occupy this captured territory for an indefinite period of time. This mission was fulfilled on numerous occasions during World War II as United States troops invaded North Africa, France and Italy and seized island after island in the Pacific. Today in the era of limited war, this mission has been expanded to include not only the projection of military power ashore but also the arrival at a trouble spot in time to deter combat. This may entail a landing of the amphibious forces over-the-beach as in Lebanon on June 15, 1958, or simply a show of force as was done in Haiti during June 1961.

The amphibious force capability for limited war lies in its ability to vary its response to situations by applying the proper degree of power necessary to meet a specific situation. Also, because the amphibious task force is

mobile, a complete war package can be moved thousands of miles in a matter of days.

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.

Naval amphibious forces are in being now. They are deployed in three major geographical locations and are ready for any form of conflict in the limited war spectrum that might be posed by any adversary. These forces have the necessary weaponry and combat support required to counter the threat. Composed of all types of warships, aircraft and the redoubtable marines, these forces serve as visible reminders to communism that the United States will not stand idly by and see the Free World nibbled away at the periphery.

The Free World's security can be endangered not only by a nuclear attack or fear of such an attack, but also it can be slowly eroded at the periphery by limited war. To forestall Communist aspirations in the waging of limited wars, it is mandatory that the United States maintain forces in readiness, of the proper size and composition to deter and

fight all types of limited war. These forces must possess mobility, readiness, balance, self-sufficiency, and flexibility. These are the characteristics that a military force must possess if it is to be effective in limited war.

The Naval Amphibious Forces have demonstrated only recently that it possesses these characteristics and that the amphibians are ever alert to the challenges of limited war. We can be assured that these forces are ready now--and will be for a long time in the future--to counter the limited war threat.

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