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MARCHING TOWARD THE SWEET SPOT

Options for the U.S. Marine Corps in a Time of Austerity

Robert P. Kozloski

Before leaving his position as Secretary of Defense in 2010, Robert Gates offered a wake-up call in a speech to the Marine Corps Association in 2010: “It [is] time to redefine the purpose and size of the Marine Corps.” The perception even then was that the Marine Corps had become too big, too heavy, and too far removed from its maritime roots.¹

Gates further noted, “I directed them [the Secretary of the Navy and Commandant of the Marine Corps] not to lose sight of the Marines’ greatest strengths, a broad portfolio of capabilities and penchant for adapting that are needed to be successful in any campaign. The counterinsurgency skills the Marines developed during this past decade, combined with the agility and esprit honed over two centuries well positioned the Corps, in my view, to be at the tip of the spear in the future when the U.S. military is likely to confront a range of irregular and hybrid conflicts.” He concluded, “Ultimately, the maritime soul of the Marine Corps needs to be preserved.”²

The Commandant of the Marine Corps at the time, General James Conway, shared a similar concern that many Marines, although battle hardened by nearly a decade of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, had never stepped foot on board a ship. In response to Gates’s challenge, Conway established a Force Structure Review Group to examine what the force in readiness should look like in the twenty-first century. The group’s findings were aligned conceptually with Gates’s observations. The internal assessment concluded that the Marine Corps should reduce the size of its active component to about 186,000 personnel (a figure nearly twelve thousand larger than when the recent wars began) and identified its joint-force operational “sweet spot” as providing formations larger than special-operations teams but smaller than traditional army units.

Getting to this sweet spot will be a challenge for the Marine Corps, as it will have to overcome institutional resistance, generated in no small part by a long, proud history of operational readiness and combat effectiveness. However, the Marine Corps must face current realities and adapt both to the changes in the geopolitical environment and to the dire fiscal problems facing the nation. In fact, the Marine Corps will likely become even smaller than the size recommend by the Force Structure Review Group. Therefore, it is critical for the Corps to find and implement innovative solutions to meet future demands while continuing to be America's crisis-response force.

To achieve these ends, the Marine Corps should carefully consider each of Dr. Gates's concerns, as they will help it shape the problems it will face as it attempts to innovate. A constrained defense budget and changes in the operational environment must stimulate efforts to define realistically the Marine Corps purpose and role within the joint force. There are several options to consider that will help the service as it prepares for the operational challenges of the twenty-first century by moving toward organizing for and operating within the newly recognized sweet spot—all within the context of a shrinking defense budget.

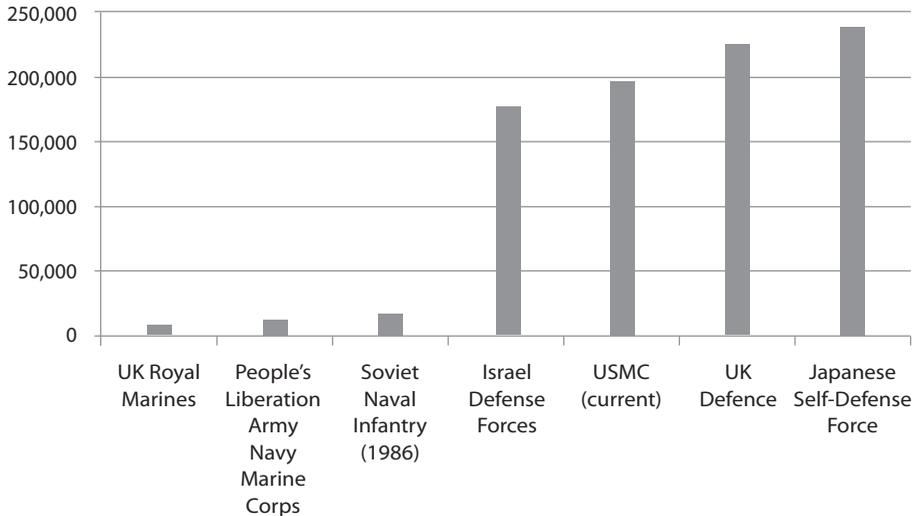
THE PROUD—BUT NOT SO FEW

The U.S. Marine Corps may be the smallest of the four U.S. military services, but it is significantly larger than any other marine or naval infantry in modern history. For the sake of comparison, figure 1 illustrates how the size of the current Marine Corps compares to those of other naval infantry forces and even capable military forces of foreign states. The Marine Corps has evolved into a self-contained military force, the like of which many developed nations might wish to possess.

It is difficult to make a direct comparison to foreign naval infantries, because the U.S. Marine Corps is an independent service and therefore must maintain an appropriate level of overhead in order to execute the requirements of U.S. Code Title 10, which establishes the legal basis on which the roles, missions, and organization of each service rest. Also, the Corps dedicates a significant portion of its force structure to armor and aviation capabilities not normally found in traditional naval infantries.³ Finally, the Marine Corps performs a host of missions outside the scope of its traditional amphibious role, such as embassy security, chemical and biological incident response, security cooperation, and security and transportation for the president.

The minimum size of the Marine Corps is codified in federal statute. According to Title 10, "The Marine Corps, within the Department of the U.S. Navy, shall be so organized as to include not less than three combat divisions and three air wings, and such other land combat, aviation, and other services as may be organic

FIGURE 1
INTERNATIONAL FORCE COMPARISON



therein.”⁴ Given the aforementioned conditions, it may be time to revisit this requirement—in terms of both numbers and units of measure.

Determination of the exact “end strength” (that is, the personnel a service requires to accomplish its statutory tasks—technically, the number it is authorized to have at the end of a fiscal year) of the Marine Corps is extremely subjective. One approach often employed by military leaders uses the ability to support the operational plans of the combatant commanders (that is, the geographic and functional unified commands—Pacific Command, Strategic Command, and so on) as a critical metric in justifying force structure. Unfortunately, the validity of this approach is limited by the shortfalls of the defense planning process.⁵ Defense planning has historically been ineffective and of questionable integrity;⁶ it should not be a significant consideration in determining future Marine Corps end strength.

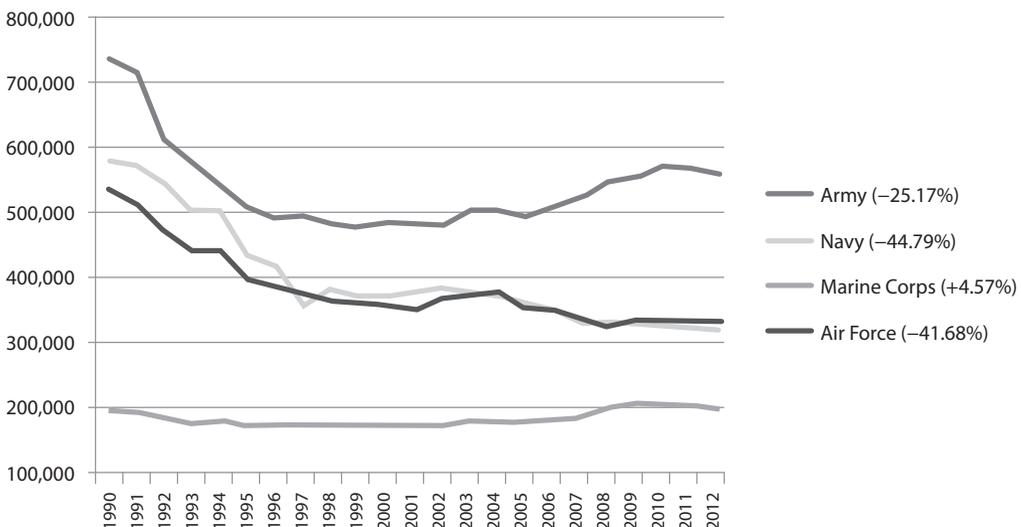
The desire to create a single, integrated, joint force may have taken the services, particularly the Marine Corps, away from their unique strengths. Historically the Marine Corps excelled at taking equipment developed by the U.S. Navy or Army and modifying it, often at low cost, to support its own concepts. One consequence of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 has been to inject the unified commands into the budgetary and programming process of the services.⁷ Each service assigns forces and capabilities to the plans, and its end strength is thereby (as we have seen) justified. The demands for these capabilities are then reflected in budget submissions to Congress. Currently any serious proposal to reduce force structure begs the response

that inability to support combatant commanders’ plans results in an increased risk to national security. To help alleviate this problem, a recent study from the Center for a New American Security suggests, services must “challenge the unconstrained requirements of the combatant commanders” so as to preserve sustainability of ships and aircraft.⁸

Another important factor that relates to the size of the Marine Corps is its historical relationship with Congress. Congressional support for the Marine Corps over the past six decades has been unwavering, and many consider it the most politically savvy of the services.⁹ As figure 2 indicates, the Marine Corps end strength today is larger than at the end of the Cold War, while those of the other services have dropped significantly during the same period. This congressional affinity for the Marine Corps may have created a force imbalance that hinders its operations—reduction in the size of the Navy has made it unable to support fully the Marine Corps’s amphibious-lift requirements.

However, in recent years, the Marine Corps may have lost some of its elite status on Capitol Hill and may have expended the political capital necessary to survive forthcoming fiscal reductions within the Department of Defense (DoD). As former Senate staffer and author of the *Maneuver Warfare Handbook* William S. Lind notes, “The Marine Corps’ clout on Capitol Hill was envied by the other services. The Marine Corps then had little money and not much interest in programs. Its message to Congress and to the American public was, ‘We’re not like the other services. We aren’t about money and stuff. We’re about war.’ That message brought the Corps unrivaled public and political support.”¹⁰ However, the

**FIGURE 2
 MARINE CORPS END STRENGTHS**



acquisition problems of the MV-22 Osprey and Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle and the demand for a Marine Corps variant of the Joint Strike Fighter may have changed that perception.

IDENTITY CRISIS

While the Marine Corps's mission is clearly articulated in law, in reality the service is experiencing an identity crisis of sorts.¹¹ As the Center for a New American Security argues, "Today, the Marine Corps is wrestling with three conflicting identities: the nation's amphibious force in readiness, deployed afloat around the world ready to respond to crises; its small wars force of choice, specializing in irregular warfare; and a middleweight force that serves as the nation's second land army, backing up the U.S. Army during prolonged conflicts. This third identity—fighting in major wars—has dominated the Marines' combat history from Belleau Wood to Guadalcanal, from the Chosin Reservoir to Khe Sanh and now from Fallujah to Marja."¹²

To a large extent, the Marine Corps is a victim of its own success. It continually struggles not to become a second land army, but it does perform exceptionally well in major ground-combat operations. This was clearly evident in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, one must ask whether Marine Corps participation in these land-centric operations was actually required or was simply the effect of the joint culture—the perception that all services must participate in any significant combat operation. During Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the Army's 4th Infantry Division did not arrive in the theater before ground operations commenced, a clear indication that the Army had enough capacity, if sequenced into the theater differently, to have conducted the ground war without the Marine Corps. Could the Marine Corps have been better used for smaller missions, such as seizing and holding critical objectives—like the capture by the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) of the airfield at Mosul—instead of sending I Marine Expeditionary Force (Reinforced) to fight side by side with an Army division?

A robust history of successful operations and inclusion in combatant commanders' land-centric plans drive Marine Corps investments. As General Conway noted regarding the uniqueness of the Marine Corps, "We've got to synergize. We cannot, in my mind, have duplication of effort across the joint force. I think it is incumbent on each Service to take a look at where we fit in to the whole patchwork effort of the Department of Defense."¹³ However, an examination of recent budget expenditures indicates the Marine Corps invests heavily in capabilities found in other services rather than those that make it unique.¹⁴

Over the past few decades, the Marine Corps appears to have lost an inherent ability that was once its bedrock—that is, combining proportional force with

cunning intellect to develop innovative solutions to operational problems. Today the Marine Corps may have, not unlike the other services, placed excessive institutional faith in extremely costly acquisition programs. In fiscally constrained times, such programs may marginalize the Marine Corps's greatest asset, one for which there is no substitute—Marines.

It would be prudent for the Marine Corps, methodically and with guidance and direction from the Navy Secretariat, to think through how to maintain its war-fighting capabilities with a much smaller force. Rather than merely defending the status quo, the Marine Corps must be willing to innovate during this potential third interwar period, and in a manner that will help preserve its unique capabilities, which are essential components of the joint force.

THE NEW REALITY

As the Marine Corps contemplates how best to evolve as the twenty-first-century force in readiness, it must contend with two pressing sets of issues. The first comprises the fiscal realities facing both the nation and the Defense Department. The second involves changes in the operational environment that may render existing organizational structures and nonessential mission capabilities obsolete or simply unaffordable.

Clearly, given the fiscal problems facing the nation and the enormity of the national debt, the defense budget will be under pressure for the foreseeable future. Despite having funded a decade of war, with questionable return on investment, it appears as though the American taxpayer will not be afforded the historical "peace dividend" as operations in Afghanistan cease.¹⁵ Nonetheless, even if there is no reduction to the defense budget, the amount of war-fighting capability obtained by the total obligation (that is, spending) authority of the Marine Corps will continue to decline for two reasons: the high cost of military personnel and the reduced purchasing power of acquisition dollars.

As General Conway once noted, "People are expensive. Our manpower accounts constitute about 58 percent of our annual Marine Corps budget."¹⁶ Personnel is the greatest cost driver in the Marine Corps, and unless there are sweeping reforms to the personnel compensation system for all the U.S. military, personnel costs will continue to increase. If they continue growing at the current rate, and the overall defense budget remains flat (allowing for inflation), military personnel costs will consume the entire defense budget by 2039.¹⁷

At the same time, the purchasing power of defense dollars is declining. All components of the Defense Department must deal with the reality that defense dollars buy less capability each year because of internal cost inflation. As a recent report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies notes, "[DoD]

is largely ignoring the fact that the defense budget is being hollowed out from within and that the reduced purchasing power (in terms of military capabilities) of the defense dollar is digging the hole even deeper.” Further, “a nominal 20 percent defense drawdown may ‘feel’ like a 30–35 percent cut to DoD managers struggling to provide military capabilities to meet the nation’s needs.”¹⁸ The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments summarizes this dilemma succinctly:

Overall, nearly half of the growth in defense spending over the past decade is unrelated to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq—personnel costs grew while end strength remained relatively flat, the cost of peacetime operations grew while the pace of peacetime operations declined, and acquisition costs increased while the inventory of equipment grew smaller and older. The base budget now supports a force with essentially the same size, force structure, and capabilities as in FY2001 but at a 35 percent higher cost. The Department is spending more but not getting more.”¹⁹

To exacerbate problems further, as respected analyst Dr. Michael O’Hanlon recently noted, because of overly optimistic budget estimates by DoD, it will have to come up with \$500 billion in additional savings to meet the estimates of the Congressional Budget Office over the next decade: “We are going to have to eliminate programs and forces just to accomplish the savings goals on the books now.”²⁰

For all these reasons, the Marine Corps, like all the services, will surely be under increased pressure to reduce the size of its force over the next decade. Can the Marine Corps realistically expect the other services to absorb the majority of fiscal cuts, as occurred in the 1990s?

Meanwhile, a host of operational challenges should force the service to reassess its current posture. To its credit, the Marine Corps has undertaken this task by forming the Ellis Group at Quantico, Virginia, reporting directly to Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.²¹ This group is important for internal decision making, but a much broader, even national, discussion needs to occur. The Marine Corps acknowledges that its capabilities cross into the mission spaces of the three domain-centric services. What unique capabilities is the Marine Corps to bring to the American national-security enterprise? Are the remnants of the unique capabilities that it displayed so extraordinarily during World War II and Korea still relevant in future operational environments? Given the aforementioned fiscal issues, how much Marine Corps does the nation now actually need? The process that attempts to answer these questions should not occur in isolation within the Marine Corps.

The first publicly released report of the Ellis Group identified several emerging threats the Marine Corps will likely encounter and how the current force structure could be used to counter them.²² They include:

- Instability and crisis will be persistent features.
- Regional challengers may necessitate larger-scale interventions than in recent decades.
- Nonstate and hybrid actors are increasing the complexity of the operational environment.
- Antiaccess and area-denial capabilities will expand.
- Terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction persist.
- A “battle of signatures”—electronic, visual, audible, etc.—will be critical to avoiding detection, especially in the littoral.
- Low-cost area-denial capabilities remain a significant obstacle to operations in littoral zones.

Given these threats and challenges, and in light of the proliferation of advanced technology, several new concepts have surfaced over recent years that are ideally suited for the future Marine Corps.

Distributed MAGTFs. A recent report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies prepared for the Department of Defense stressed the importance to the overall U.S. military posture in the Pacific of establishing “distributed” Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs), one each in Japan, Guam, Australia, and Hawaii.²³ This distribution of forces would facilitate a variety of missions, including training and exercises with partner nations and contingency response for humanitarian disaster-recovery missions, and it would form the nucleus of a crisis-response force for speedy insertion into partner nations under attack.²⁴

Underlying the distributed MAGTF organizational structure is the principle of “the fingers and the fist.”²⁵ That is, the “fingers,” or smaller units, have the ability to conduct operations independently, but as the operational situation demands, they can aggregate to form a heavier “fist.”

Deep Operations. The Marine Corps should further develop the capability to conduct “deep operations” launched from sea bases or other platforms. The concept relies on the notion of identifying critical gaps in enemy-held terrain and quickly exploiting them before the adversary can respond effectively. It was as part of such an operation during IRAQI FREEDOM that, as mentioned previously, Marines seized the critical airfield complex at Mosul, far behind enemy defenses.

Infantry battalions must be capable of conducting operations deep within enemy-held battle space, as did the Marine Corps Raider battalions of World War II.²⁶ These units need to organize and train for dispersed, small-unit, fleet reconnaissance and strike operations, as well as raids on high-value enemy network targets.

Forward-Base Seizure and Defense. Many consider the Air-Sea Battle operational concept purely a Navy–Air Force endeavor. In fact, however, the Marine Corps would certainly have a role in seizing and defending advanced bases, particularly on remote islands. Seizing forward operating bases may enable the Marines or joint forces to conduct a variety of operations, including unmanned surveillance; electronic or directed-energy attack; the boarding, search, and seizure of vessels; and even “swarm” operations against formations of the People’s Liberation Army Navy.²⁷

Enforcement of Offshore Control. The emerging strategy of “offshore control” for the undesirable and unlikely scenario of having to confront China with military force would mean remarkable opportunities for the Marine Corps. Briefly, offshore control involves a distant blockade of China, with a set of concentric rings that would deny China use of the sea inside the “first island chain” (running from the Kuriles through Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines to Borneo), defend the sea and air space of the first island chain, and dominate the air and maritime domains outside the chain.²⁸

This type of operation would be ideally suited for the Marine Corps, particularly in conducting contested boardings or defending friendly or cooperative commercial traffic against interdiction. The geographic area and the number of vessels involved would be significant and would require the Marine Corps to operate from a variety of platforms in a highly distributed manner.

Nonlethal Capabilities. Changes to the operational battlefield and the global trend toward avoidance of high casualties from military operations may expand the use of nonlethal weapons well beyond the original purpose of crowd control. As Colin Gray notes, during irregular conflicts in the future the U.S. armed forces “will need to curb their traditional, indeed cultural, love affair with firepower.”²⁹

Effective employment of nonlethal weapons may prove to be a critical niche role for the Marine Corps in the joint force. The service has historically viewed itself as “no better friend; no worse enemy,” and this belief would well serve a force that can quickly flex from nonlethal to lethal and back again as the situation dictates.

In the future, nonlethal weapons will play a critical role in crisis response, providing policy makers as they do with more options between diplomacy and economic sanctions, on one hand, and the conventional use of force, on the other. Such new options may be critical to preventing escalation and enabling intervention at a lower threshold of conflict than is now possible.³⁰

These emerging concepts for the Marine Corps have common threads: relatively small units, agile organizations, distributed and decentralized operations, and tight linkage to the maritime environment. The Marine Corps has been considering distributed operations, operational maneuvers from the sea, and other now-valuable concepts for the better part of the last decade. To turn these concepts into actual capabilities, the Marine Corps will have to orient and commit itself intellectually, institutionally, and organizationally to solving the actual operational problems involved.³¹

The following options might assist leaders within the Department of the Navy and the national policy community in considering changes to adapt the Marine Corps to twenty-first-century challenges. They represent fiscally responsible approaches to organizing the service's capabilities and integrating them with those of other elements of the joint force—for though the Marine Corps will likely become smaller, it will continue to play a critical role in American defense.

THINK NAVAL

A Brookings Institution scholar recently argued that the greatest challenge that lies ahead for the Marine Corps is not repercussions from the termination of its Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle program but rather the very nature of coordination between the Corps and the U.S. Navy. That is, the author holds, whether the subject is concepts of sea basing, assumptions about assault and transport ship-building plans, or the Marines' role in the development and execution of Air-Sea Battle doctrine, the alignment within the Marine/Navy team is not as seamless as it should be.³² This challenge, however, is one that also presents great opportunities for the Marine Corps.

The present situation is not unlike that of the 1990s. With the end of the Cold War there was emphasis on evolving the force to counter the threats posed in the new geopolitical environment. Also like today, there was fiscal pressure to shrink the force, so as to reap the benefits of the so-called peace dividend. These two factors were instrumental in reinvigorating Navy–Marine Corps integration. The two services had to reenergize an operational partnership that had lapsed since the end of the Korean War. In large measure, the 1990s can be seen as a period of operational reappraisal and debate between and within these two sea services on the extent and ramifications of their renewed operational partnership.³³

The naval services have recognized the need to continue to pursue naval integration and have taken several important steps toward this end. One, known as the “Single Naval Battle” concept, provides an overarching vision of how the services must work together to offer the nation strategic value and operational effectiveness. Specifically, “this new approach to planning and execution allows functional warfare communities and individual naval services to better understand their

relationship to the broader naval and joint forces, identify critical dependencies, optimize forces, ensure compatibility and increase partnerships.”³⁴

While naval operational integration has received various degrees of leadership attention over the years, it is critical that enduring structures and processes be put in place to ensure that the capabilities of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps are integrated and nonredundant in mission areas of common interest. In May 2011 the Commandant of the Marine Corps and Chief of Naval Operations agreed to reestablish the Naval Board—originally the Navy General Board, an advisory body that operated valuably from 1900 to 1951. The revived board will “identify naval war fighting, operational employments and force development issues that should be considered in order to optimize the contributions of the naval services across the range of military operations in the naval domain.”³⁵ While this is an important first effort, there is certainly room for improvement. It is unlikely that full cooperation will ever be achieved among service leaders when competing interests are present. As fiscal pressure increases, so too will the competition for limited resources. Adding the Navy Secretariat—particularly the Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy for Plans, Policy, Oversight, and Integration—to this forum would ensure that the secretary’s strategic guidance was fully considered and provide a mediator for contentious issues. This leader-

ship triad works well in other department-wide governance structures, such as the Department of the Navy’s Business Transformation Council. The Naval Board is an excellent forum in which to discuss top-level integration, but other measures should be put in place as well to ensure that integration flows through all echelons of command. Figure 3 depicts three levels of naval integration.

In any case, the Naval Board meets periodically to discuss various topics; it cannot be focused on any single mission area. In mission areas of shared interest, offices should be assigned responsibility as “Naval Executive Agents,” to make recommendations to the Naval Board.³⁶ Figure 4 lists mission areas of interest to both services. The organizations assigned should not be specially formed but rather be existing commands with the preponderance of resources

FIGURE 3
LEVELS OF NAVAL INTEGRATION



FIGURE 4
NAVAL MISSION AREAS



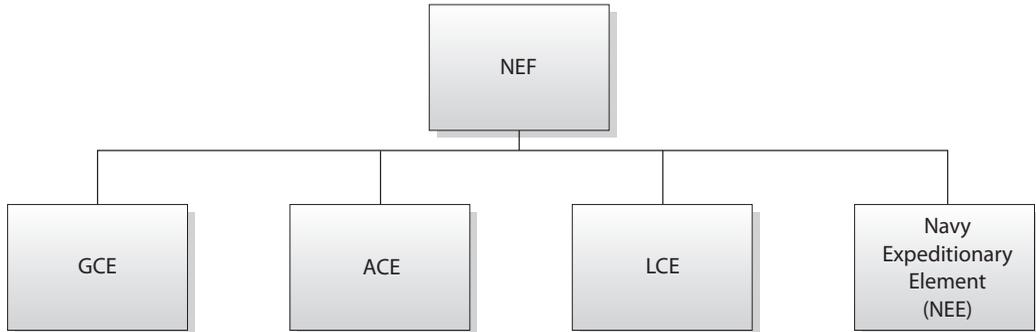
or expertise in the specific mission area needed to fill this new role. A Naval Executive Agent should seek opportunities to integrate fully Navy and Marine Corps capabilities, doctrine, and even organizations within the mission area. This approach could be applied to a host of mission areas: special operations, intelligence, cyberspace operations, civil affairs, information operations, irregular warfare, or electronic warfare, for example.

At the tactical level, new organizational structures must be considered to combine capabilities and reduce unnecessary overhead. This is not the first time the Navy and Marine Corps have struggled with the problem of how best to integrate their efforts in common mission areas. In 1990, the commander of the Naval Special Warfare Command, Admiral G. R. Worthington, conducted a detailed study on how the Navy and Marine Corps should organize for riverine warfare.³⁷ The Worthington Study, as it became known, recommended the creation of a Mobile Riverine Force that would integrate a MAGTF and a Navy river assault group. This concept was not acted on, because of the low priority given to riverine warfare during the budget reductions of the 1990s, but the concept remains valid and could be applied to a number of operational areas.

Riverine operations have never been fully embraced as an enduring mission for either service, but the concept of a truly *naval* command is worthy of serious consideration, particularly in operational mission areas of interest to both services. Intelligence, naval special operations, civil affairs, information operations, and logistics all present opportunities for truly naval structures as Admiral Worthington recommended. In other areas, such as cyberwarfare, the most beneficial alignment may be to have one service provide capabilities for both.

By examining the mission commonalities across the naval services, “trade space” can be identified. For example, if the Navy’s Seabees were trained and equipped for the full spectrum of engineering operations, from breaching to

FIGURE 5
NEW NAVAL EXPEDITIONARY FORCE



Notes: NEF = naval expeditionary force; GCE = ground combat element; ACE = air combat element; LCE = logistics combat element.

building, would the Marine Corps need a large cadre of combat engineers? Could a portion of that manpower be repurposed for different forms of engineering, such as expeditionary “3-D” manufacturing?³⁸ This kind of cross-service analysis could not only develop naval operational capabilities but also yield a variety of opportunities to improve both the Navy and Marine Corps.

Significant personnel reductions could certainly be achieved through naval integration; however, it is difficult to determine whether the reductions would come from the Marine Corps or from the Navy. For instance, the expeditionary capabilities currently organized under the Naval Expeditionary Combat Command might be more efficiently organized by attaching them to the Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEFs), thus creating a true naval expeditionary force, as depicted in figure 5.

IT’S HARD TO BE SPECIAL

Special operations forces have played an increasingly prominent role in military operations over the past two decades. From the early 1980s to 2005, when Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld directed the Marine Corps to become part of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), the Marine Corps resisted inclusion in the special operations community. Today, however, recognizing that special operations will play a critical role in future military operations, the Marine Corps is faced with the challenge of how best to integrate its unique capabilities with those of the special operations community without compromising traditional mission competence or service culture. With a decade of growth in the capabilities of the Naval Special Warfare community, the question of how much is enough must be asked. Determining how the Marine Corps can fit into this increasingly crowded mission space without redundancy is a problem the service is currently struggling to solve.

In 2005, in response to the directive to become part of USSOCOM, the Marine Corps established Marine Special Operations Command. MARSOC added to the existing capacity in the direct-action, special-reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, and counterterrorism SOF (special operation forces) disciplines. The question remains of how to integrate the rest of the Marine Corps, when appropriate, into special operations missions while under fiscal pressure to reduce the size of the force.

First, the current fiscal problems facing the entire DoD should force leaders within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the services to assess realistically what capabilities are ideally suited for each service. This assessment may result in a realignment of capabilities. While any encroachment on missions currently performed by a service will be met with stiff resistance, services may also see opportunities to expand into emerging mission areas.

One such capability that should be reexamined through this lens is the Air Force's special tactics squadrons (STSs) and the Marines' air-naval gunfire liaison companies (ANGLICOs). The STSs comprise three elements: combat controllers, specially trained to conduct air traffic control and coordinate precision fire support (both close-air support and battlefield air interdiction) while embedded within SOF ground units; special operations weathermen, who provide accurate, local weather forecasts while forward deployed in hostile environments; and para-rescue men. This Air Force capability is remarkably similar to what some experts consider could be an important contribution of the Marine Corps to the joint force in the future. As Jim Thomas, the director of research at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, noted in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, "Small teams of highly distributed / highly mobile Marines could conduct low-signature amphibious landings and designate targets ashore for bombers and submarines as a vanguard force in the early stages of a blinding campaign."³⁹

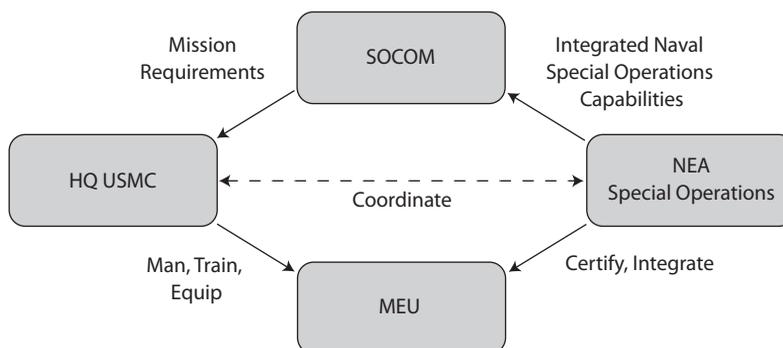
The current Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy, Robert Martinage, recommended in 2008 that the Air Force double the number of STSs, in order to provide steady-state support to each special forces group, Naval Special Warfare Groups 1 and 2, the Rangers, and MARSOC.⁴⁰ He also pointed out numerous other opportunities for the Air Force to expand its SOF portfolio. However, the fiscal realities of today will likely prevent earnest consideration of some of these recommendations for expansion. Transferring the STS mission set to the Marine Corps would free up resources to develop Air Force-unique capabilities. With the exception of the para-rescue men, the Marine Corps already possesses similar capabilities, and increasing the number of ANGLICO units may provide a reasonable way to bridge the gap between the special operations community and the

Marine Corps. While the Marine Corps historically has been loath to create or maintain elite teams that would operate outside the MAGTF construct, the complexity of future challenges will likely require such unprecedented integration.

A second approach to special operations integration can be achieved through application of the previously discussed Naval Executive Agent concept to naval special operations. When originally developing the Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) concept, the Marine Corps developed a list of special operations missions outside the scope of traditional missions. As battalions—with their associated aviation, logistics, and command components—work toward deployment as Marine expeditionary units (MEUs), they progress through a series of progressively more challenging training events and exercises that establish their ability to conduct these nontraditional missions. The workups culminate in a certification exercise certifying the MEU as “special operations capable” and the amphibious ready group in which it is to embark as ready for deployment.⁴¹ The list of missions has broadly remained the same since the inception of the program.

An alternate approach would be for USSOCOM to develop the list of special operations missions needed within the maritime domain and appropriate for a MEU-sized force. In effect this list would collect USSOCOM missions that the Marine Corps could perform. If the Naval Special Warfare Command, for example, were the Naval Executive Agent for naval special operations, it would be responsible for certification of MEUs and ensure that their capabilities were fully integrated with other Navy Special Warfare / special operations missions. This process change would fully integrate the Marine Corps with the special operations community and yet not infringe on the MAGTF construct or the authority of the MEU commander. Figure 6 outlines the proposed relationships.

FIGURE 6
PROPOSED SPECIAL OPERATIONS RELATIONSHIPS



Notes: HQ USMC = Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps; SOCOM = U.S. Special Operations Command; NEA = Naval Executive Agent.

A permanent MARSOC contribution to the U.S. Special Operations Command and a broader use of ANGLICO units represent fiscally responsible solutions for the Marine Corps–SOF integration dilemma.

RESTRUCTURE THE OPERATING FORCES

For decades, expert practitioners within the Marine Corps have seen a need to restructure its operating forces.⁴² The duplication of MAGTF headquarters and traditional unit headquarters has been of particular concern. As Under Secretary of the Navy Robert Work noted in 2002,

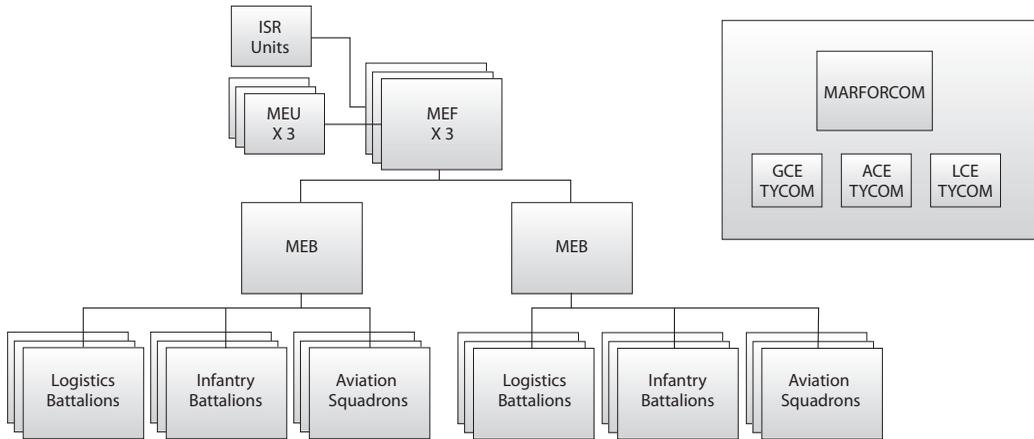
By layering standing MAGTF headquarters over their old organizational structures, the Marines paid a heavy price in staff overhead. In 1989, for example, there were headquarters for Atlantic and Pacific Marine forces, three large MEFs, six MEBs [Marine expeditionary brigades], and seven MEUs. These were in addition to the three Division, three Wing and three Force Service Support Group headquarters, as well as 12 regimental and 11 air group headquarters, giving the Corps a total of 50 higher unit headquarters!⁴³

In general, such scholars as Dr. Eliot Cohen and Dr. Francis Fukuyama have argued that military organizations have failed to evolve over the past half-century. Specifically, Cohen compares our current organizational structure with that of General Motors in the 1950s. He notes that many successful corporations have adapted away from this traditional hierarchical model by stripping out layers of middle management and reducing or eliminating the functional distinction between management and labor.⁴⁴ For his part, Fukuyama points out that whereas organizations are originally created around efficient internal information flow, military organizations have not changed commensurately with advances in information technology.⁴⁵ Opportunities exist to create flatter organizations, with more emphasis on the capabilities of smaller operational units.

As mentioned previously, the Force Structure Review Group concluded correctly that the Marine Corps “sweet spot” with respect to the joint force lies between a traditional army unit (regiment) and a special operations team (platoon). Therefore, the Marine Corps should emphasize the company and battalion levels. The goal of any effort to reorganize the operating forces must be to preserve actual war-fighting capacity; an inefficient system should not be maintained solely for the sake of officer career development or tradition. The fiscal issues facing the Marine Corps should force its leadership to make organizational changes that reflect increased emphasis on smaller-unit operations and eliminate redundancy. To this end, two approaches should be considered.

Horizontal Realignment. As the Marine Corps shifts to operations at the battalion and company levels, the need for headquarters at the regimental and group

FIGURE 7
NOTIONAL MEF HORIZONTAL ALIGNMENT



Notes: TYCOM = type commander; ISR = intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

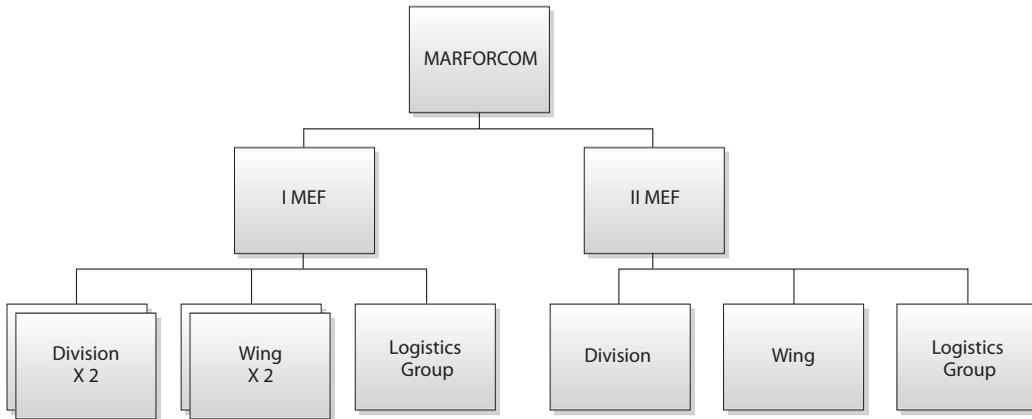
levels and above comes into question. Could an entire level of command be eliminated with no effect on operational capability? For instance, could regiments and groups (which are commanded by colonels) be eliminated, leaving tactical units to report directly to a one-star (brigadier general) command?

Eliminating the regimental headquarters from the three active Marine divisions could yield a reduction of between seven hundred and a thousand personnel in the ground-combat element alone. Extrapolate this process across the aviation and logistics elements, and the personnel savings could reach three thousand. If wing, division, and logistic group headquarters were included, the total could approach five, even seven, thousand.

To ensure consistency across the operating forces, the equivalent of “type commanders” for each of the three combat elements should be created (responsible for training and readiness functions unique to ground, aviation, and logistics elements, respectively). A single office for each discipline would be embedded within Marine Forces Command. The flexibility of this approach would rely heavily on the service’s inherent ability to create ad hoc task organizations in response to operational demands. Figure 7 depicts a notional organizational layout.

Vertical Realignment. A shortcoming of horizontal reorganization is that if executed to the fullest extent it would violate the current statutory requirement to maintain three divisions and three wings, although there would be no loss of actual combat power. An alternative that is compliant with current legislation would be to consolidate organizations vertically. To start, merge the three Marine Expeditionary Force headquarters into two and consolidate the operating forces

FIGURE 8
NOTIONAL VERTICAL REALIGNMENT



under I MEF and II MEF, as shown in figure 8. Although this would create imbalance between the two remaining MEFs, it would support the overall DoD pivot to the Asia-Pacific.

Second, identify for consolidation elements of Marine Forces Command and Marine Corps Forces, Pacific. A single Marine Corps organization is capable of responding to the force demands of each of the geographic combatant commanders.

Vertical realignment would not realize the same personnel reductions as the horizontal approach; only one to three thousand staff billets could be eliminated. But additional savings would be achieved by reductions in the overseas “footprint” and in costs of moving personnel and their households.

USE THE TOTAL FORCE

Because the Marine Corps is the smallest and most agile of the services, it has an opportunity to lower the cost associated with personnel in the active component while preserving operational capacity. The approach the Marine Corps must take—that is, total-force management—is consistent with recent changes to Title 10 of the U.S. Code.⁴⁶ Because of its cultural emphasis on readiness, the service is in an excellent position to support the new DoD-wide concept of “reversibility.”⁴⁷

Reserves at the Ready. The Marine Corps prides itself as being the nation’s force in readiness. This commitment permeates the reserve component as thoroughly as it does the active component. There has been much discussion of a shift by the United States toward its militia roots in order to survive future fiscal austerity.⁴⁸ The Marine Corps Reserve provides the nation an important surge capacity, as it does not need an extensive period of time to achieve an acceptable level of operational readiness.

The Marine Corps Reserve was one of the success stories of IRAQI FREEDOM. Its members showed that they were skilled warriors and performed as advertised. They were able to muster, train, deploy, and fight not as second-stringers but as highly motivated, highly competent Marines.⁴⁹

As we have seen, the Marine Corps is struggling to balance three identities: those of the forward-deployed amphibious force, the small-wars force of choice, and a force that fights the nation's major land wars. The majority of capabilities necessary for the third identity should be shifted to the reserve component. Tank, artillery, engineer, and aviation command-and-control units intended to support a wing-level force could be moved to the reserves without putting the nation's crisis response at risk.

“Civilian Marines.” Historically the Marine Corps has done well at institutionalizing the concept of “civilian Marines” in the total-force mix. However, there are many areas where civilians can be leveraged further. Entire career fields for military personnel can be eliminated and replaced by less-expensive civilians.⁵⁰ For example, financial services, acquisition, and comptroller career fields could be civilianized entirely. According to the *2011 Marine Corps Almanac*, the Marine Corps has over 1,700 personnel in the financial management specialty alone.⁵¹

The Defense Department has effectively implemented the Civilian Expeditionary Workforce program, which permits civilians to deploy to operational environments.⁵² Selected “civilian Marines” filling billets once held by military personnel should, as a condition of employment, be required to sign agreements stating their willingness and readiness to deploy to austere and potentially hostile environments. This practice has worked well over the past decade within the intelligence community, where civilians routinely provide forward-deployed intelligence support to war fighters.

Expanded Use of Enlisted Marines. The cornerstone of the Marine Corps is the Marine rifleman. In part due to the struggling economy, today's enlisted Marines are among the best educated and trained in the history of the Marine Corps. Some futurists predict that unemployment problems will worsen over the next several decades, as automated systems replace humans in manufacturing jobs; they estimate that 10–20 percent unemployment could become the norm in the United States for the foreseeable future.⁵³ Anything like such a social environment as that could present an excellent opportunity for the Marine Corps to enlist and keep better-educated civilians.

The Marine Corps should actively look for billets currently filled by officers that might be filled as well or better by top-performing enlisted personnel. Aviation fields will likely provide opportunities. From 1916 to 1981 the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard used enlisted pilots in a variety of ways.⁵⁴ Today, a large

percentage of the Army's helicopter pilots are warrant officers—clearly indicating that a four-year college degree and a commission are not required. Enlisted pilots should also form the nucleus of the unmanned-vehicle operator corps of the future.

While transitioning billets from officer to enlisted will not change end-strength numbers, it could achieve a cost savings with no loss of operational capacity. This is an essential premise for a total workforce reshaping.

MARINE CORPS AVIATION

As we have just seen, no examination of Marine Corps force structure or of overlapping capabilities within DoD is complete without discussion of Marine aviation. This has been a contentious issue since the service-unification movement following World War II, and it remains so today.

In 1976 General Robert Cushman, Jr., until the previous year Commandant of the Marine Corps, addressed the justification for the Marine Corps's having its own tactical air force. He argued that the Marine Corps represented a unique capability with its full spectrum of combined-arms integration and that if there were a reduction in its tactical aviation, the gap would need to be filled by another service.⁵⁵ Making tactical air an integral component of Marine air-ground tasks forces has unquestionably enabled effective, integrated air/ground "fires" within the Marine Corps. This integration is particularly striking in comparison to that between the Army and Air Force—a 2006 study found that despite twenty years of joint reform brought on by Goldwater-Nichols, the Army and Air Force were still having difficulty integrating their operational capabilities in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁵⁶

Because of the austere times the nation faces, however, the Marine Corps may have to accept a tactical-air mix that is only "good enough," one that does not include high-end capabilities such as the F-35B, the short-takeoff-and-vertical-landing variant of the Lightning II multirole fighter.⁵⁷ Against the background of fiscal trade-offs that will have to occur in the future, this expensive platform comes at a high cost in terms of other Marine Corps operational needs.

An affordable mix of tactical air for direct support of smaller infantry units may be composed of rotary-wing, unmanned platforms and modified cargo aircraft—such as the KC-130J Harvest Hawk, a gunship variant, already in the Marine Corps inventory, of the Super Hercules transport and aerial-refueling aircraft. Another option to consider is to modify the MV-22 Osprey in a new gunship variant. The new mix should reflect the differing needs for fixed-wing close air support during local contingency operations and major theater operations. The Marine Corps could safely assume greater risk in the former by relying primarily on the Navy for fixed-wing close air support; again, new organizational

alignments could facilitate cooperation between Navy squadrons and Marine Corps ground units. An additional benefit would be that Navy aviators would gain valuable experience in support of Marine Corps ground units as well as SOF. In contrast, Marine fixed-wing units for the support of major theater operations could be moved to the reserve component; such operations have historically afforded some time for buildup of forces.

One commonly used argument in favor of Marine Corps tactical aviation is commonality in training among ground personnel and aviators. After a decade of supporting ground-centric operations, the perceived schism between Navy fixed-wing tactical aviators and ground units may no longer be as wide as it once was. Also, current Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization qualifications are the same for Marine and Navy aviators flying identical aircraft, ensuring commonality in close air support missions.

Finally, the Marine Corps relies primarily on aviators to serve as forward air controllers, while other services rely on enlisted “joint terminal attack controllers” to integrate air support with ground forces. Well-qualified enlisted Marines could certainly perform this function for Marine ground units.

INITIAL ACCESSIONS

Finally, as fiscal issues force the Marine Corps to consider reductions in end strength, opportunities to reduce initial-accession infrastructure will become apparent. As the demand to bring in more new enlisted Marines decreases, the service should consider closing one of the two current recruit depots and consolidating all recruit training in a single facility. The Navy successfully took this approach during the 1990s. Should the need arise for another surge of enlisted Marines—as witnessed during the Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq conflicts—temporary facilities could be constructed at Quantico, Virginia, or Twentynine Palms, California, to handle the increased throughput.

The Marine Corps maintains a regional structure for recruiting commands, with separate organizations for the East Coast and the West Coast. The recruiting-command infrastructure could be streamlined to accommodate all Marine recruiting within a single organization.

The table summarizes the options the Marine Corps should consider as fiscal pressure and the rising cost of personnel force a reduction in active-component end strength. These proposed options overlap and so should be considered individually, not in the aggregate.

Twenty years before the start of World War II, Marine lieutenant colonel Pete Ellis foretold the challenges that lay ahead for America in the Pacific. His ability to see through the fog of uncertainty gave rise to a wide array of doctrinal and

Option	Estimated Potential Personnel Changes	Notes
Naval integration	under 2,000 to 10,000	May result in increase in Navy numbers to take on additional responsibility. Total net reduction within Dept. of Navy could be achieved.
Special operations	over 1,200 to 1,800	Greater personnel reductions could be realized in other services.
Restructure operating forces	under 2,000 to 7,000	
Total-force mix	under 500 to 7,000	Includes options to reduce cost of personnel but not to change size of total force.
Marine aviation	under 3,000 to 10,000	Would increase Navy end strength.
Initial accessions	under 500 to 1,000	Includes reduction in “civilian Marines.”

conceptual changes within the Marine Corps that eventually brought the successful amphibious campaigns of the Pacific War. Today’s Marine Corps leaders are faced with the equally daunting task of dealing with the uncertainties of a complex and constantly evolving national security environment, challenges made more difficult by a strained American economy and a government mired, at this writing, in partisan gridlock.

The Marine Corps has a long history of maintaining a high state of operational readiness and of responding with high combat effectiveness to challenges facing the nation. The smallest of the U.S. military services, it has demonstrated great agility in adapting to and overcoming adversity, on and off the battlefield. As the Marine Corps transitions from a decade of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, it will now be required to demonstrate institutional agility once again.

To remain an effective and affordable national crisis-response force, it will need to adapt to the changes in the geopolitical environment and, equally important, to fiscal realities. In doing so it must consider the thought, quoted above, of Robert Gates—that the Marine Corps has become too big, too heavy, and too far removed from its amphibious roots. By addressing these issues the Marine Corps will discover opportunities to reshape itself to achieve its “sweet spot” within the joint force.

We may argue that only as a last resort should the Marine Corps be targeted to free up defense dollars, but the reality is it will likely be caught up in an overall effort to shrink the armed forces after a decade of war. There are ways to conform to fiscal demands while not only preserving operational capacity but better preparing the Marine Corps for future operational challenges. By achieving effective

integration with the U.S. Navy, the joint force, and the special operations community; by restructuring its own operating forces; and by better utilizing its total workforce, the Marine Corps can remain America's crisis response force—ready to meet the demands of the twenty-first century.

NOTES

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1. The fiscal problems facing the nation and the Department of Defense will increase pressure to reduce defense spending. At this writing, no clear, long-term solution has been identified. As I have argued in "Building the Purple Ford: An Affordable Approach to Jointness" (in the Autumn 2012 *Naval War College Review*), opportunities exist to downsize the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Defense agencies, unified commands, and the Joint Staff with no loss of operational capacity, and these should be fully considered prior to any reduction of the war-fighting capabilities of the services. This article offers options, should that approach not be taken, to streamline the Marine Corps while preserving operational units.
2. Robert Gates, "George P. Shultz Lecture" (speech, Marine Corps Association, San Francisco, Calif., 12 August 2010), available at www.defense.gov/. See also Robert Kozloski, "Of Options and Plans: A Flawed System" (blog posting) *USNI: U.S. Naval Institute*, blog.usni.org/.
3. Of the 202,441 Marines in the active component, 40,661 (20.1 percent) are in dedicated aviation specialties. Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, *Concepts and Programs 2010* (Washington, D.C.: 2010).
4. U.S. Code, Title 10, chap. 507, sec. 5063, available at www.law.cornell.edu/.
5. The entire planning process must pivot if it is to become effective. Planners at the combatant commands should match service capabilities to threat scenarios and develop multiple plans (vice single plans with numerous "branches and sequels") to counter the threats. This reversal of roles would provide political leaders a variety of military options in the event of crisis rather than oblige them simply to execute the plan on the shelf.
6. Thomas Barnett, "The 'Strategic Pivot' to Asia Now Committed, Pentagon Can Float Allegedly Deep Cuts," *Time Nation*, 3 January 2012. Micah Zenko notes the comments of Adm. Michael Mullen, Dr. Robert Gates, Gen. James Mattis, and Maj. Gen. H. R. McMaster on the Department of Defense's poor record of predicting the next war; Micah Zenko, "100% Right 0% of the Time," *Foreign Policy: National Security*, 16 October 2012, available at www.foreignpolicy.com/.
7. Carnes Lord, *Proconsuls: Delegated Political-Military Leadership from Rome to America Today* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2012), p. 235.
8. David Barno et al., *Sustainable Pre-eminence: Reforming the U.S. Military at a Time of Strategic Change* (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security 2012).
9. Austin Long, "The Marine Corps: Sticking to Its Guns," in *US Military Innovation since the Cold War: Creation without Destruction*, ed. Harvey Sapolsky, Benjamin Friedman, and Brendan Green (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 120.
10. William S. Lind, *The Two Marine Corps* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation, 5 June 2004), available at www.lewrockwell.com/.
11. U.S. Code, Title 10, chap. 507, sec. 5063: "The Marine Corps . . . shall be so organized as to include not less than three combat divisions and three air wings, and such other land combat, aviation, and other services as may be organic therein. The Marine Corps shall be organized, trained, and equipped to provide fleet marine forces of combined arms,

- together with supporting air components, for service with the fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and for the conduct of such land operations as may be essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign. In addition, the Marine Corps shall provide detachments and organizations for service on armed vessels of the Navy, shall provide security detachments for the protection of naval property at naval stations and bases, and shall perform such other duties as the President may direct. However, these additional duties may not detract from or interfere with the operations for which the Marine Corps is primarily organized.”
12. Barno et al., *Sustainable Pre-eminence*, p. 39.
 13. David H. Gurney and Jeffrey D. Smotherman, “An Interview with General James T. Conway, 34th Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 59 (October 2010) [hereafter Conway *JFQ* interview].
 14. Barno et al., *Sustainable Pre-eminence*, p. 39.
 15. Winslow Wheeler, “With the War Ending, When Should We Look for a Peace Dividend?,” *Time Nation*, October 2012.
 16. Conway *JFQ* interview, p. 9.
 17. Todd Harrison, *Rebalancing Military Compensation: An Evidence-Based Approach* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments [hereafter CSBA], 2012), p. i.
 18. Clark Murdock, *Planning for a Deep Defense Drawdown*, part 1, *A Proposed Methodological Approach* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies [hereafter CSIS], 2012), pp. 8–12.
 19. Todd Harrison, *Analysis of the FY2012 Defense Budget* (Washington, D.C.: CSBA, 2011).
 20. Michael O’Hanlon, “Getting Real on Defense Cuts,” *Politico*, 22 July 2012.
 21. The Ellis Group was created by the Commandant, Gen. James Amos, in December 2011 to conduct a detailed examination of emerging war-fighting challenges, identify opportunities for increasing naval war-fighting effectiveness, and coordinate with naval partners. Its name recalls Lt. Col. E. H. “Pete” Ellis, USMC, an intelligence author and planner who drafted in 1921 a doctrinal publication that proved seminal for Marine Corps effectiveness in amphibious warfare in World War II. Composed of ten officers and civilians handpicked by the Commandant, the Ellis Group has five specific areas of emphasis: to strengthen naval war-fighting partnerships; to inform the combat development and integration processes; to enhance naval partnership with the U.S. Special Operations Command; to focus innovation in naval war fighting; and to develop littoral-warfare expertise.
 22. Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, *US Amphibious Forces: Indispensable Elements of American Seapower* (Quantico, Va.: Ellis Group, 2012), pp. 7–9.
 23. David Berteau and Michael Green, *US Force Posture Strategy in the Asia Pacific Region: An Independent Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2012), p. 8.
 24. Thomas Mahnken, *Asia in the Balance: Transforming the US Military Strategy in Asia* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 2012), p. 17.
 25. Frank Hoffmann originally coined this phrase to help explain the concept of distributed operations.
 26. Robert O. Work, *The Challenge of Maritime Transformation: Is Bigger Better?* (Washington, D.C.: CSBA, 2002), p. 91.
 27. Dakota Wood, *The US Marine Corps: Fleet Marine Forces for the 21st Century* (Washington, D.C.: CSBA, 2008), p. 40.
 28. T. X. Hammes, *Strategic Forum 278 Offshore Control: A Proposed Strategy for an Unlikely Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 2012), p. 5.
 29. Colin Gray, *National Security Dilemmas: Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2009), p. 200.
 30. Joseph Siniscalchi, *Non-lethal Technologies: Implications for Military Strategy*, Occasional Paper 3 (Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.: Center for Strategy and Technology, Air War College, March 1999), p. 31.
 31. Wood, *US Marine Corps*, p. 49.
 32. Peter Singer, “The Marine Corps Is All Right,” *Armed Forces Journal*, March 2011.
 33. Andrew Krepinevich, Barry Watts, and Robert Work, *Meeting the Anti-access and Area-Denial Challenge* (Washington, D.C.: CSBA, 2003), p. 32.

34. Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, *US Amphibious Forces*, p. 6.
35. "Charter for the Naval Board," memorandum of agreement between the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Washington, D.C., 30 May 2011.
36. See Robert Kozloski, "Rethinking 'Naval': Heresy or Fiscal Imperative?" U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* (July 2012), p. 34.
37. G. R. Worthington, *Riverine Warfare Study*, ser. 03/1227 (n.p.: Naval Special Warfare Command, 10 December 1990).
38. For information on the potential advantages of 3-D manufacturing for the Navy see Larry Schuette and Peter Singer, "Direct Digital Manufacturing: The Game Changer You've Never Heard Of," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2011.
39. Jim Thomas, *Statement before the House Armed Services Committee*, 13 September 2011, available at www.csbaonline.org/.
40. Robert Martinage, *Special Operations Forces: Future Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: CSBA, 2008), p. xv.
41. Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, "Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and MEU Special Operations Capable (SOC) Pre-deployment Training Program (PTP)," Marine Corps Order 3502.3B, available at www.marines.mil/.
42. For previous proposals for restructuring the Marine Corps operating forces, see Carlton Meyer, "Twelve Brigades: A Blueprint for the Future," *Marine Corps Gazette* (April 1991); Asad Khan et al., "Let's Organize and Train as We Would Fight," *Marine Corps Gazette* (October 2002); and Frank Hoffman, "Transforming for the Chaordic Age," *Marine Corps Gazette* (November 2002). Similarly, Col. Douglas Macgregor, USA, provides relevant recommendations on restructuring the Army's land forces in *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), pp. 59–93.
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44. Eliot Cohen, "A Revolution in Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 75 (March–April 1995), pp. 37–54.
45. Francis Fukuyama and Abram Shulsky, "Military Organization in the Information Age: Lessons from the Business World," in *Strategic Appraisal: The Changing Role of Information Warfare*, ed. Zalmay Khalilzad, John White, and Andy W. Marshall (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1999), p. 327.
46. U.S. Code, Title 10, chap. 3, sec. 129A: "The Secretary of Defense shall establish policies and procedures for determining the most appropriate and cost efficient mix of military, civilian, and contractor personnel to perform the mission of the Department of Defense."
47. U.S. Defense Dept., *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, D.C.: 2012), the strategic guidance for the Department of Defense, declares that "the concept of 'reversibility'—including the vectors on which we place our industrial base, our people, our active-reserve component balance, our posture, and our partnership emphasis—is a key part of our decision calculus" [italics original]. Available at www.defense.gov/.
48. Ronald Fogleman, "Going Back to the Future: Militia Model Could Cut U.S. Expenditures," *Defense News*, 16 January 2012.
49. Mark Cancian and Paul Kane, "Marine Corps Reserve Forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom," *Marine Corps Gazette* (July 2004), p. 50.
50. See Robert Kozloski, "War Fighters, Not Businessmen," *Defense News*, 4 March 2012.
51. Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, *Concepts and Programs 2011* (Washington, D.C.: 2011), pp. 312–31.
52. For more information on DoD Civilian Expeditionary Workforce, see www.cpms.osd.mil/expeditionary/.
53. As noted by Dr. Dennis Bushnell of NASA at the Navy Warfare Development Command Maritime Innovation Symposium, Norfolk, Virginia, 13–14 March 2012, available at www.nwdc.navy.mil/.
54. "Enlisted Naval Aviation Pilots (NAP) USN, USMC & USCG 1916–1981," BlueJacket.com. The father of General Amos, the current Commandant of the Marine Corps, was an enlisted naval aviator.
55. Robert Cushman, Jr., "The Marine Corps Today: Asset or Anachronism?," *International Security* 1, no. 2 (Autumn 1976), pp. 123–29.

56. David Johnson, *Learning Large Lessons: The Evolving Roles of Ground Power and Air Power in the Post-Cold War Era* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2006).
57. In a speech to Marines at Camp Lejeune, N.C., on 9 December 2012, General Amos

provided the following guidance on the forthcoming period of austerity: “The guidance I gave the Marine Corps: figure out what is good enough. In other words, what will work for us over the next five or six years of austerity.” Available at www.foreignpolicy.com/.



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