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ADAPTIVE JOINT FORCE PACKAGING (AJFP):
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

BY

SEAN A. BERGESEN

DECEMBER 1993

Thesis Advisor:

Jan S. Breemer

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**Adaptive Joint Force Packaging (AJFP):
A Critical Analysis**

by

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Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.A. San Diego State University, 1986

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the concept of Adaptive Joint Force Packaging (AJFP). Provided first is an overview of the concept itself, including the factors behind its development, the manner and scope of its implementation, and the benefits proponents claim it will bring. Also reviewed are the various concerns and criticisms that AJFP has created within the defense establishment. Among those are reservations about the concept's impact on unit integrity and doctrine, the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, training budgets, and traditional combat capability. Opposition to AJFP also involves perceptions that it will create an additional layer of bureaucracy, will conflict with other, uncoordinated, force packaging initiatives, will limit force-employment options to a fixed "menu," and, finally, will never come to fruition. The discussion of pros and cons on both sides of the AJFP debate is followed by an overall analysis and evaluation. It is concluded that, on balance, the AJFP concept has considerable potential for helping the U.S. military adapt to the post-Cold War international security environment and smaller force structure. In particular, AJFP promises to bring a greater degree of effectiveness to U.S. military operations at the lower-end of the conflict spectrum, and allows the peacetime forward presence mission to be addressed by a full range of joint forces.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A new force planning and employment concept is now being developed which attempts to address some of the more difficult challenges presented by the post-Cold War security environment and attendant reductions to the U.S. military force structure. This concept, known as Adaptive Joint Force Packaging (AJFP), intends to address those challenges by "packaging" forces drawn from any or all of the individual Services into new, and in many cases, unconventional combinations. One of many new functions assigned to the revised U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM), AJFP has received considerable publicity. However, the vast majority of that coverage originated from the concept's authors and staunch advocates. As such, it is highly supportive and offers few, if any, clues with respect to the concerns and skepticism that have been voiced about the concept.

AJFP is a combination of diverse initiatives and ideas. It includes the idea of packaging forces and adapting them to the specific environments in which they will operate, thereby providing overseas combatant commanders and national-level decision-makers with a menu of effective and efficient "tailored" options. The concept also envisions providing designated commanders and staffs with mission-specific training and exercises. This is to be done in an effort to familiarize commanders and staffs with both the packages they will lead, and the missions they will be tasked with. Finally, according to its authors, AJFP is oriented toward the lower-end of the military-use spectrum.

The concerns that have been voiced about AJFP include the belief that it will (a) disrupt the services' basic force building-blocks, (b) diminish the coordination and oversight role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and his Joint Staff, (c) add an

additional, burdensome layer of bureaucracy, (d) lock the overseas CINCs into a limited set of options, and (e) displace training budgets away from the services and overseas theater CINCs. In addition, it is argued by some AJFP critics that AJFP's focus on both non-traditional military missions and tailoring for forward presence is not only impractical, but also imprudent. Finally, there is skepticism that the AJFP concept will ever come to fruition, that it will be compatible with the overseas CINCs' need to plan for specific threats and forces in mind, and will be coordinated sufficiently with the Pacific Command's own force packaging initiatives.

A great deal of the most vociferous criticism of AJFP has centered on the concept's initial force packaging experiment - the Theodore Roosevelt/SPMAGTF initiative. This package involved a 600-man, 10-helicopter Marine force aboard a deployed aircraft carrier. While much of the opposition to this particular episode appears to have considerable validity and has resulted in the idea being "shelved" for the foreseeable future, it has, unfortunately, also caused some to provide a premature and unwarranted "thumbs-down" to the AJFP concept as a whole.

Despite widespread concern and preoccupation associated with the AJFP concept, as well as with many of the other changes introduced with the creation of USACOM, these initiatives appear to have considerable, positive potential. In particular, they promise to help the U.S. military both operate more effectively at the lower-end of the military-use spectrum (in both traditional and non-traditional roles), and compensate for increasingly smaller naval forces in the peacetime forward presence mission. Most importantly, the initiative's introduction of an official "joint force integrator," with formal responsibility for training and packaging joint forces, appears to be a step in the right direction. It appears that this development alone will enhance the U.S. armed forces' preparation to deploy rapidly and work together as a team, especially for smaller, joint, and, in some cases, non-traditional operations.

FORWARD

Lieutenant Bergesen has written an important critical analysis of the Adaptive Joint Force Packaging concept. As we enter this new and uncertain post-Cold War world, in which "threats" are less readily perceived and "risks" amorphously defined, domestic support for defense spending is declining. Against this backdrop, the need to think creatively about force structure and military strategy emerges as a pressing requirement. Proponents of the Adaptive Joint Force Packaging concept argue that many of our established approaches to national security decision-making no longer apply to the new circumstances of the day. Therefore, they reason "tailoring" forces for specific circumstances and environments makes eminent sense, especially as we downsize force structure and expect our military to take on new roles and missions (like Peace Support Operations and Humanitarian Aid) while retaining its traditional defense/deterrence (combat) capabilities. This is an exacting challenge for today's military.

In our rush to proclaim we are ready and do indeed understand the new requirements of the post-Cold War world, there is a danger of going too far too fast in the direction of change. Lieutenant Bergesen's thesis is a useful cautionary beacon in what has become perhaps a premature race to demonstrate how much we have changed in our approach to national security decision-making. He raises some important questions about the AJFP concept - questions which need resolution, or at the very least some greater clarity, before we move in a direction from which there is no turning back.

I personally believe that the AJFP concept holds great promise for the future structuring of U.S. (and combined/coalition) forces. But there may be circumstances in which the concept may fall short (in terms of bringing to a particular situation the

capabilities necessary to perform a mission or to adapt to a rapidly changing hostile environment). For this reason, and others that are explored in this thesis, we need to consider more carefully the possible pitfalls that AJFP may occasion or confront. This is why this work is so valuable and should be treated as an important contribution to the next years' debates over force restructuring, defense guidance and military spending.

Jacquelyn K. Davis
Executive Vice President
The Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

A national security policy that proved successful for forty years is not easily discarded. A military organization that successfully deterred global war, contained a militarily powerful adversary, and projected presence for stability in regional hot spots, is not easily reoriented.

(Admiral Paul David Miller, in Both Swords and Plowshares.)

A. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In his February 1993 Report on the Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States, former JCS Chairman General Colin Powell stated that "[a] new concept is being developed which envisions using geographically and missioned tailored joint forces to conduct forward presence operations."¹ This concept, known as Adaptive Joint Force Packaging, or AJFP, is the focus of this thesis.

Offered as a way to maintain proven effectiveness while cutting costs, General Powell explained that AJFP "explores the deployment of joint forces, configured to complement one another, and meet peacetime and contingency operation needs." Powell provided the following example: "a carrier battle group deploying to the Mediterranean without an amphibious ready group might rely upon the Army airborne task force in Italy to perform the ground tactical role in support of joint operations." And similarly, "an amphibious ready group might deploy separately to 'the Med,' and rely on Air Force land-based air assets, rather than on carrier-based naval aviation. As such, the Chairman envisioned that "[f]uture forward presence operations may thus consist of specially tailored joint task forces that can maintain essential forward presence at less overall cost."²

¹Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Report on the Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1993), xviii.

²*Ibid.*, II-8.

While the AJFP concept has been in the works for only a handful of years, and has experienced only limited real-world testing, it was adopted formally on 1 October 1993 in conjunction with an official change to the Unified Command Plan (UCP). This UCP change transformed the United States Atlantic Command (LANTCOM), into USACOM and what some have called a "super CINC." Its commander in chief now controls the vast majority of CONUS-based conventional forces and has been tasked with developing, training and deploying AJFPs. The AJFP "model" has yet to be subjected to rigorous analysis outside of the closed-door, strictly military planning shops of the Unified Commands, the individual Services, and the Joint Staff. This thesis intends to correct this deficiency, and provide an "open" analysis of both the pros and the cons of AJFP, and do so free from the political biases and organizational constraints inherent in any internal DoD debate of this magnitude. No such comprehensive, critical analysis of AJFP existed at the time of this writing.

More than anything, AJFP (along with its associated developments) promises big changes in the way the United States military does business in peacetime, as well as in the way it responds during crises. It will change traditional, in-grained patterns of American military forward presence; it will alter the manner in which U.S. forces are apportioned, allocated, trained, structured and employed; and it will transform the formal and informal relationships between the Unified CINCs, the Joint Staff and the individual Services. Some of the anticipated changes appear to have great merit; others arguably less so. In any case, despite the many important changes AJFP will entail, it has not received the attention it deserves.

A comprehensive critique of AJFP is both necessary and appropriate for a number of reasons. To begin with, and as alluded to above, discussion and debate of the issue have thus far been isolated almost entirely within the Department of Defense (DoD), and have rarely surfaced outside the military community as a whole. In addition, the vast majority of the statements that exist "in the public domain" regarding AJFP have

come from from Admiral Paul David Miller, his staff and, to a lesser degree, the Joint Staff and the Chairman of the JCS (CJCS). Miller, the Commander in Chief (CINC) of the Atlantic Command, has been a, perhaps the key AJFP proponent. While this body of evidence outlines a general conceptual framework for AJFP and USACOM's new role, as well as some of the factors that precipitated the development of both, it is quiet on the possible "cons." In short, the "other side of the story" - if there is one - has yet to be told, at least publicly.

The debate within DoD appears to have been somewhat less than adequate as well. This may be inherent in the nature of military organizations; they demand loyalty, reward consensus, and encourage subordinates to support the views and opinions of their commanders. It may also be that, in the case of AJFP, this normal pressure against open dissent was reinforced by reports that the concept's principal champion, Admiral Miller, was a candidate to succeed General Powell as CJCS.³

AJFP has also largely been ignored by the nation's academic and journalistic communities, traditionally strong sources of opinions on all things military. The reporting that exists, again provides little in the way of in-depth, critical analysis. It is decidedly descriptive in nature, and appears to mostly restate USACOM's already published views on the matter. Some negative "leakage" has occurred most recently (primarily since the September 1993 return of the Theodore Roosevelt battlegroup), but nowhere can one find a public airing of the full range of concerns and objections that have been voiced - quietly but firmly - about AJFP. This lack of critical attention by the academic community and the general press is understandable, given the endless list of post-Cold War issues which now demand investigation. It is perhaps unfortunate nevertheless that AJFP has been enacted into law without the benefit of prior, outside

³The possibility of Admiral Miller becoming the next Chairman was articulated in numerous telephone interviews, but was not substantiated by any published statements, official or otherwise.

critical analysis. Even so, AJFP is far from a final concept; its continuing evolution means that this thesis should remain timely and appropriate.

B. SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

If I have told you these details about the asteroid, and made a note of its number for you, it is on account of the grown-ups and their ways. Grown-ups love figures. When you tell them that you have made a new friend, they never ask you any questions about essential matters. They never say to you, "What does his voice sound like? What games does he love best? Does he collect butterflies?" Instead, they demand: "How old is he? How many brothers has he? How much does he weigh? How much money does his father make?" Only from those figures do they think they have learned anything about him.

(Antoine de Saint Exupery, in The Little Prince.)

Although AJFP is the focus for this research, it is only one of many new functions envisioned for USACOM's expanded role. That role also involves command over a large portion of CONUS-based conventional forces for the purpose of joint force training; the institution of a more formalized, indeed centralized approach to joint training itself; and designation as the armed forces' lead organization for peacekeeping and defense of the continental United States. Save the last, defense function, each of these other, non-AJFP aspects of USACOM's new role is addressed in this thesis, but discussion is limited largely to their relationship to AJFP, and, in some cases, analysis of the few specific objections that have been raised regarding them.

The thesis highlights what appear to be the most relevant AJFP issues. For the most part, they are the ones that have created the greatest amount of controversy, generated the most heated opposition, or alternatively, promise to precipitate the most drastic changes. For better or for worse, virtually every aspect of AJFP has generated at least some controversy, or promises to create fundamental changes. Consequently, AJFP should be covered quite fully in this thesis.

The initial, internal-DoD debate over AJFP and USACOM's new role has prompted a series of hard questions: Will AJFP work? Will it solve the problems which precipitated its development? What changes to the military's standard operating

procedures will be required if AJFP and USACOM's new mandate are to be fulfilled? Will their application to the new challenges of rotational deployments and non-traditional military missions so disrupt the way the armed forces do business that they will no longer be able to fight larger, traditional conflicts effectively or efficiently? And finally, will any costs generated by the anticipated changes outweigh the benefits created?

These and many more questions are addressed in this thesis. In the final measure however, and after all the pros and cons have been fully dissected and discussed, this thesis needs to conclude with some sort of judgement. Accordingly, the purpose of this thesis is not only to present the arguments on both sides of the AJFP debate, but also to analyse those arguments and come to some conclusion about their ultimate validity and worth.

There is one final note. As is the case with all research that addresses "real-time" issues, it has been necessary to select a time at which to bar any new and additional input - in other words, an "information cut-off date." It is recognized that this is especially awkward given the nature of AJFP and its associated developments - i.e. with constant evolution and adjustment the norm, and with theory just now being turned into practice. Nevertheless, the alternative would be even more painful, and might even jeopardize the successful completion of the project within the time constraints imposed. Accordingly, an information cut-off date of 15 November 1993 was set. The risk, of course, is that some of the data provided herein may be overtaken by events. Any inaccuracies thus created are regretted.

C. ORGANIZATION

Few can serve in that unique, five-sided structure with its 23,000 employees, its maze of floors, corridors, rings and offices - or even visit as a tourist - and not wonder how it all fits together.

(Bob Woodward, in The Commanders.)

This thesis begins with a summary of Admiral Miller and USACOM's vision of the future: the new security environment; the challenges and opportunities created by that new security environment and the downsizing of U.S. forces; USACOM's expanded role as a joint force integrator; and of course, adaptive force packaging. This chapter not only provides the conceptual background behind these new developments, but also some insight into what AJFPs might look like, and how they are to be created and implemented. Also discussed are AJFP's proponents' claims, i.e. the concept's alleged advantages and efficiencies.

This preliminary description of AJFP seems necessary for a number of reasons. To begin with, it appears that knowledge and understanding of the concept is, at this point, less than adequate. For some, AJFP is nothing more than its first operational iteration - the well publicized (and often criticised) deployment of the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt with a company-sized Marine contingent on-board. As such, many appear to not grasp the full range of initiatives and concepts envisioned by AJFP's authors. As well, the evolutionary nature of the concept means that it has, and continues to change almost daily, and is worthy of an update. Finally, such a description appears appropriate, insofar as it provides a suitable backdrop for the AJFP-related criticisms and analysis outlined in subsequent chapters.

The description of USACOM's vision is followed by "the case against the vision." Here, the concerns and criticisms that have been aimed at AJFP and USACOM's other new functions, are summarized. Reported objections are detailed in an issue-by-issue format, and are followed, in most cases, by this researcher's preliminary evaluation of each.

The next chapter offers a general analysis of AJFP, including a more thorough discussion of some particular aspects of USACOM's plan and the arguments against them. In particular, it provides a look at what appear to be some fundamental,

underlying themes and/or questions that accompany the on-going debate over these concepts.

The final chapter presents the thesis' final conclusions about AJFP and USACOM's new role. It weighs the likely positive and negative effects of the new concepts and processes, and in doing so, also outlines the range of adjustments that appear to be needed within the defense establishment if the concept of adaptive joint force packaging and other USACOM changes are to be exploited to their fullest potential.

D. SOURCES

As each day passed I would learn, in our talk, something about the little prince's planet, his departure from it, his journey. The information would come very slowly, as it might chance to fall from his thoughts.

(Antoine de Saint Exupery, in The Little Prince.)

This research has been hampered, from the start, by a lack of hard, "reference-able" source material. As indicated, the AJFP concept is a relatively new, post-Cold War initiative, with few if any precedents in U.S. force planning. This novelty, coupled with the fact that USACOM's own views and opinions have been the only ones offered up for public consumption, meant that the information needed for a thorough analysis of both sides of the issue was not "on the record" and readily available. Nonetheless, the task that this researcher set for himself required finding a way around this obstacle.

As noted, some of the basic conceptual framework and precipitating developments for adaptive force packaging are laid out in Admiral Miller's many recent public statements, in particular, his Both Swords and Plowshares: Military Roles in the 1990s published in 1992.⁴ This and other statements articulating roughly the same concepts have been used to develop the "USACOM's Vision of the Future" section of the thesis. Because the Swords and Plowshares document discusses AJFP from a very general,

⁴Paul David Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares: Military Roles in the 1990s (Cambridge: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1992).

conceptual perspective, that reflects little of the plan's most recent evolution and practical, real-world implementation, more detailed information had to be sought out. This includes personal interviews with USACOM planners and unpublished USACOM briefings. Finally, the USACOM Implementation Plan (the so-called I-Plan) that governed USACOM's transition and stand-up proved to be a useful source, in particular regarding some of the preliminary mechanics by which AJFPs are to be developed, trained, requested, and deployed.

The "other side of the story," i.e. the expressed concern and skepticism with USACOM's new role and AJFP, was much more difficult to address. This was not because reservations were few and far between, or buried beneath a pile of politically correct rhetoric - they were not. In fact, it took no more than a few phonecalls to get a sense that all was not well with AJFP. The difficulty of documenting the other side of the story resided in the fact that most of the concerns expressed so readily over the phone have not been written down. They are not found, for example, in prominent professional journals such as Joint Force Quarterly, Jane's Defense Weekly, Armed Forces Journal International, the United States Naval Institute Proceedings, Navy Times, etc. This lack of "negative" attention contrasts sharply with the publicity given to those who favor AJFP; their views have graced the pages of the above-mentioned publications.

Not only were criticisms of AJFP more difficult to tap into because of a lack of publication, they were also, to a large extent "unattributable." Although the military planners interviewed for this study were quite prepared to vocalize their reservations, many preferred to do so only on the condition of anonymity. In some cases, interviewees indicated that their personal views did not necessarily reflect the official views of their respective commands or commanding officers. Many of the statements generated during those interviews must therefore be treated delicately, and may be presented only without specific, detailed attribution.

In order to present the widest possible range of views and opinions on AJFP, interviews were conducted with staff officers from the following commands: USACOM, the Joint Staff, the Navy Staff, the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM), the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM), the United States European Command (USEUCOM), the Air Force's Air Combat Command (ACC), and the Army's Forces Command (FORSCOM). The people interviewed, either in-person or over the telephone, were generally planning officers (i.e. J-5/N-5) or current operations officers (i.e. J-3/N-3). Interestingly, the shop handling most of the development of AJFP at USACOM is J-3 Ops, and not J-5 Plans and Policy. Finally, interviews were also conducted with military planners outside the operational and administrative chain; i.e. at academic institutions such as the Army and Naval War Colleges and the Army, Navy and Air Force doctrine centers.

The one "gold mine" of documented information that came into the author's possession on individual Service and Unified Command concerns about adaptive force packaging was a report entitled Major Points and Analysis: First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference 6-9 Oct 92. That report highlighted an apparent lack of consensus among the Unified CINCs, the individual Services, and the Joint Staff about what force packaging is, what forward presence is, the distinction between peacetime and crisis-response forward presence, the benefits and costs of force packaging, etc. This document is almost the only hard-copy, fully-attributable source for opposing points of view. Its content has been utilized extensively in this thesis.

The foregoing difficulties aside, there is nevertheless a number of AJFP-relevant issues, concepts, or topics that have received a great deal of literary coverage. In particular, forward presence and non-traditional military missions (peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, etc.) have been written about extensively, and recently. This coverage is used and referenced as needed throughout the thesis as well.

II. USACOM'S VISION OF THE FUTURE

Today, the world which we had grown so accustomed to is gone with the wind. Instead, we now function in an environment of challenges and dangers placing new demands on the United States. America's ability to match its diverse commitments with limited resources is calling into question many of our established beliefs and traditional approaches to national security.

(Admiral Paul David Miller, speaking before the Pacific Southwest Navy League)⁵

The October 1993 revision to the UCP merged FORSCOM, ACC, the Marine Corps' Marine Forces Atlantic (MARFORLANT), and the Navy's Atlantic Fleet (LANTFLT) into a single unified combatant command named USACOM. This command is responsible not only for traditional, regional force employment commitments, but also - and more importantly - for joint force integration and training. As well, USACOM has become DoD's lead organization for peace-support operations.

Consistent with General Powell's recommendations, the former LANTCOM was the basis for the new command.⁶ Because the Navy and Marine Corps organizations were already LANTCOM components, their status did not change drastically. Conversely, the UCP change signaled a significant adjustment for the Army and Air Force organizations. Although the ACC and FORSCOM commands had been "force-providers" for the Atlantic Command in the past, the new relationship will be decidedly different. Under the new regime, USACOM has direct combatant command of these organizations and the forces under them. As a result, USACOM will have the authority to directly task those forces, without having to go through the JCS or Service Staffs, as was formerly the case.⁷ In addition, the actual USACOM Commander-in-Chief billet

⁵Paul David Miller, Remarks before the Pacific Southwest Navy League, Los Angeles, California on 8 October 1993.

⁶Powell, Roles and Missions, xii.

⁷This, of course, does not apply to deploying those forces overseas, an activity that remains under the control of the civilian National Command Authority; i.e. all deployment orders must still be signed by the

will now be what is called a "nominative" position, i.e. fillable by a four-star officer from any one of the services. This, of course, is a break with the Atlantic Command's historic and predominantly naval character.

AJFP is the one aspect of USACOM's new role which has generated the most controversy. This initiative has been characterized as a way to better organize and train forces to support the theater CINCs (the "supported" CINCs) more effectively and more efficiently, and make it easier to call forward the specific capabilities required in their respective areas of responsibility (AORs).⁸ USACOM's first Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Miller, has distinguished between "packaging" and "adapting" AJFP capabilities. "Packaging" forces appears to mean combining forces from one or more of the individual services into traditional, or new and innovative groupings so that the resulting "packages" can train and deploy together, and arrive at their destination ready to operate effectively in a joint environment. "Adapting" forces, on the other hand, apparently refers to "tailoring" packages to meet the specific requirements of a given CINC's AOR, or a particular crisis situation or mission.

In Both Swords and Plowshares, Miller also indicated that the individual services have already taken some steps to reorganize their forces along different, more appropriate lines. These initiatives are, in part, an effort to make the forces more flexible, thereby creating more options for defense planners and national decision-makers. Others are intended to make the forces more responsive to operational needs by more closely aligning peacetime training responsibilities with operational command structures. While not necessarily tied directly to AJFP's development, it is likely that many of these steps will facilitate the AJFP process.

President or the Secretary of Defense.

⁸Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares, 27.

Miller has pointed to maritime forces as a useful example of how force packages can be adapted to specific theater requirements. In doing so, he has also highlighted how different regions may require different capabilities. According to the Admiral:

"In today's fast-changing world a naval force may not need the same capabilities in one region or situation as in another. One CINC may desire to augment the offensive firepower of an aircraft carrier by varying the mix of strike aircraft in the embarked wing. Another CINC may choose to modify the capabilities of the carrier by reducing the number of naval aircraft and instead embarking Special Operations Forces (SOF) or a special purpose Marine force with capabilities tailored to specific theater requirements. Circumstances in a third region may be such that requirements can be met with a tailored Marine Amphibious Ready Group (MARG) supported by Tomahawk cruise missile-firing ships and submarines. In each case the capabilities are tailored to meet CINC requirements."⁹

The Air Force has made changes as well. In particular, it has formalized its concept of the "composite air wing," which combines aircraft of many types in a single wing; bombers, fighters, electronic jammers, refuelers, etc. The composite airwing is not a new concept per se; it was used in the past, most recently to support operations "Proven Force" and "Southern Watch."¹⁰ In both cases however, the organization appears to have been somewhat ad-hoc, and put together under conditions of considerable urgency. A new vision calls instead for the maintenance of these composite airwings during peacetime - located for the most part at a single site, training together regularly, and ready to deploy to a crisis spot at a moment's notice.¹¹ Before getting entangled however, in the wide-range of supporting details associated with adaptive force packaging, it is desirable to first provide some essential background, such as the

⁹Ibid., 29.

¹⁰"Proven Force" refers to that portion of the "Desert Storm" air campaign that was run out of Turkey, while "Southern Watch" was the United States' contribution to enforcing the UN-mandated no-fly zone in southern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War.

¹¹For more information on the Composite Airwing concept, see Julie Bird, "Anywhere, anytime: Intervention wing deploys," Air Force Times, 29 March 1993, 12., and Brig Gen Lee A. Downer, USAF, "The Composite Wing In Combat," Airpower Journal (Winter 1991): 4.

fundamental why behind the concept's creation, as well as the basics of its development and envisioned pattern of implementation.

A. THE NEED FOR DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

Four key factors - the end of the Cold War, budgetary constraints, the Goldwater-Nichols Act, and the press of new regional crises - converged to provide the opportunity, the necessity, and the authority to address the ways in which all four Services are structured, trained, and employed in combat. As a result, more changes have occurred in the US military in the past three years than in any similar period since the National Security Act of 1947.

(Colin L. Powell, in Report on the Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States.)

In his preface to Both Swords and Plowshares, Miller explained how military planners are currently faced with "a steady market in requirements keyed to regional responses," and "a growing demand for peacekeeping and domestic support capabilities."¹² At the same time however, the Admiral wrote that those planners must also deal with a near-term reduction in size and a decrease in future investment, i.e. fewer military resources.¹³ Part of the proposed solution is to ensure that the nation's "armed forces are able to operate smarter - more efficiently, more flexibly, and with a better understanding of any potential adversary's strengths and vulnerabilities."¹⁴ Doing this, explained Miller, depends on realizing "the full force-multiplier potential of jointness,"¹⁵ and that the task is possible, in part, through the designation of a single Unified CINC responsible for joint training, and the development of adaptive joint force packaging.

¹²Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares, 1.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., 26.

¹⁵Ibid.

Miller also proposed that the need to do things "smarter" is the combined result of a number of factors: the rapid shrinkage of America's network of overseas military bases, the reduction of U.S. military personnel permanently stationed overseas, the general downsizing¹⁶ of the armed forces, and, of course, the prospect of an increasingly unstable world demanding continued U.S. engagement. Complicating matters further has been the emergence of a new array of non-traditional military missions, e.g. peacekeeping and peacemaking, humanitarian tasks, combating the drug trade, and so forth.

Collectively, these developments stem largely from the end of the super-power stand-off, and domestic budgetary pressures. Without the Soviet threat, and in recognition of a national preoccupation with domestic "re-investment," the U.S. military can and must reduce its force, and scale-back the permanent stationing of large numbers of troops abroad. Unfortunately, the "new world order" has also brought to the surface new kinds of conflicts - border disputes, ethnic war, mass refugee problems, and so forth. As Admiral Miller puts it, "[l]ong simmering regional concerns, masked by forty years of East-West competition, now compete for world attention."¹⁷ These new conflicts, when combined with the demise of the specter of an East-West global war, has forced (permitted?) the national military and political leadership to contemplate new, non-traditional tasks, or what Miller has called "future-oriented" missions.¹⁸

Because of cuts in U.S. land-based overseas deployments, USACOM predicts that theater combatant commanders will be more dependent on CONUS-based forces. These forces, Miller insists, must be highly skilled, rapidly deployable, fully-capable of operating as a joint team on arrival, and tailored to the needs of individual theater

¹⁶Miller apparently prefers the term "rightsizing."

¹⁷Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares, 5.

¹⁸Ibid., 10.

CINCs. The implication is that they must embody these qualities more so than in the past - if not, why the need to do things differently? USACOM's commander implies that the combination of an official joint force integrator and adaptive joint force packaging will enhance the deployability, interoperability, and tailored efficiency - indeed the overall effectiveness - of U.S. military forces.

In another indication of the need to do things differently, Miller has reported that the "fairly rigid combination of permanently assigned forces and standardized deployment groups," that have met CINC requirements for forward positioned forces in the past, "may now provide more capability than is truly needed."¹⁹ The implication here is that scarce military resources may not be going to where they are most needed; or in other words, that they may be unnecessarily strong in one place, and overcommitted in another.

B. THE FOUR CORNERSTONES

No matter where we fight in the future, and no matter what the circumstances, we will fight as a joint team. The Armed Forces of the United States will never again poke as individual fingers; rather they will always strike as a closed fist.

(Admiral David E. Jeremiah, in "What's Ahead for the Armed Forces?")

In an article published in the inaugural issue of Joint Force Quarterly, Miller cited what he called the four fundamental "cornerstones" for realizing the full potential of smaller, post-Cold War U.S. armed forces: joint training and exercises, joint doctrine, a single commander responsible for collective joint training needs, and adaptive joint force packaging.²⁰ With respect to the first two, there appears to be little disagreement with the idea that most, if not all future large-scale conflicts (and many smaller-scale contingencies) will be fought jointly, i.e. with units drawn from at least two of the

¹⁹Ibid., 27.

²⁰Paul David Miller, "A New Mission for Atlantic Command," Joint Force Quarterly Inaugural Issue (Summer 1993): 80-87.

Services. And although there are some who worry about the "limits of jointness,"²¹ few argue against the likely benefits of expanded joint training and the development of a more formalized and effective joint doctrine. Because jointness has become a relatively non-controversial issue, these first two elements of USACOM's vision are not discussed at length in this thesis, at least not as stand-alone issues. The other two elements however, i.e. the concept of a single, official "joint force integrator," and especially AJFP, have prompted considerable controversy and therefore deserve more thorough description and analysis.

C. AJFP AND THE SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT

The goal of Adaptive Joint Force Planning is to carry this joint planning concept down the spectrum to demonstrate how alert response and presence missions can be filled with joint forces.

(USACOM Brief AJFPs: 21st Century Force Employment.)²²

In its briefings, USACOM has repeatedly stressed that AJFPs and the AJFP planning process are not intended to directly address so-called Major Regional Contingencies (MRCs) or what are called "JSCP surge" sized conflicts, but are designed instead to respond to the lower end of the military force-use spectrum.²³ Evidently, it is here that

²¹For discussions of such "limits," see Seth Cropsey, "The Limits of Jointness," Joint Force Quarterly Inaugural Issue (Summer 1993): 72-79.

²²U.S. Atlantic Command, Adaptive Joint Force Packages, (briefing slides), (Norfolk: date unknown)

²³In Les Aspin, The Bottom-Up Review: Forces For A New Era, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, September 1993), 5., examples of "MRCs" included aggression by a remilitarized Iraq against Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and by North Korea against the Republic of Korea. JSCP refers to the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, a classified document which, in general terms, outlines in considerable detail which forces are allocated to which commanders, and specifies the range of operations that each CINC must prepare for. The "JSCP-surge" term alludes to the fact that much of the JSCP document is focused on very large-scale deployments and operations.

USACOM believes its adaptive force packaging initiatives can generate the most benefit.²⁴

Planning for joint operations, especially to cope with relatively large threats, is not a novel concept; CINC staffs have long provided plans for joint operations in the form of extremely detailed operations plans (OPLANS) for global conflict with the former-Soviet Union and for MRCs, as well as somewhat less detailed contingency plans (CONPLANS) for Lesser Regional Contingencies (LRCs). While some amount of planning for what are called Flexible Deterrent Options (FDOs)²⁵ - designed for yet less demanding situations - has occurred, the bulk of joint planning appears to have focused on just the largest-scale contingencies. As such, much less attention seems to have been devoted to smaller operations.²⁶ With the disappearance of the Soviet threat, a shift in focus from global to regional warfare, and especially an intensified interest in non-traditional missions, there appears to be a heightened (indeed urgent) need for formalized, yet adaptive planning processes for smaller-scale joint operations against undetermined threats.²⁷ Also needed are Joint Task Force (JTF) commanders and staffs, joint force packages, and joint training and exercising that are specifically designed for this lower end of the spectrum. AJFP is USACOM's answer to these needs.

²⁴This appears to be the case, given the scope of the initial AJFP menu discussed in a subsequent section.

²⁵The Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan for CY 1993-1995, Annex O (Forward Presence Operations), UNCLASSIFIED, (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1992), I-7., describes Flexible Deterrent Options as "actions to preempt or precipitate actions or reactions that may result in the protection of US interests or the promotion of US influence." They are designed "to deter or forestall the onset of a crisis," and encompass "all of the elements of national power - economic, diplomatic, political, and military."

²⁶This impression was reinforced by face-to-face interviews with CENTCOM planners, who seemed to devote themselves almost exclusively to their two, very large-scale OPLANS.

²⁷Colin L. Powell, National Military Strategy of the United States, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1992), 12.

D. THE AJFP "MENU"

Warning time, or available response time, is far more likely to be exploited by key decisionmakers if they have a menu of options from which to choose. These options need to be pre-planned and gauged to a wide range of crises. This fundamental change to our military strategy is reflected in an adaptive planning process, through which planners develop multiple options keyed to specific crises.

(Colin L. Powell, in the National Military Strategy of the United States.)²⁸

The I-Plan that governed the Atlantic Command's recent transformation indicates that an initial "menu" of AJFPs would be identified by USACOM itself, but that development of that menu would take account of "supported combatant commanders' estimated requirements for employment of military forces for operations less than MRC."²⁹ Thus, the AJFP menu is to be constructed on the basis of both supporting and supported CINC input, meaning that both available resources and regional employment requirements are to be considered. One indication of the preliminary and evolutionary nature of AJFP and its associated concepts is that no definitive AJFP menu was included in the I-Plan.

At the time of this writing, an initial AJFP menu is just being formalized. That menu will apparently include the following 13 notional packages: Nations Assistance, Peacekeeping, Peace Building, Peace Making, Peace Enforcement, Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO), No Fly Zone Enforcement, Military Assistance for Civilian Disasters (MACDIS), Military Support to Civilian Authorities (MSCA)/Disaster Relief, Quarantine/Blockade, Mass Migration, and Forward Presence.³⁰ Considering that nine of the 13 package options relate to what might be considered non-traditional

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹U.S. Atlantic Command, USACOM (Draft) Implementation Plan, (Norfolk: date unknown), 259.

³⁰This listing was provided in a telephone interview of USACOM staff officers.

military missions,³¹ it is appropriate to turn to that aspect of USACOM's vision of the future.

E. BOTH SWORDS AND PLOWSHARES

In the ongoing national debate, the armed forces - and, indeed, the budget of the Department of Defense - must be clearly seen as valuable and integral components of our national strategy of promoting peace and supporting emergent democracies. In a similar manner, the military can be an integral component in rebuilding and revitalizing America's economic base and national infrastructure. The military is more than a force for deterrence; it can and should be a force for constructive change - at home and abroad.

(Admiral Paul David Miller in Both Swords and Plowshares.)

It is clear from the above-quoted passage, indeed the very title of Admiral Miller's recent monograph, that this Unified CINC favors using U.S. military forces for the range of new, non-traditional tasks that includes peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, drug interdiction, etc. Although Miller's preliminary discussions of AJFP did not specifically indicate that the concept was a result of, or a reaction to, the increased probability of U.S. military forces being so applied, the initial AJFP menu noted above seems to definitely link the two. The Admiral's view can perhaps be represented best by the following passage in Both Swords and Plowshares: "By being both a sword and a plowshare, the military can best help secure peace and prosperity in an era of uncertainty, challenge and change."³² However, it is noted in the next chapter that not everyone agrees with Admiral Miller regarding the necessity or prudence of using U.S. armed forces for non-traditional missions.

³¹Although many statements indicate that disaster relief is a task that has been accomplished relatively often by American military forces since the Nation's inception, an equally wide range of statements include this task under the common, "non-traditional" mission heading. Arbitrary or not, disaster relief has also been included in this thesis within the non-traditional title, as it appears clearly outside of the military's "traditional" combat role.

³²Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares, 47.

F. AN EMPHASIS ON CAPABILITIES, AND JMETLS

The idea is that the customer - the CINC - tells USACOM what, not who. That is, the customer says what he wants to do, not who he wants to do it.

(The Honorable Les Aspin, Secretary of Defense)³³

Both Swords and Plowshares stresses the need for so-called "capabilities-based" defense planning.³⁴ While a need to shift defense planning away from specific, individual "threats" and toward broad-based, enduring capabilities has been perceived for some time, Admiral Miller appears to take the idea one step further however. In particular, he advocates a process whereby the theater warfighting CINCs would articulate their requirements (for both forward presence and crisis response) in terms of "capabilities," as opposed to a fixed list of requested forces. For example, a supported CINC would no longer request an aircraft carrier, but instead the capability to achieve air superiority. As another example, a CINC might call for the capability to evacuate a U.S. Embassy, in lieu of a flight of six H-53s and a special forces company. Or, if a CINC has the need for a show of U.S. resolve in a particular crisis, he should state his need in those terms, rather than ask the traditional questions, "where is the carrier" or "how soon can I have the 82nd Airborne." Under Miller's plan, the requesting (supported) CINCs would state the requirement to do a particular mission, or set of missions, and the providing (supporting) CINC would recommend either a "pre-planned" package from a menu of set options, or a "crisis-planned" package. The choice between the two would depend on the range of available assets at the time, the specifics of the situation, and the priority given to the supported CINC's mission.

³³Les Aspin, Remarks at the USACOM Designation Ceremony in Norfolk, Virginia on 1 October 1993.

³⁴Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares, 18.

This concept of the "user" CINCs requesting capabilities instead of specific forces is intended to be facilitated, in part, by the use of the Joint Mission Essential Tasks List (JMETL), or something like it.³⁵ JMETL is the evolution of an Army concept, which uses formalized lists of "essential tasks" to plan for, execute, and evaluate training exercises. These lists exist for all types and sizes of Army units, and use standardized, common terms, so that all units of similar size or mission have a common basis for their training exercises. This Army idea has now been extended to the joint arena, and the Joint Staff (J-7) has recently finished compiling a Universal Joint Task List (UJTL) which contains all the joint training tasks that were articulated by two or more Unified CINCs in their individual, theater-specific task lists.

While the UJTL and the individual JMETLs were developed for training purposes, some people have suggested them as useful tools requesting and supplying forces for forward presence and crisis response operations as well. As a practical matter however, the specific details of how the UJTL and JMETLs might be used for operational purposes remain very tentative. The terms used in the UJTL provide little specificity as to task conditions and standards, and are notably oriented toward the functional training requirements of joint task force commanders and staffs. As such, they are not, at this point at least, particularly useful for deciding what type and size of force are needed to conduct a particular, individual operation.

G. "TOOL KITS" AND "RUBIC'S CUBES"

For my purposes, the six sides of the cube represent the range of capabilities that exist in the Air Force . . . Army . . . Marine Corps . . . Navy . . . non-military agencies . . . and international agencies . . . Thus, a Rubic's Cube is transformed into what I term a "capability cube."

(Admiral Paul David Miller)

³⁵Such utilization of JMETLs was articulated in Miller, A New Mission for Atlantic Command, 84, and in the discussion provided in U.S. Atlantic Command, Major Points and Analysis: First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference.

Despite the downsizing of U.S. forces, considerable numbers will remain.³⁶ According to proponents, AJFP will simply make better use of those remaining assets, especially with regard to forward presence and smaller, crisis response operations. With respect to the first, a theater CINC may no longer be able to count on the traditional combination of a Navy carrier battlegroup (CVBG) and a Marine amphibious ready group (MARG) to provide continuous, on-scene capability for air superiority, long-range strike, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), non-combatant evacuation operations (NE), maritime interdiction, amphibious or air-assault, etc. The reduction of U.S. naval forces signifies that an aircraft carrier and/or a large-deck amphibious assault ship, and/or a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) may no longer always be available for regular peacetime deployments, or even for short-notice responses to particular crises. As a result, supported CINCs will be forced, at times, to either do without the "old" CVBG-MARG capability, or rely on the wherewithall of other, alternative combinations of assets.

USACOM, in its many briefings on AJFP, has provided a number of novel descriptions for how different mixes of forces might provide the broad-based, multi-mission, forward presence capabilities (including air, ground and maritime capabilities) traditionally provided by rotationally deployed CVBGs and MARGs. Most imply that an Air Force composite air wing could be used as a substitute for the carrier's airwing, or that the MARG's ground force missions might be fulfilled by Army forces, and many depict the totality of available U.S. forces as a typical tool-kit or tool-box, from which smaller tool-packages would be drawn. As well, a range of similar but updated versions of the original graphics depict the mixing and matching of forces in terms of Admiral Miller's novel Rubic's Cube analogy.

³⁶Aspin, Bottom-Up Review, 17., indicates that by 1999, the U.S. force structure will contain 15 active and reserve Army divisions, 11 deployable Navy aircraft carriers, three Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEFs), and 20 active and reserve Air Force fighter airwings plus 184 bombers.

Besides offering a solution for the CINCs' needs for peacetime forward presence, the AJFP concept is also envisioned as a better way to provide the exact mix of capabilities needed for smaller-scale, mission-specific, and in some cases, limited-duration contingencies. Many of these might be considered non-traditional military tasks. The details of what particular forces might make up these other, mission-specific packages, have yet to be articulated.

As indicated earlier, USACOM will soon have at its immediate disposal the full range of forces included in LANTFLT, ACC, FORSCOM, and MARFORLANT. It will also be able to draw on the forces and functional capabilities of STRATCOM, SOCOM, and other non-regional unified commands. These forces will constitute USACOM's full military "tool-kit" or Rubic's Cube. It will then be up to USACOM, through its power to organize, train and deploy AJFPs, to develop combinations of forces (i.e. packages) that are suitable for the theater CINC's future forward presence and crisis response needs - as indicated, a series of smaller, mission-specific "tool-packages" or iterations of "spinning" the Cube.

It is important to note that Miller also sees non-military and non-U.S. initiatives, assets, and capabilities as able to contribute to the new security environment; they, too, can conceivably be "packaged" along with U.S. military units to achieve national (and international) security and foreign policy objectives. As such, Miller envisions closer coordination between America's military, civilian, political and diplomatic assets, and proposes that significant, synergistic effects will accrue from combining the potential of those assets into deliberate foreign policy initiatives and responses.

H. PACKAGE DEVELOPMENT

... coordinate with USACOM component commands and the other Unified Commands as appropriate for the designation of the most effective type military unit regardless of service affiliation or assignment to Unified Command.

(USACOM Implementation Plan.)

According to the USACOM I-Plan, AJFPs will include two basic types: "Preplanned" and "Crisis Response."³⁷ The first includes USACOM's standard "off-the-shelf" packages, to be employed when the crisis at hand corresponds reasonably to the mission, employment concept, and functional capabilities of one of those shelf packages. Crisis Response AJFPs, in contrast, are to be exercised for unforeseen threats and unexpected contingencies, or when a preplanned AJFP does not meet the supported combatant commander's requirements. Furthermore, it is envisioned that a preplanned package may serve, at times, as the "core" around which a crisis response package can be developed. This option appears to be, at least in part, the origin of the word "adaptive" in adaptive joint force packaging.

Whether the package is preplanned or built ad hoc in response to particular crisis, each package is to have the following characteristics: a specific mission statement, a concept of employment, a listing of functional capabilities, a designated joint force commander and staff, a listing of type-unit composition, detailed lift and sustainment requirements, and a graduated deployment time-line.³⁸

USACOM briefings also indicate that the initial task of developing adaptive force packages will fall on USACOM's various service components, i.e. the Air Force's ACC, the Army's FORSCOM, the Marine Corps' MARFORLANT, and the Navy's LANTFLT. Each component will be assigned those packages that most closely correspond to their Title 10-designated roles and missions.³⁹ While each package will therefore have a single-service "sponsor," that sponsor will, technically, be able to draw on any and all of the forces of the other services. In theory, the package developers will use those forces that are most suited for the mission, regardless of their origin.

³⁷U.S. Atlantic Command, USACOM (Draft) Implementation Plan, (Norfolk: date unknown), 258

³⁸*Ibid.*, 259

³⁹*Ibid.*, 260

I. "VALUE ADDED" PACKAGE TRAINING

Orienting deploying joint force training toward supported CINC requirements and training those forces alongside designated backup units will help ensure additional forces can be deployed whenever required. Surge forces will arrive in theater organized, trained, and ready for large scale joint operations.

(Admiral Paul David Miller, speaking before the Senate Armed Services Committee.)

USACOM is adamant that the proposed AJFP packages will not become mere "paper tigers," and put on the shelf to gather dust. In order to ensure against this, most, if not all, of the packages on the menu are to be trained and exercised on a regular basis so that they may be ready when and if they are needed. This is the "value added" dimension of the AJFP concept, and if carried out, appears to break with the past practice of dealing with most smaller military contingencies on an ad hoc and off-the-cuff basis. In the past, even when there had been substantial prior planning for smaller contingencies, the commanders and staffs directed to carry-out the plans rarely appear to have had any detailed previous experience (or training) with the plans, or the forces assigned to carry them out. This seems to have been especially true when the forces were drawn from multiple services. USACOM's proposals promise to change this.

It is important to note that the kind of package training envisioned does not necessarily mean that all the actual forces in the package will be trained together. Package training focuses on training and exercising the joint task force commanders, and core staffs (that will lead and manage the packages), and not necessarily on the individual sailors, soldiers and airman that will be used. USACOM's philosophy is evidently that "a trigger-puller is a trigger-puller, and a truck-driver is a truck-driver," regardless of whether they are pulling triggers and driving trucks in a Somalia-type humanitarian assistance operation, or a Desert Storm-like combat campaign. In any case, training to pull triggers or drive trucks is a Title 10 service responsibility, and is not intended to be the purview of AJFP's joint training focus.

Having said this, USACOM nevertheless envisions its joint force integration and training function as an opportunity to create beneficial joint training effects over and above the "value added" specifically associated with AJFP training. While USACOM cannot officially direct the individual training provided by the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines,⁴⁰ its planners believe they can indirectly generate additional joint training opportunities by merely "encouraging" service-specific training to coincide sufficiently. Consider, for example, that in the past, the Army might have been conducting an integrated infantry and armor evolution in one of its many CONUS training ranges, and simultaneously, the Navy and Marine Corps may have been doing an amphibious assault and aerial bombing exercise in say Puerto Rico. In yet a third training scenario, the Air Force may have been running a long-range strike exercise for its F-15s, F-111s, and F-117s. However, it is likely that those training exercises were in no way coordinated, or built into a centralized, joint training opportunity for available joint commanders and staffs. With that in mind, USACOM believes that it can serve as a facilitator, able to pull the Services' training evolutions into an ongoing, coordinated program designed to create joint training opportunities that are more robust and less predictable than heavily-scripted, computer-based simulations.⁴¹

J. PACKAGE DEPLOYMENT

As the Adaptive Joint Force concept matures, supported CINCs will be able to "write a more accurate prescription" - based on the evolving situation in their respective AORs - calling forward only the precise capabilities needed.

(Admiral Paul David Miller, in Both Swords and Plowshares.)

⁴⁰According to Powell, Roles and Missions Report, III-3, this issue of infringement upon Title 10, service-specific training authority was, in part, behind the failure of the previous STRICOM and REDCOM initiatives.

⁴¹See Robert Holzer, "USACOM Seeks Smaller, More Frequent Joint Exercises," Defense News, 15-21 November 1993, 20. This envisioned coordination of service training exercises was also articulated in telephone conversations with USACOM planners, and in Paul David Miller, Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington, D.C. on 20 April 1993.

USACOM's new role as a designated, official joint force integrator and provider has been referred to as "the one-stop-shop approach." That characterization appears to be overblown and, indeed, downright inaccurate. USACOM's initial vision of how the process of package selection and deployment might work is described next.

A supported CINC, in need of military forces, will transmit a list of required capabilities to CJCS and USACOM simultaneously. USACOM then either proposes to respond with an existing AJFP from its "off-the-shelf" menu, or initiates the development of a crisis response package. If needed, the supported CINC and USACOM will negotiate specific adjustments to the proposed package. Once both are satisfied that the package meets the supported CINC's requirements, and is feasible from a resource standpoint, USACOM will issue an initiating directive and submit the AJFP proposal to the CJCS for approval. If the CJCS approves, he will direct the deployment of the AJFP. If necessary, other supporting CINCs may also be directed to provide forces. Finally, USACOM will "make it all happen."⁴²

Aside from the requesting, negotiating, approving, and directing activities noted above, there are also all the activities that are required for, as indicated, making it happen. To do this, each force package on the AJFP menu will be integrated into a "Automatic Force Generator Concept,"⁴³ which is intended to greatly facilitate the deployment process. While it is indicated that this force generator process will attempt to leverage existing, automated logistics and deployment programs (designed and already in-place for large-scale deployments), the real innovation lies in applying these existing systems to the deployment of significantly smaller force packages, and for operations at the lower-end of the spectrum; areas to which they have not necessarily been applied in the past.

⁴²This process was detailed graphically in U.S. Atlantic Command, USACOM Implementation Plan Annex C: Adaptive Joint Force Package: (briefing slides).

⁴³Ibid.

K. FULL JOINT FORCE PACKAGES AND TAILORED FORWARD ELEMENTS

The supported CINCs will be confident the tailored joint force elements in their theater are backed up by a trained and ready joint force package.

(Admiral Paul David Miller, in Both Swords and Plowshares.)⁴⁴

Admiral Miller's published statements and USACOM's briefings both emphasize the concept of full joint force packages being developed, trained, and maintained in CONUS to support the possible range of likely requirements of each Unified Commander, and tailored elements of the full package being positioned forward to meet those CINCs' requirement for actual, day-to-day forward presence. The benefit of this is characterized as an increased level of confidence that the tailored elements placed forward can be supplemented quickly by deploying the rest of the full force package when needed, and that the forward and surge elements can operate effectively once joined together in-theater. This is considered possible by virtue of the full force package's prior, integrated training.

The need for this was articulated in a point paper written by a former Atlantic Command staff officer regarding the applicability of AJFPs. That paper indicated that Navy carrier air wings recently deployed in the Persian Gulf were tasked with operating jointly with an in-place USAF Composite Air Wing in coordinated air strikes. Unfortunately, as the author noted, neither the Navy, nor the Air Force units had significant experience in planning or executing coordinated air strikes with their sister service, and as a result, considerable difficulties were experienced. The author of the paper offered the opinion that, considering the difficulties experienced, "forming an AJFP, training in CONUS and then deploying presents obvious advantages."⁴⁵

⁴⁴Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares, 28.

⁴⁵R. Lynch, Application of Adaptive Joint Force Packages, (Norfolk: date unknown), a point-paper recommended for inclusion into the USACOM I-Plan.

L. THE THEODORE THEODORE ROOSEVELT/SPMAGTF INITIATIVE

Thus, may it please your Excellencies, I have detailed some, though by no means all, the considerations which led me to form the project of a lunar voyage. I shall now proceed to lay before you the result of an attempt so apparently audacious in conception, and, at all events, so utterly unparalleled in the annals of mankind.

(Hans Pfaall, in The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall.)

It seems worthwhile to explain, at this point, the first notable, real-world AJFP experiment. The case in point is the deployment, from April to September of 1993, of the battlegroup centered around the Navy aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt. While the force consisted of 11 ships (a fairly standard, Cold War-era complement), the carrier's embarked airwing was adjusted and downsized to make room for a 600-man, 10-aircraft Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF).⁴⁶ The stated objectives of the experiment were to test the SPMAGTF concept, in particular, "one of sufficient size and capability to ensure mission effectiveness, yet small enough to embark on a CV/CVN," and to "combine CV/CVN speed and firepower with SPMAGTF capabilities to respond to crisis, disaster, instability or non-traditional security missions."⁴⁷ A number of other more specific objectives were tested as well, notably some cost savings, and a flexibility associated with being able to operate the simultaneously deployed Saipan MARG separately while retaining some organic "green" capability on-board the CV.

Making room for the SPMAGTF aboard the Theodore Roosevelt necessitated a reduction of the carrier's traditional standard mix of aircraft. In particular, F-14 fighters and S-3 ASW aircraft were removed in order to create deck and berthing space for the Marines, their helicopters, and equipment. The rationale behind these specific choices

⁴⁶Author Unknown, "USN Carrier Becomes Multi-Force Assault Platform," Jane's Defense Weekly, 20 February 1993, 19.

⁴⁷U.S. Atlantic Command, Adaptive Joint Force Packages: 21st Century Force Employment (briefing slides),(Norfolk: date unknown).

was the expectation that the scheduled operating environment would require less air superiority and ASW capability. Incidentally, the SPMAGTF's command, infantry, support, and aviation elements were taken directly out of the 26th MEU organization, deployed simultaneously in the Mediterranean aboard the Saipan-centered MARG. As a result, the MEU had somewhat less than its full, standard complement and traditionally-advertised capability, a fact that was presented, in advance, to the supported theater CINC.

As will be discussed more fully in a later section of the thesis, the packaging initiative associated with the Theodore Roosevelt CVBG and the Saipan MARG has drawn to AJFP what appears to be an unwarranted amount of criticism and skepticism. In other words, and as USACOM planners repeatedly emphasize, the CV/SPMAGTF combination is only one small aspect of the much larger AJFP, and should not be the basis of any final conclusions about that parent concept's overall validity. Having mentioned criticism and skepticism, it is now appropriate to turn to that aspect of the thesis, as publicly outlining the articulated concerns with AJFP is one of the primary purposes of this project.

III. THE CASE AGAINST AJFP AND USACOM'S NEW ROLE

To some extent, each of these objections has seeds of a service-parochial reaction to the AJFP concept. However, the fact that conference participants succeeded in misunderstanding the AJFP concept even after repeated explanations suggests that misunderstanding was engendered to some degree by the logic of the concept itself.

(Analytical Commentary from Major Points and Analysis: First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference.)

Considerable skepticism has been voiced about many aspects of the AJFP initiative, as well as about some specific elements of USACOM's other new functions. Unfortunately, the reasoning for those reservations varies widely, and has not always been articulated in identical terms. This makes a methodical, detailed presentation of the case against AJFP more difficult. Nevertheless, some common themes emerge. This chapter attempts to present those themes clearly and accurately within the source-constraints cited earlier. It is important to emphasize that the criticisms cited are not necessarily the author's views. They are presented in no particular order, although some have greater pertinence for AJFP (narrowly defined) than others.

It is important also to point out that the vast majority of the most "audible" negative opinions encountered to date about AJFP centered on the Theodore Roosevelt/SPMAGTF deployment. In other words, a very small aspect of the AJFP concept, i.e. putting Marines aboard a carrier and adjusting the traditional make-up of a MARG, has become a lightning rod of sorts for AJFP critics generally. Given that the Theodore Roosevelt experience is the only one in which the AJFP concept went from a theoretical concept to an operational reality, this disproportionate attention may be understandable. It may also be unfair, in the sense that it could provide a premature, "unbalanced," and unwarranted thumbs down to AJFP as a whole; somewhat like throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

A. UNIT INTEGRITY

. . . while services do routinely break up units, there is a point or level at which unit integrity is essential. For example, if a MEU is broken up for diverse missions for more than a finite period, it would cease to maintain it's advertised mission capability as a MEU, and we cannot do that institutionally.

(Chief of the Joint Operations Directorate)⁴⁸

The so-called "unit integrity" issue refers to the belief that AJFP will break-up the Services' traditional combat organizations to the detriment of their overall readiness and effectiveness. This has been a criticism, in particular, of the Marine Corps. This service is organized for warfighting and deployment purposes into Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs), of which the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is the smallest commonly trained and employed. The Marines acknowledge that even smaller MAGTF units are available, and have been used for a number of more limited, special purpose missions, but the MEU remains the basic building-block. It is this block that is routinely trained and "worked-up" prior to deployment, and then rotated forward as part of a MARG. The MEU is also the Marine's smallest MAGTF that can be considered to have the full range of command, combined arms, and support elements, including communications, infantry, artillery, armor, engineer, reconnaissance, aviation, and logistics components.⁴⁹

As indicated earlier, AJFP's first real-world experiment with the Theodore Roosevelt deployment has become central to many critics' arguments. In the case of the Marine Corps, it is cited as evidence of AJFP's ill-effects on unit integrity. Clearly, the experiment parted with the Corps' tradition. As noted, the carrier deployed with a relatively small (though large for a CV) Marine contingent embarked. Because the

⁴⁸As quoted in U.S. Atlantic Command Major Points and Analysis: First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference.

⁴⁹U.S. Marine Corps, Marine Air-Ground Task Force: A Global Capability, FMFRP 2-12, Washington D.C. 10 April 1991.

SPMAGTF's infantry, aviation, support, and command elements were taken directly out of the accompanying MARG's battalion-sized MEU, the MEU itself could no longer be considered quite up to its full, traditionally-advertised strength. Nor did the MEU have all the internal elements which its doctrine and SOPs had in mind when drafted. As a result, considerable concern was created within the Marine Corps about the long-term impact on the basic MEU building-block organization, including doctrine and assumed capabilities, should the CV/SPMAGTF, and reduced-MEU, become models for regular, repetitive future deployments.

Within the Navy, observations about AJFP's effect on basic building-blocks has been mixed. On the one hand, objections appear to have been minimal with regard to modifying the composition of this service's traditional building block, the full CVBG. Most Navy planners recognize and acknowledge the almost total demise of the Soviet threat, and therefore generally accept the notion that the standard CVBG complement may provide a range of capabilities that is no longer needed. In particular, the shift in emphasis from preparing for large-scale war at sea against the Soviets, in favor of preparations for smaller-scale littoral warfare against less capable foes, means that the standard 10 to 11-ship carrier battlegroup combination may have become an exception rather than the rule. Specifically, wide-spread consensus points to the CV no longer needing the overwhelmingly capable ASW and anti-air warfare (AAW) screens whose primary mission it was to protect and defend the carrier against waves of Soviet bombers and attack submarines. Some planners even indicate that the aircraft carrier itself may not always be required. On the balance, the Navy seems to be relatively comfortable with the idea of forming, training, and deploying alternative, including non-carrier, combinations of ships. In fact, the Navy has actually been doing so for a number of years. This acceptance is reinforced, it seems, by the fact that most Navy ships are themselves "balanced" capabilities packages, complete with offensive and defensive weaponry, communications, and other support capabilities.

The issue of unit integrity has however generated considerable concern with respect to adjusting or modifying the integral components of individual ships, or of units aboard those ships. Especially at issue is the organization and make-up of the aircraft carrier's embarked airwing. The Theodore Roosevelt experiment has, again, provided ammunition for skeptics.

It has already been noted that to make room for the SPMAGTF and the its Air Combat Element (ACE) aboard the Theodore Roosevelt, a number of F-14 Tomcat fighter/interceptors were removed, as well all S-3 Viking anti-submarine aircraft. As said, the particular changes were motivated by the belief that these aircraft would be "redundant" in the ship's area of operations. With respect to the F-14s, it appears that this expectation fell short of reality. It turned out that a primary mission for the Theodore Roosevelt during its stay in the Mediterranean was the enforcement of a UN-mandated no-fly zone over Bosnia. This was a task that demanded long-range air superiority aircraft like the missing Tomcats. The S-3s were also sorely missed, not because of an unforeseen submarine threat, but because their secondary roles - aerial tanking and carrier on-board delivery (COD) - were not adequately filled by other designated assets.⁵⁰

Modern U.S. aircraft carriers are finely-tuned, highly-complex systems with many diverse, well-coordinated components. They are designed from the keel up for a particular (blue-water) operating environment, with a specific range of missions in mind, and so as to accomodate certain sizes and types of weapons. Although the carrier (along with its large-deck amphibious assault ship counterpart) has proven to be quite adaptable to new mixes of weapon systems, and have demonstrated great flexibility with respect to operating environments and assigned missions, their adaptability and flexibility are not unlimited. Some Navy and Marine Corps officers are concerned that

⁵⁰Problems associated with the removal of F-14s and S-3s from the Theodore Roosevelt airwing were articulated during telephone interviews with Navy Staff planners and Carrier Airwing (CVW) operators.

the Theodore Roosevelt/SPMA/GTF/Saipan experiment either pushed the outer edge of, or exceed those limits.

The Army and Air Force appear, for the most part, much less concerned over AJFP's impact on unit integrity. Both services seem comfortable with the idea of contributing forces to the pool from which adaptive force package elements would be drawn, and with the prospect that their traditional building-blocks may be modified to accommodate the requirements of a particular situation. With respect to the Army, FORSCOM staff officers indicated that their service regularly trains its smaller elements to operate independently, or as part of ad hoc combined-arms mixes with other types of forces. Those same officers did point out that the situation differs somewhat for combat arms and support units. In the case of the former, the battalion is a basic building-block, and the lowest level at which full command and control, intelligence and staff functions are integrated. By contrast, the support units were characterized as even more flexible, and could be adjusted without undue difficulty down to the smallest units.

The Air Force appears to view the issue of unit integrity similarly, or in other words, with little trepidation that USACOM's force packaging initiatives will routinely, and significantly, disrupt the operating patterns and doctrine associated with its basic force building-blocks. With respect to building-blocks, while staff officers at ACC indicated that the squadron is the fundamental unit that should not be broken-up, they envisioned that future Air Force operations within the AJFP system would come primarily in the form of deploying their new, and now more formalized "composite air wings."

The gracious attitude of the Army and Air Force must, however, be taken with a grain of salt. In explanation, and based on the vast majority of interviews conducted by this researcher, it appears that the most likely application for Army and Air Force units under the AJFP concept is limited-scale, mission-specific contingencies. This stems in

part, of course, from their inevitable dependence on land-basing. As a result, it has been argued that it is much less likely that the Army and Air Force will participate heavily in, or supplant the Navy and Marine Corps' dominant role in, packages designed for long-term, rotationally-maintained, continuous peacetime forward presence outside of Central Europe and North East Asia. As such, the effect (even worse-case) that AJFP might have on the Army and Air Force overall, appears to be somewhat less than that indicated for the Navy and Marine Corps. For example, if new and innovative packaging concepts are routinely used for peacetime forward presence operations, virtually all of the Navy and Marine Corps' basic building-blocks may pass through the new system within a few years' time.

On the other hand, many predict only occasional and limited-scope Army and Air Force participation in AJFP; i.e. for specific, mission-specific crises rather than the year-round presence associated with naval forces. While that participation may well be extremely important and decisive, the above note prediction alludes to the fact that there might be little chance that anything more than a very small portion of the Army and Air Force's entire force will be exposed to the adjustment (some would say disruption) that adaptive force packaging promises to impose. This is not to imply that the Army and Air Force's contribution to AJFP is any less important, or that their "support" of it is any less sincere, it only highlights the inevitable difference in impact that AJFP may have on the individual services. If nothing else, it is a probable cause for the disparity in relative levels of concern voiced by the different military organizations.

The Army did express one very specific concern, however. In particular, one FORSCOM officer indicated that the practice of deploying Army OH-58 helicopters aboard smaller Navy combatants has created difficulties within that specific helicopter community, i.e. difficulties associated with half the squadron being deployed while the other half remained stateside, unable to be integrated into typical training evolutions that require a full squadron. While this concern appears to be at the margins of overall

skepticism with AJFP, it nevertheless suggests the possibility of problems with using mission-specific assets from one service to fill short-falls of a particular capability in another service. One example of such use that may become more frequent in the future is the use of Navy or Marine Corps "Harm-shooters" by the Air Force for the Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD) role. This is a mission that the Air Force is finding increasingly difficult to carry-out as its F-4G "Wild Weasel" aircraft are retired.⁵¹ The perceived problem is that such lending and borrowing could lead to an unacceptable disruption of the aircraft squadrons' normal operating patterns, especially as Navy aircraft (and now Marine aircraft) are increasingly operating, by virtue of their extended deployments aboard carriers, at the outer edge of their personnel tempo of operations (PERSTEMPO) limitations.⁵²

In sum, it appears that AJFP envisions employing the individual Services' forces in some new and innovative ways. This has prompted concern that traditional force building-blocks will be modified and/or revised. Moreover, perceptions are also that the Navy and the Marine Corps may face greater adjustments in this regard than the Army and Air Force, by virtue of the former's envisioned higher rate of participation in AJFP packaging initiatives actually employed. The concerns seem to turn on two fundamental questions: will AJFP, in fact, disrupt the Services' basic building-blocks, and if so, will the adjustments thus created bring more costs than benefits?

As for the first question, it seems unlikely that AJFP will disrupt the services' traditional force units profoundly and on a regular. Aside from the unique carrier-

⁵¹The shortage of USAF "smart HARM-shooters, and the likelihood that USN/USMC aircraft will be called-on in the future to fill the shortage, is indicated in U.S. Atlantic Command, Adaptive Joint Force Package Options, and James A. Winnefeld and Dana Johnson, "Unity of Control: Joint Air Operations in the Gulf War," Joint Force Quarterly Inaugural Issue (Summer 1993): 95.

⁵²For the official Navy policy regarding PERSTEMPO, something for which the Army and Air Force have no expressed equivalent, see: Department of the Navy, OPNAV INSTRUCTION 3000.13A, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, December 1990). The primary intent of this policy is to minimize the hardships on naval personnel by limiting out-of-area deployments to six months, and requiring that a unit spend at least 50% of its time in homeport over a five year cycle.

amphibious unit cross-decking experiment of the Theodore Roosevelt, CV/SPMAGTF deployment, the vast majority of USACOM and Admiral Miller's packaging concepts clearly envision using the services' basic building-blocks basically unchanged and intact to construct new, different, and unconventional combinations of those building-blocks. As is outlined in the next chapter, the CV/SPMAGTF model appears to be destined for the "good idea shelf," rejected as a viable option for regular, repetitive peacetime deployments. Again, a deeply-felt disruption of the military's fundamental building-blocks, caused solely by AJFP, appears unlikely.

With respect to the second question, it may be argued that some adjustment of the military's basic-building blocks may well be warranted at this point. To begin with, many of those building-blocks were developed during, and in response to, a security environment that no longer exists. In other words, they were created primarily with American-Soviet, high-intensity global war in mind, and not the lower-intensity, regional, and non-traditional applications that are now seen as more likely. In addition, some of those building-blocks appear to have been formulated on the basis of of the pool of assets then available. Those assets are rapidly declining in number, so they may therefore no longer provide a logical starting point from which to construct the Services' basic force building-blocks.

While the recent 1991 Gulf War validated many traditional Cold War planning and employment concepts, even that conflict is seen by many as less than representative of the future employment of American forces; i.e. it is viewed as an anomaly rather than the model. Consequently, even if AJFP does not portend the kind of major unit integrity disruption that some suspect it will, one could question whether some significant disruption and/or adjustment is not, in fact, in order. Clearly, considering the Air Force's emerging Composite Air Wing concept, and the move within the Navy to shrink standard Cold War-sized CVBGs, those organizations obviously feel that some adjustment to their traditional ways of organizing things is due. Moreover, even the

Marine Corps' basic deployable building-block, the MEU, is changing for reasons that seem to have little to do with USACOM's adaptive force packaging per se.⁵³

To finalize this discussion, it is worthwhile to cite the U.S. Naval Forces Europe (NAVEUR) representative to the First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference, who indicated his belief that "a prerequisite to further development of the AJFP concept is to determine what the lowest levels are for units to be mixed and matched into AJFPs." In concluding his remarks, the NAVEUR representative also posed the following questions: "How low-down can we go in terms of unit size for each service and still have units that can effectively contribute to the AJFP?" And "What tools work well with each other?"⁵⁴ As such, it appears that this issue of unit integrity will remain a source of debate among the services, in part, by virtue of some force building-blocks being developed with rotational forward presence operating requirements in mind, and others being based on a different (non-forward presence) set of requirements and planning assumptions.

B. DIMINISHES THE ROLE OF THE CJCS AND JOINT STAFF

While this particular concern has now, apparently been resolved, it seems worthwhile to touch on it at least briefly. In the minds of many (in particular, those on the Joint Staff), the new USACOM mandate would include what some have called a "one-stop-shop" approach to the force providing process; a process whereby supported CINCs would come directly to USACOM to procure forces for peacetime presence or short-notice response to a crisis. This would break with the apparent previous practice of submitting requests directly to the CJCS and his Joint Staff, who would then

⁵³Of course, the reference here is to the many MEU adjustments that have been necessitated by cutting-back on the number of amphibious ships deployed in a MARG, from the fairly standard five to a now more common three (a reflection of an overall smaller fleet).

⁵⁴U.S. Atlantic Command, Major Points and Analysis: First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference, 11.

coordinate and relay the requests on to the Services and/or force-providing unified CINCs. The argument was that the Chairman and the Joint Staff would now be "out of the loop," and not in a position to exercise their coordination and oversight role. As indicated, this concern now appears to have been resolved. The USACOM I-Plan outlines, in concrete terms, the process by which forces would be requested from, and provided by, USACOM; a process which clearly includes the CJCS and the Joint Staff.

With regard to this concern, it appears that USACOM planners originally intended for the AJFP system to allow supported and supporting CINCs to deal directly with one another and decide which packages were best suited the requirements of the user CINC, and appropriate from a resource standpoint. The idea was that the CJCS, the Joint Staff, and the National Command Authority (NCA) would come into play almost exclusively at the tail-end of the process. Of course, the uniformed military continues to lack the legal authority to approve and "sign" deployment orders and must go to its civilian leadership (the NCA) for that function. As indicated by the package deployment system outlined earlier, Joint Staff and CJCS involvement will occur throughout the process, and not solely at the tail-end. Recent conversations with USACOM planners indicate however, that they remain convinced that the AJFP process would be more effective if Joint Staff involvement were minimized, restricted to a simple relay of NCA approval or disapproval of packaging decisions arrived at between the user and provider CINCs.⁵⁵ Apparently, USACOM's wishes in this matter have not been adopted.

⁵⁵USACOM planners articulated the following view: that the correct interpretation of the role of the CJCS and his staff is merely as advisors to the National Command Authority, and as coordinators of the Services - not of the Unified CINCs. As such, they appear to believe that the Chairman and Joint Staff's heavy participation in the AJFP system is neither logical nor efficient. In particular, they perceive that it undermines the power and effectiveness of the Unified CINCs to conduct joint military operations in their theaters; in their mind, a primary intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

C. ADDS ADDITIONAL BUREAUCRACY

Our goal is to keep the Atlantic Command flexible and customer-oriented by avoiding the bureaucracy often attendant to large staffs. The best way to do that is to use wisely the tremendous capability which already exists at the component level.

(Admiral Paul David Miller before the Senate Armed Services Committee.)⁵⁶

This bureaucracy concern is two-fold. First, there is general skepticism about USACOM's ability to accommodate the inclusion of ACC and FORSCOM without creating a significant amount of additional, inefficient bureaucracy. As indicated by the above quoted passage, USACOM counters this charge by pointing to its intention to rely on the management and planning capabilities of the Army and Air Force organizations that will become service components. As a result, Atlantic Command planners do not foresee any growth of their organization that is not commensurate with their expanded role and additional responsibilities.

There is an additional concern however. Some express their belief that USACOM's new joint force integrator and packaging roles will add a burdensome and unnecessary layer of decision-making to the already difficult process of crisis response force allocation. Whereas the theater warfighting CINCs previously had to go through only the Joint Staff and the Services to get the forces they needed, AJFP critics argue that those CINCs will now have to go through the Joint Staff, USACOM, and the Services. This worry appears to be less than well-founded, however. It appears that under the new plan for force provision, the individual services will be largely taken out of the loop. In other words, they will be relegated to their intended (indeed mandated) role of organizing, training and equipping forces, and will have less influence over what units are sent where and when. The new system appears to signal a change most notably for the Army and Air Force, by virtue of the fact that the vast bulk of their CONUS-based

⁵⁶Miller, Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 16.

operational forces having been newly placed under the direct control of a Unified Commander; the Navy and Marine Corps' forces have had this experience for some time.

Thus, with major CONUS-based operational elements of all four services now being placed under USACOM, the process of selecting units for mission-specific tasks, training them to operate as a joint team, and deploying them rapidly and efficiently, appears to be more streamlined, rather than more laborious, difficult, and bureaucratic.

D. THE LIMITS OF CAPABILITIES-BASED PLANNING

With respect to capabilities required, EUCOM most often cited requirements in terms of a shorthand, using names of potential crisis countries or regions, or ongoing JTF operations that could open up and require more or different forces.

(Major Points and Analysis: First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference.)

Discussions with theater Unified CINC planners (EUCOM and CENTCOM in particular) indicated some concern that capabilities-based planning - vice planning with specific threats and force-assets in mind - will be most difficult. It was explained to this researcher that theater warplans are essentially a detailed accounting of the operational and logistical strategies and tactics that will be used for particular warfighting scenarios, and that these scenarios fundamentally rely on specific threats or adversaries, as well as on fairly rigid sets of individual U.S. military units that are allocated and envisioned for employment. The warplans provide a script for what forces are going to be deployed, how they are going to get to the theater of operations, what they are going to do once they get there, and how they are going to do it. The question theater CINC planners ask with respect to AJFP and capabilities-based planning is: "If we don't know with any certainty which forces we'll be handed in a time of crisis (or for forward presence), how can we possibly plan for their employment in any meaningful fashion?"

Theater CINCs appear at this point unable (or unwilling) to commit to producing comprehensive, detailed lists of capabilities-based requirements of the kind that would be useful for determining what size and mix of forces ought to be assigned to their respective AORs for presence, or crisis response. As one participant in the First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference pointed-out, "[w]ithout these requirements, it is impossible to pick capabilities from the tool box."⁵⁷ As indicated in the previous discussion of JMETLs, there is not even an appropriate, common set of terms, or "dictionary" available with which to begin such a process.

In some ways, this lack of commitment to capabilities-based planning on the part of overseas CINCs is understandable. If nothing else, their pattern of planning over the past decades has been based on specific threats, and on a detailed list of units allocated for their use. With a clear understanding of exactly what forces were promised, which, in the case of forward presence was a full CVBG plus MARG combination, there appears to have been little need, or support, for capabilities-based planning. Rapidly changing an in-grained pattern such as this is obviously difficult, and requires an underlying justification that is both understood and accepted. Unfortunately, as far as the overseas CINCs are concerned, such a clear justification for capabilities-based planning has not been demonstrated. This criticism thus appears to relate not so much to an inability on the part of the CINCs to change to capabilities-based planning, but rather a skepticism that such planning will work and produce positive results.

In the opinion of this researcher, this concern may have considerable validity. Take, for example Gulf War. It would seem that the extremely detailed planning CENTCOM had on-file as part of this country's large-scale Middle East warplan was indispensable to the successful conduct of operations. Although the plan was clearly not adhered to

⁵⁷This lack of clear, detailed, capabilities-based requirement statements from the overseas CINCs was highlighted in U.S. Atlantic Command, Major Points and Analysis: First Adaptive Joint Force Forward Presence Conference. That report even indicated that the Theodore Roosevelt/SPMAGTF deployment had no EUCOM statement of requirements upon which its development was based.

precisely, either in terms of forces that were deployed, or how they were eventually employed, it provided a ready-made blueprint for starting the process of bringing forces into the theater, and later, the manner in which they were used.⁵⁸ It has been suggested that without that blueprint, the whole process might have taken twice as long, and could have led to much less satisfactory results.⁵⁹ Although AJFP is clearly oriented toward contingencies below the Gulf War-MRC level, the same reservations with capabilities-based planning seem to be applicable.

There is however a compelling argument in favor of USACOM's call for capabilities-based planning and force allocation. In particular, the significantly smaller, post-Cold War U.S. force structure simply will not allow the overseas CINCs to count on a fixed, detailed, specific set of forces designated for their sole use. Henceforth, the supporting CINCs (in this case USACOM) will have to manage a smaller pool of assets against the competing demands of multiple theater warfighters.

E. TAILORING AND PEACETIME FORWARD PRESENCE

At this writing, we are involved in operations Provide Promise, Maritime Guard, and Deny Flight in the Adriatic Sea; operation Southern Watch in the Persian Gulf; and operation Restore Hope in Somalia. This involvement illustrates the inherent flexibility, utility, and global reach of naval forces in supporting important national taskings.

(Vice Admiral Leighton W. Smith, in Carriers For Force 2001.)

According to General Powell, one of the initial, defining objectives of the AJFP concept was to create efficiencies by tailoring force packages to specific regions and/or missions, especially for forward presence. While this may be possible and appropriate with certain static, ground-based, and limited-objective forward presence forces, many

⁵⁸According to Bob Woodward, The Commanders, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), the original CENTCOM 1002 Operations Plan called for 150,000 or so troops, much less than the over half a million that were deployed.

⁵⁹Department of Defense, Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1992), D-7.

have voiced skepticism over the idea of tailoring being inserted into the type of forward presence operations that have been the domain of naval forward deployments over the past few decades. In particular, it has been argued that these deployments were specifically designed to provide just the opposite of what tailoring implies. In other words, they were intentionally developed to provide a capability that is supremely flexible with regard to mission and region, while purposefully avoided a focus on any one AOR or conflict scenario.

The rationale for such flexibility is relatively straight-forward. Simply consider that a rotationally deployed CVBG and/or MARG package may one week be evacuating non-combatant civilians in Haiti or Liberia, or enforcing a no-fly-zone in the Adriatic. The next week, it may be sent off to the Horn of Africa to provide humanitarian assistance. Next, the same "package" may be ordered to conduct long-range air strikes in the Persian Gulf, or provide disaster relief in Bangladesh. This is the way that naval forces have been used in the "real-world." It follows that some overseas theater CINC planners question the viability of tailoring rotationally-deployed, continuous forward presence force packages either for particular regions or specific missions.

This criticism appears to have basis in fact. Problems with tailoring CVBGs and MARGs were encountered most recently when the Theodore Roosevelt battlegroup was pulled away from its intended EUCOM/Mediterranean operating environment and sent through the Suez Canal to support CINCCENT. It appears that some CENTCOM staff officers were unhappy with some of the tailoring that had been done with the formation, and felt that the traditional CVBG mix of capabilities would have been more appropriate.⁶⁰ Similarly, when the USS Tripoli MARG was repositioned to the waters off of Somalia, some felt that the MARG's tailoring, with the resultant lack of sufficient

⁶⁰Case in point was one Central Command Naval Component (NAVCENT) staff officer who lamented in a telephone interview the absence of the Theodore Roosevelt's F-14s to support the "Southern Watch," UN-mandated enforcement of a no-fly zone in southern Iraq, as well as the lack of S-3s to serve as long-range COD platforms.

armor and over-the-beach lift capabilities in particular, affected the embarked MEU's readiness to respond decisively.⁶¹

While only a few concrete examples have been provided, they serve to highlight some likely problems associated with tailoring regularly deployed, continuous peacetime presence packages. If nothing else, they probably reflect a need to reexamine the concept of region or mission-specific peacetime presence and the envisioned practice of tailoring the forces that will carry-out that mission.

F. LACK OF USE, AND NO "VALUE ADDED"

Most often the forces that were used for these "presence" missions, as well as most other activities, came from the standing U.S. deployments nearby.

(Force Without War, by Blechman and Kaplan.)

There is concern among some planners that USACOM's CONUS-based force packages will not readily be used, even if and when they are eventually developed and trained. This belief is held for a number of reasons. Some people argue that in virtually overseas crises, the forces that are already deployed in-theater are the ones that will be directed to address the situation, both in the short-term, and over the long run. Certainly, this view reflects the American crisis response pattern of the past, i.e. the propensity to respond to virtually all smaller contingencies - regardless of their particular nature - with the forces that were positioned forward already. Proponents of this claim cite, as recent examples, both Bosnia and Somalia. In both instances, forward stationed and, in particular, forward deployed naval forces were the first to respond. The latter, of course, continue to provide the bulk of U.S. military presence in and around those situations. In the case of Bosnia, even the Air Force assets that were based at Aviano and elsewhere in Italy, were drawn almost exclusively from units already

⁶¹For a discussion of the USS Tripoli MARG experience, see Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr., "The Marine Corps of Tomorrow," USNI Proceedings, November 1993, 28., and William T. DeCamp III and Kenneth F. McKenzie, "A Hollow Force?", USNI Proceedings, November 1993, 40.

forward positioned in Germany.⁶² Furthermore, when President Clinton again escalated the U.S. presence in Somalia in October 1993, the vast majority of the additional forces came in the form of a rapidly repositioning a carrier battle group and amphibious ready group that were already deployed overseas.⁶³

Another aspect of the "lack of use" concern revolves around the suspicion that internal, military institutional struggles will continue to determine the composition of crisis response force packages. In other words, it is felt that certain - unavoidable - DoD organizational and political interests will ultimately outweigh, or dramatically modify, USACOM's AJFP planning and employment processes, and determine what units are sent where and when. Those articulating this concern point to the "politically determined" use of the New York-based 10th Mountain Division for operations in Somalia,⁶⁴ and the "inappropriate" selection of forces for the Grenada invasion.⁶⁵

Yet another dimension to the argument that already forward positioned forces will be the ones, in fact, to respond to overseas crises, pertains to the belief that mobilizing and deploying CONUS-based forces is politically much more difficult than simply repositioning forces that are already forward positioned. It is claimed that the former step generates considerably more attention in the press⁶⁶ and in the halls of Congress,

⁶²Neff Hudson and Steve Vogel, "Limited Threat Seen for Allies Enforcing No-Fly Zone in Bosnia," Air Force Times, 19 April 1993, 15.

⁶³Michael Elliot, "The Making of a Fiasco," Newsweek, 18 October 1993, 34.

⁶⁴The "inappropriateness" of deploying the 10th Mountain Division to Somalia was a view articulated in numerous "off-the-record" telephone interviews, but is not backed-up by any published public statements to that effect, official or unofficial. In those interviews, it was indicated that the 10th was deployed for "Provide Hope" as a consolation for not being used in "Desert Storm."

⁶⁵John W. Vessey, Jr., "JCS Replies to Criticism of Grenada Operation," Army, August 1984.

⁶⁶ As an example of this phenomena, consider that Air Force units recently deploying from stateside bases to Italy to participate in the "Deny Flight" operation over Bosnia received considerable attention and fan-fare in the national press, while little or no attention was paid to the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force units (from Germany) that had been poised in the area continuously for the past year or more. CNN broadcast of 29 November 1993 which highlighted the deployment of CONUS-based Air Force Reserve F-16s to Italy.

and therefore will present a more weighty decision for the National Command Authority. The likely result, according to some AJFP critics, will be that effective, well trained, mission-specific force packages will oftentimes remain idle at their stateside bases, while untrained, ad hoc combinations of forward positioned forces are assigned to the tasks for which AJFP packages were specifically developed.

Another concern is that AJFP's focused, in-advance organizing and training, i.e. the "value added," will never completely materialize. To begin with, it is argued that two of the USACOM components assigned to develop and oversee the packages (ACC and FORSCOM) do not have, and are not anticipated to receive, the additional staff personnel required by their new AJFP-related functions. It has been indicated to this researcher that this concern is exacerbated by the fact that these organizations have now been given significant warfighting responsibilities in addition to their traditional service roles of organizing, training, and equipping troops. It is also feared that the core-AJFP package staffs, once organized and trained, will evaporate or diffuse (along with their "corporate knowledge") more quickly than they can be re-generated. High turn-over rates have historically been the plight of most active military organizations.

An additional concern relates to uncertainty about the make-up of the designated JTF commanders and accompanying staffs that will be trained within the AJFP system. In particular, some question whether overseas theater commanders and staffs will participate heavily in the package training process. As such, those who might ultimately direct the efforts of AJFP packages once deployed may not benefit from the value added of the AJFP concept. Even more importantly, they may not be able to incorporate quickly the specific procedures formalized during pre-deployment package training.

It appears that the critics have much to support their arguments. Certainly, if the previous pattern of American crisis response is a telling factor for the future, then already forward positioned forces will continue to bear the brunt of smaller overseas contingencies. The military's own National Military Strategy (NMS) points out that the

Nation's forward presence is "the leading edge of our crisis response capability," and "often the most responsive in cases of natural disaster or regional crisis."⁶⁷ The NMS appears to point out the obvious: why have those forces "over there" if not to respond to crises? Conversely, deploying a special force from CONUS each and every time a problem arises overseas, does not seem particularly "efficient," or the best use of available resources. No doubt also, the argument that deploying a CONUS-based package will be more difficult politically than repositioning already forward stationed or deployed forces has considerable merit.

Having said this, it needs nevertheless to be recalled that the post-World War II pattern of American crisis response evolved in an environment where AJFP did not exist, and when specially trained, mission-specific joint force packages were not always available. It may be that the development of such packages alone will be sufficient to change old habits and justify the deployment of CONUS-based forces for certain contingencies. In any case, the "old" pattern may already be in flux, for recent crises have seen a greater resort to CONUS-based forces. Notably, the majority of the U.S. forces sent to Somalia (at the height of that operation) were sent directly from the United States as a mission-specific deployment. Considering that peace-support, nation-building, disaster relief, and other such non-traditional operations appear to be the focus of USACOM's current AJFP menu, it may be that CONUS-based, mission-specific force package deployments are something to be encountered more often in the future than in the past.

As far as the worry that AJFP-trained commanders and staffs will diffuse more rapidly than they can be reconstituted, or that overseas combatant command officers will not be involved sufficiently in AJFP training, this may reflect a tendency to claim defeat before the task has even been attempted. Simply put, if those in charge of AJFP's

⁶⁷Powell, National Military Strategy, 14.

development and maintenance are determined to make the system work (and have the necessary "power" delegated to them), then it appears likely that they will eventually be able to overcome these reservations.

G. TRADITIONAL VS. NON-TRADITIONAL MISSIONS

. . . instead of using the peacetime interregnum to hone their military skills, senior military officers sought civilian missions to justify their existence. When war came they were woefully unprepared. Instead of protecting their soldiers' lives they led them to their deaths. In today's post-Cold War peacetime environment, this trap again looms large . . . Some today within the U.S. military are also searching for relevance, with draft doctrinal manuals giving touchy-feely prewar and postwar civil operations equal weight with warfighting. This is an insidious mistake. (Harry Summers, as quoted in The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012.)

The debate over "non-traditional" missions for America's military is one that appears to be gaining more momentum as time goes on. While it has been most visible within the Nation's political and journalistic communities, it has also begun to generate considerable controversy within the active military as well - albeit somewhat less publicly. Although skepticism with such employment for U.S. forces is discussed here under a common heading, and though it has commonly been addressed as a single topic, the issue of traditional versus non-traditional military missions can be more effectively addressed as a combination of separate, yet inter-related questions.

To begin with, there is the general question of whether or not the U.S. military should be employed for other than traditional, "war-fighting," or combat tasks. Next is the question of, if the armed forces are to be so employed, should they spend significant time and energy preparing for non-traditional missions? In addition, concern also emerges about the ability of the military to improve measurably their performance in some of these mission-areas through the more mission-focused preparation envisioned by AJFP.

Because this researcher's own analysis and conclusions about this issue are largely included in the final two chapters of this thesis, the discussion here merely presents the

arguments of those concerned with the use of American military force for non-traditional missions, and criticising AJFP on the basis of its apparent non-traditional mission focus.

It seems undeniable that AJFP is, at this point, "heavily preoccupied" with so-called non-traditional missions. Although USACOM insists that the concept was originally intended for virtually the entire range of contingencies at the lower-end of the military spectrum, including a wide range of LRCs, and has indicated that this is still the plan, the first AJFP menu now being developed consists, as noted earlier, largely of non-traditional mission options. Among the 13 packages included in the initial menu, at least nine can be characterized as non-traditional - that equates to almost 70% of AJFP's preliminary planning efforts. For what its worth, this researcher has considered the four missions of NEO, No-Fly Zone Enforcement, Quarantine/Blockade, and Forward Presence as traditional missions. As such, the remaining missions are, for the purposes of the following discussion, characterized as non-traditional.

General arguments against the employment (and/or training) of America's military forces for many non-traditional missions seem, at this point, fairly well known. Although the public debate on this issue does not specifically cite AJFP, it is logical to assume that those opposing non-traditional missions would render similar verdicts about AJFP's initial non-traditional mission focus. Unfortunately, there are few, if any, quotable statements available from active military officers that tie such non-traditional mission concerns directly to AJFP. This is not to say that such direct tie-ins were not made - they were. It only indicates that they have either not been written down and published, or were given to this researcher on the condition that they remain anonymous or "unattributed."

The overall argument against non-traditional employment and training for U.S. military forces does not appear to reflect a single line of reasoning, or any one set of underlying rationales. To begin with, there are those who argue simply that any such

operations - if conducted overseas - are a drain on limited American assets and resources that some indicate are needed here in the United States. The arguments are as rudimentary as "why feed Somalis on the Horn of Africa when we have our own starving citizens in every major city here at home?"

Next, there are also those who argue that non-traditional employment will detract from the military's more traditional - and "more important" - combat roles and missions. For what it is worth, this argument is often made completely apart from the question of whether or not the armed forces can effectively accomplish such missions. In any case, this opinion can be summarized by statements such as "[i]t's possible to get so lost in humanitarian concerns that that the country could float off into oblivion, . . . at the expense of undermining America's own national security."⁶⁸ For those who hold these views, there appears to be little room for regularly employing U.S. forces for missions like peacekeeping, riot-control, humanitarian relief, etc., whether it be overseas, or in the United States itself.

Thirdly, there are those who argue that, even if it is decided to routinely use American military forces for non-traditional tasks, this should not entail an equal commitment to training and preparation for those tasks. In other words, the armed forces would go ahead and carry out its new, unconventional operations, but should treat them much as they have been treated in the past, i.e. as "lesser included tasks."

A fourth and final argument holds that no matter how much U.S. military forces train and prepare for such missions (and no matter how important they may be to U.S. interests), they are likely to be doomed to failure. The reasoning behind this argument appears to be a view that many of the situations at which these operations are directed are fundamentally unsuited to the application of military forces. This reasoning is offered most often, of course, for the missions of peacekeeping, peacemaking,

⁶⁸Former Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, as quoted in Neil C. Livingstone, "The Dangers of Doing Good," Sea Power, August 1993, 25.

humanitarian assistance and nation-building, and somewhat less so at specific, one-time disaster relief operations. In any case, all four arguments say a great deal about concepts like AJFP, which intends to apply considerable planning time and training resources to these new missions. The obvious goal of AJFP is, of course, to do these missions better in the future than they have been done in the past.

H. "LOCKS-IN" A LIMITED SET OF OPTIONS

Now, there are four ways of doing a thing aboard ship - the right way, the wrong way, the Navy way, and my way. I want things on this ship done my way.
(Captain Queeg in The Caine Munity)

To some, the term "menu" appears to mean a limited, indeed limiting set of options, i.e. options that may fall short of addressing the particulars of specific contingencies. Moreover, it is often suspected that, despite the insistence on flexible "crisis response" package processes, the AJFP menu will eventually become a static, confining list of choices with neither flexibility nor adaptivity. One AJFP critic drew the analogy of a restaurant that advertised dishes made to order, but which when confronted with a non-menu request notified a customer, "We can accomodate special orders, but we don't like to."

The obvious counter to the above line of reasoning is to point out the truly limiting set of options that the previous, non-AJFP system provided. Not only does it appear that, in the past, just large-scale contingency warplans were given significant attention by theater CINC plannings, but also that most smaller-scale plans (LRC CONPLANS and FDOs) were relegated to the "bottom drawer."⁶⁹ This "lack of options" problem was noted in Bob Woodward's The Commanders, which indicated that former

⁶⁹This was the impression generated during face-to-face interviews with CENTCOM planners, who focused almost exclusively on the command's two, large-scale OPLANS.

President Bush was displeased with the limited range of military options offered to him during the 1989 Panama and 1990 Kuwait crises.⁷⁰

The "old" system also appears to have provided relatively few smaller-scale, mission-specific joint force packages, or JTF commanders and staffs, on-the-shelf, well-trained, and ready to deploy and operate in the less predictable, and less traditional post-Cold War, joint operating environment. Instead of limiting the overseas CINCs' and National Command Authority's options, AJFP appears to expand the range of available military responses (especially at the low and non-traditional end of the spectrum) and increase the level of confidence that those responses will be rapid, well coordinated, and better trained for the contingencies at hand.

I. DISPLACES TRAINING BUDGETS

Combined exercises between U.S. and regional forces provide a foundation for developing strong military-to-military relations and future coalitions.

(U.S. Central Command: Issues, Challenges and Strategy.)⁷¹

Some commentators on AJFP fear that USACOM's designation as a single, official joint force integrator will draw joint training dollars away from the overseas theater CINCs, as well as away from the individual Services. The contention here is the portion of the total "pot" of training money that is given each year to the CINCs and the Services, which is specifically allocated for joint training (as opposed to "Title 10" service-specific training).

This appears to be a particular concern for the overseas CINCs who rely on these joint training dollars, not so much to improve jointness, but to conduct multi-national training exercises that are an integral part of their overseas "engagement" forward

⁷⁰Bob Woodward, The Commanders, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991)

⁷¹U.S. Central Command, U.S. Central Command: Issues, Challenges and Strategy, (Tampa: date unknown), 6.

presence mission. In one sense, these training exercises (funded by the joint training budget now in question) are an end in themselves. Taking away their funding is seen as a direct threat to an overseas CINC's ability to carry-out his on-going presence mission.

Although it is difficult to predict with any certainty the extent to which USACOM's new joint training role might displace training budgets away from the other Unified CINCs and the individual services, it appears likely that some displacement will occur.⁷² By the same token however, a considerable increase in the Atlantic Command's joint training budget (and a corresponding decrease for the services and overseas theater commands) appears logical given the considerable expansion in joint training authority and responsibility associated with USACOM's new joint force integrator and AJFP development roles.

K. ATLANTIC VS. PACIFIC COMMAND PACKAGING

This provides all the benefits of forward presence - engagement, deterrence, influence, and rapid reaction - along with the flexibility to rapidly adjust or adapt to change.

(Admiral Charles R. Larson, in United States Pacific Command Posture Statement 1993.)

In his May 1993 Posture Statement,⁷³ the Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC) Admiral Charles Larson outlined his plans for addressing the changing strategic environment in the Pacific region. Part of that vision included concepts that appear to correspond closely to many elements of USACOM's AJFP initiative. According to Admiral Larson:

⁷²Some substantial displacement was indicated (especially away from the Services) during telephone interviews with Joint Staff J-7 (Training) staff officers.

⁷³Charles R. Larson, United States Pacific Command Posture Statement 1993, Camp H. M. Smith: 1993.

We can tailor forces for specific challenges by pulling them from Forward Bases on U.S. territory (Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, etc.), or afloat in the Eastern Pacific, or from USPACOM forces based in the continental U.S. We can even draw on forces from other CINCs. I call this process of rapidly tailoring forces to the specific mission "Adaptive Presence."⁷⁴

The Pacific CINC also indicated that because of an increasing array of missions, decreasing availability of assets, and constantly evolving threats in the theater, his command has "amassed more than two years of experience in adapting mobile force packages . . ." ⁷⁵ As examples, Larson pointed to "the Pacific Fleet's now-routine practice of forming battle groups with fewer escort ships, and dispersing battle group assets to provide military-to-military contacts with as many foreign nations as possible," as well as the recent deployment of the USS Tripoli Amphibious Task Unit, which replaced a few of its amphibious ships with a Maritime Prepositioning Ship (MPS) stocked with supplies and equipment for air-delivered, follow-on forces.⁷⁶

Akin to USACOM's "value added" concept of providing pre-crisis training and exercising to designated AJFP commanders and staffs, the PACOM posture statement also noted an ongoing CINCPAC-sponsored exercise program designed to institutionalize the joint training required to field flexible, tailored Joint Task Forces on short notice. This program includes detailed classes, computer assisted exercises, command post exercises, and realistic deployments for the joint forces and commands identified as being likely to be called on in a crisis.

Given the concepts and initiatives outlined in Admiral Larson's posture statement, it appears that PACOM and USACOM are headed in some of the same directions. One question that arises is why the PACOM initiatives have not received the same attention that has accompanied USACOM's development of AJFP. Additional questions that

⁷⁴Ibid., 17.

⁷⁵Ibid., 21.

⁷⁶Ibid.

seem appropriate include: are the two approaches of these commands the same, or are they significantly different? Is one better than the other? And does one promise to initiate (and demand) more drastic and difficult changes than the other?

There appear to be four notable differences between the PACOM Atlantic Command programs. First, USACOM seems to have attracted a great deal more attention to its force packaging initiatives than has PACOM. It might be said that the Norfolk command has actively solicited - by virtue of Admiral Miller's many recent public statements - the greater publicity, and must accept the implications (both good and bad) that increased visibility and notariety entail. PACOM's activities, on the other hand, have not resulted in a flood of press coverage, or military and civilian political attention. As such, successes (and failures, if any) have escaped significant publicity.

A second difference lies in the nature of both commands themselves. The Atlantic Command has become primarily a force provider, or supporting CINC. PACOM, on the other hand, is both a force user, and a force provider by virtue of its twin tasks of having to provide both itself and CENTCOM with forces. One possible implication of this distinction is that, should PACOM encounter problems with its force packaging initiatives, they might, in fact, remain an "internal" matter, with any "blame" or criticism self-imposed. This is not possible, of course, if CENTCOM is involved and finds itself supplied with PACOM forces with which it is less than satisfied. In contrast, USACOM's force packaging concepts will almost always involve another unified CINC, and any criticism created will not readily be containable within the Atlantic organization.

Thirdly, it appears that the, what some have considered, "radical" nature of USACOM's first public packaging exercise (the CV/SPMAGTF mix) prompted a great deal more attention than may have been warranted, or ultimately desired. Nevertheless, the episode serves to provide a contrast to PACOM's USS Tripoli packaging initiative. Possibly due to the unique circumstances and timing of the Somalia operation,

indications are that this tailored naval formation worked satisfactorily and generated only minor hind-sight "grumbling."⁷⁷

Finally, the sheer magnitude of recent changes at the Atlantic Command (new roles, the addition of ACC and FORSCOM, etc) has certainly played a part in focusing attention on that organization's activities. Added to that is the fact that USACOM's primary supported region, the Mediterranean, is experiencing changes and crises that, so far at least, appear to be significantly more challenging than those that have characterized the Pacific area.

While the preceeding discussion has been provided as part of this chapter's broader discussion of the criticisms that have been leveled against AJFP, it may not truly be a part of the type of anti-AJFP concerns outlined previously. It marks, more appropriately, concern that the Atlantic Command and the Pacific Command may be pursuing innovative force packaging initiatives on what are seen as two separate, uncoordinated tracks. The result may be that neither the overseas force package users, i.e. the theater CINCs, nor the individual services who provide the basic force building-blocks, will be able to adjust well to two different systems.

L. MORE ON THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT/SPMAGTF

Can I place a small number of tailor-made Marines on a carrier? The answer is yes. Would I, personally, want to do that? No. There are tradeoffs for both services that I believe are not worth the effort. There will be some missions we can do, and may do, but I don't think this is a viable option for repetitive deployments.

(LCOL Ray Young USMC, Executive Officer of the Theodore Roosevelt-embarked SPMAGTF)

It has already been noted that objections to the CV/SPMAGTF combination (with the attendant "dilution" of the Saipan-centered MARG) were many. The Marine Corps' concern over the long-term doctrinal impact on its traditional MEU building-block was

⁷⁷For the objections that have been published regarding PACOM's USS Tripoli package, see McKenzie, "The Marine Corps of Tomorrow," and DeCamp, "A Hollow Force."

addressed in an earlier section of this paper. Other concerns were voiced as well. They ranged from skepticism about the SPMAGTF's real mission capability (which was characterized by some as "extremely limited" and not equal to the concept's original advertisement), to complaints about the reductions imposed on the CV's embarked airwing. In addition, there were concerns that the SPMAGTF's effectiveness would be constrained by the CV's propensity to operate in "blue-water" vice "brown-water." Ironically, there was also the seemingly opposite concern that the CV's effectiveness and survivability would be jeopardized by the need to remain close to shore while supporting the SPMAGTF.⁷⁸

There were also those who voiced criticisms about the decreased capability of the deployed MARG (from which the SPMAGTF was drawn), should it have been needed for any significant real-world contingencies. And there were criticisms of this "Task Force 93-1" not being a true test of the ability to provide forward presence with fewer assets - a reference to its simultaneous deployment of both a CVBG and a MARG.⁷⁹ There was finally the proposal that alternative (and better) ways existed to provide the same capability without deploying Marines on a CV and without altering the MARG's basic composition. In particular, EUCOM staff officers indicated that they would have preferred to rely on already in-place, ground-based special operations and rapid reaction forces to provide the limited, yet very focused, mission-specific capability for which the SPMAGTF was envisioned.

It is important to note that although the Theodore Roosevelt, CV/SPMAGTF combination was "worked-up" for months in the Navy's stateside test-ranges prior to deployment, it was also immediately sent off overseas to "the front lines." In that sense, it was not merely a laboratory test-case, with its "warts" simply jotted-down and

⁷⁸McKenzie, "The Marine Corps of Tomorrow."

⁷⁹In the mind of this researcher, this is a significant observation, and indicates that the naval units deployed to the Mediterranean in the Summer of 1993 were not a valid example of "making do with less."

filed away in an after-action exercise report. The Theodore Roosevelt was, in essence, thrown from the frying pan into the fire when it became the United States' primary on-call asset to deal with the quagmire of Bosnia. Some have suggested that, in retrospect, the past year may have not been the best time to be "mucking" with the Navy and Marine Corps' time-proven concepts and systems. To put this a different way, or in a more sympathetic light, it may have been somewhat unfortunate that AJFP's initial introduction came both, in the form of an almost purely naval version of packaging, and as part of a real-world, forward deployment. The implication is that AJFP's introduction would have been more appropriate had it been both a one-time training exercise involving a fully multi-service joint force package. As such, the various drawbacks and/or limitations of the CV-based SPMAGTF concept all appear to have been greatly magnified by the context in which they were discovered. As well, many of those who disliked the Theodore Roosevelt deployment appear to have formed a negative opinion of AJFP as a whole on the basis of their concerns with that first, initial force packaging evolution.

In contrast to most of the other AJFP-related concerns outlined in this chapter, and similar to the approach taken with the discussion of non-traditional missions, an analysis and preliminary critique of the concerns associated with the CV/SPMAGTF option is not presented here. It is provided separately in the next chapter.

IV. FUNDAMENTAL AJFP THEMES AND QUESTIONS

The past four years have been historic ones. So many changes have occurred that it is hard to chronicle them without losing a listener's attention. We have lived through a time that historians will labor over for decades to come, trying to sort out the heroes from the villains, fact from fiction, and momentous from trivial or transient events.

(Colin L. Powell, in Joint Force Quarterly.)

The preceding two sections have provided an overview of the many claims, both positive and negative, that have been made about AJFP and the "new" U.S. Atlantic Command. If there remain questions about what AJFP actually is (or is not), or about what these developments really mean for the use of U.S. military forces in the future, this is not surprising. USACOM planners themselves, along with most other concerned parties, admit that the concepts are still in their infancy and will continue to evolve as time goes on.

Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of this researcher, some fundamental questions and/or themes emerge. This section introduces and describes those questions or themes, and in the process, outlines what appear to be the implications for what AJFP can and cannot do, as well as for where it should and should not be applied. In support of the analysis, an additional, abbreviated look at the Theodore Roosevelt/SPMAGTF deployment is provided. This is done not only because that deployment is considered the first and only real-world application of USACOM's adaptive force planning concepts, but also because it addressed what appears to be the most pressing challenge that precipitated AJFP's development - i.e. providing continuous forward presence in a time of major fleet reductions.

The first set of questions that emerges from researching this topic of adaptive joint force packaging, can be introduced best by examining what appear to be the underlying factors behind its creation. On the one hand, there appears to be a need to simply do

things better - or more effectively. This need arises not only because the United States military has failed to conduct some assigned operations (especially smaller, heavily-joint operations) with maximum effectiveness in the past, as well as because its strategic focus has shifted from global war with the former Soviet Union to smaller regional conflicts with unidentified opponents, but also because it has been handed a range of new, non-traditional missions for which it has relatively less planning and practical, operational experience. On the other hand, there is also a growing need to do things much more efficiently - or with fewer available resources. This applies most notably to the mission of continuous peacetime forward presence outside of Central Europe and East Asia, which has traditionally been met with naval task groups centered around now-dwindling Navy aircraft carriers and large-deck amphibious assault ships.

Having indicated earlier this researcher's belief that increased efficiency in the forward presence arena - i.e. doing things as well, or better, with fewer available assets - is the most pressing challenge behind AJFP's development, it seems important to substantiate that claim. For starters, Admiral Miller, and especially CJCS General Colin Powell, provided initial descriptions of adaptive force packaging which focused on this mission of forward presence. In fact, General Powell included his AJFP definition and discussion within the forward presence section of the Roles and Missions statement, and characterizing it as a way to "maintain essential forward presence at less overall cost."

Aside from the four-stars' preliminary thinking on packaging, the seemingly greater importance of providing forward presence with fewer assets (as compared to doing smaller and non-traditional missions better) might also be substantiated by examining the consequences of doing nothing - or not instituting something like AJFP. With respect to achieving greater effectiveness at the (non-forward presence) lower-end of the military force-use spectrum, the impact of doing things differently (vice the same old way) might be difficult to measure. In fact, significantly different outcomes may not

even result. In other words, the ultimately "successful" results achieved in operations like "Urgent Fury," "Just Cause," or "Hurricane Andrew" might actually seem, or be the same, whether carried out under the previous system or under the new AJFP regime. Any differences in casualty-rates or levels of force required might conveniently be chalked-up to different circumstances, etc.

Similarly, the perceived lack of long-term success with problems like Bosnia or Somalia may also not change significantly with the implementation of new force packaging initiatives and mission-focused training and exercising. If nothing else, even if the United States experienced increased success in the future with such non-traditional missions, it might be impossible to separate more effective political and diplomatic processes, from force packaging, as the cause for that increased success.

On the other hand, the effect of doing nothing in the continuous forward presence arena (in the face of smaller CV and large deck amphibious ship fleets) would be, and has been, immediate and undeniable. Whereas the United States previously had year-round, on-scene CVBG and MARG coverage in each of three traditional deployment areas, it now has incomplete, gapped, and "tethered" presence, a change that is neither ambiguous nor unnoticed. Despite the above argument about the urgency of gaining efficiencies in forward presence operations, as compared to achieving greater effectiveness in other smaller and non-traditional missions, the fact remains that USACOM's current AJFP working-menu is clearly focused less on forward presence than some of its original conceptualizing predicted.

Thus, the basic questions that emerge appear to be the following. First, "Can adaptive force packaging concepts help the American military respond more effectively in an environment where, missions at the lower end of the conflict spectrum have taken on greater importance, increased joint-service operations are indicated (indeed mandated), and a range of non-traditional (and in many cases non-combat) tasks have been added to the military's pallet?" And second, "Can these concepts assist in the

provision of future, continuous peacetime military presence overseas, given the lower post-Cold War numbers of Navy aircraft carriers and large-deck amphibious assault ships - traditionally the bulwarks of that mission?" Although the answer to both questions appears to be yes, the reasoning behind those conclusions differs somewhat in each case.

A. THE NEED FOR GREATER EFFECTIVENESS, AND THE LOWER-END OF THE MILITARY-USE SPECTRUM

With respect to the need to do things better (or more effectively), the main advantage of USACOM's adaptive force packaging concepts appears to be their emphasis on prior planning, training and exercising - in AJFP parlance, the "value added." While this applies to both traditional-type missions, and new, non-traditional missions, it is worthwhile to first provide some explanation and illustrative examples.

Because the U.S. military has, over the past few decades, focused primarily on preparing for global war with the former Soviet Union, and also for large regional wars such as the recent Gulf War, planning (and training) for smaller contingencies generally took a back-seat. Now, such lower-scale operations, including the new, non-traditional and non-combat missions, appear increasingly to be the Armed Forces future (day-to-day) bread and butter. As a result, the missions or tasks for which the military will most often be called upon to do, are also the ones for which they appear least prepared. AJFP is one attempt to rectify that situation.

As indicated, this unpreparedness applies both to traditional missions (at the lower end of the spectrum), and non-traditional missions. With regard to the former, the best example is probably the 1983 Grenada operation, which, although ultimately successful, encountered significant difficulties during its implementation. In particular, there were problems with the multi-service nature of the forces involved, which in its purest form meant that the forces of the different services could not even talk to one another. While this, of course, was a function of incompatible communications systems, other critics of

the 1984 "Urgent Fury" operation point to a considerable lack of pre-deployment planning and coordination as a major source of difficulties.⁸⁰ But even more importantly, the overall commander of the operation, and his planning and operations staffs, appear to have had little or no experience - or specific prior training - for and with some of the particular elements of the multi-service force that was ultimately involved.⁸¹ Thus, the aspect of AJFP that envisions forming, training, and exercising tailored packages (and in particular their designated core staffs) in advance of them being needed, appears to have considerable merit.

It is important to highlight the fact that, in many cases, the actual composition of the packages themselves may not be anything magic. In other words, the package that might be listed on a hypothetical AJFP menu as say "invasion force for a small Caribbean island-nation," may in fact look almost identical to the force that was employed in 1983, or the force that an assigned theater CINC would request even if AJFP did not exist. The big difference is that under USACOM's new plan, AJFP should be able to provide a joint force package - and a JTF commander and staff - that is trained-up and ready to go for just such a specific type of operation.

With respect to the set of new, non-traditional missions that the military is now being called on to perform, the same sense of less than optimal preparedness seems to exist. Pertinent examples might include humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations such as the initial Somalia mission, and the military's response to Hurricane Andrew, as well as peacekeeping, peacemaking and/or nation-building efforts such as Bosnia, or what the Somalia case has become. Here, the reference is not so much to the problems encountered in Somalia that stem specifically from the political uncertainty

⁸⁰Scott R. McMichael, "Urgent Fury: Looking Back and Looking Forward," Field Artillery Journal, March-April 1985, 11-12.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 8-9. For other accounts of the Granada operation, see John W. Vessey, Jr., "JCS Replies to Criticism of Granada Operation," Army, August 1984., and Michael Duffy, "Granada: Rampant Confusion," Military Logistics Forum, July-August 1985.

and evolving mandate surrounding that operation, or similar problems resulting from the political indecision about how much the federal government can and should contribute to localized disaster relief, like in the Hurricane Andrew case. Instead, the focus is primarily on the considerable difficulties encountered in simply deciding which forces should be involved, standing-up and deploying those designated forces, and getting the operations (including the command and control functions) off the ground and on track.

In the Hurricane Andrew situation, some of the military leadership assigned appears to have had less than adequate experience working with the standard disaster relief agencies (Red Cross, etc.), or with the other sister-service types of units that were ultimately employed.⁸² In the Somalia case, a similar situation appears to have existed - although in this case it was the lack of experience working with the UN and its associated agencies, as well as with the plethora of private, international relief agencies, that hampered much of the operation's initial efforts.⁸³ With mission-specific AJFPs and JTFs, it is envisioned that some of the problems encountered in Grenada, south Florida, and Somalia will become less pronounced in similar, future operations.

Although only a few historical examples have been provided for where the U.S. military could have done things better in the past, it appears that in a number of previous American military operations (in particular at the lower end of the spectrum) there has been a certain degree of what some have called "ad hocary." In other words, because the vast majority of the military's planning and training was focused on global, and major regional war-fighting, it has been argued that other "less demanding"

⁸²Some of the criticisms aimed at the federal government's early response to Hurricane Andrew are outline in Tom Morganthau, "Storm Warnings," *Newsweek*, 14 September 1992, 25. Other indications of inadequate preparation, especially as regards less than optimal utilization of available naval assets by the operation's Army commanders were articulated during telephone conversations with FORSCOM staff officers.

⁸³This "lesson learned" was provided by during telephone conversations with Navy Staff officers involved in the initial implementation of the Somalia operation.

operations were often carried-off "on the fly" and "by the seat of somebody's pants." Thus, the prior planning and exercising that AJFP's authors intend to apply to these now "more important," or at least more likely missions (both combat and non-combat), appear to have a great deal of potential for increasing the military's effectiveness in those areas.

B. THE NEED FOR GREATER EFFICIENCY, AND THE CONTINUOUS PEACETIME FORWARD PRESENCE MISSION

As the 1992 National Military Strategy points out, operations of U.S. forces abroad demonstrate American commitment, foster regional stability, lend credibility to alliances, and enhance the ability of American (and foreign) forces to operate in multi-lateral, international coalitions. Collectively known as "forward presence," these operations are considered essential to the United States' goals of deterring potential aggressors, assuring friends and allies, and securing (and preserving) foreign-soil access agreements. As well, it is indicated that the units so positioned are also the leading edge of American crisis response capability, and often the most responsive in cases of natural disaster and regional conflicts overseas.⁸⁴

Over the past few decades, American military presence overseas has been characterized, in part, by the permanent stationing of large numbers of Army and Air Force units in Europe and North-East Asia. Most of this permanent, ground-based presence has been associated with firm security guarantees and formal (Cold War driven) bi-lateral and multi-lateral defensive alliances. Added to this was the continuous positioning of afloat naval forces in the three traditional deployment "hubs" of the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and the Western Pacific. While the last of these areas has been serviced by a CVBG, a MARG, and a full Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) permanently stationed in Japan, the others ("the Med" and "the IO") saw

⁸⁴Colin L. Powell, National Military Strategy of the United States (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1992), 14.

continuous afloat presence provided by "rotational" deployments of CONUS-based CVBGs and MARGs.

While the changed strategic situation vis a vis the former Soviet Union has substantially reduced the need for Cold War-era numbers of ground-based U.S. forces in Europe and East Asia, and has resulted already in the scaling back of those forces, the new global security environment appears to have had no such effect on the need for forward positioned afloat (i.e. naval) forces. With regional instability and widespread ethnic, religious, and political conflicts on the rise, and the drawdown of U.S. forces permanently stationed abroad, some argue, in fact, that rotationally deployed naval forces will take-on even greater importance in the future.

The reasons behind the decidedly "naval" flavor of forward presence outside of Central Europe and East Asia are certainly no secret. For starters, the other regions were not marked by long-term, unambiguous defensive alliances and "predictable" operational situations that readily lend themselves to the introduction of permanent, ground-based forces; naval forces availed U.S. decision-makers of a geographic and mission flexibility that traditional Army and Air Force basing and operating patterns lack. This characteristic of naval forces still applies, and is central to the ongoing debate over the Navy's future force structure.

The new naval force structure recommended by the 1993 Bottom-Up Review (which calls for only eleven regularly deployable carriers and a similar number of large-deck amphibious assault ships) will not support a continuing strategy of continuous, three-area presence; at least not with traditional deployment patterns and "PERSTEMPO" guidelines intact. Accordingly, a number of alternatives have been suggested. Some have centered around using new and different combinations of naval platforms, many of which do not include either a CV, a large-deck amphibious assault ship, or both. While many of these alternative formations have already been exercised, in some cases deployed during periods when CV or MARG coverage was gapped, the overseas

CINCs continue to demand the traditional battlegroups, and have often protested vociferously when provided with something else.⁸⁵

Other suggestions have included measures like longer deployments, shorter turn-around times, double crewing, additional overseas homeporting, etc. While these options all have the potential to increase the on-station time of the naval service's major deployable assets, and, in the case of longer cruises and shorter at-home periods, have already been implemented to some extent, they all have certain limitations and side effects that preclude them from becoming the overall solution to robust forward presence with fewer deployable CVs and large-deck amphibious assault ships.

Yet another option is to increase the Army and Air Force's forward presence participation in those regions where Navy and Marine Corps forces have traditionally predominated.⁸⁶ AJFP is consistent with this line of thought. As indicated earlier, the initial conceptualizing on AJFP not only focused on the forward presence issue, but also envisioned taking advantage of "the full force multiplier of jointness." While some have indicated that Army and Air Force forces can go along way toward supplementing (in some cases substituting for) Navy and Marine Corps presence, others have claimed that the Army and the Air Force cannot begin to take on the peacetime presence role of the CVBGs, MARGs, or other naval formations. The next discussion is aimed at the many concerns voiced over how much the Army and Air Force can and should do to help with the problems created by smaller numbers of deployable naval assets.

⁸⁵This appears to have been the case for CINCCENT, who, it is indicated, recently vented his displeasure with proposals to allocate less than year-round CVBG coverage to his AOR.

⁸⁶It is important to point out that this problem of too few carriers and amphibious ships is not by any means new. In fact, a 1978 Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report addressed this same problem and responded with an almost identical set of possible solutions. See: Dov S. Zakheim and Andrew Hamilton, U.S. Naval Forces: The Peacetime Presence Mission, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Budget Office, December 1978). Fortunately, the Reagan-era build-up came along, with its target of a 600-ship Navy and fifteen carriers, and the problem temporarily went away. For a more recent discussion of this issue, and another analysis of the same set of alternatives, see: Ronald O'Rourke, Naval Forward Deployments and the Size of the Navy, (Washington D.C. Congressional Research Service, 13 November 1992).

Concerns over the use of AJFP as a means to insert Army and Air Force units into traditionally naval forward presence roles are abundant. First, there are those who cite the progressive reluctance of many foreign nations to host U.S. troops on their soil, and claim that therefore, the necessary host-nation access will not be available. Others argue that even when access is granted, the operational constraints imposed by land-basing make Army and Air Force participation imprudent for the United States in any case. As well, there are those who predict that the land-based nature of Army and Air Force units will make them unable to produce the "wide-swath" deterrence and assurance traditionally associated with geographically-flexible naval forces "showing the flag." And finally, yet another group of opponents simply argues that these "garrison" forces are not designed or equipped for rotational deployments, and will never willfully submit to the rigors that such deployments entail.

With those concerns in mind, it is worthwhile to first put the problems associated with fewer naval assets in context, and then discuss briefly the range of forward presence-related AJFP options available to address those problems; in particular those options which include major Army and Air Force involvement. With regard to the size of the fleet, even the reductions envisioned will still leave enough forces to provide a significant amount of overseas presence. At the risk of oversimplifying the situation, a straight-line reduction from the late 1980s target of fifteen deployable CVs and large-deck amphibious assault ships (the number considered optimal to provide continuous three-area CVBG and MARG coverage) to eleven of each would nevertheless retain the ability to provide roughly 73% of the previous level of presence. Thus, the AJFP presence that might be considered necessary to directly fill-in for unavailable CVBGs

and MARGs would only involve a 27% "gap," or roughly three months of coverage in each of the three traditional deployment areas.⁸⁷

So, the question becomes, what AJFP options are available to assist the Navy and Marine Corps in their presence mission? While there are, of course, purely naval packaging options, many of which promise to strengthen the Navy and Marine Corps' ability to provide presence with fewer assets, they are not discussed at length here. There are also options that envision using specific Army and/or Air Force assets to provide traditional and unconventional naval formations with some particular, focused capability that those formations alone lack. Examples of such options include the already-employed tactics of using Air Force KC-135s to provide long-range aerial refueling support to carrier-based aircraft, or deploying Army OH-58 missile-firing helicopters aboard smaller naval combatants. Another possibility is deploying the future Army Tactical Missile (ATACM) system aboard naval ships.⁸⁸ While the first two initiatives have already shown their worth, and the latter option appear to hold some promise as well, they truly seem to address the problem at its margins. In other words, they are limited in scope, and do not come close as substitutes for either the CVBG or the MARG. As such, they too are not addressed further in this discussion.

Of course, there are also those options initially introduced in General Powell and Admiral Miller's preliminary discussions of forward presence-related adaptive force packaging - i.e. Air Force composite air wings and Army airborne battalions filling-in for CVBGs and MARGs respectively. In contrast to those cite above, these options do appear to get at the heart of the problem, and therefore, provide a focus for this analysis.

⁸⁷If one region were to be given "priority" over the others, as has been suggested for CENTCOM's AOR, then the CVBG/MARG gap to be filled would reside in larger measure in the other, "lower priority" regions.

⁸⁸Robert Holzer, "U.S. Navy Turns Gunsights Ashore," Defense News, 22-28 November 1993, 4.

In evaluating the capability of such substitutions to fulfill the roles traditionally played by deployed naval formations, it is worthwhile to look again at what those formations have typically provided. As indicated, they have provided deterrence against potential aggressors, and assurance to regional friends and allies. They have also helped to secure and preserve overseas, foreign-soil, access agreements. And probably most importantly, they have provided the United States with an on-scene, rapid response. military capability. Thus, the suggested Army and Air Force substitutions for CVBGs and MARGs should be "critiqued" with the above four forward presence missions in mind.

Naval formations have also been credited with the ability to project forward presence in a particular way that is reflective of what is commonly perceived as the inherent advantage of afloat forces. In other words, during a single, typical deployment, a CVBG and/or a MARG have been able to provide deterrence and assurance, and affect access arrangements, across an entire area. They have done so by making many port calls as they traversed a region (like the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, or Latin America) from one end to the other. With regard to rapid crisis response, naval formations have also been seen as unique. It is argued that they provided a unilateral response or power projection capability that was not encumbered by any host-nation employment limitations. These characteristics must also be examined closely when evaluating possible Army and Air Force's participation in forward presence packaging alternatives.

Looking at deterrence, assurance, and access, some have indicated their concern that ground-based Army and Air Force deployments will not be able to provide the "wide-swath," multi-nation assurance, deterrence, and access alluded to above. Such skepticism appears to be due largely to these services' traditional overseas operating patterns, which primarily involve only long-term or permanent, large-scale, single-site deployments. Even when they are involved in smaller-size deployments, these are

typically for only one-time, mission-specific exercises in a particular nation. The argument therefore, is that land-basing may severely limit the presence potential of Army and Air Force package alternatives. In other words, their capacity for creating assurance and securing access would be restricted to the country in which they were at any one time located, and deterrence would be narrowly focused only on territorially contiguous adversaries. One answer might be to move these forces around every few weeks or so, from one country to another, in much the same way that naval battlegroups traverse a region, showing the flag and conducting combined operations along the way. In theory, not only would this enable ground-based forces to provide the kind of multi-country deterrence, assurance and access that naval forces have traditionally provided, it might also preclude them from "wearing out their welcome" in any one particular host-nation.

Arguments against the viability of such mobile deployment schemes for the Army and Air Force were articulated earlier. To repeat, it is uncertain whether foreign countries will provide the necessary access for such deployments, and whether the Army or the Air Force are indeed prepared to embark on such a high-tempo rotation strategy. With regard to the first concern, it appears that perceptions of limited access may be overblown. Recall that CVBGs and MARGs might be unavailable only during a two or three month period each year. It follows that Army and Air Force substitution would only be needed for that limited-duration period. If forces are moved about frequently, their maximum stay in any one country might only be a week or two. And finally, recent developments suggest that many countries may be more willing to accept occasional, limited-duration deployments of ground-based U.S. forces than has been predicted.⁸⁹

⁸⁹Recent examples of this include the deployment of Air Force aircraft to Italy for the "Deny Flight" operation and to Singapore, as well as Army deployments for training (DFTs) to Kuwait and elsewhere.

It appears that skepticism over the Army and Air Force's ability (and willingness) to deploy in other than their traditional, static role may be overstated as well. Both services emphasize that they have units that are rapidly deployable, very mobile and extremely flexible. With clear mandates to conduct such deployments, and with a force-providing CINC as their overall commander, such mobility and flexibility could be more pronounced and more practiced as time goes on. There is, of course, also the question of financial cost, which most indicate would be much higher for mobile, multiple-site land-based Army and Air Force deployments than for the traditional naval deployments which they would replace.

With all of these concerns in mind, and especially the final concern about exorbitant monetary costs, USACOM planners appear to have settled on another method for fitting land-based forces into the forward presence picture. In particular, they have proposed that for periods when an Air Force composite wing is needed to fill-in for the standard CVBG in, say, the Mediterranean, the various elements of the wing could be deployed to a variety of nations in the region. For example, the wing's F-15s and aerial tankers might be stationed in one country, its F-16s and electronic jammers in a second, and its reconnaissance and transport assets in yet a third country. Those planners indicate that this is just the kind of plan that they are currently working on, and envision for deployment in the 1995 time-frame.

Such innovative deployment schemes aside, the central focus of the arguments against Army and Air Force units substituting for CVBG and MARG forward presence relates to their questioned ability to provide the kind of unencumbered, on-scene rapid crisis response capability that naval formations have traditionally provided. To be sure, this reservation does not concern the sheer technical capability of Army and Air Force units to carry-out the CVBG and MARG's power projection tasks. Clearly, given the right mix of forces, a composite air wing can roughly bomb the same land targets that a Navy carrier airwing can bomb (and in some cases, may even bomb them better). And

given some additional training, they can surely attack the same sorts of maritime targets that naval aircraft are trained to attack. Similarly (excepting some of the purely amphibious tasks), an Army airborne or air assault unit could, theoretically, conduct many (if not most) of the same sorts of operations advertised in the MARG's twenty-one MEU/SOC capabilities. Again, in some cases, they might even be able to do some of these things better.

Instead, concern revolves around the question of ability of Army and Air Force units to conduct offensive operations when and where the United States' National Command Authority deems necessary. In other words, the historic ability of afloat naval forces to strike unilaterally and unconstrained by host-nation-imposed limitations may not be sufficiently duplicated by their land-based counterparts. As such, critics of Admiral Miller and General Powell's proposals to substitute CVBGs and MARGs with Army and Air Force units, argue that even if access is secured, and even if the other services can be packaged (and induced) to conduct such deployments, it is not in the best interests of the United States to rely on them as a primary overseas crisis response capability. This particular concern with USACOM's vision of AJFP appears to have considerable validity, and will most surely create additional debate as the AJFP concept and overseas forward presence demands unfold.

Before concluding the discussion of forward presence and AJFP however, it is worthwhile to make a few additional observations. The first has to do with the reasons for American forward presence already mentioned, i.e. assurance, deterrence, access, and crisis response capability. Specifically, it has to do with the relationship among and between them. The common perception held by many appears to be that a strong crisis response capability (either to punish a potential aggressor, or defend a friend or ally) will provide the necessary deterrence and assurance. In turn, it is also often perceived that that crisis response capability, by virtue of its ability to assure, will also secure and

maintain the access agreements that the U.S. feels it needs. While this line of reasoning might appear logical, it may also be less than accurate.

First and foremost, deterrence and assurance are fundamentally a function of perceptions. When talking about overseas military presence, they are largely a function of foreign, or non-U.S. perceptions. In other words, the on-scene power projection or defensive capability that American military planners may consider adequate, and which they feel should both deter and assure, may not be the same level or type of capability that deters or assures overseas "target" nations. A case in point were the concerns noted by CENTCOM planners during personal interviews with the author. It was pointed out, for example, that the power projection (TLAM) and air defense capabilities of Aegis-class cruisers (considered by some in the United States as robust and worthy of respect) may not be viewed as particularly reassuring by the Arab countries from whom the U.S. is seeking access. In the end, the aircraft carrier was (and is) seen by America's Arab friends and allies as the primary symbol of U.S. commitment and resolve. As such, and interestingly, CINCCENT's recent demand for continuous, year-round CV coverage in his AOR may have been less tied to a real, hard-core need for the carrier's capability (as indicated officially), and more dependent on the perceptions of the target audience with whom he is continually battling to preserve access agreements.⁹⁰

Similarly, but at the other end of the spectrum, it was indicated that some Middle East Arab decision-makers saw no difference between a standard, conventional aircraft carrier, and an amphibious assault ship. Both were "thousand foot-long grey things with aircraft flying off their decks." Although to a U.S. military planner, the two have markedly (indeed overwhelmingly) different capabilities, to some of the nations whom the United States is attempting to assure, they apparently appear about the same. The

⁹⁰This impression was reinforced by face-to-face interviews with CENTCOM planners. The message conveyed continuously was that securing and preserving access agreements was the immediate, overriding objective pursued by that command's long range planners.

perceptions of those who the U.S. is trying to deter are certainly more difficult to ascertain, but it is possible that the same disparity with American views exists.

A second observation that warrants noting, is that there appears to be little agreement within the American defense establishment about how much forward presence is needed, or for that matter, what level of assurance and deterrence is achieved by different forward presence force options and various forward presence operating alternatives. Certainly, as indicated in the previous chapter's discussion of the limits of capabilities-based planning, the overseas CINCs have not yet been able to write the "more accurate prescription" that USACOM is seeking - at least not as relates to peacetime forward presence. As such, the current planning environment is one in which traditional ideas about types and levels of forward presence have become highly uncertain.

Uncertainty also surrounds the relationship, on the one hand, between the threats that forward presence is designed to deter, and the assurance and access relationships that it is to secure, on the other. In short, it appears most difficult to come to any definitive conclusions about the relative ability of non-traditional forward presence packages to achieve the diverse objectives of American forward presence. At best, it appears that heavy-Army and Air Force land-based packages have significant potential to achieve deterrence, assurance, and access objectives (and in some cases more effectively than afloat forces),⁹¹ while having somewhat less promise to substitute for naval force packages in fulfilling the nation's on-scene, unilateral, crisis response capability needs.

⁹¹A number of sources solidify the commonly held belief that foreign-soil, ground-based forces send a stronger signal of American commitment and resolve, by virtue of their inability to withdraw rapidly from their positions. As such, it is perceived that Army and Air Force units are often preferable for deterring aggressors and assuring allies. For more information on this issue, see Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1978.

There are, however, a number of additional activities, outside of the composite air wing and airborne battalion alternatives discussed above, that have been described as significant contributors to American forward presence. Many of these were introduced in the January 1992 National Military Strategy, and were characterized as providing presence over and above that provided by permanent stationing and continuous, rotational naval deployments (or their equivalents).⁹² They included access agreements, prepositioning of equipment and supplies, security and humanitarian assistance, etc. These options, many of which have been exercised already, also appear to have the potential for supplementing more traditional forward presence operations. As such, they too should be figured-into the overall forward presence calculation or equation.

C. TRADITIONAL VS. NON-TRADITIONAL MISSIONS.

Chapter two presented Admiral Miller and USACOM's perspective on the issue of non-traditional missions, which, in general terms, indicates that so-called "peace-promoting" missions are a natural extension of the armed forces' role in advancing American security interests. This view maintains also that the use of military forces for such missions will not come at the expense of their preparedness to meet "normal" wartime requirements. Chapter three offered some contrasting opinions, notably the complaint that such employment of America's armed forces is unnatural and ultimately counter-productive for the vital national security interests of the United States.

With regard to the overall question of whether or not the U.S. military should be used for non-traditional and/or non-combat missions, it is tempting to simply avoid the issue altogether. In other words, one could relatively safely claim that it is not up to the military to decide when and where it will be employed, or to define what are or are not the vital interests of the United States. It could consequently be argued that the military are merely responsible for preparing for and carrying-out the orders of its civilian

⁹²Powell, National Military Strategy, 14.

leadership, regardless of what those orders might be. Although this researcher generally agrees, to avoid discussion would be tantamount to what Admiral Miller called an abdication of "our right and obligation to engage in and affect the public debate."⁹³

Finally, some might question the appropriateness of an extensive discussion of the traditional versus non-traditional missions issue in this thesis; after all, the subject is the AJFP concept. There is good reason, however. Much of USACOM's initial AJFP menu is focused on non-traditional missions, which has been the source, in turn, of much criticism of AJFP.

This researcher has concluded that incorporating the range of new, non-traditional tasks into the military's operational employment (and training) pallet will not negatively impact, to any significant degree, the ability to meet traditional war-fighting requirements and/or commitments. This conclusion is based on three primary reasons. First, and as Admiral Miller has often pointed out, the forces that predominate in the vast majority of these non-traditional operations will often not include front-line battle weapons or combat personnel. They will generally be "supporting" forces, such as construction or engineering units, medical personnel, logistics units, etc. In almost all cases, the functions that these units will perform in non-traditional-type operations are identical to the tasks they perform in traditional, combat scenarios. As such, the training that they get forward "promoting peace" may actually improve their readiness for "waging war." If nothing else, if and when they are needed for traditional, combat contingencies, their participation in non-traditional operations overseas or domestically may well put them in a better position to deploy rapidly, and arrive on-scene, ready to operate immediately with maximum effectiveness.

⁹³Miller, Both Swords and Plowshares, 11.

It appears that the numbers of U.S. personnel that might be involved in non-traditional military operations will be relatively small. For instance, even if the United States were to be committed to a series of simultaneous such operations that collectively, over the long term, included the deployment of, say, 30,000 troops, this would constitute only a small percentage of the nation's active and reserve military potential.⁹⁴

Finally, with respect to planning and training for non-traditional military operations, the end of the Cold War provides a window of opportunity for those missions to take on greater importance. For example, if the totality of U.S. military preparations were to be viewed as a typical pie graph, the Cold War pattern of training and exercising might breakout with a very large (maybe 200 degree) wedge devoted to preparing for global war, a somewhat smaller (perhaps 120 degree) wedge assigned to fighting MRC-type conflicts, and a quite diminutive (40 degree) slice for smaller traditional, and non-traditional contingencies (the percentages are included only for rough, illustrative purposes). If it is assumed, for a moment, that previous planning for MRCs was sufficient, and that the likelihood of global war has diminished to the point that only a much smaller portion of the planning needs be focused there, then the result is that a large wedge of "planning pie" has become available for something else. Conceptually then, the kind of detailed attention that AJFP envisions for smaller traditional, and new non-traditional missions, is not misguided, nor does it necessarily detract from the ability to plan and train for the larger, traditional, and truly combat roles which define the military's ultimate purpose and responsibility.

⁹⁴It is indicated however, that a large percentage of the forces typically employed for such operations (transport, logistics, communications, medical, etc.) reside in the reserves. As such, a series of significant non-traditional missions might necessitate calling-up a number of non-active units, with all the possible political fall-out that attends such decisions. Despite this note, the fact remains that such employment would probably constitute only a relatively small portion of America's full active plus reserve military potential.

Another way to look at this issue of whether or not non-traditional roles and missions detract from traditional war-fighting capability, is to examine more closely those essential factors which most directly contribute to the U.S. military's advantage in high-intensity combat operations. For starters, there is the advantage of owning the world's most sophisticated, high-technology weapons, intelligence gathering, and communications systems. With that in mind, it has been argued that, no matter how many non-traditional missions are attempted, the military's fundamental procurement strategies will not change; U.S. forces will continue to be equipped with the best. But of arguably equal importance is DoD's vast logistics capability that in the 1991 Gulf War enabled the United States to move a 600,000-strong force half-way around the world and defeat a dug-in opponent decisively. Ironically, it appears that it is just this type of logistics capability that is exercised most by the kind of non-traditional operations that are now on-going, and contemplated for the future.⁹⁵

Also critical to the U.S. military's past and future success are its other fundamental core-competencies, which include (in addition to combat operations and logistics) such elements as operational planning, leadership, command, control, and communications, reconnaissance and intelligence, etc.⁹⁶ It is precisely these competencies that seem to suffer most, and are most difficult to exercise, during times of peace. As such, most of the non-traditional missions in which American military units participate, will serve, if nothing else, to exercise these core competencies in situations of stress and severe unpredictability - something that can never quite be duplicated in "canned" training exercises. Although clearly, that is not the primary purpose of such operations and

⁹⁵This was the view articulated in Henry C. Stackpole and Erick Chase, "Humanitarian Intervention and Disaster Relief: Projecting Military Strength Abroad to Save Lives," Marine Corps Gazette, February 1993, 18., which stated "in addition to the good accomplished in humanitarian relief, the planning and execution of these missions serve 'double duty' by exercising fundamental military logistical capabilities."

⁹⁶This concept of fundamental, core-competencies receives considerable coverage in both The National Military Strategy, and Admiral Miller's Both Swords and Plowshares.

should not provide their underlying justification, it is side-benefit that cannot be ignored.

This author concludes that non-traditional use of our military forces is not, in and of itself, wrong, or counter-productive to the Nation's fundamental goals and objectives. To counter those who argue that such operations, if conducted overseas, divert limited resources away from pressing domestic needs, it appears likely that most of the funding for such missions would not otherwise be applied to solving America's serious social and economic ills. Without going into a detailed description of the sources of, and possible solutions to those ills, suffice it to say that for the most part, the problems of poverty, crime, poor education, inadequate health security, etc., will not be aided even marginally by the resources that now, or in the future, might be put toward humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, and/or nation-building efforts abroad. In large measure, these ills appear to be less dependent on monetary resources, and more appropriately addressed with fundamental changes to the Nation's social, political, and legal systems.

In addition, it is clear that in the new international order, security does not equate directly, or only, to traditional war-fighting military security, whether against an overwhelming, global opponent like the former Soviet Union, or a strong, possible regional hegemon like Iraq or China. In other words, considering the world-wide interdependence of the United States' own economic, political and social systems overall, American national security is affected just as much by new, "unconventional" threats as by the traditional military threats mentioned above.⁹⁷ This, added to both the disappearance of the East-West confrontation, and the emergence of the United States as the world's only true super-power, means, again, that a challenging, but crucial window of opportunity has opened. This challenging window means that not only does

⁹⁷These other, non-military challenges to American security are outlined in George Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1993), 1.

America now have the chance, it also has the requirement, to shape - rather than simply react to - the international environment upon which its prosperity (and security) is becoming ever more dependent.

To put this line of reasoning a different way, and to paraphrase Admiral Miller, the United States military's participation in activities that achieve, or contribute to, the preemption of possible crises, advances the security of the American people just as much as reacting to overt, de-facto military threats. Although Miller did not add the following caveat, it is likely that he intended to imply it: it appears to be more efficient, and ultimately less destructive and costly to both the United States and the world as a whole, if possible or likely crises can be prevented before their underlying causes fester until they require an extremely costly Desert Storm-sized response. While the voices of isolationism are strong in the United States, and are often associated with calls to both preclude the military's involvement in non-traditional roles and "let the Third World take care of itself," those voices appear to be misguided - however patriotic they may be.

While there seem to be good reasons, therefore, for using America's military forces for non-traditional missions, and for implementing more formal preparations for such employment (like AJFP), certain caveats are nevertheless in order. For starters, it cannot be said with absolute certainty that assigning forces to such non-traditional operations, and developing training regimes accordingly, will not affect the military's overall capacity to carry-out traditional war-fighting roles. America's national security leadership must, instead, commit themselves to ensuring that such operations and training practices do not, in fact, degrade traditional capabilities. In other words, American military superiority is not automatic or inevitable, and must be pursued continually, deliberately, and with determination. The military's top commanders must test themselves and their forces regularly in as realistic a manner as possible, so as to

constantly ensure themselves of the capability to conduct the type of large and small-scale conventional combat operations that remain their primary mission.

This researcher agrees with critics who propose that a large number of overseas, internal and multi-national conflicts are inappropriate for the introduction of American or UN military forces. Not only is the use of force unlikely to solve the fundamental roots of some of these conflicts, it often serves only to exacerbate those roots. This is not to say that all peacekeeping, peacemaking and/or nation-building challenges abroad are immune to the application of military force, either alone or in concert with political, economic and social initiatives - they are not. Yet caution should be the order of the day when deciding where and when the United States should commit its military resources. This caution is not so much a function of limited military resources, but of the limited political capital that is necessary to commit those resources. In other words, the Nation's political capital ought to be (indeed needs to be) rationed, and spent where it has the best chance of success and the greatest likelihood for generating tangible benefits. To do otherwise would result in an American people, an American military establishment, and an American legislature increasingly opposed to non-traditional employment of its armed forces, including those cases where they can make a difference.

In the final measure however, and regardless of the "below-the-surface" internal DoD debate over traditional versus non-traditional roles and missions, the military will be responsible for carrying out the orders of the Nation's civilian leadership. In response to what appear to be the trend of those orders - i.e. toward increased participation of the U.S. military in such operations - military leadership have clearly committed themselves accordingly. Certainly, that is the sense of virtually all recent official statements coming out of the JCS, the individual services, and the Unified CINCs.⁹⁸ All things being equal in the range of new, non-traditional challenges in which

⁹⁸This commitment can best be summed-up by quoting the Air Force's 1990 white paper Global Reach - Global Power, which indicated that the military's capability to participate in non-traditional missions "... provides a tool for building trust and confidence and spreading goodwill around the world," and allows

the U.S. military may participate, focused force-packaging and mission-specific, pre-crisis training initiatives such as AJFP seem to hold out the promise of a considerable pay-off.

D. YET MORE ON THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT/SPMAGTF

It is particularly important to again point-out that AJFP includes, as a subset, adaptive naval force packaging initiatives, the first "official" iteration of which was the deployment of the Theodore Roosevelt and its embarked SPMAGTF. While the almost purely naval flavor of this preliminary AJFP experiment may be due, in part, to the naval flavor of the "old" Atlantic Command itself, it is surely also a reflection of the inherent limitations and difficulties (outlined above) associated with using non-naval force units for flexible, basing-constrained forward presence operations. As well, it is also probably an indication of the previously discussed immediacy of the forward presence/naval asset shortage problem. In any case, and despite the many concerns and criticisms associated with this particular naval force packaging concept, a closer look is warranted.

As indicated, a number of criticisms have been aimed at the Theodore Roosevelt/SPMAGTF deployment. To restate them again for clarity, one cited the possible long-term negative impacts on the Marine Corps' MEU-related doctrine should the concept become a model for future deployments. A second deplored the fact that the 600-man Marine Corps unit which was put aboard the carrier lacked the same strong, multi-mission capability and sustainability of a traditional, full up MEU. It arguably fell short of even the limited capability with which the smaller unit was advertised. Other critics claimed that the downsizing of the CV's embarked airwing was unnecessary and even counter-productive, while some argued that there are probably better, more

"the United States to influence events important to our national security and the security of the free world."

appropriate ways to provide the same capabilities without unconventional packaging. And finally, there were those who did not understand why the new force packaging exercise was staged to begin with.

These criticisms can be partially addressed by providing a clearer explanation of what appear to be the fundamental, underlying reasons for the CV/SPMAGTF's implementation. If the critical statements published most recently in the Navy Times⁹⁹ are an accurate indication, then it seems that the relevant planners either did not explain their reasons, or simply did not get their message across. The following is this researcher's interpretation of the reasoning behind the CV/SPMAGTF concept. It is followed, in turn, by an analysis of the possible relevance, viability, and likelihood of such force packaging initiatives for future deployments.

Assume, for the sake of discussion, that the Navy does not have any resource problems, in other words, that it will, for the foreseeable future, continue to have enough aircraft carriers and large-deck amphibious assault ships to provide one of each, year-round, to all of the overseas CINCs that want them. This would mean, for example, that EUCOM (and/or CENTCOM) will always have both a CVBG and a MARG, in their respective AORs. Assume also, however, that the overseas operating environment has in fact changed; that relatively speaking, the prospect of missions at the lower end of the spectrum, including new, non-traditional missions, has replaced the Cold War scenario of deterring and being ready to fight the former Soviet Union.

Given these circumstances, a fundamental choice presents itself with regard to deployed CVs. Either a traditional CVBG (with a Cold War-mix airwing) plus a standard MARG may be deployed, or the Theodore Roosevelt-type composition can be selected (with a downsized airwing, a marginally less capable MARG, and a small, limited-capability SPMAGTF aboard the CV). If the traditional set-up is chosen, and the

⁹⁹Chris Lawson, "Home! Six-Month Experiment Laid to Rest as Roosevelt Returns," Navy Times, 20 September 1993, 3.

theater CINC wishes to have both the air capability of the carrier's airwing and the ground capability of the Marines. both the CVBG and the MARG must be present. With the new configuration, however, the MARG may go-off on its own (either for training, for libery, for showing the flag, or for some real-world contingency) and the carrier-centered force will still have some "green" capability (embodied in the SPMAGTF), albeit much more limited than the full MARG. The cost of that flexibility, of course, is the loss of the aircraft that are excluded to make room for the CV-embarked Marine contingent, and (if the SPMAGTF is taken directly from the MEU) a somewhat less capable MARG.

In this scenario, with both a carrier and a large amphibious assault ship available, the question revolves around what the regional commander wants or thinks he will need. Does he want the dozen or so extra aircraft that the non-SPMAGTF option offers, plus the requirement to bring the LHA or LHD to bear any time he needs even limited Marine capability? Or is he willing to forego those dozen aircraft, and possibly accept a less potent MARG, in order to put some Marine capability aboard the CV that allows his MARG to go-off and operate independently? Considering the fundamental changes in the overseas operating environment, with multiple hot-spots and diverse missions at the lower end of the spectrum replacing conflict with the Soviet Union as the planning norm, the apparent, underlying rationale for the CV/SPMAGTF concept seems to be sound.

It seems important at this point to note that, although it was not introduced as such, the asset-rich scenario (analogous to the context in which the Theodore Roosevelt and the Saipan were both deployed simultaneously) primarily represents a case of doing things more effectively with the same "old" set of deployable assets. Conversely, it hardly seems representative of a move to do things more efficiently, as will be demanded by a reduction of overall deployable assets and the requirement to

occasionally deploy either a CV centered task force, or a force built around a large-deck amphibious assault ship - but not both.

As such, a second scenario should be introduced. In this case, a smaller force-structure and relatively firm Perstempo limitations ensure that only a CV is available to the regional CINC. Although, as indicated, the Theodore Roosevelt was deployed along with a MARG in the traditional fashion, it appears that the days of only one or the other being available may be at hand. In fact, considering that CVBG and MARG coverages are already being gapped, it appears that this situation has already arrived.¹⁰⁰ If only a CV is available, the regional CINC is faced with a choice similar to, but more pressing than that outlined in the preceding scenario. Does he want his carrier to have the traditional full complement of aircraft, without an afloat capability to do, say, a NEO or hostage rescue operation? Or is he willing to reduce the airwing's complement marginally to allow the embarkation of a SPMAGTF that might afford that option. Again, the choice revolves around the question of which tasks (or capabilities) are most likely to be in demand. Given the changing face of military force employment patterns, the CV/SPMAGTF option appears to provide a flexibility and versatility that traditional CVBG force compositions cannot furnish..

Considering the number and heated nature of the criticisms articulated with respect to the Theodore Roosevelt deployment, especially those which questioned the basic "why" behind it, it may be that the Atlantic Command planners involved in the development of the CV/SPMAGTF concept did not sufficiently publicize these hard and fast choices. Alternatively, it may be that the intended audience was simply not willing face-up to the different operating environment and smaller force structure that

¹⁰⁰ An estimate of the degree to which this will happen depends on who is providing the estimate, and on what planning assumptions are made with regard to deployment lengths, turn-around times, tethers, PERSTEMPO guidelines, etc. For a "number-crunching" analysis of the CV problem, see Ronald O'Rourke, Naval Forward Deployments and the Size of the Navy CRS Report for Congress, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 1992).

now demand change. The latter, "blindness" argument is the one offered by most USACOM planners.

It is only fair to take an even closer look at one particular criticism aimed at this preliminary force packaging initiative, namely the argument that there are better and more appropriate ways to provide the kind of task-capability that was advertised for the CV/SPMAGTF option. This argument was articulated not only by the Marine Corps, but also by the "user" Unified Command, EUCOM itself. Conversations with EUCOM staff officers indicated that they would have preferred to rely on other in-theater rapid-reaction forces (the Army units at Vicenza, Italy for example) for responding quickly to hostage rescue, NEO, and/or Search and Rescue (SAR) contingencies. Part of the rationale for that assessment focused on the truly specialized training and equipment needed for such operations - especially if conducted in a "non-permissive" or hostile environment.¹⁰¹ The Marine Corps SPMAGTF unit on-board the Theodore Roosevelt was considered not adequately prepared, or equipped, for such missions, and therefore not worth the costs of limiting the capability of its parent Marine battalion aboard the MARG or the aircraft carrier's airwing.

This author is not in a position to referee the claims made about the SPMAGTF's relative capability, or the avowed advantages of using more specialized, land-based forces for that capability. In partial support of the CV/SPMAGTF choice, however, it is important to note the advantage of afloat forces, insofar as they do not have the host-nation consent problems associated with most overseas land-based units.

In summary however, it is probably important to emphasize that force packaging decisions may need to be the responsibility of the theater Unified CINCs, i.e. the ultimate users. The individual services (in the CV/SPMAGTF case the Navy and

¹⁰¹For a thorough discussion of the demands of hostage rescue operations see Richard F. Brauer, "Planning for Hostage Rescue Missions: A Critical Examination," Essays on Strategy, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1985), 1-38.

Marine Corps) ought not be the final arbiters in whether one packaging option is selected in favor of another. Their opinions are of course important, especially as regards an estimation of the actual capabilities of the various force package alternatives, but those opinions should be limited to just that.

Similarly, USACOM and the CJCS will also need to play a role, in particular, for deciding the range of options available and prioritizing multiple AOR demands. But, again, that role should not extend to making the final decision on which package to select from the available menu. In the end, the hard decisions appear to be most appropriately made by the supported CINCs who are assigned overall command of those forces, and who are ultimately responsible for supporting and defending American objectives and interests abroad. While it is perhaps unfortunate that their voice has not been heard publicly vis a vis AJFP, it is equally important to note that, below the surface, their input has been vociferous and to the point. As regards the CV/SPMAGTF packaging alternative, EUCOM and NAVEUR are reported to have recently rejected that option for regular, repetitive deployments.¹⁰²

In conclusion, it is necessary to introduce the package configuration that was chosen for the Theodore Roosevelt's successor in the Mediterranean, the America battlegroup. Also important are the most recent developments regarding its deployment. Taken together, they provide what may be an accurate indication of the future of this particular naval subset of adaptive joint force packaging.

The America was also deployed with a small detachment of Marines aboard, although the size and make-up of the force was reduced considerably. To be specific, the carrier's "green" contingent included only about 250 Marines and four helicopters (less than half of the Theodore Roosevelt's complement).¹⁰³ Interestingly, the name and

¹⁰²While the official rejection of the CV/SPMAGTF option for routine, repetitive deployments was spelled-out in non-public, "personal for" messages sent between the four-stars (unavailable, of course, to this researcher), their basic substance was offered in unofficial telephone conversations.

¹⁰³Chris Lawson, "Home! Six-Month Experiment Laid to Rest as Roosevelt Returns," Navy Times, 20

organizational relationships of America's cross-decking operation were changed as well. The Marine contingent was no longer called a SPMAGTF, but was referred to instead as a MEU "detachment." In contrast with the Theodore Roosevelt episode, when the SPMAGTF was incorporated formally into the carrier's internal command structure, the America detachment was apparently considered "on temporary loan" from the MARG to the carrier force. Although the fundamental catalyst is unclear at this point (i.e. resulting either from EUCOM's direct order, or the MARG's own initiative) the Marine detachment aboard the America was recently withdrawn, and returned to its place within the Guadalcanal MARG organization deployed simultaneously.

It appears, therefore, that the future of placing large detachments of Marines aboard regularly deployed aircraft carriers is, at this point, uncertain at best. If nothing else, these deployments demonstrated that this particular AJFP option "can be done." They have also amassed a library of corporate knowledge and lessons learned that should prove extremely helpful should such a mixed-force package be needed in the future.

V. CONCLUSIONS

If the Armed Forces are to serve the Nation in confronting the challenges that lie ahead, perceptions of a military unable or unwilling to entertain any idea which is not supported by a consensus of all the services must be put to rest now and forever. The world is changing and it is time for the military to do the same through reform that goes beyond Goldwater-Nichols.

(Peter W. Chiarelli, in Joint Force Quarterly.)

In the introductory chapter of this thesis, it was argued that a thorough, unbiased examination of adaptive joint force packaging was needed. In doing so, the next two chapters in the thesis presented the respective cases for and against AJFP. Although not every possible detail of the arguments could be presented, it is hoped that the coverage was fair, accurate, and robust enough to provide readers with a clearer picture of what AJFP is and may become, as well as of the claims made by both champions and critics. Because the initiative incorporates so many factors and objectives and continues to change and evolve almost daily, "real time" analysis was often difficult. Nevertheless, some predominant themes emerged. Some of these themes - doing things better at the lower-end of the military spectrum, providing forward presence with lower levels of naval assets, traditional versus non-traditional missions, and the first real-world iterations of AJFP - were presented in Chapter IV.

This chapter closes the discussion with some general conclusions. Before doing so however, it is important to note that AJFP, regardless of whatever advantages and disadvantages it might have, has been adopted. In other words, it, and the other fundamental changes involved with the stand-up of USACOM have already been enacted into law. With that in mind, plus the fact that much of AJFP remains a preliminary, evolving set of theoretical ideas with very few real-world data-points, the following conclusions are not provided with an eye toward rigidly accepting or rejecting the concept of adaptive joint force packaging as a whole. Official decisions

have obviously already been made. Instead, the following discussion merely makes some general observations about the applicability of AJFP (i.e. what it can and cannot do), as well as about the problems it is likely to encounter on its way toward full implementation.

A. CHANGES ARE NEEDED.

It is evident that the United States military force structure will be significantly smaller in the future. But this alone does not warrant an automatic shift in the way America's armed forces do business. Clearly, the primary threat for which much of that force structure was built has changed. It could therefore be argued that the smaller force structure merely reflects a demise of the Soviet threat, and does not call for a fundamental revision to the military's peacetime and wartime mode of operations.

However, the change in the security environment is not limited only to a new, non-hostile relationship with the old global adversary. Instead, and ironically due in part to that new relationship, the future environment also portends greater instability and unrest worldwide. This specter has precipitated the well-publicized shift toward preparations for missions at the lower-end of the military-use spectrum. Unfortunately, this is precisely the types of small-scale contingencies for which the U.S. military appears least prepared. It follows that the need for new planning and training processes for smaller-scale missions is fundamentally a function of the changing external security environment, and less so of force reductions. AJFP is one attempt to address the need to do things better at the lower end of the military-use spectrum.

There is another aspect to the need for change. The increased instability and unrest of the new international environment demand the continued peacetime presence of American forces overseas. This appears especially true of the regions outside of the U.S. Cold War focus of Central Europe and the Korean Peninsula. Such presence is still considered essential to prevent conflicts, diffuse them before they get out of hand, or

respond to them quickly with potent military force if the need arises. In contrast to the need to plan and train better for smaller-scale crisis response missions, the necessity for providing robust forward presence is affected directly by on-going force drawdowns.

As indicated previously, the forces at issue are the Navy aircraft carriers and large-deck amphibious assault ships that have traditionally provided regular presence in and about many of the world's regions. Despite general recognition that the demand for forward presence remains high, the number of major naval assets available to do the job is being reduced however. Given that this trend is not likely to be reversed for the time being, AJFP explores ways to supplement the forward presence capability supplied by the remaining CVs and LHAs/LHDs. AJFP proposes to do so, in part, through the innovative packaging of forces from all the services, including the Army and the Air Force.

B. GREATER EFFECTIVENESS AT THE LOWER-END OF THE SPECTRUM.

It is concluded that AJFP can significantly improve the ability of the U.S. military to respond effectively to contingencies at the lower-end of the military-use spectrum. It could be said that, considering the previous practice of devoting only very limited attention to smaller-scale contingencies, almost any plan to address them more thoroughly will help. In much the same way that hostage rescue and amphibious assault missions require specialized equipment and training, the tasks associated with this lower-end of the spectrum demand commanders and associated staffs with specialized training and focused exercise experience. While this applies to both traditional and non-traditional missions, it seems especially true for the latter, as that category has received even less attention over the past decades.

C. SUPPLEMENTING NAVAL PRESENCE WITH JOINTNESS

AJFP envisions a series of "joint" packaging options to help compensate for lower, post-Cold War numbers of major naval assets that remain the foundation of the

continuous forward presence mission in many regions of the world. Although some of these options intend only to “enhance” naval presence when a CVBG and/or a MARG is available and on-scene, others are designed as substitutes. While the first objective is commendable and worthy of continued investment, the second appears to address the real challenge of forward presence more squarely. The catch is that the “old” naval packages have simultaneously fulfilled a number of different roles while deployed overseas, and have fulfilled them in a particular, some would argue unique, way. Those simultaneous roles included deterring potential aggressors, assuring friends and allies, securing needed foreign-soil access, and providing an on-scene rapid crisis response capability.

It is the opinion of this author that AJFP packages, including those built primarily around Army and/or Air Force units can go along way toward replacing CVBGs and MARGs when naval asset-availability precludes the presence of those standard formations. Of course, this may require some changes on the part of the Army and Air Force. In particular, it may require these services to enhance their ability to deploy small, multi-capability, limited “tail” packages to under-developed basing sites, and the either disperse them, or move them around once in-theater. If that can be done, and if the necessary access can be negotiated, it appears that ground-based forces can, to a large extent, create the kind of region-wide deterrence, assurance, and access historically provided by naval formations.

As indicated in an earlier chapter, such land-based presence may even be able to deter and assure better, insofar as their ashore positioning may actually send a somewhat stronger signal of American commitment and resolve than afloat forces. Of course, that perception of greater U.S. commitment is something that American policy makers must consider when deciding whether or not to implement such alternative, non-naval forward presence options. In other words, in the absence of formal, long-term defensive alliances and explicit security guarantees with the nations on whose soil

Army and Air Force units would be placed, it may not not be prudent to accept the possible, inadvertant implications of alliance and guarantee that such options may convey.

The above noted concerns aside, there is an additional factor to consider with respect to using Army and Air Force units in regions not normally patrolled by ground-based forces. Deploying Air Force composite air wings or Army airborne forces to these regions would provide them with opportunities to train in "unfamiliar" areas, and exercise with non-NATO international armed forces. In view of the argument that those regions are the most likely locales of future U.S. force employment, and that ad hoc international coalitions will likely be used much more often in the future, then it may be that more operational experience with such regions and multi-national forces is an overall positive step for both the Army and the Air Force.

With respect to the other articulated mission of forward positioned forces, i.e. providing an on-scene rapid response capability, the option of substituting naval forces with ground-based forces may have some significant constraints that need to be considered. Specifically, the afloat nature of naval forces gives them the ability to project American military power unilaterally, without the operational limitations associated with foreign-soil basing and host-nation concerns. While it may be possible to negotiate access agreements for temporary, peacetime Army and Air Force deployments, total U.S. freedom of action is not likely to be a characteristic of those agreements. As such, no matter how technically capable Army and Air Force replacements for CVBGs and MARGs may be, they will not always be able to respond when and where the NCA wishes them to. This does not mean that such replacements should be rejected out of hand; it only proposes that U.S. decision-makers must consider the ramifications of possible host-nation constraints when weighing their forward presence, foreign policy options and alternatives.

D. NON-TRADITIONAL MISSIONS ARE "OK"

Chapter IV argued the importance and appropriateness of American military forces being applied to non-traditional or non-combat missions like peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, nation-building, disaster relief, etc. That conclusion was based on four primary considerations. First, it was argued that such missions do not necessarily detract from the military's ability to conduct traditional combat missions. It was pointed out that relatively few American forces would probably be so employed, and that, as a "bonus," fundamental military core competencies would be exercised in the course of such operations. It was also argued that if the resources which go into such operations were not so spent, they would not necessarily be diverted to address the Nation's domestic social and economic problems. And finally, it was argued also that the new, post-Cold War security environment portends a range of economic, political and social instabilities that may be as dangerous, in the long run, to American national security as "traditional" military threats. As such, the idea of using U.S. military forces to respond to such non-traditional challenges is not outside the defining purpose of the Nation's armed forces.

Given the case for non-traditional missions for U.S. forces, more deliberate preparations is a logical next-step. Clearly, American military forces have had, prior to the past few years, relatively little experience with the types of operations and contacts with non-military, non-U.S. organizations that these new missions require. Probably because those missions were less likely in the past, they did not receive a great deal of focused planning and training. USACOM, through its AJFP concept, intends to change that situation, and in the process, promises to increase the effectiveness of operations directed at these new missions.

Alongside the above noted argument, it was nevertheless remarked that not all non-traditional challenges are appropriate for U.S. military participation. It was pointed out that some situations are simply unsolvable by outside intervention, while others may be

more appropriately addressed with diplomatic and economic initiatives vice military forces. As such, America's leadership must make some hard choices about which challenges it will take on, and when and where it will respond to those challenges by deploying its armed forces. Thus, advocacy for applying American military forces to what Admiral Miller calls "forward looking" missions does not come without reservations.

E. EXCESSIVE FOCUS ON NON-TRADITIONAL MISSIONS

While it is often desirable that U.S. forces participate in and train for non-traditional military missions, there is a risk that the initial AJFP menu is overly preoccupied with those missions. Specifically, that menu may not provide enough attention to the wide-range of traditional, combat missions that remain at the lower-end of the spectrum. While the vast diversity of potential non-traditional situations might clearly justify each of the nine non-traditional packages in the menu, there remains an equally large diversity of smaller-scale combat missions that are in need of tailored packages and mission-specific JTF training.

As indicated earlier, the initial menu does, in fact, include a number of packages that might be considered as designed for traditional military tasks, notably Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations, No-Fly Zone Enforcement, Quarantine or Blockade, and Forward Presence. But this short list fails to incorporate other typical combat tasks like invading and occupying a small island nation, bombing the strategic targets of some other small nation, or even defending an ally or non-aligned country from hostile take-over by a small, but more powerful and aggressive neighbor. These are missions that are also worthy of the kind of force packaging and JTF training that AJFP envisions.

While it is as yet unclear exactly how soon AJFP planners will get around to developing packages for these other likely, traditional military tasks (or even if they

intend, ultimately, to do so), their exclusion at this point appears to be one of the major shortcomings of the AJFP process to date.

F. THE CUSTOMER IS KING.

It appears that the overseas theater CINCs ought to be the ones who make the final decisions about which force packages will be deployed to their AORs, be it for forward presence or to respond to specific crises. After all, they are the ones who will employ the force packages, and who will be responsible for the success or failure ultimately achieved. This is not to say, however, that the CJCS and the Joint Staff, the Services, and the force-providing CINCs should have no say in the matter. On the contrary, these organizations will certainly determine the menu of force package options made available to the overseas CINCs. They will inevitably play this role on account of their in-depth knowledge and understanding of the resources (the basic force building-blocks) that are available over the long-run, and at any one particular time.

The CJCS and the Joint Staff, in particular, will need to exercise their coordination and oversight function, especially when multiple CINCs are demanding packages simultaneously and not enough of the most requested types exist. To put it bluntly, the CJCS and his staff (in conjunction with USACOM, obviously) will be forced to prioritize the various overseas CINC's demands, and allocate the available resources accordingly. To add one additional caveat to this idea of user-CINCs choosing the force packages, it may be necessary, at times, to merge the desires of multiple theater CINCs into a single, articulate requirement. This applies most notably to the packages that will be deployed for peacetime forward presence. This is due to the fact that forward presence packages often rotate through more than one AOR during a single deployment. The apparent need to coordinate and conclude which force package best meets the collective needs of multiple overseas CINCs may have been the driving force behind USACOM's call for regular, semi-annual, forward presence scheduling conferences to be attended by

representatives from the force providers, the overseas force users, the Joint Staff, and the Services.

In the end, however, the theater combatant commanders who are to employ adaptive joint force packages must be the ones who make a final selection from the list of available options. They are surely the ones who best understand the particular conditions of the environment in which the force packages will operate.

G. A CAPABILITIES "DICTIONARY" IS NEEDED

One of the most notable deficiencies blocking the successful implementation of AJFP appears to be the lack of a common set of terms for the supporting and supported CINCs to carry-out the new system of capabilities-based force allocation. As indicated earlier, the recently finalized UJTL is simply not adequate for soliciting and selecting forces for particular, individual crises or forward presence requirements. Nor was it designed to do that. Nevertheless, a list of common, capabilities-based terms is needed for AJFP to work, and the JMETL system has been indicated as the logical place to start. Adapting it to the needs of AJFP is a task that must be pursued and accomplished before the full potential of adaptive force packaging can be realized.¹⁰⁴

H. A DESIGNATED "JOINT FORCE INTEGRATOR" WILL HELP

The United States has been trying to get its armed forces to work together as a joint team for many years. Major initiatives toward this end include the National Security Act of 1947, and the Goldwater-Nichols Act passed in 1986. Although "jointness" appears to have improved remarkably in the past few years, success in this endeavor has, by most accounts, been less than total. In the mind of this researcher, one probable cause for the lack of success has been the diffusion of responsibility and accountability for making jointness happen. In other words, the mandate for getting the individual

¹⁰⁴In a telephone interview conducted just prior to the completion of this thesis, USACOM planners indicated that this was one of the major remaining obstacles to the realization of AJFP.

services to work together has, until now, been spread-out across the Services, the Unified and Specified CINCs, and the CJCS and Joint Staff. Like planning and training for the lower-end of the military-use spectrum, jointness appears to have consistently taken a back seat to the affairs of the day. For the Services, organizing, training and equipping their individual, service-specific fleets, air forces and armies took precedence, while for theater CINCs, achieving the day-to-day containment of the Soviet Union and dealing with the odd assorted crisis only occasionally required close, highly coordinated contact. Even if problems with joint interoperability were revealed during those occasions, no one organization seems to have been able, on its own, to correct the weaknesses. In the end, if jointness did not occur, as it did not, each could blame the other. Now, USACOM and its Commander in Chief are officially responsible and accountable for making jointness happen. Should it not, the accusing fingers will all point in one direction.

It could be argued that the CJCS, by virtue of the expansive powers given him by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, was not only responsible for jointness, but also in a position to make it happen. Unfortunately, joint interoperability is only a very small portion of the Chairman and Joint Staff's duties. Because their day to day contact with, and power over, the actual forces is minimal, and because their attentions are inevitably tied-up with the politics of Washington, it was probably unrealistic to expect the CJCS and his staff to, themselves, put jointness in-place. Unfortunately, no other single organization appears to have had the power to do it either. This has changed. Not only does USACOM have the responsibility, it also has the necessary power. To be specific, it has direct command over major elements of all four services, in-CONUS and in peacetime - something which is required to make the process work, but which has not been available before.

I. DOD-WIDE COOPERATION IS ESSENTIAL

Despite the above discussion, which pointed to USACOM having both the incentive and much of the wherewithal to make jointness a reality, the goal of having the different services operate together more effectively is by no means assured. In other words, despite USACOM's direct control over FORSCOM, ACC, MARFORLANT, and LANTFLT, the individual services and the overseas theater CINCs will still have considerable power to affect future Atlantic Command efforts - if not to completely derail them, then at least to make their realization somewhat more difficult. Fortunately, as noted earlier, each of the Services and Unified CINCs have recently produced public policy statements that clearly claim a determined commitment to realizing a new and substantially expanded level of jointness.

Nevertheless, there must be a recognition of the fact that similar statements were produced at the time of Goldwater-Nichols, and that the desired jointness did not develop. As well, a certain pragmatism (or healthy skepticism) must accompany the stand-up of USACOM, and the fact that that development places a great deal of real power in the hands of a single organization and a single Unified CINC. As such, it may very well exacerbate the pulling and hauling that marks the relationship among the military's top four-stars officers. Whether any resentment will thus be created between those four-stars, or whether any "passive resistance" will in-turn result, is impossible to say. It is a factor that must, however, be considered, especially in view of the previous problems encountered with implementing jointness. Ultimately, it will be up to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense to make sure that all elements within the defense establishment are on-board, and making a concerted effort to support USACOM's new joint force integrator role.

In addition, the activities included in USACOM's new functions - consolidating major elements of all four Services, joint training and exercising, and developing and

deploying joint force packages - do not necessarily encompass the entirety of what is considered necessary to achieve jointness. Other relevant measures include coordinated procurement practices, formalized joint doctrine, and joint education at the lowest levels. While USACOM can push for, and have an impact on, these other steps, it does not have the overall responsibility for them, or the direct power needed for their implementation. As such, even if the Atlantic Command is highly successful with its new missions, jointness cannot be fully realized unless these other activities are pursued as well.

With respect to AJFP specifically, cooperation and commitment are also needed from the non-USACOM organizations. Despite the official, October 1993 adoption of the Atlantic Command's new mandate, the old system of force requesting and providing seems to linger. Conversations with staff officers involved in the recent deployment of additional forces to Somalia indicated that USACOM was provided with a hard and fast list of forces that were to be deployed, versus a list of required capabilities, as is the intended procedure envisioned for the capabilities-based AJFP. Therefore, it appears that much of USACOM's vision has yet to be put into practice. If that vision is the "right thing to do," and its official adoption via the USACOM I-Plan indicates that the nation's leadership feels it is, then the Joint Staff and the overseas theater CINCs may need to devote more attention, and more commitment, to getting on-board.

In the end, however, the final test of success will only come with actual, real-world military operations, especially those types of smaller, highly integrated operations against determined foes that demand an extra measure of jointness and an added degree of prior planning and exercising. As such, it would be ideal to revisit this thesis and its AJFP topic a few years hence, in order to examine the level of success generated by the new imperative to operate jointly and the initiatives involved with USACOM's much expanded role.

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