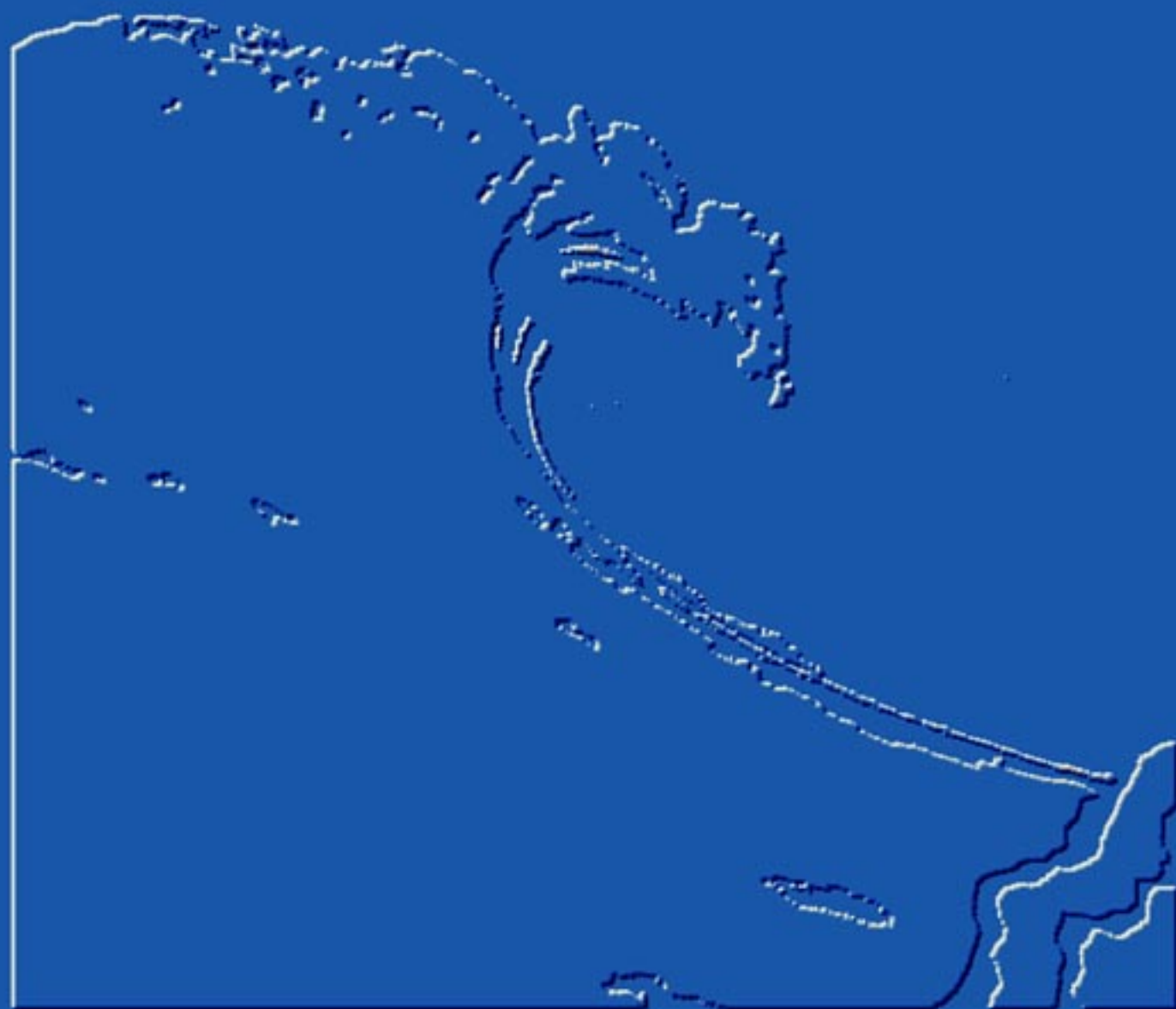


FORWARD

...FROM THE SEA



FORWARD

... FROM THE SEA




Department of the Navy
Washington


FORWARD


...FROM THE SEA

In 1992 the Navy-Marine Corps paper **...FROM THE SEA** defined the strategic concept intended to carry the Naval Service—the Navy and Marine Corps—beyond the Cold War and into the 21st century. It signaled a change in focus and, therefore, in priorities for the Naval Service away from operations on the sea toward power projection and the employment of naval forces from the sea to influence events in the littoral regions of the world—those areas adjacent to the oceans and seas that are within direct control of and vulnerable to the striking power of sea-based forces.

The purpose of U.S. naval forces remains to project the power and influence of the nation across the seas to foreign waters and shores in both peace and war. **FORWARD ...FROM THE SEA** updates and expands the strategic concept articulated in our 1992 paper to address specifically the unique contributions of naval expeditionary forces in peacetime operations, in responding to crises, and in regional conflicts. **FORWARD ...FROM THE SEA** amplifies the scope of our strategic concept while confirming the course and speed for the Naval Service as defined in the original document.


John H. Dalton
Secretary of the Navy


Admiral J. M. Boorda, USN
Chief of Naval Operations


General Carl E. Mundy, Jr., USMC
Commandant of the Marine Corps



INTRODUCTION

With the publication of **...FROM THE SEA** in September 1992, the Navy and Marine Corps announced a landmark shift in operational focus and a reordering of coordinated priorities of the Naval Service. This fundamental shift was a direct result of the changing strategic landscape—away from having to deal with a global maritime threat and toward projecting power and influence across the seas in response to regional challenges.

In the two years since **...FROM THE SEA** became our strategic concept, the Administration has provided expanded guidance on the role of the military in national defense. A major review of strategy and force requirements resulted in a shift in the Department of Defense's focus to new dangers—chief among which is aggression by regional powers—and the necessity for our military forces to be able to rapidly project decisive military power to protect vital U.S. interests and defend friends and allies. In defining our national strategy for responding to these new dangers, the review emphasized the importance of maintaining forward-deployed naval forces and recognized the impact of peacetime operational tempo on the size of Navy and Marine Corps force structure. In addition to recognizing the unique contributions of the Navy and Marine Corps in the areas of power projection and forward presence, it restated the need for the Navy to support the national strategic objectives through our enduring contributions in strategic deterrence, sea control and maritime supremacy, and strategic sealift.

FORWARD ...FROM THE SEA addresses these naval contributions to our national security. Most fundamentally, our naval forces are designed to fight and win wars. Our most recent experiences, however, underscore the premise that the most important role of naval forces in situations short of war is to be *engaged* in forward areas, with the objectives of *preventing* conflicts and *controlling* crises.

Naval forces thus are the foundation of peacetime forward presence operations and overseas response to crisis. They contribute heavily during the transitions from crisis to conflict and to ensuring compliance with terms of peace. At the same time, the unique capabilities inherent in naval expeditionary forces have never been in higher demand from U.S. theater commanders—the regional Commanders-in-Chief—as evidenced by operations in Somalia, Haiti, Cuba, and Bosnia, as well as our continuing contribution to the enforcement of United Nations sanctions against Iraq.



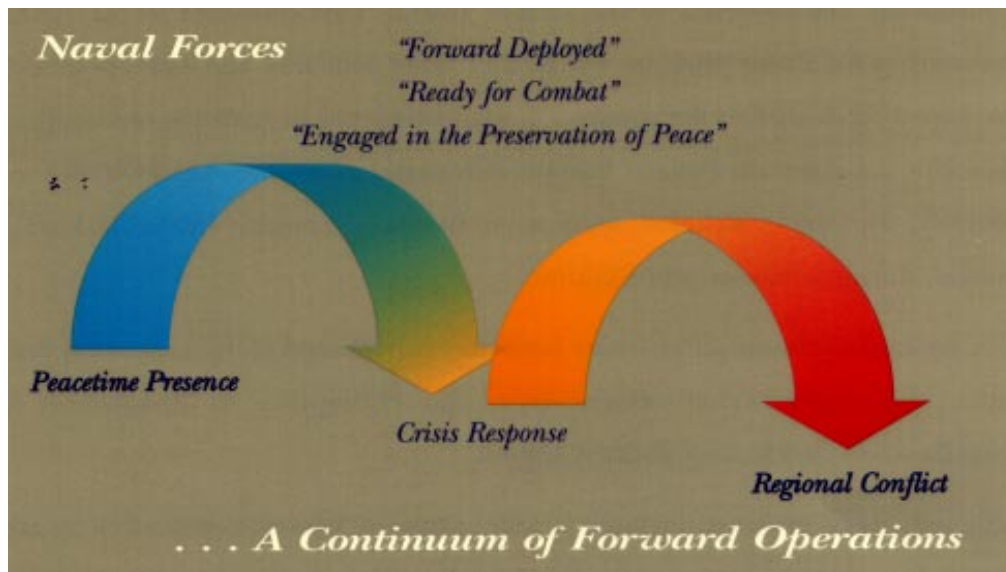
THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

The vital economic, political, and military interests of the United States are truly global in nature and scope. In many respects these interests are located across broad oceans, and to a great extent they intersect those of current and emergent regional powers. It is in the world's littorals where the Naval Service, operating from sea bases in international waters, can influence events ashore in support of our interests.

Because we are a maritime nation, our security strategy is necessarily a transoceanic one. Our vital interests—those interests for which the United States is willing to fight—are at the endpoint of “highways of the seas” or lines of strategic approach that stretch from the United States to the farthest point on the globe. Not surprisingly, these strategic lines and their endpoints coincide with the places to which we routinely deploy naval expeditionary forces: the Atlantic, Mediterranean, Pacific, Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and Caribbean Sea. Reductions in fiscal resources, however, dictate that we must refocus our more limited naval assets on the highest priorities and the most immediate challenges, even within these areas of historic and vital interest to the United States.

Naval forces are particularly well-suited to the entire range of military operations in support of our national strategy. They continue the historic role of naval forces engaged in preventive diplomacy and otherwise supporting our policies overseas. Moreover, forward-deployed naval forces—manned, equipped, and trained for combat—play a significant role in demonstrating both the intention and the capability to join our NATO and other allies, as well as other friendly powers, in defending shared interests. Finally, if deterrence fails during a crisis and conflict erupts, naval forces provide the means for immediate sea-based reaction. This could include forcible entry and providing the protective cover essential to enabling the flow of follow-on forces which will be deployed, supported, and sustained from the continental United States.

In short, forward-deployed naval forces will provide the critical operational linkages between peacetime operations and the initial requirements of a developing crisis or major regional contingency.



PEACETIME FORWARD PRESENCE OPERATIONS

Naval forces are an indispensable and exceptional instrument of American foreign policy. From conducting routine port visits to nations and regions that are of special interest, to sustaining larger demonstrations of support to long-standing regional security interests, such as with UNITAS exercises in South America, U.S. naval forces underscore U.S. diplomatic initiatives overseas. Indeed, the critical importance of a credible overseas presence is emphasized in the President's 1994 National Security Strategy:

... presence demonstrates our commitment to allies and friends, underwrites regional stability, gains U.S. familiarity with overseas operating environments, promotes combined training among the forces of friendly countries, and provides timely initial response capabilities.

In peacetime U.S. naval forces build "interoperability"—the ability to operate in concert with friendly and allied forces—so that in the future we can easily participate fully as part of a formal multinational response or as part of "ad hoc" coalitions forged to react to short-notice crisis situations. Participation in both NATO Standing Naval Forces and in a variety of exercises with the navies, air forces, and land forces of coalition partners around the Pacific rim, Norwegian Sea, Arabian Gulf, and Mediterranean basin provide solid foundations for sustaining interoperability with our friends and allies.



Additionally, the outreach to the former Warsaw Pact countries in the NATO Partnership for Peace program will further build solidarity and interoperability. We have already made solid progress in expanding and intensifying our cooperation with the navies in Eastern Europe with exercises such as BALTOPS 94 and BREEZE 94, which included units from Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, and Ukraine.

U.S. forward-deployed naval forces have also contributed to humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief efforts—from the Philippines to Bangladesh to Rwanda—with similar, very positive, results.

Although naval presence includes a wide range of forward-deployed Navy *and* Marine Corps units afloat and ashore in friendly nations, our basic presence “building blocks” remain *Aircraft Carrier Battle Groups* — with versatile, multipurpose, naval tactical aviation wings — and *Amphibious Ready Groups* — with special operations-capable Marine Expeditionary Units. These highly flexible naval formations are valued by the theater commanders precisely because they provide the necessary capabilities forward. They are ready and positioned to respond to the wide range of contingencies and are available to participate in allied exercises, which are the bedrock of interoperability.

We have also turned our attention to examining the naval capabilities that could contribute to extending conventional deterrence. In this regard, forward-deployed surface warships—cruisers and destroyers—with theater ballistic missile defense capabilities will play an increasingly important role in discouraging the proliferation of ballistic missiles by extending credible defenses to friendly and allied countries. By maintaining the means to enhance their security and safety, we may reduce the likelihood that some of these nations will develop their own offensive capabilities. Our efforts will thereby slow weapons proliferation and enhance regional stability.

In addition, even as we have shifted our emphasis to forward presence and power projection from sea to land, the Navy continues to provide a robust strategic nuclear deterrent by maintaining strategic ballistic missile submarines at sea. As long as it is U.S. policy to ensure an adequate and ready strategic nuclear deterrent, our highly survivable strategic ballistic missile submarines will remain critical to national security.



CRISIS RESPONSE

U.S. naval forces are designed to fight and win wars, as are all elements of our military arsenal. To successfully deter aggressors, we must be capable of responding quickly and successfully in support of U.S. theater commanders. Forces deployed for routine exercises and activities undergirding forward presence are also the forces most likely to be called upon to respond rapidly to an emerging crisis. The potential for escalation dictates that presence forces must be shaped for missions they may encounter. This provides theater commanders with credible crisis-response capabilities in the event normal conditions or outcomes do not turn out as we expect.

Building on normally deployed forces, we can mass, if the situation requires, multiple Aircraft Carrier Battle Groups into Carrier Battle Forces, Amphibious Ready Groups with embarked Marine Expeditionary Units, and as needed project our naval expeditionary forces ashore using the afloat Maritime Prepositioning Force. Such a massing of naval units can be complemented by the deployment of Army and Air Force units to provide a joint force capable of the full range of combat operations that may be required.

A U.S. warship is sovereign U.S. territory, whether in a port of a friendly country or transiting international straits and the high seas. U.S. naval forces, operating from highly mobile “sea bases” in forward areas, are therefore free of the political encumbrances that may inhibit and otherwise limit the scope of land-based operations in forward theaters. The latter consideration is a unique characteristic and advantage of forward-deployed naval forces. In many critical situations, U.S. naval forces alone provide theater commanders with a variety of flexible options—including precise measures to control escalation—respond quickly and appropriately to fast-breaking developments at the operational and tactical levels.

Whether surging from adjacent theaters or from continental U.S. deployment bases, naval forces are uniquely positioned, configured, and trained to provide a variety of responses in the event of an unexpected international crisis. Their operational flexibility and responsiveness are a matter of record. The most recent examples of crisis-response operations are summarized here.



Sharing of Major Forces between Theaters/Operations

<i>Date</i>	<i>Forces</i>	<i>Original Deployment</i>	<i>Crisis Location</i>
December 1992	USS <i>Ranger</i> Battle Group USS <i>Tripoli</i> Amphibious Ready Group/15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC)*	Persian Gulf	Somalia Humanitarian Relief
January 1993	USS <i>Kitty Hawk</i> Battle Group	Somalia	Persian Gulf Strike Operation Against Iraq
June 1993	USS <i>Theodore Roosevelt</i> Battle Group	Mediterranean/Adriatic	Red Sea Support of Tomahawk Strike Against Iraq
October 1993	USS <i>America</i> Battle Group USS <i>Guadalcanal</i> Amphibious Ready Group 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC)*	Mediterranean/Adriatic	Somalia Response to Increasing Casualties on Land
April 1994	USS <i>Peleliu</i> Amphibious Ready Group/ 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC)*	Somalia	Mombasa Support of Distant Runner-Rwanda Non-combatant Evacuation Operations
August 1994	USS <i>Tripoli</i> Amphibious Ready Group/15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC)*	Mombasa	Entebbe, Uganda to Rwanda Humanitarian Relief
October 1994	USS <i>George Washington</i> Battle Group USS <i>Tripoli</i> Amphibious Ready Group/15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC)*	Mediterranean/Adriatic	Persian Gulf/Red Sea Iraq

*SOC – Special Operations Capable

REGIONAL CONFLICT

Naval forces make a critical contribution in a major regional contingency during the transition from crisis to conflict. Forward naval forces deployed for presence and reinforced in response to an emerging crisis can serve as the transition force as land-based forces are brought forward into theater.

Using a building-block approach, U.S. naval forces can be “tailored” with specific capabilities. The resulting naval expeditionary force—conceptually built around fleet operational forces and a forward-deployed Marine Expeditionary Force—can provide a highly flexible force for a wide range of missions, including long-range strike operations and early forcible entry to facilitate or enable the arrival of follow-on forces.



Focusing on the littoral area, Navy and Marine Corps forces can seize and defend advanced bases—ports and airfields—to enable the flow of land-based air and ground forces, while providing the necessary command and control for joint and allied forces. The power-projection capabilities of specifically tailored naval expeditionary forces can contribute to blunting an initial attack and, ultimately, assuring victory. The keys to our enabling mission are effective means *in place* to dominate and exploit littoral battlespace during the earliest phases of hostilities.

Moreover, the unique capabilities inherent in naval tactical aviation operating from our sea bases or expeditionary airfields, as well as the capability to contribute to sustained land combat operations, provide theater commanders with flexibility in the conduct of littoral operations. Throughout the 20th century, Marine Air-Ground Task Forces, placed ashore initially as enabling forces, have fought and contributed decisively in every major ground conflict. Similarly, naval tactical aviation has made pivotal contributions when the nation's air power was needed in combat.

In the event of a future regional conflict, U.S. naval forces will assume critical roles in the protection of vital sealift along the strategic lines of approach to the theater of conflict, including the air- and sea-ports of debarkation. Our success in a major regional contingency will depend upon the delivery of heavy equipment and the resupply of major ground and air elements engaged forward. Sealift is the key to force sustainment for joint operations, and we are committed to a strong national capability.

JOINT AND COMBINED OPERATIONS

No single military service embodies all of the capabilities needed to respond to every situation and threat. Our national strategy calls for the individual services to operate jointly to ensure both that we can operate successfully in all warfare areas and that we can apply our military power across the spectrum of foreseeable situations—in peace, crisis, regional conflict, and the subsequent restoration of peace.

The enhanced combat power produced by the integration of all supporting arms, which we seek to attain through joint operations, is inherent in naval expeditionary forces. For example, the Aircraft Carrier Battle Group integrates and focuses diverse technologies and combat capabilities to assure the dominance of the air,



surface, and sub-surface battle space necessary for the prosecution of subsequent campaigns. Further, Marine Expeditionary Forces, employing Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) combined-arms doctrine, are the most versatile expeditionary forces in existence. Established by law to be “forces of combined arms, together with supporting air components,” MAGTFs are expeditionary, rapidly expandable air-ground formations, capable of operating from sea bases, ashore, or both, simultaneously. They are the model for the joint air-ground task forces evolving as conflicts grow smaller and the forces available grow fewer.

Naval expeditionary forces have long operated as integral elements of joint forces acting with other joint or allied sea, land, air, and space forces. Just as the complementary capabilities of Navy and Marine Corps forces add to our overall strength, combining the capabilities and resources of other services and those of our allies will yield decisive military power.

MAINTAINING OUR NEW DIRECTION

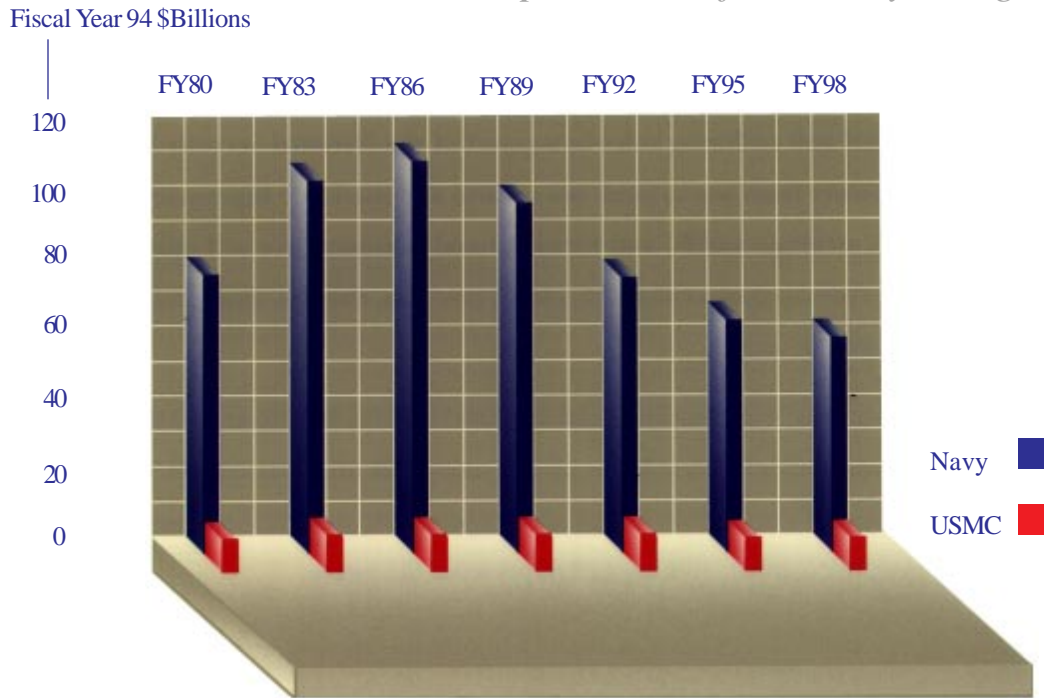
The new direction for the Naval Service remains focused on our ability to project power from the sea in the critical littoral regions of the world. We remain committed to structuring our naval expeditionary forces so that they are inherently shaped for joint operations, with the emphasis on operations forward from the sea, tailored for national needs. Recent Department of the Navy budget decisions, which resulted in a real increase in spending on littoral warfare and the means for power projection, are illustrative of the shift in priorities we have undertaken since the publication of **...FROM THE SEA**. As we continue to improve our readiness to project power in the littorals, we need to proceed cautiously so as not to jeopardize our readiness for the full spectrum of missions and functions for which we are responsible.

In the two years since **...FROM THE SEA** was published, we have expanded on and capitalized upon its traditional expeditionary focus. “Expeditionary” implies a mind set, a culture, and a commitment to forces that are designed to be deployed forward and to respond swiftly. Our new direction provides the nation:

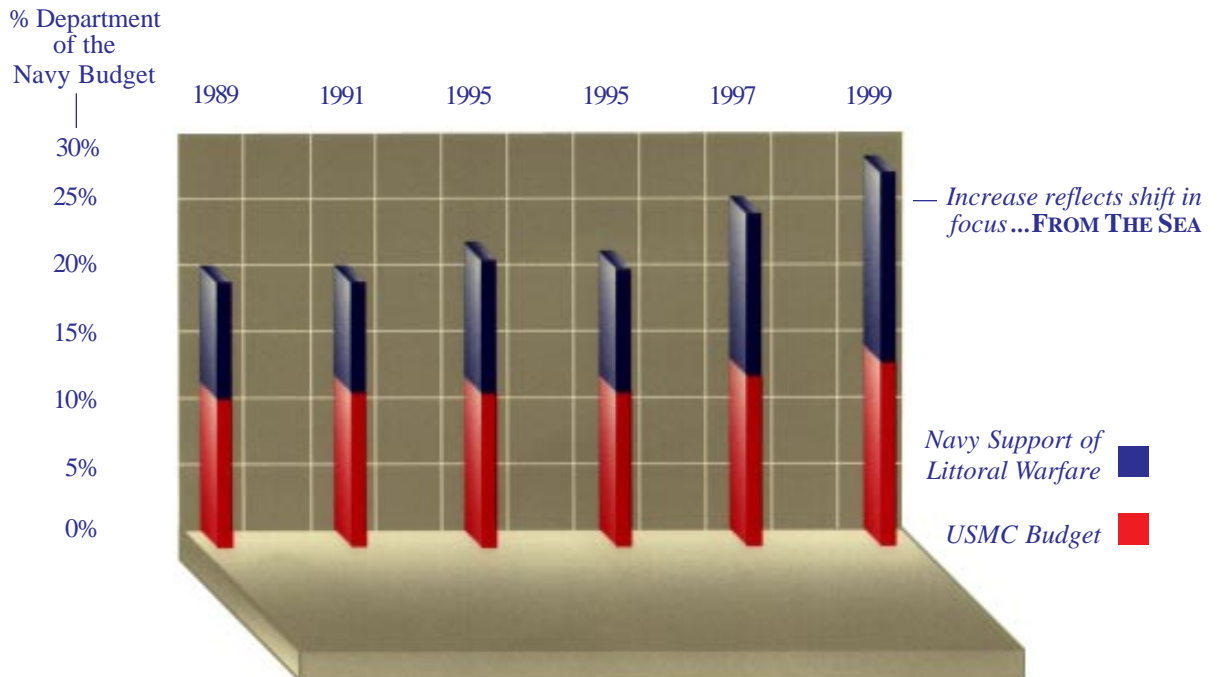
- * Naval Expeditionary Forces
- * Shaped for Joint Operations
- * Tailored for National Needs
- * Operating **FORWARD ...FROM THE SEA**



Department of the Navy Budget History



Department of the Navy Support of Littoral Warfare





CONCLUSION

.. **F**ROM THE SEA was the initial step in demonstrating how the Navy and Marine Corps responded to the challenges of a new security environment. Our strategy and policies continue to evolve as we learn from our recent experiences and prepare for the new challenges and opportunities of this highly dynamic world. Naval forces have five fundamental and enduring roles in support of the National Security Strategy: projection of power from sea to land, sea control and maritime supremacy, strategic deterrence, strategic sealift, and forward naval presence. We will continue to carry out these roles to protect vital U.S. global interests, citizens, allies and friends, wherever they may be at risk.

The Cold War may be over, but the need for American leadership and commensurate military capability endures. Many of our most vital interests remain overseas where the Navy and the Marine (Corps are prepared for new challenges—*forward* deployed, **ready** for combat, and **engaged** to preserve the peace.