

The aircraft carrier USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVN 63) sails in formation with Australian, Canadian, South Korean, and U.S. Navy ships during a Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2008 exercise group photo off the coast of Hawaii. *Kitty Hawk* was taking part in RIMPAC with units from the United States, Australia, Chile, Japan, the Netherlands, Peru, South Korea, Singapore, and the United Kingdom. Exercises such as RIMPAC are examples of the everyday execution of "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower," as was the homeporting in Japan of the *Kitty Hawk* and her battle group. *Kitty Hawk* has now been replaced by USS *George Washington* (CVN 73).



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kyle D. Gahlau



# THE WAY AHEAD FOR AMERICA'S SEA SERVICES

A Strategy for the 21st Century

By Rear Adm. Joseph F. Callo, USNR (Ret.)

During the past three decades, the U.S. Navy has published a number of strategies. Those documents not only determined how U.S. naval power would be employed, they also helped determine the kind of weapons and the number of people the Navy needed to support U.S. national policy.

The first of those strategies was the white paper initiated in the late 1970s by then-Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Thomas Hayward. The challenge at the time, as Hayward put it, was that the United States had "a one-and-a-half ocean navy for a three-ocean commitment."

The white paper, called "The Future of the United States Navy," became the cornerstone of the dramatic rebuilding of the Navy during the administration of President Ronald Reagan, and it was the strategic rationale for the "six hundred-ship" force shaped by then-Secretary of the Navy John F. Lehman. In the opinion of many, that Reagan-era Navy played an indispensable role in the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Then, toward the end of 1992, the Navy and Marine Corps published a new strategy called "...From the Sea." It began: "The world has changed dramatically in the last two years, and America's national security policy has also changed ... our strategy has shifted from a focus on a global threat to a focus on regional challenges and opportunities."

One of the different elements of "...From the Sea" was its recognition of the need for "capabilities required in the complex operating environment of the 'littoral' or coastlines of the earth." During the initial years of the 21st century, "...From the Sea" was adjusted to match the continually shifting geopolitical landscape.

In October 2007, again based on a changed geopolitical landscape, the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Coast Guard jointly published "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower." The preface spells out a new approach to creating a coherent strategy:





An F/A-18 Hornet from the "Tomcatters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 31 flies over Afghanistan during routine operations. VFA-31 was assigned to Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, deployed aboard USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71). The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier was on a scheduled deployment in the 5th Fleet area of responsibility, focused on reassuring regional partners of the United States' commitment to security, which promotes stability and global prosperity.

"Never before have the maritime forces of the United States - the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard - come together to create a unified maritime strategy. This strategy stresses an approach that integrates seapower with other elements of national power, as well as those of our friends and allies. It describes how seapower will be applied around the world to protect our way of life, as we join with other like-minded nations to protect and sustain the global, inter-connected system through which we prosper. Our commitment to protecting the homeland and winning our Nation's wars is matched by a corresponding commitment to preventing war."

### **An Unusual Process**

The strategy that follows that statement is the result of a process that had begun a year earlier, and it recognizes that the strategic landscape has once again changed radically; how radically was violently underscored by 9/11.

In the new "Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower," the emphasis shifts from the possibility of a symmetrical, large-scale war, accompanied by the probability of regional conflicts, to the actuality of an asymmetrical war - including direct attacks on the United States - plus the possibility of symmetrical war with one or more national powers.

To complicate today's strategic challenges, a broad spectrum of dangerous geopolitical problems are playing out beyond - sometimes far beyond - the initial arenas of ongoing, asymmetrical combat in Afghanistan and Iraq. There are, for example, Iran and North Korea embarked on

nuclear weapons programs, an increasingly aggressive and rearming Russia, constant armed violence in various formats in the Middle East, unfriendly and bellicose behavior by anti-United States dictators in the Caribbean, destabilizing terrorist attacks in Pakistan and India (both nuclear powers) and other areas of Asia and Africa, pirates practicing their trade in a strategic portion of the oil tanker route off the coast of Somalia, and a global economic collapse with significant strategic implications, to name a few. It was indeed a time for a revised seapower strategy to meet the more diffused and more immediate threats.

Faced with the radically different geostrategic paradigm, the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard did more than set out to develop parallel strategies, they got together to develop a common strategy. It was, as the strategy itself states: "a historical first." The nation's three sea services began the process by introducing a surprising element to the methodology to be used for framing a new maritime strategy.

In addition to reaching out to expected sources, such as the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, combat and component commanders, and relevant Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard components, the three maritime services introduced a distinctly non-military aspect to the process: They sought input from local community leaders, civilian opinion makers, and civic groups. This "thinking outside the box" was called "A Conversation with the Country." That notably different initial part of the process was led by Navy Vice Adm. John G. Morgan, Jr., then-Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information, Plans, and Strategy.





U.S. Marines assigned to the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit assist U.S. citizens departing from the American Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon. At the request of the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon and at the direction of the secretary of defense, the United States Central Command and the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (24 MEU) assisted with the departure of U.S. citizens from Lebanon. Forward presence of naval assets greatly speeds the reaction time required for such operations.

In a letter of invitation to one local session that was part of the "conversation," Morgan pointed out, "Exactly how these forces (Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard) should be employed to support national policy objectives in this new and complex security environment is the subject of an ongoing discussion." He went on to describe the civilian outreach he was leading: "We are seeking the ideas and opinions of distinguished men and women from all walks of life, which will help to inform the analyses we are conducting through more traditional means."

### **The Product**

One of the most noteworthy features of the strategy that resulted was the greater degree to which it commits the three maritime services to cooperation among themselves. Interservice cooperation has been a rallying cry among the military services since World War II, but the new strategy moves significantly beyond commitment; it's a call to assertive action.

In addition, the new strategy requires seriously increased cooperation with U.S. economic, political, and military partners around the world. In this respect, it reflects a global view of maritime defense based on the strong links between maritime

power and the ongoing trends toward a steadily increasing global interdependence among the world's nations.

Those interservice and international aspects of the strategy recognize a need to preserve peace and prosperity as well as win wars.

Finally, the new strategy puts increased emphasis on the inherent flexibility of naval power to meet the expanding and shifting challenges of an asymmetrical war in which indiscriminate terror is the main weapon. It also recognizes the need to meet a conceptually and geographically wide variety of future contingencies.

At its heart, the new "Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower" identifies six core capabilities that must be maintained for it to work successfully: forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security, and finally, humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

### **Forward Presence**

Forward presence of naval forces increases the efficiency of the strategy. In particular, reacting to an emergency immediately and on scene often resolves or mitigates a problem at a reduced cost of money, materiel,





and lives than would be expended after the emergency had expanded with time.

Evacuating U.S. citizens trapped in a combat zone, as has happened in the Middle East, or delivering humanitarian aid in a natural disaster, as is done regularly after hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, and other natural catastrophes, are examples. In a military context, reacting to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait before he had time to consolidate his conquest contributed to the ability to oust him without a prolonged military campaign and greater loss of life.

Forward deployment of naval forces also provides visible evidence of the U.S. commitment to its partners around the world, as well as the ability to join with them quickly to meet mutual threats. The U.S. 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean and the U.S. 7th Fleet in the Western Pacific have been highly visible examples of this capability, as is the homeporting of an aircraft carrier in Yokosuka, Japan.

### **Deterrence**

The Cooperative Strategy states: "Preventing war is preferable to fighting wars," and this involves the proactive use of maritime forces to raise the negative potential of war for potential enemies. This capability encourages the resolution of disputes through diplomacy. This capability is, however, inescapably linked to a credible national will that naval force will be used - as a last resort - when the safety of the United States and its people is threatened. This is an important point that is often missed: there must be the will for the presence of the way to be a credible deterrent.

### **Sea Control**

Free access to the seas is a prerequisite to the use of naval power. If those who would do us harm control ocean choke



**Opposite page:** The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) is anchored off the island coast of Weno, part of Chuuk State in the Federated States of Micronesia, during Pacific Partnership 2008. *Mercy* is the primary platform for Pacific Partnership, a four-month humanitarian mission providing engineering, civic, medical, and dental assistance to Southeast Asia and Oceania. Humanitarian assistance is a central element of the seapower strategy. **Right:** A U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point C-130 crew flies over USS *Crommelin* (FFG 37), homeported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and the FSS *Independence*, a patrol boat from the Federated States of Micronesia, patrolling in the Western Pacific Ocean. Both the Coast Guard and Navy have shared goals of protecting the fragile ecosystems of Oceania as well as enforcing maritime laws throughout mutual areas of responsibility.

points, if local law contravenes long-standing international custom by denying access to ocean areas traditionally open to all nations, if an enemy is capable of denying U.S. use of an ocean area through the use of submarines, or if modern-day pirates are able to threaten commercial sea lanes, execution of a credible maritime strategy becomes increasingly difficult.

### Power Projection

This element of the strategy emphasizes the ability of such elements of U.S. naval power as carrier battle groups, embarked Navy-Marine Corps expeditionary forces, submarines, or special warfare units to apply national power where and when needed and at times and places that are inconvenient for our enemies. Advanced technology aircraft, large-deck aircraft carriers, flexible and hard-hitting expeditionary warfare forces, technologically advanced submarines, and adaptable littoral combat ships are among the elements of this maritime capability.

As was the case with deterrence, this is a strategic element that is closely linked to the national will to employ naval forces in something more than a purely defensive posture. It requires a national consensus that offensive capability is an ongoing part of a sound seapower strategy.

### Maritime Security

The ability of all nations to use the oceans for non-aggressive purposes is a strategic companion to the U.S. ability to use the oceans for its defense. This element of the strategy is closely connected with the need for increased interoperability with other navies and coast guards around the world. Realistic and ongoing training with allies and potential allies is basic to this element of the strategy.

### Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response

This component of the strategy is an extension of all of the other elements of the strategy and it involves the move of humanitarian assistance from a corollary of naval activity to a central element in a seapower strategy. The rapidly transportable technical capabilities of Navy ships and squadrons, the skills of Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel, and the underlying goodwill of Americans are all part of this core capability.



### Ethos

In November 2008, the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead published a description of the Navy Ethos. In many ways it is the necessary companion of "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower." It defines the most basic Navy values that sustain the strategy's core capabilities. It adds the people factor to the equation by identifying, in the Chief of Naval Operations's words: "our service's overarching set of beliefs, embracing Navy core values."

To characterize the Navy Ethos in 21st century terms, the Chief of Naval Operations reached out for input from active duty and Reserve component, as well as civilian employees of the Navy throughout the world. The articulation that emerged reflects how the members of today's Navy define themselves, and it reads:

"We are the United States Navy, our nation's seapower - ready guardians at peace, victorious at war. We are professional sailors and civilians - a diverse and agile force exemplifying the highest standards of service to our nation, at home and abroad, at sea and ashore. Integrity is the





Members of a visit, board, search, and seizure (VBSS) team from the guided-missile cruiser USS *Gettysburg* (CG 64) and U.S. Coast Tactical Law Enforcement Team South Detachment 409 capture suspected pirates after responding to a merchant vessel distress signal while operating in the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) area of responsibility as part of Combined Task Force (CTF) 151. CTF 151 is a multinational task force established to conduct counter-piracy operations under a mission-based mandate throughout the CMF area of responsibility to actively deter, disrupt, and suppress piracy in order to protect global maritime security and secure freedom of navigation for the benefit of all nations.

foundation of our conduct; respect for others is fundamental to our character; decisive leadership is crucial to our success. We are a team, disciplined and well-prepared, committed to mission accomplishment. We do not waver in our dedication and accountability to our shipmates and families. We are patriots, forged by the Navy's core values of honor, courage and commitment; in times of war and peace, our actions reflect our proud heritage and tradition. We defend our nation and prevail in the face of adversity with strength, determination and dignity. We are the United States Navy."

At a U.S. Naval Institute conference in February 2009, a junior Marine Corps officer commented on his career motivation in a panel discussion. He talked of seeing the events of 9/11 unfold on television and why he and others have enlisted in the Marine Corps. In summing up, he said: "Simply put, it's because we want to win." In blunt Marine Corps style, he managed to express the basic rationale for a maritime strategy within an ethos supporting its execution, and he did it in eight words.

### On Any Given Day

"A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower" is a real-time guide for Navy/Marine Corps/Coast Guard support of national policy, but in the end, it must be defined by actions, the specifics that add up to the future safety and prosperity of ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren. Following are a few typical examples of the everyday execution of the Cooperative Strategy at a variety of locations. The items provide representative "snapshots" of what the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard were doing on any given day during 2008:

- Feb. 20 - USS *Harry S. Truman* Carrier Strike Group departed Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates, for ongoing combat support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the maintenance of maritime theater security in its area of operations.
- Feb. 20 - USS *San Jacinto* conducted operations in the Black Sea with NATO and Partnership-for-Peace units from Bulgaria, Romania, and Ukraine.





The guided-missile destroyer USS *O'Kane* (DDG 77), the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force destroyer *Setogiri* (DD 156), and the guided-missile frigate USS *Rodney M. Davis* (FFG 60) steam in formation during a photo exercise for the Rim of the Pacific 2008 exercise.

- March 1 - the future USS *New York* (LPD 21) was christened by Dotty Hennlein England at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Miss. *New York* is the fifth of nine San Antonio-class expeditionary warships that are designed to deliver U.S. Marines when and where they are needed to forestall - or resolve on favorable terms - global threats.
- April 15 - USS *Hawaii*, the new Virginia-class submarine, was under way in the Caribbean as part of Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) counter drug trafficking operations.
- May 14 - USNS *Mercy* was under way to begin a four-month humanitarian assistance program that partnered the U.S. Navy with U.S. nongovernmental agencies for assistance projects in five Pacific Rim countries.
- June 9 - The Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise began, with participation by navy, marine, air force, and coast guard units from Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Netherlands, Peru, Republic of Korea, Singapore, United Kingdom, and the United States. The 10 nations provided 35 ships, 150 aircraft, and 20,000 personnel for

the multinational exercise that emphasized interoperability on a wide range of maritime missions.

- June 13 - USS *Essex* Expeditionary Strike Group with U.S. Marines embarked was under way after participation in exercise Cobra Gold 08 with Thai military units. Cobra Gold 08 included four U.S. Navy amphibious ships and the Marines' 3rd Expeditionary Brigade.
- June 13 - U.S. Navy Reserve Component sailors from Expeditionary Port Unit 106 supported port operations at Kuwait Naval Base.
- July 24 - U.S. Navy Reserve Component sailors from Naval Air Systems Command carried out aircraft structural repairs for Navy and Marine Corps forces in Iraq.
- Sept. 12 - USS *Kearsage* and her embarked Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464 delivered an estimated 114 metric tons of disaster relief supplies to Haiti. The mission was triggered by the damage caused by tropical storms and Hurricane Ike and involved close cooperation with civilian relief organizations.
- Sept. 18 - 525 students were in training to become U.S. Navy SEALs and Special Warfare combat-craft crew members in Coronado, Calif.
- Oct. 17 - USS *Jacksonville* (SSN 699) was under way conducting maritime security operations in the U.S. 6th Fleet's Mediterranean area of operations.
- Oct. 17 - USS *Elrod* (FFG 55) completed a port visit to Lobito, Angola, in support of Africa Partnership Station.
- Nov. 8 - USS *Freedom*, built by the Lockheed Martin/Martin Marinette shipbuilding team as one of the first of the Navy's new littoral combat ships, was commissioned in Milwaukee, Wisc.
- Nov. 12 - USS *Theodore Roosevelt's* Carrier Air Wing Eight flew more than 30 sorties in support of coalition forces on the ground in Afghanistan.

### A Focus on the Future

The conclusion of "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower" emphasizes opportunities and optimism. It also reemphasizes the collaborative manner in which the strategy must be carried out. Its final statement reflects all of the features of a durable strategy, one that is working, and one that has earned the ongoing support of the U.S. citizens it is protecting:

"United States seapower is a force for good, protecting this nation even as it joins with others to promote security and prosperity around the globe."