Chapter 2

The Nature of Expeditionary Operations

"Since men live upon the land and not upon the sea, great issues between nations at war have always been decided—except in the rarest cases—either by what your army can do against your enemy's territory and national life or else by the fear of what the fleet makes it possible for your army to do."[1]

—Julian S. Corbett

"Word came on May 27 that another revolution was in full swing at Bluefields, on the east coast of Nicaragua. We received orders to leave at eight thirty in the morning and by eleven thirty were on our way—two hundred and fifty officers and men. Mrs. Butler had [gone] . . . to do some shopping. When she returned at noon, I was gone . . . ."[2]

—Smedley D. Butler

Based on the wide variety of overseas crises and conflicts described in chapter 1, this chapter discusses the nature and requirements of expeditionary operations and the Marine Corps' role in and approach to their conduct.

NATIONAL INTERESTS, CRISIS PREVENTION, AND CRISIS RESPONSE

Chapter 1 described a chaotic world where threats to U.S. interests may arise quickly and in unexpected places. The national security strategy places these interests into three categories: vital interests of broad, overriding importance to the survival, safety, and vitality of the United States; important interests that affect national well-being; and humanitarian interests.[3]

History teaches that our nation's interests are less likely to be threatened when other nations are at peace, and their political, economic, and social systems are relatively stable. Therefore, peacetime deterrence is one of the military's most important roles in shaping the international environment. A capable military and the resolve to use it against a potential adversary are key to effective deterrence. By preventing a potential belligerent from taking actions that threaten the interests of the United States or our allies, the military helps promote regional stability and fosters an environment where

differences and issues can be resolved or addressed peacefully.

Even with the best efforts at deterrence, complex and chaotic conditions in the world will inevitably produce crisis and conflict. Therefore, protection of the interests of the United States and its allies demands an effective crisis-response capability—the ability to respond quickly and effectively to a wide variety of potentially dangerous situations. Not all crises require a military response. However, when diplomatic, economic, and informational power prove inadequate, the ability to apply military power is essential to the protection of national interests. Military action may not be the preferred solution, and it may be used infrequently, but under some conditions the United States will inevitably find it necessary to use military force.

An effective military response to an overseas crisis involving U.S. interests often requires the expeditionary capability to intervene or interpose in foreign political controversies. A military intervention is the deliberate act of a nation or group of nations to introduce its military forces into the course of an existing controversy in order to influence events. A military interposition, on the other hand, is the deliberate act of a nation to introduce military forces into a foreign country during a crisis to protect its citizens from harm without otherwise becoming involved in the course of the crisis. The ability to act swiftly in such circumstances may be the best way to contain, resolve, or

mitigate the consequences of a crisis that could otherwise become more costly and deadly.

Crisis response requires the full spectrum of military capabilities, including the capability for forcible entry—the introduction of military forces in the face of organized, armed resistance. National interest requires an expeditionary crisis-response force specifically organized, trained, equipped, and deployed to project military power overseas. Because of the unpredictability of potential crises, such crisis-response forces should be designed with a broad range of capabilities rather than in response to a specific threat. Such a rapid-response, general-purpose force must maintain itself in a continuous state of readiness, ready to deploy rapidly by both air and sea and able to adapt to a broad range of operating environments on short notice.

EXPEDITIONARY OPERATIONS DEFINED AND DISCUSSED

An expedition is a military operation conducted by an armed force to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country.[4] The missions of military expeditions may vary widely. Examples of missions of military expeditions include providing humanitarian assistance in times of disaster or disruption;

establishing and keeping peace in a foreign country; protecting U.S. citizens or commerce abroad; retaliating for an act of aggression by a foreign political group; and destroying an enemy government by defeating its armed forces in combat.

The defining characteristic of expeditionary operations is the projection of force into a foreign setting.[5] By definition, an expedition thus involves the deployment of military forces to the scene of the crisis or conflict and their requisite support some significant distance from their home bases. These forces may already have been forward-deployed, as in the case of a Marine expeditionary unit (special operations capable), deployed aboard Navy amphibious ships and ready for immediate employment, or they may be required to deploy from their home bases in response to a developing situation. Expeditionary operations involve the establishment of forward bases, land or sea, from which military power can be brought to bear on the situation. An expeditionary operation thus requires the temporary creation of a support apparatus necessary to sustain the operation to its conclusion. Logistics, the movement and maintenance of forces—the "mounting" of the expedition—is thus a central consideration in the conduct of expeditionary operations.[6]

In some cases an expeditionary force may accomplish its mission without the direct application of coercive force by merely establishing a visible and credible presence nearby. However, this indirect influence can result only from the perception of a nation's capability and willingness to physically

establish military forces on foreign soil if necessary, and so the ability to project a physical presence remains central. Furthermore, in some situations presence must be established in the face of hostile resistance—that is, through forcible entry.

All expeditions involve the projection of power into a foreign setting. However, it is important to recognize that not all power projection constitutes expeditionary operations; power projection is a necessary component but not a sufficient condition by itself to constitute an expeditionary operation. Operations that do not involve actual deployment of forces are not expeditionary operations.

Power projection does not imply that expeditionary operations are by definition offensive. The initial deployment of forces to the Persian Gulf in 1990, Operation Desert Shield, had the mission of defending Saudi Arabia against an Iraqi attack. Only when the defense of Saudi Arabia was secured did Desert Shield give way to preparations for Desert Storm, the offensive to liberate Kuwait. Desert Storm in turn gave way to Operation Provide Comfort, a humanitarian mission to protect Kurds against Iraqi attacks and to provide food, water, and shelter for thousands of Kurdish refugees along the Turkish border.

An expeditionary force need not be primarily a ground combat organization. Even in humanitarian operations, an expeditionary force will invariably include some ground forces, if only to provide local security. However, the composition of an

expeditionary force depends on the requirements of the mission. For example, an expeditionary force may consist of aviation units to operate and fly missions out of an expeditionary airfield, supported by only a small security force. In disaster relief or refugee control missions, the predominant forces may be combat service support.

Expeditionary forces vary significantly in size and composition. The American Expeditionary Force, for example, that fought in the First World War eventually totaled some two million troops in 42 infantry divisions plus supporting organizations. The special purpose MAGTF that conducted Operation Eastern Exit, the evacuation of the U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu, Somalia, in 1991, consisted of a reinforced helicopter squadron, a combat service support detachment, and less than one battalion of infantry embarked on two amphibious ships.

Expeditionary operations may also vary greatly in scope, ranging from full-scale combat to noncombat missions. Operation Desert Storm was an overwhelming offensive to defeat Iraqi forces by offensive air and mechanized ground operations following a massive, deliberate buildup of forces and supplies. Operation Assured Response in April 1996 was much more limited, consisting of the evacuation by the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (special operations capable) of more than 2,100 people from Liberia in the face of sporadic violence.

The term “expeditionary” implies a temporary duration with the intention to withdraw from foreign soil after the

accomplishment of the specified mission. The American Expeditionary Force first helped repulse German offensives in France in the spring of 1918 and then participated in continuous combat until the end of the war in November, at which point it returned home. In contrast, Operation Eastern Exit, the evacuation of the U.S. embassy in Somalia in 1991, was of much shorter duration. From the time the U.S. Ambassador requested military assistance to the time the evacuees were offloaded in Oman, the expedition lasted 10 days, although the actual evacuation operation, from the launching of the first wave of helicopters to the return of the last wave with the withdrawing security force, lasted only 24 hours. An operation that involves a permanent or indefinite presence supported by a standing organization and infrastructure such as the U.S. forces stationed in Europe, Japan, or Korea ceases to be an expedition and becomes a permanent station.

The term "expeditionary" also implies austere conditions and support. This does not mean that an expeditionary force is necessarily small or lightly equipped, but that it is no larger or heavier than necessary to accomplish the mission. Supplies, equipment, and infrastructure are limited to operational necessities; amenities are strictly minimized. Expeditionary bases or airfields, for example, provide less than the full range of support typically associated with permanent stations. Operational considerations such as force protection and intelligence prevail over administrative, quality-of-life, or other considerations. This tendency toward austerity derives from security

considerations, the temporary nature of expeditionary operations, and the imperative to minimize lift and support requirements.

In summary, to perform expeditionary operations requires a special mindset—one that is constantly prepared for immediate deployment overseas into austere operating environments, bringing everything necessary to accomplish the mission. There are different ways to conduct expeditionary operations, and the various armed Services provide differing but complementary capabilities. In general, naval expeditionary forces provide a self-sustaining, sea-based capability for immediate or rapid response, especially through forward deployment. Land-based forces, on the other hand, generally require a longer deployment phase and the creation of an in-theater logistics apparatus to achieve the buildup of decisive force. While all the Services include units capable of expeditionary operations, the entire operating forces of the Marine Corps are specifically organized, equipped, and train- ed for expeditionary service.

REASONS FOR CONDUCTING EXPEDITIONARY OPERATIONS

Some political objectives can be secured through the actual or potential destruction that long-range bombing or the precision fires of a fleet can provide. Some potential aggressors can be deterred and some actual aggressors can be compelled to

change their behavior through the threat of punishment from afar. That said, there are many policy aims or military missions that can be accomplished only by establishing a potent military force on foreign soil. In numerous situations, physical destruction alone cannot achieve policy aims, or massive destruction is inconsistent with political goals. Because, as Corbett's epigraph at the beginning of this chapter suggests, political issues are ultimately decided on land, there will be no shortage of conflicts requiring an ongoing physical presence at the scene of the conflict. Expeditionary operations will thus be required for a variety of reasons, including—

- To assure that policy objectives pursued by other means have in fact been secured; for example, to ensure compliance with established diplomatic solutions such as the adherence to cease-fire arrangements or an agreement to hold free elections.
- To seize or control key physical objectives such as airports, ports, resource areas, or political centers in order to ensure their safe use by all groups, to deny their use to an enemy or disruptive element, or to facilitate future actions such as the introduction of follow-on forces.
- To control urban or other restrictive terrain.
- To establish a close, physical, and highly visible presence in order to demonstrate political resolve, deter aggressive action, or compel desired behavior.

- To establish and maintain order in an area beset by chaos and disorder.
- To protect or rescue U.S. citizens or other civilians.
- To separate warring groups from each other or from the population at large, especially when enemy or disruptive elements are embedded in the population.
- To provide physical relief and assistance in the event of disaster.[7]

SEQUENCE IN PROJECTING EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

The projection of an expeditionary force generally occurs in the following sequence:

- Predeployment actions.
- Deployment.
- Entry.
- Enabling actions.
- Decisive actions.
- Redeployment.

This sequence is in no way meant to dictate the phases of an operation. It merely provides a framework for discussion and further understanding.

All military expeditions begin with planning and predeployment actions. These actions include the commander's organization of the deployment to ensure that forces arrive in the objective area in a logical sequence, at the right time, and with the correct equipment and sustainment to support the concept of operation.

Deployment is the movement of forces, their equipment, and their sustainment to either a theater of operations or an objective area in accordance with the commander's plan. Airlift is normally the quickest way to deploy forces, although it requires the presence of a secure airhead at the destination. The quickest way to introduce significant, sustainable forces is by sealift. Maritime prepositioning force operations, discussed in chapter 4, combine the advantages of both airlift and sealift. The initial U.S. forces deploying to Operation Desert Shield, including the 7th and 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigades,[8] arrived by air, although the equipment and supplies for the Marine brigades arrived aboard maritime prepositioning ships. In the end, 90 percent of U.S. forces and supplies arrived by sea.

The speed at which capable forces can be deployed to the scene of a crisis is often vitally important. The more quickly forces can deploy to stabilize a situation, the greater will be the likelihood of eventual success and the less may be the eventual

cost. What matters, however, is not just how quickly the first forces can deploy; it is the speed at which capable, sustainable forces can deploy. Thus, an expeditionary force deploys by phases in support of the commander's concept of operations. Typically, forward-deployed or rapidly deployable forces move as the initial crisis response, followed by other, often heavier forces deploying more slowly. The Marine Corps achieves rapid deployment through placing some forces in ships and other locations abroad, through transporting some forces by air, and through placing some supplies in ships and other locations abroad.

It is not enough to be able to deploy forces to a foreign theater. There is also the problem of access, gained by force if necessary. Many expeditionary forces are not capable of forcible entry, although all amphibious forces are. "Entry" refers to the initial introduction of forces onto foreign soil. During this period, expeditionary forces are often at greatest risk, and for this reason, the introduction of forces is often a complicated military evolution. Entry is normally accomplished by seaborne or airborne movement, although in some cases forces may be introduced by ground movement from an expeditionary base in an adjacent country. Historically, entry has required the establishment of an expeditionary base ashore from which to operate, but this is not necessary if the expeditionary force can operate effectively from a sea base. Key to the entry phase is the presence or creation of some entry point—an available airfield or port, an assailable coast line, a suitable and supportable drop zone, or an accessible frontier. The most difficult

type of entry is forcible entry—seizing a lodgment area in hostile territory via combat. Not all expeditionary operations involve forcible entry. Many involve the introduction of forces into a permissive environment or an environment that has not yet turned hostile. Because there is always a potential for hostile resistance and because the level of hostility can change quickly, a forcible-entry capability is a permanent requirement for successful expeditionary opera- tions.

Enabling actions refer to those preparatory actions taken by the expeditionary force to facilitate the eventual accomplishment of the mission. Deployment and entry could also be thought of as enabling actions, but because of their importance and particular requirements, we have considered them separately. With the possible exception of expeditions of very limited scope and duration, such as a noncombatant evacuation or a punitive raid, the forces that can initially deploy and enter an area will rarely be sufficient to accomplish the mission. Usually, other forces will follow, and the initial forces will undertake actions that are designed to set the stage for the eventual decisive actions. Enabling actions may include, for example, seizing a port or airfield to facilitate the secure introduction of follow-on forces. They may include establishing the necessary logistics and other support capabilities. In cases of disaster or disruption, enabling actions usually involve the initial restoration of order or stability. In the case of open warfare, enabling actions may involve operations to seize a lodgment area for follow-on forces or to capture key terrain necessary for the conduct of decisive operations.

Decisive actions are those actions intended to create the conditions that will accomplish the political objective—in other words, to accomplish the mission. In disasters, they include relief operations. In disruptions, they often include peacemaking and peacekeeping until local governmental control can be reestablished. In conflict, they usually involve the military defeat of the enemy's fighting forces. In Operation Desert Shield, for example, the decisive actions were those undertaken to protect Saudi Arabia against Iraqi attack. In Operation Desert Storm, the decisive actions were the offensive to eject Iraqi forces from Kuwait and destroy their offensive capability. In Operation Provide Comfort, the decisive actions were those to protect the Kurds from Iraqi attack and to provide humanitarian aid. In Operation Restore Democracy, the 1994–1995 intervention in Haiti, the decisive actions were those to restore and support the democratically elected government and to ensure the peaceful transition of authority through the next election.

Because expeditions are by definition temporary, all expeditionary operations involve a redeployment—the departure of the expeditionary force or a transition to a permanent presence of some sort. This is often one of the most difficult aspects of expeditionary operations. An "exit strategy" therefore must be an important consideration in both the initial decision to take military action and the conduct of operations. Departure is not as simple as the tactical withdrawal of the expeditionary force from the scene. It requires the withdrawing of force in a way that maintains the desired political situation. If a situation has

been stabilized to the point that the local government can maintain peaceful order, military forces may depart altogether. It is more likely, however, that the expeditionary force will be replaced by a longer-lasting presence, whether an occupation force, an observation force, or some nonmilitary agency. For example, Operation Provide Comfort, the relief effort that was initially conducted primarily by military forces previously deployed for Desert Storm, was turned over to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees in June 1991. At that point, military forces, including the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), began departing northern Iraq.

Although a similar sequence of phases can be seen in many expeditionary operations, they are conducted in many different ways. What follows is a discussion of the Marine Corps' approach to the conduct of expeditionary operations.

EXPEDITIONARY MINDSET

The most important element in the Marine Corps' conduct of expeditionary operations is not a particular organization, family of equipment, or tactic. It is a state of mind. For the Marine Corps, being "expeditionary" is, before anything else, a mindset. The epigraph by Smedley Butler at the beginning of this chapter captures this attitude. Just as every Marine is a rifleman regardless of duties and military specialty, all Marines

must also think of themselves as part of a fundamentally expeditionary organization designed and intended to project military force overseas. This expeditionary mindset is epitomized by the phrase "bags packed"—that is, ready and willing to deploy on a moment's notice, any time, to any place, to perform any mission. All operating forces, rather than selected ready units, must maintain themselves in a high state of deployability and general readiness. The expeditionary mindset implies a Spartan attitude: an expectation and a willingness to endure—in fact, a certain pride in enduring—hardship and austere conditions. As an example of this attitude, embarkation boxes substitute for bookcases, even in garrison, and creature comforts are minimal.

An expeditionary mindset implies the versatility and adaptability to respond effectively without a great deal of preparation time to a broad variety of circumstances. Another part of this expeditionary mindset is a global perspective oriented to responding to a diverse range of threats around the globe rather than to a specific threat in a specific part of the world.

This mindset is a matter of training and institutional culture. Commanders must realize the continuous importance of imparting and maintaining this attitude within their units.

NAVAL CHARACTER

The Marine Corps is fundamentally a naval service. Marines are "soldiers of the sea," trained to operate on the sea but to fight on the land. This distinction is more than just historical or cultural—although it is that also. It is first a matter of practical significance. The sea remains the only viable way to deploy large military forces to distant theaters and to rapidly shift forces between theaters. Additionally, in many situations, sea basing provides a viable, secure option for sustaining expeditionary operations. Given the range of naval aviation, few parts of the globe are beyond the operational reach of naval expeditionary forces today. For a country that possesses naval dominance, the sea becomes an avenue for projecting military power practically anywhere in the world.

The Marine Corps' naval character facilitates global sourcing, the composition of an expeditionary force by Marine elements from anywhere in the world. I Marine Expeditionary Force in Operation Desert Storm was composed of forces from bases on the U.S.'s east and west coasts and in the Pacific. Naval mobility similarly facilitates the rapid and flexible shifting of forces between theaters.

There is more to naval expeditionary power projection, however, than using the sea to provide strategic or operational mobility. There is also the significant practical problem of projecting military power from the sea onto land in the face of

hostile resistance. In the words of General George C. Marshall: "A landing against organized and highly trained opposition is probably the most difficult undertaking which military forces are called upon to face."[9] Amphibious operations require a high degree of training to achieve proficiency. All Marine Corps forces are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to deploy aboard, operate from, and sustain themselves from Navy ships. They are specifically designed to project land combat power ashore from the sea. Forcible entry through amphibious landing remains the Marine Corps' specialty.[10] Given a decreasing permanent U.S. military presence overseas and the volatility in the littoral regions of the developing world, this amphibious expertise provided by the Marine Corps is one of the most valuable components in the Nation's power projection capabilities.

STRATEGIC MOBILITY: CLOSURE RATE AND GLOBAL REACH

In an age of global uncertainty and rapidly developing crises, closure rate and global reach are critical expeditionary considerations. Closure rate refers to how quickly a military force can close on an objective area once tasked. The ability to close quickly is extremely important, especially in the early stages of a developing situation. Reach refers to the geographical limits to which a force can deploy and sustain credible military power. Both considerations are functions of strategic mobility,

the capability to deploy and sustain military forces worldwide in support of national strategy.[11]

In large part, although not exclusively, the Marine Corps gains its strategic mobility from its naval character. Marine Corps forces maintain strategic mobility in three ways. First is through the forward deployment of combined arms, general-purpose operating forces in the form of Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs). The composition and capabilities of MAGTFs are discussed in chapter 3. Deployed aboard amphibious Navy ships, these task forces maintain a continuous presence at strategic locations around the globe and can be rapidly moved to and indefinitely stationed at the scene of potential trouble. Because the globe is dominated by water, there are few locations beyond the reach of forward-deployed MAGTFs. When deploying to an objective area, naval forces can move continuously, unlike land or air forces, which must suspend movement for rest and replenishment. Also unlike land or air forces, naval forces can loiter indefinitely near the scene of a potential crisis. A good example of this ability to loiter is Operation Sharp Edge, the evacuation of Liberia in 1990. Amphibious Squadron 4 and the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (special operations capable) arrived off the coast of Liberia on 3 June 1990 as the situation in that country deteriorated. They remained on station, some 50 miles offshore, for 62 days before evacuation operations were required starting 5 August.

The second element of Marine Corps strategic mobility is the prepositioning of equipment and supplies aboard ships at sea. The advantage of maritime prepositioning is that Marines can link up in an objective area with prepositioned equipment

and supplies more quickly than those same Marines can deploy from their home base with their equipment and supplies. As with forward-deployed MAGTFs, prepositioned equipment and supplies can be moved quickly nearly anywhere in the world and can be maintained indefinitely near the scene of a potential crisis. Chapter 3 discusses the organization of maritime prepositioning forces while chapter 4 discusses maritime prepositioning force operations.

The third element of Marine Corps strategic mobility is the rapid deployability of units by sea and air. Strategic airlift is generally the faster way to deploy but is limited in the amount of lift. Strategic airlift also requires a secure airhead for the introduction of forces, whereas naval amphibious shipping can support forcible entry. Shipping generally cannot match airlift for speed of deployment but remains the only viable means for deploying large forces and adequate supplies and equipment. All Marine Corps operating forces are specifically organized and equipped for deployment aboard Navy amphibious ships.

OPERATIONAL MOBILITY

Operational mobility is the capability of military forces to move from place to place within a theater to perform their missions. Whereas strategic mobility is the ability to move from theater to theater and tactical mobility is the ability to move in combat, operational mobility is the ability to move between

engagements or other actions within the context of the campaign. Operational mobility is a function of range and sustained speed over a significant distance. The Marine Corps achieves operational mobility in several ways: through amphibious shipping, assault support aircraft, landing craft, assault amphibious vehicles, and light armored vehicles.

Although we typically think of shipping as a component of strategic mobility, it may also be employed to significant operational effect as well. In many cases, a MAGTF carried on amphibious shipping can enjoy greater operational mobility along a coastline than an enemy moving along the coast by land. This is especially true when the naval force has the ability to interfere with an enemy's use of roads. This may likewise be true in the developing world where road systems may not be adequate for the movement of large, mechanized formations. In this way, the sea can be an avenue of approach rather than an obstacle to movement, and the amphibious force maneuvers by landing at the time and place of its own choosing, where the enemy is vulnerable. An excellent example of this is Operation Chromite, MacArthur's landing of the 1st Marine Division at Inchon in September 1950 to dramatically sever North Korean lines of communications during the Korean War.

OPERATIONAL AND TACTICAL COMPETENCE

Operational and tactical competence refers to the consistent ability of the organization to effectively accomplish assigned missions and tasks. More simply, competence is the ability to "get things done," and it is obviously an essential element of effective expeditionary operations. Competence is a broad and largely intangible quality based on, among other factors, experience, doctrine, technical proficiency, training, education, and leadership.

Experience is perhaps the single most important factor in developing operational and tactical competence. Experience provides understanding of the practical problems of execution and an appreciation for what is feasible and what is not. Doctrine contributes the body of concepts and principles that guide action. The Marine Corps' institutional doctrinal philosophy is based on tempo, surprise, and focused exploitation of enemy critical vulnerabilities, a doctrine called maneuver warfare.

One of the purposes of training and education is to instill sound judgment in leaders at all levels. Competence requires leaders who can see beyond the tactical requirements of the immediate problem and who understand the larger impli-cations of their decisions—to include the nature of military action as an element of politics and policy. Technical proficiency refers to expertise in the employment of equipment and procedures and is largely a function of individual and unit training. Marine

leadership is best summarized by the principle of leadership by example. Finally, competence requires capable, reliable equipment and support, which is not to say that it always requires the most advanced equipment avail- able.

Competence is a complex combination of various skills and qualities. Furthermore, competence is situationally dependent. What it takes to be competent with respect to one mission may not be what it takes to be competent with respect to another mission.

SUSTAINABILITY

Effective expeditionary operations are not merely a matter of projecting military power but also of sustaining that power throughout the duration of the expedition. Sustainability is the ability to maintain the necessary level and duration of operational activity to achieve military objectives. It is a function of providing for and maintaining the levels of forces, matériel, and supplies needed to support military effort.[12] Sustainability can be an especially important consideration in the developing world, where many regions often lack the infrastructure necessary to support highly advanced military forces.

Expeditionary operations generally involve the establishment of some forward operating base or bases near the scene of the action. This may be an expeditionary land or sea base or a

combination of both. Sea bases have the advantage of being ready-made and ready-to-operate when a naval expeditionary force deploys, whereas land bases must be established ashore. Sea bases also have the advantage of being easily retrievable at the end of the operation, facilitating departure and redeployment. However, sea bases are limited by shipping capacity, technical challenges of offloading and ship-to-shore movement, and the access limitations imposed by combat loading requirements. The last two of these are partially offset by efficient procedures developed over time by the Navy and Marine Corps as the result of extensive experience. The limits of sea bases will be further offset as new ship designs facilitate accessibility of supplies and selective offloading. The relative security of expeditionary land and sea bases is situation-dependent, based on the capabilities of the enemy. In many cases, sea bases are more secure, especially in situations in which friendly naval forces dominate the seas. However, in some cases, expeditionary bases may actually be more secure, as in the Falklands War of 1982 in which the greatest British losses were ships sunk by Argentine air-to-surface missiles. This said, the conditions likely to prevail in future expeditionary operations—threats of disease and rear area attack, host-nation sensitivity to a large foreign presence—argue for an increase in the importance and utility of sea basing. Effectiveness in future expeditionary operations will require the ability to operate routinely and continuously from sea bases.

A self-contained sustainment capability can be an important logistic consideration in expeditionary operations, especially in

the early stages of deployment before a theater sustainment system has been put in place. All MAGTFs deploy with the supplies necessary to sustain the force until reinforcements arrive.

Finally, another important consideration for sustaining an expeditionary force is the support requirements of the force. A military force able to operate under the most austere conditions can be at a significant advantage, especially in undeveloped regions that lack the infrastructure to satisfy massive logistic requirements. Such a force is more easily sustained and is less adversely affected by logistic limitations. It places less of a demand on strategic, operational, and tactical lift. It requires a smaller expeditionary base, which enhances force protection. Because expeditionary operations are by definition temporary, a smaller, lighter footprint simplifies the problems of redeployment.

ADAPTABILITY

Adaptability is the capacity to change—tactics, techniques, organizations, and so on—in anticipation of or in response to changes in the situation. In an uncertain, chaotic world environment, adaptability is an essential characteristic of effective expeditionary operations. The more quickly an organization can adapt in a changing environment, the more effective it will be.

We can adapt through improvisation, departing from the planned action in response to an unexpected change in the situation. At the lowest echelons, where decision cycles are short, improvisation may involve a truly spontaneous action. At higher echelons, where decision cycles are likely to be longer, improvisation is more likely to involve rapid modification of the existing plan. In any event, improvisation involves a specific, untested response to a particular set of unexpected conditions.

We can also adapt through innovation, the systematic adoption of new operating methods, organizations, or technologies either in response to actual experience or in anticipation of likely need. An improvisation that proves to have general value can become an innovation through its systematic adoption and refinement. In fact, this is a common source of innovation. A good example of innovation is the Marine Corps' development of amphibious warfare doctrine, methods, and equipment after the First World War in anticipation of war in the Pacific against Japan. Innovation should not be the result only of formal programs but should also "bubble up" from the bottom of the organization as operating units down to the lowest levels develop, institutionalize, and pass on valuable new methods. Commanders at all levels must not only be open to innovation but must actively encourage it from subordinates. Only by these complementary top-down and bottom-up processes of innovation can the Marine Corps maintain the necessary adaptiveness.

As with most of the other characteristics of effective expeditionary operations, adaptability is largely a function of mindset. It requires leaders at all levels with flexibility of mind who are willing to exercise judgment and initiative on the basis of situational awareness rather than merely to follow orders and apply techniques by rote. This ability is largely a function of training, education, and especially institutional culture. Adaptability requires a learning organization—an organization that is self-critical and is able to change quickly in response to its experiences.

Adaptability also has an important organizational aspect. Balanced, multidimensional, general-purpose organizations demonstrate adaptability through the ability to task-organize rapidly and effectively on the basis of the requirements of each situation.

Adaptability has a doctrinal aspect as well. The maneuver warfare concept of mission tactics requires leaders down to the lowest levels to exercise local initiative on the basis of their understanding of the larger situation and intent. This decentralized form of command and control increases the speed at which an organization can adapt to changing situations.

RECONSTITUTION

Reconstitution refers to the ability of an expeditionary force to regenerate, reorganize, replenish, and reorient itself for a new mission after employment elsewhere without having to return to home base. This is not merely the ability to divert from an original deployment to another mission but to complete one mission ashore and then redeploy to perform another. It is the ability to project expeditionary power anew from an existing expeditionary base or forward-deployed status. The ability to reconstitute is a source of the adaptability that is vitally important in modern expeditionary operations. It can save significant time and cost in deploying to meet an emerging crisis. For example, in October 1983, the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit was diverted to Grenada while en route to Lebanon. The Marine amphibious unit conducted landings as part of Operation Urgent Fury at Grenada on 25 October and at Carriacou on 1 November. By 3 November, the Marine amphibious unit was reembarked aboard its amphibious shipping and had resumed its passage to Lebanon. Another example is the 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade's participation in Operation Sea Angel in April 1991. The brigade was returning home via the Indian Ocean from duty during Operation Desert Storm when it was diverted to Bangladesh to provide disaster relief in the wake of a cyclone that had left millions homeless.

The Marine Corps' ability to reconstitute combat power comes from several sources. First is the nature of the MAGTF as a combined arms, general-purpose force readily tailorable to

different situations. MAGTFs are readily and routinely reorganized during both deployment and employment. This allows a MAGTF performing one mission to reorganize quickly for another. Second is the naval character of Marine forces and the self-contained nature of MAGTFs deployed aboard amphibious ships. Self-contained, sea-based sustainment allows Marine expeditionary forces to be reemployed without the need to first put in place a sustainment system. The existing system for sustaining routinely forward-deployed units can also be used to reconstitute combat power.

COST-EFFECTIVENESS

It is difficult to put a price on national security or to weigh the cost of action versus inaction in any particular crisis. When costs and benefits are measured in terms of human life, traditional cost-benefit analysis becomes inadequate. However, the resources of the United States are not unlimited. Consequently, it is imperative as a general principle that military forces conduct expeditions as economically as possible. The need for economy becomes especially important in an uncertain era characterized by unexpected crises requiring the unanticipated and unbudgeted allocation of military force.

Cost-effectiveness does not simply mean accomplishing a mission inexpensively. Too small a commitment early may lead at best to an unnecessarily larger commitment later and at

worst to a failed mission. As with the military principle of economy of force, cost-effectiveness here means accom- plishing the mission with no greater cost or commitment than is necessary to accomplish the mission properly.

Several factors contribute to cost-effectiveness. First, the Marine Corps routinely forward-deploys expeditionary forces and equipment near the scene of potential crises. This cuts down on the cost of deployment in response to an operational need because much of the cost of deployment is covered in routine operating expenses. The regenerative ability described earlier contributes to this aspect of cost-effectiveness. Additionally, routine deployments with the Navy develop institutional proficiency and efficiency at deploying. The requirements of being routinely deployed aboard ship imbue the institutional culture with a decidedly Spartan character.

Versatility is another source of cost-effectiveness—for example, the ability to task-organize for a wide variety of contingencies. This versatility applies to equipment as well. The assault amphibious vehicles and helicopters, for example, that provide mobility from ship to objective in amphibious operations also provide mechanized or helicopterborne tactical mobility during operations ashore and are invaluable in supporting disaster relief operations in the littorals. This kind of versatility can translate into major cost savings by minimizing the requirement for specialized units and equipment.

CONCLUSION

As the sole remaining superpower in an increasingly interconnected world, the United States finds its national interests affected by events in every part of the globe. These interests include vital interests of national survival, important interests of national well-being, and humanitarian interests. While political, economic, and psychological components of national power play an important role in responding to worldwide crises, the preservation of the national interest also demands the ability to project military force into foreign countries. The ability to respond quickly and effectively to the entire range of political crises anywhere in the world is the foundation of national military strategy. There will be numerous missions requiring expeditionary operations—sometimes the physical establishment of a military force on foreign soil, in the face of hostile resistance. The rest of this publication describes the organizations and concepts with which the Marine Corps provides that capability through the conduct of expeditionary operations.