Department of the Navy 1997 Posture Statement

Excerpts From a Report by
The Honorable John H. Dalton,
Secretary of the Navy,
Admiral Jay L. Johnson, United States Navy,
Chief of Naval Operations, and
General Charles C. Krulak, United States Marine Corps,
Commandant of the Marine Corps,
on the Posture and the Fiscal Year 1998 Budget of
The United States Navy and
The United States Marine Corps

The Nation's Force in Readiness— Forward . . . From The Sea

Events of the past year have reaffirmed the enduring significance that forward-deployed, combat-ready naval forces play in shaping the strategic environment. In March, carriers *Nimitz* (CVN 68) and *Independence* (CV 62) and their carrier battle groups moved into the South China Sea in a measured but swift response to rising tensions in the Taiwan Strait. From April through August, the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), as the joint task force command, and the ready group with amphibious assault ship *Guam* (LPH 9) evacuated 757 U.S. citizens and [third] country nationals from Liberia and the Central African Republic. Also in September, the *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) carrier battle group was the centerpiece of a joint response to Iraqi aggression against the Kurds.

Daily, U.S. naval forces demonstrate their ability to support and defend our national security interests through highly visible forward presence, expeditionary readiness, and potent on-scene power projection capability. Sea-based forces are sovereign extensions of our Nation, operating in international waters. They are unencumbered by the treaties and access agreements that land-based forces normally need to operate overseas. Naval forces also offer the flexibility of acting within full view of a potential aggressor, over the horizon, or submerged and totally undetected.

Naval forces play a pivotal role in supporting our national interests and the objectives as defined by the *National Security Strategy* and *National Military Strategy.* Our prosperity hinges on the sea: 70 percent of the world's population lives within 200 miles of the sea; 80 percent of the world's capitals lie within 300 miles of the sea; and 99 percent of all U.S. overseas trade travels on the seas. We are indeed a maritime Nation.

The Navy-Marine Corps white paper *Forward . . . From the Sea* focuses on the importance of littoral operations

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and the daily presence of our naval forces around the world in meeting our national security objectives. Forward presence enhances regional stability through peacetime engagement, underscores U.S. resolve, bolsters deterrence, prevents and contains crises, reassures allies, and lays the groundwork for successful coalition operations. Similarly, the capabilities of our expeditionary naval forces are especially critical in the initial stages of a developing situation, when rapidly responding, combat-credible forces heavily influence the outcome. Moreover, naval forces present a unique range of options to the National Command Authorities (NCA). By using the oceans as both a means of access and as a base, forward-deployed Navy and Marine air, land, and sea forces provide the NCA with a rheostat of national response capabilities.

The Navy-Marine Corps Team: The Embodiment of Jointness

Naval forces also provide the joint force commander a full range of land- and sea-based military options flexibly tailored for peacetime missions, crisis response, or conflict. Naval forces are typically the first to arrive at the scene of a crisis; once there, they shape the battlespace for further joint operations. By attacking the enemy's infrastructure, seizing and defending key ports and airfields, sustaining the flow of sea-based logistics, and (in the future) providing sea-based theater missile defense, naval forces carry the fight until the heavier land-based forces are able to build up combat power ashore and achieve the full warfighting potential of a fully integrated joint force. In addition, naval forces can establish a temporary or permanent joint task force (JTF) command structure. Carrier battle groups and amphibious ready groups are ideally suited for assuming these duties in the initial stages of a crisis, while our numbered-Fleet command ships are capable of establishing a long-term, national base for JTF command and control from the sea. The built-in command, control, and communications links of our

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carriers, amphibious assault and command ships, along with their ability to integrate quickly with forces from other Services, are key factors in establishing a joint force. Naval forces also can establish a JTF headquarters ashore, when needed. The II Marine Expeditionary Force is leading the effort to establish a premier standing JTF headquarters. This Marine Corps initiative provides regional commanders with a ready-made organization that trains together and can deploy rapidly. The standing JTF headquarters contains the command and control links necessary to conduct joint operations. On a smaller scale, all forward-deployed amphibious ready groups and their embarked MEUs are being upgraded to assume a limited JTF headquarters role when required. The Navy-Marine Corps Team is the critical catalyst for joint operations.

Most important, naval forces are adaptive forces for uncertain times. The Navy and Marine Corps continue to exploit the synergy created when carefully tailored naval forces are dispatched to the scene of a crisis. In addition to forward-deployed carrier battle groups and amphibious ready groups with embarked MEUs, specifically tailored battle groups and special purpose Marine air-ground task forces provide regional commanders with the precise tools they need.

Overall, naval forces provide our Nation with a rapid response force; persuasive in peace, compelling in crisis, and capable throughout the full range of conflict. Whether the mission is humanitarian assistance, crisis response, or conflict resolution, adaptable forces from the sea, operating independently or jointly, are a powerful instrument for carrying out national policy.

To ensure that the capabilities we acquire are appropriate for such a wide range of functions, the Navy and Marine Corps use joint coordination groups to discuss, evaluate, and propose to the leadership anticipated requirements for the two Services. The process allows the Navy-Marine Corps Team to voice requirements within the joint arena from a single naval perspective. This teamwork also is occurring in the budget process. As the only military department with two Services, the Department of the Navy must coordinate its budget submissions closely to improve efficiencies and create a more cohesive product. Such integration leads to better support of our overall naval strategy.

A Focus on the Future

The Department of the Navy is proud of its heritage of innovative thinking and its long-standing contributions to national security. In 1991, the Navy-Marine Corps Team examined the changing world environment and recognized that the ending of the Cold War era would require a move away from the standing Maritime Strategy. We responded with the publication of our landmark white papers: . . . *From the Sea* and *Forward . . . From the Sea*. These documents focused both the Navy and Marine Corps on the critical littoral regions of the world, while capturing the unique capabilities of each Service. They also established the foundation for operational concepts that will drive our future doctrine and ensure our continued operational primacy. "Operational Maneuver from the Sea," signed by the Commandant of the Marine Corps in January 1996, is one example. This capstone document details a naval concept for the projection of power ashore, exploits the Navy-Marine Corps Team's expeditionary capabilities, and provides a framework for applying maneuver warfare to maritime operations during a joint campaign. Similarly, the Chief of Naval Operations will sign the Navy's Operational Concept in early 1997. This seminal document describes how the Navy operates forward from the sea to carry out the three components of the *National Military Strategy*: peacetime engagement, deterrence and conflict prevention, and fight and win. It explains the vital role of the Navy in future joint operations envisioned in *Joint Vision 2010*.

With the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff's strategic vision, *Joint Vision 2010*, and the recently approved Joint Strategy Review as guides, the Department of the Navy aggressively is preparing for the future warfare environment. Organizations such as the Naval Doctrine Command and the Marine Corps Combat Development Command are working on concepts to make the capabilities of sea-based forces most useful to the joint force. Both Services are examining these concepts through test beds such as the Commandant's Warfighting Lab, the Navy's Fleet Battle Experiments, and the recently approved "Extending the Littoral Battlespace" advanced concept technology demonstration.

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