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Alternative Naval Strategies

Captain Guillermo J. Montenegro, Argentine Navy (Retired)

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE is to suggest a general framework for selecting both suitable strategies and the component operations necessary to execute them.¹

In what is generally referred to as conventional warfare, or mid-intensity conflict, it would be useful to have a model for the theater command or theater naval forces command level for making basic initial decisions predicated on both one's own order of battle and the enemy's.² The model suggested here takes into consideration the type of conflict, the geography, the anticipated duration of hostilities, and the political environment. Although the concepts addressed relate to mid-intensity conflict, a few would also apply to the roles that naval forces play in low and high-intensity conflicts.

The real-life examples that support this model are drawn primarily from the First and Second World Wars—wars, that is, of the “great powers.” Even so, the model appears to work reasonably well when tested in short regional conflicts such as the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971.

While the focus of this article is on naval warfare, it should be understood that naval operations are usually designed to influence events on land, that in some clear way they should contribute to a joint effort, and that some tasks related to naval warfare can and should be carried out by other services in close cooperation with the navy.

Let us assume that our naval strategy is defined when our national objective is established as being either defensive or offensive. For navies, three basic strategic objectives are implicit: our naval forces and the enemy's, territories (ours and his), and sea transportation systems (both sides').³

Combining the three objectives with the offensive and defensive choices allows us to define six alternative strategies:

- Attack on enemy naval forces.
- Defense against enemy naval forces.
- Attack on territory the enemy holds.
- Defense of territory we hold.

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- Attack against enemy sea transportation.
- Defense of our sea transportation.⁴

Each strategy may be carried out by one or a combination of substrategies or courses of action in which the following items should be clearly defined: probable geographical area involved, time considerations, mass requirements, and political constraints (expressed by the tactical rules of engagement).

To clarify the meaning of time considerations, we will posit the following four definitions of time:

- Time in a chronological sense, equals *duration*—a particular length of time.
- Time in the sense of *sequence* concerns whether an event must be executed before or after another event.⁵
- Time in the sense of *opportunity* is normally associated with the factor of surprise.
- Time in the sense of *rhythm* is a measure of the *tempo* of operations.

A few words about *mass*: Our attention to the quantity and distribution of forces must be tempered strongly with concern for quality. Logistics decisively influences the building and maintenance of mass, and both logistics and mass are directly related to sustaining the effort for a given duration and rhythm.

The model under discussion is intended not as a substitute for detailed planning or for the classic tests of suitability, feasibility, and acceptability. Rather, it is intended to aid in reaching sound basic decisions about the overall campaign. With that in mind we will examine the characteristics of each of the six proposed strategies and their derived substrategies.

Attack on Enemy Naval Forces

The aim of an offensive against the enemy's fleet is to restrain, confine, weaken, and destroy that fleet. Success will not only permit us to operate freely against enemy-held territory and the enemy's sea-going transportation, but will also ensure the safety of our own territory and sea transport from attack by his fleet. To realize this strategic aim, the methods suggested should be used in combinations, e.g., a blockade may be supplemented effectively by offensive mining; successful submarine action can wear down enemy forces prior to or after a battle; battle could be the appropriate answer to an enemy attempt to break through our blockade. Submarine operations in particular are more likely to succeed if the enemy faces several threats simultaneously.

It may be that the enemy's sea-based nuclear forces become a focus of one's attack. Such forces may have little direct naval relevance, but they certainly will have enormous political importance. Hence, a decision to seek out enemy nuclear forces will be political, rather than tactical, in nature and origin.

Battle. Hostilities generally result from the struggle for control over territory. The geographical area in which a battle develops is often close to or on the disputed land.

There are drawbacks to selecting battle as the primary course of action. Many of the choices available may favor an enemy who seeks to avoid it. It is imperative that the side initiating battle have definite superiority. Rhythm, sequence, and opportunity acquire special relevance. Mass is important, but if the force available is not of the right kind, mass may not be enough to provide superiority. In sea war, this superiority has long been significantly dependent upon the availability of aviation, whether carrier-based or shore-based.

Attacks against Enemy Naval Forces in Harbor. This is a particularly advantageous substrategy that can be used at the outbreak of hostilities when there is little chance that enemy forces will have left their bases. Geographical areas from which to attack an adversary would be those close to his bases and harbors.

Opportunity is a paramount factor in this substrategy; duration and rhythm are also relevant because in many instances it is essential to reattack bases to hinder the enemy's recovery and repair. Sequence is a consideration in certain circumstances when it is necessary—given the radii of action of our available forces—to occupy particular geographic positions in order to launch successive attacks. Mass significantly influences the expected results but is less relevant if surprise is successful. Some examples are the torpedo boat attack at Port Arthur (1904), the British carrier raid at Taranto (1940), R.A.F. bomber raids at Brest (against German ships, 1941-42), the carrier raid at Pearl Harbor (1941), and attacks of various kinds against the *Tirpitz* in Norwegian fjords (1942-44).

Destruction of, or Damage to, Enemy Bases and Shipyards. Destroying or damaging the enemy's logistics is an effective method of inhibiting the operation of his fleet. Attacks should be staged from areas close to the adversary's bases, shipyards, and supply lines. As a general rule, aircraft are the usual means for executing operations of this sort; however, there are cases in which land-attack cruise missile strikes or amphibious or airborne raids on key objectives can achieve important results.

With amphibious or airborne raids, opportunity and surprise are paramount to the success of the mission. Rhythm, on the other hand, is essential to the success of air and cruise missile attacks; continuous assault on bases and shipyards is fundamental to thwarting the enemy's efforts to operate. Duration is taken into account for the same reasons; sequence—given the range of our weapon systems and the need to occupy certain positions from which to reach targets—is also a consideration. Except for amphibious and airborne raids, mass is significant.

Examples include: St. Nazaire (an amphibious raid, destruction of key repair facilities, 1942), German naval bases (air attack, destruction of bases, 1945),

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German submarine building yards (air attacks, damage and destruction of facilities and boats being built, 1944-45).

Capture of Enemy Bases. Bases are generally captured by campaigns ashore, some of which are begun by an amphibious assault. If successful they deprive the enemy of his bases, and the victor gains this territory for his own use. The occupation of a base has important and perhaps decisive implications: the captors continue to operate and the losers cease to function. Geographical areas selected to launch an attack would be those close to the base to be captured.

Seizing a well-defended base by direct seaborne assault involves considerations of time, rhythm, and duration with respect to land operations. Sequence must also be considered should it be necessary to take a key position as a preliminary to an amphibious assault or a land campaign. For a direct seaborne assault, opportunity is mandatory. As a general rule, the mass required for joint forces involved in capturing a base is large. If it is believed that surprise will suffice (in place of mass), the quality of the attacking units will be important.

Examples include the capture of Port Arthur (by the Japanese, 1905), all of Norway's harbors (captured by the Germans, 1940), France's Atlantic harbors (captured by the Germans, 1940), Sevastopol (captured by the Germans, 1942 and by the Russians, 1944), Singapore and Manila (both captured by the Japanese, 1942) and Romanian and Bulgarian Black Sea harbors (captured by the Russians, 1944).

Blockade, Bottling or Obstruction of Enemy Bases or Their Approaches. *Bottling* is the closure of a given harbor or its channel by the deliberate sinking of ships. An *obstruction* is a barrier, perhaps of barges, nets, or chains, that hinders significantly any transit through a passage.

Opportunity is vital to the bottling-up operation, which has not been used since World War I. Although it is an option, chances of bottling successfully in the future are small. Endurance is of primary importance for establishing a blockade or otherwise laying down obstructions. Mass requirements are significant for maintaining blockades and obstruction (though they have little relevance for bottling operations). Constraints may be necessary should blockade, bottling, or obstructions harass or hinder the naval forces or commercial shipping of neutral parties.

Examples include the Russian fleet at Port Arthur (partial bottling, 1904 and blockade, 1904-05), German High Seas Fleet (blockade, 1914-18), Austro-Hungarian Fleet (blockade, 1914-18), Otranto (obstruction, 1917-18), Dover Straits (obstruction, 1917-18), and Ostende-Zeebrugge (bottling, 1918).

Submarine Operations. A significant part of any effort against naval forces is submarine warfare, which restricts the enemy's freedom of action and increases

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STRATEGY	OBJECTIVE	SUBSTRATEGY/ COURSE OF ACTION	GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS	TIME CONSIDERATIONS	MASS
ATTACK ON ENEMY NAVAL FORCES	ENEMY NAVAL FORCES	BATTLE	TERRITORY, STRATEGIC POSITION OR SLOC IN DISPUTE	RHYTHM SEQUENCE OPPORTUNITY	LARGE
		ATTACKS AGAINST ENEMY NAVAL FORCES IN HARBOR	ENEMY NAVAL BASES/ HARBORS	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM SEQUENCE	LARGE TO MEDIUM
		DESTRUCTION OR DAMAGE OF ENEMY BASES/ BUILDING FACILITIES	ENEMY NAVAL BASES/BUILDING FACILITIES	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM DURATION SEQUENCE	LARGE
		CAPTURE OF ENEMY BASES	ENEMY NAVAL BASES	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM DURATION SEQUENCE	LARGE
		NAVAL BLOCKADE/ BOTTLING/ OBSTRUCTION	ENEMY NAVAL BASES AND/OR APPROACHES	DURATION (OPPORTUNITY FOR BOTTLING)	LARGE (LESS RELEVANT FOR BOTTLING)
		SUBMARINE OPERATIONS	ENEMY NAVAL BASES AND/OR APPROACHES ENEMY'S OP. AREAS	DURATION RHYTHM	MEDIUM
		OFFENSIVE MINING	ENEMY CONTROLLED OR DISPUTED AREAS	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM	MEDIUM
DEFENSE AGAINST ENEMY NAVAL FORCES	OWN NAVAL FORCES/ ENEMY NAVAL FORCES	INDECISIVE ACTIONS	STRATEGIC POSITIONS SLOCS	OPPORTUNITY	AS AVAILABLE
		ATTACKS AGAINST ENEMY NAVAL FORCES IN HARBOR	ENEMY NAVAL BASES/HARBORS	OPPORTUNITY	AS AVAILABLE
		SUBMARINE OPERATIONS	ENEMY NAVAL BASES AND/OR APPROACHES ENEMY'S OP. AREAS	DURATION RHYTHM	MEDIUM
		OFFENSIVE MINING	ENEMY CONTROLLED OR DISPUTED AREAS	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM	MEDIUM
		PROTECTIVE MINING	OWN CONTROLLED AREAS	RHYTHM DURATION	MINIMUM
		FLEET-IN-BEING	AREAS CLOSE TO OWN BASES	DURATION OPPORTUNITY	AS AVAILABLE

the scope of the threat against him. Classical submarine capability, i.e., to operate in enemy-controlled or disputed areas, significantly multiplies one's own effectiveness and can even eventually correct an inferiority of one's forces.

Geographical areas involved would be those near enemy bases, their approaches, restricted passages, and their likely operations areas. Duration is important because submarines do not create impassable barriers; their opportunities for success depend on the number of enemy units they detect. Rhythm is significant in determining the number of submarines to be assigned to patrol areas in a given time. Sizeable mass will force the enemy into a significant antisubmarine effort. Political constraints are imposed to avoid identification errors which could lead to attacks on neutral merchant or naval vessels.

There are many well-known examples of submarine attacks on enemy warships.

Offensive Mining. Generally offensive mining is important in its influence and is therefore strongly recommended, whenever possible, near enemy bases, in their approaches, in restricted passages, and other areas not yet under dispute.⁶

Opportunity will have its usual multiple effects. Rhythm is also a consideration in the replenishment of minefields in the face of enemy countermeasures. Although submarines and aircraft are typical offensive minelayers, sometimes surface ships will serve. If mass is important, land-based heavy bombers might be used as mine layers. As always, concern is necessary to protect neutral parties who may have interests in areas selected for mining.

Examples include the mining of Port Arthur (1904-05), the North Sea Mine Barrage (1918), the crippling of the *Goeben* in the Aegean (1918), the Baltic Sea blockade of the Russian fleet (1941-44), and the mining of Japanese domestic waters (1944-45).

Defense against Enemy Naval Forces

The aim of this strategy is to preserve one's own naval forces while attempting to reduce the enemy's. This often requires a commander to avoid decisive actions. A successful defending commander will so restrict the enemy's freedom of action as to deny him all initiatives.

Delaying or Attritive (Indecisive) Actions. The availability of a suitable strategic position or an enemy sea line of communication will open the possibility for actions that tend to wear away the enemy.

Opportunity is very important. Although there are no mass requirements (because these operations are executed with forces available at the time), the larger the force the better. Actions of this sort will always subject our forces to risk. Therefore, it is essential that readiness, training, command, control, communications, and intelligence all be excellent.

The burden on the tactical commander will be substantial, particularly if he is assigned a dual mission, as often happens. He may be responsible for the destruction of a particular valuable entity as well as for generally wearing down enemy forces. His concern for his nation's forces, his motivation to defeat the enemy, and his instincts to avoid catastrophe will impose on him a constant struggle.

Examples include the German battle cruisers at Dogger Bank (1915), the High Seas Fleet at Jutland (1916), the Austro-Hungarians' Otranto raid (1917), and the U.S. carriers in the Pacific (January-March 1942).

Attacks against Enemy Naval Forces in Harbor. Assuming that such operations are to be carried out by the weaker forces, opportunity is the most important element of this operation. The usual means of engagement chosen to achieve surprise are submarines, midget submarines, human torpedoes, or other special assault units. This does not, however, prohibit creativity on the part of the commander. Quality is most significant, size less so. In most cases, results will be far from decisive, but in certain circumstances they will have important strategic consequences (e.g., Alexandria, December 1941). Propaganda effects of a successful attack on an enemy harbor can be more important than the actual damage inflicted.

Examples include the sinking of the *Royal Oak* (Scapa Flow, 1939), the sinking of the *York* (Suda Bay, 1941), and the crippling of the *Queen Elizabeth* and the *Valiant* (Alexandria, 1941).

Submarine Operations. Observations noted for submarine operations in "Attack on Enemy Naval Forces" are also valid in the defensive. It is assumed here, however, that our own forces are inferior to those of the enemy and that submarine operations therefore become even more important.

Many examples can be found in both world wars, but recent examples are scarce. One occurred in the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971 when a Pakistani submarine sank an Indian frigate off the Indian Coast.

Offensive Mining. Considerations pertinent to offensive mining under the rubric of "Attack on Enemy Naval Forces" apply as well here. Examples include the sinking of the battleship *Audacious* (1914), the destruction of British Force "K" in the Mediterranean (1941), and the mining of British coastal waters in World Wars I and II.

Protective Mining. This course of action is a most effective one for enhancing security. An important advantage is that specialized units are not required. The rhythm as well as the probable duration of the mining effort are relevant to the

defeat of enemy countermeasures. Mass requirements are minimal. Geographical areas would be chosen with a view to denying them to the enemy.

Examples include German mining of the German Bight in World Wars I and II, Turkish mining of the Dardanelles in 1915, and the Russian mining of the Baltic Sea in both world wars.⁷

Fleet-in-Being. This is a highly controversial course of action which suggests itself when one's naval forces are inferior to those of the enemy's. As a general rule, the fleet-in-being substrategy should complement indecisive delaying actions. As long as the existence of a fleet-in-being remains effective, its credibility is maintained and efficiency and morale are kept at a high level.

The fleet-in-being would be kept in geographical areas close to its own bases or advanced anchorages. The dimension of the areas and proximity to one's own bases is determined by the distance to enemy bases and by the magnitude of the enemy's margin of superiority.

Relevant time considerations include duration (inasmuch as the fleet must be kept in a high state of efficiency for a considerable period of time) and opportunity (for making use of potential advantages). However, when the fleet is out of its bases to keep "pressure" on the enemy, the risk exists of the fleet being overcome by the enemy. On the other hand, if the fleet chooses to be completely inactive in order to avoid risks, it ceases to pose a credible threat to the enemy and its efficiency and morale will steadily decline.

Examples include the German High Seas Fleet (1914-18), the Austro-Hungarian Fleet (1914-18), the *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau*, and *Prinz Eugen* (in Brest, 1941-42), and the *Tirpitz* battle group (in Norway, 1942-44).

Attack on Territory the Enemy Holds

This strategy imposes upon the enemy the necessity for a heavy defensive effort because of his uncertainty as to where our forces will strike.

Amphibious Assault. An amphibious assault is the beginning of a campaign ashore, and consideration of such a campaign must loom large in planning the assault. As a general rule, an amphibious assault is a complex and massive operation involving a large variety of resources and requiring highly efficient command, control, communications, and intelligence.

The optimal use of opportunity will multiply the overall effect of the operation. Careful sequencing may be necessary to reach certain geographical positions in advance of, or in coordination with, launching an amphibious assault. This was the case in the Japanese assault on the Philippines in support of the 1941 southward advance, the German occupation of Denmark as part of *Weserübung* in 1940, and the Allied advance in the Pacific in 1942-45. Usually

a large mass is important to achieve initial superiority and to keep up the tempo in succeeding operations. Care should be taken to avoid injury to third parties on shore.

Examples include the assaults on the Dardanelles (1915), the Baltic Islands (1917), Norway (1940), North Africa (1942), the Pacific Islands (1942-45), Sicily and Italy (1943), Normandy (1944), and southern France (1944).

Amphibious Raid. Small in comparison to an amphibious assault, the amphibious raid is usually limited in space, time, and scope. Its purpose is to damage or destroy key facilities and impose upon the enemy the necessity of protecting his coastal areas. Geographical target areas are key points on the enemy coastline, chosen for either their significance or their vulnerability. Opportunity is imperative for the success of an amphibious raid. Mass does not have great significance, but the quality and efficiency of the forces committed are of major concern. Examples include Dieppe (1942), the commando raid on Rommel's headquarters in North Africa (1942), and the German raid on Spitsbergen (1943).

Naval Bombardment. Operations such as this normally have limited aims in space and scope and, as in an amphibious raid, impose upon the enemy the additional burden of protecting his coastal areas. It is employed against key geographic points on the enemy coastline.

As a general rule, opportunity and surprise should be emphasized. Additionally, if one possesses a distinct superiority, duration and rhythm can serve to enhance his supremacy. Mass factors in this situation dictate a size in proportion to the sought-after results.

Examples include the bombardment of the British coast by German battle cruisers (surprise, 1914-16), bombardment of Ancona by the Austro-Hungarian Fleet (surprise, 1915), bombardment of Stavanger by the cruiser *Suffolk* (surprise, 1940), bombardment of Narvik by British forces (superiority, 1940), bombardment of Genoa by French forces (surprise, 1940), bombardment of Genoa by the British (surprise, 1941), bombardment of Axis-held coastal areas by Soviet naval forces in the Black Sea (surprise, 1942), bombardment of Japanese coastal towns by the Americans (superiority, 1945), bombardment of Karachi by the Indians (superiority, 1971), and the bombardment of Puerto Argentino/Port Stanley by the British (superiority, 1982).

Naval Air Bombardment. Given the increased range of operations permitted when using naval air, more objectives may be reached by air than by gunfire. Participating naval forces also have greater freedom of action. The choice of geographical areas will be similar to that in naval bombardment, but will be greater because of the larger number of objectives, as well as of favorable launching positions available. Shipborne cruise missiles can be and have also been

assigned for air bombardment. Again, opportunity and rhythm are relevant and, complemented by a well-proportioned mass, will permit significant results.

Examples include the air raid on Tokyo in 1942, the Japanese raid on Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in the Indian Ocean in 1942, and the use of Tomahawk missiles in the air attacks on Baghdad in 1991.

Naval Support of Land Operations. When a land front has a maritime flank, ground operations normally require naval and naval air support, logistic support, raids, landings to outflank enemy positions, etc. Geographical areas will be selected on the basis of the location of the maritime flank, one's own bases and support positions, and the lines of communication between the two. The anticipated duration of these operations, related to one's capability to sustain the support effort, should be given careful consideration. Sequence could become a factor if it should be necessary to conquer, occupy, and develop certain key positions in the conduct of our operations. Should geography pose a natural barrier that protects support operations (e.g., the Dalmatian or Norwegian coasts), then mass requirements may be diminished.

Examples include the logistic support of the Austro-Hungarian southern front (1914-18), naval gunfire support to the British advance on Libya (1940), the logistic support of the German front in northern Norway (1941-45), the German amphibious landing on the Kuban Peninsula in the Black Sea (1942), the British landing on Bluff Cove/Bahia Agradable (1982), and the complex coalition naval support of the ground portion of "Desert Storm" in 1991.

Defense of Territory We Hold

As a general rule, it is vital that naval forces executing the following substrategies be complemented by land forces.

Engagement of Main Naval Forces. The purpose here is to destroy, contain, or wear down the enemy forces that threaten territory one holds. These operations include land-based aircraft employed as already described. Geographical areas involved are functions of the positions to be protected, and their dimensions are derived from the radii of action of the opposing forces. Opportunity and surprise should have their usual multiplying effect. Duration should be taken into account if the enemy threat persists beyond a certain length of time. Since the enemy will attempt to take the territory one holds only if he believes he has a significant superiority, our own naval operations would generally be limited to those which could be supported from nearby land.

Examples include the British Mediterranean Fleet's interdiction of German attempts at seaborne invasion of Crete (1941), the Americans in the Battle of

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STRATEGY	OBJECTIVE	SUBSTRATEGY/ COURSE OF ACTION	GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS	TIME CONSIDERATIONS	MASS
ATTACK ON TERRITORY HELD BY THE ENEMY	ENEMY HELD TERRITORY/ BASES/ KEY POINTS	AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT	AS REQUIRED BY LAND CAMPAIGN KEY POINTS	OPPORTUNITY SEQUENCE	LARGE
		AMPHIBIOUS RAID	KEY POINTS	OPPORTUNITY	MEDIUM TO SMALL
		NAVAL BOMBARDMENT	KEY POINTS	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM DURATION	MEDIUM TO LARGE
		NAVAL AIR BOMBARDMENT	KEY POINTS	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM	MEDIUM TO LARGE
		NAVAL SUPPORT OF LAND OPERATIONS	MARITIME FLANK OF A LAND FRONT	DURATION SEQUENCE	MEDIUM
DEFENSE OF TERRITORY WE HOLD	OWN TERRITORY/ BASES/ KEY POINTS	ENGAGEMENT OF MAIN NAVAL FORCES	CLOSE TO POSITION TO BE PROTECTED	OPPORTUNITY DURATION	LARGE TO MEDIUM
		ENGAGEMENT OF SHORE BASED AIR	CLOSE TO POSITION TO BE PROTECTED	RHYTHM DURATION	LARGE
		ENGAGEMENT OF LIGHT FORCES	CLOSE TO POSITION TO BE PROTECTED	OPPORTUNITY DURATION	MEDIUM TO SMALL
		PROTECTIVE MINING	OWN CONTROLLED AREAS	RHYTHM DURATION	MINIMUM
		IMPLEMENTATION OF COASTAL DEFENSES	CLOSE TO POSITION TO BE PROTECTED	DURATION	AS AVAILABLE
		NAVAL SUPPORT OF LAND OPERATIONS	MARITIME FLANK OF A LAND FRONT	DURATION SEQUENCE	MEDIUM

the Coral Sea (1942) and the struggle for Guadalcanal (1942), and the Japanese in the Marianas (1944) and Leyte Campaigns (1944).

Engagement of Shore-Based Air. Air operations are designed to destroy, contain, or wear down enemy forces that threaten the territory we hold. Shore-based air is generally used when naval forces do not have the mass necessary to engage the enemy naval forces. Geographical areas are defined by the radii of action of available aircraft, the relative positions of air bases, and the objectives to be protected. Duration and rhythm are prime considerations. As a general rule, mass should be large, for two reasons: first, to keep the necessary rhythm, and second, to allow for a possibly heavy attrition rate. As any professional could imagine, quality of mass is especially relevant in this case. Examples include the Luftwaffe attacks against the British Home Fleet off Norway (1940), *kanikaze* attacks against Allied naval forces in 1944-45, and Argentine air force and naval aviation attacks against the British task force in the Falklands/Malvinas (1982).

Engagement of Light Forces. Engaging forces that threaten the territory with light "home force" units can inhibit enemy amphibious operations and wear down the threatening force. Geographical areas involved should be close to threatened coastal positions. The short range of light forces will generally restrict their operations to coastal waters. Opportunity is a significant factor. The enemy may sustain his operations, thus requiring us to prepare our forces for engagement at any time in a prescribed period. A significant mass is not required, but results are related to the numbers committed; a significant loss of home units can be expected. Examples include the activities of Turkish torpedo boats at the Dardanelles (1915), of U.S. torpedo boats in the Philippines (1941-42) and at Guadalcanal (1942-43), of Axis fast motorboats at Salerno (1943), Anzio (1944), and Normandy (1944), and of Japanese midget submarines at Iwo Jima and Okinawa (1945).

Protective Mining. Considerations stated in protective mining under the heading "Defense against Enemy Naval Forces" are also valid here. An example is that of Wonsan, North Korea, in 1950. Another is that of the northern Persian Gulf in 1990-91.

Coastal Defenses. Usually installed near bases, important facilities, etc., coastal defenses have as their primary handicap the lack of mobility. On the other hand, their main advantages are their permanent location near something worth taking, their reasonable ease of maintenance, the effort usually required to destroy them, and their deterrent effect. As we saw both in the Falklands/Malvinas and the Persian Gulf, coastal antiship missiles are adding a new dimension here. Suitable geographical areas are relatively small zones placed according to positions to be

defended and weapon ranges. Duration is an especially important factor; there is a need to keep a high level of readiness over a considerable period of time. Examples include coastal defenses at Oslo (1940), Dakar (1940), Wake (1941), Singapore (1942), Casablanca (1942), the Japanese-held Pacific Islands (1942-45), Normandy (1944), Puerto Argentino/Port Stanley (1982), and Kuwait (1991).

Naval Support of Land Operations. As for naval support of land operations in attack territory the enemy holds, these operations are feasible on the maritime flank of a defensive land front, i.e., where our forces are holding a static line or are losing ground. Naval and air fire support, logistic support, raids, evacuations, and suchlike, are the courses of action usually available. Time and space considerations are the same as previously stated. There are no definite mass requirements, but results intended should be commensurate with the size of the available forces, unless geography provides some natural protection. Examples include the evacuations of the Serbian Army (1915-16), Durkirk (1940), the evacuation of Norway (1940) and of Greece and Crete (1941), the Soviet amphibious raids in Crimea (1941-42), and logistical and naval gunfire support of Sevastopol in those same years, the Japanese evacuation of Guadalcanal (1943), the German evacuation of Kuban bridgehead in the Black Sea (1943), the Axis retreat from Sicily (1943), German naval gunfire support on the Baltic coast (1943-45), the retreat from the Baltic Islands of Moon, Dago, and Osel (1944), the German evacuation of Sevastopol (1944) and of East Prussia (1945), and the holding action on the Pusan perimeter (Korea, 1950).

Attack on Enemy Sea Transportation

The objective here is to disrupt both military and commercial sea transportation. Priorities of the types of transportation to be disrupted depends on the nature of the conflict and the enemy's vulnerabilities. Geographical areas of concern are those where the enemy's sea lines of communication run, especially focal areas and restricted passages. Duration is particularly important because it is difficult to paralyze an enemy completely and immediately, and even when successful his stored supplies will allow him to maintain his war effort for some time.

Main Naval Forces Operations. The option of using principal combatants against sea transport can yield results of the utmost decisiveness, generally through major engagements. For this purpose, land-based aircraft are considered "naval forces." In this form of warfare, opportunity will have its usual effect. Rhythm should be kept in mind as a measure of our capability to hold the enemy's sea transportation under pressure. Mass requirements are significant because it is

reasonable to expect a strong enemy reaction, both to protect his shipping as well as to force an engagement upon us whenever circumstances are favorable to him. If naval or merchant ships of neutral parties are close to operational areas, constraint of operations through requiring positive identification of potential targets or restriction on the use of certain weapons may be necessary. Examples include the operations of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* against British shipping in the Atlantic (1941) and those of Task Force 38 against Japanese shipping in the South China Sea (1945).

Minor Naval Forces Operations. In this context, minor naval forces are defined as comprising only a moderate number of units, with no capital ships. Of course, shore-based air support is desirable. Experience indicates that these actions involve a certain amount of "hit and run" tactics. Geographical areas would be determined by the proximity of one's bases to an enemy line of communication and the radii of action of the units to be committed. To avoid engagement between our raiding forces and enemy escort or covering groups, or to engage them with the utmost advantage, proper use of opportunity and surprise is essential. A reasonable mass would be one which maintains some degree of rhythm over a given duration, as in the case of Malta Striking Forces (Force K, 1941). Political constraints in regard to neutral parties are similar to those depicted in main naval forces operations. Examples include the *Brunner* and *Bremse* versus the Norwegian convoy (October 1917), the German destroyer group versus the Norwegian convoy (December 1917), British Force "K" versus Axis lines of communication to North Africa (1941), German destroyer group versus PQ13/QP9 (March 1941), German destroyer group versus QP11 (April 1942), and Axis aircraft and torpedo boats versus the convoy *Pedestal* (August 1942).

Surface Raider Operations. This course of action generally supplements other operations against enemy sea transportation. The diversified threat to the enemy may lead him to disperse his protection effort. Basic geographical considerations such as sea lines of communications, focal areas, and restricted passages apply here; however, it should be taken into account that surface raiders operate primarily in secondary areas, far from enemy power concentrations, for the purpose of avoiding detection and engagement (and destruction) by superior enemy forces. In addition to duration, opportunity is vital to the success of raiders. There are no definite mass requirements, but obviously the larger the number of raiders, the better the expected results since the burden on the enemy to protect himself is heightened. Normally, however, only slight impact upon the enemy's sea transportation can be achieved by surface raiders. The greatest constraint on the surface raider operations lies in the requirement for positive target identification, one which could "backfire" on the raiders since doing so

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STRATEGY	OBJECTIVE	SUBSTRATEGY/ COURSE OF ACTION	GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS	TIME CONSIDERATIONS	MASS
ATTACK ON ENEMY SEA TRANSPORTATION	ENEMY SEA TRANSPORTATION	MAIN NAVAL FORCES OPERATIONS	SLOCS FOCAL AREAS RESTRICTED PASSAGES	DURATION OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM	MEDIUM TO LARGE
		MINOR NAVAL FORCES OPERATIONS	SLOCS FOCAL AREAS RESTRICTED PASSAGES	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM DURATION	MEDIUM
		SURFACE RAIDERS OPERATIONS	SLOCS FOCAL AREAS RESTRICTED PASSAGES	DURATION OPPORTUNITY	AS AVAILABLE
		SUBMARINE OPERATIONS	SLOCS FOCAL AREAS RESTRICTED PASSAGES	DURATION RHYTHM	AS AVAILABLE
		OFFENSIVE MINING	FOCAL AREAS RESTRICTED PASSAGES	OPPORTUNITY RHYTHM	MEDIUM TO SMALL
		BLOCKADE/ BOTTLING/ OBSTRUCTION	ENEMY HARBORS AND/OR APPROACHES	DURATION (OPPORTUNITY FOR BOTTLING)	LARGE (LESS RELEVANT FOR BOTTLING)
DEFENSE OF OWN SEA TRANSPORTATION	OWN SEA TRANSPORTATION	DISTANT COVER/ SUPPORT	SLOCS FOCAL AREAS RESTRICTED PASSAGES	DURATION RHYTHM	MEDIUM TO LARGE
		CLOSE ESCORT	CLOSE TO ENTITY TO BE PROTECTED	DURATION RHYTHM	AS AVAILABLE
		PROTECTIVE MINING	OWN CONTROLLED AREAS	RHYTHM DURATION	MINIMUM
		NAVAL CONTROL OF SHIPPING	SLOCS FOCAL AREAS RESTRICTED PASSAGES	DURATION	MINIMUM

discloses their own location. Examples include the warships *Emden*, *Königsberg*, and *Karlsruhe* (1914-15), the merchant raiders *Seeadler*, *Möwe*, and *Wolf* (World War I), the warships *Admiral Graf Spee*, *Admiral Scheer*, *Deutschland*, and *Hipper* (1939-41), and the merchant raiders *Pinguin*, *Kormoran*, *Atlantis*, and *Komet* (World War II).

Submarine Operations. The evidence is clear that submarine operations can disrupt an enemy's sea transportation system while also forcing him to heighten his protection in an effort to keep his losses at a reasonable level. Duration is a key consideration, but rhythm is also significant. The success of rhythm is dependent upon mass, which fixes the number of active units, and on our capability for replacing losses. Some operations may be constrained by the need for positive identification of targets in order to avoid attacks on neutral ships. Examples include the German submarine campaigns (World Wars I and II), the U.S. submarine campaign against Japan (World War II), and submarine operations by both sides in the Mediterranean (1940-43).

Offensive Mining. This is a highly effective operation which helps to overburden the enemy's effort to defend his sea transportation system. Depths suitable for mining should be taken into account. Duration is a key consideration, and rhythm is significant as a measure of capability to replenish minefields in the face of the enemy's countermining efforts. Mass is not the foremost consideration, given an adequate number of mines and minelayers. Political constraints are similar to those stated for offensive mining as part of an "Attack on Enemy Naval Forces," i.e., the possibility of neutral parties being in areas selected for mining. Examples include the mining of British coastal waters by German forces in World War II, the mining of Japanese coastal waters (1944-45), and British mining of the German Baltic coast in 1945.

Blockade, Bottling or Obstruction of Enemy Harbors or Their Approaches. The considerations applicable to naval blockade, bottling, or obstruction of enemy bases or their approaches as part of attacks on enemy naval forces are also pertinent here. Geographical areas are those close to enemy harbors of interest and their approaches. Examples include British blockade of German harbors (World Wars I and II), the Allied Otranto barrage at the mouth of the Adriatic, (1917-18), and German closure of Russians from Baltic and Black Sea harbors (World Wars I and II).

Defense of Our Sea Transportation

The objective of this strategy is to preserve our sea transportation system while counteracting enemy threats. The most likely geographical areas are those where

our sea lines of communication run, especially focal areas and restricted passages. Enemy persistence should be expected; therefore duration is a primary consideration.

Distant Cover and Support. This course of action is normally executed by naval forces keeping station at certain distance from the ship or convoy to be protected. Shore-based air should be used whenever possible. Duration and rhythm are important; rhythm is significant to enhance our capability to meet various threats either simultaneously or successively. Mass requirements are significant, and our forces engaged in support operations must be able to protect themselves as well as the defended units. Examples include naval protection of Axis and allied shipping in the Mediterranean (1940-43) and of Allied shipping in the Atlantic (1939-45) and en route to Murmansk (1941-45). It was a British covering force that sank the *Scharnhorst* (1943).

Close Escort. As for distant cover and support, close escort is performed by naval forces and, if available, by shore-based air. Duration and rhythm remain important considerations. Mass requirements are less significant, but in all cases the escort must be enough to defeat enemy efforts against the units. Examples include the protection of Axis and Allied shipping in the Mediterranean (1940-43), and of Allied shipping in the Atlantic (1939-45) and to Murmansk (1941-45). It was a British close escort force that protected a convoy being attacked by *Lutzow*, *Hipper*, and a destroyer group and that contained them until the arrival of a cruiser covering force, which led to the German withdrawal (31 December 1942).

Protective Mining. All considerations stated earlier about protective mining apply here.

Naval Control of Shipping. The aim of this "passive" protection is to hinder enemy operations against our sea transportation system by way of designating sea routes, schedules, departure from and arrival at harbors, and so on. General spatial considerations hold in this case. Duration factors are also applicable. As administrative organization suffices, mass requirements are minimal.

Conclusion

This paper does not pretend to summarize the whole of the art of naval warfare. Most probably, a commander facing a difficult real-time decision in the future will find that his particular case is not described here. It is hoped, however, that these ideas will stimulate a fruitful discussion among professionals.

Notes

This paper was based on 3.1 of *Contribución Académica No 12: Estrategia Operacional*, by José M. Cohen, Guillermo J. Montenegro, and Ventura J. Reverter, (Buenos Aires: Escuela de Guerra Naval, 1987), pp. 82-105.

1. Throughout this paper, "strategy" is used in the sense defined by *Webster's II: New Riverside University Dictionary* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), p. 1145: "1. The science or art of military command as applied to the overall planning and conduct of large-scale combat operations. 2. A plan of action resulting from the practice of strategy. . . ."

2. George E. Tbibault, comp., *The Dimensions of Military Strategy* (Washington: National Defense University, 1987), p. 344.

3. Though not inspired by it, this paper has a certain resemblance to some concepts in G. Till, *Maritime Strategy and the Nuclear Age* (New York: St. Martin's, 1984), Figure 2, p. 15.

4. *Ibid.*, chapters 4, 5, 6. This approach also bears some resemblance to Frank Uhlig, Jr.'s "Naval Tactics: Examples and Analogies," *Naval War College Review*, March-April, 1981, p. 93.

5. See the concept of sequential strategy in J.C. Wylie, *Military Strategy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1967), pp. 23-29. This concept is reproduced in J.L. Collins, *Grand Strategy* (Annapolis, U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1973), pp. 15-16.

6. Throughout this paper the concept of offensive mining covers both offensive and defensive minefields as defined by JCS-1, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1986), pp. 107, 156.

7. Protective mining, as used in this paper, applies in the sense of protective minefields as defined by JCS-1, p. 287.

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