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**ALWAYS FAITHFUL, ALWAYS FORWARD:
MARINE CORPS CULTURE AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF MARINE CORPS FORCES
SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND**

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Monterey, CA; Naval Postgraduate School

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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**ALWAYS FAITHFUL, ALWAYS FORWARD: MARINE CORPS
CULTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARINE CORPS
FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND**

by

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December 2018

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**ALWAYS FAITHFUL, ALWAYS FORWARD: MARINE CORPS CULTURE
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL
OPERATIONS COMMAND**

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ABSTRACT

The Department of Defense activated U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) in 1987, but the Marine Corps did not become a full partner until 2006. This study explores why. The activation of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) demonstrates the limitations of a senior civilian to prompt change in a military organization, especially after his perceived indecision encourages additional resistance. Culture matters. The Marine Corps adopted an “acknowledge and evade” strategy to retain control of its Marines, prevent the creation of an “elite within an elite” in its ranks, and undermine Secretary Rumsfeld’s eventual desire to create a Marine Corps special operations component. The non-traditional backgrounds of the officers and senior-enlisted personnel who proved pivotal in MARSOC’s development exposed them to unique career opportunities that better equipped them to adapt to the demands of the post-9/11 environment. These Marines represented a fundamental disconnect between the culture of the Marine Corps as an institution and how that culture manifested in the actions of its members. They believed in the special operations mission and its importance to the future of the Marine Corps. Motivated by professional duty, they embodied what it means to be a Marine and helped Secretary Rumsfeld overcome an intransigent senior Marine Corps leadership. These quiet professionals are the unsung heroes of the Marine Corps’ journey to a special operations component.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	MILITARY INNOVATION	7
A.	BUREAUCRACIES AND CHANGE	8
B.	EXTERNAL DRIVERS	10
C.	INTERNAL DRIVERS	15
D.	DOCTRINE AND CHANGE.....	23
III.	MILITARY CULTURE	27
A.	THE ELUSIVENESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE.....	28
B.	THE “ESSENCE” OF THE ORGANIZATION.....	32
C.	CULTURE CREATION AND SOCIALIZATION	40
D.	ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND THE MARINE CORPS.....	45
IV.	MARINE CORPS CULTURE.....	51
A.	A HEALTHY DOSE OF PARANOIA.....	52
B.	CULTIVATING AN ELITE IMAGE.....	53
V.	THE CORPS’ FORMATIVE YEARS AND THE INFLUENCE OF ARCHIBALD HENDERSON.....	59
A.	THE IMPORTANCE OF SHIPS GUARDS	60
B.	BRINGING STABILITY TO THE CORPS	61
C.	EMERGING REQUIREMENTS, STAGNANT MISSION	64
D.	REVOLUTION IN PANAMA.....	68
VI.	THE MARINE CORPS AND THE NEW NAVY.....	71
A.	THE NEW NAVY	71
B.	THE MARINE CORPS REBUFFS THE NEW NAVY	72
C.	THE GREER BOARD AND ITS AFTERMATH	76
D.	A SMALL VICTORY FOR THE NEW NAVY.....	79
E.	FULLAM STOKES THE FLAMES AGAIN.....	81
F.	THE ROOSEVELT PERSONNEL BOARD AND WAR WITH SPAIN.....	83
G.	THE ADVANCE BASE FORCE AND A LACK OF PROGRESS.....	86
VII.	THE MARINE CORPS AND DEFENSE UNIFICATION	89

A.	INTERSERVICE STRIFE.....	90
B.	DIFFERING VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE	92
C.	DEFENSE-IN-DEPTH	96
VIII.	GOLDWATER-NICHOLS AND DEFENSE REORGANIZATION	103
A.	THE CASE FOR AND HISTORY OF REORGANIZATION	104
B.	THE MARINE CORPS RESPONDS.....	109
C.	THE BEIRUT BOMBING AND OPERATION URGENT FURY ..	114
D.	GENERAL KELLEY AND THE CORPS DEFEND THE JCS	115
E.	THE BILL AND ITS AFTERMATH	118
IX.	THE MARINE CORPS AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS	123
A.	SPECIAL OPERATIONS HISTORY	124
B.	DEFENSE REFORM AND THE MARINE CORPS	150
C.	MANEUVER WARFARE: PEOPLE	155
D.	MANEUVER WARFARE: IDEAS.....	161
E.	MANEUVER WARFARE: HARDWARE.....	170
F.	THE MEU(SOC) AND THE FUTURE	173
X.	THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPONENT.....	181
A.	TRANSFORMING THE DOD	182
B.	THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11	184
C.	DET ONE.....	187
D.	ORGANIZING AND ACTIVATING A COMPONENT	212
E.	CULTURAL INTRANSIGENCE	233
F.	“SEPARABLE BUT NOT SEPARATE”	237
G.	MANPOWER STRAIN.....	246
H.	MARINE CORPS PERCEPTIONS AND POST-OEF PLANNING	252
I.	“MARINES ARE WHO WE ARE; SPECIAL OPERATIONS ARE WHAT WE DO”	261
J.	THE RAIDERS	270
XI.	CONCLUSION	277
	APPENDIX A. LIST OF PERSONAL CONVERSATIONS.....	289
	APPENDIX B. LIST OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL.....	291
A.	PERSONAL PAPERS	291
B.	RECORD COLLECTIONS.....	291

APPENDIX C. COMMANDERS, MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND.....	293
APPENDIX D. AVERAGE MONTHLY END STRENGTH	295
APPENDIX E. AVERAGE MONTHLY DEPLOYED PERSONNEL	299
APPENDIX F. INDIVIDUAL TRAINING COURSE.....	301
APPENDIX G. ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION	303
LIST OF REFERENCES	305
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	327

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Detachment Organization	191
Figure 2.	Lieutenant Colonel Clark’s Proposed Modification of 4th MEB (AT) ...	203
Figure 3.	Lieutenant Colonel Clark’s Proposed MARSOC Structure.....	204
Figure 4.	Proposed MARSOC Organizational Structure	218
Figure 5.	Second Proposed MARSOC Organizational Structure.....	219
Figure 6.	Det One and Settelen Proposed Organizational Structure	223
Figure 7.	Development of Marine Special Operations Aviation Detachment	224
Figure 8.	Development of Marine Special Operations Aviation Group.....	225
Figure 9.	Raider Insignia	273

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A&S	Assessment and Selection
AAF	Army Air Forces
AAR	After Action Review
AASG	Advanced Amphibious Study Group
ACE	Aviation Combat Element
AFAF	Amphibious Force Atlantic Fleet
AFRICOM	U.S. Africa Command
ANGLICO	Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company
AOR	Area of Responsibility
ARG	Amphibious Ready Group
AT	Anti-terrorism
AWS	Amphibious Warfare School
BRC	Basic Reconnaissance Course
CAP	Combined Action Platoon
CC	Combat Correspondent
CCSG	Chairman's Special Study Group
CENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
CG	Commanding General
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINC	Commander in Chief
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
CJSOTF-A	Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan
CJSOTF-I	Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Iraq
CNA	Center for Naval Analyses
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COA	Course of Action
CSO	Critical Skills Operator

DI	Drill Instructor
DoD	Department of Defense
EOS	Executive Offsite
ESG	Expeditionary Strike Group
EWS	Expeditionary Warfare School
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FMF	Fleet Marine Force
FMFLANT	Fleet Marine Force Atlantic
FMOS	Free Military Occupational Specialty
FMTU	Foreign Military Training Unit
FMV	Full-Motion Video
GCC	Geographic Combatant Command
GCE	Ground Combat Element
GFM	Global Force Management
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief
HASC	House Armed Services Committee
HMMWV	High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle
HQMC	Headquarters Marine Corps
I3	Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence
I&L	Installations and Logistics
IHR	In-extremis Hostage Rescue
IOC	Infantry Officer Course
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
ITC	Individual Training Course
IW	Irregular Warfare

JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JSOC	Joint Special Operations Command
JSOTF	Joint Special Operations Task Force
JSOU	Joint Special Operations University
JTF	Joint Task Force
LAV	Light Armored Vehicle
LHA	Landing Helicopter Assault
LHD	Landing Helicopter Dock
LNO	Liaison Officer
LSD	Landing Ship Dock
M&RA	Manpower and Reserve Affairs
MAB	Marine Amphibious Brigade
MACVSOG	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam—Studies and Observations Group
MAF	Marine Amphibious Force
MAGTF	Marine Air Ground Task Force
MARADMIN	Marine Administrative Note
MARCENT	Marine Corps Forces Central
MARFORPAC	Marine Corps Forces Pacific
MARSOC	U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command
MAU	Marine Amphibious Unit
MCDEC	Marine Corps Development and Education Command
MCRD	Marine Corps Recruit Depot
MCS	Marine Corps Schools
MEB	Marine Expeditionary Brigade
MEF	Marine Expeditionary Force
MEU	Marine Expeditionary Unit
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MRB	Marine Raider Battalion

MRR	Marine Raider Regiment
MRSB	Marine Raider Support Battalion
MMSG	Marine Raider Support Group
MRTC	Marine Raider Training Center
MSE	Major Subordinate Element
MSOAG	Marine Special Operations Advisor Group
MSOB	Marine Special Operations Battalion
MSOC	Marine Special Operations Company
MSOF	Marine Special Operations Force
MSOG	Marine Special Operations Group
MSOR	Marine Special Operations Regiment
MSOS	Marine Special Operations School
MSOSB	Marine Special Operations Support Battalion
MSOSG	Marine Special Operations Support Group
MSOT	Marine Special Operations Team
MSOU	Marine Special Operations Unit
MSPF	Maritime Special Purpose Force
NAD	Naval Advisory Detachment
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA	National Command Authority
NEO	Noncombatant Evacuation Operation
NMOS	Necessary Military Occupational Specialty
NSC	National Security Council
NSW	Naval Special Warfare
ODA	Operational Detachment Alpha
OEF	Operation ENDURING FREEDOM
OPCON	Operational Control
OPT	Operational Planning Team
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSS	Office of Strategic Services

P&R	Programs and Resources
PACOM	U.S. Pacific Command
PF	Popular Force
PME	Professional Military Education
PMOS	Primary Military Occupational Specialty
PO-SOD	Operations Division Special Operations Directorate
PP&O	Plans, Policies, and Operations
PSYOPS	Psychological Operations

SASC	Senate Committee on Armed Services
SEAL	Sea, Air, and Land Team
SERE	Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape
SF	Army Special Forces
SOC	Special Operations Capable
SOCCENT	Special Operations Command Central
SOCCS	Special Operations Combat Service Support
SOCEUR	Special Operations Command Europe
SOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
SOC PAC	Special Operations Command Pacific
SOCS	Special Operations Capabilities Specialist
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOFLE	Special Operations Forces Liaison Element
SOG	Special Operations Group
SOMEB	Special Operations Marine Expeditionary Brigade
SOO	Special Operations Officer
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force

TACON	Tactical Control
TBS	The Basic School
TRADOC	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command
TRAP	Tactical Recovery of Aircraft or Personnel
TSOC	Theater Special Operations Command

UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UBL	Usama bin Laden
UDT	Underwater Demolition Teams
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VMU	Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron

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I. INTRODUCTION

It may have taken awhile to get our Marines and special operations warriors together. And it did. But that day has come.

—Donald Rumsfeld, February 24, 2006¹

During a brief speech at a ceremony activating U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) on February 24, 2006, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld celebrated the pairing of “two of history’s most dedicated groups of warriors—the men and women of U.S. Special Operations Command with the United States Marine Corps.”² Referencing the Marine Corps’ storied fighting history and the need to “arrange ourselves in new and unconventional ways, if we are able to succeed in meeting this great peril of our age,” Secretary Rumsfeld noted the nation was once again calling on the Marines to “seek new and innovative ways to take the fight to the enemy.”³ Secretary Rumsfeld’s remarks concerning how long it had taken to forge this partnership almost certainly alluded to the 19 years that had passed between the activation of U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and the activation of MARSOC. However, his remarks could just as easily describe his own experiences overseeing the negotiations between SOCOM and the Marine Corps following the September 11, 2001 attacks, which finally culminated in the activation of the Marine Corps’ special operations component. Describing the talks as “painfully” slow and taking “forever” during a visit to SOCOM headquarters on October 11, 2005, Rumsfeld quipped, “I’ll be 85 before it’s finished, I’m afraid.”⁴

¹ Chris Mazzonny, “Nation calls on Marines again,” *Jacksonville Daily News*, February 24, 2006, Command Chronology (CC), Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC), February 24-June 30, 2006 (Tab F), Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

² “Secretary Rumsfeld Comments at MARSOC Activation Ceremony,” February 24, 2006, CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006 (Tab G).

³ “Secretary Rumsfeld Comments.”

⁴ As quoted in Susan Murray, “The United States Marine Corps and Special Operations: A Nineteen Year Convergence Toward a Marine Component,” (master’s thesis, U.S. Army War College, 2006), 19, accessed November 2, 2018, <https://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a449405.pdf>. Secretary Rumsfeld was 73-years-old at the time.

Current accounts of the development of MARSOC give Secretary Rumsfeld the majority of the credit for its creation.⁵ Secretary Rumsfeld himself listed “Getting the Marines connected with Special Operations” at the top of his list of “Firsts” that he accomplished as Secretary of Defense in the first five years of the Bush administration.⁶ Rumsfeld came to office under the banner of transformation and the need to develop a more agile and mobile force.⁷ He believed that the military’s task following the end of the Cold War was no longer to overwhelm countries or people, but rather to apply a “measured application of military power to minimize civilian casualties and encourage local cooperation.”⁸ This notion was further reinforced by the immediate conflicts following 9/11. As a result, Secretary Rumsfeld declared war on the Pentagon bureaucracy and boosted funding for special operations by 107 percent in his first five years in office.⁹ The creation of MARSOC was part of this larger effort.

This narrative, however, overlooks the aforementioned negotiations between the Marine Corps and SOCOM, the different alternatives considered, the concerns and objectives of the parties involved, and the parochialism exhibited therein—not just between the Marine Corps and SOCOM and its components, but within the Corps itself. In doing so, these accounts present an entirely too linear process of organizational change

⁵ Murray, “Convergence”; Mark Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe: The Rise of America’s Special Operations Forces* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 280–285; John P. Piedmont, *DET ONE: U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Special Operations Command Detachment, 2003–2006* (Washington, DC: United States Marine Corps History Division, 2010), 93. Fred Pushies presents a more passive role for Rumsfeld, as well as a rather amiable relationship between the Marine Corps and SOCOM: “In an announcement by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on November 1, 2005, he approved a joint recommendation by SOCOM and the Marine Corps to add Marine Corps special operations forces to SOCOM.” See Fred Pushies, *MARSOC: U.S. Marine Corps Special Operations Command* (Minneapolis, MN: Zenith Press, 2011), 48.

⁶ Donald Rumsfeld to VADM Jim Stavridis, “List of ‘Firsts,’” February 28, 2006, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3989/2006-02-28%20To%20Jim%20Stavridis%20re%20List%20of%20Firsts.pdf#search=%22list%20of%20firsts%22>. Additionally, in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, Rumsfeld lists “including the U.S. Marines in Special Operations Forces” as reflecting “a process of change that has gathered momentum since the release of its predecessor QDR in 2001.” See Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2006), viii, accessed November 3, 2018, <http://archive.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/qdr20060203.pdf>.

⁷ Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Penguin Group, 2011), 331–333, 645–655.

⁸ Rumsfeld, 650.

⁹ Rumsfeld, 333, 654.

and overlook the role culture—famously strong in the Marine Corps¹⁰—might play in resisting change, especially when it is foisted upon it by a civilian outsider.

Histories of the Marine Corps' relationship with special operations also tend to ignore the Corps' more macro organizational history and the Corps' role in, and relationship with, the rest of the defense establishment. The Corps has faced countless challenges to its professional jurisdiction, status as a separate service, and even its very existence since its creation, and as a result, it jealously protects its independence, autonomy, and elite image.¹¹ These aspects of the Corps' history and culture—its relationship baggage, if you will—were undeniably relevant to its decision-making process concerning whether or not to cede control of a segment of its Marines to SOCOM.

Ignoring these larger institutional dynamics has also led many to ascribe too much credit to either Secretary of Defense Weinberger's 1983 memorandum declaring the revitalization of special operations forces (SOF) "a matter of national urgency" or the Nunn-Cohen Amendment to the 1987 DoD Authorization Act for the development of the Marine Amphibious Unit (Special Operations Capable).¹² Rather, the Weinberger memo and the Nunn-Cohen Amendment were both lagging indicators, or symbols, of a far more comprehensive organizational reform movement that had already begun (at least) on the

¹⁰ See, for example, Thomas E. Ricks, *Making the Corps* (New York: Scribner, 1997).

¹¹ See, for example, Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "At Afghan outpost, Marines gone rogue or leading the fight against counterinsurgency," *Washington Post*, March 14, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/13/AR2010031302464.html>; Todd Greentree, "Bureaucracy Does Its Thing: U.S. Performance and the Institutional Dimension of Strategy in Afghanistan," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36, no. 3 (Mar. 2013): 325–356; Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 340. The authors, including former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, contend that the Marine Corps put its own parochial service concerns above overall mission requirements in Afghanistan by insisting on retaining operational control of its forces and deploying as a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) into a single area of responsibility.

¹² Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 1–5; Murray, "Convergence," 4; Moyar, *Oppose Any Foe*, 180–181; John A. Van Messel, "USMC-USSOCOM Relationship: Does Increased Interoperability Necessitate Force Contribution?" (master's thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2004), 5–13, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a523762.pdf>. As quoted in Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 1. Hereafter, MAU(SOC).

battlefields of Vietnam.¹³ During the Cold War, the Marine Corps was likely to be called upon to conduct amphibious operations or fight the Soviets and would thus likely be outnumbered in either instance. As a result, the Marine Corps needed to place an emphasis on fighting “smart,” or avoiding enemy strengths and focusing on enemy weaknesses to reduce casualties and yield decisive results.¹⁴ This organizational transformation—from attrition to maneuver warfare—was nested within a larger congressional military reform movement that also included the U.S. Army.

This study explores the reasons why the Marine Corps, which had a history of conducting special operations missions, did not become a full partner in the special operations community when SOCOM was first created. It also analyzes the bureaucratic, institutional, and cultural obstacles that coalesced in the Marine Corps’ reluctance to activate its own special operations component even after Secretary Rumsfeld ordered them to do so. More specifically, this study seeks to answer the following primary research questions:

1. What factors, both internal and external, can prompt a military organization to innovate and change (Chapter II)?
2. How can organizational culture impact a military organization’s ability to do so (Chapter III)?
3. How have the Marine Corps’ culture, roles, and functions evolved as a result of its position in the defense establishment, and how have these in turn impacted the Corps’ position therein (Chapters IV–VIII)?

¹³ Michael D. Wyly, “Doctrinal Change: The Move to Maneuver Theory,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 10 (Oct. 1993): 44; General Al Gray, USMC (ret.), personal conversation with author and Professor Mie Augier, Arlington, VA, September 13, 2018.

¹⁴ U.S. Marine Corps, *FMFM I: Warfighting* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1989), 74, accessed August 25, 2018, http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/virtual_disk_library/index.cgi/1304387/FID653/ACROREAD/FMFM1.PDF; Al Gray, Paul Van Riper, and John Schmitt, “Warfighting Panel” (panel, Marine Corps Base Quantico, video published March 26, 2015 by MAGTF Instructional Group), accessed August 22, 2018, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RL4_NVYByw.

4. What internal and external factors drove the development of the Marine Corps' MAU(SOC) units, and why did the Marine Corps initially choose not to provide forces to SOCOM when it was formed in 1987 (Chapter IX)?
5. What internal and external factors played a role in the formation of MARSOC, and what cultural, bureaucratic, and institutional factors had to be overcome (Chapter X)?

This study is structured as a qualitative, longitudinal analysis. In conducting a longitudinal rather than a cross-sectional study, this study attempts to situate the development of Marine Corps special operations capabilities and units within the Corps' unique historical and cultural inheritance. This study incorporates official Marine Corps correspondence, studies, and reports, which are located in the National Archives and at the Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History at Marine Corps University in Quantico, Virginia. Additionally, the personal papers of multiple military officers and civilian defense officials, which are located in the Manuscript Division at the Library of Congress, in the Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, and online, provide additional context and complement personal interviews the author conducted with retired Marine officers who, in total, were involved in organizational-level decisions and the policy creation and implementation process concerning special operations for several decades. Conceptual debates and after-action reports in the *Marine Corps Gazette* and *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* serve to highlight various aspects of Marine Corps culture, its perceived role in the defense establishment, and the Corps' institutional interests and informal learning processes. Secondary historical sources supplement the analysis throughout.

This study should be read in three parts. Part I (Chapters II–III) analyzes the scholarly literature concerning military innovation and military culture in order to lay the groundwork for evaluating the aforementioned sources and for answering the last three primary research questions, in particular. Part II (Chapters IV–VIII) analyzes aspects of Marine Corps culture—namely, its institutional paranoia and elite image—and how they

have impacted the manner in which the Marine Corps has positioned itself in the defense establishment. Chapters V–VIII, specifically, focus on key episodes, or inflection points, in the Corps’ history to demonstrate how these cultural elements have developed and to provide a history of how the organization has responded to exogenous shocks from the geostrategic environment and other members of the defense establishment. Lastly, Part III (Chapters IX–X) uses these episodes as an historical and cultural lens through which to view the Corps’ decision-making vis-à-vis its involvement with the special operations community.

II. MILITARY INNOVATION

The decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization. The fully developed bureaucratic apparatus compares with other organizations exactly as does the machine with the non-mechanical modes of production.

—Max Weber, in *Economy and Society*, 1978¹⁵

A military organization's ability to adapt and innovate is crucial to its ability to effectively operate in a changing environment over which it has little control. Militaries, however, are complex bureaucratic organizations, which are by their very nature designed not to change.¹⁶ This study examines the factors that initially prevented, and then ultimately led to, the creation of the Marine Corps' own component under SOCOM, making the literature concerning the purported drivers of military innovation and change particularly relevant to such an analysis. While scholars generally converge on the amenability of peacetime to innovation,¹⁷ there remains widespread disagreement regarding what actually spurs innovation. Furthermore, scholars overwhelmingly focus on formal doctrinal products to evaluate change even though doctrine is oftentimes a lagging indicator of established organizational behavior.¹⁸ This is relevant since even though the Marine Corps did not start formally training units explicitly labeled special operations capable until the advent of the MAU(SOC) in 1986 and did not become full

¹⁵ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 973, accessed September 28, 2018, <http://archive.org/details/MaxWeberEconomyAndSociety/page/n1081>.

¹⁶ The author notes that this is not always necessarily a negative characteristic.

¹⁷ Williamson Murray, "Innovation: Past and Future," in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, ed. Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 308–309; Stephen Peter Rosen, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 251. See also Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), 183. Downs notes how search is greatly affected by the amount of time available. The cost of delay rises with the pressure to act quickly, leading the rational decisionmaker to make decisions on less information. As a result, a minimum number of alternatives is considered, biases that influence the order in which alternatives are considered are accentuated, "ready-made" solutions are preferred, and the number of people—and thus diversity of views—is limited.

¹⁸ Keith B. Bickel, *Mars Learning: The Marine Corps' Development of Small Wars Doctrine, 1915–1940* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), 4–7.

partners in the special operations community until 2006,¹⁹ the Marine Corps traces its special operations roots to the Marine Raiders in World War II and conducted special operations missions in conflicts both large and small thereafter.²⁰ Thus, the absence of an explicitly labeled special operations organization was not necessarily indicative of an inability to adapt to a changing geostrategic landscape or to embrace these new activities, and it underscores the limitations of the scholarly emphasis on the tangible doctrinal product or organizational unit, as opposed to the process by which either developed.

This chapter begins by noting the characteristics of bureaucracies that make them resistance to change before analyzing the aforementioned drivers of change. For simplicity's sake, this chapter categorizes the purported drivers of military innovation into whether they are internal or external to the organization.²¹ It is worth noting that few scholars adhere completely to a single theory and build enough flexibility into their respective theories to allow for military organizations to respond differently to internal and external drivers under different circumstances. In military parlance, organizational responses are “situation dependent.”

A. BUREAUCRACIES AND CHANGE

Max Weber, one of the creators of modern sociology, notes that bureaucracies are designed for the “regular and continuous fulfillment of . . . duties,” which are “distributed in a stable way” and “strictly delimited by rules concerning the coercive means . . . at the disposal of officials.”²² While in today's public discourse the *bureaucracy* label carries very negative connotations, Weber actually argues in favor of its technical superiority and contends that bureaucracy is comparatively more democratic and even more

¹⁹ Gerald H. Turley, *The Journey of a Warrior*, 2nd ed. (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute Press, 2017), 192–198; U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, *MARSOF* (Camp Lejeune, NC: MARSOC, 2011), 1–1.

²⁰ Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 41–62. One might also argue that the Marine Corps' colonial infantry missions, which began at the turn of the 20th century and led to the development of its small wars doctrine, should be categorized as a special operations-like mission.

²¹ The author credits Thomas Rid, *War and Media Operations: The U.S. Military and the Press from Vietnam to Iraq* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 17–22, for providing this external-internal framework for analysis.

²² Weber, *Economy and Society*, 956.

liberating (i.e., less arbitrary) for the individual than other forms of organizations he had encountered. Concerning armies specifically, he argues that the bureaucratic structure itself is necessary “for the development of professional standing armies which are necessary for the constant pacification of large territories against distant enemies,” as well as for enabling military discipline and the development of technical military training.²³

In his assessment of bureaucracy, however, Weber is concerned first and foremost with efficiency as opposed to effectiveness. Organizational efficiency, defined as the ratio of resources utilized to output produced, is an internal standard of performance, whereas effectiveness entails the ability to create acceptable outcomes and actions and is an external standard for evaluating how well an organization is meeting the demands placed on it by outside entities.²⁴ By favoring efficiency over effectiveness, as bureaucratic organizations age, they learn to perform given tasks better and better and, in a desire to document organizational memory, develop more and more rules concerning more and more specific situations previously encountered in order to make its behavior even more stable and predictable.²⁵ These rules improve behavior concerning situations previously encountered, but they also divert attention away from achieving the desired mission of the organization in favor of conforming to its own rules. Over time, the organization’s structural complexity increases, thus strengthening the organization’s inertia, since the organization is loath to dispense with previous investments of time, money, and resources in its current procedures.²⁶ As devotion to these rules becomes an

²³ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 956–978, 981.

²⁴ Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik, *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978), 11. See Allan R. Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth H. Watman, “The Effectiveness of Military Organizations,” in *Military Effectiveness*, 3 vols., ed. Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), I: 1–30, for detailed measures the authors employ for determining the effectiveness of military organizations at the political, strategic, operational, and tactical levels of military activity.

²⁵ Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy*, 18.

²⁶ Downs, 18–19, 195.

end in itself, the very procedures necessary for the general efficiency of the organization make it resistant to change.²⁷

Complicating matters further, in times of peace, military organizations are limited in their ability to create realistic training scenarios that replicate actual conditions in war.²⁸ This results in an insufficient level of urgency, which John Kotter notes is a primary factor in failed organizational transformation efforts.²⁹ As the ambiguities, complexities, and difficulties experienced in combat become distant memories, it becomes increasingly easy for military organizations “to develop concepts, doctrines, and procedures that meet the standards of peacetime efficiency rather than those of wartime effectiveness.”³⁰ Williamson Murray maintains, “[I]t has been the persistence of many military organizations to hold their course despite evidence to the contrary.”³¹ Despite these seemingly insurmountable obstacles, military organizations do in fact innovate and change.

B. EXTERNAL DRIVERS

Modern international relations theory presents some of the leading arguments concerning what prompts military innovation, arguing that military organizations are driven to innovate by the competition between states in the international system. Within this school of thought, scholars posit that statesmen embarking on conquest prefer offensive doctrines out of necessity. Additionally, states facing multiple enemies,

²⁷ Charles H. Coates and Roland J. Pellegrin, *Military Sociology: A Study of American Military Institutions and Military Life* (University Park, MD: The Social Science Press, 1965), 102–103. See also Robert Komer, *Bureaucracy at War: U.S. Performance in the Vietnam Conflict* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 18. Komer quotes former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who claims that “heavy, bureaucratic, and modern government creates a sort of blindness in which bureaucracies run a competition with their own programs and measure success by the degree to which they fulfill their own norms, without being in a position to judge whether the norms made any sense to begin with.”

²⁸ Williamson Murray, “Thinking About Innovation,” *Naval War College Review* 54, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 122.

²⁹ John P. Kotter, “Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail,” *Harvard Business Review*, Product Number 4231 (Mar.-Apr. 1995), 60–61 accessed October 7, 2018, <http://www.globalsurgery.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Leading-Change-Kotter.pdf>.

³⁰ Murray, “Thinking About Innovation,” 122.

³¹ Williamson Murray, “Thinking About Revolutions in Military Affairs,” *Joint Force Quarterly* (Summer 1997): 76. Emphasis in original.

political isolation, or desiring to fight “preventive” wars adopt offensive doctrines. In contrast, states preferring the status quo and those states that are preparing to fight in coalitions prefer defensive doctrines. Germany during the 1918–1939 interwar period is used as evidence of the former, and Great Britain and France during the same period is used as evidence of the latter.³² Implied in this argument is the importance of strategic net assessments.³³ Scholars from a second strand of this school of thought argue that states play a glorified game of “copycat” and try to catch up to the state they deem most powerful, leading military weapons and doctrines among the major powers to look alike.³⁴ Others argue that states react to innovation in another state’s military doctrine if this foreign innovation is seen to significantly alter the environment or calculus of future battle.³⁵

The civilian intervener who awakens a reluctant or incompetent military from its doldrums has been romanticized in the literature due to the seminal contribution of Barry Posen. In his analysis of the French, British, and German militaries between the world wars, Posen observes very little internally generated innovation. Rather, since militaries abhor uncertainty—which changes in traditional ways of fighting always involve—and no service within a military organization willingly accepts second priority, Posen argues that civilians with legitimate authority are needed to promote innovation and an integrated grand strategy.³⁶ Left to its own devices, each service prepares as if it were fighting each war alone, leading to a lack of integration between military doctrine and the

³² Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 16–19, 228–236.

³³ Allan R. Millett, “Patterns of Military Innovation in the Interwar Period,” in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, ed. Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 336–342.

³⁴ Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979), 127.

³⁵ Kimberly Marten Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy: Organization Theory and Soviet Military Innovation, 1955–1991* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 13, 18.

³⁶ Posen, *Sources*, 224–227. Posen cites the Royal Air Force and its air defense system and the German Army’s Blitzkrieg doctrine as noteworthy examples of civilian intervention resulting in innovation in military doctrine. It is worth noting, however, that Posen does not explicitly define what “legitimate” means.

political objectives of the state's grand strategy.³⁷ According to this civilian interventionist school of thought, fear of recent events in the international environment, increases in perceived threats to the state, and the resulting expectation of military disaster prompt civilian intervention.³⁸ Additionally, failure and the resulting anger of civilian leaders can lead these civilian leaders to shift resources from one service to another, providing the "slack" for the newly favored service to attempt potential innovations.³⁹ By Posen's own acknowledgment, however, these civilian interveners are ultimately still dependent on finding sources of military knowledge—so-called "mavericks"—"for the details of doctrinal and operational innovation."⁴⁰

Military organizations sometimes seek to mitigate battlefield threats identified with a particular kind of physical terrain, possibly making geography a driving force of innovation or determinant of doctrine. According to this view, militaries identify the terrain on which a future war might take place via an analysis of the state's most likely threats, and they subsequently change doctrine as the state's national security policy and most likely threats also change.⁴¹ After conducting an analysis of U.S. Army tactical doctrine from the conclusion of World War II to the conclusion of the Vietnam Conflict, retired U.S. Army Brigadier General Robert Doughty argues that the selection of new technologies and how they are employed "has generally depended upon the selection of

³⁷ Posen, 53–54.

³⁸ Posen, 75–79. Posen argues that such conditions also make the military more receptive to outside criticism.

³⁹ Posen, 57.

⁴⁰ Posen, 174–175. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' altering of the U.S. Army's promotion procedures, most notably in convening a second general officers' promotion board in 2007 after he disagreed with the results of the first, and his involvement in implementing counterinsurgency doctrine along with the aid of General David Petraeus and Petraeus' coalition of officers from the U.S. Military Academy's Department of Social Sciences, provide more recent examples of this civilian intervener–military maverick model. Fred Kaplan, the author of the Gates-Petraeus narrative, dubs the Army officers advocating for the new counterinsurgency doctrine "the insurgents" rather than "the mavericks." However, one can certainly debate whether or not a four-star general, who became the top-ranking officer in Iraq, Afghanistan, and at U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), really still qualifies as a maverick. See Fred Kaplan, *The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American War of War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013).

⁴¹ Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 8.

the possible future battlefield and the conditions under which a battle might be fought.”⁴² Posen also argues that geographical factors can have very powerful, direct, and long-lasting effects on doctrine, which he notes is consistent with German and British military doctrine between the world wars.⁴³

Adherents to the importance of resources argue that military innovation may threaten the traditional flow of resources,⁴⁴ and military organizations “tend to resist innovative ideas that threaten their budgetary resource share or corporate autonomy”⁴⁵ or that generate a new function without any corresponding increase in their budget.⁴⁶ Additionally, in states where civilian leadership controls the resources devoted to the military, military organizations are sometimes forced to innovate out of budgetary necessity. For example, international security and foreign policy scholar Kimberly Zisk notes that domestic-centered cost-cutting efforts in military spending can spur change.⁴⁷

Graham Allison similarly notes that marked changes in the behavior of large government organizations are more probable to occur not just during periods of “budgetary feast,” when leaders committed to change can use extra funds to bring them

⁴² Major Robert A. Doughty, *The Evolution of U.S. Army Tactical Doctrine, 1946–1976*, Leavenworth Papers, no. 1 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: USACGSC, 1979), 47.

⁴³ Posen, *Sources*, 237–238.

⁴⁴ Edmund Beard, *Developing the ICBM: A Study in Bureaucratic Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

⁴⁵ Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy*, 14.

⁴⁶ Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1974), 57–58. Halperin notes that “[o]rganizations are vigilant not only about their absolute share of budget but also their relative share of a larger budget.” According to Halperin, the services in the U.S. military “prefer the certainty of a particular share of the budget to an unknown situation in which budgets may increase but shares may change.” Services tend to resist proposals that promise more funds but a less than proportionate increase in their budget. Other scholars, however, tend to downplay the importance of bureaucratic politics in budget formation. See, for example, Edward Rhodes, “Do Bureaucratic Politics Matter?: Some Disconfirming Findings from the Case of the U.S. Navy,” *World Politics* 47, no. 1 (Oct. 1994): 1–41.

⁴⁷ Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy*, 14.

about, but also during so-called “prolonged budgetary famine.”⁴⁸ While a single year’s famine typically results in few fundamental changes, Allison argues that a prolonged period can incentivize organizations to change even if they are typically risk averse. Military innovation in the interwar period generally supports this notion that resource constraints can spur, or at least not inhibit, innovation. Williamson Murray and renowned Marine Corps historian Alan Millett note, “One must stress that in spite of low military budgets and considerable antipathy towards military institutions in the aftermath of the slaughter in the trenches, military institutions were able to innovate in the 1920s and 1930s with considerable success.”⁴⁹

Technology can also drive doctrinal change insofar as doctrine must change to keep pace with advancing technology. In 1957, two U.S. Army colonels at the U.S. Army’s Command and General Staff College described a technology environment then that could very well have been written today: “We are living in the most dynamic age in the history of mankind. Technological advances tumble from our laboratories with ever-increasing rapidity. As a result, our most progressive doctrines, organizations, and materiel stand in constant danger of being outdated almost overnight.”⁵⁰ This ever-increasing tempo of technological advance thus necessitates a corresponding acceleration in the formation of doctrine.⁵¹ However, if dynamic change really is a constant, as the authors suggest, then technological innovations would immediately become outdated, and their impact—as well as the authors’ basic premise—neutered. Retired U.S. Air Force

⁴⁸ Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1971), 84–85; Graham T. Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *American Political Science Review* 63, no. 3 (Sep. 1969): 701. Allison and Andy Marshall, then of RAND Corporation and later of the Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Net Assessment, first analyzed bureaucratic behavior in the context of military organizations in Graham T. Allison and A. W. Marshall, *Explanation and Prediction of Governmental Action: An Organizational Process Model* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1969), a recently declassified study.

⁴⁹ Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett, “Introduction,” in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, ed. Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 2. Emphasis in original.

⁵⁰ Colonel Victor W. Hobson Jr. and Colonel Oliver G. Kinney, “Keeping Pace With the Future: Development of Doctrine at USA CGSC,” *Military Review* 37, no. 8 (Nov. 1957): 15.

⁵¹ Hobson and Kinney, 10. Hobson and Kinney argue that another result of technological advancement is that doctrine is based more on theory than historical experience, since the environment is new, novel, and different, and experience is thus limited.

officer David Macmillan argues that experience gleaned from four major wars drove changes in tactical air warfare—namely, into the missions of counterair, air interdiction, close air support, aerospace surveillance and reconnaissance, airlift, and special operations.⁵² According to Drew, “Technical improvements are what made it possible to develop specialized equipment and tactics to perform each of these missions.”⁵³

C. INTERNAL DRIVERS

While the aforementioned scholars subscribe to the importance of external shocks to overcome an organization’s propensity to maintain the status quo, an opposing school of thought focuses on internal drivers of innovation. External stimuli oftentimes are not sufficient, and civilian interveners can lack the necessary legitimacy, political capital, or attention span to substantively impact the organization. For example, retired U.S. Army officers Andrew Krepinevich and John Nagl, among others, note in their research the U.S. Army’s resistance to President Kennedy’s emphasis on “Flexible Response” upon taking office in 1961, including the requirement that he identified for countering subversive, insurgent, and guerilla forces in low intensity conflicts.⁵⁴ This strategy implied dramatic changes in traditional military operations and was at odds with the Army’s preparations for a conventional, linear war on the plains of Europe instead of for brushfire wars in the Third World.⁵⁵ This Army resistance provides evidence that internal stimuli must also be taken into account, since external drivers are not always sufficient.

Proponents of the vital role senior officers play in promoting change note that the more professional a military organization is, the more civilians are not seen as entirely

⁵² Lieutenant Colonel David T. Macmillan, “Technology: The Catalyst for Doctrinal Change,” *Air University Review* 29, no. 1 (Nov.-Dec. 1977): 19.

⁵³ Macmillan, 16–22.

⁵⁴ Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 27–55; John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 124–142.

⁵⁵ Krepinevich, 29.

“legitimate.”⁵⁶ In contrast to Allison’s argument that military organizations avoid uncertainty by arranging a “negotiated environment” to obtain more of what they already have,⁵⁷ Stephen Rosen regards military organizations as “complex political communities in which the central concerns are those of any political community: who should rule, and how the ‘citizens’ should live.”⁵⁸ While the different branches in healthy military organizations generally agree “about the manner in which they should work together in wartime,” this is “a dynamic condition,” subject to debate among the citizens of that community, with “no permanent norm defining what is or is not the dominant professional activity.”⁵⁹ Innovation requires an “ideological struggle” and “an intellectual redefinition of the way the entire military organization conceived of the tasks it would have to perform to win the next war.”⁶⁰ Since this “new theory of victory must be reflected in a change in the distribution of power within the governing class of the community,” senior military officers wielding the requisite political power must create new career paths to the senior ranks so that an officer practicing the new way of war is not marginalized as a specialist and can still become a flag or general officer.⁶¹ Thus, civilians are relegated to either supporting or not supporting senior officers that are already striving to transform military organizations, and they cannot themselves bestow on these senior officers any legitimacy.⁶²

Rosen’s analysis, however, focuses on 21 different case studies and covers very limited periods of time concerning each case. Thus, he is more apt to ascribe credit to one particular individual during too narrowly confined a time period. In contrast to Rosen,

⁵⁶ Stephen Peter Rosen, “New Ways of War: Understanding Military Innovation,” *International Security* 13, no. 1 (Summer 1988): 142.

⁵⁷ Allison, “Conceptual Models,” 700–701. See also Posen, *Sources*, 54. Posen observes that this can take the form of either a customary split of the budget or dividing shares equally.

⁵⁸ Rosen, “New Ways of War,” 141.

⁵⁹ Rosen, 141.

⁶⁰ Rosen, 141.

⁶¹ Rosen, 142.

⁶² Rosen, 142. While Rosen presents a top-down model of innovation, he does acknowledge that key ideas may work their way up to the senior ranks from below.

Murray argues, “Innovation depends on organizational focus over a sustained period of time rather than on one particular individual’s capacity to guide the path of innovation for a short period of time.”⁶³ Murray and Barry Watts, a retired U.S. Air Force officer, support this supposition by pointing to “the importance of bureaucratic acceptance” of successful peacetime innovation and thus the limited potential for one or two “visionaries” to bring about innovation, or for civilian leaders or outsiders to impose it on a reluctant service.⁶⁴ Senior leaders are needed more as means of fostering this bureaucratic acceptance: “Without the emergence of bureaucratic acceptance by senior military leaders, including adequate funding for new enterprises and viable career paths to attract bright officers, it is difficult, if not impossible, for new ways of fighting to take root within existing military institutions.”⁶⁵

In many respects, the arguments espousing the importance of senior leadership begin their analysis too late in the innovation process and tacitly assume that many new ideas already exist and simply need to be adopted and protected by senior leadership. Such arguments shy away from discussing how these new ideas and concepts originate in the first place. In order to spur idea generation, U.S. Marine Corps Colonel Morgan Mann argues that senior leadership must not only provide clear guidance for innovation and an end state tied to the organization’s strategic and operational objectives, but also “foster an environment in which there is a willingness to challenge assumptions and test paradigms that have been the foundation of an organization’s success.”⁶⁶ According to Mann, “Latitude for heresy must be accepted by the institution.”⁶⁷ Mann thus implies that some degree of protection must be afforded to the bearers of new ideas but stops short of describing how this protection might be built into a military organization. In pointing to

⁶³ Murray, “Innovation: Past and Future,” 309.

⁶⁴ Barry Watts and Williamson Murray, “Military Innovation in Peacetime,” in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, ed. Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 409–410.

⁶⁵ Watts and Murray, 409. Emphasis in original.

⁶⁶ Morgan Mann, “Innovation as Leadership: The need to adapt when institutions are threatened,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 98, no. 5 (May 2014): 46.

⁶⁷ Mann, 46.

staff processes, informal networks, social networking, and venues such as the *Marine Corps Gazette* as forums for socializing and testing ideas, Mann implies that mid-level officers are ultimately the source of these new ideas.

Adherents to the importance of mid-level officers subscribe to a number of different theories concerning how mid-level officers actually effect innovation. For example, Rosen characterizes U.S. Marine officer Earl H. “Pete” Ellis, who at the time was just a major, as a visionary genius for singlehandedly making the conceptual leap from the advance base force to the amphibious assault.⁶⁸ As previously discussed, Posen posits that the “military maverick,” a midgrade officer who has been bypassed by the system, can still effect change with the aid of a civilian outsider.⁶⁹ Noted civil-military scholar Samuel Huntington even makes allowances for a junior officer to “disobey” his superiors to advance professional knowledge and new doctrine.⁷⁰ If perceived by his superiors as disobedient, such an officer would undoubtedly also qualify as a maverick.

In his analysis of forces that shape doctrine, Keith Bickel refers to the officer in the lower and midgrade ranks as an “expert.”⁷¹ Bickel defines the “expert” as an individual who is a military officer, not a civilian, and who is neither a maverick, nor a genius. Furthermore, such an individual is not among the senior officers of his service. Rather, by dint of his experience, such an officer is “a promoter of change” and a “recognized authority on a particular form of warfare” who is given the opportunity to create or change doctrine.⁷² The expert may still be subject to the whims of his superiors,

⁶⁸ Rosen, *Winning*, 66–67. Similarly, Bickel dubs this the “military genius” category of the “great man” school of thought, in which he also includes the civilian intervener, military leader, and military maverick. Bickel treats the “great man” school of thought as its own separate category of innovation drivers, in addition to the internal-external driver analytical framework employed here. See Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 13–14.

⁶⁹ Posen, *Sources*, 171, 178. Brigadier General Billy Mitchell is also often cited as one of the preeminent military mavericks. For example, even though Mitchell lost out on command of the U.S. Army Air Corps following World War I, he remained an outspoken advocate for airpower. His increasing agitations ultimately led to his court martial in 1926—what some scholars consider deliberate provocations to draw attention to his ideas about aviation. See, for example, Alfred F. Hurley, *Billy Mitchell, Crusader for Air Power* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975).

⁷⁰ Samuel P. Huntington, *Soldier and the State* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), 75–76.

⁷¹ Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 14.

⁷² Bickel, 14.

who can accept or reject his ideas; however, he has the opportunity to sway the opinion of enough of his peers to the extent that superiors cannot ignore him.⁷³

Bickel notes that such officers are often overlooked because scholars tend to focus on the doctrinal product rather than the doctrinal process, and military officers never discuss the informal part of doctrinal development in which they unwittingly take part, thus exacerbating the neglect of how doctrine evolves. Bickel's subject of analysis is the development of the U.S. Marine Corps' small wars doctrine. By Bickel's own admission, this doctrine was far from a new form of warfare, but rather a compilation of what Marine officers had learned from personal experience and had already been teaching in the Marine Corps Schools (MCS) for years. These mid-level officers were acting out of a kind of professional duty.⁷⁴ While maybe not particularly relevant to the study of new theories of waging war, it is germane to this study since the Marine Corps was involved in conducting special operations missions long before the creation of a formal special operations component and was undoubtedly influenced by its past experiences in the creation of more formal capabilities. It also underscores the limitations of the scholarly emphasis on the doctrinal product.

Eliot Cohen not only reiterates the importance of the lower and midgrade officer, but also that of the enlisted man, arguing that theorists "may have overestimated the degree to which enlightened senior leadership could, by itself, remake the armed forces, as opposed to creating conditions that would by themselves foster change."⁷⁵ According to Cohen, "Throughout most of military history, to include the current period, change tends to come more from below, from the spontaneous interactions between military people, technology and particular tactical circumstances."⁷⁶ Senior leaders, Cohen contends, might help disseminate new ideas, but they do not often create them. Theo Farrell similarly stresses the importance of a bottom-up model, but he makes a point of

⁷³ Bickel, 14.

⁷⁴ Bickel, 15, 17–18.

⁷⁵ Eliot A. Cohen, "Change and Transformation in Military Affairs," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 27, no. 3 (2004): 400.

⁷⁶ Cohen, "Change and Transformation," 400.

stressing the difference between adaptation—what he defines as a “change in tactics, techniques, or existing technologies to improve operational performance”⁷⁷—and innovation, or “doctrinal or structural change, or the acquisition of a brand new technology.”⁷⁸ Adaptation at the smaller unit level, according to Farrell, oftentimes occurs more quickly than at the level of the service of which it is a part.

The importance of professional military education (PME) and its role in encouraging “debate, study, and honest experimentation in preparation for war” is another factor conducive to overcoming the natural tendency to conform and to determining the extent to which a service will innovate.⁷⁹ Williamson Murray notes the importance of this “process of rigorously examining the past”⁸⁰ and this “culture of critical examination”⁸¹ and seems to imply that a more systematic focus is necessary to drive change, as opposed to one led by, or revolving around, a particular individual. Such a focus on PME would presumably be supported by—and likely even mostly led by—the service’s large cadre of midgrade officers.

Discounting the agency of particular individuals, Mark Mandeles argues that the formal organizational structure in which individual officers interact might itself induce doctrinal change. According to Mandeles, the key to unlocking the process of innovation lies in an analysis of the multiple sets of relationships among individuals, organizations, and the interactions among groups of organizations—what he dubs the “multiorganizational system.”⁸² While individuals play critical roles in the formation and continuing operation of such a system, Mandeles argues that the military problems of choosing new weapons systems or developing new operational concepts is beyond the

⁷⁷ Theo Farrell, “Improving in War: Military Adaptation and the British in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 2006–2009,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 4 (2010): 569.

⁷⁸ Farrell, 570.

⁷⁹ Murray, “Thinking About Innovation,” 125.

⁸⁰ Murray, “Thinking About Revolutions in Military Affairs,” 74.

⁸¹ Murray, “Innovation: Past and Future,” 27.

⁸² Mark D. Mandeles, *Military Transformation Past and Present* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007), 13.

competence of any one person, group of persons, or of any one profession. In analyzing military aviation between the wars, he credits the Navy's multiorganizational system comprised of the Fleet, the Bureau of Aeronautics, the Naval War College, and the General Board for embarking on a self-evaluating and self-correcting course of inquiry despite the risk that it could lead to reductions in budgetary commitments to battleships. He concedes the purely accidental manner in which this multiorganizational system was created by observing that it was not applied to other strictly naval problems, such as the Bureau of Ordnance's development of torpedoes. Mandeles argues that in the face of uncertainty and rapidly developing technology, the most effective strategy is to discover organizational goals through action rather than to announce "vision statements" or goals to use as the basis for an acquisition problem.⁸³

Since "action officers" usually reside at the junior and mid-level and vision statements are typically the domain of more senior officers or civilian masters, Mandeles also hints at a bottom-up or middle up-down model of military innovation nested within his larger thesis concerning the multiorganizational system. He argues that the absence of such institutional relationships in the U.S. Army hindered its ability to create useful operational doctrine for aviation in advance of combat and to forecast tactical problems and potential solutions during the same time period. The Army did not experiment or analyze doctrine. Rather, Mandeles argues, they merely reiterated it. Mandeles uses a similar model for explaining why the U.S. Marines were successful in studying and implementing the amphibious landing, whereas the Royal Marines were not. The interaction among a set of organizations having partial overlap of jurisdictions, Mandeles posits, enables the establishment of "self-correcting organizations" on the basis of rational criticism, rooted in experience and experimentation.⁸⁴

⁸³ Mandeles, *Military Transformation*, 38–39, 46–47. Wilson also notes the riskiness of such top-down change because government executives are too far removed from the "action" and thus "lack the detailed and specialized knowledge possessed by operators and lower-level managers." As a result, they are likely to overestimate the benefits of change and underestimate its costs. Wilson also notes that since these executives are drawn from outside the agency and serve for a brief period, their rewards come not from the agency but from what outsiders think of them. See James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1989), 229.

⁸⁴ Mandeles, *Military Transformation*, 43, 47, 68.

Leo Daugherty III provides a model similar to Mandeles' in arguing that amphibious warfare was a "joint" effort in which individual service members brought their own unique contributions to the trial-and-error process of amphibious warfare development. Furthermore, Daugherty argues that the acceptance of amphibious warfare required not the intervention of particular senior officers or civilian leadership, but rather a generational change in the officers that entered the military at the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century.⁸⁵ Daugherty thus reinforces the importance of mid-level officers at least initially, before they went on to more senior ranks, while also implying that the conduciveness of an organizational structure to innovation varies with the climate of prevailing opinion and experience.

In contrast to Leo Daugherty's more benign theory of "jointness," Owen Cote argues that it is competition between the different U.S. military services that is vital to innovation.⁸⁶ According to Cote, political battles take place at the service level rather than between the different branches within a single service, as Rosen in part suggests. Cote studies the development of the Polaris and Trident II weapons systems that the U.S. Navy developed during periods of major strategic nuclear modernization. Both systems provided superior alternatives to the Air Force bomber and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) at the time, but only Polaris produced major innovative changes because it was developed as an alternative to Air Force land-based forces, whereas Trident II was developed as a complement to these same forces. Cote also builds on the notion of the military maverick or mid-level expert: "More importantly, when the claims of a rival service threaten a service with the loss of a mission or of the right to deploy certain classes of weapons, advocates for exploiting the doctrinal potential of these new missions or weapons gain stature they would have lacked in the absence of such an interservice challenge."⁸⁷ Such competition increases the stature of professional military mavericks

⁸⁵ Leo J. Daugherty III, *Pioneers of Amphibious Warfare, 1898–1945: Profiles of Fourteen American Military Strategists* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2009), 3.

⁸⁶ Owen R. Cote Jr., "The Politics of Innovative Military Doctrine: The U.S. Navy and Fleet Ballistic Missiles," (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1996), accessed July 13, 2018, <http://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/11217>.

⁸⁷ Cote, 82.

or internal experts who advocate for radical doctrinal innovation if they can present their proposals as drawing from the resources of another service rather than from their own. Furthermore, the burden placed on civilian executives is reduced, and thus the probability of success much higher, since interservice competition alerts these executives to the existence of doctrinal alternatives to which they might not otherwise have been aware without this competition.⁸⁸

D. DOCTRINE AND CHANGE

As noted previously, studying doctrine for indications of change in how a military organization wages war might not be entirely appropriate for the subject of this study, since there can be a large time lag between initial experiences and operations and the creation of formal units and doctrine. Furthermore, this form of analysis largely overlooks informal learning, which proves important since a lack of adequate resources, high operational tempo, the quest for concurrence, and the “tyranny of the present” can oftentimes serve as institutional impediments to doctrinal compilation or development. Bickel argues that the overwhelming focus on the doctrinal product rather than the doctrinal process leads to a neglect of “how ideas may be transmitted among the officer corps and improved upon before they become institutionally recognized or sanctioned,” which he refers to as informal doctrine.⁸⁹ Bickel notes that articles in professional military journals, such as the *Marine Corps Gazette*, are the most common form of idea exchange. He also includes field orders, personal letters, and other forms of socialization among the different forms of informal doctrine. Thomas Rid argues that informal doctrine can and does influence action, so to focus solely on formal product is “conceptually blindfolded.”⁹⁰

Retired U.S. Air Force officer Dennis Drew describes informal doctrine as “the result of repeated experiences that produce similar results and subsequently produce beliefs—sometimes personal, sometimes broadly held—about what usually works

⁸⁸ Cote, 81–82.

⁸⁹ Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 5.

⁹⁰ Rid, *War and Media*, 23.

best.”⁹¹ He does not find it unrealistic to assume that these beliefs are even “more ubiquitous than officially blessed doctrines” since they are oftentimes “more timely, accurate, and useful than officially sanctioned doctrine, which must suffer through the travails of bureaucratic coordination and compromise before publication.”⁹² Bickel similarly notes the “lag between when operations are conducted and when new training courses are created and institutionally sanctioned lessons are disseminated.”⁹³ This study also aims to explore the interaction between the Marine Corps, special operations, and the defense establishment to identify any lessons learned from the Marine Corps’ experiences that influenced the development of more formal special operations capabilities.

Organizational culture can also play a significant role in the development of—or resistance to—doctrinal and structural change. Anthony Downs notes the importance of ideology in making organizations resistant to change. If it has taken a long time to get the individuals of an organization accustomed to a certain ideology, then it may take an equally long time to convince them of the necessity for changing it, resulting in an “ideological lag” and continued behavior that is no longer beneficial to the individuals or the organization.⁹⁴ Charles Coates and Roland Pellegrin refer to the effect of social forces that resist the need for change in institutional forms, organizational structures, or long-standing ways of working as a “cultural lag.”⁹⁵ Such ways of operating become deeply entrenched in attitudes and values and are learned over long periods of time and thus “cannot be immediately abolished administratively or modified legally.”⁹⁶ According to Coates and Pellegrin, attitudes and opinions, steeped in culture and tradition, must be unlearned or never learned in the first instance.

⁹¹ Dennis M. Drew, “Informal Doctrine and the Doctrinal Process: A Response,” *Air University Review* 35, no. 6 (Sep.-Oct. 1984): 96–97.

⁹² Drew, 96.

⁹³ Bickel, *Mars Learning*, 5. Kenneth McKenzie, who was recently nominated to be the next CENTCOM Commander, outlines the development of the Marine Corps’ maneuver warfare doctrine, which took place over multiple decades. See Kenneth McKenzie, “On the Verge of a New Era: The Marine Corps and Maneuver Warfare,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 7 (Jul. 1993): 63–67.

⁹⁴ Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy*, 244.

⁹⁵ Coates and Pellegrin, *Military Sociology*, 413.

⁹⁶ Coates and Pellegrin, 416.

The effects of culture on how an organization adapts to environmental change is thus germane to the study of military innovation. Military culture can impact not only the receptiveness and responsiveness of a military organization to new doctrine or capabilities, but also the manner in which an organization decides to adapt to perceived underperformance and external change. Military organizations can exploit existing competencies with more subtle refinements of existing tactics, techniques, and procedures, or they can explore entirely new capabilities by developing new means and methods of warfare.⁹⁷ The next chapter explores how military culture affects this decision-making process.

⁹⁷ Farrell, "Improving in War," 570.

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III. MILITARY CULTURE

While the obstacles to cutting costs and becoming more efficient are more onerous for the public sector—local, state, and federal—leaders in both the public and the private sectors face multiple barriers to innovation and reform to cope with new and changing circumstances. For example, leaders in both sectors often encounter entrenched cultures that make real change difficult, as well as lower-level organizations resistant to guidance from the top, determined to preserve their piece of the cake and their status.

—Robert Gates, former Secretary of Defense⁹⁸

Given the chaotic nature of war, a common culture that establishes predictable behavior among members of a military organization is often both necessary and desirable, facilitating both coordination and efficiency benefits. However, even though the importance of culture is increasingly recognized in the academic community,⁹⁹ business world,¹⁰⁰ and even professional sports,¹⁰¹ it remains a somewhat nebulous concept. Scholars agree that culture serves as a filter through which organizations interpret events and view the world. Culture can also make organizations unwilling to change their essence and, as a result, more prone to adopting defensive routines when confronted with an imperative to change. This chapter provides an overview of the conceptual debates concerning how culture should be analyzed, including its theoretical

⁹⁸ Robert Gates, *A Passion for Leadership: Lessons on Change and Reform from Fifty Years of Public Service* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016), 5.

⁹⁹ Cristiano Busco, Angelo Riccaboni, and Robert W. Scapens, “When Culture Matters: Processes of Organizational Learning and Transformation,” *Reflections* 4, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 43–54; Edgar H. Schein, “How Can Organizations Learn Faster? The Challenge of Entering the Green Room,” *Sloan Management Review* (Winter 1993): 85–92.

¹⁰⁰ Jena McGregor, “A Lesson from GE: The Power of Telling Hard Truths—and the Peril of Avoiding Them,” *Washington Post*, February 22, 2018, http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2018/02/22/a-lesson-from-ge-the-power-of-telling-hard-truths-and-the-peril-of-avoiding-them/?utm_term=.538f4c6224b1; Thomas Gryta, Joann S. Lublin, and David Benoit, “How Jeffrey Immelt’s ‘Success Theater’ Masked the Rot at GE,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 21, 2018, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/how-jeffrey-immelts-success-theater-masked-the-rot-at-ge-1519231067>; Michael Lee Stallard, “Ford’s Alan Mulally and the Superpower of Connection,” *Industry Week*, June 13, 2018, <http://www.industryweek.com/leadership/fords-alan-mulally-and-superpower-connection>.

¹⁰¹ Michael Lombardi, *Gridiron Genius: A Master Class in Winning Championships and Building Dynasties in the NFL* (New York: Crown Archetype, 2018), 9–26; Mike Robbins, “Culture and Chemistry Matter,” *Huffington Post*, October 30, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mike-robbins/culture-and-chemistry-mat_b_6076468.html.

shortcomings, analyzes how culture affects an organization's willingness to adapt, and identifies socialization processes more amenable to fostering an innovative, as opposed to custodial, mindset among members of an organization. This chapter concludes by noting the seeming contradiction the Marine Corps represents. Known not only for its strong culture and routinized behaviors, but also for its innovativeness, the Corps ostensibly strikes a balance between the two by fostering "we-leadership" principles and establishing processes that make routine behavior and innovation mutually supportive.

A. THE ELUSIVENESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Scholars generally agree that organizational culture does exist and is important, but they are often left grasping for how exactly to define it, from where it comes, how new members learn it, how it changes or evolves, as well as its impact on behavior. These complications explain why so many different research methodologies and perspectives are used to study the phenomenon and why some scholars settle for merely describing elements or characteristics of organizational culture. Other scholars compare the different research methodologies and theoretical foundations influencing the concept of organizational culture.¹⁰² For example, Edgar Schein summarizes, and highlights some of the shortcomings in, the different research methodologies.

According to Schein, survey research based on questionnaires struggles when trying to measure something as abstract as culture, so by necessity, the analytical descriptive approach breaks the concept of culture down into smaller units (e.g., stories and rituals) in order to develop empirical measures, thus fractionating a concept meant to draw attention to the group as a whole. Schein notes that the ethnographic approach borrows heavily from sociological and anthropological concepts and methods and is time consuming and expensive. Historical and longitudinal analyses suffer from weaknesses similar to those of the ethnographic approach. Lastly, the essential characteristic of the clinical descriptive approach is that the researcher collects data while also actively

¹⁰² Edgar H. Schein, "Organizational Culture," *American Psychologist* 45, no. 2 (Feb. 1990): 109–119; Daniel R. Denison, "What is the Difference Between Organizational Culture and Organizational Climate? A Native's Point of View on a Decade of Paradigm War," *The Academy of Management Review* 21, no. 3 (Jul. 1996): 619–654.

serving as a consultant and helping his or her client work on problems the client defines. Thus, it lacks both “the descriptive breadth of an ethnography and the methodological rigor of quantitative hypothesis testing.”¹⁰³ In addition to noting the different research methodologies used to study culture, Schein identifies observable artifacts, values, and basic underlying assumptions as the “three fundamental levels at which culture manifests itself.”¹⁰⁴

Joseph Soeters, Donna Winslow, and Alise Weibull similarly describe three perspectives used to study culture. The integration perspective views culture as “a pattern of thoughts and priorities gluing all members of the group together.”¹⁰⁵ The differentiation perspective perceives the culture of the whole group as “a mosaic consisting of subcultures, that are hard edged and largely homogeneous” internally but provide for the heterogeneity of the group.¹⁰⁶ Lastly, the fragmentation perspective views cultural elements as only loosely connected in microcultures that consist of small numbers of people.¹⁰⁷

Daniel Denison and Aneil Mishra note the hurdles to developing a theory of culture and effectiveness and then proceed to analyze whether or not various cultural traits can reasonably predict the performance or effectiveness—definitions themselves subject to differing, incompatible, and changing criteria amongst stakeholders even in the same organization—of an organization. Denison and Mishra find that “stability” traits like mission and consistency can reasonably predict profitability, whereas “flexibility”

¹⁰³ Schein, “Organizational Culture,” 111.

¹⁰⁴ Schein, 110–111.

¹⁰⁵ Joseph L. Soeters, Donna J. Winslow, and Alise Weibull, “Military Culture,” in *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military*, ed. Giuseppe Caforio (New York: Springer, 2006), 239–240.

¹⁰⁶ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, 239.

¹⁰⁷ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, 239–240.

traits like involvement and adaptability can more readily predict growth.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, rather than highlight the differences between various research streams, Denison later attempts to reconcile the theoretical foundations concerning organizational culture and organizational climate, arguing that “these two research traditions should be viewed as differences in *interpretation* rather than differences in *phenomenon*.”¹⁰⁹

Scholars further reinforce this lack of consensus concerning a theory of organizational culture by highlighting the endemic shortcomings of any such theory, as evidenced by the heterogeneity present in a given organization’s many sub-cultures.¹¹⁰ Schein, for example, notes the inherent conflict between three sub-cultures in an organization: the operators who “make and deliver the products and services that fulfill the organization’s basic mission,” the engineers who are “the technocrats and core designers in any functional group,” and the executives who are the ones ultimately held accountable.¹¹¹ Concerning the military, in particular, Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull note that military cultures differ substantially across different nation states, and they also emphasize the Janusian “cold” and “hot” cultures of any military organization, which try alternately to “prevent the occurrence of problems and provides the preconditions for the core task.”¹¹²

Culture also differs within the different services of a military organization, as Snider notes: “Derived over time from their assigned domain of war on land, sea, and in

¹⁰⁸ Daniel R. Denison and Aneil K. Mishra, “Toward a Theory of Organizational Culture and Effectiveness,” *Organizational Science* 6, no. 2 (Mar.-Apr. 1995): 204–223. Concerning military culture and effectiveness, Williamson Murray repeatedly makes the argument that a military culture emphasizing a systematically examining the past is necessary for both innovation and for adapting to the actual conditions of war—in other words, effectiveness. See Murray, “Does Military Culture Matter?” *Orbis* 43, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 27–42; Murray, “Thinking About Revolutions in Military Affairs”; Murray, “Thinking About Innovation”; and, Murray, “Innovation: Past and Future.”

¹⁰⁹ Denison, “What is the Difference,” 621, 625, 641, 643, 645.

¹¹⁰ Edgar H. Schein, “Culture: The Missing Concept in Organization Studies,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (Jun. 1996): 229–240; Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, “Military Culture,” 238, 245–249; Don Snider, “An Uninformed Debate on Military Culture,” in *America the Vulnerable: Our Military Problems and How to Fix Them*, eds. John H. Lehman and Harvey Sicherman (Philadelphia, PA: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2001), 125–128; Rosen, *Winning*, 19.

¹¹¹ Schein, “Missing Concept,” 236–238.

¹¹² Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, “Military Culture,” 245.

the air, these individual services have developed very different ideals and concepts that in turn strongly influenced their institutional cultures and behavior, particularly their strategic approach to war that establishes their claim on the nation's assets."¹¹³ Due in part to the seeming elusiveness of a comprehensive definition or theory for such a "mushy" topic, military scholars oftentimes settle for simply describing the basic elements or characteristics of military culture.¹¹⁴ For example, Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull detail the "communal" character of life in uniform, the downward flow of directives, the relative coerciveness of the military hierarchy, and the importance of discipline. Such discipline is evidenced by the emphasis placed on "compliance with rules, the acceptance of orders and authority, and the way the organization deals with disobedience through overt punishment."¹¹⁵

James Burk, whom Don Snider cites extensively in his own work, also notes that discipline—"perfected through repetitive drill that makes the desired action a matter of habit"—is an essential element of military culture.¹¹⁶ In addition to discipline, Burk identifies the professional ethos of the military officer, ceremonies and etiquette, and cohesion and esprit de corps as essential elements of military culture. According to Burk, the professional ethos of the officer corps consists of "a set of normative understandings" that define "its corporate identity, its code of conduct, and (for the officers at least) its social worth."¹¹⁷ This ethos is based on a commitment to prepare for combat and being willing to kill and risk being killed in the service of the state.¹¹⁸ Ceremonies and etiquette affirm the group's solidarity and celebrate the organization's being, and

¹¹³ Snider, "Uninformed Debate," 125.

¹¹⁴ See, for example, Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, "Military Culture," 237–254; James Burk, "Military Culture," in *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict*, vol. 2 (Waltham, MA: Academic Press, 1999): 447–462; Snider, "Uninformed Debate," 19–125.

¹¹⁵ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, "Military Culture," 240–243.

¹¹⁶ Burk, "Military Culture," 448, 448–450.

¹¹⁷ Burk, 450.

¹¹⁸ Burk, 450–451.

cohesion and esprit de corps refer to the comradeship that soldiers feel for one another and to their commitment to the group, respectively.¹¹⁹

In fact, the problem of defining culture, according to Edgar Schein, derives in many respects from the difficulties associated with defining the parameters of the organization. Using the existence of some “cultural phenomena” to prove the existence of a group falls victim to the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* fallacy. Rather, it must first be specified that “a given set of people has had enough stability and common history to have allowed a culture to form.”¹²⁰ Despite these inherent conceptual challenges, culture has very real effects on organizations.

B. THE “ESSENCE” OF THE ORGANIZATION

Organizations are created to perform certain tasks or accomplish certain missions, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) typically enumerate how to accomplish them. In larger organizations, these tasks and missions compete for limited resources, oftentimes resulting in the leadership of the organization assigning them different levels of importance.¹²¹ For example, according to Morton Halperin, “The organization’s *essence* is the view held by the dominant group in the organization of what the mission and capabilities should be.”¹²² Organizations demonstrate the importance of this essence by favoring policies and strategies that make the organization more important, fighting for the capabilities most directly tied to its essence, resisting efforts that seek to strip those functions perceived to be part of its essence, and demonstrating an indifference—if not outright hostility—to those functions that are neither a part of nor protect its essence.¹²³ Similarly, Andy Krepinevich notes how the U.S. Army’s “perception of how

¹¹⁹ Burk, 451–454.

¹²⁰ Schein, “Organizational Culture,” 111.

¹²¹ Nagl, *Learning*, 4.

¹²² Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics*, 28. See also Victor A. Thompson, “Bureaucracy and Innovation,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (Jun. 1965): 2. Thompson refers to this essence as a “production ideology,” which explains what the group is doing and what it ought to do and legitimizes the coercion of the individual by the group.

¹²³ Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics*, 39–40.

wars ought to be waged”—the so-called “Army Concept of war”—influenced how it organized and trained its troops for battle before and during the Vietnam War, leaving it not only unprepared to fight what he deemed a counterinsurgency, but also unwilling to change.¹²⁴ John Nagl also notes how the U.S. Army remained true to this “American way of war,” focused on high technology, overwhelming firepower, and an aversion to unconventional tactics, in spite of dramatic evidence that it was facing a new kind of war in Vietnam.¹²⁵

Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow define organizational culture as “the set of beliefs the members of an organization hold about their organization, beliefs they have inherited and pass on to their successors.”¹²⁶ According to Allison and Zelikow, organizational culture matters even more so in government agencies because these agencies, and the bureaucrats within them, enjoy a lot of autonomy in shaping their organization’s missions and in defining their operational objectives and critical tasks, which they can do in a way that serves the preferences of the organization and its managers. How organizations decide to scope such definitions, in turn, not only filters the information and options members of the organization pass up to senior policymakers, but also the directives policymakers pass down.¹²⁷ Even more cynically, Allison and Zelikow note that in some cases, organizations have managed to “define their operational objectives in relation to the special capacities they had, or wanted to have.”¹²⁸

According to Halperin, such career officials in these government agencies believe they know better than others what capabilities they need and how to accomplish their mission and thus resist efforts, especially by senior officials, to control or interfere with what they know is right. These officials compete for roles in activities the organization has deemed most important and seek to avoid support roles. Organizations seek to

¹²⁴ Krepinevich, *Army and Vietnam*, 4–7.

¹²⁵ Nagl, *Learning*, 43–51.

¹²⁶ Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman Press, 1999), 153.

¹²⁷ Allison and Zelikow, 150–151, 153, 167.

¹²⁸ Allison and Zelikow, 151.

maintain morale by establishing modes of conduct for their staff members in order to avoid conflict, and officials shun changes that would probably improve the organization's effectiveness if they believe such actions might negatively impact morale or upset the promotion patterns of the organization.¹²⁹ Maintaining morale, then, can become even more important than mission accomplishment: "Short-run accomplishment of goals and even increases in budgets take second place to the long-run health of the organization."¹³⁰ Additionally, Chris Argyris and Donald Schön note that when individuals are faced with embarrassing or threatening issues, which altering the status quo oftentimes is, organizational "defensive routines" predominate. As a result, productive learning and inquiry are undermined, and higher-level learning fails to become disseminated or embedded in the organization.¹³¹

James Q. Wilson, who literally wrote the book on bureaucracy, links the concept of organizational essence to organizational culture, which he describes as "a persistent, patterned way of thinking about the central tasks of and human relationships within an organization."¹³² Organizational culture, he argues, also gives an organization "a distinctive way of seeing and responding to the world."¹³³ While acknowledging the vagaries of the concept, he contends that it is no less real than human personality, which leads individuals to respond differently to the same stimuli.¹³⁴ This patterned way of thinking becomes so ingrained that "members of a culture are not even aware of their own culture until they encounter another."¹³⁵ In fact, Oriol Pi-Sunyer and Thomas De Gregori argue that the very concept of culture implies the necessity of choice: "Only

¹²⁹ Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics*, 51, 55–56.

¹³⁰ Halperin, 56.

¹³¹ Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schön, *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method, and Practice* (New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1996), 75–107.

¹³² Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, 91.

¹³³ Wilson, 93.

¹³⁴ Wilson, 92–93.

¹³⁵ Schein, "Missing Concept," 236.

when there are two or more possible choices are we dealing with cultural phenomena.”¹³⁶

Edgar Schein’s classic definition of culture notes how these patterned ways of thinking create assumptions that subsequently impact the organization and create shared individual expectations among members over time:

Culture can now be defined as (a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.¹³⁷

Williamson Murray argues that military culture, which he defines as “the sum of intellectual, professional, and traditional values possessed by an officer corps,” influences “how officers assess the external environment and respond to threats” and is “crucial in how forces prepare for combat and innovate.”¹³⁸

Similarly, Elizabeth Kier argues that an organization’s culture “shapes its members’ perceptions and affects what they notice and how they interpret it: it screens out some parts of reality, while magnifying others.”¹³⁹ In particular, she notes that a military’s organizational culture has an independent explanatory power that frames its decisions and “guides how it responds to constraints set by civilian policymakers.”¹⁴⁰ Military organizations, after all, do not all react the same way to the same set of

¹³⁶ Oriol Pi-Sunyer and Thomas De Gregori, “Cultural Resistance to Technological Change,” *Technology and Culture* 5, no. 2 (Spring 1964): 248. See also Aaron Wildavsky, “Choosing Preferences by Constructing Institutions: A Cultural Theory of Preference Formation,” *The American Political Science Review* 81, no. 1 (Mar. 1987): 7. Wildavsky argues that “conflict among cultures is a precondition of cultural identity,” noting that “the differences and distances from others define one’s own cultural identity.”

¹³⁷ Schein, “Organizational Culture,” 111.

¹³⁸ Murray, “Innovation: Past and Future,” 54. Elsewhere, Murray claims that culture “represents the ethos and professional attributes, both in terms of experience and intellectual study, that contribute to a common core understanding of the nature of war within military organizations.” See Murray, “Does Military Culture Matter?” 134.

¹³⁹ Elizabeth Kier, “Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars,” *International Security* 19, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 69.

¹⁴⁰ Kier, 66.

constraints. Rather, culture “contains certain approaches to a variety of issues that provide each military with a finite number of ways to order behavior,” thus limiting what it imagines is possible.¹⁴¹ Concerning doctrine, in particular, Kier argues that a military organization chooses “the doctrine that corresponded with the possibilities contained within its culture.”¹⁴² Thus, even though culture remains relatively static, doctrine can change due to a change external to the organization that prompts the organizational culture to react and integrate the change into how the organization conducts business.¹⁴³

Ann Swidler, a sociology professor at University of California-Berkeley, likens culture to a “tool kit” or “repertoire” which provides the components from which “strategies of action” are constructed to organize behavior and solve problems.¹⁴⁴ In other words, people do not choose the available values and practices or the combinations thereof. Rather, “[o]nly second-level choices (which of the available ways of life do I prefer?) and third-level choices (which policies do I believe are efficacious in supporting

¹⁴¹ Kier, 79, 93.

¹⁴² Kier, 80.

¹⁴³ Kier, “Culture and Military Doctrine,” 66, 69–70, 79–80, 93. See also Allan English, “Influence of Our Military Culture on What is Taught in Our Professional Military Institutions,” in *Pedagogy for the Long War: Conference Proceedings*, ed. Barak A. Salmoni (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Training and Education Command and U.S. Naval Academy, 2007), 39. English argues that culture is a key determinant of how an military force perceives its future roles and missions, how it prepares for them, and how it incorporates new technologies.

¹⁴⁴ Ann Swidler, “Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies,” *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 2 (Apr. 1986): 273, 277. See also Swidler, “Culture in Action,” 281. Swidler differentiates between “settled lives” and “unsettled lives”—in other words, “culture’s role in sustaining existing strategies of action and its role in constructing new ones” (278). In unsettled lives, “[w]hen people are learning news ways of organizing individual and collective action, practicing unfamiliar habits until they become familiar, then doctrine, symbols, and ritual directly shape action” (278). In contrast, in settled lives, “established ways of acting do not depend upon such immediate cultural support (281).”

my preferred way?) are potentially available to choice.”¹⁴⁵ In creating these initial frames, culture also biases the organization to make changes consistent with tasks and constituencies that already exist.¹⁴⁶ For example, officials tend to advocate for policies that advance their own interests while working against those that undermine this goal.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, Swidler observes a “cultural lag” when “[p]eople do not readily take advantage of new structural opportunities which would require them to abandon established ways of life” because doing so entails abandoning “familiar strategies of action for which they have the cultural equipment.”¹⁴⁸ Daniel Levinthal and James March similarly note a “competence trap,” or “success trap,” wherein as organizations engage in an activity more and more, they develop more and more competence, leading them to engage in these activities still further due to an increase in the opportunity costs associated with exploratory experiments that are likely to provide worse results in the short run. As a result, organizations tend to ignore the long run, the bigger picture, and

¹⁴⁵ Wildavsky, “Choosing Preferences,” 4. Herb Simon’s seminal work on bounded rationality proves relevant for explaining how these assumptions and perceptions can impact choices and decisions. While agents intend to make rational decisions, they have limited amounts of information and cannot process it all at a given time. See Herb Simon, “A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 69, no. 1 (Feb. 1955): 99–118 and Herb Simon, “Rational Choice and the Structure of the Environment,” *Psychological Review* 63 (Jan. 1956): 129–138. See also Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, “Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases,” *Science*, New Series 185, no. 4157 (Sep. 1974): 1124–1131. Tversky and Kahneman seek to explain seemingly irrational human economic choices that result from the impact of systematic human cognitive biases in thinking under uncertainty. People rely on heuristics in order to “reduce the complex tasks of assessing probabilities and predicting values to simpler judgmental operations” (1124). According to Tversky and Kahneman, these heuristics “are quite useful, but sometimes they lead to severe and systematic errors” (1124). The confirmation and anchoring biases and endowment effect are three such cognitive biases that might help explain how culture affects individual decision-making. See Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), 80–81, 119–128, 289–299. Anchoring occurs when people start with a number, assess whether it is too high or low, adjust their estimate, but discontinue their adjustment prematurely when they become uncertain as to whether or not to move farther. Confirmation bias entails a deliberate search for data that are compatible with the beliefs a person already holds. The endowment effect posits that one’s willingness to buy or sell a given good depends on whether one owns the good. Losses loom larger to an individual than do corresponding gains, engendering a sense of loss aversion wherein the pain of giving up a good is considered greater than the pleasure of getting the same good.

¹⁴⁶ Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, 223.

¹⁴⁷ Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy*, 77.

¹⁴⁸ Swidler, “Culture in Action,” 281.

failures.¹⁴⁹ Organizations prefer to segregate new activities in separate units, such as research and development units, thus preventing them from affecting the status quo.¹⁵⁰

Scholars have accused military organizations, in particular, of ignoring or misusing the past,¹⁵¹ or even rejecting it outright in order to avoid change.¹⁵² In doing so, Terry Terriff argues, “Organizational culture thus can provide a compelling explanation for why specific military organizations may continue to pursue ways of warfare that are incompatible with emerging or prevailing strategic and operational realities.”¹⁵³ Even when new technology is accepted, the organization’s culture can give it a different meaning, and existing habits of mind and the organization’s outlook and sense of self can inhibit its efficient use and lead to considerable resistance.¹⁵⁴ Such “peripheral borrowing” results in the potentialities and efficient use of the new technology not being fully realized, as the French in 1940 notably demonstrated in the way they treated tanks as accoutrements rather than as an integral part of a coordinated military effort.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁹ Daniel A. Levinthal and James G. March, “The Myopia of Learning,” *Strategic Management Journal* 14, Special Issue: Organizations, Decision Making and Strategy (Winter 1993): 100, 102. Similarly, March and Olsen posit that any decision rule that seemingly works at one point becomes more favored in the future. James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, “The Uncertainty of the Past: Organizational Learning Under Ambiguity,” *European Journal of Political Research* 3, no. 2 (Jun. 1975): 158. See also Argyris and Schön, *Organizational Learning II*, 19 and James G. March and Barbara Levitt, “Organizational Learning,” in *The Pursuit of Organizational Intelligence* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc.), 78–79.

¹⁵⁰ Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, 8.

¹⁵¹ Murray, “Innovation: Past and Future,” 56; Katzenbach, “The Horse Cavalry in the Twentieth Century: A Study in Policy Response,” *Public Policy* 8 (1958): 134.

¹⁵² Murray, “Does Military Culture Matter?” 140.

¹⁵³ Terry Terriff, “‘Innovate or Die’: Organizational Culture and the Origins of Maneuver Warfare in the United States Marine Corps,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 3 (Jun. 2006): 478.

¹⁵⁴ Pi-Sunyer and De Gregori, “Cultural Resistance,” 252; Terry Terriff, “Warriors and Innovators,” *Defence Studies* 6, no. 2 (Jun. 2006): 215, 238; Katzenbach, “Horse Cavalry,” 125–126, 146; Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, “Military Culture,” 456; Burk, “Military Culture,” 456.

¹⁵⁵ Pi-Sunyer and De Gregori, “Cultural Resistance,” 249–253. See also James J. Tritten, “Revolutions in Military Affairs: From the Sea,” *Military Review* 80, no. 2 (Mar.-Apr. 2000): 79–81. In highlighting the shortcomings of the technology-driven model of military innovation, Tritten notes that it assumes that military organizations will always capitalize on new technologies and recognize the need for new doctrine or organization.

However, given a dynamic operational environment, a common culture is necessary to help engender consistent and predictable behavior in socialized members of the organization in order to overcome the stressors of the battlefield. Thus, despite its potential for being resistant to change and innovation, culture is also beneficial to the organization, insofar as socialized members learn that “inconsistent behavior produces too many costs in terms of damage to reputation, penalties, or lack of promotions or other benefits.”¹⁵⁶ The organization must be able to balance the need to maintain these predictable behaviors with its ability to adapt and change.

Denison and Mishra note the psychiatric term, alloplastic, that is commonly applied to this phenomenon, and which entails “the capacity to change in response to external conditions without abandoning one’s underlying character.”¹⁵⁷ Denison and Mishra assert that an effective organization “must develop norms and beliefs from its environment and translate these into internal cognitive, behavioral, and structural changes.”¹⁵⁸ Thomas Rid similarly refers to this same dynamic as maintaining a flexible conservatism.¹⁵⁹ In the literature on organizational behavior, Charles O’Reilly and Michael Tushman introduce the concept of an “ambidextrous organization,” which pursues both small improvements, or “incremental innovations,” that enable it to use existing products and operations more efficiently, as well as “radical advances . . . that profoundly alter the basis for competition in an industry, often rendering old products or ways of working obsolete.”¹⁶⁰ The manner in which culture is initially created and then socialized to new members, in part, determines the degree to which organizations are amenable to innovation and change and able to maintain this delicate balancing act.

¹⁵⁶ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, “Military Culture,” 250.

¹⁵⁷ Denison and Mishra, “Toward a Theory,” 215.

¹⁵⁸ Denison and Mishra, 215.

¹⁵⁹ Rid, *War and Media*, 15; see also Schein, “Organizational Culture,” 116. Schein notes the constant pressure on every culture to evolve and grow.

¹⁶⁰ Charles A. O’Reilly III and Michael L. Tushman, “The Ambidextrous Organization,” *Harvard Business Review* (Apr. 2004), accessed September 28, 2018, <http://hbr.org/2004/04/the-ambidextrous-organization>.

C. CULTURE CREATION AND SOCIALIZATION

Culture, and subsequently the norms and beliefs that become ingrained in an organization's members as assumptions, must first be created. One line of analysis concerning norm and belief formation focuses on how members respond to critical incidents. According to Schein, if something "emotionally charged or anxiety producing" occurs, such as a member attacking the leader, what happens immediately thereafter tends to create a norm because "everyone witnesses the event and because tension is high."¹⁶¹ If the leader counterattacks and the other members of the organization respond with silence of approval, the norm of not attacking the leader may eventually become an established practice, especially if the same pattern of behavior recurs. Thus, according to Schein, "By reconstructing the history of critical incidents in the group and how members dealt with them, one can get a good indication of the important cultural elements in that group."¹⁶²

Schein identifies modeling by leader figures as a second way in which culture can be created. This enables group members to "identify with them and internalize their values and assumptions."¹⁶³ The beliefs, values, and assumptions of these dominant figures "provide a visible and articulated model for how the group should be structured and how it should function."¹⁶⁴ These beliefs are then tested, and the organization learns from experience which parts work for the group and which do not, fostering a "joint

¹⁶¹ Schein, "Organizational Culture," 115.

¹⁶² Schein, "Organizational Culture," 115. See also Robert Axelrod, "An Evolutionary Approach to Norms," *The American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (Dec. 1986): 1097–1098. Axelrod posits a more evolutionary approach, which he applies to norm creation. He proposes three different mechanisms: "It could be that the more effective individuals are more likely to survive and reproduce . . . that the players learn by trial and error, keeping effective strategies and altering ones that turn out poorly . . . and the one most congenial to the study of norms, is that the players observe each other, and those with poor performance tend to imitate the strategies of those they see doing better."

¹⁶³ Schein, "Organizational Culture," 115.

¹⁶⁴ Schein, 115.

learning” environment that “gradually creates shared assumptions . . . that reflect the total group’s experience, not only the leader’s initial assumptions.”¹⁶⁵

Regardless of how culture first forms, the socialization of a group’s new members is necessary to perpetuate it since culture is ultimately learned and not inherited.¹⁶⁶ Recruitment and selection begins the socialization process, since the organization is likely to favor those that already share a similar—or, the “right”—set of assumptions, beliefs, and values.¹⁶⁷ This subsequently reduces the need for more formal socialization. However, even if individuals naturally identify with the existing culture (i.e., “anticipatory socialization),” new members must oftentimes still “learn the ropes” pertaining to organizational roles and require further training and acculturation.¹⁶⁸

In proposing a causal mechanism, Van Maanen and Schein provide six dimensions along which socialization processes can vary and that “influence the individual in transition and which may make innovative responses from that individual more likely than custodial.”¹⁶⁹ The custodial, or caretaker, approach simply accepts the status quo. The newcomer merely learns his or her job requirements and the best practices that have already been developed to meet them, thus ensuring mission accomplishment.¹⁷⁰ Van Maanen and Schein make the distinction between “content innovation,” which is “marked by development of substantive improvements or changes in the knowledge base or strategic practices of a particular role,” and the more extreme

¹⁶⁵ Schein, “Organizational Culture,” 115. Schein argues, “*Primary embedding mechanisms* are (a) what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control; (b) how leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises; (c) deliberate role modeling and coaching; (d) operational criteria for the allocation of rewards and status; and (e) operational criteria for recruitment, selection, promotion, retirement, and excommunication. *Secondary articulation and reinforcement mechanisms* are (a) the organization’s design and structure; (b) organizational system and procedures; (c) the design of physical space, facades, and buildings; (d) stories, legends, myths, and symbols; and (e) formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds, and charters.” Emphasis in original.

¹⁶⁶ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, “Military Culture,” 238.

¹⁶⁷ Schein, “Organizational Culture,” 115.

¹⁶⁸ Schein, 116; Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, “Military Culture,” 249.

¹⁶⁹ John Van Maanen and Edgar H. Schein, *Toward a Theory of Organizational Socialization* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1979), 34, accessed September 29, 2018, <http://dspace.mit.edu/bitstream/handle/1721.1/1934/SWP-0960-03581864.pdf>.

¹⁷⁰ Van Maanen and Schein, 30–31.

“role innovation”—that is, “a rejection and redefinition of the major premises concerning missions and strategies followed by the majority of the role occupants to both practice and justify their present role.”¹⁷¹

The six dimensions of socialization posited by Van Maanen and Sloan are as follows:

1. *Collective vs. Individual*: the degree to which an organization takes “a group of recruits who are facing a given boundary passage” and puts “them through a common set of experiences together” (e.g., boot camp), or instead processes them “singly and in isolation from one another through a more or less unique set of experiences” (e.g., apprenticeship).¹⁷² Collective socialization more readily yields a custodial orientation because “the group perspective which develops as a result of collective socialization acts as a constraint upon the individual.”¹⁷³
2. *Formal vs. Informal*: the degree to which “a newcomer is more or less segregated from regular organizational members while being put through a set of experiences tailored explicitly for the newcomer,” as opposed to making no effort to “distinguish the newcomer’s role specifically” or “rigidly differentiate the recruit from other more experienced organizational members.”¹⁷⁴ In emphasizing the “accepted” ways of doing things, formal tactics more likely produce a custodial orientation.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Van Maanen and Schein, *Toward a Theory*, 31–32. Separately, Schein identifies these three possible outcomes of socialization as “(a) a custodial orientation, or total conformity to all norms and complete learning of all assumptions; (b) creative individualism, which implies that the trainee learns all of the central and pivotal assumptions of the culture but rejects all peripheral ones, thus permitting the individual to be creative both with respect to the organization’s tasks and in how the organization performs them (role innovation); and (c) rebellion, or the total rejection of all assumptions. If the rebellious individual is constrained by external circumstances from leaving the organization, he or she will subvert, sabotage, and ultimately foment revolution.” See Schein, “Organizational Culture,” 116.

¹⁷² Van Maanen and Schein, *Toward a Theory*, 38.

¹⁷³ Van Maanen and Schein, 42.

¹⁷⁴ Van Maanen and Schein, 44.

¹⁷⁵ Van Maanen and Schein, 43–50.

3. *Sequential vs. Random Steps*: “the degree to which the organization or occupation specifies a given sequence of discrete and identifiable steps leading to the target role,” in comparison to the “sequence of steps” being “unknown, ambiguous, or continually changing.”¹⁷⁶ Sequential tactics necessitate that recruits conform to the “demands of others in the organization for a long period of time before the target role is achieved” and are thus more likely to lead to a custodial orientation.¹⁷⁷
4. *Fixed vs. Variable*: “the degree to which the steps involved in a socialization process have a timetable associated with them that is both adhered to by the organization and communicated to the recruit,” in contrast to a process in which few clues are provided “as to when a newcomer can expect a boundary passage,” since the process, by definition, varies from one newcomer to another.¹⁷⁸ Variable timelines might induce anxiety that fosters a desire to conform, resulting in a custodial orientation.¹⁷⁹
5. *Serial vs. Disjunctive*: the degree to which “experienced members of the organization groom newcomers who are about to assume similar kinds of positions in the organization,” as opposed to situations in which “no role models are available to recruits to inform them as to how they are to proceed in the new role.”¹⁸⁰ The disjunctive pattern mitigates incumbents teaching newcomers how to do things, and while this risks complication and confusion, it is more likely to result in an innovative orientation.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ Van Maanen and Schein, 51.

¹⁷⁷ Van Maanen and Schein, 54.

¹⁷⁸ Van Maanen and Schein, 55.

¹⁷⁹ Van Maanen and Schein, 58.

¹⁸⁰ Van Maanen and Schein, 60.

¹⁸¹ Van Maanen and Schein, 63.

6. *Investiture vs. Divestiture*: the degree to which socialization “processes ratify and document for recruits the viability and usefulness of those personal characteristics they bring with them to the organization,” or instead seek to “deny and strip away certain personal characteristics of a recruit.”¹⁸² Investiture processes are more likely to produce an innovative orientation, since divestiture processes “remold the person and, therefore, are powerful ways for organizations and occupations to control the values of incoming members.”¹⁸³

According to Van Maanen and Schein, collective, formal, random, fixed, and disjunctive processes are most likely to yield content innovation. In order to facilitate this mindset, recruits should be trained together as a formal group, and the value of innovation should be stressed when teaching new ideas and technologies. This helps avoid instruction that simply reinforces the status quo. Variable timetables prone to induce anxiety and promote the aforementioned “play it safe” mentality should be avoided. Lastly, role models need to be innovative or simply absent from the process so that the newcomer is encouraged or left in a position where he or she is forced to innovate.¹⁸⁴ According to Van Maanen and Schein, “redefining the mission or goals of the role itself” (i.e., “role innovation”) is “the most extreme form of innovation.”¹⁸⁵ Individual, informal, random, disjunctive, and investiture processes are most likely to yield these results.¹⁸⁶ Newcomers must be encouraged individually in an informal process, since an informal process by its very nature “implies disloyalty to the role, group, organizational segment, or total organization itself.”¹⁸⁷ The individual must also be “free of sequential stages which might inhibit innovative efforts,” have role models

¹⁸² Van Maanen and Schein, 64.

¹⁸³ Van Maanen and Schein, 67.

¹⁸⁴ Van Maanen and Schein, 69.

¹⁸⁵ Van Maanen and Schein, 69.

¹⁸⁶ Van Maanen and Schein, 69.

¹⁸⁷ Van Maanen and Schein, 69–70.

that are themselves innovative, and “experience an affirmation of self throughout the process.”¹⁸⁸

Based on Van Maanen and Schein’s criteria, the military relies on a socialization process that is somewhat amenable to content innovation; however, it is largely the opposite of what the authors identify as most conducive to role innovation. Militaries rely on formal training and educational institutions to socialize and expose new military recruits to the organization’s norms, authority relations, and disciplinary codes in order to facilitate their transition into their new roles and statuses. New military recruits, for example, go through a process of degradation, wherein their civilian selves are torn down (i.e., divestiture), before subsequently being rebuilt. This degradation implies that full membership is something worth having, and as a result, recruits display commitment to the organization and engage in consistent, predictable behavior.¹⁸⁹ Militaries face additional challenges when recruits leave the academy or training institute and move from “idealizations to the practicalities of real life” for the first time.¹⁹⁰ Their lofty expectations are usually not entirely fulfilled, and a “certain degree of routinization” sets in that “leads to more realistic and henceforth more sober attitudes toward the organization.”¹⁹¹ According to Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, the resulting need to cope with military life can result in evading work, feigning being busy, and never volunteering, resulting in a situation in which “unofficial patterns of behavior conflicting with official organizational demands seem to coexist with the official patterns.”¹⁹²

D. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND THE MARINE CORPS

In addition to an organization’s socialization processes, the strength of a given organizational culture might make it more resistant to change. Axelrod analyzes norms, in particular, to explain how large numbers of individuals coordinate their behavior.

¹⁸⁸ Van Maanen and Schein, 69–70.

¹⁸⁹ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, “Military Culture,” 249–250.

¹⁹⁰ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, 251.

¹⁹¹ Soeters, Winslow, and Weibull, 251.

¹⁹² Van Maanen and Schein, *Toward a Theory*, 251.

Noting that norms exist “in a given social setting to the extent that individuals usually act in a certain way and are often punished when seen not to be acting in this way,” Axelrod observes that the strength of a norm lies not in identifying someone or something as taboo and punishing that person and his actions accordingly. Rather, in order to establish and then protect a norm, those unwilling to punish the aforementioned individual must also be punished—what Axelrod describes as a metanorm.¹⁹³ Thus, organizations in which the existence of metanorms is in abundance might be particularly ill-suited to sanctioning new (i.e., deviant) behaviors and ideas.

James March and Johan Olsen analyze the impact of rules in prescribing what is deemed appropriate action, which they define as proceeding “according to the institutionalized practices of a collectivity based on mutual, and often tacit, understandings of what is true, reasonable, natural, right, and good.”¹⁹⁴ Rules must be fit to a situation according to their appropriateness, “where rules and situations are related by criteria of similarity or difference through reasoning by analogy and metaphor.”¹⁹⁵ While rules may change over time due to routine refinement, new experiences, new settings, and disasters, the degree to which action is rule-based—as opposed to consequence-based—is dependent on the rules’ prescriptive clarity in different settings and situations.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Axelrod, “An Evolutionary Approach,” 1095–1111.

¹⁹⁴ James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, “The Logic of Appropriateness,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, ed. Robert E. Goodin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 479.

¹⁹⁵ March and Olsen, “The Logic of Appropriateness,” 483.

¹⁹⁶ March and Olsen, “The Logic of Appropriateness,” 488–492.

Renowned today for its strong, elite warrior culture,¹⁹⁷ the Corps is also hailed for its innovativeness.¹⁹⁸ Thus, the Marine Corps represents a rather startling contradiction. Rather than making the Corps averse to change, as the literature thus far might suggest, the Corps' culture seemingly makes it more apt to embrace it. Mie Augier and Jerry Guo suggest that the Corps is able to strike this balance by fostering "we-leadership." In contrast to traditional leadership perspectives that emphasize the importance of the individual leader in motivating a team, we-leadership places "explicit focus on leadership behaviours designed to increase the follower's commitment to the organization and an emphasis on selflessness."¹⁹⁹ We-leaders place the organization and their followers' success ahead of their own career goals. The Corps builds this mentality through symbolic actions, such as stripping away recruits' identities at boot camp by providing them all the identical haircut and no longer allowing them to use the first-person singular pronoun, *I*. This team identity is further forged through grueling physical activity, such as the 54-hour Crucible, when recruits are afforded little sleep and must complete a series of otherwise daunting exercises, after which they are presented an eagle, globe, and anchor device and declared Marines. Since individual followers and leaders are less concerned about their own reputations and careers, they are more likely to try new things and fail and subsequently learn from their mistakes. Augier and Guo credit

¹⁹⁷ Aaron B. O'Connell, *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 1–60; James A. Warren, *American Spartans* (New York: Free Press, 2005), 1–34; Marion F. Sturkey, *Warrior Culture of the U.S. Marines: Axioms for Warriors, Marine Quotations, Battle History, Reflections on Combat, Corps Legacy, and Humor—and Much More—for the World's Warrior Elite* (Plum Branch, SC: Heritage Press International, 2003).

¹⁹⁸ Allan R. Millett, "Assault from the Sea: The Development of Amphibious Warfare Between the Wars—the American, British, and Japanese Experiences," in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, eds. Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 50–95; Rosen, *Winning*, 52, 58–67; Jeter A. Isely and Philip A. Crowl, *The U.S. Marines and Amphibious War: Its Theory and Its Practice in the Pacific* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), 4, 6. Isely and Crowl quote John F. C. Fuller, who concludes that the Marines had "revolutionized" amphibious warfare with what was "in all probability . . . the most far-reaching tactical innovation of the war" (6).

¹⁹⁹ Mie Augier and Jerry Guo, "Overcoming Negative Leadership Challenges Through We-Leadership: Building Organizational Identification and Commitment, with Inspiration from the United States Marine Corps," in *Negative Leadership: International Perspectives*, eds. Daniel Watola and Dave Woycheshin (Kingston, Ontario: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2016), 271.

we-leadership with breaking down traditional notions of hierarchy and creating open, collaborative environments that can help generate new ideas.²⁰⁰

Elsewhere, Mie Augier and Jerry Guo offer General Al Gray, the 29th Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, as an exemplar of this type of leadership. For example, Gray emphasized the importance of free play exercises that served as experiments to test doctrine. He was comfortable with failure and implemented procedures to ensure his units learned from missteps when they occurred. During debriefs at the conclusion of these exercises, for example, he insisted that Marines remove their rank insignia in order to foster the free exchange of ideas and empower junior Marines to speak up, trust their instincts, and correct those more senior. Gray was more concerned with why a Marine made a given decision, not what the decision was. In other words, he emphasized how to think, not what to think. As such, he invested in the intellectual development of his Marines, implementing, among other initiatives, the Commandant's Reading List, in 1988. Gray also encouraged intellectual debate in the Corps' professional journal, *Marine Corps Gazette*, as he promoted maneuver warfare, and in building a team, he sought not those that agreed with him, but rather anyone who could help. Central to Gray's perspective were that ideas mattered—not hierarchy—and that ideas oftentimes do not come from the top of an organization.²⁰¹

In praising some of the leadership principles valued by the U.S. Marine Corps and that make the Corps more amenable to innovation and change, Mie Augier and Jerry Guo do not establish a false dichotomy and denigrate rules and routines in and of themselves. Rather, they argue not only that highly routinized organizations like the Marine Corps can still be innovative, but also that routines can spur innovation. For example, through repetition, members of an organization might adjust or change their routines by recombining prior knowledge stored in the organization's memory, and thus uncover

²⁰⁰ Augier and Guo, "Negative Leadership," 267–284.

²⁰¹ Mie Augier and Jerry Guo, "The Evolutionary Nature of Innovation and Disruptive Change: The Interrelatedness of Technology, Leadership and Organizations," in *Technology and Leadership: International Perspectives*, eds. Daniel J. Watola and Allister MacIntyre (Kingston, Ontario: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2017), 127–148.

genuine innovations. The Marine Corps emphasizes drill as a foundation of routine behaviors that can be tested and applied in different ways during exercises, which serve more as experiments than “canned” scenarios. Additionally, routines make organizations more efficient and thus free up sources—slack—that can be diverted to support innovation. In the Marine Corps, doctrine provides this slack by simplifying communication processes and developing certain baseline understandings across the organization. Routines can also reduce search costs as organizations pursue new knowledge in response to new problems by providing organizations a starting point from which to approach a new problem, as well as a means to interpret new information and convert it to knowledge. Commanders, with strong foundations in theory and concepts, can recombine this knowledge when confronted with new problems, while also seeking new information.²⁰²

The next part of this study analyzes the Marine Corps’ own culture more closely, including how it has evolved and how it has affected the organization’s decision-making at key inflection points in its history. The Marine Corps has not always managed to balance exploration and exploitation in organizational learning. The next part of this study identifies why and considers how such instances might be relevant to understanding the Marine Corps’ decision-making vis-à-vis its relationship with the special operations community.

²⁰² Jerry Guo and Mie Augier, “The Dynamics of Rules, Learning, and Adaptive Leadership: Inspirations and Insights from the United States Marine Corps,” in *Overcoming Leadership Challenges: International Perspectives*, eds. Douglas Lindsay and Dave Woychesin (Kingston, Ontario: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2017), 185–202.

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IV. MARINE CORPS CULTURE

You are part of the world's most feared and trusted force.... For the mission's sake, our country's sake, and the sake of the men who carried the Division's colors in past battles—who fought for life and never lost their nerve—carry out your mission and keep your honor clean. Demonstrate to the world there is “No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy” than a U.S. Marine.

—James N. Mattis, March 2003²⁰³

“There are more Marines in power now than ever before,” boasted a recent headline in the *Marine Corps Times*.²⁰⁴ The Marine Corps now has a retired or uniformed Marine holding the position of Secretary of Defense, White House Chief of Staff, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Commander of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM). Additionally, in August, President Trump nominated Marine Lieutenant General Kenneth McKenzie Jr. to be the next Commander of CENTCOM.²⁰⁵ This is a far cry from the repeated threats to its existence and its struggle for independence as a service that have permeated the Corps' history.

Part II (Chapters III–VII) of this study analyzes not only how these struggles have impacted the Corps' culture and how the Marine Corps has positioned itself in the defense establishment, but also how each one has, in turn, affected the other. The remainder of this chapter analyzes two elements of Marine Corps culture—its institutional paranoia and elite image—that are particularly relevant for understanding the Corps' relationship with the special operations community, since establishing a special operations component entailed relinquishing control of this subset of Marines and

²⁰³ Paul Szoldra, “This Letter General James Mattis Wrote to His Marines Is a must Read in Military History,” *Business Insider*, June 13, 2016, <http://www.businessinsider.com/general-james-mattis-wrote-letter-marines-combat-iraq-war-marines-2013-3>.

²⁰⁴ Todd South, “There Are More Marines in Power Now Than Ever Before. Here's How It Happened,” *Marine Corps Times*, October 1, 2018, http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/10/01/there-are-more-marines-in-power-now-than-ever-before-heres-how-it-happened/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ebb%2010/2/18&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief.

²⁰⁵ Tara Copp, “New CENTCOM, SOCOM Leadership Named,” *Military Times*, August 21, 2018, <http://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/08/21/new-centcom-socom-leadership-named/>.

creating an “elite within an elite” construct within the organization. Chapters IV–VII focus on key episodes, or inflection points, in the Corps’ history to demonstrate how these cultural elements have developed and to provide a history of how the organization has responded to exogenous inputs from the geostrategic environment and other members of the defense establishment. In Part III (Chapters VIII–XI), this study uses these episodes as an historical and cultural lens through which to view the Corps’ decision-making vis-à-vis its involvement in the special operations community.

A. A HEALTHY DOSE OF PARANOIA

The Marine Corps has historically maintained a somewhat precarious position in the American military establishment as “perennially the smallest kid on the block in a hostile neighborhood”²⁰⁶ and has lacked a domain of warfare to call its own. As late as June 1941, the Marine Corps accounted for just three percent of the active duty military, and their highest-ranking officer was but a two-star general who did not have a seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).²⁰⁷ The Marine Corps has had to overcome repeated challenges to its professional jurisdiction—and even its very existence—and as a result, it has become hypervigilant in order to ward off not only enemies in combat, but also threats from other services and forces from the executive branch. According to U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant General Victor “Brute” Krulak, Marines “ha[ve] learned through hard experience that fighting for the right to fight [has] often presented greater challenges than fighting their country’s enemies,”²⁰⁸ resulting in the often expressed belief on the part of Marines that, “They’re after us.”²⁰⁹ Krulak notes some 15 different times a “vigilant” Congress was needed to preserve the Corps and five occasions in

²⁰⁶ Victor H. Krulak, *First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984), 3.

²⁰⁷ O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 1.

²⁰⁸ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 15.

²⁰⁹ Krulak, 13.

particular that Congress cast aside a motion that he feels would have damaged or destroyed the Marine Corps.²¹⁰

The challenges that the Marine Corps has faced as an institution have led to a healthy weariness of new ideas stemming from other Services that could undermine one of its roles or missions. The Marines have never viewed a drop in their share of the budget or losing one of these assigned roles or missions as a standalone event, but rather as “a harbinger of the end of the Corps as it understands itself.”²¹¹ Feeling perpetually persecuted and under siege by the other services despite their effectiveness in the two world wars, the Marines became actively engaged in American society and politics as a means of survival, recruiting newspapermen, finding friends in Hollywood, sending veterans into politics, orchestrating congressional support, and building grassroots networks of support.²¹² In doing so, the Marines have leveraged their culture as a form of power and deployed it as a type of weapon or armor to protect themselves from external threats.²¹³

B. CULTIVATING AN ELITE IMAGE

In part due to this same institutional paranoia, the Marine Corps has cultivated an elite, almost mystical reputation and a culture of exceptionalism, demanding loyalty, sacrifice, discipline, frugality, and courage, which engenders a “hunger for excellence” among its ranks.²¹⁴ Marines have always insisted they are superior to other services. For example, they take great satisfaction in being uniquely charged by Congress to be “the

²¹⁰ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 13. Krulak also notes that moves to diminish or eliminate the Corps had always begun in the executive branch—in the Navy Department, the War Department, or the White House itself.

²¹¹ Terriff, “Innovate or Die,” 483.

²¹² O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 3.

²¹³ O’Connell, 19.

²¹⁴ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 5.

most ready when the nation is least ready,”²¹⁵ and they are committed to a demanding, explicit warrior code, anchored in history, wherein personal objectives are subsumed by pride in—and an almost religious dedication to—one’s country, in the Corps, and in one’s unit.²¹⁶

The famous “We don’t promise you a rose garden” poster featuring Drill Instructor (DI) Sergeant Charles A. Taliano was the first in a series of posters with the slogan “The Marines are looking for a few good men,” a campaign which ran from late 1971 until mid-1984.²¹⁷ The poster was paired with a public service announcement (PSA) for the Marine Corps Recruiting Service that challenged men who were not “afraid of tough physical training or tough technical skills” to “earn their membership in an elite force.”²¹⁸ The PSA made no promises other than to make the viewer a Marine—“one of the few and one of the finest.”²¹⁹ The PSA embodied the sense that to be a Marine is a vocation in which an individual recognizes that he is part of something larger than himself, and his life is imbued with a sense of purpose. Those that self-select into the Marine Corps are drawn to the challenge—physical, mental, and otherwise—of what it

²¹⁵ U.S. Marine Corps, *Commander’s Readiness Handbook* (Washington, DC: 2014), iv, accessed July 16, 2018, http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/Portals/138/Commanders%20Readiness%20Handbook_Jan%202014_FINAL_Low-Res.pdf; *Statement of General John Paxton, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, Before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness on Marine Corps 2017 Budget Request and Readiness*, 114th Cong., March 3, 2016, 2, accessed July 16, 2018, <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS03/20160303/104349/HHRG-114-AS03-Wstate-PaxtonJ-20160303.pdf>.

²¹⁶ Warren, *American Spartans*, 13. See also Marines, “The Transformation | Making United States Marines,” produced by Combat Camera Parris Island, accessed July 15, 2018, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpFpHfFbAPI>. In an introductory monologue to new recruits explaining the ground rules, drill instructors (DIs) emphasize that to become a part of the “world’s finest fighting force,” recruits must train as a team. Recruits at boot camp are not allowed to use the pronoun “I” during the course of training, and the haircut recruits are given upon their arrival symbolically strips away their individuality. Lead DIs foster an appreciation for, and obligation to live up to, the Marine Corps’ history through guided discussions. The unique role of the Marine DI in this transformation process has been exalted in popular culture by, for example, roles played by R. Lee Ermey, himself a Marine, in “The Boys in Company C” and “Full Metal Jacket.” This further underscores the Marine Corps’ uniquely close relationship with the American public.

²¹⁷ Jennifer Brofer, “We Don’t Promise You a Rose Garden,” TECOM Training & Education Command, February 21, 2006, accessed October 5, 2018, <http://www.tecom.marines.mil/News/News-Article-Display/Article/527984/we-dont-promise-you-a-rose-garden/>.

²¹⁸ Audie Murphy American Legend, “USMC ‘Rose Garden’ Recruiting Commercial (PSA) BEST EVER! Lynn Anderson (1973),” *YouTube*, February 5, 2013, accessed October 5, 2018, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sWW0nxi9bw>.

²¹⁹ “‘Rose Garden’ Recruiting Commercial.”

takes to be a Marine. During the transformation process at boot camp, recruits spend countless hours on rigorous physical training, weapons handling, drill, uniform inspections, and lessons on history and tradition. As a result, at graduation, Marines are easily recognizable, looking and talking differently than everyone else.²²⁰ In short, the Marine Corps displays many of the traits of a fundamentalist or enclave culture—for example, high ideological walls, an obsession with losing status, and a lack of patience for rules imposed by outsiders.²²¹ These rigid boundaries further engender a sense of solidarity and commitment.

Whereas people in other services tend to identify more closely with their particular branch or those who do a similar type of work, Marines share a common identity as riflemen first and foremost. The Marine Corps lists as its first principle, which it claims helps define the cultural identity of Marines, “Every Marine a Rifleman. Every Marine—regardless of occupational specialty—is first and foremost a disciplined warrior.”²²² This identity has always led the Marine Corps to stress the human dimension in war and focus on the individual Marine—the rifleman, not weapons, technology, or systems—as its “number-one priority,” its “most important warfighting asset,” and as the

²²⁰ O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 34–38.

²²¹ O’Connell, 6.

²²² U.S. Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025* (Washington, DC: 2008), 8, accessed July 15, 2018, <http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/Portals/142/Docs/MCVS2025%2030%20June%5B1%5D.pdf>. See also Jeff Schogol, “Every Marine a Rifleman No More?” *Marine Corps Times*, May 7, 2017, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2017/05/07/every-marine-a-rifleman-no-more/>. The Marine Corps has proven more skeptical than other services concerning former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter’s “Force of the Future” reforms, including lateral entry—in other words, the ability to skip boot camp and begin service at a mid-career rank. In contrast, note the controversy concerning the U.S. Navy’s decision to stop referring to enlisted sailors by their rating (e.g., Hospital Corpsman or Damage Controlman), replacing these ratings with their more generic titles of Seaman (E1-E3) or Petty Officer (E4-E6). Approximately three months after making this change, the Navy reversed course and restored the enlisted rating titles due to the public outcry. See, for example, Sam LaGrone, “Navy to Restore Enlisted Rating Titles After Months of Criticism,” *USNI News*, December 20, 2016, <http://news.usni.org/2016/12/20/navy-restore-enlisted-rating-titles-months-criticism>.

foundation for its ability to fight and win wars.²²³ That all enlisted Marines attend boot camp at one of two places, Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) Parris Island or MCRD San Diego, and that all officers, including pilots, attend a six-month basic rifle platoon commander training course at The Basic School (TBS) in Quantico, VA, undoubtedly results in shared experiences that foster this unique identity. And yet, despite this reverence for tradition and the past, the Marines have proven able to adapt and anticipate change. Aaron O’Connell argues that the manner in which the Corps deemphasizes technology and the scientific approach to warfare has made it more comfortable with uncertainty and less bureaucratic, and its suspicion of outsiders has led to the Marines rejecting the more conventional wisdom of other services and instead paving new ground.²²⁴

O’Connell observes the rather tautological narratives that undergird the Marines’ sense of exceptionalism but notes that beneath the circular logic lies “an unspoken contract between the Marine and the Corps, one that traded comfort for prestige and lionized suffering and self-sacrifice as quintessential acts of devotion.”²²⁵ According to O’Connell, Marines are granted access to stories, an intimate community, and this overriding sense of elitism in exchange for a demanding ideological commitment, the abandonment of their civilian identities, and the adoption of new stories and priorities. Marine recruiters have marketed this elitism to great effect. For example, in the first six months of World War II, the Marine Corps doubled in size and had a faster growth rate

²²³ U.S. Marine Corps, *Warfighting*, MCDP 1 (Washington, DC: 1997), 13–14, accessed July 15, 2018, <http://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/MCDP%201%20Warfighting.pdf>; U.S. Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2008* (Washington, DC: 2008), 1, accessed July 15, 2018, <http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/pandr/Concepts-and-Programs/Concepts-and-Programs-2008/>; U.S. Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025*, 14; U.S. Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Concepts and Programs 2003* (Washington, DC: 2003), 2, accessed July 15, 2018, <http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/pandr/Concepts-and-Programs/Concepts-and-Programs-2003/>; O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 9. Warren argues that this identity contributes to another distinguishing feature of the Marines: the tight bond between officers and enlisted. Warren recounts former Secretary of the Navy and former Senator James Webb’s observation that there is a real difference between the way officers and enlisted in the Marine Corps relate to one another in comparison to the other services. Webb grew up as an Air Force brat and later served as a Marine in Vietnam. Warren, *American Spartans*, 12.

²²⁴ O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 7.

²²⁵ O’Connell, 27.

than either the Army or Navy.²²⁶ Instead of adapting its culture to civilian society following such a large expansion, the Marine Corps emphasized its differences from other groups and Services, which ultimately helped minimize rifts between the prewar Marines and those of the New Corps.²²⁷

The next chapter explores the formative early years of the Marine Corps under the stewardship of Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson, when the Corps' institutional paranoia in particular began to take root.

²²⁶ O'Connell, 27–30.

²²⁷ O'Connell, 32–33.

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V. THE CORPS' FORMATIVE YEARS AND THE INFLUENCE OF ARCHIBALD HENDERSON

The drill of the men at the different posts has been carefully attended to. The limited strength of the guards does not admit of military instruction beyond the company drill, and the severity of the duty often requires that the recruit be put on post before he can be thoroughly drilled even in the primary school. Under such circumstances, it is gratifying, to me, as the Commandant of the Corps to state that the military duty at the posts has been performed with fidelity and effectiveness.

—Archibald Henderson, October 22, 1831²²⁸

Archibald Henderson served on active duty as a Marine Corps officer for over 52 years and as Commandant for over 38 years (1820-1859), in which position he served 11 different presidents and 18 secretaries of the navy.²²⁹ That he left his mark on the Corps is undeniable. When Henderson took over as Commandant, the Marine Corps was in disarray, but under his stewardship, the Marine Corps more than doubled in strength, began pushing needed reforms to professionalize the force, and conducted extended land campaigns with the Army for the first time. This chapter analyzes how repeated attempts to eliminate the Corps by other members of the defense establishment, as well as by the president, fostered a defensiveness that made Henderson and his immediate successors unwilling to adapt to meet the demand for increasingly large-scale amphibious operations in support of a more expansive U.S. foreign policy. This defensiveness persisted despite—and in many ways because of—their success establishing a firmer institutional footing for the Corps. In the face of these threats to the Corps' existence, Henderson continually defended the roles and mission of the Marine Corps, which he viewed as serving “on board the Ships of War in distant seas for the protection of our widely extended commerce”—namely, as guards and sharpshooters ready to form boarding

²²⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Levi Woodbury, October 22, 1831, Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC), “Letters Sent, 1798–1884,” Records of the United States Marine Corps, Record Group (RG) 127.

²²⁹ Joseph H. Alexander, “Archibald Henderson: 1820–1859,” in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 60, 73.

parties—and as sentries at navy yards.²³⁰ Henderson’s dogged defense of his beloved Corps, however, led to his continual justification of the very same mission and roles despite the advancement of modern warship technology, the developing professionalization of the Navy bluejacket, and a changing geostrategic environment. In many respects, it foreshadowed how the Corps would respond to a similarly changing technological and geostrategic environment following the attacks on 9/11.

A. THE IMPORTANCE OF SHIPS GUARDS

Two events early in Archibald Henderson’s career prove crucial to understanding his lingering bias in favor of retaining the ships guards. In 1807, Lieutenant Henderson was serving on board the *Constitution* when the ship’s captain, fearing a war with England after the Chesapeake affair, held his ship in Syracuse harbor and his crew past the expiration of their enlistments. The crew’s discipline deteriorated, and the crew eventually rushed the captain’s cabin in protest, leading Lieutenant Henderson to call out his Marines to restore order.²³¹ Later, during the War of 1812 (actually, three days past its official conclusion), on February 20, 1815, Captain Henderson was again aboard the *Constitution*, when it encountered the HMS *Cyane* and HMS *Levant* on the high seas and fought the outmatched ships at ranges as close as 250 yards. Henderson’s Marines maintained effective musket fire, further cementing the importance of the ships guards to Henderson.²³² During the war, American and Royal Navy warships fought in 16 engagements that resulted in one of the vessels involved being captured or sunk, but in only six did Marine sharpshooters play a role—and an insignificant one at that.²³³ That, however, was beside the point.

²³⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Smith Thompson, February 7, 1821, Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC), “Letters Sent, 1798–1884,” RG 127; Alan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps*, rev. ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 58–59, 69; Alexander, “Archibald Henderson,” 63.

²³¹ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 42.

²³² Millett, 47.

²³³ Millett, 47.

B. BRINGING STABILITY TO THE CORPS

Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Henderson took over for Anthony Gale, who left the Marine Corps a drunken disgrace.²³⁴ The office of the Commandant had been further weakened by officers appealing directly to the secretary of the navy on matters large and small, and by conflict within the officer corps, which culminated in an 1817 court martial of then Commandant Franklin Wharton. Henderson himself charged Wharton with neglect of duty and dishonorable behavior since Wharton had failed to answer to criticisms of his courage.²³⁵ Following new Navy regulations in 1818, which gave Navy yard commandants more authority over the Marine guards, one Marine barracks commander lamented, “[W]e have lost all; and the Corps now stands, in the most degenerated, and deplorable state . . . we are, as it were, outcasts, literally nothing.”²³⁶ Immediately upon taking over, Henderson restored order by appointing a new staff, ordering all commanders of ships guards and barracks detachments to send their reports directly to him, and establishing an informal course of instruction at his headquarters for all new officers. He improved enlisted morale by abolishing flogging ashore, making Sunday a nonduty day, and improving uniforms and pay.²³⁷

Throughout his tenure, Henderson faced an assortment of efforts that meddled with the Marine Corps or sought to eliminate it, the first of which occurred in 1821. The Navy Department’s Stevenson Archer noted in a special report to Congress that the Corps was little bigger than an infantry regiment but cost three times as much to operate and maintain. Archer advocated eliminating the positions of the Commandant and his

²³⁴ Merrill L. Bartlett, “Anthony Gale: 1819–1820,” in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 50–53.

²³⁵ Gerald C. Thomas Jr., “Franklin Wharton: 1804–1818,” in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 44; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 54; *American State Papers (ASP)/Naval Affairs (NA)*, 4 vols. (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1834–1861), I: 503–510, accessed July 29, 2018, <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsp&fileName=023/llsp023.db&recNum=4>. Henderson was among the officers who felt Wharton brought the Corps into disrepute by leaving Washington, DC before the British burned the city rather than taking to the field himself. Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 49.

²³⁶ Brevet Major R. Smith to Brevet Major A. Henderson, November 19, 1818, Historical Division, Office of the Commandant HQMC, “Letters Received, 1818–1915,” RG 127. Emphasis added.

²³⁷ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 56.

headquarters, noting the “duties of the colonel commandant are altogether of a civil character. His troops are never together, but are either at sea or are dispersed over the United States, at various posts, for the preservation of the public property, while that portion of the corps stationed at the city of Washington, under the immediate eye of the colonel, scarcely ever exceeds a captain’s command.”²³⁸ Henderson, however, reminded Secretary of the Navy Smith Thompson that the Corps had served with honor and had proved its utility in the war with Great Britain and justified the size of the headquarters—”the Skeleton of a Battalion”—as necessary for band instruction, training, guard duty, and responding to contingency requirements.²³⁹

Archer’s efforts proved unsuccessful but prompted Henderson to attempt to codify the Corps’ size in relation to the Navy. Working with the Board of Navy Commissioners under the leadership of Commodore William Bainbridge, Henderson drew up a manning table for ships guards in 1825—the “Bainbridge scale”—which relied on the Royal Navy standard of one gun-one Marine. Congress, however, did not agree.²⁴⁰ Debates over the utility of Marines aboard ship again bubbled to the surface early in the Jackson administration. Amos Kendall, auditor of the Treasury Department and a friend of Jackson, cited evidence of unauthorized expenditures and extravagances and contended the Corps provided the least services for the greatest pay, costing roughly three times as much as an infantry regiment. On December 8, 1829, President Jackson recommended that the Marine Corps be merged with the artillery or infantry.²⁴¹

Given the pressure from the President and the desire to save money, in 1830, Secretary of the Navy John Branch asked his senior officers whether Marines were necessary aboard ship. The results were mixed.²⁴² Many believed that voluntary

²³⁸ *ASP/NA*, I: 739–742; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 65.

²³⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Smith Thompson, February 7, 1821, HQMC, “Letters Sent, 1798–1884,” RG 127.

²⁴⁰ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 60–61; Alexander, “Archibald Henderson,” 66–67.

²⁴¹ Alexander, “Archibald Henderson,” 66–67.

²⁴² *ASP/NA*, III: 560–569, accessed July 29, 2018, <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsp&fileName=025/llsp025.db&recNum=4>.

enlistments had made Marines unnecessary for maintaining the good order of a ship's company and that sailors could be trained to do anything as equally well as Marines. One officer even suggested that those sailors unfit for sea service could usefully be employed in place of Marines as sentries at navy yards. A particularly caustic response noted that the captain of the sloop *Erie* had deployed in 1829 without a customary Marine detachment. He claimed, "Should the marine corps be separated from the navy, you will, in a very short time, hear every officer in command expressing astonishment why such an absurdity had been so long tolerated."²⁴³ However, in contrast, some of the older, more experienced navy officers defended the Marine Corps. One navy captain noted, "[T]he natural aversion of sailors to the duties of a soldier forbids the hope of ever rendering them useful substitutes for well regulated marines."²⁴⁴ Another believed that becoming well drilled in artillery and infantry would impair the sailor's nautical character. Henderson's former boss, Charles Stewart, noted the same aversion to infantry drill and still maintained the Marine's necessity not only to maintain discipline, but serve as infantry soldiers.²⁴⁵ Soliciting helpful feedback from experienced, friendly fleet commanders such as these became one of Henderson's preferred bureaucratic tactics.

The debate ultimately culminated in landmark legislation enacted by Congress in 1834 that proved beneficial to the Corps. Henderson's rank was increased to colonel, the number of noncommissioned officers more than doubled, and the number of privates increased by 250 men. The 1834 legislation resolved many of the debates over authority between naval officers and Marine officers both on ship and at navy yards and clearly stated that the Marine Corps was part of the Navy Department and subject to Navy Regulations both at sea and ashore, unless ordered to do duty with the Army.²⁴⁶ It was this last caveat that Henderson seized upon to commit the Marine Corps to battle twice while Commandant—in the Indian wars in the southeastern United States from (1836-1842), and in the Mexican War (1846-1848)—in order to further enhance the Corps'

²⁴³ *ASP/NA*, III: 564.

²⁴⁴ *ASP/NA*, III: 585. Emphasis in original.

²⁴⁵ *ASP/NA*, III: 565–566.

²⁴⁶ Alexander, "Archibald Henderson," 68; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 66–67.

reputation as a force-in-readiness. Henderson even took to the field himself during service in Georgia during the Indian wars. This extended land service as a temporary part of the Army represented an entirely new kind of service for the Marine Corps, precipitated in large part by Henderson's desire to justify the Corps' existence after it was challenged just a couple years earlier.²⁴⁷

C. EMERGING REQUIREMENTS, STAGNANT MISSION

During his tenure, Henderson sought to implement a host of administrative reforms to increase the professionalism of the officer corps, including a retired list so that older or infirm officers could honorably leave the service to make way for younger officers, strict examinations of officer candidates' educational and moral fitness, increased training and education, and assigning West Point graduates to the Marine Corps.²⁴⁸ Henderson also made repeated requests for artillery training as means to enhance the Corps' ability to project power ashore, but historians credit these requests with more than foresight than they deserve.²⁴⁹ Henderson first raised the issue early in his tenure as Commandant and then began to reemphasize the need for artillery training later in his tenure as well, especially in case of the need for landing a force in a foreign

²⁴⁷ Alexander, "Archibald Henderson," 68–69; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 70.

²⁴⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard, March 11, 1828, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy William Graham, October 15, 1851, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy John Kennedy, November 11, 1852, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy James Dobbin, November 17, 1853, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy James Dobbin, November 10, 1854, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Isaac Toucey, November 12, 1857, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Isaac Toucey, November 20, 1858, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 84; Joseph G. Dawson III, "With Fidelity and Effectiveness: Archibald Henderson's Lasting Legacy to the U.S. Marine Corps," *The Journal of Military History* 62, no. 4 (Oct. 1998): 748.

²⁴⁹ See, for example, Dawson, "With Fidelity and Effectiveness," 748–749.

country.²⁵⁰ Historian Joseph Dawson blames Henderson's successor, Colonel John Harris, Commandant from 1859–1864, with failing to understand Henderson's proposal for employing Marine artillery as part of a landing force and instead assigning Marines as gun crews on board ships—"a dead-end step derailing Henderson's farsighted proposal of strengthening landing forces."²⁵¹ Henderson, however, largely buried his requests for artillery training amidst larger manpower complaints and used the increasing employment of the landing party to justify the Marines' shipboard guard function, never considering an organizational change to meet this emerging mission. In fact, Henderson opposed consolidating Marines at the four largest navy yards, which would have made such training more feasible.²⁵²

For example, in 1842, Commander Alexander Slidell MacKenzie hanged three mutineers—one of them the midshipman son of the secretary of war—during a cruise of the training brig *Somers*. The *Somers* did not have a Marine guard, and Henderson made sure the House Committee on Naval Affairs did not overlook this fact.²⁵³ Additionally, in 1852, after Congress abolished flogging on American warships, Henderson became convinced this would lead to an increased demand in the size of the Marine Corps. He reached out to his friendly coterie of senior naval officers for confirmation. Commander David Farragut obliged, noting that Marines were essential for shipboard discipline. However, he also noted "the important duty of landing to act against the enemy, when they become the nucleus: and in fact, the chief reliance of the Commanding Officer for

²⁵⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard, November 18, 1823, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy John Mason, November 22, 1847, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy John Mason, January 31, 1848, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy John Mason, November 11, 1852, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy James Dobbin, November 13, 1856, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127; Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson to Secretary of the Navy Isaac Toucey, November 12, 1857, HQMC, "Letters Sent, 1798–1884," RG 127.

²⁵¹ Dawson, "With Fidelity and Effectiveness," 750, fn. 43. Emphasis in original.

²⁵² Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 69.

²⁵³ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 59.

the formation of landing forces.”²⁵⁴ Ever the champion of the ships guard role, Henderson was undoubtedly pleased to see the first part of Farragut’s response, but he only ever highlighted two armed landings in his correspondence with the Navy Department despite the fact that Marines and sailors conducted fifty such landings during his time as Commandant.²⁵⁵ The Marine ships guards of the Pacific Squadron and Gulf Squadron during the Mexican War demonstrated the tactical value of mobile amphibious forces trained and equipped to land and raid or occupy at will an expansive coastline, but Henderson remained fixated for over a year on finding favorable information concerning his Marines’ performance at Chapultepec to prove, once again, that his Marines could fight.²⁵⁶ The Commandant did not have much of a case based on his Marines’ performance, and his insistence came at the expense of incorporating what should have been lessons learned regarding the value of amphibious operations and his Marines’ role therein. Thus, it is entirely unsurprising that the two men who took over for Henderson—John Harris (1859–1864) and Jacob Zeilin (1864–1876)—continued to defend the ships guards even at the expense of the emerging requirement for a force capable of fighting in larger scale engagements as landing parties in sustained land combat.

During the Civil War, Marine ships guards excelled serving on landing parties; conducting boat raids to capture Confederate blockade-runners, privateers, and gunboats; temporarily occupying forts and towns captured by the North’s blockading squadrons; and, conducting riverine operations. Marines and sailors, however, struggled with larger Confederate forces and more sustained combat due to a lack of training, organization, and sustainment, failing disastrously at Fort Fisher.²⁵⁷ Despite mounting evidence of this emerging requirement and the Marines’ ability to meet it, Harris, like Henderson, remained steadfast in insisting on continued service with the fleet. In December 1863,

²⁵⁴ As quoted in Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 83.

²⁵⁵ Alexander, “Archibald Henderson,” 71; Harry Allanson Ellsworth, *One Hundred Eighty Landings of United States Marines 1800–1934* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1974).

²⁵⁶ Alexander, “Archibald Henderson,” 70; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 74–76.

²⁵⁷ Joseph H. Alexander, “John Harris: 1859–1864,” in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 82; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 97–100. Marines also manned ships guns in battles out of expediency, but it was not policy.

Congress mounted an attempted to transfer the Marine Corps to the Army for assimilation. Borrowing a page from Henderson's playbook, Harris solicited support from experienced Navy flag officers and ended up victorious.²⁵⁸

Zeilin, likewise, faced multiple threats to the Corps' existence. In June 1866, Congress made another attempt at "abolishing the Marine Corps, and transferring it to the Army, and making provision for supplying such military force as may at any time be needed in the Navy, by detail from the Army."²⁵⁹ Following in the footsteps of Henderson and Harris, Zeilin sought support from friendly senior officers in the fleet and employed his own political connections in the House of Representatives not only to defeat the bill, but also to score an endorsement for the Corps from the House Naval Affairs Committee:

From the beginning, this Corps seems to have satisfactorily fulfilled the purposes of its organization, and no good reason appears either for abolishing it or transferring it to the Army; on the contrary, the Committee recommends that its organization as a separate Corps be preserved and strengthened . . . [and] that its commanding officer shall hold the rank of a brigadier general.²⁶⁰

Zeilin faced another congressional attempt on the Corps in 1874, again having to mobilize support from among his political friends and the Civil War naval officers. The Corps survived, but its operating budget was slashed by a third, its officer corps reduced, and the brigadier rank for Commandant rescinded.²⁶¹ Morale and public opinion were low, and two-thirds of all enlisted Marines were at sea on extended deployments. When Zeilin adopted Emory Upton's Infantry Tactics as the basis for military education for all officers, it was difficult to implement due to the Corps' being spread across so many

²⁵⁸ Alexander, "John Harris," 83.

²⁵⁹ Robert Debs Heinl Jr., *Soldiers of the Sea: The United States Marine Corps, 1775–1962* (Baltimore: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1991), 87.

²⁶⁰ As quoted in Heinl, *Soldiers of the Sea*, 87; Joseph H. Alexander, "Jacob Zeilin: 1864–1876," in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 93.

²⁶¹ Heinl, *Soldiers of the Sea*, 98; Alexander, "Jacob Zeilin," 95.

small detachments.²⁶² Thus, despite landing operations in China in 1866, Japan and Formosa in 1867, Japan and Uruguay in 1868, Mexico in 1870, Korea in 1871, Panama in 1873, Hawaii in 1874, and Mexico in 1876, the operational realities of maintaining Marines on ship as ships guards and his constant defense of the Corps provided little slack for Zeilin to innovate.²⁶³ Furthermore, Zeilin himself had experienced the negative results of battalion-sized operations in support of the Army and Navy, possibly further reducing any inclination he might have had to pursue amphibious experiments.²⁶⁴

D. REVOLUTION IN PANAMA

Charles McCawley, who succeeded Zeilin in 1876, took over an officer corps divided between younger reformers and an old guard trying to hang on. McCawley turned inward, drawing up a list of thirty-some relatively modest changes he wanted to make to the Corps and began implementing them, hoping especially to standardize training and drill.²⁶⁵ In 1885, the United States intervened in Panama when a revolution in Colombia threatened American business interests and resulted in the burning of the city of Colon and the seizing of the U.S. consul as a hostage. The U.S. Government ordered the deployment of a naval expeditionary force consisting of two Marine infantry battalions, a navy artillery battery, and ships of the U.S. North Atlantic Station to maintain the peace until relieved by a Colombian military force. The Marine Corps generally received praise from the press and public and received a congratulatory letter from Secretary of the Navy William Whitney.²⁶⁶ The Commander of the naval expeditionary force, Commander Bowman McCalla, described the Marines “as highly efficient and admirably disciplined,” but he criticized them for using tactics “of a bygone day.”²⁶⁷ McCalla also criticized the

²⁶² Alexander, “Jacob Zeilin,” 91, 93–94.

²⁶³ Alexander, “Jacob Zeilin,” 94; Ellsworth, *Landings*, II-III.

²⁶⁴ Alexander, “Jacob Zeilin,” 91.

²⁶⁵ Jack Shulimson, “Charles McCawley: 1876–1891,” in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 101, 104.

²⁶⁶ Shulimson, “McCawley,” 108; Jack Shulimson, “U.S. Marines in Panama, 1885,” in *Assault From the Sea: Essays on the History of Amphibious Warfare*, ed. Merrill L. Bartlett (Annapolis, MD: United States Naval Institute, 1983), 107–117.

²⁶⁷ As quoted in Shulimson, “Panama,” 117.

Marines for wasting too much time in their barracks. He recommended summer maneuvers for the entire shore establishment in conjunction with the fleet and Army, and he proposed that the Navy Department purchase its own transports to carry future naval brigades and practice conducting more realistic landing operations. For a New Navy seeking an amphibious force capable of projecting U.S. power into Central America, the Marine Corps' organizational structure proved lacking.²⁶⁸

The Marine Corps under the leadership of Archibald Henderson and his immediate successors proved willing and able to seize new opportunities to employ its forces, such as in extended land campaigns with the Army, in order to justify its existence. The precariousness of its position in the defense establishment, and the repeated threats to its existence, however, made it fundamentally unwilling to consider a change in its existing core missions and organizational structure to cope with changes in technology or the demands of the Navy Department. The next chapter considers the Marine Corps' relationship with the New Navy and analyzes how the Corps responded to continued challenges to its professional jurisdiction.

²⁶⁸ Shulimson, "McCawley," 108; Shulimson, "Panama," 111–112, 117.

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VI. THE MARINE CORPS AND THE NEW NAVY

The retrospect is simply horrible, and I feel that God and Congress have both been good to let us live so long. This total absence of esprit has put us where we are, and without further recital I will come direct to the object of this pamphlet, which is to arouse every officer to the necessity of some action that will make us respectable and useful, and forever end these slurs and innuendoes, and these incessant threats of abolition.

—Henry Cochrane, *The Status of the Marine Corps*, October 1, 1875²⁶⁹

The 1880s witnessed a revolution in doctrine, weaponry, and organization in the U.S. Navy that was spurred, in part, by the naval arms race in Europe and the State Department's desire for a stronger Navy for the expansion of commerce. The main drivers of change, however, came from the Congressional naval affairs committees and the Navy's own junior officers.²⁷⁰ This chapter analyzes why the Marine Corps strengthened its commitment to the ships guard mission following operations in Panama despite the criticisms of its tactics and organization, and in spite of members of the New Navy clamoring for change and the creation of Marine battalions. The ships guard mission created a path dependency that, coupled with its institutional paranoia resulting from repeated threats to its jurisdiction, made the Corps resistant to more exploratory forms of change. The Marine Corps fought to remain on ship and, seemingly, for its own irrelevancy, much like it would roughly a century later when Secretary Rumsfeld began prodding the Corps to create a special operations component.

A. THE NEW NAVY

In 1881, the Navy Department's First Naval Advisory Board recommended a \$29 million building program for a new fleet of steel vessels capable of higher speeds and carrying heavier guns.²⁷¹ The following year, Congress prohibited repairing vessels that

²⁶⁹ Henry Clay Cochrane, *The Status of the Marine Corps, A Plan for Its Reorganization*, 4–5, Henry Clay Cochrane Collection, Box 34, Folder 11, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

²⁷⁰ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 115–117.

²⁷¹ Millett, 115.

could be replaced at only three or four times the cost of repairs, ushering in the retirement of most of the Navy's old fleet. By the end of the decade, in 1889, Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Tracy stated explicitly in his annual report that the Navy was on new a course in both naval strategy and warship design, ushering in a commitment to an ambitious shipbuilding program and a transition from the single cruiser concept to the tactical squadron ready to conduct battle with other battleships.²⁷² From 1885 to 1896, three successive Presidential administrations committed the country to the new battleship navy, authorizing building programs totaling more than 200,000 tons.²⁷³ These ships featured increasingly greater tonnage, armament, speed, and technological complexity, which demanded adapting and improving the Navy's officer corps and enlisted ranks to man these new ships and employ these new tactics.

B. THE MARINE CORPS REBUFFS THE NEW NAVY

While the Navy was exploring changes in nearly every facet of its organization, the Marine Corps continued its defense of the status quo, much to the admission of the Marine Corps' own reformers. Marine Captain Henry Cochrane observed, "The Navy is undergoing a complete revolution, but the Marine Corps slumbers."²⁷⁴ The Marine Corps remained unwilling to consider giving up its traditional ships guard mission and continued to demonstrate a constant defensiveness to new ideas emanating from the Navy. The Corps' ships guard identity continued to drive its priorities, prolonging an inward focus on manpower and other administrative matters, which they might have thought dutifully prudent, but doing so neglected changes in the technological, sociological, and geostrategic environment around them.²⁷⁵

²⁷² Millett, 116.

²⁷³ Millett, 116.

²⁷⁴ As quoted in Shulimson, "McCawley," 112.

²⁷⁵ The former President and Chief Executive Officer of Intel Corporation, Andrew Grove, describes such behavior as a form of escape or diversion driven by denial, wherein senior management respectably spends its time on and makes progress in something that legitimately requires its attention instead of coping with more pressing strategic concerns that could spell the demise of the organization. Andrew S. Grove, *Only the Paranoid Survive: How to Exploit the Crisis Points That Challenge Every Company and Career* (London: Profile Books, LTD, 1996), 88–90, 124–125.

Following Commander Bowman McCalla's rebuke of the Marines' tactics in Panama, Colonel Commandant McCawley responded to these criticisms in a lengthy letter to the Secretary of the Navy, noting that the Marine Corps was drilled "in strict accordance with Upton's tactics as provided for the Army," and if these tactics were lacking, "it is singular that it is left to a naval officer to discover." After all, General Upton was "not as ignorant of modern tactics as he [McCalla] seems to suppose." McCawley emphasized the limits Congress placed on him for sending officers to specialized training, his unfilled requests for new weaponry, and the limited manpower in the barracks, which further limited opportunities for training. He reinforced the centrality of the ships guard mission and sentry duty at navy yards and labeled McCalla's proposition to conduct summer maneuvers "impracticable for several excellent reasons," noting further that he "never found the least trouble in having every duty as well performed in camp as in garrison after a few day's experience."²⁷⁶ McCawley made no mention of a possible future expeditionary role that might have demanded more robust capabilities and training in comparison to what the landing parties comprised of ships guards had previously been providing.

In contrast to McCawley's insistence on the status quo following operations in Panama, naval officers emphasized the need for change to meet new operational demands and technological capabilities. In an 1886 *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* prize winning essay, Navy Lieutenant Carlos G. Calkins noted, "Changes are necessary, both in organization and drill, if our ships are to be made effective men-of-war."²⁷⁷ Regarding the Marine Corps, in particular, he acknowledged that the Marine Corps "furnishes a valuable element in our ships' companies . . . in spite of the want of adaptability of its system of training to nautical conditions and modern weapons." Calkins continued,

²⁷⁶ All quotations from Colonel Commandant C. G. McCawley to Secretary of the Navy W. C. Whitney, July 13, 1885, "Press Copies of Letters, Endorsements, and Annual Reports to the Secretary of the Navy, February 1884-January 1904," RG 127. See also Shulimson, "McCawley," 108-109 and Jack Shulimson, *The Marine Corps' Search for a Mission: 1880-1898* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 62.

²⁷⁷ Lieutenant Carlos G. Calkins, "What Changes in Organization and Drill Are Necessary to Sail and Fight Effectively Our War Ships of Latest Type?" *The Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute* 12 (1886): 270. Hereafter, *Proceedings*.

advocating for establishing Marine battalions at two or three central bases to provide “for advanced military instruction . . . and an organized force for detached service.”²⁷⁸

In the discussion of Calkins’ essay in the same issue, Ensign William Rodgers acknowledged that Marines might have been better drilled, more reliable, and more efficient at the time, but he emphasized what he thought was an obvious point: “[A] thoroughly good seaman well instructed in all his duties is a more useful man for general naval service than is an equally good marine.”²⁷⁹ In fact, once the Navy had “a good body of blue-jackets the marines [would] no longer be called for.”²⁸⁰ Two notable Marine respondents largely concurred with Calkins. Major James Forney argued that the best way to organize the Marines was in regimental formations, provided the strength of the Corps was sufficient in numbers.²⁸¹ He proposed increasing the size of the Corps and establishing three depots located at Mare Island, Philadelphia, and Norfolk. He worried that if the Marines did not work the guns aboard ship, they would lose their esprit de corps as soldiers. First Lieutenant Littleton Waller similarly proposed that a central depot should be established as “a school of instruction for officers and men,” and he emphasized that Marines should not only be placed in charge of the machine guns on board ships, but also could serve as both infantry and light artillery.²⁸²

In the following year’s prize-winning essay, “The Naval Brigade: Its Organization, Equipment, and Tactics,” Lieutenant C. T. Hutchins noted the need to project power ashore as landing parties, citing recent examples of domestic riots in 1877, the British in Egypt, the French in Sfax, and the American expedition in Panama. He emphasized the need to do away with “show drills” and “the hasty assembling of a naval

²⁷⁸ Calkins, “What Changes,” 277; Shulimson, *Mission*, 65.

²⁷⁹ Ensign William L. Rodgers, “Discussion of Prize Essay for 1886,” *Proceedings* 12 (1886): 342.

²⁸⁰ Rodgers, “Discussion of Prize Essay for 1886,” 342.

²⁸¹ Major James Forney, “Discussion of Prize Essay for 1886,” *Proceedings* 12 (1886): 357.

²⁸² First Lieutenant Littleton W. T. Waller, “Discussion of Prize Essay for 1886,” *Proceedings* 12 (1886): 358.

force for landing.”²⁸³ He called for more regularity in training and organization and argued that the naval brigade, consisting of trained seamen, could more than hold its own against all but regular soldiers. Hutchins found the Marines ill-equipped and lacking training in the handling of machine guns and rifles. The Marines, according to Hutchins, should consist of five companies totaling 220 men—just a small portion of his proposed twenty companies of infantry totaling 880 men that would be supported by 230 artillerymen and 10 artillery guns.²⁸⁴

In the 1888 *Proceedings*, Ensign Rodgers reengaged on the topic of the naval brigade and while doing so, reconsidered his position vis-à-vis the Marines.²⁸⁵ He noted that the Marines recognized the need to become more familiar with artillery and that they were ready to assume charge of the secondary battery and of submarine mining. Importantly, Rodgers agreed that Marine companies should form their own battalions. He also noted the lack of regulations or instruction concerning the landing force in the Navy and thought it essential to detail what was required of a landing force in organization, equipment, drill, and tactics, noting English and French examples.²⁸⁶ Upton’s *Tactics*, adopted out of convenience to conform to the Marines, was insufficient and “in complete opposition to the requirements which have been satisfied” by the battalion formation he described.²⁸⁷ He noted the need for artillery and covering fires from the fleet to prepare the landing and concluded that while naval officers need not match those in the Army in knowledge of military matters, they should still “look upon duty ashore as an integral, though secondary, part of their profession.”²⁸⁸

While the debating continued on in *Proceedings*, the Corps largely sat on the sideline, and Colonel McCawley, not looking for new initiatives, dutifully occupied

²⁸³ Lieutenant C. T. Hutchins, “The Naval Brigade: Its Organization, Equipment, and Tactics,” *Proceedings* 13 (1887): 305–307.

²⁸⁴ Hutchins, “The Naval Brigade,” 305–306, 311, 323; Shulimson, *Mission*, 66.

²⁸⁵ Ensign William L. Rodgers, “Notes on the Naval Brigade,” *Proceedings* 14 (1888): 57–96.

²⁸⁶ Rodgers, “Notes on the Naval Brigade,” 59, 63, 73.

²⁸⁷ Rodgers, 80.

²⁸⁸ Rodgers, 91–92, 95; Shulimson, *Mission*, 66–67.

himself with preserving the Corps' traditional missions and increasing the enlisted and officer end strength—while continually lamenting desertion problems and misguided recruiting practices, thus effectively blaming a lack of manpower for his various problems.²⁸⁹ Despite the Corps' best efforts to avoid the issue, the seeds of reform in the New Navy and the debates concerning how to organize ships companies of the new battleships came to a head again in 1889, when Secretary Tracy appointed a Board of Organization, Tactics, and Drill (i.e., the “Greer Board”) to examine the question of shipboard organization and landing party practices.²⁹⁰

C. THE GREER BOARD AND ITS AFTERMATH

Likely warned that the board would deliberate on the ships guard function, Colonel McCawley called for Secretary Tracy's immediate attention to the Marine Corps' “need for 400 more [privates] at once to supply demands for the new ships” and requested that the board “consider the Marine Corps in connection with the new Navy, and that its duties on board ship be well defined.”²⁹¹ He detailed Captain Daniel Mannix, an experienced officer who was in charge of the School of Application at Headquarters, to serve as the Marine Corps' representative on the board, and he made the Corps' position, predictable though it was, known beforehand: Marines were needed as ships guards for security duty and as marksmen; they were to remain “separate and distinct from the rest of the ship's company”; they were to man the secondary batteries under their own officers; and, Marine officers should command the guns of the secondary battery, provided they did not interfere with the duties of the guard.²⁹²

The Greer Board, however, reached decidedly different conclusions, wanting to eliminate all non-essential personnel onboard and integrate the entire ships crew to

²⁸⁹ Shulimson, “McCawley,” 109–110; Shulimson, *Mission*, 67.

²⁹⁰ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 122.

²⁹¹ Colonel Commandant C. G. McCawley to Secretary of the Navy B. F. Tracy, Subject File NF (“Distributions and Transfers”), Record Group (RG) 45; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 122.

²⁹² Colonel Commandant C. G. McCawley to President of the Board on Organization Commodore Jas. A. Greer, October 18, 1889, Subject File NF, RG 45; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 122; Shulimson, *Mission*, 83.

handle all of the ships guns and constitute the entire landing party.²⁹³ Given the improved quality of the American sailor, one of the board members, Lieutenant William Fullam, argued that the presence of the ships guards actually limited the improvement of the ships crews by infantilizing sailors and hindering the development of responsible petty officers. The board rejected McCawley's suggestion to expand the Marines' duties aboard ship and instead recommended their complete removal. Portraying the sentiment of the day, the *Army and Navy Journal* carried a blurb referring to an earlier *New York Times* story, which claimed "the corps has stood still and . . . has been asleep for the past fifty years."²⁹⁴

Secretary Tracy did not accept the recommendations of the Greer Board, but that did not settle the debate. In 1890, Lieutenant Fullam took to the pages of *Proceedings* to argue again that the efficiency of modern warships in battle depended upon the training and organization of its personnel, who needed to be more skilled and motivated than before.²⁹⁵ Marines on ship, however, prevented the development of sailors, as well as the recruitment of a more disciplined force. Fullam argued, "Nothing could be more harmful to the sailor than the presence of the marine guard afloat, because it prevents the development of a military spirit and deprives the sailor of the duties and responsibilities that cultivate the qualities we most require in these days—exactness, care and trustworthiness."²⁹⁶ He countered potential critics, claiming that an emphasis on military habits would not ruin a man as a sailor, but only enhance his efficiency.²⁹⁷

Nineteen naval officers commented on his paper, eleven strongly supporting Fullam, four providing partial support, and only four remaining noncommittal.²⁹⁸ On the

²⁹³ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 122; Shulimson, *Mission*, 84.

²⁹⁴ *Army and Navy Journal*, December 7, 1889, accessed August 20, 2018, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924069761694;view=1up;seq=297>.

²⁹⁵ William F. Fullam, "The System of Naval Training and Discipline Required to Promote Efficiency and Attract Americans," *Proceedings* 16 (1890): 473–495.

²⁹⁶ Fullam, "The System of Naval Training," 475.

²⁹⁷ Fullam, "The System of Naval Training," 490.

²⁹⁸ "Discussion," *Proceedings* 16 (1890): 495–536; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 123.

heels of the Greer Board, Commodore Greer, the first respondent, simply stated, "I can only say that I fully agree with the views and suggestions so admirably expressed by the writer."²⁹⁹ William Rodgers, now a lieutenant, concurred, "I agree heartily with almost all that Mr. Fullam says."³⁰⁰ He argued, "Marines have no longer a function on board ship that can be filled by them alone. No doubt, were the marine guard removed from a ship, there would be some trouble for a little while, but only such as a man recovering from lameness might experience when he first throws away his crutch."³⁰¹ The primary topic of discussion concerned the Marines' utility aboard ship and whether or not the sailor could be drilled to comparable standards without the ships guard. Nobody made the case that Marines would be more useful as an expeditionary force, but in war planning at the Naval War College, most plans or fleet problems detailed landing operations and the establishment of a land base to support the fleet.³⁰² As Captain Mahan observed, the Marine Corps would be the "backbone of any force landing on the enemy's coast."³⁰³

Fullam would become a vocal leader and recurrent critic of Marines aboard ship, a viewpoint reinforced by his service aboard the cruiser *Chicago* in 1891–1892, when the Marine guard looted and consumed some liquor while on guard at the American consulate in Venezuela. Their captain was court martialed and convicted for inattention to duty, but his conviction was remitted.³⁰⁴ Meanwhile, as McCawley's health failed, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Heywood, who eventually succeeded him, assumed McCawley's mantle, continuing requests and pleas for more men in a yearly refrain in his annual report to Secretary of the Navy Hilary Herbert. Heywood, like his predecessor, also focused inward, on quality of barracks life, increasing rations for his Marines, improving uniforms, and implementing promotion exams for officers, as well as a

²⁹⁹ Commodore Jas. A. Greer, "Discussion," *Proceedings* 16 (1890): 495.

³⁰⁰ Lieutenant William L. Rodgers, "Discussion," *Proceedings* 16 (1890): 506.

³⁰¹ Rodgers, "Discussion," 507.

³⁰² Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 123.

³⁰³ As quoted in Shulimson, *Mission*, 144.

³⁰⁴ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 124.

retirement system.³⁰⁵ He organized the School of Application that all new lieutenants and select enlisted attended and continued to stress the utility of Marines at sea, even requesting an order for Marines to man the secondary battery: “It is as Artillerymen aboard our new floating batteries that their importance must be felt and acknowledged in the future.”³⁰⁶ Thus, the Corps’ leadership continued to refine the existing construct and exploit existing capabilities rather than explore entirely new ones.

D. A SMALL VICTORY FOR THE NEW NAVY

The Fullamites finally gained an institutional victory in 1892, when Commodore Frank M. Ramsay, chief of the Bureau of Navigation, abolished all-Marine gun crews in favor of mixtures of sailors and Marines under junior line officers. Some ship captains interpreted this to mean the removal of Marines from the secondary battery, and Ramsay compounded these perceived attacks by denying the coastal defense monitor *Monterey* a ships guard, despite naval policy to the contrary. Heywood protested on both counts, arguing that his officers would be commanded by ensigns far junior to them. Furthermore, mixing Marines with the larger gun crew would detract from the efficiency of the ship. The Marines on the *Monterey*, according to Heywood, provided utility as infantrymen, artillerists, and sharpshooters and should service both the main and secondary batteries. In these bureaucratic maneuverings, Heywood identified what he felt a concerted campaign to eliminate Marines from onboard ship.³⁰⁷

Navy line officers continued to lobby allies in Congress, even mounting a petition against Marines among sailors of the fleet. On February 5, 1894, Senator Eugene Hale

³⁰⁵ Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Secretary of the Navy H. A. Herbert, September 28, 1893; October 11, 1895; and, October 9, 1896, all HQMC, LSSN, RG 127; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 118–119; Jack Shulimson, “Charles Heywood: 1891–1903,” in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 117–119; Shulimson, *Mission*, 100.

³⁰⁶ Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Secretary of the Navy B. F. Tracy, October 18, 1891, HQMC, LSSN, RG 127.

³⁰⁷ Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Secretary of the Navy B. F. Tracy, January 21, 1892 and November 30, 1892, both HQMC, LSSN, RG 127; Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Commodore F. M. Ramsay, USN, January 22, 1894, Subject File VR (USMC), RG 45; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 124; Shulimson, “Heywood,” 119.

introduced a bill “by request” in the Senate for the reorganization of the Navy and Marine Corps, which included a retirement “plucking” retirement provision, a reduction in the number of engineers and a limitation of their responsibility to ship construction design, and of course, the eventual abolition of the Marine Corps and Paymaster Corps.³⁰⁸

Secretary of the Navy Herbert forwarded his own recommendations on March 1, 1894, making no reference to the Marine Corps. On March 24, Rear Admiral John G. Walker, who had been chief of the Bureau of Navigation during the open in Panama and continued to push for a more expansive foreign policy, testified on a bill he had drafted, which included the same “plucking” provision, as well as the abolition of the Marine Corps and Paymasters Corps.³⁰⁹ Walker argued, “Marines have been of great service in days gone by—in the days of press gangs and mutinies . . . their day of usefulness at sea has gone by.”³¹⁰

The Commandant responded by not only reemphasizing many of his points concerning the need for more Marines and assignment of Marines to the secondary batteries under their own officers, but he also detailed how the individual Marine cost \$1,000 less than the individual sailor. In fact, if Marines manned the secondary batteries, the Navy would save over \$69,000 and have the sailors necessary to man the Navy’s new ships.³¹¹ In August 1894, Army artillery reformers looking to separate the coast artillery from the field artillery found friendly senators to introduce a bill that would combine the coast artillery regiments with the Marine Corps for the purpose of harbor defense. Heywood and his Marine officers recognized this as a threat to the Corps. The reform bills were eventually tabled, but Secretary Herbert, in order to placate the Navy line officers, ordered ships guards to send correspondence through the ship captain to the Bureau of Navigation before reaching the Commandant. He also ordered Heywood to

³⁰⁸ Shulimson, *Mission*, 130.

³⁰⁹ Shulimson, *Mission*, 130.

³¹⁰ As quoted in Shulimson, *Mission*, 130–131.

³¹¹ Shulimson, *Mission*, 130–131.

delete a portion of his annual report, which again called for assignment of Marines to the secondary batteries.³¹²

E. FULLAM STOKES THE FLAMES AGAIN

The following year, Navy Captain Robley D. Evans of the new battleship *Indiana* requested an exemption from carrying ships guards on account of what he deemed insufficient berthing space.³¹³ While Secretary Herbert denied the request, Heywood was prompted to reiterate the necessity of Marines that had been “proven throughout history,” as well as their superior training, gunnery, and discipline, and their longer enlistment and relatively lower cost.³¹⁴ The “modern man of war” was but a “floating fort,” and the British, after all, had more Royal Marines and yet still had sufficient berthing space.³¹⁵

In response, Fullam reengaged on the topic of the ships guards in the 1896 *Proceedings*.³¹⁶ Fullam proposed organizing Marines into six permanent battalions—two on the Pacific coast and four on the Atlantic—and maintaining a transport on each coast ready to transfer these battalions for expeditionary service abroad. According to Fullam, these Marine battalions should receive special instruction and sufficient equipment to conduct field maneuvers annually. Fullam observed that naval officers had not only proven themselves capable of commanding companies and battalions on shore and being the Marine’s equal in conducting military duties, but also could contribute more to general naval efficiency. He repeatedly emphasized that there was no meaningful difference in terms of loyalty and discipline between the Navy bluejacket and Marine.

³¹² Shulimson, *Mission*, 132–133.

³¹³ Shulimson, 145.

³¹⁴ Secretary of the Navy H. A. Herbert to Captain R. D. Evans, USN, November 1, 1895, HD/HQMC, “Letters Received, 1818–1915,” RG 127; Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Secretary of the Navy H. A. Herbert, October 31, 1895, HQMC, LSSN, RG 127.

³¹⁵ Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Secretary of the Navy H. A. Herbert, October 31, 1895, HQMC, LSSN, RG 127.

³¹⁶ William F. Fullam, “The Organization, Training, and Discipline of the Navy Personnel As Viewed from the Ship,” *Proceedings* 22 (1896): 83–116.

Rather, the present system stunted the bluejacket's ability to develop, and the presence of Marines on board ship had done little to advance discipline in the previous 100 years.³¹⁷

Sixteen of the twenty Navy officers who responded agreed with Fullam's views, particularly that Marines were not needed to keep order and seemed too eager to claim the main and secondary batteries.³¹⁸ The primary point of contention among Navy officers centered on whether or not the ships crews should be trained for landing party duty or remain on board ship to man the vessel. The Marine Corps, organized in expeditionary battalions, not as a collection of ships guards, might fill such a void. The Marines, naturally defensive, argued that their utility aboard ship was limited by Navy Regulations and ship captains, and they took issue with the quality of military training Navy officers actually received. Marines did not command landing parties because their senior officer was typically just a captain and thus junior to the senior line officer detailed to the party. Just as the Army divides its labor among the infantry, artillery, and cavalry branches instead of training all of its soldiers in all three specialties, it did not make sense to insist on a "homogenous," jack-of-all-trades ships company. The Marines, however, did not respond directly to the Fullam's proposal concerning expeditionary battalions.

Fullam's essay resonated with Navy officers and won new, influential converts. Fullamites even began talking of transferring the Marine Corps to the Army, a notion strongly opposed by Marine officers and the Commandant, who asked Secretary Herbert to censure Fullam for insubordination, since his essay implicitly criticized Herbert's decision in the *Indiana* case. The Navy Department's official position remained unchanged in the revised Navy Regulations of 1896, but this did not settle the debate.³¹⁹ Early on in his term the following year, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long appointed Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt as president of a special board to

³¹⁷ Fullam, "Organization, Training, and Discipline," 91, 110, 113–114.

³¹⁸ "Discussion," *Proceedings* 22 (1896): 116–197; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 126.

³¹⁹ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 126.

consider merging the Navy line and engineer officers. The board also considered merging the line with the Marine Corps and removing the ships guards.³²⁰

F. THE ROOSEVELT PERSONNEL BOARD AND WAR WITH SPAIN

Heywood surveyed his officers by circular letter concerning whether Marines should be transferred to the line, if they should serve on board ship, and if they should serve on ship, whether officers should also serve as watch and division officers. Opinion was divided as to the degree to which the ships guards were worth staking their future. The officers sought to widen their ships guard role as gunners and landing party artillery, but they also saw value in colonial infantry and coastal defense artillery. They did, however, agree that separation from the Navy Department would result in their demise.³²¹

In presenting his opinion to the board, Heywood opposed a transfer to the line of the Navy, citing the Corps' history and the experience of the Royal Marines. Furthermore, the Marines performed special functions as infantry and sentries that sailors could not perform and still run the ship as well. The age of specialties demanded more, not fewer, distinct corps, and the Marines on board ship would have to be replaced with less experienced seamen, who would be asked to perform the same duties and would virtually become Marines. Heywood defined the Marine Corps' mission as ships guards with the added duty of manning the secondary batteries.³²² In essence, Heywood presented the same arguments as Archibald Henderson had decades prior.

The deliberations of the Roosevelt board were overcome by preparations for a possible war with Spain, which included permission to commission 43 second lieutenants and 1,640 more enlisted men, but for the war only. Following two decisive sea engagements in Manila Bay on May 1, 1898 and off the coast of Santiago de Cuba on July 3, Heywood set to work once again to prove that ships guards were something other

³²⁰ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 127; Shulimson, *Mission*, 164–165.

³²¹ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 127; Shulimson, *Mission*, 165–166.

³²² Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Assistant Secretary of the Navy T. Roosevelt, November 22, 1897, HQMC, LSSN, RG 127; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 127; Shulimson, *Mission*, 166–167.

than anachronistic. Seeing no mention of Marine guards in initial reports from both fleet engagements, he asked the ships captains and Marine officers for reports of what the Marines had contributed to the victories. While the Marines had acted with coolness under fire and did their work in a creditable and efficient manner, it was difficult to verify many hits from the secondary batteries, despite what Heywood later claimed in his own report. In that same report, however, Heywood did not waste an opportunity to request more men to meet the demands for increased foreign service.³²³

Heywood made additional attempts to take advantage of the Marine Corps' good publicity resulting from the war and from the new requirements resulting from changes to the geostrategic environment in the war's aftermath. Heywood presented a bill for the reorganization of the Marine Corps to the secretary of the navy to enable the Corps to conduct the duties upon which it thought it would be called. His recommendations, however, amounted to nothing more than requests for more men.³²⁴ Heywood acknowledged that the "recent war with Spain has so changed the conditions which surround this country," but he still saw no need for any substantial change to the Corps' duties.³²⁵ Heywood recounted mobilizing Marines and pulling equipment from multiple yards along the east coast for service in both Cuba and Panama the previous decade, and despite leaving these yards with a skeleton crew, which he deemed "an improper state of affairs,"³²⁶ he still seemed perfectly content with the haphazard manner in which his Marines responded to both events. Heywood requested more men to man not only these domestic yards, but also new garrisons in the newly acquired Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, Hawaii, and the Philippines. Heywood even acknowledged "how important and useful it

³²³ For Heywood's report, see Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Secretary of the Navy J. D. Long, September 24, 1898, HQMC, LSSN, RG 127. For reports from Marine officers, see Commander H. W. Lyons to Colonel Commandant C. Heywood, August 15, 1898; First Lieutenant R. H. Lane to Colonel Commandant C. Heywood, August 27, 1898; Lieutenant Colonel R. L. Meade to Colonel Commandant C. Heywood, August 29, 1898; Captain L. W. T. Waller to Colonel Commandant C. Heywood, September 1, 1898; Captain F. E. Chadwick to Colonel Commandant C. Heywood, September 2, 1898, all HD/HQMC, "Letters Received, 1818–1915," RG 127. See also Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 130.

³²⁴ Colonel Commandant C. Heywood to Secretary of the Navy J. D. Long, November 9, 1898, HQMC, LSSN, RG 127.

³²⁵ Heywood.

³²⁶ Heywood.

is to have a body of trained troops which can be quickly mobilized and sent on board transports, fully equipped for service ashore and afloat,” but he did not consider a real reorganization of the Corps that would make this an easier, more efficient process.³²⁷ Rather, reorganization continued to mean simply more numbers and now, more locations for duty.

In contrast, the Navy did seriously confront the changes resulting from the war and how these new territorial acquisitions, for example, might affect plans for future war. Modern battleships required frequent refueling and increased maintenance and were, in effect, tied to a ready access to coal, and thus a base where the coal could be stored. Navies needed some means to enable its new short-range battleships to operate across long stretches of open ocean, requiring either permanent bases in potential overseas areas of operation or an extensive string of temporary, “stepping-stone” bases to supply and repair vessels. Lacking the imperial prowess of its European rivals, the stepping-stone option was the only realistic solution for the American Navy. At their first meeting, the General Board, established in March 1900 to “consider questions relating to the efficient preparation of the fleet in case of war and for the naval defense of the coast”³²⁸ and to advise the Secretary of the Navy on war plans, bases, and general naval policy,³²⁹ recommended that the Marines “would be best adapted and most available for immediate and sudden call” in the defense of a naval advance base.³³⁰

Brigadier General Commandant Charles Heywood responded to the Board’s communication by expressing his concurrence with their recommendation, noting that “it will give me very great pleasure to cooperate with the General Board in its plans, as

³²⁷ Heywood.

³²⁸ *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy*, 1900 cited in Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth J. Clifford, USMCR, *Progress and Purpose: A Developmental History of the United States Marine Corps 1900–1970* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1973), 6.

³²⁹ Ronald Spector, *The Naval War College and the Development of the Naval Profession* (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1977), 101.

³³⁰ President, General Board, to Secretary of the Navy, October 6, 1900, General Board (GB) File 408, Record Group (RG) 80; Clifford, *Progress and Purpose*, 8; Graham A. Cosmas and Jack Shulimson, “The Culebra Maneuver and the Formation of the U.S. Marine Corps’s Advance Base Force, 1913–1914,” in *Assault from the Sea: Essays on the History of Amphibious Warfare*, ed. Merrill L. Bartlett (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1983), 121–122.

expressed in their communication, so far as it relates to the Marine Corps.”³³¹ While keen to warn the General Board that it “will necessitate very careful consideration and considerable time will be necessary for accomplishing it,” the Commandant agreed to set about establishing and properly equipping a one thousand man expeditionary force capable of operating independently as an advance base force, as well as securing the necessary accommodations, facilities, and resources to instruct his Marines in building hasty fortifications, mounting fixed defense artillery, constructing searchlight and telegraph-telephone systems, and laying mines.³³²

G. THE ADVANCE BASE FORCE AND A LACK OF PROGRESS

Despite this mounting pressure to reorganize into permanent expeditionary battalions to develop and defend temporary advance bases for the fleet, coupled with Heywood’s concurrence—however nominally, it turns out—to do so, the Marine Corps continued to refuse to surrender its attachment to its traditional duties, and Heywood showed little interest in the new task.³³³ In 1906, the Fullamites and the Bureau of Navigation again began maneuvering to remove Marines from ship in order to put the approximately 2,000 Marines on ship into new advance base force battalions. On October 16, 1908, the chief of the Bureau of Navigation, Rear Admiral J. E. Pillsbury, asked the Secretary of the Navy to remove the ships guards since not only were ships crews no longer so undisciplined as to require Marine sentries, but the Marines should also be grouped and trained ashore for expeditionary duty, since the absence of a Marine landing party for duty ashore weakened ships gun crews. Secretary of the Navy Victor Metcalf

³³¹ Brigadier General Commandant C. Heywood to Admiral G. Dewey, November 22, 1900, GB File 408, RG 80. This letter can also be found in the William F. Fullam Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress and Historic Amphibious File, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

³³² Brigadier General Commandant C. Heywood to Admiral G. Dewey, November 22, 1900, GB File 408, RG 80; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 271–272; Cosmas and Shulimson, “Culebra Maneuver,” 122.

³³³ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 137. See also Heywood’s annual report the following year, for example: Brigadier General Commandant C. Heywood to J. D. Long, October 1, 1901, HQMC, LSSN, RG 127.

supported Pillsbury's position and drafted a New Executive Order, which now President Theodore Roosevelt signed, on November 12.³³⁴

Executive Order 969 listed the duties of the Marine Corps as such:

1. To garrison the different navy yards and naval stations, both within and beyond the continental limits of the United States.
2. To furnish the first line of the mobile defense of naval bases and naval stations beyond the continental limits of the United States.
3. To man such naval defenses, and to aid in the manning, if necessary, of such other defenses, as may be erected for the defense of naval bases and naval stations beyond the continental limits of the United States.
4. To garrison the Isthmian Canal Zone, Panama.
5. To furnish such garrisons and expeditionary forces for duties beyond the seas as may be necessary in time of peace.³³⁵

Roosevelt's decision was generally met with approval, except from Marine officers convinced that the Executive Order spelled the Corps' doom. Even though Congress was unlikely to abolish the Corps, some in Congress did maintain these fears, and thanks to powerful—and familial—Marine allies in Congress, ultimately restored the Marines' pre-Executive Order 969 duties at the outset of the Taft administration.³³⁶

Despite the Marine Corps' agreeing to the advance base force mission, which would play a crucial role in any future war, just months before the U.S. Atlantic Fleet's annual winter maneuvers at Culebra in 1914, the Secretary of the Navy's Aid for Inspection, now CAPT William F. Fullam, admonished the Marine Corps in a letter to the secretary of the navy, claiming that "considered from the view-point of real efficiency for war purposes, practically nothing has been accomplished during the past thirteen

³³⁴ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 138–139.

³³⁵ As quoted in Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 139.

³³⁶ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 141–143. The House Naval Affairs Committee named Representative Thomas Butler, father of Marine Captain Smedley Darlington Butler, the chair of the subcommittee established to investigate the removal order.

years.”³³⁷ Fullam continued, calling for “a complete reorganization of the Marine Corps into permanent battalions,” laying the blame for the Marine Corps’ failure or inability to qualify for performing the advance base duty at the feet of the “present organization, or lack of organization, which results in the scattering of the Corps in small detachments afloat, as well as on shore, and the fact that all effort seems to have been concentrated in perpetuating this ineffective organization.”³³⁸ In short, the experiences of the thirteen years between the inception of the General Board and the Marine Corps’ subsequent acceptance of the advance base mission and Fullam’s inspection proved it necessary to “make a complete breach with the past” so that “the conservative forces which have, up to the present time, prevent [*sic*] the effective use and employment of this Corps will gradually disappear.”³³⁹

Marine Corps leadership employed an “acknowledge and evade” strategy, nominally agreeing to the mission, but refusing to relinquish its traditional missions—or resources—to do so because it considered them a part of its very identity and existence. In the preparation for and execution of the Culebra Maneuver, a Marine advance base force was finally established, and although diverted multiple times for expeditionary duty at Vera Cruz, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba, the force maintained a continuous existence until replaced by the East Coast Expeditionary Force following World War I.³⁴⁰ This force, ultimately, presaged the modern Fleet Marine Force (FMF) and the development of the amphibious assault.³⁴¹ However, despite the notoriety that came to the Corps during World War II, the Corps faced another struggle for its survival immediately thereafter. The next chapter discusses the Marine Corps’ response to defense unification efforts following World War II.

³³⁷ W. F. Fullam to Secretary of the Navy, May 1, 1913, File 1975–10, HQMC, General Correspondence, 1911–1938, RG 127.

³³⁸ Fullam.

³³⁹ Fullam.

³⁴⁰ Cosmas and Shulimson, “Culebra Maneuver,” 130–131.

³⁴¹ Advance base theory was also needed to form the conceptual basis for the amphibious assault, which in many respects, is just a logical extension of the initial advance base requirement.

VII. THE MARINE CORPS AND DEFENSE UNIFICATION

We exist today—we flourish today—not because of what we know we are, or what we know we can do, but because of what the grassroots of our country believes we are and believes we can do.

—Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, *First to Fight*, 1984³⁴²

Even as the War in the Pacific had just begun, the War Department had already started laying the groundwork for post-war military arrangements and reorganization. On November 2, 1942, General George Marshall submitted a memorandum to the JCS “relating to the single department of war in the postwar period,” formalizing his support in favor of defense unification.³⁴³ The committees and hearings that followed in both the House and Senate all focused on seeking greater efficiency, greater economy, and greater readiness to meet short notice crises, such as Pearl Harbor. Noticeably absent in War Department’s proposals, however, was the Marine Corps, which Army witnesses dismissed as unimportant.³⁴⁴ The purpose of this chapter is not to recount the specific events of post-World War II deliberations, which continued on for over a decade and are already ably recounted elsewhere.³⁴⁵ Rather, it serves to highlight the lengths to which the Corps went to survive, solidify its independence as a service, and protect the FMF and its aviation component. The Corps’ experience during the defense unification proceedings colored its perception of subsequent Department of Defense (DoD) reorganization efforts and led to a dogged opposition to any proposals it felt would detract from its independence or undermine its position in the defense establishment. Thus, it is particularly relevant for understanding the positions the Marine Corps took vis-à-vis the Goldwater-Nichols DoD Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Nunn-Cohen Amendment to the 1987 DoD Authorization Act some four decades later.

³⁴² Krulak, *First to Fight*, xiv.

³⁴³ As quoted in Gordon W. Keiser, *The U.S. Marine Corps and Defense Unification 1944–1947* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1982), 5.

³⁴⁴ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 19.

³⁴⁵ See Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 456–464, 469–474, 496–500; Krulak, *First to Fight*, 15–66; O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 98–147.

A. INTERSERVICE STRIFE

Disputes between the Army and Marine Corps predated World War II. In 1916, for example, the Army General Staff proposed requiring a senior Army officer to command mixed contingents of Army and Marine forces, claiming Marine officers were “ipso facto less fitted for command” in comparison to Army officers.³⁴⁶ The use of Marines in the Army Expeditionary Forces and the perceived undue and unbalanced publicity the Marines received became another bone of contention. During the interwar years, President Hoover, encouraged by General Douglas MacArthur, took an interest in abolishing the Corps, which the Army viewed as competition for scant peacetime funds and manpower. George Marshall, then a colonel, also reportedly commented to First Lieutenant Lewis B. Puller that the Marine emphasis on “professional soldiering” in recruiting was not only undemocratic, but also unfair to the other services.³⁴⁷

Events in the Pacific fueled further ill will between the Marine Corps and other services. For example, after the landing at Guadalcanal, Rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher requested permission to withdraw his three aircraft carriers that had been serving as Task Force 62’s protective force while TF 62 unloaded its supplies. The Marine commander, General Alexander Vandegrift, later accused Fletcher of cowardice: “This was the Koro [Saratoga] conference relived, except that Fletcher was running away twelve hours earlier than he already threatened during our unpleasant meeting. We all knew his fuel could not have been running low.”³⁴⁸ Navy and Marine planners would subsequently fight each other constantly because naval doctrine dictated that the Navy retained control of landing forces until a beachhead had been established, thus giving them control over the location of any landings and of pre-landing naval gunfire and air bombardments.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁶ As quoted in Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 3.

³⁴⁷ Keiser, 3–4.

³⁴⁸ As quoted in James D. Hornfischer, *Neptune’s Inferno: The U.S. Navy at Guadalcanal* (New York: Bantam Books, 2011), 52.

³⁴⁹ O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 48–49.

Interservice friction with the Army was much worse, especially concerning the conduct of amphibious assaults. The Marine Corps believed speed was critical even if it meant pushing through the enemy's strength. The Army, however, prioritized conserving manpower at the expense of time or terrain seized, even when it placed the Navy at further risk.³⁵⁰ This disagreement came to a head on Saipan, in the Marianas, when Marine Lieutenant General Holland M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith relieved Army Major General Ralph Smith for his lack of aggressiveness and "defective performance," further poisoning relations between the Army and Marine Corps.³⁵¹

Earlier in the war, the Army had already revealed its future intentions concerning the Marine Corps in multiple interactions with the Corps' officers. In October 1942, Lieutenant Colonel Victor H. Krulak and a group of officers reported to the Army's 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii to teach the division aspects of amphibious warfare before it shipped for the South Pacific. In an office call with the division commander, Major General J. L. Collins, after the conclusion of training, General Collins said the Army intended to eliminate its reliance on Marines for amphibious expertise, since he did not consider the specialty very difficult anyway.³⁵² A couple months later, in December 1942, Marine Lieutenant Colonel Merrill B. Twining visited his brother, Army Air Force (AAF) Brigadier General Nathan Twining, at the quarters of the chief of staff of the Noumea Army Command at New Calcedonia. A group of senior Army officers, including the same General Collins, shared billeting there. The Army officers, including Twining's own brother, condemned Navy and Marine operations at Guadalcanal and revealed that organizational steps were already underway to prevent the Marine Corps from infringing on the functions of the other services.³⁵³ Such was the backdrop of the Corps' next struggle for its survival.

³⁵⁰ O'Connell, 48–49.

³⁵¹ O'Connell, *Underdogs* 51. Keiser disputes the notion that the "Smith versus Smith" controversy was due to fundamental differences in tactics between Army and Marine and that it was a deciding factor in firming Marshall's resolve against the Marine Corps. See Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 47.

³⁵² Krulak, *First to Fight*, 17–18.

³⁵³ Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 4–5.

B. DIFFERING VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Navy supported the Marine Corps' air-ground FMF concept built upon divisions and air wings. The Navy identified a specific post-war need for the FMF that was not linked to a naval campaign. As the Army focused on Europe and the AAF on nuclear bombs, the Navy argued the FMF would be the ideal force to intervene in the Persian Gulf region, as necessary, to control the region's oilfields, which the Navy considered vital for containing the Soviet Union.³⁵⁴ With the Corps deployed to the western Pacific and the eastern Mediterranean, it would not infringe upon or duplicate an Army mission. The Navy would provide amphibious shipping for two divisions and six escort carriers for Marine air.³⁵⁵ The Corps' amphibious base-seizure mission, in essence, remained valid even after the advent of the nuclear age. For example, following a series of Navy-directed nuclear tests in the summer of 1946, the Marine Corps appointed a Special Board to reconcile amphibious operations with nuclear weapons—a theory that relied on flying forces in via helicopter behind initial beach defenses in order to prevent nuclear strikes. The crux of the Marine Corps' argument was that the Army did not fully appreciate the Corps' amphibious expertise or the benefits of an integrated air-ground task force.³⁵⁶

The Army, however, denied the need for a Marine Corps designed as it was for World War II, questioning whether future ground operations would be part of a naval campaign. Furthermore, even if such operations became necessary, the Army could handle them, thus meaning the Marine Corps had no significant wartime function.³⁵⁷ The Army argued that the Marine Corps should instead be organized as “small, readily available and lightly armed units to protect United States interests ashore in foreign countries”—in other words, as colonial infantry.³⁵⁸ The Army wanted any land-based air

³⁵⁴ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 451.

³⁵⁵ Millett, 452.

³⁵⁶ Millett, 451–454.

³⁵⁷ Millett, 452.

³⁵⁸ As quoted in Millett, 452.

to be part of the AAF and proposed using the Navy's amphibious shipping for its own training.³⁵⁹

Following a series of dueling committee hearings, reports, and proposals, and President Truman's own forays into the controversy (likely at Marshall's prodding), these differing visions of the future force solidified the battle lines on which the defense unification controversy would ultimately be settled. The arguments were generally divided between the Army and AAF on one side and the Navy and Marine Corps on the other.³⁶⁰ The Army, with Presidential support, argued in favor of full unification and the establishment of a single department of defense comprised of three services—land, sea, and air—and led by a single administrative secretary at the top. The military chain of command would be led by a chief of staff of the armed forces who fell under the secretary of defense and whose control of the budget process would enable him to assign services roles and missions without congressional approval. According to the Army, such an approach would dismantle duplicative bureaucracies and achieve maximum efficiency for a peacetime military.³⁶¹

In contrast, the Navy urged greater civilian-military national security policy coordination in the form of new agencies and boards like the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), but it opposed a single department of defense. Instead, the Navy proposed that the JCS and separate departments be continued based on the World War II model. The Navy wanted to preserve civilian authority over the services via secretaries of the military departments and disagreed with tri-elemental organization, instead opting for service

³⁵⁹ Millett, 452.

³⁶⁰ See Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 8–33, 38–40, for detailed discussions of the Woodrum Committee hearings, the Richardson Committee Report, the Eberstadt Report, the Senate Military Affairs Committee hearings, the Collins Plan—the same General Collins following through on his previous threats—and President Truman's recommendations. Keiser notes that Navy-Marine relations became strained due to the Navy Department's initial inattentiveness and later, its pragmatism. See also Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 46 and Krulak, *First to Fight*, 32–33. Having made a delayed entrance to the debate, the Navy became willing to use the Marine Corps as a bargaining chip and to compromise Marine organizational integrity to preserve its own interests, which were tied to maintaining control of the seas and, specifically, naval aviation.

³⁶¹ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 459; Krulak, *First to Fight*, 31–32; O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 119; Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 40–43.

organization on a functional basis. The Navy's primary concern was preserving naval aviation, as carrier planes would be needed to stake a claim to nuclear weapons and ward off underfunding and post-war obsolescence.³⁶²

The Marine Corps generally agreed with the Navy; however, the Corps believed even more strongly in the need for civilian control over the military at large, particularly as it concerned the budget. The Corps believed in the necessity of an air-ground Marine Corps of adequate size and composition to fulfill its expeditionary force-in-readiness role. Following the revelation of the JCS Series 1478 studies, the Marine Corps became increasingly concerned over its own survival and concluded that the only way to protect itself in the defense establishment was to specify the roles and missions of each service in law rather than in a later executive order signed by the President. If left to the executive branch, the Marine Corps reasoned, the president could eliminate the Corps' missions or reassign them to another service.³⁶³

During the congressional Christmas recess in December 1945, while Senator Elbert D. Thomas of the Senate Military Affairs Committee worked on a unification bill that accounted for recent committee hearings and reports, the Joint Chiefs continued to study unification proposals, grouping the documents they produced into the JCS Series 1478. The Army, Navy, and AAF service chiefs laid out their points of view on a unified defense department, focusing in particular on missions. The Marine Corps, however, could only offer the Navy advice since the Commandant of the Marine Corps did not yet sit on the JCS.³⁶⁴

Dwight D. Eisenhower, the new Army Chief of Staff and a likely candidate to be the first chief of all the armed forces, recognized "a real need" for one service to be responsible for "bridging the gap" between ship and shore, finding this a fitting function

³⁶² Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 457; Krulak, *First to Fight*, 32; O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 119–120; Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 43–46.

³⁶³ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 32; O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 120.

³⁶⁴ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 34; O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 118–119; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 458–459; Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 49–51.

for the Marine Corps.³⁶⁵ He also conceded the need for what amounted to a colonial infantry mission, as well as guarding naval ships and shore establishments, which would be the Corps' main role. However, he insisted the Army would conduct "the land aspect of amphibious operations" and that the Corps would be no more than "the equivalent of a regiment" in size, even during war.³⁶⁶ In fact, Eisenhower claimed that the Marines, as constructed in World War II, merely duplicated the role of the Army: "When naval forces are involved in operations requiring land forces of combined arms, the task becomes a joint land-sea, and usually air force mission. Once Marine units attain such a size as to require the combining of arms to accomplish their mission, they are assuming and duplicating the functions of the Army and we have in effect two land armies."³⁶⁷

General Carl W. Spaatz, the new chief of the AAF and likely chief of staff of a new air force, similarly described Marine Corps operations in World War II as "patently an incursion" into the missions of the Army and Air Force and similarly recommended that the Marine Corps not exceed a regiment in size.³⁶⁸ The Marine Corps, for its part, was concerned the Navy had agreed to the following provision: "To maintain a Marine Corps for the execution of minor operations in war and in peace, and to supply requisite minor garrisons and naval guard services afloat and ashore."³⁶⁹ *Minor* was left undefined, and because other services would be calling the shots and post-war dollars would be short, the Corps saw this as a precarious position in which to be left. Additionally, these JCS Series 1478 documents were unnecessarily classified "Top Secret," which the Corps viewed as an intentional attempt to limit its ability to show the public what the other services had been planning for its future. Furthermore, most all of the Corps' comments on the studies had been scrubbed by the Navy following the Navy's review.³⁷⁰ Such was the Corps' position as Senator Thomas's subcommittee drafted the

³⁶⁵ As quoted in Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 50 and Krulak, *First to Fight*, 34.

³⁶⁶ As quoted in Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 50.

³⁶⁷ As quoted in Keiser, 50.

³⁶⁸ As quoted in Krulak, *First to Fight*, 34.

³⁶⁹ As quoted in Krulak, 33.

³⁷⁰ Krulak, 33–34.

unification bill. More troublingly still, President Truman imposed what amounted to a gag order on Navy officers who wanted to speak against unification with the press, wishing that discussions of unification be limited to appearances before congressional committees.³⁷¹

C. DEFENSE-IN-DEPTH

Assessing that maintaining its independence was vital to its institutional survival, the Marine Corps systematically organized its public and congressional relations apparatuses to shape the domestic environment in they operated, most especially after the Navy seemingly abandoned the Corps in a compromise with the Army to save naval aviation. The Marine Corps had the smallest public relations budget and staff of all the services and did not even maintain an active public relations division at headquarters until July 1941. Thus, as a result, the Corps was the least well-known and least popular branch before the war began. However, following the battle of Wake Island, the Corps emphasized its unique culture, traditions, and history in outreach to the press, helping transform their public image from that of a tough and rowdy lot to one understood for its solidarity and tradition.³⁷²

Building on this initial good publicity, Brigadier General Robert L. Denig, the Marine Corps' director of public relations, began actively recruiting professional newspapermen in Washington, DC, to serve as combat correspondents (CCs), providing the Corps unrivaled wartime publicity and a network of professional journalists to leverage even after these Marines left the service. Denig even went so far as to solicit assignments from publishers and editors for these CCs. Denig's CCs also made inroads with radio broadcasts, comic strips, photo exhibits, and newsreel coverage, focusing in particular on hometown human interest stories and intimate stories of junior Marines—as opposed to weapons, tactics, and strategy—that appealed, in particular, to women. The Corps did not let its public relations infrastructure atrophy after the war, but rather

³⁷¹ Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 52.

³⁷² O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 66–70.

adapted the Marines' image to peacetime by leveraging the "language of the American family life."³⁷³ For example, the Marines created programs such as Toys for Tots in 1947, built alliances in Hollywood, and provided unmatched support and cooperation for war films such as *Sands of Iwo Jima*, all of which helped soften the Corps' image and quell concerns associated with demobilization and the lingering effects of war.³⁷⁴

Politically, the Corps established bipartisan coalitions in Congress to protect itself from the President and other services and preyed on the public's fears of militarism to undermine arguments in favor of unification. During the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, an average of 20 Marine veterans—and 27 in total—served in Congress.³⁷⁵ While this number was dwarfed by the other services, these Marines banded together for the betterment of the Corps. The Corps' coalition was also comprised of congressional members who had never served in the Marine Corps or military at all but who, for some reason or other, became stalwart defenders of the Corps. The politics and geographical disposition of these members were nothing if not diverse.³⁷⁶ Additionally, the Corps leveraged Marine reservists serving on professional staffs of congressmen and congressional committees to serve as unofficial liaisons and draft legislation to protect the Corps' interests.³⁷⁷ Taking steps that would be anathema today, the Marine Corps allowed active duty Marine political candidates to appear in campaign literature in uniform and wear uniforms at rallies so long as they did not speak, and the Corps helped Marine veterans use the Corps for political gain.³⁷⁸

³⁷³ As quoted in O'Connell, 85.

³⁷⁴ O'Connell, 70–97.

³⁷⁵ O'Connell, 103.

³⁷⁶ O'Connell, 103–105.

³⁷⁷ O'Connell, 105–107.

³⁷⁸ O'Connell, 107–113. O'Connell cites the example of "Silent George" Sarbacher Jr. of Philadelphia who was recruited by Republican Party bosses to run against a veteran who had not served overseas. Sarbacher marched out in uniform at rallies and stood on stage while others spoke about him. He, however, rarely spoke. O'Connell also details how the Corps enabled Senator Joseph R. McCarthy to lie about the number of combat flights he conducted so he could earn the Distinguished Flying Cross. The Corps continued to promote him in rank as he served in an inactive reservist status while a member of the Senate. As another example, Senator George Smathers of Florida served in the Corps for only three-and-one-half years but was nonetheless still promoted to colonel.

To cooperate with Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal and Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Chester Nimitz, and to preserve the independence of the Corps, General Vandegrift approved the creation of two groups of Marine officers—known as the “Chowder Society” and coordinated by Brigadier General Merritt A. Edson and Brigadier General Gerald C. Thomas—to monitor the activities of the executive branch and Congress and effectively serve as planners and lobbyists. Thomas and Edson led the group in Washington, and Colonel Twining, supported by the aggressive and vocal Lieutenant Colonel Krulak, led a group of MCS colonels.³⁷⁹ The “board,” composed mostly of lieutenant colonels, operated in relative obscurity given the relatively junior ranks of its members. It was also not a formal body that convened regularly, but rather maintained its distance from the Corps’ senior leadership to provide the Commandant a degree of plausible deniability from the Chowder Society’s proclivity for rule breaking. Brigadier General Edson, for example, stole the “Top Secret” 1478 papers from the office of the CNO, made illegal copies of them, and leaked them to key players in the unification fights, including journalists. The Chowder Marines used the 1478 studies to prepare the Commandant for the 1946 hearings on the S. 2044 unification bill. During these hearings, Vandegrift recounted the Corps’ history of amphibious warfare doctrinal development and its subsequent execution in World War II, urged Congress not to eliminate the positive benefits of interservice rivalry in developing warfare techniques, noted the Corps was relatively less expensive than the Army, and called upon Congress to protect the Corps again as it had multiple times in the past.³⁸⁰ He concluded,

The Marine Corps, then, believes it has earned this right—to have its future decided by the legislative body which created it—nothing more . . . The bended knee is not a tradition of our Corps. If the Marine as a fighting man has not made a case for himself after 170 years of service, he must go. But

³⁷⁹ The group at MCS acted largely as the planners and the group in Washington as the lobbyists. The group formally consisted of Brigadier Generals M. A. Edson and G. C. Thomas; Colonels M. B. Twining and E. C. Dyer; Lieutenant Colonels V. H. Krulak, S. R. Shaw, DeW. Schatzel, J. C. Murray, J. D. Hittle, E. H. Hurst, and R. D. Heintz Jr.; and, Major J. M. Platt. Edson was chosen to be the board’s senior member due to his distinguished status as a war hero from the Pacific campaign, his experience serving as the Marine Liaison Officer to CNO, and his personal courage. See Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 72–76. The board faced an uphill battle since the President, the rest of the defense establishment, and the public were against them. See Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 76–80 and O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 120–121.

³⁸⁰ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 459; O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 113–122.

I think you will agree with me he has earned the right to depart with dignity and honor, not by subjugation to the status of uselessness and servility planned for him by the War Department.³⁸¹

The Corps, coupled with the Navy's opposition to limitations on naval air, managed to stall unification legislation for the rest of 1946. However, unification hearings began anew with the 80th Congress in 1947, and multiple factors did not bode well for the Corps. Secretary Forrestal replaced Admiral Arthur W. Radford with Vice Admiral Forrest P. Sherman as the department's principal negotiator. Sherman was a naval aviator who the Marines correctly thought might trade the Corps' interests to save naval aviation.³⁸² Congress also reorganized its committee system and merged the Senate and House naval affairs committees, bastions of pro-Marine sentiment, into committees on armed services. Congressman Carl Vinson, a Marine Corps advocate, dominated the House committee, but the Senate committee was very pro-Army.³⁸³

The latest administration proposal, S. 758, did not provide legislative protection for the Marine Corps—but did for naval aviation—and passed through the Senate committee and floor vote. Troublingly, when President Truman announced the proposal, Secretary Forrestal issued the aforementioned gag order on public opposition to the proposal.³⁸⁴ Furthermore, naval regulations prohibited unauthorized informal contact with members of Congress, prohibited the release of information contained in government records “which for reasons of public policy, should not be disclosed to persons not of the Naval or other Military Establishments,” and prevented Marines from making public speeches or writing publications “prejudicial to the interests of the United States.”³⁸⁵ President Truman made clear on multiple occasions that Marine attempts to undermine unification legislation constituted a violation of these regulations. This, however, did not prevent Brigadier General Edson from openly opposing the unification

³⁸¹ As quoted in Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 56 and Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 460.

³⁸² Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 461; O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 120–121.

³⁸³ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 461–462.

³⁸⁴ O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 122–123.

³⁸⁵ As quoted in O'Connell, 122.

bill, providing briefs summarizing classified information to influential journalists and members of Congress, openly testifying against it, and leaking details of a private meeting between General Eisenhower and General Vandegrift to a reporter.³⁸⁶

The administration's defense unification managers urged House leadership to have Congressman Clare E. Hoffman of Michigan introduce the House bill, H. 2319, and then have Hoffman's Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Department hold hearings to avoid the pro-Marine Corps House Armed Services Committee (HASC). Pro-Army advocates expected Hoffman to turn the bill over to a subcommittee headed by a pro-Army expert, Representative James W. Wadsworth.³⁸⁷

The father of Chowder Society member Lieutenant Colonel Don Hittle, however, knew Hoffman personally and arranged an audience with the congressman. After some coaching, Hittle persuaded Hoffman to preside over the hearings, which turned into a pro-Marine testimonial. Hoffman insisted he could not report out H. 2319 until his committee examined the JCS 1478 studies, which forced Truman and the JCS to release the papers, thus compromising the testimony of Army advocates, including General Eisenhower, who had previously claimed no ill will towards the Marine Corps. Desperate to pass unification legislation, the Truman administration had to accept that there would be no law unless the Marine Corps and naval aviation received legislative protection. The new act, H. 4214, included a section on service roles and missions and further mitigated the powers of any executive official to modify them through the budgetary process. Chowder Marines Colonel Twining, Lieutenant Colonel Krulak, and Lieutenant Colonel Hittle drafted Section 206(c) of H. 2319, which affirmed the Corps' traditional duties and wartime right to expand, established the Corps' primary responsibility for developing amphibious warfare doctrine and equipment, and protected the combined arms FMF and their supporting air components.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁶ O'Connell, 122–123.

³⁸⁷ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 462; Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 98; O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 123–124; Krulak, *First to Fight*, 45–46.

³⁸⁸ Keiser, *Defense Unification*, 98–113; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 462–464; O'Connell, *Underdogs*, 123–125; Krulak, *First to Fight*, 45–49.

In mid-1949, Congress considered amendments to the National Security Act of 1947, prompting the Chowder Marines to return to their “guerilla” tactics. They collected more stolen files and stashed them in secretive places. They convinced the quartermaster general of the Marine Corps to direct secret funds towards a nationwide grassroots mailing effort to oppose the amendments, and they enlisted the help of their former CCs and Hollywood allies. They wore civilian clothes on the Hill to avoid attention, and while keeping the Commandant generally apprised of their activities, they did not divulge many of their activities to him in case trouble should arise. The Chowder Marines resorted to emotional rhetoric, warning of the dangers of militarism ostensibly inherent in the concentration of power in the executive branch, as well as by comparing the Army’s proposal to the Prussian military system, which was part of the totalitarian Nazi state the country had just defeated. This enabled them to expand their scope of support to include those not normally interested in the intricacies of defense bureaucracy.³⁸⁹ The Chowder Society’s decentralized network for lobbying and lack of a formal organizational designation, O’Connell argues, helped the Corps avoid the political fallout associated with senior officers breaking with their superiors, which the Navy, in contrast, was unable to do.³⁹⁰

The Corps leveraged its lobbying expertise and network of supporters to continue to strengthen its position in the defense establishment during additional unification proceedings lasting through the late 1950s. The 1949 amendments to the National Security Act prevented the Secretary of Defense from using targeted budget cuts to reduce the Corps’ combat units.³⁹¹ The 1952 Douglas-Mansfield Act, which seized on the public fallout associated with President Truman’s equating the Marines to Stalin,

³⁸⁹ O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 126–127, 132–141; Krulak, *First to Fight*, 42–45.

³⁹⁰ O’Connell, *Underdogs*, 127–130. O’Connell imparts the “guerillas” moniker. He notes the B-36 controversy wherein Navy Department officials erroneously alleged the Air Force’s procurement of the B-36 was rife with corruption. This resulted in more congressional hearings on unification and strategy, ultimately leading to senior admirals publicly breaking with the Secretary of the Navy and criticizing the premises of strategic bombing and unification. The Organizational Research and Policy Division (OP-23), the Navy’s Chowder Society equivalent, was also involved, its offices raided, and its members detained and interrogated. OP-23 was subsequently disbanded.

³⁹¹ O’Connell, 99.

gave the Marines a seat on the JCS, reaffirmed their status as a separate armed service, and legislated a three division and three wing minimum size and structure for the Corps.³⁹² The final major unification effort of the 1950s, which culminated in the Defense Reorganization Act of 1958, contained a provision allowing either chamber of Congress the power to veto a transfer of functions, roles, or missions from one service to another. The Act also increased the power of the service chiefs and service secretaries by providing them the right to appeal directly to Congress on a transfer of functions. The Corps thus effectively undermined President Eisenhower's goal, which had been to give the executive branch the power to switch, alter, or abolish service missions.³⁹³

O'Connell argues that the Chowder Society's fears for the future of the organization imbued themselves with a sense of urgency, which kept them focused and nimble and able to outmaneuver their bureaucratic opponents.³⁹⁴ Fighting for their survival and legislative protection, they were pushed to improvise, bypass regulations, and remain a cohesive group. When defense reorganization arose again in the 1980s, the Marine Corps employed many of the same arguments, continuing to prize their autonomy as a Service and refusing to yield any of their hard-won authority in the defense establishment. Chapter VII analyzes this episode in Marine Corps history.

³⁹² O'Connell, 99–100.

³⁹³ O'Connell, 99–100, 130–132, 141–144.

³⁹⁴ O'Connell, 146–147.

VIII. GOLDWATER-NICHOLS AND DEFENSE REORGANIZATION

You want to take the best of our past and the best of other pasts, other experiences, be it German, British, Russian, whatever, and mold it together. And I think that is a very lovely goal. And yet, you violate this idea because the—there is an enormous amount of language in the Goldwater-Nichols law, and in the debate that has taken place here with respect to joint PME which steps aside from the whole idea of mission-type orders, mission-type guidance.

—General Al Gray, July 12, 1988³⁹⁵

Precipitated by a series of very public failures on the part of the DoD, calls for defense reorganization gained increasing momentum in the early 1980s. The Marine Corps fought back against some of the same centralization arguments it confronted in the 1940s and 1950s, in many instances using the same opposing arguments themselves. Themes of independence and autonomy as a service again resurfaced, although minimal emphasis was placed on organizational survival, since that was never seriously questioned. The Marine Corps demonstrated a great deal of concern regarding proposals that would diminish the role of the Commandant and other service chiefs, as well as that of the JCS as a corporate body. Whereas the Marine Corps had previously been able to rely on Congress to protect its autonomy and roles and missions, the Corps was now confronted by its former protectors, who preferred to ignore the changes the DoD had already implemented and instead became increasingly intrusive in implementing new training and education requirements the Corps deemed unnecessary. This chapter presents the reformers' case for reorganization and analyzes the manner in which the Marine Corps responded to these new threats to its position in the defense establishment. Goldwater-Nichols undermined the Corps' autonomy, which subsequently played a role in the Corps' decision concerning whether to provide a force contribution to SOCOM

³⁹⁵ *Professional Military Education Before the Military Education Panel, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives*, 100th Cong., July 12, 1988, 31–32, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 6, Folder 8, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

after the Nunn-Cohen Amendment was passed the following year. The concern that a joint officer personnel management system would create an “officer corps within an officer corps” or an “elite” track foreshadowed the argument the Marine Corps would use against becoming a full partner with SOCOM.

A. THE CASE FOR AND HISTORY OF REORGANIZATION

Proponents of DoD reorganization prior to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 claimed that while the 1949, 1953, and 1958 reorganizations during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations took steps toward unifying the defense establishment, they failed to address the underlying problem of control of the services. This undermined the JCS and as a result favored parochial service interests over the broader interests of national defense.³⁹⁶ James Locher, a staff member who spearheaded the reform efforts for the Senate Committee on Armed Services (SASC), argued that the services effectively controlled the JCS and dominated the unified commands by keeping their service component commanders independent of the unified commanders’ authority.³⁹⁷ The services, according to Locher, provided the Secretary of Defense with largely self-serving advice, presented a united front when their interests were threatened, and circumvented the secretary’s authority by appealing directly to Congress. Furthermore, the services led a powerful political alliance comprised of colleagues on Capitol Hill, defense contractors, military associations, veterans’ groups, and other vocal supporters. Reorganization efforts thus proved daunting. Following the 1958 reorganization, neither successive administrations from both parties nor Congress pushed for significant statutory changes to defense organization, in no small part due to the failure even a war hero like Dwight Eisenhower experienced when trying to overcome opposition to reform and the services’ influence in Congress.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ James R. Locher III, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 22–29.

³⁹⁷ Locher, 15.

³⁹⁸ Locher, 29.

Proponents of reform cited a series of operational and administrative failures that ostensibly highlighted the DoD's institutional shortcomings and that had forced successive administrations to study the perceived problems, even if they ultimately did not propose reforms.³⁹⁹ President Kennedy commissioned an advisory committee on defense organization during his campaign. Chaired by Senator Stuart Symington, the first Secretary of the Air Force, the committee found that the services' excessive power needed to be corrected. However, the Kennedy administration never seriously considered the committee's recommendations, which included centralizing power in the Secretary of Defense and a chairman of a joint military staff, because Secretary McNamara had his own management experience and philosophies. Based on his experience at the Office of Statistical Control during World War II and as part of the "Whiz Kids" at Ford Motor Company, McNamara believed he could fix the problems.⁴⁰⁰ Locher cites the Bay of Pigs as an example of the "dismal quality of military advice" the JCS provided President Kennedy, accusing the JCS of botching its review of the CIA's plans for the American-sponsored operation.⁴⁰¹ Rather than address this underlying issue, however, Kennedy settled for installing retired General Maxwell Taylor as his military and intelligence advisor to serve as a filter between himself and the JCS.⁴⁰²

Locher cites the Vietnam War as another example of "the JCS's inability to formulate quality advice and the absence of unified command in the field."⁴⁰³ Accusations of "undue civilian interference," however, obscured these organizational shortcomings. General David C. Jones, a subsequent Chairman of the JCS (CJCS), described Vietnam as each service fighting its own war, including the land and sea commands for the evacuation of Saigon setting a different "H-hour."⁴⁰⁴ Additionally, inadequate command arrangements that caused confusion and delays left American

³⁹⁹ Locher, 29–31.

⁴⁰⁰ Locher, 29.

⁴⁰¹ Locher, 29.

⁴⁰² Locher, 29.

⁴⁰³ Locher, 29.

⁴⁰⁴ Locher, 29.

forces unable to respond when North Korean vessels seized the USS *Pueblo* some fifteen miles off the coast of North Korea on January 23, 1968.⁴⁰⁵

During the Vietnam War, President Nixon appointed a Blue Ribbon Defense Panel to study defense organization. Issued in July 1970, the panel's report echoed many of Senator Symington's findings and recommendations, but the Nixon administration only adopted what Locher describes as "three lesser recommendations of the panel's fifteen proposals on organization" due to "political obstacles in Congress and the military services at a time of Vietnam exigencies and declining budgets."⁴⁰⁶ On May 12, 1975, Cambodian armed forces fired upon and boarded the American merchant ship SS *Mayaguez*, before anchoring the *Mayaguez* near Koh Tang Island and moving the ship's crew to the mainland. Locher describes the response as "slow." American forces ultimately "recaptured the crewless *Mayaguez*, and the Cambodians released the seamen. American forces [then] needlessly attacked Koh Tang Island and suffered eighteen dead and fifty wounded without achieving a single military objective."⁴⁰⁷

In 1977, President Carter ordered the DoD to reevaluate its organization, leading to five more reports.⁴⁰⁸ While these reports focused on operational problems, according to Locher, administrative and support areas also suffered from disunity of effort. The Carter administration did not act on any of the recommendations proffered in these reports, in part due to its weak political standing on military matters, which was further exacerbated by the aborted rescue of 53 Americans held hostage in Tehran. Eight servicemen died during the rescue attempt, when an air force transport plane collided with a Marine-piloted helicopter on the desert landing strip.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵ Locher, 29–30.

⁴⁰⁶ Locher, 30. Second quote as quoted by Locher of Richard A. Gabriel, *Military Incompetence: Why the American Military Doesn't Win* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), 61–83.

⁴⁰⁷ Locher, 30. Locher references Gabriel, *Military Incompetence*, 61–83, wherein Gabriel concedes that "while it may have been some sort of political success, [the attack] was a military failure."

⁴⁰⁸ Locher, 30.

⁴⁰⁹ Locher, 31–32.

National defense featured prominently in the 1980 presidential election, and the failed rescue attempt became a symbol of the perceived decline of America's prestige. However, even though Ronald Reagan's platform called for revitalizing the military, this largely only entailed immediate increases in spending. In fact, the administration criticized the Office of Management and Budget and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) for complicating budgeting and planning issues.⁴¹⁰ In doing so, Reagan's platform "promot[ed] service prerogatives . . . and positioned Reagan and his party on the side of those who opposed a more integrated DoD."⁴¹¹ According to Locher, Reagan and his Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger "did not understand that the excessive power of the four services was undermining the unity required to defend the nation's interests" and "did not perceive how service separatism contributed to operational failures."⁴¹²

On February 3, 1982, in a closed session, General David Jones, the CJCS, delivered a statement to the HASC declaring, "It is not sufficient to have just resources, dollars and weapon systems; we must also have an organization which will allow us to develop the proper strategy, necessary planning, and the full warfighting capability . . . We do not have an adequate organizational structure at least in my judgment."⁴¹³ In doing so, General Jones, who was nearing the end of his second two-year term as CJCS and who would eventually serve a total of eight years as a JCS member, became the first serving officer since 1945 to initiate an effort to reform the JCS.⁴¹⁴ According to Jones, the JCS suffered from having to operate on the basis of unanimity, which provided each service a de facto veto at each level. The service chiefs, he contended, were biased towards their own service in matters concerning resources, the Joint Staff suffered from too much personnel turnover, and the rewards for joint service remained too few.⁴¹⁵ In a subsequent article in the February 1982 issue of *Directors & Boards*, a business journal,

⁴¹⁰ Locher, 30–31.

⁴¹¹ Locher, 31.

⁴¹² Locher, 31.

⁴¹³ Locher, 34.

⁴¹⁴ Locher, 34.

⁴¹⁵ Locher, 35–37.

Jones argued for strengthening the chairman by removing service chiefs from making recommendations on resources and missions and by authorizing a deputy for the chairman. Jones also saw the need to strengthen the unified commander's role and to "broaden the training, experience, and rewards for joint duty."⁴¹⁶ From his position as a senior SASC member, however, Locher was convinced the majority of members, having strong ties to the services, would reject Jones' recommendations.⁴¹⁷

General Jones named a Chairman's Special Study Group (CCSG), which interviewed senior officers on the basis of non-attribution. The CCSG confirmed that the JCS had little credibility or effect, leading the group to propose a strengthened chairman as senior military advisor and consider possibly giving him the authority to make decisions when service interests pervaded an issue. The CCSG also proposed establishing a deputy chairman; a joint officer management system, including increased preparation for joint assignments and rewards for joint duty; and, increasing the Joint Staff's independence by eliminating the need for unanimity, as well as by limiting service involvement in the joint process.⁴¹⁸ The CNO, Admiral Tom Hayward, disputed the idea of a deputy, opposed the idea of a career path for joint officers due to a shortage of Navy personnel, and generally questioned the utility of the report.⁴¹⁹ Secretary of the Navy John Lehman strongly disagreed with the report.⁴²⁰

Not only did Secretary Lehman disagree with the CCSG's report, but he also enlisted the help of retired Marine Brigadier General J.D. "Don" Hittle to serve as a watchdog. Hittle was a veteran of the unification battles of the 1940s and 1950s and had proven instrumental in diluting some of the provisions of the National Security Act of 1947. Hittle warned Secretary Lehman of mounting pressure for defense reform, claiming the targets of reform were naval aviation and the Marine Corps. He thought the CNO and

⁴¹⁶ As quoted in Locher, 38.

⁴¹⁷ Locher, 40.

⁴¹⁸ Locher, 50–54.

⁴¹⁹ Locher, 54.

⁴²⁰ Locher, 55.

the Commandant, General Robert H. Barrow, were not treating these perceived threats seriously enough.⁴²¹

The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Shy Meyer, took to the pages of *Armed Forces Journal* to press the case for more radical reform than that proposed by Jones. In an article titled “The JCS—How Much Reform Is Needed?” Meyer recommended the end of “dual-hatting,” citing the “divided loyalty” the service chiefs faced between their respective services and the JCS.⁴²² He advocated for a National Military Advisory Council comprised of full-time advisers who would be free from any service responsibilities and who would never return to their respective services. He, like Jones, supported the idea of a vice chairman and sought to strengthen the chairman’s role and influence by permitting him to direct planning and operations and disagree with the proposed council. Furthermore, Meyer argued the “chairman alone would direct the Joint Staff. He would determine the issues for study and initiate staff actions through the director of the Joint Staff.”⁴²³

The ideas of Jones and Meyer established the parameters of the reform debate that would proceed in the years to come, lasting through multiple terms of Congress and turnover amongst all of the service chiefs.

B. THE MARINE CORPS RESPONDS

In January 1982, the Advanced Amphibious Study Group (AASG) at Headquarters Marine Corps published a background paper, *Reorganization: An Historic Overview*. The paper begins with an ominous memorandum from the Director of the AASG featuring a single terse sentence: “The enclosed background paper attempts to provide ‘institutional memory’ for those in the future, who, in attempting to improve the Defense organization we have today, may seek solutions which resurrect severe problems

⁴²¹ Locher, 55.

⁴²² As quoted in Locher, 65.

⁴²³ As quoted in Locher, 66.

which were laid to rest in the past.”⁴²⁴ The AASG argued that the increasing trend toward centralization, wherein the roles of the OSD and the CJCS had been increasing at the expense of the military department secretaries and the JCS as a corporate institution, departed “from the fundamental organizational philosophy mandated by Congress, which sought a mechanism for correct (rather than fast) military decisionmaking at the national level, decentralized management of defense matters under the policy direction of the Secretary, and assurance that majority and minority views are represented before decisions are made.”⁴²⁵

Harkening back to Marine arguments made in the 1940s and 1950s, the AASG likened a system in which the CJCS functions as principal military advisor and is supported by a national general staff to a 19th century concept that proved adequate for nations like Prussia that had limited continental security interests. Its use by major powers (e.g., Germany, Japan, and the United Kingdom) in the 20th century, however, surfaced “the shortcomings of monolithic military advice to a nation with a need not only to assess and employ the maritime and continental dimensions of military action but also to weigh military action in the balance with the other components of national policy—primarily political and economic.”⁴²⁶ Britain, the AASG notes, shifted away from a single chief of staff to one of a chiefs of staff committee following the catastrophe of World War I. As such, the AASG assessed a role for the CJCS separate from the corporate body of the JCS as undesirable. Furthermore, the AASG contended, organizational change could not remedy incapable agencies that failed to provide the requisite level of support.⁴²⁷

A few months after the publication of this paper, the Commandant of the Marine Corps appeared before the House Investigations Subcommittee, on April 28, 1982. Maintaining the line with Admiral Hayward and Secretary Lehman, General Barrow

⁴²⁴ Advanced Amphibious Study Group, *Defense Reorganization: An Historic Overview* (Washington, DC: HQMC, 1982), Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 62, Folder 9.

⁴²⁵ AASG, *i*.

⁴²⁶ AASG, *i*.

⁴²⁷ AASG, *ii*.

argued that General Jones' proposal would do serious harm to the JCS system. At an earlier meeting with the CCSG, he had initially expressed his belief that the JCS system was fundamentally flawed, making the views he presented to the Investigations Subcommittee a significant change in course, likely due in part to the influence of Hittle and Secretary Lehman.⁴²⁸ By the end of July, 34 witnesses had appeared before the subcommittee. All ten former high-ranking civilian defense officials favored JCS reform, as did all active and retired Army and Air Force officers. However, all Marine witnesses and half of those from the Navy opposed reorganization.⁴²⁹ In the Investigations Subcommittee's 1983 hearings, General Barrow advanced the argument that the JCS was very personality dependent and that in his first year on the job, the new CJCS, General John Vessey, demonstrated the requisite leadership and ability to make the system work effectively and overcome the identified shortcomings.⁴³⁰

General Barrow soon retired and served on the Committee on Civilian-Military Relationships at the Hudson Institute.⁴³¹ The following year, the committee produced a report, *An Analysis of Proposed Joint Chiefs of Staff Reorganization*, that argued against the proposal to make the CJCS a permanent member of the National Security Council (NSC), place the CJCS in the operational chain of command, and give him authority over the unified commanders, personal control of the Joint Staff, and de facto veto over promotions above the rank of major general.⁴³² The committee argued the proposal

⁴²⁸ Locher, *Victory*, 71.

⁴²⁹ Locher, 71–72. Locher notes that the three admirals who favored reform—Harry Train, Bob Long, and Thor Hanson—did not appear until the end of the hearings, giving those at the early hearings the impression that the debate was split along Army-Air Force and Navy-Marine Corps lines.

⁴³⁰ Locher, 106.

⁴³¹ General Barrow also continued his antireform efforts in retirement by mobilizing Marine associations, contacting Congressmen, providing commentary, and serving on the Packard Commission—the President's Blue Ribbon Panel on Defense Management. See Locher, 269.

⁴³² Committee on Civilian-Military Relationships (CCMR), *An Analysis of Proposed Joint Chiefs of Staff Reorganization* (Washington, DC: Hudson Institute, 1984), ii, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 61, Folder 6. The committee included a former CJCS, two former members of the JCS, a former director of the Joint Staff, a retired chief counsel of the House Armed Services Committee, a retired Army Reserve Brigadier General who was an attorney and former national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and an accountant who served on the Defense Subcommittee of the Grace Commission on Economy in Government.

would effectively demote the service chiefs to secondary positions and abolish the corporate principle of the JCS in favor of a “Prussian”-type staff system. Most troublingly, the increased powers of the CJCS “would undermine civilian control of the military,” and the proposal would “provide power no good Chairman needs, and power no bad Chairman should have.”⁴³³ As Barrow did in his hearing before the Investigations Subcommittee, this committee noted the critical element of personal leadership and recommended a twenty percent reduction in the OSD staff to reduce delays in military decision-making.⁴³⁴

Retired Lieutenant General Victor Krulak, another veteran of the 1940s and 1950s unification battles, remained active in the reorganization debate and continually emphasized the need to avoid centralization and additional bureaucracy.⁴³⁵ In fact, Krulak often noted that “an all-encompassing military bureaucracy—represents a more formidable battlefield than many the Corps has known.”⁴³⁶ Krulak argued that the World War II defense structure had been effective, and postwar modifications had themselves been the cause of subsequent poor performances.⁴³⁷ In fact, Krulak proffered the radical proposals of removing the secretary of defense from the military chain of command so as not to interfere with the chain of military advice to civilian leaders, as well as reestablishing “the stature of the JCS, a corporate body, as the direct military advisers and operational subordinates of the Commander-in-Chief” by eliminating the office of the CJCS.⁴³⁸ He also reinforced military beliefs of civilian overinvolvement, which ostensibly led to failure in Vietnam: “57,900 Americans died in the Vietnam War. A fair case can be made that the number of dead would have been fewer and the results more

⁴³³ CCMR, *ii*.

⁴³⁴ CCMR, *ii-iii*.

⁴³⁵ Locher, *Victory*, 114.

⁴³⁶ Krulak, *First to Fight*, 225.

⁴³⁷ Locher, *Victory*, 114.

⁴³⁸ Victor H. Krulak, *Organization for National Security: A Study* (Washington, DC: United States Strategic Institute, 1983), 113–128.

favorable had we fought the war the way our military leadership wanted.”⁴³⁹ Even Hittle, a likeminded reformer and longtime colleague, could not take Krulak’s recommendations seriously, however.⁴⁴⁰

While the old Marine guard seemed to be trying to relitigate the same battles of yesteryear, Lieutenant General Al Gray, who would become the 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1987, remained convinced that the services were already taking significant steps towards joint operations.⁴⁴¹ Lieutenant General Gray, for example, was good friends with General John Lindsay, who became the first SOCOM Commander and, like Gray, was an advocate of maneuver warfare. As Commanding General (CG) of the “Carolina MAGTF,” Gray agreed to joint standard operating procedures with Lindsay’s 18th Airborne Corps two years before the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act.⁴⁴² Nevertheless, like his forbears from the unification battles of the 1940s and 1950s, as CG of Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic (FMFLANT), Lieutenant General Gray invoked an explicit concern for institutional survival into the debate, issuing a memorandum, “Marine Corps Roles and Missions,” that anticipated a review of the roles and missions of the Marine Corps to possibly coincide with reorganization legislation:

The pending legislation concerning reorganizing DoD has and will continue to result in increased scrutiny of all parts of DoD. I am sure that as part of this scrutiny, the roles and missions and possibly the force structure of the Marine Corps will again be questioned by some; some with an honest view toward seeing if they can make DoD more efficient, a few with the intent of abolishing the Marine Corps.⁴⁴³

Gray included a copy of a letter Victor Krulak wrote nearly 30 years prior concerning why the nation needs a Marine Corps.

⁴³⁹ Krulak, *Organization*, 87.

⁴⁴⁰ Locher, *Victory*, 134.

⁴⁴¹ Gray, personal conversation.

⁴⁴² Gray, personal conversation.

⁴⁴³ “Marine Corps Roles and Missions,” Memorandum from the Command General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, July 11, 1986, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 62, Folder 2.

C. THE BEIRUT BOMBING AND OPERATION URGENT FURY

Two events in October 1983 provided additional justification for reorganization efforts from the reformers' point of view, and one in particular served to undermine the Marine Corps' standing in the reorganization debate. The bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut on October 23, 1983, which killed 241 servicemen, including 220 Marines, served as another post-Vietnam failure for the DoD. The disaster highlighted the "serious imbalance in the responsibility and authority of each unified commander."⁴⁴⁴ The unified command responsible for the Lebanon mission, European Command (EUCOM), had limited authority that was further undermined by "dysfunctional barriers imposed by the navy and marine chains of command."⁴⁴⁵ The Reagan administration dispatched the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General P. X. Kelley, to Beirut the day after the bombings, where he made headlines for defending the security measures at the barracks as adequate. Kelley then appeared before the SASC on October 31. He insisted on reading his prepared opening remarks, which lasted 35 minutes. Observers assessed they were designed to "defend the Marine Corps's honor and defeat arguments that accused a fellow Marine—Col. Timothy J. Geraghty, the on-scene commander—of failing to provide adequate security for his men."⁴⁴⁶ Kelley seemed to be relying on emotion rather than facts, and his arguments did not hold up to further questioning, eroding his once lofty reputation among the members of the SASC.⁴⁴⁷

On October 25, the U.S. military invaded Grenada in order to restore democracy after the Marxist government began building an airfield with the capacity to handle large military aircraft, which Cuba and the Soviet Union might be permitted to use. The safety of 600 American medical students was used as additional justification. Senator John Tower, the Chairman of the SASC, and three committee staffers, including James Locher,

⁴⁴⁴ Locher, *Victory*, 162.

⁴⁴⁵ Locher, 127.

⁴⁴⁶ Locher, *Victory*, 130. Millett notes that by refusing to condemn the 24th MAU for its "obvious lapses in security," Kelley was in essence protecting the Reagan administration. See Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 628.

⁴⁴⁷ Locher, 131–132.

traveled to Grenada in early November on a two-day fact-finding trip. While most of their trip's focus was on justifying the invasion, the group also uncovered many operational problems:

We learned that the army and Marine Corps had fought side-by-side under separate chains of command. The army had trouble coordinating with the navy for gunfire support, and the services had been unable to coordinate their air activities. Planners and soldiers and marines on the ground had been forced to rely on tourist maps. Worst of all, a third campus of American medical students—whose rescue was the rationale for the invasion in the first place—went undiscovered for days.⁴⁴⁸

Senator Tower's report did not criticize the military's performance, but rather noted that the SASC intended to review the military operation in more depth at a later date. Locher impugns the motives of the DoD in shielding classified information to prevent Congress from gaining a better understanding of the operation.⁴⁴⁹ Senator Sam Nunn, who was in many ways the driving force behind the SASC's reorganization efforts, became further convinced of the need for change following operations in Grenada.⁴⁵⁰

D. GENERAL KELLEY AND THE CORPS DEFEND THE JCS

General P. X. Kelley had already expressed his opposition to JCS reform proposals during his confirmation hearings, claiming the current system was effective and the proposed reforms would do little to improve this effectiveness.⁴⁵¹ Just days after his appearance before the SASC to discuss the Beirut bombing, General Kelley appeared before the committee again, on November 9, 1983, to discuss reorganization. His authority recently undermined, and with the aforementioned complications in the chain of

⁴⁴⁸ Locher, 135.

⁴⁴⁹ Locher, 135.

⁴⁵⁰ Gray, personal conversation. General Gray disputes the veracity of the story of communications problems in Grenada that led a service member to use a payphone and a calling card to call Fort Bragg to request support. General Gray and General Lindsay specifically tried to identify the individual in order to present him with an award, but they never found him. It was, according to Gray, a good narrative presented by reformers to build more momentum for reform.

⁴⁵¹ Locher, *Victory*, 104, 106.

command identified as one of the primary culprits,⁴⁵² Kelley nonetheless assessed that the existing JCS structure was essentially sound.⁴⁵³ However, he acknowledged that some form of reorganization was likely inevitable—and maybe even desirable—and noted his willingness to remove the statutory restrictions on service on the Joint Staff. Overall, he contended that a major overhaul was unnecessary. Proposed legislative initiatives to increase the role and functions of the CJCS, Kelley argued, would effectively make the JCS “impotent in a practical sense.”⁴⁵⁴ Kelley recommended including language in any legislation to clarify that the CJCS acted for the JCS as a corporate body, whose functions were planning and advising, not commanding.⁴⁵⁵

Congress passed a handful of the less controversial defense reorganization proposals as part of the Fiscal Year 1985 Defense Authorization Bill. These provisions included, for example, enabling the CJCS to select Joint Staff officers from service nominations, allowing the CJCS to force a decision on issues being considered by the service chiefs to neutralize a chief’s ability to delay, and empowering the CJCS to act as spokesman on operational needs for the unified and specified commanders.⁴⁵⁶ Representatives Bill Nichols and Ike Skelton championed the inclusion of these proposals

⁴⁵² In his formal remarks to the Senate President after submitting the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986—Conference Report, Senator Sam Nunn noted that there were “eight levels of command bureaucracy between the marines on the ground and the command authorities in Washington. When there are that many levels of command, responsibility is diffused. Because everyone is in charge, no one is in charge . . . For example, under this bill, there could have been only one layer of command between the marines in Beirut and the authority here in Washington.” See *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986—Conference Report*, 99th Congress, September 16, 1986, S 12652, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 65, Folder 6.

⁴⁵³ “General Officer’s Conference, 7 JAN 1985,” JCS Reorganization Update: CMC Testimony 9NOV83 (TAB 4), Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 61, Folder 7. Reflecting the Marine Corps’ institutional opinion at the time, this reading packet for the Marine Corps general officers’ conference included another *Armed Forces Journal* article titled, “Thoughtless JCS Change Is Worse Than None” (TAB 3).

⁴⁵⁴ “General Officer’s Conference, 7 JAN 1985,” JCS Reorganization Update: CMC Testimony 9NOV83 (TAB 4), 326.

⁴⁵⁵ “General Officer’s Conference, 7 JAN 1985,” JCS Reorganization Update: CMC Testimony 9NOV83 (TAB 4), 326.

⁴⁵⁶ Benjamin F. Schemmer and Clinton H. Schemmer, “Congress Promises ‘Comprehensive’ 1985 Legislation on DoD/JCS Reform,” *Armed Forces Journal International* (Nov. 1984): 14–18, in “General Officer’s Conference, 7 JAN 1985,” JCS Reorganization Update: AFJ Article With Questions from HASC and SASC for SECDEF, CJCS, CINCS, and Service Chiefs (TAB 2), Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 61, Folder 7.

to counteract the stalling tactics of the retiring chairman, Senator John Tower. The two promised to seek a more comprehensive reform in the next Congress.⁴⁵⁷ The Marine Corps proved ready to present its case in opposition once again.

At the Marine Corps' general officers' conference on January 7, 1985, attendees were provided a reading packet focused on the JCS reorganization proceedings. The first tab in the packet identified the Title 10 changes implemented by the previous Congress before listing 11 additional proposals for Title 10 changes expected for 1985.⁴⁵⁸ These included, for example, providing for the CJCS in the chain of command, issuing National Command Authority orders through the JCS, the CJCS supervising the Commanders in Chief (CINCs) on his own behalf, the CJCS serving as a member of the NSC, and the CJCS managing the Joint Staff on his own behalf. The common refrain for every proposal excepting those with which the Marine Corps agreed or those it deemed irrelevant was ensuring the role and influence of the JCS as a corporate body was maintained and specifying in all cases that the CJCS acts on behalf of the JCS.

In General Kelley's hearing before the SASC on December 5, 1985, he continued to echo these sentiments. Addressing the staff report, *Defense Organization: The Need for a Change*, specifically, he noted the selective manner with which the authors highlighted perceived failures and "selected extracts from outdated reports by groups who have examined the JCS system in the past, and on citations from a few retired military officers who, with the wisdom of retrospection, are now critical of the JCS system which was in existence during their active duty."⁴⁵⁹ The report seemingly ignored any and all successes over the previous 40 years, creating what Kelley deemed "a lack of appropriate balance and objectivity" biased in favor of portraying the JCS as an

⁴⁵⁷ Schemmer and Schemmer, 14, 18.

⁴⁵⁸ "General Officer's Conference, 7 JAN 1985," JCS Reorganization Update: Title 10 Changes (OCT84) and Expected 1985 Issues (TAB 1), Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 61, Folder 7.

⁴⁵⁹ *Statement of General Paul X. Kelley, Commandant of the Marine Corps, Concerning Department of Defense Organization before the Committee on the Armed Services, United States Senate, 99th Cong., December 5, 1985, 3*, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 64, Folder 21.

ineffective body.⁴⁶⁰ Kelley also noted that the report failed to recognize many of the substantial changes that had already been made during the past several years.⁴⁶¹ Kelley addressed what he deemed to be several inaccuracies in the report and then proceeded to address several of the report's recommendations. He was "unalterably opposed" to "the recommendation that the Joint Chiefs of Staff be disestablished and replaced by a Joint Military Advisory Council consisting of a Chairman and a 4-star military officer from each Service on his last tour of duty."⁴⁶² He opposed a deputy chairman if the position would be senior to the JCS and would only agree to make the CJCS "the principal military advisor to the Secretary of Defense on operational matters and the sole command voice of higher authority" if it was made explicit that he discharged those duties on behalf of the JCS and "must always provide alternative views held on the JCS."⁴⁶³ Lastly, he urged extreme caution in developing and administering a personnel management system for military officers assigned to joint duty, fearing the creation of "a 'cult' of joint staff theoreticians" who are "skilled in perfect syntax in the preparation of neuter position papers and staff reports."⁴⁶⁴ He valued operationally oriented officers with real world experience.

E. THE BILL AND ITS AFTERMATH

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (H.R.3622) was ultimately passed by the House, 383–27, and without an opposing vote in the Senate, 95–0.⁴⁶⁵ In his formal remarks to the Senate President after submitting the conference report for the bill, Senator Sam Nunn identified what he deemed to be several significant and positive structural changes, including strengthening civilian leadership of the military by providing "a new framework for centralized decisionmaking on key

⁴⁶⁰ *Statement of General Paul X. Kelley*, December 5, 1985, 1–2.

⁴⁶¹ *Statement of General Paul X. Kelley*, December 5, 1985, 1–3.

⁴⁶² *Statement of General Paul X. Kelley*, December 5, 1985, 20–21.

⁴⁶³ *Statement of General Paul X. Kelley*, December 5, 1985, 21–23.

⁴⁶⁴ *Statement of General Paul X. Kelley*, December 5, 1985, 24.

⁴⁶⁵ H.R. 3622, 99th Cong. (1986), <http://libguides.nps.edu/citation/chicagonb#legal-bill>.

policy issues but decentralized execution of these policies in a more flexible manner”; improving the quality of professional military advice offered to the president, NSC, and secretary of defense by making the CJCS the principal military adviser; increasing the authority of the CINCs of the unified commands; creating the new position of Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs; and, decreasing the size of headquarter staffs in the defense agencies and military headquarters staffs by 17,000 personnel.⁴⁶⁶

Importantly, Senator Nunn noted his concerns that the consolidation of the military and civilian staffs in the military departments could adversely impact the Marine Corps because of its already smaller size. According to Nunn, specific language was included to ensure the Corps received “even-handed treatment” and that the Commandant “would have access to the staff support the [*sic*] needs to carry out his responsibility.”⁴⁶⁷ Other conferees had shared these same concerns, notably Senator John Glenn, himself a Marine.⁴⁶⁸ Alan Millett assessed that the ineffectuality of the Navy Department’s opposition to reform legislation and the ease with which reorganization eventually passed Congress “seemed an ill omen that Marine Corps positions no longer brought much respect in Congress, the traditional protector of Corps interests.”⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁶ *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986—Conference Report*, 99th Congress, September 16, 1986, S 12654, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 65, Folder 6. A complete summary of the bill can be found at H.R. 3622, 99th Cong. (1986), <http://libguides.nps.edu/citation/chicagonb#legal-bill>.

⁴⁶⁷ *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986—Conference Report*, S 12655.

⁴⁶⁸ *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986—Conference Report*, S 12655.

⁴⁶⁹ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 631.

Articles in the *Gazette* concerning the legislation ranged from the informational to the more critical.⁴⁷⁰ The 39th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert Neller, then a major, cited Title IV of the bill, which established “an occupational category, referred to as the ‘joint specialty’ for the management of officers who are trained in and oriented toward joint matters.”⁴⁷¹ Intended to eliminate perceived parochialism, the scapegoat for many of America’s joint military failures, Neller argued that it would instead lead to unintended consequences by creating “an officer corps within the officer corps, with officers from all Services being forced to join this exclusive group in order to advance their own career ambitions.”⁴⁷² Frank Hoffman, who would later become a leading thinker on defense and security matters, argued that Title IV would “create a multi-Service cadre of officers who have succeeded by working on staffs rather than the more rigorous and more valid series of progressive command assignments in a combat specialty.”⁴⁷³ Hoffman feared the broad range of real-world experience for such a group would be limited, and internal group dynamics would “exert pressures for conformity rather than innovative or opposing views” and lead to groupthink.⁴⁷⁴

These themes remained consistent at higher levels of the organization as well. Lieutenant General Bernard Trainor, then the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies, and Operations (PP&O) at Headquarters Marine Corps, compared the JCS to the Supreme Court, arguing the organization is less important than the people who comprise

⁴⁷⁰ For examples of informational articles, see the three-part series written by Lieutenant Colonel Peter Stenner: Peter R. Stenner, “Title IV and the Marine Corps,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 8 (Aug. 1988): 24–26; Peter R. Stenner, “Title IV and the Marine Corps, Part II,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 9 (Sep. 1988): 47–48; Peter R. Stenner, “Title IV and the Marine Corps: Issues Surrounding Joint Officer Management 78, no. 10 (Oct. 1988): 39–40. For critical articles, see Francis G. Hoffman, “‘Joint Think,’” *Marine Corps Gazette* 71, no. 5 (May 1987): 20–21; Robert B. Neller, “Institutionalizing Careerism,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 71, no. 5 (May 1987): 18–20. Hoffman remained critical of Goldwater-Nichols well after its passage, arguing that the desire for centralized solutions discouraged innovation, adaptability, and experimentation in the name of jointness. See Francis G. Hoffman, “Jointness and Institutional Stewardship,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 79, no. 12 (Dec. 1995): 58–65.

⁴⁷¹ Robert B. Neller, “Institutionalizing Careerism,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 71, no. 5 (May 1987): 18.

⁴⁷² Neller, 18–19.

⁴⁷³ Hoffman, “‘Joint Think,’” 20.

⁴⁷⁴ Hoffman, 21.

it.⁴⁷⁵ Furthermore, empowering the CJCS as the sole military adviser established an arrangement that “could be conducive to giving bad or single-dimensional advice to the President,” since it would undermine the current system of “adversary relationships” that “allows opposing views to compete, with the best solution usually emerging in the process.”⁴⁷⁶

Lieutenant General Gray found the bill ill advised.⁴⁷⁷ Gray, along with the other service chiefs, spent at least 1,000 hours modifying the bill into something with which they could live in the first few years after its passage.⁴⁷⁸ The initial bill, according to Gray, had too many training and education requirements that took time away from military occupational specialty (MOS)-specific training. Furthermore, the bill not only told the service chiefs what to do, but also how to do it, which took away their flexibility and was inimical to the ideals of mission-type orders many reform-minded members of Congress claimed to uphold.⁴⁷⁹ The bill also contained a rule mandating that 50 percent plus one of the students at a joint school had to go on to a joint assignment. Lieutenant General Gray felt this carried the potential for creating first and second-class citizens—an idea anathema to an organization that prides itself on its universally elite image—and made it more difficult to combat creeping careerism in the Corps.⁴⁸⁰ More Marines, he observed, were already worrying more about their respective careers—what they would do, where they would go, and how many of the right assignments they would have—

⁴⁷⁵ John C. Scharfen, “Views From PP&O: An Interview with LtGen Bernard E. Trainor,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 67, no 9 (Sep. 1983): 37–38.

⁴⁷⁶ Scharfen, 38.

⁴⁷⁷ Gray, personal conversation.

⁴⁷⁸ Gray, personal conversation.

⁴⁷⁹ *Professional Military Education Before the Military Education Panel, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives*, 100th Cong., July 12, 1988, 31–32, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 6, Folder 8.

⁴⁸⁰ *Professional Military Education*, July 12, 1988, 14–15. General Gray would later use the same argument—not wanting to create a “two Marine Corps” organizational structure—to justify not becoming a full partner with U.S. Special Operations Command when the Nunn-Cohen Amendment to the 1987 DoD Authorization Act was passed.

instead of about the Marines they would lead, and this requirement would only exacerbate that tendency.⁴⁸¹

Lieutenant General Gray was also concerned the bill provided too much authority to the CJCS.⁴⁸² Gray knew Representative Bill Nichols, who introduced the bill in the House, and had him over for lunch one day. When Representative Nichols asked him what he thought about the law, Gray told him the bill swung the pendulum a little too far and gave the CJCS a bit too much authority. According to Gray, Nichols himself admitted that Gray was right and told him to bring it up again in the next Congress. Unfortunately, General Gray never did get this chance. Representative Nichols died unexpectedly before he and Gray could readdress the issue, leaving the CJCS with still too much power in the minds of Marine leadership.⁴⁸³

The Nunn-Cohen Amendment to the 1987 DoD Authorization Act was passed just over six months after the Goldwater-Nichols Act. The next chapter analyzes how the Marine Corps' penchant for independence, the cultivation of its elite image, and its position in the defense establishment impacted the Corps' response to the creation of SOCOM.

⁴⁸¹ *Professional Military Education*, July 12, 1988, 14–15.

⁴⁸² Gray, personal conversation. Gray also notes the Marine Corps had fewer problems with the training requirements since it already sent some of its best people to joint billets and joint training schools.

⁴⁸³ Gray, personal conversation.

IX. THE MARINE CORPS AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS

The contemporary lesson is clear. We must have military strength capable of dealing with the threat at hand, and, in most circumstances, the use of large-scale conventional forces in low-intensity conflict would be premature, inappropriate, and/or infeasible. SOF, on the other hand, provide us a precisely tailored capability to respond to this challenge. In fact, SOF are, today, the most heavily used of our military forces.

—Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Noel C. Koch, April 10, 1984⁴⁸⁴

Histories of the Marine Corps' relationship with special operations ignore larger institutional dynamics and as a result give too much credit to either Secretary of Defense Weinberger's 1983 memorandum or the Nunn-Cohen Amendment for the development of the MAU(SOC).⁴⁸⁵ Rather, both were lagging indicators of a far more comprehensive organizational reform movement that began on the battlefields of Vietnam and were aided by and nested within a larger congressional military reform movement.⁴⁸⁶ While the Marine Corps refused to provide forces to SOCOM due to its reluctance to create a "two Marine Corps" organizational framework and relinquish control of its forces, the Corps proved far from unwilling to adapt as hindsight might now suggest. Rather, the MAU(SOC)'s emphasis on the raid and avoiding landing in the teeth of the enemy defense was a natural outgrowth of the Marine Corps' transition from attrition to maneuver warfare. The Marine Corps receives far too little credit for the largely proactive organizational transformation it undertook in the late 1970s and 1980s, which postured the Corps to meet the demands of the operating environment leading into the 21st century. The MAU(SOC), and later the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU)(SOC), proved

⁴⁸⁴ Statement by Mr. Noel C. Koch, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (*International Security Affairs*) Before the Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, 98th Cong., 2nd sess., April 10, 1984, 6, Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 2, Folder 4, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

⁴⁸⁵ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 1–5; Murray, "Convergence," 4; Moyar, *Oppose Any Foe*, 180–181; Van Messel, "USMC-USSOCOM Relationship," 5–13.

⁴⁸⁶ Wyly, "Doctrinal Change," 44; Gray, personal conversation.

adequate to meet these demands but ironically initiated a path dependency that has made the Corps less amenable to adapting ever since.

A. SPECIAL OPERATIONS HISTORY

The Marine Corps has a long history conducting special operations. These experiences, however, largely arose in response to requirements and did not take the form of standing units. The Corps' contributions have also historically been overcome by events, and when the capability was no longer required, the Corps disbanded it. An evaluation of these experiences informed the Corps' analysis of its decision concerning whether it should provide a force contribution to SOCOM and is thus germane to this study. The Corps' special operations history also led to an uneasiness with respect to SOF's status as an elite force and its perceived parasitical relationship with the larger Marine Corps.

The creation of the World War II Marine Raiders can be traced to the friendship between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Evans Carlson, as well as the influence of William Donovan. As a lieutenant, Carlson served in Shanghai in 1927 and in Peking from 1933 to 1935. After his promotion to captain, Carlson was assigned as the second-in-command of the military guard for President Franklin D. Roosevelt's retreat at Warm Springs, Georgia, where he became friendly with Roosevelt. Carlson then served a third tour in China, embedding with the Eighth Route Army, the main communist force in the northern part of China. Carlson spoke highly of the discipline and determination the communists demonstrated. This rankled many senior officers, who tried to squash his reports. Carlson, however, had already been engaging in personal correspondence with President Roosevelt. Frustrated, Carlson resigned his commission in April 1937 and toured the country while writing two books, *The Chinese Army* and *Twin Stars in China*, about his observations. Knowing the country would soon go to war, he requested a reserve commission and ultimately returned to active duty in April 1941.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁷ Dave Haughey, "Carlson and the Makin Raid: Looking Back," Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 53, Folder 22; John W. Gordon, "Thomas Holcomb: 1936–1943," in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 268–269.

Carlson was convinced of the merits of guerilla warfare and ideological indoctrination to instill discipline, and Captain James Roosevelt, President Roosevelt's son, was one of his most strident adherents. Captain Roosevelt, who was also serving as William Donovan's "military advisor and liaison officer," wrote the Commandant a letter in January 1941 concerning the subject of the "Development Within the Marine Corps of a Unit for Purposes Similar to the British Commandos and the Chinese Guerillas."⁴⁸⁸ Major General Commandant Thomas Holcomb remained unconvinced. Furthermore, he seemed perturbed by the idea of a special unit: "The term 'Marine' is sufficient to indicate a man ready for duty at any time, and the injection of a special name, such as 'Commando,' would be superfluous."⁴⁸⁹ However, William Donovan, a Medal of Honor winner in World War I, classmate of President Roosevelt's at Columbia Law School, and renowned Wall Street attorney, gained the backing of Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox for such a proposal. Knox threatened to make Donovan, then a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, a brigadier general in the Marine Corps Reserve and commander of a Marine commando unit, thus forcing the Commandant to accede to the demand for a special operations unit.⁴⁹⁰

In addition to Captain Roosevelt and William Donovan, the formation of the Raiders can also be traced to more conventional military—and less political—matters. Major General Holland Smith and Lieutenant Colonel Merritt Edson also proved to be two figures pivotal to the development of the Raiders. Major General Holcomb assigned Smith to Quantico in the fall of 1939, where Smith took command of 1st Marine Brigade. While studying amphibious operations, Smith identified several shortfalls in amphibious resources that prevented a quick buildup of forces ashore. In order to avoid this problem, during Fleet Landing Exercise (FLEX) 6, Smith decided to employ converted high-speed

⁴⁸⁸ As quoted in Joseph H. Alexander, *Edson's Raiders: The 1st Marine Raider Battalion in World War II* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 27 and Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 42. See also Jon T. Hoffman, *From Makin to Bougainville: Marine Raiders in the Pacific War* (San Diego, CA: Didactic Press, 2015), 1; Gordon, "Thomas Holcomb," 268–269.

⁴⁸⁹ Alexander, *Edson's Raiders*, 27.

⁴⁹⁰ Gordon, "Thomas Holcomb," 268–269. Winston Churchill also endorsed the concept due to the success British commandos had already enjoyed conducting operations along the European coastline. See Hoffman, *From Makin to Bougainville*, 1.

transports known as APDs to land a company from 5th Marines in an area removed from the primary assault landing beach. This would occur three hours before the primary assault would take place. The company would then seize key terrain to protect the main landing. The next year, during FLEX 7, Smith employed three APDs and embarked three companies from 7th Marines to form a Mobile Landing Group. Smith also conceived a new method of amphibious operations consisting of three echelons of forces. The first wave consisted of faster forces who could seize key terrain and protect the larger combat units (i.e., the second wave) as they came ashore. The third wave consisted of reserve and support elements. The first wave of forces consisted of “a parachute regiment, an air infantry regiment (gliderborne troops), a light tank battalion, and ‘at least one APD battalion.’”⁴⁹¹

During maneuvers as CG, Amphibious Force Atlantic Fleet (AFAF), Smith embarked 1st Battalion, 5th Marines in six APDs and also assigned the 1st Marine Division’s company of tanks and company of parachutists to the battalion. He landed this “APD battalion” two days before the main assault. The APD battalion surprised and destroyed the enemy’s reserves and seized key terrain. Smith asked Lieutenant Colonel Edson, esteemed for his service in Nicaragua from 1928–1930, to command 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. This battalion remained in Quantico when the rest of the AFAF moved to New River, North Carolina, and Edson conducted a series of landing experiments to identify the proper organization and equipment for this new force. In Edson’s evaluation, the standard configuration of an infantry battalion was fine so long as the Marine Corps simply wanted the battalion to maintain proficiency with the APD battalion capability as a collateral endeavor. However, the APD battalion structure lacked the requisite equipment, weapons, and vehicles to fight conventionally. It would also serve as a drain on the regiment’s resources once the initial raid had been conducted. Thus, if the Marine Corps wanted to commit to the capability, the APD battalion would have to report directly to the division or corps headquarters, and the standard infantry battalion structure would have to be reconfigured specifically to meet the demands of the

⁴⁹¹ Hoffman, *From Makin to Bougainville*, 1–2.

new mission. The battalion would also need more night amphibious training. Major General Smith wanted to remove the battalion from 1st Marine Division entirely, but he would not have been able to replenish 5th Marines. As a result, he asked the Commandant to redesignate the battalion. He was informed of this approval and the battalion's redesignation as 1st Separate Battalion on January 7, 1942, a week before Captain Roosevelt sent his letter to the Commandant.⁴⁹²

2nd Separate Battalion was activated on February 4, 1942, and Edson was forced to transfer a third of his own force to this new unit. Major Carlson was promoted to lieutenant colonel and took command of 2nd Separate Battalion. James Roosevelt became his executive officer. 1st Separate Battalion was redesignated 1st Raider Battalion on February 16, 1942, and 2nd Separate Battalion was redesignated 2d Raider Battalion on February 19. 2nd Raiders trained at Jacques Farm at Camp Elliot and adopted many of the features of the Chinese units Carlson had previously observed. Officers were given no privileges and were to lead by consensus. Indoctrination was emphasized, and liberty was rarely granted.⁴⁹³ Regarding how the Marines were selected, Lieutenant Colonel Evans Carlson reflected, "We built our Marine raider battalion on these premises. Only competent officers who were ready and willing to lead on the basis of merit were selected. Discipline was based on knowledge and reason instead of on blind obedience. Individual initiative and resourcefulness were encouraged."⁴⁹⁴ Training emphasized long hikes, hand-to-hand combat, night operations, and weapons skills. Edson's battalion trained similarly but placed more emphasis on training with the APD, and his ideas on leadership were markedly different and more conventional than those of Carlson.⁴⁹⁵ The battalions became the Corps' top priority for personnel and equipment, and they were

⁴⁹² Hoffman, *From Makin to Bougainville*, 2–4; Alexander, *Edson's Raiders*, 13–21.

⁴⁹³ Hoffman, *From Makin to Bougainville*, 5.

⁴⁹⁴ Evans Carlson, "Methods of the U.S. Marine Raiders," Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 2.

⁴⁹⁵ Hoffman, *From Makin to Bougainville*, 5.

granted permission to recruit the best Marines from other units, leading to resentment from the rest of the Marine Corps.⁴⁹⁶

The Raiders' mission was to conduct strategic reconnaissance and harassing raids. 2nd Raider Battalion conducted its first raid at the Makin Atoll in the Gilbert Islands in August 1942. Described by critics as "diversionary" and by more neutral observers as at best having "more psychological than military value,"⁴⁹⁷ the raid could have possibly diverted Japanese attention and boosted American morale. The Raiders blew their element of surprise following a negligent discharge before the Raiders even reached shore, and as a result, Carlson decided against sending any of his Raiders to destroy the radio facilities and military installations on the island—the primary objectives. The Raiders struggled to extract from the island, forcing the submarines that had transported them to remain on station through the night. More Raiders were able to finally reach the submarines before dawn the next day, but Carlson feared exposing his men to Japanese air power in broad daylight. He and the rest of his men remained on the island for an evening departure. Carlson sent out a series of patrols that morning and found out that the Japanese on the island had largely been eliminated. Carlson's Raiders finally did blow up the radio stations and military facilities and ransacked the general store.⁴⁹⁸

Edson's Raiders conducted their first raid, on the island of Tulagi in the Solomon Islands, on August 7, 1942. Tulagi was 1,000 yards wide and 4,000 yards long and was inhabited by 350 troops from the Japanese Special Naval Landing Forces. Edson's Raiders killed all but three of the island's defenders over the course of three days but suffered 38 Raiders killed and 55 wounded. On September 8, Edson's Raiders conducted an amphibious landing behind Japanese lines at Tasimboko, on the island of Guadalcanal. They met little resistance at the supply depot and destroyed most of what they found. On September 12, Japanese soldiers attacked Edson's Charlie Company, which was maintaining perimeter security. In the ensuing three-day battle on "Edson's Ridge," the

⁴⁹⁶ Hoffman, *From Makin to Bougainville*, 5; Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 43.

⁴⁹⁷ Gordon, "Thomas Holcomb," 271; Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 43.

⁴⁹⁸ Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 44–48.

Raiders suffered 135 casualties but inflicted 1,200 on the Japanese and saved Henderson Field from being captured. 2nd Raider Battalion came to help reinforce the island in November 1942 and conducted a prolonged raid to the enemy's rear that covered 150 miles. Only 57 of the original 266 Raiders completed the month-long mission, but the Raiders killed some 700 Japanese and destroyed hundreds of Japanese weapons.

Carlson's battalion gained a lot of positive publicity, leading to the creation of 3rd and 4th Raider battalions, again over the Commandant's objections. 4th Raider Battalion participated in the invasion of New Georgia in the Solomon Islands and the defeat of a Japanese force at Enogai. 1st and 4th Raider battalions marched the two miles from Enogai to Bairoko but lacked the heavy weapons to penetrate the inner defensive ring and eventually abandoned the effort after suffering over 250 casualties. The increasing size of operations quickly eliminated opportunities to use the Raiders' unique capabilities,⁴⁹⁹ and the Commandant was already pursuing an effort "to get 'this Raider business . . . straightened out.'" He was quickly winning supporters who believed regular Marine units were capable of conducting the same raids.⁵⁰⁰

The Raider battalions were eventually redesignated as a regular Marine regiment, 4th Marines, in February 1944. The absence of SOF from the famous victories of the Pacific, ably conducted by regular Marine infantry units that had coopted the Raiders' mission, would influence the Corps' perception of SOF. The guerilla tactics Carlson and James Roosevelt had espoused never proved particularly relevant. Instead, the Raiders became tied to amphibious operations as Smith and Carlson had projected. The increasing size of amphibious operations, aided by the new *Essex* class of aircraft carriers, effectively negated the requirement for surprise, and new amphibious shipping that could beach equipment and heavy weapons reduced even further the need for the Raiders' role in the first wave of an assault. The Corps' embrace of amphibious operations across the force also led to an unprecedented expansion in its size, and the notoriety the Corps earned helped it protect itself in the defense establishment. Lastly, the

⁴⁹⁹ Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 48–56.

⁵⁰⁰ Gordon, "Thomas Holcomb," 271.

Raiders ran into a very real prejudice against them, which was only further confirmed by the Corps' successes in the Pacific. General Alexander Vandegrift, who succeeded Holcomb as Commandant remarked, "I had always felt—and I knew General Holcomb felt it to a degree, too—that a well-trained infantry battalion could do anything that these other specialists could do."⁵⁰¹

While Donovan never did become a general, President Roosevelt approved his vision of a centralized intelligence service and named him its first director, the Coordinator of Information (COI), in July 1940. Donovan set out to build the service from scratch. Recruiting and establishing the organization took the better part of a year. While Donovan received a secret funding account and the service was exempt from civil service salary caps, he continued to run afoul of the War Department, which had opposed the agency's creation in the first place. Additionally, the head of military intelligence, Major General George V. Strong, denied Donovan access to the military's manpower pools, which nearly led to the organization's demise. Donovan reversed course and instead began lobbying to become part of the War Department to gain access to its resources and protection from other civilian agencies. President Roosevelt redesignated Donovan's organization as the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) on June 13, 1942. OSS would fall under the Army Chief of Staff George Marshall, who granted Donovan access to military personnel, including several Marines.⁵⁰²

Marine service with OSS was marked by exceptionally talented individuals with unique backgrounds. OSS Marines served in France, North Africa, Yugoslavia, China, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, and Greece, among other places.⁵⁰³ However, in comparison to the Raiders, there were relatively few Marines that served with OSS, and there was no systematic process to recruit, assess, and train additional Marines. Marines were recruited on an individual basis, and working behind enemy lines, they also did not encounter conventional force commanders. Thus, these Marines were

⁵⁰¹ Alexander, *Edson's Raiders*, 307.

⁵⁰² Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 67–70.

⁵⁰³ Robert E. Mattingly, *Herringbone Cloak—GI Dagger Marines of the OSS* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1989), 86–91.

not viewed as a threat by the rest of the Corps. When OSS officially disbanded on October 1, 1945, only 52 Marine officers were on its rolls. All of them were administratively transferred to one of the new strategic intelligence outfits.⁵⁰⁴

In the European theater, Donovan wanted his OSS commandos to parachute into France as soon as possible, but the British did not want the inexperienced and overzealous Americans to interfere with their own carefully crafted intelligence collection operations. This led Donovan to choose North Africa as the first place OSS would support an anti-Nazi resistance. Donovan turned to his regional intelligence chief, Lieutenant Colonel William Eddy. Born to Presbyterian missionaries in Syria, he grew up in what is now Lebanon before being sent to Wooster, Ohio for school. Eddy served in France during World War I. He earned his Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, and PhD from Princeton and became an English professor at Dartmouth. He met Major General Commandant Holcomb by chance in Washington, DC, and Holcomb recruited him to report to the Director of Naval Intelligence. Eddy subsequently became Naval Attaché to Cairo. Eddy caught Donovan's attention, and Donovan brought him back to Washington, so he could brief him on COI plans. Donovan then assigned him to Tangier to establish an intelligence network. Eddy brought along the Commandant's son, Second Lieutenant Frank Holcomb, and quickly began planning support for an invasion of the Azores. His requests for arms for anti-German French colonial troops were not supported in Washington. When planning for Operation TORCH, an invasion of French North Africa, began during the summer of 1942, Eddy provided General Eisenhower detailed briefings on Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia but struggled to acquire detailed intelligence. He recruited French exiles and Vichy French officers and believed they would turn against the Germans. The Allies invaded on November 8, 1942, but an antifascist resistance never did materialize to the extent Eddy assessed it would. Eddy left active duty on August 12, 1944 to serve as the first American Minister to Saudi Arabia. Frank Holcomb

⁵⁰⁴ Mattingly, 61.

transferred to OSS, rose to major, and directed counterintelligence operations in France.⁵⁰⁵

Captain Peter Ortiz was born in New York City, grew up in La Jolla, California, and was educated in France. While in France, he dropped out of school, joined the Foreign Legion, and served for five years in North Africa. He was offered a commission at the end of his enlistment but instead returned to the United States. When the Germans invaded Poland, Ortiz rejoined the Legion and became a first lieutenant. He served in the 11th Regiment, which fought well during battles from May-June 1940, but he was ultimately taken prisoner. He was taken throughout Europe by the Germans, but he eventually escaped into neutral Portugal and returned to New York. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in June 1942 and was granted a commission at boot camp at Parris Island. Ortiz was promptly transferred to the Marine Parachute Battalion and then assigned to OSS as an Assistant Naval Attaché and Marine Corps Observer, Algiers. There, he immediately found combat while supporting a variety (e.g., British Derbyshire Yeomanry, French Legion, U.S. 1st Armored Division) of units. He eventually found his way to the British Special Operations Executive, suffered multiple gun shots wounds in a battle, and was sent home to recuperate.⁵⁰⁶

On January 6, 1944, Captain Ortiz jumped from a Royal Air Force bomber along with a Frenchman and a Brit to make contact with, assess, arm, and train 3,000 Free French maquisards along the Vercors plateau. The mission was named UNION. The maquis lacked not only weapons, but also blankets, basic field equipment, ammunition, and radios. Nonetheless, Ortiz trained them and rankled German soldiers by walking around in German occupied territory wearing his Marine uniform. The UNION team was withdrawn from France in late May. Ortiz and six other Marines then jumped back into France as part of the Operations Group—a heavily armed contingent tasked with conducting direct action against the Germans. Ortiz was eventually taken prisoner again

⁵⁰⁵ Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 81–82; Mattingly, *Herringbone Cloak*, 22–38.

⁵⁰⁶ Mattingly, *Herringbone Cloak*, 40–47.

and remained in that status for the duration of the war. He left the Marine Corps in 1946 as the most decorated OSS Marine.⁵⁰⁷

Captain Walter Mansfield received his *artium baccalaureus* and his juris doctorate from Harvard. He originally joined OSS as a civilian but then applied for a commission in the Marine Corps Reserve. After Reserve Officer Candidate Class, he was ordered to Marine Parachute Training School per Donovan's request. He initially went to London to serve at OSS's own parachute training center, but in August 1943, Captain Walter Mansfield made a solo jump into Yugoslavia along with three tons of ammunition and some small arms and radios. He linked up with his British counterparts, and the group made its way to their base camp, where they met General Draga Mihailovic. Mihailovic commanded the largely Serbian Chetniks. When Tito's Partisans turned their guns on the Chetniks instead of the Nazis, Mansfield escaped to Italy.⁵⁰⁸ Two months later, Mansfield was serving in Southeast Asia coordinating Burmese, Malayan, and Thai saboteur groups. In December 1944, he went behind enemy lines to conduct raids and ambushes against Japanese supply lines. In June 1945, he moved to North China and took charge of teams parachuting into prison camps in order to evacuate American prisoners of war. Mansfield supported the rescue of General Jonathan Wainwright, General Lewis Beebe, and three members of the Doolittle raid.⁵⁰⁹ Marines at OSS served valiantly in a variety of roles, but recruiting remained ad hoc, and they were never viewed as a systematic threat to the conventional Marine Corps.

In July 1950, U.S. Army and Republic of Korea units were understrength and had been pushed back onto the Pusan Perimeter as North Korean forces invaded across the 38th Parallel. 1st Provisional Marine Brigade arrived and helped bolster the defensive perimeter, but there was an urgent need to harass and interdict North Korean men and

⁵⁰⁷ Mattingly, 114–131.

⁵⁰⁸ Mattingly, *Herringbone Cloak*, 65–79. For Mansfield's firsthand accounts of his time in Yugoslavia, see Walter R. Mansfield, "Marine with the Chetniks," *Marine Corps Gazette* 30, no. 1 (Jan. 1946): 2–9; Walter R. Mansfield, "Marine with the Chetniks," *Marine Corps Gazette* 30, no. 2 (Feb. 1946): 15–20.

⁵⁰⁹ Mansfield, "Marine with the Chetniks," 3. For a firsthand account of Mansfield's time in China, see Walter R. Mansfield, "Ambush in China," *Marine Corps Gazette* 30, no. 3 (Mar. 1946): 12–16, 39–42.

supplies flowing south along coastal roads and rail lines in order to pull North Korean troops away from Pusan. 1st Amphibious Reconnaissance Company from Camp Pendleton was flown into theater to form part of Special Operations Group (SOG), which also consisted of Underwater Demolition Teams (UDT). Major Edward Dupras, who served with the Raiders in World War II and then trained and operated with Nationalist Chinese Guerillas as U.S. Naval Group China's officer-in-charge, was designated the Commander, Landing Force.⁵¹⁰ On August 12, 1950, SOG personnel, including Marine Lieutenant Philip Shutler and his 30 Marines, USS *Horace A. Bass* (APD-124) sailors, and 50 UDTs embarked on a series of demolition raids at chokepoints along the eastern coast of North Korea. They successfully detonated three targets, including a rail tunnel entrance, a rail bridge, and a complex target consisting of two rail tunnels.⁵¹¹ When they returned following the third raid on August 16, they were re-tasked with beach reconnaissance missions along Korea's west coast with the objective of identifying possible landing sites for the Inchon operation. They ultimately found no alternative to the Inchon landing site. At the conclusion of their mission, Phil Shutler, who retired a major general, rejoined the rest of his company, which conducted further operations with 1st Marine Division. George Atcheson, a Marine lieutenant with SOG, later worked as part of a covert CIA operations program in Korea led by Marine Major Vincent "Dutch" Kramer.⁵¹²

In 1954, Commandant General Lemuel Shepherd Jr. approved the activation of Marine Corps Test Unit 1. The Test Unit was operationally under the control of the Commandant and was created to "develop specialized tactics, techniques, and organizational concepts for the Marine Corps in the nuclear age."⁵¹³ Specifically, the unit was given four broad mission objectives:

⁵¹⁰ John B. Dwyer, "Special Operations Group Korea, 1950," *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 7 (Jul. 1994): 18.

⁵¹¹ Dwyer, 20–21.

⁵¹² Dwyer, 21–23.

⁵¹³ Bruce F. Meyers, *Fortune Favors the Brave: The Story of First Force Recon* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 27.

1. evolve organizational concepts for the marine landing force under conditions of nuclear warfare,
2. determine requirements for light weight weapons and equipment to permit maximum tactical exploitation of nuclear weapons,
3. develop tactics and techniques responsive to the full employment of nuclear weapons, and
4. evolve operational concepts, transportation requirements, and techniques to enable fast task force ships and submarines, or a combination of such shipping and airlift, for movement to the objective area and the ship-to-shore movement.⁵¹⁴

Test Unit 1 was activated on July 1, 1954 at Camp Pendleton, California and was initially comprised of 104 Marine officers (many of them aviators), 1,412 enlisted Marines, 7 naval officers, and 51 naval enlisted personnel.⁵¹⁵ One of the unit's main priorities was developing the capability to jump from carrier aircraft, which the unit tested for the first time on July 26, 1956.⁵¹⁶ The unit also focused on developing the Marine Corps' pathfinding capability, which entailed providing detailed guidance to airborne assault units so they could reach their proper landing zones. After two years of training, Test Unit 1 was scheduled to disband on June 30, 1957. The unit reported to the Commandant that he "now had a proven, fully operational method of insertion for deeper preassault and postassault parachute reconnaissance, which would supplement the already existing methods for amphibious reconnaissance of areas close to the landing beaches."⁵¹⁷ Test Unit 1 merged with 1st Amphibious Reconnaissance Company to become 1st Force Reconnaissance Company on June 19, 1957. A year later, HQMC sent roughly half of its jumpers and some of its divers to activate 2d Force Reconnaissance Company at Camp Lejeune.⁵¹⁸ 3rd Force Company was created in 1965 in response to a

⁵¹⁴ Meyers, 27–28.

⁵¹⁵ Meyers, 28.

⁵¹⁶ Meyers, 38–48.

⁵¹⁷ Meyers, 70.

⁵¹⁸ Meyers, 77, 82.

demand signal from Vietnam.⁵¹⁹ The Force Recon Companies had a history of being blended into division recon battalions even though they had two different missions. Force Recon works for the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) commander and conducts deep, operational-level reconnaissance, whereas division reconnaissance operates just forward of front lines.⁵²⁰ As a result, during the Vietnam War, then Lieutenant Colonels Al Gray and Gerald Polakoff designed the Surveillance and Reconnaissance Center to serve as a “dynamic, integrated intelligence/surveillance and reconnaissance capability” for the Marine Amphibious Force (MAF) commander.⁵²¹

In Vietnam, Marines also served with Military Assistance Command, Vietnam—Studies and Observations Group (MACVSOG), which was established on January 24, 1964 in order to conduct unconventional warfare (UW) operations in North Vietnam.⁵²² SOG’s euphemistically named Naval Advisory Detachment (NAD), its maritime component, always had a Marine deputy chief for operations, for example. Bernard Trainor, who would retire a lieutenant general, and Wesley Rice, who would retire a major general and serve as Director of Joint Special Operations Agency, both held this billet.⁵²³ NAD’s missions included insertion of agents into North Vietnam and psychological warfare, coastal bombardments, and supply interdiction along North Vietnam’s coastline.⁵²⁴

A small percentage of the Marines in Vietnam served in Combined Action Platoons (CAPs). CAPs consisted of 15 Marines partnered with 34 paramilitary Popular Forces (PFs). Each CAP lived in a particular village or hamlet and focused on textbook counterinsurgency tactics—namely, the “destruction of insurgent infrastructure, protection of the people and the government infrastructure, organization of local

⁵¹⁹ Pushies, *MARSOC*, 40.

⁵²⁰ Pushies, 40–41.

⁵²¹ Meyers, *Fortune*, 166.

⁵²² Richard H. Shultz Jr., *The Secret War Against Hanoi: The Untold Story of Spies, Saboteurs, and Covert Warriors in North Vietnam* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1999), 31–40.

⁵²³ Shultz, 182.

⁵²⁴ Shultz, 183.

intelligence nets, and training of the PFs.”⁵²⁵ CAPs proved effective. CAP-protected villages scored higher on the Hamlet Evaluation System in comparison to other villages, and they suffered 50 percent fewer casualties than Army infantry and Marine battalions conducting large-scale, helicopter-borne operations.⁵²⁶ The Marines also initiated, GOLDEN FLEECE, which secured coastal farming areas during harvest season, protecting farmers from Viet Cong taxes.⁵²⁷ Marines would later serve as advisors in El Salvador in the 1980s as well.⁵²⁸

After Vietnam, funding for SOF units declined to one-tenth of one percent of the DoD budget,⁵²⁹ and critics blamed SOF, whose funds declined even more than conventional forces, for losing the war.⁵³⁰ In fact, funding was reduced 95 percent over the course of the 1970s, SOF manpower was cut by 75 percent, and three Special Forces Groups were deactivated.⁵³¹ Following the Desert One tragedy, critics argued SOF was not as good as they claimed and could not be employed to solve strategic problems. Their proponents pointed to the ad hoc organizational structure, lack of rehearsals, lack of communication, and inadequate number of helicopters.⁵³² The Special Operations Review Group, known as the Holloway Commission, was commissioned to “conduct a

⁵²⁵ Krepinevich, *Army and Vietnam*, 173.

⁵²⁶ Melissa Dell and Pablo Querubin exploit discontinuities in U.S. strategies to compare areas where the bomb-heavy U.S. Army strategy was employed in Vietnam to areas where the Marine Corps’ CAPs served. They find that the firepower strategy “plausibly increased insurgent attacks and worsened attitudes towards the U.S. and South Vietnamese government, relative to a hearts and minds approach.” See Melissa Dell and Pablo Querubin, “Nation Building Through Foreign Intervention: Evidence from Discontinuities in Military Strategies” (NBER Working Paper No. 22395, July 2016), Abstract, accessed November 29, 2018, <http://www.nber.org/papers/w22395.pdf>.

⁵²⁷ Krepinevich, *Army and Vietnam*, 172–177.

⁵²⁸ Marvin Montez, “Advisory Duty in El Salvador,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 75, no. 10 (Oct. 1991): 58–60; Roland B. Walters, “The Marine Officer and a Little War,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 70, no. 12 (Dec. 1986): 54–59. Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Armstrong published a series of nine articles in the *Gazette* on this mission from April–December 1990.

⁵²⁹ Susan L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare: Rebuilding U.S. Special Operations Forces* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 68.

⁵³⁰ Moyar, *Oppose Any Foe*, 155; Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, 34–35.

⁵³¹ *Statement by Mr. Noel C. Koch, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) Before the Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives*, 98th Cong., 2nd sess., April 10, 1984, 6, Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 2, Folder 4.

⁵³² Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, 72–73; Moyar, *Oppose Any Foe*, 171.

broad examination of the planning, organization, coordination, direction, and control of the Iranian hostage rescue mission.”⁵³³ The Commission consisted of six flag and general officers representing all four services. Major General Al Gray served as the Marine Corps representative. The Commission took great pains to clarify that “no one action or lack of action caused the operation to fail.”⁵³⁴ Nonetheless, it found, “The ad hoc nature of the organization and planning is related to most of the major issues and underlies the group’s conclusions.”⁵³⁵ Since there was no existing joint task force (JTF) organization, the JCS had to literally start from scratch to build one, leading to rudimentary training and a lack of readiness.

The buildup of SOF became a focus of effort for members of Congress and the Reagan administration in the 1980s. From 1981–1985, funding for SOF tripled, and the number of SOF troops increased thirty percent.⁵³⁶ During Operation URGENT FURY in Grenada, however, this still proved inadequate. During the nine-day operation, SOF suffered a disproportionate number of casualties, including thirteen of the nineteen fatalities.⁵³⁷ Major General Richard Scholtes, the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) Commander, blamed ad hoc organization and conventional force commanders’ inability to employ SOF properly.⁵³⁸ SOF also lacked tactical mobility, firepower, and the ability to operate at night, and their air was limited in range. SOF reformers contended that SOF units lacked integration with each other and with conventional

⁵³³ “Rescue Mission Report,” August 1980, Forward, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 43, Folder 1.

⁵³⁴ “Statement of Admiral J. L. Hollway III, USN (Ret.), Chairman, Special Operations Review Group,” 4, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 43, Folder 1.

⁵³⁵ “Rescue Mission Report,” August 1980, 60, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 43, Folder 1.

⁵³⁶ “America’s Secret Soldiers: The Buildup of U.S. Special Operations Forces,” *The Defense Monitor* 14, no. 2 (1985), Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 2, Folder 4.

⁵³⁷ Moyar, *Oppose Any Foe*, 179.

⁵³⁸ Moyar, 180.

units.⁵³⁹ SOF needed a unified command and protection for their funds and manpower resources.⁵⁴⁰

SOF reformers, who were referred to as the “SOF Liberation Front” and lauded for employing “guerilla tactics” on Capitol Hill, began to gain momentum. The Joint Special Operations Agency was established on January 1, 1984 to advise “the Joint Chiefs of Staff in all matters pertaining to special operations and the military activities related thereto, including national strategy, planning, programming, budgeting, resource development and allocation, joint doctrinal guidance, exercise and readiness evaluation, and employment of forces.”⁵⁴¹ While SOF reformers viewed it as “an important milestone in enhancing the management of SOF,”⁵⁴² they also still believed legislation was required to correct the management of SOF.⁵⁴³

On November 14, 1986, the Nunn-Cohen Amendment to the 1987 National Defense Authorization Act was passed. It established SOCOM and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC). SOCOM would be a four-star command that would have all SOF stationed in the continental United States assigned to it. The amendment created a new Major Force Program funding line, MFP-11, and specified special operations activities for the first time in law: “Direct action, strategic reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil affairs, psychological operations, counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance, theater search and rescue, [and] other such activities as may be specified by the President or the Secretary of Defense.”⁵⁴⁴ The other three services put their SOF under SOCOM, but the Marine Corps refused to make a force contribution.

⁵³⁹ Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, 106.

⁵⁴⁰ Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, 90; Moyer, *Oppose Any Foe*, 180.

⁵⁴¹ “Not to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Charter of the Joint Special Operations Agency,” January 6, 1984, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 1.

⁵⁴² *Statement by Mr. Noel C. Koch, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) Before the Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives*, 98th Cong., 2nd sess., April 10, 1984, 11.

⁵⁴³ Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, 132.

⁵⁴⁴ Marquis, 146.

After Secretary Weinberger issued his memo, which happened just weeks before the Beirut bombing and URGENT FURY, the Commandant, General P. X. Kelley, decided to conduct a study of Marine Corps special operations capabilities and evaluate available options for enhancing them. He ordered the CG, FMFLANT, Lieutenant General Al Gray, to “examine the potential employment of Fleet Marine Forces to conduct maritime oriented special operations and to make recommendations on the formation of a Fleet Marine Force SOF capability which is capable of independent operations under naval command or as part of a naval component in a joint operation.”⁵⁴⁵ General Kelley stipulated that any SOF capability should be amphibious in nature, organized within the concept of the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), and viewed as a complement to naval operations. He explicitly wanted any assigned special operations to be “doctrinally (LFM 0–1, LFM 0–2, FMFM 0–1, etc.) Marine missions . . . that do not directly conflict with the missions of the other Services’ SOF.”⁵⁴⁶

Guiding this study was a significantly revised JCS definition of special operations:

Military operations conducted by specially trained, equipped, and organized DoD forces against strategic or tactical targets in pursuit of national military, political, economic, or psychological objectives. They may support conventional military operations or they may be prosecuted independently when the use of conventional forces is either inappropriate or infeasible. Sensitive peacetime operations, except for training, are normally authorized by the National Command Authority (NCA) and conducted under the direction of the NCA or designated commander. Special operations may include unconventional warfare, counterterrorist

⁵⁴⁵ Commandant of the Marine Corps to Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic; Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific; and, Command General, Marine Corps Development and Education Command, “Marine Corps Special Operations Capabilities,” September 14, 1984, Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 2, Folder 4.

⁵⁴⁶ Commandant of the Marine Corps to Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic; Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, Command General, Marine Corps Development and Education Command, “Marine Corps Special Operations Capabilities,” September 14, 1984.

operations, collective security, psychological operations and civil affairs measures.⁵⁴⁷

The Marine Corps' doctrine had been based on the previous JCS definition, which stipulated special operations as "secondary or supporting operations which may be adjuncts to various other operations and for which no one service is assigned primary responsibility."⁵⁴⁸ As a result, the Marine Corps had historically considered arctic, desert, jungle, river-crossing, and amphibious raid operations as "special."⁵⁴⁹

FMFLANT convened a study group from November 19 to December 17, 1984 at Camp Lejeune. The study group members included Colonel Gordon Keiser and Sean Delgrosso from II MAF, Colonel Anthony Zinni from the Commandant's office, and Colonel Pat Collins from Marine Corps Development and Education Command (MCDEC). They categorized the alternatives into three broad capabilities:

Type A. The capability to conduct special operations tasks such as special purpose raids. This capability requires unique skills, highly specialized equipment, and training far beyond that normally assigned conventional forces. The forces involved are small and would be used in operations of short duration.

Type B. The capability to conduct amphibious raids and support other special operations missions with conventionally organized forces (normally a ground unit of company-size) which have been designated, intensively trained, and equipped for special operations.

Type C. The capability to conduct amphibious raids, NEO [noncombatant evacuation operation] operations, and support of other special operations missions with a large, conventionally organized and equipped combined arms force.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁷ Commandant of the Marine Corps to Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic; Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, Command General, Marine Corps Development and Education Command, "Marine Corps Special Operations Capabilities," September 14, 1984.

⁵⁴⁸ "Portions of Past Reports," Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 1.

⁵⁴⁹ "Portions of Past Reports," Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 1.

⁵⁵⁰ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, "Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements," *iii*, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

The overarching question that needed to be considered was whether the enhanced capability would build on an existing structural base or require a new structure. Marine Corps history, the study group observed, indicated enhancement of the status quo had characterized the Corps' capability development the past several decades. The second primary factor concerning the degree to which the Marine Corps should participate in special operations was the effect this increased capability would have on the Corps' ability to conduct its traditional roles and missions.⁵⁵¹

The study group provided an overview of the Marine Corps' history of support to special operations, defined the terms on which its evaluation was based, and then proceeded to identify the advantages and disadvantages of seven different options. The first option entailed maintaining the current Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) and training a SEAL-Recon special operations team to Type B. This involved no new major logistics infrastructure or training changes but only provided a small and limited SOF element, and special operations techniques remained confined to the team. Option 2 provided for one reinforced rifle company and limited elements of the aviation combat element (ACE) trained to Type C while the rest of the MAU maintained its current capabilities. This provided a quick solution for the FMF and did not depend on external support. Training and logistics required no large changes, but it would be difficult to stabilize the raid company and its support elements. Option 3 provided raid training and specialized equipment to Type C for the entire MAU with the night amphibious raid as the centerpiece. The time to train to this level would impact operational tempo, and stabilization would be a big problem. The option entailed substantial procurement of specialized equipment. The fourth option built on Option 3, providing a reinforced rifle company and selected elements of the ACE trained for Type B tasks, while the rest of the MAU was trained to Type C. This option provided a special operations capability within the MAGTF and "quantum improvement in basic military skills." The raid company

⁵⁵¹ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, "Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements," 1–2.

would require “absolute stability,” time for adequate training would impact operational tempo, and it would require significant new procurement.⁵⁵²

Option 5 added a Type A SEAL-Recon team capability to Option 4 but removed reconnaissance assets from the ground combat element (GCE). The sixth option consisted of a ground special operations force that would be deployed for specific missions to complement the forward-deployed MAU. Selected elements of the ACE would be trained to support the special operations force, while the remainder of the MAU trained to its current capabilities. The option provided little benefit to the FMF overall and required significant changes to logistics infrastructure. There was an inadequate intelligence capability to support Type A missions, and the special operations force would have limited opportunities to train with the MAU and might not be able to link up with the MAU in time to conduct operations. The seventh and final option provided an integrated air-ground special operations force trained and equipped to Type A operations. The unit would deploy to link up with the forward-deployed MAU for specific missions but would not necessarily be dependent on the MAU’s assets. While options three through six redirected the MAU away from other training and commitments, Option 7 was assessed to potentially detract from the FMF’s traditional amphibious role.⁵⁵³

The study group identified specific issues related to personnel, intelligence, training, logistics, communications-electronics, aviation, command relationships, and the U.S. Navy perspective. It also noted that SEAL-Recon solutions proved difficult and that the creation of a specialized unit would be accompanied by “elitist instincts.” Such an option could not become insular and needed to remain part of the FMF team. The study group found four “workable” options: Option 2, Option 4, combining Option 4 with Option 6, and combining Option 7 with Option 2. Option 2 was deemed the “quick fix” and the “easiest way to demonstrate some enhancement,” whereas the first combination would take two years to develop and the second combination would take three years.

⁵⁵² Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” 10–13.

⁵⁵³ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, 14–16.

Combining Option 7 and Option 2 was deemed “the most radical approach and would be extremely costly, but it offers maximum capability and chance for operational success.”⁵⁵⁴

Lieutenant General Gray, however, was not satisfied with the results, so he continued the study from December 23, 1984 to June 7, 1985.⁵⁵⁵ On March 1, 1985, he submitted another report to the Commandant, which Colonel Pat Collins also wrote. The study found, “In general, it was determined that the basic resources, structure, facilities, and programs required by the Marine Corps to participate fully in the full spectrum of special operations currently exist.”⁵⁵⁶ The study was designed to explain to others how the study group was framing the problem since the group itself was having a difficult time defining what special operations were, what they meant to the Marine Corps, and who should be responsible for what.⁵⁵⁷ This study built on the first and provided vastly more detail. The study again defined and categorized special operations missions and identified relevant issues concerning personnel requirements, training, aviation training and equipment, communications-electronics, logistics, specialized equipment, and intelligence. The historical overview of special operations provided in the first study was replaced with a more detailed historical assessment, including special operations mission types and functional requirements, characteristics of successful special operations organizations, the principles of planning for special operations, and the principles of training for special operations and the use of rehearsals. The study also included a concept paper, *Improving Operational Capabilities: Operational Orientation*, that served

⁵⁵⁴ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, 18–25.

⁵⁵⁵ Letter from Colonel Pat Collins, April 28, 1986, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁵⁶ Commanding General FMFLANT to Command of the Marine Corps, “Examination of the Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” March 1, 1985, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁵⁷ Letter from Colonel Pat Collins, April 28, 1986, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

as a mission analysis focused on answering how the Corps could become more capable. It examined the Marine Corps' roles and missions in light of the strategic context.⁵⁵⁸

The study identified three levels of involvement: (Level A) a selected dedicated special capability beyond those of the general purpose force; (Level B) a capability with designated forces from within the MAGTF who are conventionally organized but specially trained; and, (Level C) general purpose forces trained to conduct selected operations in selected environments.⁵⁵⁹ Within Level A, Category I consisted of a direct action capability, and Category II consisted of intelligence gathering capabilities.⁵⁶⁰ The study group identified three options:

1. Do not get fully involved in the full spectrum of special operations. Just maintain the current special intelligence gathering capability and continue to utilize the existing special MAGTF training facilities. (The present situation as is [*sic*] exists today.)
2. Do not develop a Level A Category I direct action capability, but pursue a definitive program to improve our general purpose special training facilities and capabilities, which in turn enhance our Level B and C direct action capabilities.
3. Develop and implement a full blown special direct action and intelligence gathering capability. Also, implement a definitive program to provide the Marine Corps general purpose forces the full spectrum of special categories of training facilities, program and procedures that will provide MAGTF units the wherewithall [*sic*] to be fully proficient in a special operations environment that requires some degree of special training.⁵⁶¹

The study group recommended Option III. Despite the cost and effort, the group believed it would “protect our Marine Corps roles and missions, enhance our Naval

⁵⁵⁸ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” Enclosures 2 (“A Historical Overview of Special Operations”) and 3 (“Improving Operational Capabilities.”)

⁵⁵⁹ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” Enclosure 1 (“Fleet Marine Force Atlantic Operational Concept to Enhance the Special Operational Capability of the Marine Corps,” 13.

⁵⁶⁰ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” Enclosure 1, 2.

⁵⁶¹ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” Enclosure 1, 35.

campaign capabilities, and provide the National Command Authority a nautical special operations capability that does not presently exist (it will exist soon, however, and it will be the U.S. Army doing our roles).”⁵⁶² The option also provided the Marine Corps the opportunity to improve the general purpose force “under the cloak of special operations.”⁵⁶³

Colonel Jim Toth of the MCDEC Doctrine Center wrote a third study, dated April 15, 1985.⁵⁶⁴ The study began with a rather provocative statement: “The various definitions of ‘special operations’ are defective and provide no accurate discrimination of the capabilities they attempt to describe.”⁵⁶⁵ Toth then conducted a threat assessment and detailed the strategic case for a Marine Corps special operations capability. He proffered four recommendations. In Option 1, the MAUs trained for “ordinary” raids and urban intervention, but a force reconnaissance battalion augmented the MAU for “extraordinary” tasks. The force reconnaissance battalion consisted of a special support company (direct action platoon and support platoon), deep reconnaissance company, amphibious reconnaissance company, and headquarters and support company. Option 2 entailed training MAUs to the ordinary raid and urban intervention standard, but special amphibious troops augmented the MAU as necessary for extraordinary tasks. The special amphibious troops were comprised of a radio battalion, communication battalion, Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO), force reconnaissance company, special support company (direct action, assault engineer, and sniper platoons), a headquarters and service company, and a tactical deception company that needed to be established.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶² Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” Enclosure 1, 37.

⁵⁶³ Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements,” Enclosure 1, 37.

⁵⁶⁴ Letter from Colonel Pat Collins, April 28, 1986, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁶⁵ “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements: Marine Corps Special Operations Capabilities,” April 15, 1985, 2, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁶⁶ “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements: Marine Corps Special Operations Capabilities,” April 15, 1985, 21–24, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

In Option 3, MAUs trained to the ordinary raid and urban intervention standard and a self-deploying air-ground raider group performed extraordinary tasks either independently as a MAU or as the inner ring assault element with the forward-deployed MAU serving as the outer cordon. The raider group was comprised of an aviation element, including the vertical takeoff and landing aircraft; an assault support element (e.g., assault engineers, snipers), assault element (direct action and light infantry elements), and a headquarters and service element. Option 4 entailed the same MAU training standards, as well as augmentation by the special amphibious troops in Option 2. These special amphibious troops were no longer assigned to the FMF and were instead centralized at MCDEC in a raider school. The cadre at the school served as the air-ground raider group from Option 3. Toth provided no recommendation but emphasized that any program must make the best possible use of the forward deployed MAU and not detract from current responsibilities.⁵⁶⁷ After the Toth study, Colonel Collins wrote another concept paper, this time concerning special operations training. It provided a given MAU a framework for achieving the appropriate level of readiness in the time allotted. It proactively addressed the special operations capability the Marine Corps was trying to establish.⁵⁶⁸

On June 7, 1985, General Kelley decided against establishing any new organizations, feeling that to do so “would unnecessarily duplicate special purpose organizations such as JSOC, Special Forces, SEALs, SOW, etc.”⁵⁶⁹ Instead, he explained, the Marine Corps should establish complementary capabilities and focus “on the enhancement of forward deployed Marine Amphibious Units to conduct special

⁵⁶⁷ “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements: Marine Corps Special Operations Capabilities,” April 15, 1985, 25–31, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁶⁸ “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements: Training Concept Plan,” June 1, 1985, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁶⁹ “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements: For CMC Decision Papers,” Memorandum for the Record, June 7, 1985, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12. A presentation on the MAU(SOC) described the decision: “What the Corps is undertaking is the enhancement of an existing capability within its current unique and proven organization for combat—the Marine Air-Ground Task Force. Our intention is to offer a complementary contribution to existing special operations capabilities that is centered on our established maritime roles and missions.” See “Marine Amphibious Unit (Special Operations Capable): MAU(SOC),” Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 2, Folder 4.

operations.”⁵⁷⁰ On June 14, 1985, General Kelley tasked Lieutenant General Gray with initiating a pilot program to identify the proper organizational structure and special equipment required.⁵⁷¹ The 26th MAU under Colonel Mike Myatt served as the test bed and was designated MAU(SOC) in December 1985. The specific training enhancements included establishing a third MAU headquarters to facilitate increasing the length of the pre-deployment training cycle to 180 days, establishing a Special Operations Training Group (SOTG), placing more emphasis on the raid, NEO, night operations, military operations on urban terrain, and antiterrorism operations.⁵⁷² In particular, the MAU(SOC) established the capability of being able to conduct a raid within six hours of receiving an order. The MEU(SOC) still trains to this capability today.⁵⁷³

General Kelley decided against committing forces to SOCOM because SOCOM at the time was a fledgling command and doing so would have limited the Marine Corps’ flexibility to meet requirements across the broad spectrum of operations. He declined a proposal to put all SOF under the Marine Corps and successfully argued that Force Recon was not simply a SOF unit, but rather a deep reconnaissance asset for the MAGTF.⁵⁷⁴ Jim Locher, who crafted the Nunn-Cohen Amendment, and Major General Arnold Punaro, a congressional staff member at the time, noted that Goldwater-Nichols had undermined the service chiefs’ stature in the DoD, and the Nunn-Cohen Amendment was perceived as yet another infringement on their prerogatives. Coupled with the Marine Corps’ reluctance to create an elite unit, according to Locher and Punaro, this provided the foundation for the Marine Corps’ resistance.⁵⁷⁵ Locher and Punaro also speculated

⁵⁷⁰ “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements: For CMC Decision Papers,” Memorandum for the Record, June 7, 1985, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁷¹ Commandant of the Marine Corps to Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic, “Examination of Marine Corps Special Operations Enhancements: For CMC Decision Papers,” June 14, 1985, Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection, Box 6, Folder 12.

⁵⁷² “Marine Amphibious Unit (Special Operations Capable): MAU(SOC),” Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 2, Folder 4.

⁵⁷³ Gray, personal conversation.

⁵⁷⁴ Giles Kyser, “Fix Recon, USSOCOM, and the Future of the Corps: Food for Thought,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 87, no. 7 (Jul. 2002): 17–18.

⁵⁷⁵ Kyser, “Fix Recon,” 18.

that other possible explanations included SOF's checkered history, SOF's baggage from Vietnam, SOF's lower priority during the Cold War, and the lack of backing for SOF reform OSD.⁵⁷⁶

Colonel Collins, one of Lieutenant General Gray's most trusted advisors, continued to argue in favor of a Tier I, Marine Raider, capability, in both a master's thesis at King's College London and in another concept paper.⁵⁷⁷ Gray, however, recalls that maintaining the status quo was not a feasible option. Creating a separate special forces unit, however, would have, in effect, created a "two Marine Corps" organizational construct, which was also not an attractive option. Instead, improving what he believed to be an already good Marine Corps seemed the best option.⁵⁷⁸ Gray also recalls that some in SOCOM were jealous of the Marine Corps' capabilities and as a result did not want Marines to be a part of SOCOM. This feeling of superiority was not totally unwarranted, as the demarcation between conventional forces and SOF was not as definite as it is today. SOF's shortcomings were also echoed in multiple assessments of operations in Grenada. The SOF command, including Delta Force, some SEALs, and some Rangers, wanted "to show off its forces," which "proved ironic, since their performance did not justify their claims to be the nation's military elite."⁵⁷⁹ The SEALs, for example, undertook three or four missions and only succeeded in one of them—rescuing the Governor General, Paul Scoon. Mark Adkin, a retired British infantry officer observed the same ill-fated SOF desire to prove itself: "Urgent Fury came at exactly the right

⁵⁷⁶ Kyser, "Fix Recon," 18.

⁵⁷⁷ For a description of Collins' relationship with Gray, see Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 131–136. Collins' concept paper, "Concept Paper 1–86: Marine Corps Special Operations Capabilities," March 1, 1986, can be found in the Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 38, Folder 13 and in the Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 1, Folder 4. His thesis, "A Concept for the Doctrinal Employment of United States Marine Corps Air Ground Naval Amphibious Task Forces" (master's thesis, King's College London, undated), can be found in the Wesley H. Rice Collection, Box 1, Folder 3 and in the Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 40, Folder 10.

⁵⁷⁸ William S. "Bill" Lind, a former aide to Senators Robert Taft Jr. and Gary Hart, notes that anything related to "special operations," defined in broad umbrella terms, could justify funding at the time. He, however, considered the MEU(SOC) a distraction from reform efforts and maneuver warfare. Bill Lind, personal conversation with author, November 20, 2018.

⁵⁷⁹ "Were Any Lessons Learned from Grenada?" Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 56, Folder 13. On October 25, 1983, all three SOF assaults failed. See Mark Adkin, *Urgent Fury: The Battle for Grenada* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1989), 333–334.

moment for all the Special Operations Forces: it gave them a not-to-be-missed opportunity to prove themselves and establish that they could do the sort of job for which they had been created. Unfortunately, . . . Grenada did not give them the triumph they sought.”⁵⁸⁰

The Marine Corps’ belief in itself as an elite fighting force and its unfailing quest to protect its independence as a service thus played a key role in its decision not to commit forces to SOCOM. When viewed solely through the lens of special operations, the Marine Corps, in hindsight, seems somewhat recalcitrant and resistant to change. However, this could not have been further from the truth. The Marine Corps, long before Weinberger’s memo, had already started out on a quest to transform itself into an organization capable of meeting the demands of the operational environment.

B. DEFENSE REFORM AND THE MARINE CORPS

The failures of Vietnam prompted the Marine Corps to undertake a complete organizational transformation encompassing people, ideas, and hardware. Body count strategies that proved misguided, and fluid battles that revealed how outdated and rigid Marine Corps doctrine was, prompted returning veterans, relatively junior in rank at the time, to demand change, sparking the maneuver warfare movement.⁵⁸¹ General Gray recalls that this quest for improvement and change also concerned the counterterrorism operations on which the development of the MEU(SOC)’s capabilities would, in part, be based. There was a growing sense, including among Bernard Trainor and Anthony Zinni, that “we should look at what we had to do to make that better” concerning counterterrorism operations that existed long before the Weinberger memo.⁵⁸² The reform movement in the Marine Corps is a necessary institutional factor that places the Corps’ decision not to commit a force contribution to SOCOM in the proper context. While cultural concerns played a very real factor in this decision, these concerns did not

⁵⁸⁰ Adkin, *Urgent Fury*, 173.

⁵⁸¹ Wyly, “Doctrinal Change,” 44.

⁵⁸² Gray, personal conversation.

inhibit the Marine Corps from proactively adapting to the changing geostrategic landscape and operational environment.

The quest for change in the Marine Corps was nested in a larger military reform debate that also had its roots in the failures of Vietnam. According to Senator Gary Hart and his aide, Bill Lind, military reform “is an effort to make all our defense policies and practices—from the infantry squad through the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Congress—serve the purpose of winning in combat.”⁵⁸³ This reform debate focused on doctrine, procurement, and force structure and preceded and remained independent of the later defense reorganization movement.⁵⁸⁴ Crucially, Lind distinguished between a more effective defense and a more expensive defense. He noted, “The danger is that we will continue to equate resource level with capability, at a time when we cannot hope to have superiority in resources. It is inconceivable that the United States could match Soviet ground forces man for man or tank for tank.”⁵⁸⁵ As a result, the crux of the problem was identifying “how to fight outnumbered and win.”⁵⁸⁶

The defense reform movement started with Senator Robert Taft Jr.’s service on the SASC from 1972–1976 and the publication of his *White Paper on Defense: A Modern Military Strategy for the United States*, in 1976.⁵⁸⁷ In 1976, Bill Lind met with General William DePuy concerning the forthcoming rewrite of *Field Manual 100–5, Operations*—the so-called “Active Defense” doctrine. Lind criticized its focus on attrition and synchronization, leading him to submit an article, “Some Doctrinal Questions for the U.S. Army,” to *Military Review* that U.S. Army Training and Doctrine

⁵⁸³ Gary Hart with William S. Lind, *America Can Win: The Case for Military Reform* (Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, Publishers, Inc., 1986), 17.

⁵⁸⁴ Bill Lind argues Goldwater-Nichols was a “smoke screen designed to look like reform, but it didn’t really change much.” Lind, personal conversation.

⁵⁸⁵ William S. Lind, “Maneuver Warfare,” Paper for the 1980 New York Militia Association Convention, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 11.

⁵⁸⁶ William S. Lind, “Maneuver Warfare,” Paper for the 1980 New York Militia Association Convention, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 11.

⁵⁸⁷ “Reforming the Defense Establishment: Introduction,” in *The Defense Reform Debate: Issues and Analysis*, eds. Asa A. Clark IV, Peter W. Chiarelli, Jeffrey S. McKittrick, and James W. Reed (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 20.

Command (TRADOC) summarily suppressed, per General DePuy's guidance.⁵⁸⁸ Lind penned a second article, "Banned at Fort Monroe, Or The Article The Army Doesn't Want You To Read," which prompted TRADOC to admit to suppressing the article. This generated a lot of attention for maneuver warfare advocates.⁵⁸⁹ The rewrite of *FM 100-5* also highlighted a divide in the Army concerning whether doctrine should serve as a guide for action or rather a set of instructions dictating action. General DePuy doubted the initiative of soldiers and believed they needed to be told in simple terms what to do. In contrast, Lieutenant General John Cushman believed people worked best when initiative was encouraged and thus that doctrine was best employed as a guide that did not create artificial constraints.⁵⁹⁰ Reformists also focused on the centrality of leadership and the importance of people. Developing an officer corps that could make the right choices and that was not inclined to conformity was deemed a priority.⁵⁹¹

In 1978, Senator Hart joined Senator Taft in publishing a second *White Paper on Defense*, arguing the United States could increase the effectiveness of its military forces without increases in spending. The senators proposed a new force structure, consisting of smaller, more modern ground forces and a more effective Navy featuring new concepts and technologies.⁵⁹² Newt Gingrich was also an active reformer and published his own manuscript on the national defense system. Observing a common agreement that too much money was being spent on the wrong things and too much time was being spent on

⁵⁸⁸ Lind, personal conversation. This emphasis was driven by the influence of operational research and analysis in the development of the publication as opposed to military theory. See Robert Leonhard, *The Art of Maneuver: Maneuver-Warfare Theory and AirLand Battle* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1991), 130–135.

⁵⁸⁹ Lind, personal conversation.

⁵⁹⁰ Paul H. Herbert, "Toward the Best Available Thought: The Writing of Field Manual 100-5, Operations by the United States Army, 1973–1976" (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1985), 120–124, accessed November 26, 2018, http://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=osu1487261919111102&disposition=inline.

⁵⁹¹ John M. Oseth, "An Overview of the Reform Debate" in *The Defense Reform Debate: Issues and Analysis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1984), 49–52. (44–61)

⁵⁹² Robert Taft Jr. and Gary Hart with William S. Lind, "*White Paper on Defense: A Modern Military Strategy for the United States*, 1978 ed., Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 9.

the minor details, Gingrich outlined a series of questions and principles to “begin a dialogue on the requirements of American survival.”⁵⁹³

Bill Lind joined forces with Steven Canby, Norman Polmar, Pierre Sprey, and John Boyd to form the intellectual engine of the reform movement. Boyd, a retired U.S. Air Force colonel, fighter pilot, and influential military theorist, began inspiring a generation of Pentagon reformers with his broad perspective on warfare encapsulated in his famed “Patterns of Conflict” lecture.⁵⁹⁴ In 1981, Senator Hart penned a column in the *Wall Street Journal* identifying the “military reform” movement as such for the first time, and he helped create the Congressional Military Reform Caucus.⁵⁹⁵ In 1982, Colonel Huba Wass de Czege helped revise a new version of *FM 100–5*, or *AirLand Battle*. General DePuy still had a powerful lobby, so the new version, which emphasized initiative and operational art, still contained the concept of synchronization. That same year, the U.S. Military Academy held a conference on military reform, which resulted in the first book on the subject.⁵⁹⁶

The Marine Corps’ own reform movement and embrace of maneuver warfare developed around the strategic leadership of General Gray and, to a lesser extent, John Boyd as the operational-level leader.⁵⁹⁷ General Gray, who found greater kinship with Sun Tzu than Clausewitz explained his embrace of maneuver warfare: “But I believe in the indirect approach. I believe in the absolute essentiality of using the subtleties of war

⁵⁹³ Newt Gingrich with Steve Hanser, Walter Jones, and David Warnick, *On Survival: A Comprehensive Critique of Our National Defense System* (Draft, 1983), Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 54, Folder 1.

⁵⁹⁴ A compilation of Boyd’s briefings can be found via Air Power Australia: Australia’s Independent Defence Think Tank: <http://www.ausairpower.net/APA-Boyd-Papers.html>.

⁵⁹⁵ “Reforming the Defense Establishment: Introduction,” in *The Defense Reform Debate: Issues and Analysis*, eds. Asa A. Clark IV, Peter W. Chiarelli, Jeffrey S. McKittrick, and James W. Reed (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 21.

⁵⁹⁶ Lind, personal conversation. See also Huba Wass de Czege, “Army Doctrinal Reform,” in *The Defense Reform Debate: Issues and Analysis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1984), 101–120.

⁵⁹⁷ The Marines folded Boyd, who provided a lot of the initial intellectual weight, into their early discussions concerning maneuver warfare. See, for example, Ian T. Brown, *A New Conception of War: John Boyd, the U.S. Marines, and Maneuver Warfare* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2018), 61.

and thinking as part of the major game plan.”⁵⁹⁸ Maneuver warfare is a warfighting philosophy predicated on empowering young leaders and rendering “the enemy incapable of resisting by shattering his moral and physical cohesion,” as opposed to through incremental attrition.⁵⁹⁹ The philosophy is “built upon the concepts of concentration, speed, surprise, boldness, friction, and disorder,” as well as the “commander’s intent, aggressive decentralized decisionmaking, a single focus of main effort, an understanding of the necessary actions required to shape the situation, and mission tactics.”⁶⁰⁰ Maneuver entails more than just gaining a positional advantage in space. Rather, adapting to changing circumstances and generating a faster operational tempo by making and implementing decisions consistently faster than the enemy can result in “a tremendous, oftentimes decisive advantage.”⁶⁰¹ The use of mission tactics—“assigning a subordinate mission without specifying how the mission must be accomplished”⁶⁰²—enables a subordinate to exploit opportunities as they arise and inform his commander of what he has done rather than waiting for permission to do it. Understood two levels up and two levels down, the commander’s intent is the “glue” that ensures this decentralized initiative remains consistent with the commander’s desires.⁶⁰³

Embodying the maneuverist mindset, Gray emphasized the democratization of ideas and understanding the need for fresh inputs from non-Marines as well, leading to his assembling an eclectic mix of reform-minded politicians, military theorists, congressional staffers, Army officers, and Sea, Air, and Land Teams (SEALs) that joined

⁵⁹⁸ *Professional Military Education Before the Military Education Panel, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives*, 100th Cong., July 12, 1988, 9, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 6, Folder 8.

⁵⁹⁹ U.S. Marine Corps, *FMFM I*, 59.

⁶⁰⁰ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 123.

⁶⁰¹ U.S. Marine Corps, *FMFM I*, 69.

⁶⁰² U.S. Marine Corps, 70.

⁶⁰³ U.S. Marine Corps, 71–72.

forces with the Marine maneuverists.⁶⁰⁴ General Gray initially met Bill Lind at a seminar at Carlisle Barracks in the mid-1970s. Lind was a crank and something of an iconoclast at times, and as a result, General Gray was told by higher-ups that he should not let Lind speak with his Marines. However, Gray was willing (and eager) to speak with anyone who had ideas and wanted to help.⁶⁰⁵ Lind served as the political arm of the Marine reform movement. Colonel Mike Wyly, who was the Head of Tactics at Amphibious Warfare School (AWS) in Quantico introduced a new generation of junior officers to maneuver warfare and contributed frequently to debates in the *Gazette*. He embodied the educational and intellectual arm. Colonel John Greenwood, the editor of the *Gazette*, managed the “social media” arm, and a whole host of dedicated change-minded junior and midgrade officers who ultimately refined the operational concepts, acquired the hardware, and embraced the philosophy during exercises served as the operatives of the movement.⁶⁰⁶ This network was necessary to bureaucratically and intellectually outmaneuver a Marine Corps still focused on attrition-based warfare.

C. MANEUVER WARFARE: PEOPLE

When General Louis Wilson became Commandant in 1975, the Marines Corps was suffering from a “crisis of confidence” and was losing its identity as an elite fighting force. The Marines Corps, struggling to cope with the transition to the All-Volunteer Force (AVF), had “the worst rates of imprisonment, unauthorized absence, and courts-martial in the armed forces” and was second only to the Navy in drug and alcohol abuse rates, all of which adversely impacted proficiency and readiness.⁶⁰⁷ Racial agitators both inside and outside the Marine Corps attributed these problems to the increased proportion—from 11.5 percent of enlisted personnel in 1970 to 22.4 percent in 1980—of

⁶⁰⁴ Gray, personal conversation. General Gray noted meeting with several politicians, including Representatives Newt Gingrich and William Nichols and Senator Sam Nunn, as well as working with maneuver warfare advocates in the Army, such as General John Lindsay, the first Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command.

⁶⁰⁵ Gray, personal conversation.

⁶⁰⁶ Wilson, email to author, November 20, 2018.

⁶⁰⁷ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 612.

black Marines, an indication of the racial turmoil both in the Marine Corps and in American society at the time.⁶⁰⁸ Military thinkers were (again) beginning to question the future of the Marine Corps and the need for an amphibious capability in the Nuclear Age.⁶⁰⁹ Determined to recapture the public's admiration and its status as an elite fighting force, General Wilson, joined by newly appointed and newly promoted Lieutenant General Robert H. Barrow as deputy chief of staff for manpower at Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC), made improving the quality of the individual Marine a top military and political priority. In a series of recruiting, recruit depot, and training and organization reforms and initiatives, General Wilson and his ultimate successor, General Barrow, restored the distinction of, and trust in, the Marine Corps and positioned the Corps as a viable, versatile, and independent force in the defense establishment.⁶¹⁰ As the Marine Corps transitioned to maneuver warfare, the Corps' leadership harnessed the improved quality of the individual Marine to emphasize initiative, thinking leaders, fighting smart, and decentralized execution on the battlefield.

The Marine Corps made three primary errors as it transitioned to the post-Vietnam AVF: prioritizing mental testing focused on inherent ability (e.g., an IQ test) over education; assuming the end of the draft would not negatively impact the Corps' recruiting effort since it was already a volunteer organization; and, assuming drill instructors "could make a Marine out of anyone."⁶¹¹ General Wilson's predecessor, General Robert E. Cushman Jr. emphasized quantity (i.e., making numbers) over quality. Under General Cushman's watch, "the number of Category IV mental types (the

⁶⁰⁸ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 612.

⁶⁰⁹ See, for example, Martin Binkin and Jeffrey Record, *Where Does the Marine Corps Go from Here?* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1976).

⁶¹⁰ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 612–616; David H. White Jr., "Louis H. Wilson: 1975–1979" in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 427–432; Edwin H. Simmons, "Robert Hilliard Barrow: 1979–1983," in *Commandants of the Marine Corps*, eds. Allan R. Millett and Jack Shulimson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 447–448; William J. Bowers, "Transformational Leadership: Gen Louis H. Wilson, Millsaps '41" (lecture, Millsaps College, video published March 22, 2015 by SoutheastMarines), accessed August 22, 2018, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJZCBg_SDLY.

⁶¹¹ Bernard E. Trainor, "The Personnel Campaign Issue Is No Longer in Doubt," in *The Legacy of Belleau Wood: 100 Years of Making Marines and Winning Battles*, eds. Paul Westermeyer and Breanne Robertson (Quantico, VA: History Division, U.S. Marine Corps, 2018), 252–255.

marginally mentally competent)” dropped “from a 1972 high of 20 percent to 4 percent in the following year,” but the percentage of high school graduates also decreased to roughly half of all new male recruits,⁶¹² despite a standing recruiting goal of 65 percent high school graduates.⁶¹³ The Marine Corps erred in overlooking the difference between being “trainable, as measured by a validated testing system,” and being “receptive to training” and amendable to adjusting to military life, which by dropping out of high school, most recruits had already proven themselves not to be.⁶¹⁴ Secondly, the Marine Corps did reasonably well recruiting during the draft years and thought this would be continue with the AVF. A large percentage of these volunteers, however, were simply trying to avoid being drafted into the Army. Thirdly, the introduction of an inferior quality of recruits strained an already overworked drill instructor corps, leading to frustration, high attrition rates, and recruit abuse that culminated in the Private Harry Hiscock and Private Lynn McClure incidents. A drill instructor at Parris Island shot Hiscock in the hand, and McClure died due to head injuries sustained in a pugil stick bout at San Diego.⁶¹⁵

Immediately upon becoming Commandant, General Wilson set out to transform the Marine Corps’ culture and remake its public image, laying out his philosophy at his change of command: “I call upon all Marines to get in step, and to do it smartly.”⁶¹⁶ His first round of reforms raised standards for recruiting, mandating a 75 percent high school graduation rate; shifted operational control for recruiting from HQMC to the commanding generals of the recruit depots, and only credited recruiters with success if their recruits completed initial training; and, cleansed the Corps’ ranks of drug, alcohol, and other problems via the Expeditious Discharge Program. Wilson emphasized that he would accept a 10,000-Marine reduction in forces if it meant recruiting only stable,

⁶¹² Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 612.

⁶¹³ Trainor, “Personnel Campaign,” 252.

⁶¹⁴ Trainor, “Personnel Campaign,” 252; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 612.

⁶¹⁵ Trainor, “Personnel Campaign,” 253–257; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 614; White, “Louis H. Wilson,” 431.

⁶¹⁶ As quoted in White, “Louis H. Wilson,” 429.

adaptable youths who would finish their enlistments. Wilson systematized the recruiting process and introduced a series of quality control measures to identify unusual or unexplained variances and distinguish good recruiters from bad ones. By Fiscal Year 1983, recruiters exceeded their annual non-prior service quotas and surpassed the 90 percent high school graduate threshold, reaching nearly 100 percent four years later. An increasing number of female Marines, whose numbers tripled between 1976 and the late 1980s, contributed to the success of these new selective recruitment procedures.⁶¹⁷

Following the Hiscock and McClure incidents, Wilson instituted a second round of reforms specific to recruit training. He eliminated so-called “motivation platoons,” shortened the training syllabus, and provided recruits with a little bit of free time when they previously had none. The number of officers assigned to recruit companies and platoon series doubled to improve supervision, and Wilson refined the process for screening, selecting, and training drill instructors. Additionally, he provided recruits with “a protected, confidential channel through which to report abuses” and reduced the number of recruits per platoon.⁶¹⁸

General Barrow inherited a serious drug abuse problem in the Corps when he succeeded Wilson as Commandant. In a 1980 DoD survey, 48 percent of male enlisted Marines admitted to using drugs in the past month, and 20 percent of the drug users further conceded that it limited their performance. On February 1, 1982, General Barrow issued an “ALMAR,” announcing his intention to eliminate all forms of illegal drugs in the Marine Corps. His new drug policy included a random and frequent urinalysis program. Barrow simultaneously “energized” Marine Corps leadership, and detected drug use gradually began to decline. Officers and staff noncommissioned officers who were

⁶¹⁷ Bowers, “Transformational Leadership”; Trainor, “Personnel Campaign,” 258–262; Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 614–615; Simmons, “Robert Hilliard Barrow,” 448. In his first posture statement, General Barrow set a goal of ten thousand women Marines, which he did not reach. See Simmons, “Robert Hilliard Barrow,” 452.

⁶¹⁸ White, “Louis H. Wilson,” 432; Bowers, “Transformational Leadership”; Trainor, “Personnel Campaign,” 263–269. As quoted in White, “Louis H. Wilson,” 432.

caught using illegal drugs were given no second chances. As a result, substance abuse numbers fell to less than 10 percent by 1985.⁶¹⁹

Trainor describes the Great Personnel Campaign upon which Wilson embarked as one of the most “difficult and critical” to the future of the Corps.⁶²⁰ In refusing to sacrifice quality and recognizing the individual Marine as the Corps’ most precious asset,⁶²¹ Wilson restored the Marine Corps’ position as an elite fighting force in the eyes of the American public, readied the Corps for operations across the globe, and strengthened its position within the defense establishment. Wilson and Barrow’s personnel reforms subsequently proved instrumental in facilitating General Gray’s decidedly bottom-up approach to implementing maneuver warfare.

Embracing this same “people first” mentality, General Gray set out to combat the anti-intellectual current in the Marine Corps at the time by making reading and serious self-study an expectation. He was determined to make his leaders think—a necessary component to maneuver warfare—and invested a large amount of time and resources to improve the quality of the Corps’ Marines. For example, as CG, 2nd Marine Division, he consolidated a packet of readings on maneuver warfare for his Marines to read,⁶²² activated a “professional study group,”⁶²³ and established a Maneuver Warfare Board to spread ideas on maneuver warfare.⁶²⁴ When Gray became the 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, he institutionalized this “intellectual renaissance” by revitalizing the Command and Staff College curriculum and faculty, publishing a required reading list for all Marines, revising the Marine Corps Institute professional education curriculum, introducing a Professional Noncommissioned and Staff Noncommissioned Officers

⁶¹⁹ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 615; Simmons, “Robert Hilliard Barrow,” 454.

⁶²⁰ Trainor, “Personnel Campaign,” 251.

⁶²¹ Louis Wilson, “Emphasis on Professionalism for a New Generation of Marines,” in *The Legacy of Belleau Wood: 100 Years of Making Marines and Winning Battles*, eds. Paul Westermeyer and Breanne Robertson (Quantico, VA: History Division, U.S. Marine Corps, 2018), 249.

⁶²² See the Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 39, Folder 13, for the packet of readings.

⁶²³ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 131.

⁶²⁴ Gray, personal conversation.

Education Training System, and securing funding for the construction of a credible library and research center. Gray's vision was to consolidate "all of the educational type institutions in the Marine Corps under the broad umbrella of such a Marine Corps University."⁶²⁵ This emphasis on education stood in marked contrast to what maneuverists identified as a burgeoning overreliance on technology—which promised to make everything lighter, faster, less complicated, and less expensive—as the answer to every problem on the battlefield.⁶²⁶

Gray wanted to ensure Marines were as mentally ready to fight as they were physically. He believed this was best achieved through education: "Through education we can equip ourselves to make sound military judgments even in chaotic and uncertain situations. The ability to make clear and swift judgments, amidst chaos, is what sets the warrior apart intellectually. Though practice in the field and in wargames is important to improving military judgment, its development remains anchored to education about war."⁶²⁷ Gray's intent for the Marine Corps PME system was to teach military judgement, not material to be memorized.⁶²⁸ As the first President of Marine Corps University, retired Lieutenant General Paul Van Riper, observed,

I often noted in my two years at Quantico that the primary 'weapon' that officers possess remains their minds . . . [and] that books provide the 'ammunition' for this weapon . . . I wanted to impart a simple lesson: a properly schooled officer never arrives on a battlefield for the first time, even if he has never actually trod the ground, if that officer has read wisely to acquire the wisdom of those who have experienced war in times past.⁶²⁹

⁶²⁵ As quoted in Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 270. See also Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 270–275; Millet, *Semper Fidelis*, 633–634; "Warfighting Panel."

⁶²⁶ Gary I. Wilson, email to author, November 23, 2018.

⁶²⁷ *Book on Books*, "Draft Copy" (Marine Corps University: Quantico, VA), Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 5, Folder 9. The quote is from the first chapter, which was authored by Colonel Mike Wylly.

⁶²⁸ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 270.

⁶²⁹ Paul K. Van Riper, "The Relevance of History to the Military Profession: An American Marine's View," in *The Importance of History to the Military Profession*, eds. Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 53.

Such vicarious experiences imparted wisdom and military judgment and enabled “practitioners of war to see familiar patterns of activity and to develop more quickly potential solutions to tactical and operational problems”—one of the very principles upon which maneuver warfare is based.⁶³⁰

D. MANEUVER WARFARE: IDEAS

Maneuver warfare involved three distinct mechanisms for building a broad base of support that facilitated a bottom-up transformation within the Marine Corps from an attrition-based mindset to one centered on creativity, initiative, and outthinking and outpacing the enemy. The first mechanism was the conceptual debates that occurred in the *Marine Corps Gazette*. The articles authored by maneuverists introduced the maneuver warfare philosophy and educated the readers, while those penned by detractors helped maneuverists refine their ideas and strengthen their arguments. The second was the training exercises and experiments that enabled junior Marines to experience firsthand the merits of maneuver warfare. The third was educational forums, both informal and formal.⁶³¹

Former President and Chief Executive Officer of Intel Corporation, Andrew Grove, identified “broad and intensive debate” as the single “most important tool in identifying a particular development as a strategic inflection point”—a full-scale change in the way business is conducted.⁶³² Such debate takes a lot of time, energy, and guts to partake in it, but it helps participants refine their own arguments and helps clarify the purpose of the debates themselves. Grove noted the importance of involving people from outside the organization or company as well since they bring their own biases, expertise,

⁶³⁰ Van Riper, 40.

⁶³¹ Gary I. Wilson, personal conversation with author and Professor Mie Augier, November 6, 2018. Wilson, a retired Marine colonel who took part in the *Gazette* debates, also notes the roles played by certain defense experts in the media. Fideleon Damian presents a similar argument, identifying General Gray’s use of institutional authority as another mechanism. See Fideleon Damian, “The Road to FMFM 1: The United States Marine Corps and Maneuver Warfare Doctrine, 1979–1989” (master’s thesis, Kansas State University, 2008), accessed November 25, 2018, <http://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2097/555/FideleonDamian2008.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

⁶³² Grove, *Only the Paranoid Survive*, 114.

and interests.⁶³³ The *Marine Corps Gazette* provided a public forum in which the merits of maneuver warfare were debated by both insiders and outsiders. These debates began in the late 1970s and early 1980s and developed the intellectual foundation for maneuver warfare and its outgrowth, the MEU(SOC).

In the February 1978 issue of the *Gazette*, William Lind penned a rather scathing critique of Marine officers, observing the lack of new tactical or operational concepts introduced in the *Gazette*, which he attributed to an inadequate knowledge of theory and history and a promotion system that did not emphasize theoretical ability.⁶³⁴ However, subsequent articles, including one of his own, seemed to blur the distinction between concept and capability development, and more specifically, between maneuver warfare as a philosophy and the related mobility and mechanized capabilities necessary to fight like a maneuverist. For example, later that September, Lind observed the “need to mechanize some portion of the Marine Corps” in order to meet the demands of the modern battlefield.⁶³⁵ A foot infantry force had severely limited tactical mobility, “rendering it operationally irrelevant” and “unable to exploit a tactical success.”⁶³⁶ As such, Lind proposed alternative models for building a mechanized capability and recommended the Marine Corps serve “as a laboratory for the development of more efficient and effective mechanized units,” but he had not yet addressed the maneuver warfare philosophy directly in the pages of the *Gazette*.⁶³⁷

In June 1978, Captain Stephen Miller identified lessons from World War II and from recent events in the Middle East, as well as growing trends toward mechanization. He also called for mechanizing the Corps’ amphibious forces to provide them with the

⁶³³ Grove, 3–7, 114–116.

⁶³⁴ William S. Lind and Jeffrey Record, “Marines Don’t Write About Warfare,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 62, no. 2 (Feb. 1978): 14. Lind decried the Corps’ structural deficiencies in an earlier article in *Proceedings*. See William S. Lind, “Twilight for the Corps?” *Proceedings* 104, no. 7 (Jul. 1977), accessed November 16, 2018, <http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/1978-07/twilight-corps>.

⁶³⁵ William S. Lind, “Proposing Some New Models for Marine Mechanized Units,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 62, no. 9 (Sep. 1978): 35.

⁶³⁶ Lind, “Proposing Some New Models,” 35.

⁶³⁷ Lind, 34–38.

mobility, firepower, and speed necessary to respond to crises, confine them, and provide for their end as quickly as possible.⁶³⁸ Hinting at maneuver warfare philosophy, Miller notes that in the European theater, a high mobility mechanized force could bypass “the forward concentration of forces which the Soviets strive for in the offensive . . . [and] exploit the critical vulnerability of the Soviet rear and flanks.”⁶³⁹ In a follow-up letter in February 1979, Miller further confused the relationship between mechanized forces and maneuver philosophy, writing, “[T]he nomenclature ‘mechanized’ needs not be restricted to a force composed of main battle tanks, tracked armored vehicles and tracked self-propelled guns . . . For ‘mechanized’ is less a function of equipment—as important as that may be—as it is a tactical concept, a method of operations and a state of mind.”⁶⁴⁰

In October 1979, Miller published a two-part series in the *Gazette* appropriately titled “Winning Through Maneuver” that clarified the earlier confusion he had caused by his using the terms “mechanization” and “maneuver” interchangeably. In his first essay, Miller cited historical examples of outnumbered forces winning in battle by focusing their strength on the enemy’s weakness and using surprise to their advantage. Miller encouraged Marines to further their knowledge of how Soviets would respond to an amphibious assault and emphasized the need for superior speed, mobility, flexibility, intelligence, and deception to counter the Soviet offensive force and generate a high tempo of operations. Doing so would lead to Soviet paralysis and a collapse of their will to resist. Key to such a concept would be retaining the initiative: “Control must be decentralized with each unit capable of fully independent operation. Friendly commanders at all levels must be keyed to recognizing and exploiting opportunities of their own initiative.”⁶⁴¹

⁶³⁸ Stephen W. Miller, “It’s Time to Mechanize Amphibious Forces,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 62, no. 6 (Jun. 1978): 39–42.

⁶³⁹ Miller, 41.

⁶⁴⁰ Stephen W. Miller, “Defining Mechanization,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 63, no. 2 (Feb. 1979): 12.

⁶⁴¹ Stephen W. Miller, “Winning Through Maneuver: Part I-Countering the Offense,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 63, no. 10 (Oct. 1979): 28–36.

Two months later, Miller's essay on countering the defensive was published. Miller observed that success in a defense organized on the Soviet model depended "upon the time available for its establishment, the degree of mobility of the opponent, and the direction and flexibility of the opponent's attack," which should be focused on identified weak points in the defense.⁶⁴² To win, an amphibious landing force employed maneuver and mobility and avoided an attrition-based conflict. A deception campaign, coupled with eliminating the defender's reconnaissance screen, supplied tactical surprise. Once penetration was achieved, the attack could not slacken to ensure the Soviet defender remained unbalanced.⁶⁴³ Miller's description of countering both the Soviet offensive and defensive embodied textbook principles of maneuver warfare.

Given the emphasis on maintaining a high tempo of operations and his involvement as a leader of the defense reform and maneuver warfare debate, it is no surprise that the influence of Colonel John Boyd began to surface in the *Gazette* debates concerning maneuver warfare. In March 1980, William Lind took to the *Gazette* once again to dispel perceived confusion, noting that maneuver warfare, which "is more psychological than physical," was "an overall concept or 'style' of warfare" whose opposite was the firepower-attrition style.⁶⁴⁴ Furthermore, maneuver was not simply movement, but rather "relational movement" and "moving and acting consistently more rapidly than the opponent."⁶⁴⁵ Lind referenced Boyd's observation-decision-action cycle and argued that the victor would be the one who could consistently cycle more quickly than his opponent, which caused the opponent to feel that he had lost control of the situation: "At that point, he has lost. Often he suffers mental breakdown in the form of panic and is defeated before he is destroyed physically."⁶⁴⁶ Similarly, at the end of the year, then Major General Bernard Trainor observed that the basic principle of operations

⁶⁴² Stephen W. Miller, "Winning Through Maneuver: Conclusion-Countering the Defense," *Marine Corps Gazette* 63, no. 10 (Oct. 1979): 61.

⁶⁴³ Miller, "Winning Through Maneuver: Conclusion," 57–63.

⁶⁴⁴ William S. Lind, "Defining Maneuver Warfare for the Marine Corps," *Marine Corps Gazette* 64, no. 3 (Mar. 1980): 55.

⁶⁴⁵ Lind, 56. Emphasis in the original.

⁶⁴⁶ Lind, 56.

in order to avoid attrition is initiative: “Essentially, the principle of the initiative calls for staying progressively ahead of an opponent in both thought and action. The corollary has the opponent always reacting to our actions.”⁶⁴⁷

In April 1981, the *Gazette* published a series of four articles on maneuver warfare under the headline “The ‘Maneuver Warfare’ Concept.” Captain Gary “GI” Wilson provided a synopsis of maneuver warfare principles: “The key element of maneuver warfare is the disruption and disorganization of the enemy rather than a fixation with the kill-this-and-kill-that syndrome. The maneuver style of war is more psychological in its destruction of the enemy, whereas firepower-attrition is more physical.”⁶⁴⁸ He also noted the need for not only a flexible logistics system, but also Marines who were able to operate independently according to individual initiative. He called on the Marine Corps to accept, teach, and train for maneuver warfare and identified careerism and the bureaucratic mindset as obstacles to its adoption.⁶⁴⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Michael Wyly followed, expressing his disdain for battle simulations that focus on casualties and lose sight of the objective. Wyly argued, “Attrition is not even relevant to winning or losing . . . Our war games should focus on meaningful things, such as destruction, not attrition. We destroy the enemy when we destroy his will to resist.”⁶⁵⁰ William Lind then critiqued Major General Trainor’s earlier article,⁶⁵¹ comments which Trainor viewed “as an extension of the essay rather than a contradiction.”⁶⁵² Deviating somewhat from Lind’s strict adherence to maneuver warfare philosophy, Trainor confessed, “As for my view that war is a ‘killing game,’ I plead guilty to being a hostage of my Service. Marines never seem to fight enemies who capitulate when the rules of chess would so dictate.

⁶⁴⁷ Bernard E. Trainor, “New Thoughts on War,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 64, no. 12 (Dec. 1980): 49.

⁶⁴⁸ Gary I. Wilson, “The ‘Maneuver Warfare’ Concept,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 65, no. 4 (Apr. 1981): 49.

⁶⁴⁹ Wilson, “The ‘Maneuver Warfare’ Concept,” 49–51.

⁶⁵⁰ Michael D. Wyly, “The ‘Maneuver Warfare’ Concept,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 65, no. 4 (Apr. 1981): 52.

⁶⁵¹ William S. Lind, “The ‘Maneuver Warfare’ Concept,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 65, no. 4 (Apr. 1981): 53–54.

⁶⁵² Bernard E. Trainor, “The ‘Maneuver Warfare’ Concept,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 65, no. 4 (Apr. 1981): 54.

Until we do, I still think it's wiser for an enemy to know that we intend to kill him, not psych him.”⁶⁵³

Maneuver warfare critics also joined the debate in the *Gazette*. One critic argued that the “cookbook recipes” dismissed by the maneuverists were in many instances required since a sufficient level of competence cannot be assumed to exist down to the small unit level. The critic went on to characterize maneuver warfare as a “freewheeling approach” that focused too much on the Corps’ tactical mobility—which could lead to more mechanization that could detract from the Corps’ strategic mobility—and not enough on destroying the enemy’s.⁶⁵⁴ Another critic argued that maneuver warfare did not give enemy commanders enough credit. After all, “it should not be assumed that enemy commanders will lose control of the situation and their forces disintegrate when faced with rapidly changing situations” while Marine commanders somehow remain unaffected.⁶⁵⁵ Additionally, enemy forces had proven throughout history that they would fight on in spite of “a disastrous logistics and command and control situation.”⁶⁵⁶ Mission type orders that relaxed command and control were deemed inappropriate, and lastly, if maneuver warfare was based on the assumption of an enemy superior in numbers and materials, the philosophy could not also assume there would be weak points to exploit.⁶⁵⁷ Another critic presented a rather circular argument, claiming the Corps’ mission statements, structure of, and perceived functions for MAGTF components were not oriented toward maneuver warfare, not recognizing that these could also be changed to facilitate the adoption of the new warfighting philosophy.⁶⁵⁸

⁶⁵³ Trainor, 54.

⁶⁵⁴ Gordon Batcheller, “Reexamining Maneuver Warfare,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 66, no. 4 (Apr. 1982): 22–23.

⁶⁵⁵ Richard H. Voigt, “Comments on Maneuver Warfare,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 66, no. 4 (Mar. 1982): 20.

⁶⁵⁶ Voigt, 20.

⁶⁵⁷ Voigt, 20.

⁶⁵⁸ J. D. Burke, “Maneuver Warfare & the MAGTF,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 66, no. 9 (Sep. 1982): 67–71.

In August 1982, Captain Wilson reentered the debate, noting that critics might have embarked on too casual a reading of maneuver warfare theory. Maneuverists did “not reject battle drills that have proven successful, only the combining of such drills into dull, repetitious, rote tactics” that “lead to predictability and defeat.”⁶⁵⁹ Subordinates were not simply turned loose on the battlefield. Rather, mission-type orders were tailored to meet the commander’s intent.⁶⁶⁰ Another maneuverist weighed in, pointing out that mission-type orders were, in fact, still orders that must be obeyed. However, instead of dwelling on *how* to accomplish the mission, these orders simply conveyed *what* needed to be done.⁶⁶¹ Bill Lind also combatted the critics who deemed the Germans an inappropriate example since they had lost two world wars. Such critics did “not have adequate historical background to separate German tactical and operational performance, which was generally very good, from Germany strategy and grand strategy, which was so poor it made defeat inevitable.”⁶⁶² Lind suspected that this rejection of German ideas was driven by a narrow parochialism and outright prejudice and anti-intellectualism.

As debates in the *Gazette* raged on,⁶⁶³ General Gray took a decidedly bottom-up approach to implementing maneuver warfare, notably as CG, 4th Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB), then MCDEC and 2nd Marine Division. Beyond refining task organizations and increasing the mobility and firepower of Marine ground combat elements, Gray nurtured an open and collaborative environment that broke down traditional notions of hierarchy, which he deemed essential to critical and creative thinking. A tireless operational critic, General Gray insisted on after action reviews

⁶⁵⁹ Gary I. Wilson, “Defending Maneuver Concepts,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 66, no. 8 (Aug. 1982): 34.

⁶⁶⁰ Wilson, “Defending Maneuver Concepts,” 34. Wilson, however, did somewhat inaccurately claim that maneuver advocates had never argued for increased mechanization in order to increase maneuverability.

⁶⁶¹ Bruce G. Brown, “Mission-Type Orders,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 66, no. 7 (Jul. 1982): 26.

⁶⁶² William S. Lind, “Why the German Example?” *Marine Corps Gazette* 66, no. 6 (Jun. 1982): 59.

⁶⁶³ Debates concerning maneuver warfare continued on in earnest for well over a decade. See Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., “On the Verge of a New Era: The Marine Corps and Maneuver Warfare,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 7 (Jul. 1993): 63–67. The editors include a comprehensive list of early articles concerning the maneuver warfare debate. Articles concerning maneuver warfare can still even be found in current issues of the *Gazette*.

(AARs) following wargames and field or command post exercises, during which discussions took place without rank insignia being visible, thus encouraging open dialogue and emphasizing the merit of ideas over rank.⁶⁶⁴ Gray was always more concerned about why a Marine did what he did (and what he thought) than what he did.⁶⁶⁵ The professional study groups he established at Camp Lejeune were imitated at other Marine Corps bases as well. For example, even though outside of Gray's immediate purview, maneuver warfare discussion groups at Camp Pendleton, inspired by those at Lejeune, insisted on participants, regardless of rank, referring to one another as "Sir," thus placing a similar emphasis on the merit of ideas.⁶⁶⁶ The conceptual debates in the *Gazette* were not inhibited by a deference to rank either.

Knowing he faced a lot of resistance, he ignored the "Marine Corps way" of doing things and sheltered the maneuver warfare movement from established doctrinal processes and the top of the organization, which he felt would have crushed it. Despite senior Marine leadership remaining skeptical, under his leadership, 4th MAB embraced mission-type orders over conventional warfare doctrine during North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) exercises, and 4th MAB's operational performances consistently received high marks from the Supreme Allied Commander Europe and European allies.⁶⁶⁷ This not only won him converts at the grassroots level within his own command, but he could also explain away his lower units' straying from conventional tactics as junior officers not knowing any better, thus protecting maneuver warfare from meddling while also testing it at some of the highest levels possible short of actual combat.⁶⁶⁸ While at Quantico, Gray started identifying Marines to come work for him at the Doctrine Center, creating a critical mass that fed on itself. After working hours

⁶⁶⁴ Mie Augier and Jerry Guo, "Overcoming Negative Leadership Challenges," 279.

⁶⁶⁵ "Warfighting Panel."

⁶⁶⁶ Al Gray, Frank Hoffman, and T. X. Hammes, "The Great Story NEVER Told – The Untold Story General (Ret) Alfred M. Gray" (panel, Marine Corps Base Quantico, video published August 25, 2016 by samuel ezerzer), accessed August 23, 2018, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvU0nTickWo&app=desktop#fauxfullscreen>.

⁶⁶⁷ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 12–15.

⁶⁶⁸ Wilson, personal conversation.

debates, wherein the merits of a given idea and not the rank of the holder mattered, were commonplace.⁶⁶⁹ At 2nd Marine Division, General Gray leveraged command post and field exercises to evaluate the effectiveness of his guidance, as well as of his units as they explored the concept of maneuver warfare. He later incorporated computer simulators into these war games and reactivated his Camp Lejeune “professional study group.”⁶⁷⁰ In continually challenging his Marines in command post and field exercises, which emphasized “free play” instead of scripted scenarios, he let his Marines discover the merits of the maneuver philosophy first-hand, creating disciples.⁶⁷¹ General Gray leveraged his command positions to adopt maneuver warfighting as the official doctrine of increasingly larger units, which he commanded for an unusually long time. This fostered a broad-based, bottom-up change that ultimately enabled him to bureaucratically outmaneuver his maneuver warfare opponents.

Even after he became Commandant and tasked John Schmitt, then just a junior captain, with writing *FMFM I, Warfighting*, Gray ensured the publication would not be staffed in order to avoid diluting its value. He told Schmitt that the only person Schmitt had to satisfy was him. He also ensured the publication would bear no author and would thus be effectively written by the organization, spawning a sense of ownership and thus making it more difficult to reverse course. Remaining true to his principles, he provided Schmitt with his intent, oftentimes in the form of parables, and did not dictate any part of the publication.⁶⁷²

In more formal PME forums, Michael Wyly proved a pivotal figure in developing the maneuver warfare curriculum at AWS and imbuing junior officers with the maneuver warfare philosophy. Then the Director of the Education Center, Major General Trainor reassigned Wyly, then a junior lieutenant colonel, from the support staff at the Education

⁶⁶⁹ “Warfighting Panel.”

⁶⁷⁰ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 126–127, 131.

⁶⁷¹ Gray, personal conversation.

⁶⁷² “Warfighting Panel.”

Center to “fix tactics” at AWS.⁶⁷³ Wyly had previously impressed Trainor after sharing with Trainor some of his studies from his master’s work in history at George Washington University. Wyly, as the Head of Tactics at AWS, felt the curriculum he inherited and which he had studied himself while a student at AWS, was lacking in history and intellectual rigor. Dissatisfied with Marine Corps doctrine and educational curricula, Wyly turned to the ideas of John Boyd and resolved to deemphasize instruction in manuals and doctrine, which he felt became ends in themselves.⁶⁷⁴ Wyly invited Boyd to speak during the 1979–1980 school year, and he incorporated historical battle studies and exercises that required students to make decisions. He eliminated prescribed solutions that instructors had previously relied on during these exercises. Wyly even deviated from established norms and curricula by taking his students to the field for tactical exercises without troops.⁶⁷⁵ He developed a reading list for his students, as well as an instructional program to teach maneuver warfare, which he later published as an appendix to Bill Lind’s *Maneuver Warfare Handbook*. Each lesson consisted of an historical background of the concept being taught, as well as a scenario providing a practical application exercise concerning the employment of the concept.⁶⁷⁶ Like General Gray, Wyly was able to help establish a broad base of support for maneuver warfare by leveraging his position to foster bottom-up momentum via his interaction with the Corps’ junior officer corps.

E. MANEUVER WARFARE: HARDWARE

During the Cold War, the Marine Corps was likely to be called upon to conduct amphibious operations or fight the Soviets and would thus likely be outnumbered in either instance. As a result, the Marine Corps needed to place an emphasis on fighting “smart,” or avoiding enemy strength and focusing on enemy weakness to reduce

⁶⁷³ Damian, “The Road to FMFM 1,” 73–74.

⁶⁷⁴ Damian, 73–76

⁶⁷⁵ Damian, 76–78.

⁶⁷⁶ Damian, “The Road to FMFM 1,” 78–80. A copy of the handbook can be found in the Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 50, Folder 5.

casualties and yield decisive results. Unfortunately for the Marine Corps, in NATO exercises during the mid-1970s, which served as a proving ground to European theater commanders, Marine ground combat elements were consistently assigned only lesser roles due to a lack of mobility and firepower. These Marine elements were oftentimes bypassed by more mobile opposing forces, or simply isolated, and ultimately contributed little to these exercises beyond serving as a symbol of U.S. strategic deterrence.⁶⁷⁷

As a result, in a letter dated December 9, 1977, General Wilson tasked MCDEC with developing a “test concept” for evaluating “mobile/mechanized forces” of reinforced battalion and reinforced regiment size and strength.⁶⁷⁸ The CG, MCDEC forwarded the test concept to the CG, FMF Pacific on March 7, 1978.⁶⁷⁹ The CG, MCDEC reported the results back to the Commandant on May 30, 1978, including recommendations concerning the most effective task organization for company-level operations, command and control procedures, and training and organizational requirements, as well as an evaluation of existing equipment and organization to support mechanized operations.⁶⁸⁰ The premise on which this initial test and evaluation, as well as the many that followed, was based was the necessity for Marine air-ground teams to be “responsive and flexible. They must be strategically mobile enough to move rapidly to any part of the world, yet tactically capable of fighting any enemy when they get there.”⁶⁸¹ In order to deal with the threats on the modern battlefield, amphibious warfare required substantial changes in tactics and equipment that enabled Marine Corps units to “choose the battlefield and the

⁶⁷⁷ U.S. Marine Corps, *FMFM I*, 74; “Warfighting Panel”; Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 12.

⁶⁷⁸ “Historical Chronology: Mobile/Mechanized Task Force Training and Fact,” Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 12, Folder 2.

⁶⁷⁹ Commanding General, MCDEC to Commanding General, FMF Pacific, “Test Concept for Evaluation of Mobile/Mechanized Operations,” March 7, 1978, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 12, Folder 1.

⁶⁸⁰ Commanding General, MCDEC to Commandant of the Marine Corps, “Phase I Mobile/Mechanized Task Force Training Exercise Report (Report Symbol MC-3500-06),” May 30, 1978, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 12, Folder 1.

⁶⁸¹ Alfred M. Gray Jr., “The Marine Corps and the Modern Battlefield” (speech, Virginia Military Institute, November 12, 1980), 4, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 56, Folder 17.

time.”⁶⁸² The enemy might know the Marines are coming, but he “doesn’t know where or when.”⁶⁸³

As Commandant, both Generals Wilson and Barrow rearmed the Corps and expanded training to keep the Corps operationally relevant “as a ready, mobile general-purpose force with amphibious expertise.”⁶⁸⁴ General Wilson established the Air-Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, California “to practice combined arms training, desert maneuver warfare, and mechanized/antimechanized operations” in realistic, live fire training environments.⁶⁸⁵ The Marine Corps conducted amphibious operations and maneuvers in northern Europe, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and in East Asia to prepare the Corps for operations in “any clime and place.” Tasked with not only being capable of performing NATO missions on the “northern flank” of Europe, the Marine Corps also had to be responsive and flexible enough to deploy anywhere in the world. As a result, the Corps developed three programs to tackle this strategic mobility problem set. The Navy began the *Wasp*-class landing helicopter dock (LHD) program in the early 1980s, as well as the LSD (landing ship dock)-41 program in the same time frame. In 1982, the United States and Norway agreed to build a mountain supply depot to support a MAB should the Corps be called on to defend airfields and anchorages in northern Norway. Lastly, the Corps organized the Maritime Prepositioning Ships program.⁶⁸⁶

For its ground forces, the Corps increased the firepower of the Marine infantry battalion, upgraded to the M198 155-mm howitzer from its 105-mm howitzers, adopted the M-1A1 tank in 1985, provided infantry regiments and tank battalions with vehicle-mounted TOW antitank missiles, and introduced the Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) program in 1980.⁶⁸⁷ To support these ground forces, General Wilson canceled his

⁶⁸² Gray, “The Marine Corps and the Modern Battlefield,” 7.

⁶⁸³ Gray, “The Marine Corps and the Modern Battlefield,” 7.

⁶⁸⁴ Wilson, “Emphasis on Professionalism,” 249.

⁶⁸⁵ White, “Louis H. Wilson,” 430; Wilson, “Emphasis on Professionalism,” 246, 248

⁶⁸⁶ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 617–618.

⁶⁸⁷ Millett, *Semper Fidelis*, 619. General Gray was particularly instrumental in the acquisition of the LAV. Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 167; Lind, personal conversation.

predecessor's plan to purchase the Grumman F-14 and decided to wait for the McDonnell-Douglas F-18 and its attack/fighter capability. Wilson then moved forward with plans to acquire the new Harrier, the AV-8B, which he deemed essential "to assure land-based, fixed-wing close air support in amphibious operations without having to rely on existing airfields."⁶⁸⁸ Wilson leveraged his significant network of allies in Congress across both parties to counter opposition from the Navy, who viewed the AV-8B as a threat to the large aircraft.⁶⁸⁹

The Marine Corps also acquired or developed significant enhancements to their command, control, and communications equipment, as well as the high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV), landing craft air cushioned (LCAC), V-22 Osprey, M-16 rifle, and squad automatic weapon, among many other improvements to their warfighting toolkit.⁶⁹⁰ In short, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Marine Corps totally revamped its capabilities to create a more mobile, responsive, forward-deployed force that made the implementation of maneuver warfare possible.

F. THE MEU(SOC) AND THE FUTURE

The transformation of the Marine Corps preceded the Weinberger memo, and the MEU(SOC), with its emphasis on the raid and embracing the concept that "we were no longer going to land where they are, we were going to land where they aren't" is a natural outgrowth of the maneuver warfare movement.⁶⁹¹ Thus, even though the Marine Corps was reluctant to provide a force contribution to SOCOM, it had already taken the initiative to meet the demands of the future operating environment, and its assessment of the capabilities needed therein proved adequate.

Maneuver warfare and the MEU(SOC) both enjoyed fairly immediate success in meeting the demands of the operating environment. Success on the battlefield in

⁶⁸⁸ White, "Louis H. Wilson," 434.

⁶⁸⁹ White, 434.

⁶⁹⁰ Gray, "The Marine Corps and the Modern Battlefield," 10–15; Gray, personal conversation.

⁶⁹¹ Gray, personal conversation.

Operation DESERT STORM was in many respects credited to maneuver warfare.⁶⁹² General Norman Schwarzkopf employed three Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs) consisting of 31 amphibious ships and 18,000 Marines and Sailors from 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), 5th MEB, and the 13th MEU off the coast of Kuwait in a deception operation to force Iraqi forces to hold their defensive positions along the beaches, thus preventing them from being employed against the main attack.⁶⁹³

On August 4, 1990, during Operation SHARP EDGE, President George H. W. Bush ordered the 22nd MEU(SOC) to evacuate Americans from Liberia due to civil unrest. The original plan to fly elements of the 82nd Airborne Division into the international airport was no longer feasible since rebels had claimed the airport, so in the MEU(SOC)'s first test of its special operations capabilities, a rifle company of 225 Marines and Sailors flew by helicopter into the capital city, Monrovia, to begin evacuating Americans and foreign dependents. The initial flight rescued 73 civilians; in total, over 2,700 people would be rescued.⁶⁹⁴

On January 2, 1991, Secretary of State James Baker requested that President Bush order an emergency evacuation of the American ambassador from the U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu, Somalia. 4th MEB, already forward deployed in support of Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, was dispersed over several thousands of miles participating in a maritime exercise. 4th MEB deployed a two-ship task force to travel 1,600 miles to its southwest. On January 4, while still some 500 miles away, the task force launched a 60-man force on two CH-53E helicopters to the Embassy compound, where they arrived during the early morning on January 5. The operation called for the

⁶⁹² G. I. Wilson, an early maneuver warfare advocate, championed the cause in the *Gazette*. See G. I. Wilson, "The Gulf War, Maneuver Warfare, and the Operational Art," *Marine Corps Gazette* 75, no. 6 (Jun. 1991): 23–24. For a more mainstream account of the successes of maneuver warfare, see Joseph J. Romm, "The Gospel According to Sun Tzu," *Forbes*, December 9, 1991, copy emailed to author and Professor Mie Augier by G. I. Wilson, November 7, 2018.

⁶⁹³ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 358–360. After retiring, Lieutenant General Bernard Trainor became a war correspondent. He argued that even though these forces did not conduct an amphibious assault, "their very presence . . . played a decisive strategic role in the overall campaign. See Bernard E. Trainor, "Amphibious Operations in the Gulf War," *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 8 (Aug. 1994): 56–60.

⁶⁹⁴ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 362–365.

helicopters to be refueled three times. The Marines secured the compound and evacuated 282 people, including 12 different ambassadors and citizens from 31 different countries.⁶⁹⁵ During subsequent operations in Somalia, Marines performed nearly every special operations capable mission essential task.⁶⁹⁶

In another rapid response operation, on June 8, 1995, forward-deployed Marines on ship launched a tactical recovery of aircraft or personnel (TRAP) mission in less than two hours following notification to rescue downed U.S. Air Force pilot Captain Scott O'Grady in Bosnia. 41 infantry Marines embarked on two CH-53 helicopters picked up O'Grady while two Harriers, two Cobras, two EA-6Bs, and two Marine F/A-18s provided air coverage.⁶⁹⁷ The perceived success of the MEU(SOC), however, masked the fact that the MEU(SOC) had not seen actual combat and that the institutional-level link between SOCOM and the Marine Corps, the SOCOM-USMC Board, had atrophied and would lapse all together in the mid-1990s.⁶⁹⁸

In July 1999, the Commandant, General Jones, ordered a review of the MEU(SOC) program consisting of three phases: validating the then 29 capabilities of the MEU(SOC); conducting a review of doctrine, policy, structure, training, and equipment to identify the need for possible changes; and, changing and rewriting doctrine, orders, and directives following the Commandant's approval of recommended changes.⁶⁹⁹ The review, which consisted of representatives from all three MEFs, determined the "MEU(SOC) program is not broken!" and recommended dropping the in-extremis hostage rescue (IHR) mission and placing more training emphasis on conventional

⁶⁹⁵ Turley, *Journey of a Warrior*, 366–371.

⁶⁹⁶ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 5–6.

⁶⁹⁷ John H. Admire, "The Rescue in Bosnia: More Than Meets the Eyes," *Armed Forces Journal International* (Jul. 1995): 47, Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 5, Folder 27.

⁶⁹⁸ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 6.

⁶⁹⁹ "Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable, MEU(SOC), Executive Summary," Steve Patton Collection, Box 3, Folder 3, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

amphibious capabilities, such as humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HADR) and NEOs.⁷⁰⁰

The early success of the MEU(SOC) was heralded in the *Gazette*, and the vast majority of Marines seemed as satisfied with the program as the institution was. “The Raid is Back!” exclaimed one Marine major, in the November 1988 issue.⁷⁰¹ The renaissance of this capability “returns the Marine Corps’ unique and distinguished role as the Nation’s expeditionary forces-in-readiness.”⁷⁰² Another Marine described the MEU(SOC) as “[o]ne of the most important developments” in providing “a defense for the evolving threats directed against our country.”⁷⁰³ A lieutenant colonel made another bold claim: “The Nation has no assets that can equal the flexible responsiveness of its forward-deployed, special operations capable Marine expeditionary units.”⁷⁰⁴ Reflecting on his experiences on a recent MEU(SOC) deployment, one Marine captain noted “the diverse usefulness of these forward-deployed forces.”⁷⁰⁵ Another Marine worried that declining budgets would could imperil the MEU(SOC) and thus the country’s maritime strategy,⁷⁰⁶ while others lauded the training the program provided and argued for more

⁷⁰⁰ “MEU(SOC) Program Review Phase II Recommendations,” February 17, 2000, Steve Patton Collection, Box 3, Folder 4; “Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable, MEU(SOC), Executive Summary,” Steve Patton Collection, Box 3, Folder 3. III MEF and I MEF disagreed on whether the IHR mission should be retained. III MEF wanted to retain close quarter battle capabilities but not include the IHR direct action mission. See Colonel Timothy Conway to Lieutenant Colonel Aluah E. Ingersoll, Colonel Randall W. Larsen, Colonel Gary W. Miller, Lieutenant Colonel Robert S. Rea, Richard Crawford, Jim Gillis, and David Johnson, “RE: I MEF Trip to II MEF 16–18 Feb,” Steve Patton Papers, Box 3, Folder 4. After the attacks on September 11, 2001, the training focus reverted back to emphasizing more combat skills.

⁷⁰¹ Susan J. Flores, “The Raid Is Back!” *Marine Corps Gazette* 72, no. 11 (Nov. 1988): 25–26.

⁷⁰² Flores, 26.

⁷⁰³ Bruce A. Gandy, “Maintaining Our Special Operations Capabilities,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 73, no. 11 (Nov. 1989): 37.

⁷⁰⁴ Thomas W. Williams, “MEU(SOC): The Jewel in the Crown of Our Corps,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 3 (Mar. 1994): 30–32.

⁷⁰⁵ Steven M. Sullivan, “Forward Presence: MEU(SOC)s in Action Today and Tomorrow,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 79, no. 8 (Aug. 1995): 38–39.

⁷⁰⁶ Matthew E. Broderick, “MEU(SOC)—Once a Threat, Now Threatened,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 3 (Mar. 1994): 33.

coherent oversight and more training resources to expand the special operations capability beyond the MEU to the MEF.⁷⁰⁷

Rarely did a Marine critique the MEU(SOC) program, and even then, it was borne of a desire to refine and improve the MEU(SOC) and not question its adequacy or relevance. Colonel Lawrence Karch, for example, warned that raids were inherently risky and recommended limiting the MEU(SOC) to one or two raid packages, given the time crunch the force would be under when called upon.⁷⁰⁸ Major William Mullen argued MEU(SOC) training was too focused on “the ‘high speed’ and ‘sexy’ aspects of special operations” at the expense of “more mundane fundamentals that ultimately decide the outcome.”⁷⁰⁹ He recommended eliminating the combat rubber raiding craft raid company from the MEU force structure and proposed a redesigned pre-deployment training cycle that focused on the missions Marines would most likely be called upon to accomplish.⁷¹⁰

While the relevance—and even primacy—of the MEU(SOC) was never questioned, the idea that the Marine Corps should offer a force contribution only came up a few times in the pages of the *Gazette* throughout the 1990s, but never consistently, and never did the idea garner any support in subsequent articles. In fact, the opposite was the case; such suggestions were immediately met with opposition in two of the three instances. In the July 1992 issue, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Rogish Jr. argued the Marine Corps should “chop” its direct action platoons to SOCOM since their employment was unlikely given the likelihood SOCOM would turn to internal solutions. Maintaining these

⁷⁰⁷ Robert I. MacPherson, “A Marine Infantry Battalion and Special Operations Training,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 73, no. 11 (Nov. 1989): 30–32; Lawrence D. Meyer, “MEU(SOC): Coherent Oversight and Expanded Vision,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 80, no. 7 (Jul. 1996): 32–34; James G. Magee and Gary I. Wilson, “Maritime Special Operations,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 74, no. 9 (Sep. 1990): 14–16.

⁷⁰⁸ Lawrence G. Karch, “The Raid-The Dark Side,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 73, no. 2 (Feb. 1989): 18–19.

⁷⁰⁹ William F. Mullen, “The MEU(SOC) Program: Are We Preparing Properly?” *Marine Corps Gazette* 81, no. 3 (Mar. 1997): 29. Colonel Andrew Pratt and Major Steven Cash similarly argued that Force Recon could not maintain an IHR capability without it crippling its reconnaissance capabilities. Instead, they argued the MEU(SOC) should re-embrace the amphibious raid. See Andrew N. Pratt and Steven J. Cash, “Do We Still Need In-Extremis Hostage Rescue,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 77, no. 7 (Jul. 1993): 34–36.

⁷¹⁰ Mullen, “The MEU(SOC) Program,” 27–29.

direct action platoons duplicated capabilities that SOCOM already possessed. If the Marine Corps decided against contributing forces to SOCOM, the Corps should get rid of the MEU(SOC) IHR mission necessitating this force structure.⁷¹¹

Echoing many of Rogish's arguments, in the January 1994 issue, Major James Laster asked, "Are we elite enough?"⁷¹² Laster argued that by not contributing forces to SOCOM, "we are not able to benefit from special training, and we are excluded from certain missions."⁷¹³ He recommended including not only the Corps' direct action platoons from its Force Recon companies, but also radio reconnaissance platoons, and riverine assault craft units. Lieutenant Colonel Duane Van Fleet Jr., a Marine assigned to SOCOM, quickly pointed out that much of the information Laster used in his article was either dated or incorrect and that the SOCOM-USMC Board was already in place to address how to employ Marine and SOCOM capabilities in a complementary manner.⁷¹⁴

The matter did not arise again until April 2001 when Captain Michael Mooney argued in favor of establishing a Marine special operations component.⁷¹⁵ Identifying the Marine Corps' cultural reluctance as the primary culprit, Mooney wrote, "If our Corps is to continue to move forward, we must discard any ancient prejudices or parochialism that prevent organizations from growing and improving. Likewise, we must also not fall victim to a paradigm of exclusivity or institutional paranoia concerning the potential loss of forces to someone other than a Marine commander."⁷¹⁶ Mooney's article also met immediate opposition. Captain Ryan Reilly labeled Mooney's recommendation "an

⁷¹¹ Joseph J. Rogish, "Do Marines Belong in USSOCOM?" *Marine Corps Gazette* 76, no. 7 (Jul. 1992): 58–59.

⁷¹² James B. Laster, "The Marine Corps' Role in Joint Special Operations: Are We Elite Enough?" *Marine Corps Gazette* 78, no. 1 (Jan. 1994): 52–57.

⁷¹³ Laster, 53.

⁷¹⁴ Duane Van Fleet Jr. "Marines and Special Operations: A Reply," *Marine Gazette* 78, no. 4 (Apr. 1994): 56–57.

⁷¹⁵ Michael J. Mooney, "The Marine Special Operations Command: Clearing the Final Hurdle," *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no. 4 (Apr. 2001): 46–48.

⁷¹⁶ Mooney, 47.

unnecessary development.”⁷¹⁷ The Marine Corps, he argued, “has no unique capabilities that are not already provided by one of USSOCOM’s tenant commands.”⁷¹⁸ A Marine force contribution would only weaken the Corps.

Student theses in the 1990s expressed similar sentiments. The MEU(SOC) was deemed a “credible force alternative” and “appropriate to the most likely challenges of the twenty-first century.”⁷¹⁹ Some students even ranked the relevance of MEU(SOC) capabilities, ostensibly to prioritize which capabilities to retain in a budget constrained environment.⁷²⁰ The topic of a Marine force contribution was rarely engaged by Marines themselves. However, one Navy lieutenant argued, “To focus on special operations would actually serve to limit the Marine Corps’ overall strategic, operational and tactical utility.”⁷²¹ In contrast, an Army major recommended the assignment of the Corps’ force reconnaissance direct action platoon to SOCOM due to the “duplication of effort resulting from Marine reluctance to participate in the [Special Operations] unified command.”⁷²² In a rather prescient thesis at the turn of the century, Marine Major Francis Donovan obliquely referenced the need for SOF capabilities in arguing that the Marine Corps needed to avoid becoming too focused on large-scale, conventional

⁷¹⁷ Ryan W. Reilly, “An Unnecessary Development,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no. 7 (Jul. 2001): 49–50.

⁷¹⁸ Reilly, 49. It is worth noting that both proponents of a force contribution and its detractors employed the same duplicative capabilities argument on their behalf.

⁷¹⁹ Steven L. Suddreth, “MEU(SOC): Answer to the Most Likely Threat into the Twenty-First Century” (master’s thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1996), 23–24, accessed November 25, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a527723.pdf>.

⁷²⁰ John K. Love, “An Analysis of the Twenty-Nine Capabilities of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)” (master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1998), accessed November 26, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a350036.pdf>; Lawrence D. Nicholson, “An Analysis of the Twenty-One Missions of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)” (master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1994), accessed November 26, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a284632.pdf>.

⁷²¹ Robert G. Walker, “Spec Fi: The United States Marine Corps and Special Operations” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2000), 98, accessed November 26, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a359694.pdf>.

⁷²² Charles M. Sellers, “United States Special Operations Command: How Marine Corps Participation Could Enhance Current Special Operations Capabilities” (master’s thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1993), Box 178: Individual Research Papers, 1992–1993 McM-Q, Folder 12, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

campaigns and humanitarian assistance operations. Rather, the Marine Corps' future would be dominated by "unconventional and irregular small wars fought in remote and often inhospitable terrain and climate where the lines of distinction between government officials, military leaders, rebel warlords, and commercial profiteers are blurred."⁷²³ As such, the Marine Corps needed to achieve a balance between the ability to fight small wars and large-scale campaigns.

The Marine Corps as an institution was content with the MEU(SOC) and its relevance in the defense establishment as it entered the 21st century. The Corps identified low-intensity conflict as its most likely form of employment and advertised the value of its expeditionary forces as its ability to tailor forces ashore to meet the situation, rapidly reinforce or withdraw, limit force vulnerability and visibility, avoid basing or overflight requirements, and self-sustain.⁷²⁴ But would expeditionary forces retain their value in sustained low intensity conflicts in areas far inland? If not, how would the Marine Corps respond? The next chapter considers these questions as the Corps confronted a changing political and operational environment following the attacks on September 11, 2001.

⁷²³ Francis L. Donovan, "Chaos in the Littorals: Anarchic Wars and the United States Marine Corps" (master's thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2000), Executive Summary, accessed November 26, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a526292.pdf>.

⁷²⁴ "Marine Corps Capabilities in the Most Likely Environment for Employment: Low Intensity Conflict," Alfred M. Gray Collection, Box List Part 2, Box 6, Folder 1.

X. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPONENT

Simply put, the dynamics of the world have changed. The Cold War is long over and the Global War on Terrorism has caused us to rethink how we use our combat forces. Marines have capabilities easily adaptable to special operations and the eventual activation of MARSOC is a natural and necessary evolution to defeat today's terrorists . . . The change will be good for the country, good for SOOCM and good for the Marine Corps. This change is necessary. Parts of this change may be hard, culturally and otherwise, but people will adapt and SOCOM will be better for it.

—Dennis Hejlik, before taking command of MARSOC,
2006⁷²⁵

The Marine Corps entered the 21st century believing in the operational relevance of the MEU(SOC) and confident in its professed stature as the “first to fight.” Secretary Rumsfeld’s emphasis on transforming the DoD into a more agile force and the high value-low risk option SOF proved themselves to be in toppling the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, however, led to an increasing demarcation between SOF and conventional forces and a corresponding rise in the demand for and employment of SOF. Commandant General James Jones offered SOCOM a Force Reconnaissance platoon immediately following the attacks on September 11, 2001,⁷²⁶ but his successor, General Michael Hagee, proved less amenable to relinquishing any of his Marines to SOCOM control.

While General Hagee agreed to commit an initial force contribution to SOCOM, he viewed this solely as a proof of concept to demonstrate that Marines could do special operations. When Secretary Rumsfeld ordered a reluctant Marine Corps and SOCOM to develop a Marine special operations component, the Marine Corps’ intransigence undermined the transition from this initial force contribution to a component. The Marine Corps’ desire to retain control of its Marines and reluctance to create an “elite within an elite” manifested itself in the creation of additional obstacles along MARSOC’s path to both operational relevance and organizational stability. The Marine Corps proved

⁷²⁵ Mike Bottoms, “Interview with Brig. Gen. Hejlik,” *Tip of the Spear* (Jan. 2006) (Tab C), CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006.

⁷²⁶ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 8.

reluctant to adapt and question its own operating concepts, instead repeatedly opting to refine these concepts at the margins. A select group of midgrade officers and experienced enlisted Marines with non-traditional career backgrounds and previous SOF experience proved instrumental in the Corps' embrace of special operations and the development of the Marine Corps' initial force contribution and, ultimately, its special operations component.

A. TRANSFORMING THE DOD

Two months after taking over as Secretary of Defense to serve a President seeking to transform the DoD, Secretary Rumsfeld observed that the Department was providing the men and women of the U.S. military with “training, equipment and exercises that are more appropriate for the Cold War than for the coming decades.”⁷²⁷ Laying out what he dubbed “the enormity of the challenge,” Secretary Rumsfeld lamented DoD personnel policies that were still designed to manage a conscript (as opposed to volunteer) force of single men, policies that uprooted families and service members to new assignments so often that service members could never learn from their mistakes, benefit and assistance programs modeled after centralized Soviet government systems, and grade and rank systems that had been rejected long ago in the private sector in favor of flatter organizations.⁷²⁸ He declared it the Department's “collective responsibility” to “transform this great national asset.”⁷²⁹

Secretary Rumsfeld insisted each service “become more agile, more deployable, and better prepared to confront new, previously unanticipated threats.”⁷³⁰ He pushed the Air Force to field more unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and credits the Navy for developing the Fleet Response Plan, which doubled the number of carrier strike groups

⁷²⁷ “The Enormity of the Challenge—the Importance of Succeeding,” 1, March 20, 2001, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/660/2001-03-20%20Re%20The%20Enormity%20of%20the%20Challenge-The%20Importance%20of%20Succeeding.pdf#search=%22enormity%20of%20the%20challenge%22>.

⁷²⁸ “The Enormity of the Challenge,” 2–4.

⁷²⁹ “The Enormity of the Challenge,” 7.

⁷³⁰ Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 649.

available at any given time.⁷³¹ The Army, according to Rumsfeld, proved most resistant to change and transforming away from its Cold War posture focused on large land battles between sovereign states. As a result, he canceled the \$11 billion Crusader artillery system, a forty-ton 11-millimeter howitzer he deemed “the antithesis of agility and deployability.”⁷³² Rumsfeld dismissed Secretary of the Army Tom White for his resistance to these efforts and his advocacy for parochial interests. Secretary Rumsfeld also brought General Peter Schoomaker, a Special Forces (SF) officer, out of retirement to serve as the new Chief of Staff of the Army when General Eric Shinseki completed his tour. Secretary Rumsfeld and General Schoomaker converted the Army from ten active divisions to forty brigade combat teams in order to make the Army relatively more agile and deployable.⁷³³ He also directed the implementation of the Global Force Management (GFM) system in order to manage the force from a more global, capabilities-based perspective in order to facilitate the deployment of smaller, task organized units.⁷³⁴ Observing that the realities of war had changed following the end of the Cold War, Rumsfeld wanted to prepare the military “to be used earlier in order to avoid full-scale conflicts altogether.”⁷³⁵ As such, he also made increasing the authorities, capabilities,

⁷³¹ Rumsfeld, 649.

⁷³² Rumsfeld, 651.

⁷³³ Rumsfeld, 654–655.

⁷³⁴ James C. Wright, “Managing Non-Standard Force Demands: Risk Implications of the Global Force Management System” (master’s thesis, Joint Advanced Warfighting School, National Defense University, 2012), 1–20, accessed November 18, 2018, <https://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a562434.pdf>. Wright argued in 2012 that, despite Rumsfeld’s efforts, the GFM system at the time was still “inadequately designed to manage risk and resources for non-standard capabilities requested by the Combatant Commands (CCMD). These non-standard forces (*ad hoc* units and individual augmentees) represent the difference between the force currently constructed and the force currently requested to prosecute today’s operations. Embedded within is a fundamental bureaucratic tension inherent in managing the trade-offs between programmed and un-resourced activities.” See Wright, Abstract.

⁷³⁵ Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 650. Labeled the “key to the continued Joint Force transformation and improvement of joint warfighting capabilities,” *Major Combat Operations Joint Operating Concept*, published by U.S. Joint Forces Command, consolidated many of Rumsfeld’s ideas on transformation and established “a framework for the armed forces to transition from the industrial age in order to better harness our human and organizational capabilities.” See General Richard B. Myers to Secretary Rumsfeld, “Major Combat Operations (MCO) and Joint Operating Concept (JCO),” September 28, 2004, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3342/2004-09-28%20From%20Richard%20B%20Myers%20re%20Major%20Combat%20Operations%20Joint%20Operating%20Concept.pdf#search=%22myers%20major%20combat%20operations%22>. The first quote is from the “Action Memo,” the second from MCO JOC (TAB A), *iii*.

equipment, and size of SOF a priority, which only became more so following the attacks on 9/11.

B. THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11

Approximately 1,300 Marines and sailors from the 15th MEU(SOC) and the 26th MEU(SOC), known as Task Force 58 (TF-58), remained off the coast of Pakistan as Army SF Operational Detachment Alphas (ODAs) were flown into Afghanistan to execute a UW campaign to topple the Taliban regime. TF-58 eventually “seized” a desert landing strip southwest of Kandahar a month after an Army Ranger element had already captured it. The Marines of TF-58 saw little combat thereafter.⁷³⁶ Nevertheless, subsequent articles in the *Gazette* brimmed with enthusiasm but lacked any reflection concerning why the Marine Corps’ crown jewel, the MEU(SOC), had been relegated to the sidelines at the start of the campaign.

Following the attacks on 9/11, the U.S. Government quickly determined Usama bin Laden (UBL) was responsible, and President Bush demanded the Taliban regime in Afghanistan turn UBL and his supporters over to U.S. authorities. The Taliban did not comply, so President Bush ordered CENTCOM to topple the Taliban regime. This presented a somewhat daunting proposition. Afghanistan is a mountainous, land-locked country with minimal road and rail networks, making moving large numbers of troops into the country to conduct a ground invasion challenging even under the best conditions. Additionally, given the need to respond rapidly and the inability of air power alone to topple the regime, CENTCOM instead developed a plan for a UW campaign immediately following the attacks.⁷³⁷

On October 19, 2001, two ODAs were flown into Afghanistan. ODA 595 linked up with General Abdul Rashid Dostum. Relying on close air support and mounted on

⁷³⁶ Eric N. Thompson, “MarSOC: It’s About the Future,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 95, no. 10 (Oct. 2011): 62.

⁷³⁷ U.S. Special Operations Command, *20 Year History: 1987–2007* (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: SOCOM, 2007), 87.

horseback, ODA 595 claimed Mazar-e Sharif on November 10.⁷³⁸ ODA 555 linked up with the Northern Alliance commander General Fahim Khan and General Bismullah Khan on October 21 at Bagram Airfield. Once they commenced their offensive, ODA 555 and General Fahim cleared Bagram in two days of fighting and then launched an attack on Kabul on November 11, claiming the capital on November 13. The Taliban and al Qaeda forces quickly fled south toward Kandahar and east toward the Tora Bora Mountains.⁷³⁹ On November 14, ODA 574 and ODA 583 infiltrated into the Kandahar region and linked up with anti-Tablian forces, including Hamid Karzai. Karzai and his negotiators secured the surrender of the Taliban forces in the Kandahar region on December 6.⁷⁴⁰

In mid-November, the CIA deployed one of its “Jawbreaker” teams to Jalalabad to pursue UBL in conjunction with local Afghans. The team, however, needed assistance due to its small size. Since there were so few conventional forces in Afghanistan at the time, TF Dagger (Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF)-North) Commander Colonel John Mulholland agreed to commit ODA 563, which spent December and January in Tora Bora searching more than 200 caves in the hopes of finding UBL.⁷⁴¹

A Ranger airborne element captured Objective Rhino, a desert landing strip southwest of Kandahar, during the night of October 19–20. TF K-BAR (JSOTF-South) established its forward headquarters there on November 22, permanently moving to Kandahar Airfield on December 15.⁷⁴² TF-58, commanded by then Brigadier General James N. Mattis, also established a base camp at Objective Rhino.⁷⁴³ This marked the

⁷³⁸ SOCOM, 89.

⁷³⁹ SOCOM, *20 Year History*, 90; Linda Robinson, *Masters of Chaos: The Secret History of the Special Forces* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), 153–158.

⁷⁴⁰ SOCOM, *20 Year History*, 92–93.

⁷⁴¹ Robinson, *Masters of Chaos*, 158–177; SOCOM, *20 Year History*, 94.

⁷⁴² SOCOM, *20 Year History*, 89–90, 103–104.

⁷⁴³ “Marines Continue Fight in Operation Enduring Freedom,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 1 (Jan. 2002): 6.

longest amphibious force projection in Marine Corps history.⁷⁴⁴ On December 10, approximately 80 Marines helped secure the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, and on December 14, approximately 300 Marines seized the Kandahar Airfield, making the way for TF K-BAR to establish its headquarters.⁷⁴⁵

In January, TF K-BAR began executing a series of large-scale direct action missions. On the first mission, on January 6, a SEAL platoon, ST-3E, and TF-58 attempted to capture remaining al Qaeda members in Zhawar Kili. The mission lasted eight days and resulted in 406,000 pounds of ordnance expended and 10–15 Taliban killed. ST-3E and the Marines “found numerous documents and other items of intelligence value” in a series of caves and tunnels.⁷⁴⁶ The coalition contingent of TF K-BAR conducted additional sensitive site exploitation and direct action missions over the next two weeks, with the Marines providing air assault support.⁷⁴⁷

The speed with which the UW campaign achieved its objective and the limited number of troops it required raised the public profile of SOF and left an indelible mark on the military officer and politico’s consciousness as an example of a potentially new kind of warfare. SOF paired with indigenous forces, high technology, and immense firepower, it was thought, might be able to replace large numbers of forces and armor.⁷⁴⁸ For their part, the Marines of TF-58 authored a series of operational summaries and lessons learned compendiums in the *Gazette* during the second half of 2002. The topics ranged from an account of the airfield seizure by the assault flight leader for the six CH-53Es,⁷⁴⁹ to the relevance of the Marine Corps General Orders,⁷⁵⁰ the role of an infantry company

⁷⁴⁴ Dick Couch, *Always Faithful, Always Forward: The Forging of a Special Operations Marine* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 2014), 26–27.

⁷⁴⁵ “Marines Continue Fight,” 6.

⁷⁴⁶ SOCOM, *20 Year History*, 104.

⁷⁴⁷ SOCOM, 104–105.

⁷⁴⁸ Robinson, *Masters of Chaos*, 188.

⁷⁴⁹ Jay M. Holterman, “The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit’s Seizure of Camp Rhino,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 6 (Jun. 2002): 41–43.

⁷⁵⁰ T. Shane Tomko, “The 11 Commandments and the Defense of Kandahar,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 6 (Jun. 2002): 38–41.

executive officer in the defense,⁷⁵¹ fire support,⁷⁵² the employment of a weapons platoon in the defense,⁷⁵³ an infantry platoon and company in the defense,⁷⁵⁴ and ambush patrols.⁷⁵⁵ The reflections were exceedingly narrowly and tactically focused and borderline triumphal. If Afghanistan represented a new kind of warfare, that realization did not bear out amongst its Marine participants.⁷⁵⁶ While these Marines were fighting in Afghanistan, however, the Marine Corps at an institutional level did take some actions to reflect an appreciation for this new political and operating environment.

C. DET ONE

After 9/11, the Marine Corps reenergized its linkages with SOCOM. General Jones offered SOCOM several forms of support to alleviate the burden placed on the SOF community, including an initial force contribution, which met stiff resistance both from SOCOM and the Marine Corps. When he succeeded General Jones, General Hagee viewed this initial force contribution solely as a proof of concept. Demonstrating the resistance, the Marine special operations community faced from both the Marine Corps and SOCOM, General Hagee and the SOCOM Commander both sought to terminate this force contribution following its trial deployment.

⁷⁵¹ Jon Riggs, "The XO in the Defense of Kandahar," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 7 (Jul. 2002): 49–50.

⁷⁵² Clayton Henderson and Jason E. Broene, "Fire Support in the Defense of Kandahar," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 7 (Jul. 2002): 45–47.

⁷⁵³ Clayton Henderson, "Weapons Platoon in the Defense of Kandahar," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 7 (Jul. 2002): 42–45.

⁷⁵⁴ Ron Reed, "2D Platoon Defense at Kandahar," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 7 (Jul. 2002): 38–39; T. Shane Tomko, "Defense of Kandahar," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 7 (Jul. 2002): 35–36.

⁷⁵⁵ Alex S. Metcalf, Jason A. Richardson, Augusto F. Santa Cruz, Antione J. Howell, et al., "Kandahar Ambush Patrols," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 11 (Nov. 2002): 56–58.

⁷⁵⁶ One article stands out in particular for its focus on how the learning points the article identifies should be incorporated into training and equipping the force in the future. The platoon commander for the 1st Force Reconnaissance platoon from the 15th MEU(SOC), Captain Philip Treglia, identified the need for more thermal imaging devices, night vision goggles, laser designator capabilities, and live fire training. Within a laundry list of questions concerning how the Marine Corps was training and equipping its Marines for war, Treglia asked, "Why don't we expand 1st Force to participate as a full-fledged member of Special Operations Command?" See Philip J. Treglia, "Force Reconnaissance Missions," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 10 (Oct. 2002): 14–16.

Immediately following 9/11, Lieutenant General Emil R. Bedard, Deputy Commandant for PP&O, traveled to SOCOM to offer the Marine Corps' support in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The Marine Corps subsequently provided liaison officers to SOCOM for planning assistance and to inform, define, and shape personnel requirements for follow-on Marine Corps augmentations. The Marine Corps and SOCOM developed a joint position concerning developmental requirements for the V-22 Osprey and established institutional-level relationships between SOCOM directorates and their equivalents at Headquarters Marine Corps. The Marine Corps also provided planning augmentation to Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) to support requirements for Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF).⁷⁵⁷

Lieutenant General Bedard ordered Lieutenant Colonel Giles Kyser to go to SOCOM Headquarters and begin repairing relationships between the Marine Corps and SOCOM, which had fallen dormant in the mid-1990s. Lieutenant Colonel Kyser was the head of the MAGTF special operations section at PP&O (POE-30), having recently checked in during the summer of 2001. An infantry officer, he had also served as the operations officer for 2nd ANGLICO, executive officer for 2nd Force Reconnaissance Company, and on the staff of Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR). At SOCEUR, Kyser had developed a network within the special operations community, including U.S. Army Major General Eldon A. Bargewell, that he would be able to leverage in his new position. Additionally, while at SOCEUR, Kyser observed that special operations forces lacked the synergy of MAGTFs, leading him to conclude that the Marine Corps had something unique it could offer SOCOM: "a self-contained, task-organized air-ground force capable of a wide range of missions and imbued with an expeditionary, combined arms ethos."⁷⁵⁸

Lieutenant Colonel Kyser was tasked with reestablishing the SOCOM-USMC Board, a previously annual conference involving Flag and General Officer participation.

⁷⁵⁷ Giles Kyser, "The Corps and USSOCOM—Renewed Links," *Marine Corps Gazette* 86, no. 2 (Feb. 2002): 24.

⁷⁵⁸ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 6.

Kyser first met with the senior Marine at SOCOM, Colonel Paul Hand, who had similarly received guidance from Lieutenant General Bedard to improve the institutional relationship, reestablish the board, and identify opportunities to integrate efforts. While both Kyser and Hand had actually begun their efforts before 9/11, the emerging GWOT hastened them. Colonel Hand was already working on the placement of two Marine intelligence officers at SOCOM to provide immediate assistance. Colonel Hand and Lieutenant Colonel Kyser, however, ran into anti-Marine attitudes at SOCOM, as well as anti-SOCOM attitudes within the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps, after all, had originally decided not to become a full partner with SOCOM, and Marines, who thought of themselves as elite, believed they were capable of doing anything the SOF community could.⁷⁵⁹

On November 9, 2001, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Jones, and the SOCOM Commander, General Charles R. Holland, signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) reestablishing the SOCOM-USMC Board in order to “interface and coordinate with regard to common mission areas and similar procurement initiatives.”⁷⁶⁰ Specifically, the Board was tasked to:

1. Examine current capabilities and missions in order to leverage the unique capabilities of each organization, thus enhancing interoperability.
2. Establish and continue the interface between continental United States-based and theater-based SOC and deploying MAGTFs.
3. Synchronize USSOCOM and USMC warfighting developments, as well as material research and procurement initiatives.⁷⁶¹

Lieutenant Colonel Kyser briefed General Jones and select senior Marine officers in early January 2002 on an engagement plan in preparation for the first SOCOM-USMC Board. At the conclusion of the brief, General Jones expressed his belief that the Marine Corps had to seriously consider committing forces to SOCOM to demonstrate their

⁷⁵⁹ Piedmont, 7.

⁷⁶⁰ Kyser, “Renewed Links,” 24.

⁷⁶¹ Kyser, “Renewed Links,” 24.

commitment.⁷⁶² Lieutenant Colonel Kyser interpreted this as an order to develop a plan for a Marine Corps contribution to SOCOM to present at the first SOCOM-USMC Board. He quickly enlisted the help of Master Gunnery Sergeant Joseph G. Settelen III, who was the POE-30 Chief, and Master Sergeant Troy G. Mitchell. Settelen and Mitchell had extensive experience in the reconnaissance community and both had done “dark side” tours with SOCOM and knew the two communities well. Fortuitously, back in February 2000, Master Sergeant Mitchell had been selected to serve on the Reconnaissance Operational Advisory Group, which had been tasked by General Jones to “fix recon.” He thus had an intimate knowledge of the capacity of one of the communities that would be relied on heavily to contribute forces to the Marine Corps’ initial force contribution.⁷⁶³

Lieutenant Colonel Kyser wanted a uniquely Marine contribution to SOCOM that was self-sufficient, had particular intelligence capabilities, and that could operate alone or with any combination of conventional, special operations, or foreign military units.⁷⁶⁴ Kyser “identified four mission areas where this unit could make an immediate contribution: direct action, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, and coalition support.”⁷⁶⁵ Marching orders in hand, Settelen and Mitchell designed an initial plan for a unit of approximately 110 Marines and sailors consisting of organic fires, radio reconnaissance, and counterintelligence capabilities, as well as the necessary staff sections so the unit could function as a stand-alone entity. Aviation was not included

⁷⁶² General Jones had already offered SOCOM a force reconnaissance platoon in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. See Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 8.

⁷⁶³ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 9. For a discussion of the “Fix Recon” initiative, see Giles Kyser, “Fix Recon, USSOCOM, and the Future of the Corps: Food for Thought,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 87, no. 7 (Jul. 2002): 16–21. The initiative included extending the primary MOS (PMOS) designation of 0321 through E-9, extending the moratorium on special duty assignments to stabilize the population, and establishing missions and tables of organization for each reconnaissance unit.

⁷⁶⁴ Major Wade Priddy, the Det One fires liaison element leader and later its operations officer, described the unit: “Det 1 was able to independently execute the entire cycle of operation—from target development through exploitation—and sustain itself with its organic forces and equipment. Although lacking an aviation element, Det 1 adhered to the Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) philosophy that the whole of a properly trained and task-organized unit can be much greater than the simple sum of its parts, particularly when those parts train and operate together—day in and day out—under a single commander.” See Wade Priddy, “Marine Detachment 1,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 90, no. 6 (Jun. 2006): 58–61.

⁷⁶⁵ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 10.

because aviation personnel and equipment pipelines are programmed too far in advance and also are not completely under Marine control. Including aviation would have undermined the plan's chances of being able to quickly form, train, and deploy a unit to meet current operational requirements.⁷⁶⁶

Importantly, the unit was designed to be manned by senior Marines who would rotate back-and-forth with the conventional Marine Corps, thus negating the argument that the Marine Corps would lose these Marines to SOCOM forever. Settelen and Mitchell had to pare the initial plan for a 110-man unit to 86, which cut into the support capacity and functions that would distinguish the unit's unique contribution.⁷⁶⁷ In fact, less than one-third (24 of the 86) of the detachment would hold the 0321 Reconnaissance Marine MOS (see Figure 1).⁷⁶⁸

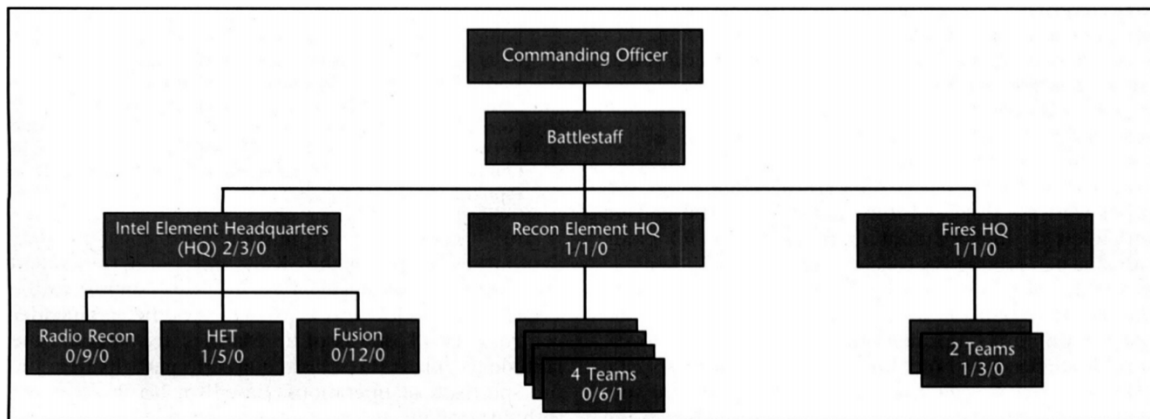


Figure 1. Detachment Organization⁷⁶⁹

Lieutenant Colonel Kyser immediately ran into resistance when he briefed the plan at the first SOCOM-USMC Board. Marines were not SOF, Kyser was repeatedly told, and despite offering a ready-built force that could perform four missions to help

⁷⁶⁶ Piedmont, 9–11.

⁷⁶⁷ Piedmont, 10.

⁷⁶⁸ Priddy, "Marine Detachment 1," 59.

⁷⁶⁹ Source: Wade Priddy, "Marine Detachment 1," *Marine Corps Gazette* 90, no. 6 (Jun. 2006): 59.

relieve the strain on other SOCOM units, Kyser and Colonel Hand struggled even to get SOCOM and HQMC to agree on and release minutes of the board meeting. The executive summary of the board meeting described the proposed Marine force contribution as “possible,” “notional,” and “a pilot program.”⁷⁷⁰

In subsequent discussions in Quantico, with Rear Admiral Albert Calland serving as the senior representative for SOCOM and Lieutenant General Bedard serving as the senior representative for the Marine Corps, Calland started with the offer that the proof of concept would be one Force Recon team. Bedard countered, refusing to offer anything less than a MAGTF commanded by at least a one-star general. The table of organization Settelen and Mitchell had designed won out.⁷⁷¹

Kyser and Hand identified Naval Special Warfare (NSW) Command as the key to any opposition to a Marine contribution. NSW appeared institutionally opposed to a Marine contribution due to parochialism and the belief that if the Marines had not wanted to be a part of SOCOM when it was activated, they did not need to be part of it ever. Unexpectedly, however, NSW offered to serve as the force contribution’s executive agent within SOCOM to press the issue forward, since NSW and the Marine Corps are both naval forces. This raised concerns that NSW might be trying to use its own proposal as a ploy to kill the Marine Corps’ force contribution proposal or make it serve NSW’s own purposes. The commanders of SOCOM and JSOC and the chiefs of the individual service components usually made key decisions in council, and NSW at the time was the potentially deciding vote, so Lieutenant Colonel Kyser and Colonel Hand acquiesced despite their concerns. However, as planning progressed, it became clear NSW was more interested in the support and staff function capabilities the detachment would provide, and not its reconnaissance platoon. In other words, NSW looked at the Marines’ force contribution as a toolbox from which to grab individual items, and not as a cohesive whole.⁷⁷²

⁷⁷⁰ As quoted in Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 11.

⁷⁷¹ Neil Schuehle, email to message to author, August 5, 2018.

⁷⁷² Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 11–12.

In July 2002, Kyser penned a response to a DoD study on the future of SOF, using it as an opportunity to demonstrate both the Marine Corps' historical support of SOF as well as the actions the Corps had taken since the 9/11 attacks to support SOF, including filling approximately 100 billets directly supporting SOCOM, providing liaison officers to SOCOM and SOCCENT, and the support TF-58 provided in Afghanistan. He also began lobbying the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, Michael A. Westphal, a former Marine himself. In another significant development and a further demonstration of the Marine Corps' support to SOCOM, Colonel Hand began working on getting Brigadier General Dennis J. Hejlik assigned to SOCOM. Hejlik would become the first Marine general officer assigned to the command. Meanwhile, Master Gunnery Sergeant Settelen and Master Sergeant Mitchell worked on finding money and equipment, all of which had to come from existing Marine Corps structure.⁷⁷³

On August 15, 2002, Secretary Rumsfeld wrote an email to the CJCS, General Richard B. Myers, asking Myers to write a proposal identifying what could be done to shift tasks currently being done by SOF to conventional forces.⁷⁷⁴ General Myers solicited input from the combatant commanders and service chiefs.⁷⁷⁵ Stephen Cambone, the Director, Program Analysis and Evaluation, offered that conventional forces could assume certain training missions (e.g., demining, counterdrug, peacekeeping, conventional operations), serve as a quick reaction force, conduct aerial resupply, and provide logistical support. SOF could be provided "first right of refusal" concerning various training missions, which Secretary Rumsfeld seemed particularly keen on

⁷⁷³ Piedmont, 12–14.

⁷⁷⁴ Secretary Rumsfeld to General Richard B. Myers, "Conventional Forces/Special Forces," August 15, 2002, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/2555/2002-09-26%20from%20Richard%20B%20Myers%20re%20Reducing%20Demands%20on%20Special%20Operations%20Forces.pdf#search=%22myers%20conventional%20forces%20special%20forces%22>.

⁷⁷⁵ General Richard B. Myers to Secretary Rumsfeld, "Reducing Demands on Special Operations Forces," September 26, 2002, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/2555/2002-09-26%20from%20Richard%20B%20Myers%20re%20Reducing%20Demands%20on%20Special%20Operations%20Forces.pdf#search=%22myers%20conventional%20forces%20special%20forces%22>.

relieving SOF from doing.⁷⁷⁶ For example, in a follow-up with Cambone, Rumsfeld asked Cambone to identify who could replace SOF conducting training missions in Afghanistan and Georgia and determine what the timetable should be.⁷⁷⁷

In response to Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers, General Jones wrote a memorandum to Secretary Rumsfeld, informing him that “Marine forces are capable of performing many special operations missions and collateral activities.”⁷⁷⁸ General Jones noted that the Marine Corps’ combined arms capabilities were particularly well-suited for direct action, special reconnaissance, coalition support, combat search and rescue, combating terrorism, foreign internal defense, humanitarian assistance, and security assistance. He also reminded Secretary Rumsfeld that the MEU(SOC) was capable of performing twenty-three mission essential tasks, many of which corresponded to SOF tasks. In particular, he noted that during OEF, MEU(SOC) units performed the following missions in support of SOF: sensitive site exploitation support/security, tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel, ground logistical (fuel) support, aerial refueling support, close air support, rotary wing assault support, forward operating base/safe house security, medical evacuation, intelligence sharing, and quick reaction force. In order to execute any SOF missions to the standard expected, however, the Marine Corps would need additional augmentation or support to improve its language capability and overcome technical shortfalls that limited interoperability with SOF.⁷⁷⁹

⁷⁷⁶ Stephen A. Cambone to Secretary Rumsfeld, “Conventional Forces/Special Forces,” September 16, 2002, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/2558/2002-09-16%20from%20Stephen%20Cambone%20re%20Conventional%20Force-%20Special%20Forces.pdf#search=%22cambone%20Conventional%20Forces%20Special%20Forces%22>.

⁷⁷⁷ Secretary Rumsfeld to General Richard B. Myers, “Special Operations,” October 11, 2002, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/1030/2002-10-11%20to%20Gen%20Myers%20re%20Special%20Operations.pdf#search=%22myers%20special%20operations%22>. The Marine Corps would assume the training and advising mission with the Georgians. See William Rosenau, Melissa McAdam, Megan Katt, Gary Lee, Jerry Meyerle, Jonathan Schroden, and Annemarie Randazzo-Matsel, *United States Marine Corps Advisors: Past, Present, and Future* (Arlington, VA: Center for Naval Analysis, 2013), 7.

⁷⁷⁸ General James L. Jones, Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, “Marine Corps Capabilities to Assist Special Operations Forces in Meeting Emerging Requirements,” Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

⁷⁷⁹ General Jones, “Marine Corps Capabilities to Assist Special Operations Forces in Meeting Emerging Requirements.”

General Jones continued by explaining that the Marine Corps and SOCOM had established the SOCOM-USMC Board and that the Corps, in coordination with SOCOM and NSW, “developed an integrated 80–90-man detachment as an initial ‘proof of concept’ force that can serve as the foundation for future contributions.”⁷⁸⁰ In order to meet the Secretary Rumsfeld’s goals, forward deployed MAGTFs would continue to both support and be supported by SOF, and the SOCOM-USMC Board would “aggressively pursue initiatives to improve interoperability and develop a permanent Marine force contribution for USSOCOM.” He concluded, “Rest assured that I am committed to closing the ‘gaps and seams’ between our two services in order to better meet challenges to our nation’s security.”⁷⁸¹

In late October, General Jones sent Marine Corps leadership an executive personal communication describing the Corps’ force contribution to SOCOM, his intent concerning the force contribution, and what he needed those addressed to do to help, especially logistically and administratively. He emphasized that the unit was a priority not only for himself, but also for Secretary Rumsfeld, the Secretary of the Navy, and the next Commandant, then Lieutenant General Hagee. The Marine Corps Special Operations Command Detachment (MCSOCOM, “Det One”) was formally established on December 4, 2002 as a two-year proof of concept. Harkening back to the historic Marine Raiders of World War II, Lieutenant Colonel Kyser put the Raider patch at the bottom of the detachment’s logo.⁷⁸²

General Jones’ initiatives to support SOCOM did not simply stop with the activation of the Corps’ first contribution. In late November, General Jones sent an executive personal communication to the SOCOM Commander, General Charles Holland, concerning actions to improve the interoperability between SOCOM and the Marine Corps. He referenced the memorandum he sent to Secretary Rumsfeld expressing

⁷⁸⁰ General Jones, “Marine Corps Capabilities to Assist Special Operations Forces in Meeting Emerging Requirements.”

⁷⁸¹ General Jones, “Marine Corps Capabilities to Assist Special Operations Forces in Meeting Emerging Requirements.”

⁷⁸² Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 14–15.

his commitment to supporting SOCOM in the GWOT and highlighted three initiatives that he believed could further accelerate the process. Based on TF-58's interaction with SOCCENT, which highlighted the value of exchanging liaison officers, General Jones offered to direct each MEU to provide a permanent liaison officer to the theater special operations command (TSOC) when the MEU entered a given area of responsibility (AOR). He offered General Holland and his key decision makers the opportunity to observe a special operations capable certification exercise to provide them a better understanding of a Marine MAGTF's capabilities. Lastly, he thanked those from SOCOM and its TSOCs who attended the second SOCOM-USMC Board and for contributing to the progress made at the meetings.⁷⁸³

General Holland replied in early January,⁷⁸⁴ although not to the satisfaction of Lieutenant Colonel Kyser, who analyzed General Holland's message in an information paper and drafted the Marine Corps' response. Holland thanked Jones for his support and forward leaning leadership and said he would seek coordination and support from all the services. Holland observed, "It is imperative that we reduce our response time by forward basing and deploying forces in forward locations."⁷⁸⁵ This struck a nerve with Kyser, likely in part due to his interactions with NSW and NSW's desire to employ Det One's support and staff capabilities as a toolbox. In his information paper, Kyser highlighted, "If you read between the lines here this means SOF on Amphibs (AFSB's), displacing Marines."⁷⁸⁶ If Marines were part of SOF and provided this response capability, he argued, the Corps would preserve its roles and missions and more readily ensure the Corps' forward deployed MAGTFs were employed appropriately. If the Corps did not do so, the Marines onboard amphibious ships would be "displaced" and "become a tool kit

⁷⁸³ Personal for General Holland from General Jones, "Actions to Improve Interoperability Between the Marine Corps and the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)," R 211445Z NOV 02, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

⁷⁸⁴ Personal for General Jones from General Holland, "Actions to Improve," R 071558Z JAN 03.

⁷⁸⁵ Personal for General Jones from General Holland, "Actions to Improve," R 071558Z JAN 03.

⁷⁸⁶ Giles Kyser, Information Paper, "Analysis of the COMUSSOCOM P4 Response to the 32d Commandant's P4 on November 2002 and a Recommended Response," January 16, 2003, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

as the JSOTF arrives aboard our ship, displaces our units and uses individual Marine capabilities to become a more capable afloat JSOTF (MAGTF) themselves.”⁷⁸⁷

General Holland described the Corps’ offer of support as “most timely,” since he wanted to “maximize SOF assets to target most directly the war on terror.”⁷⁸⁸ Holland continued, “Facilitating this economy of force will entail the sharing of SOF collateral mission areas with respective services.”⁷⁸⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Kyser emphasized that General Holland only mentioned sharing collateral mission areas and did not include general or primary missions, even though General Jones had informed Secretary Rumsfeld in his memorandum that “Marine forces are capable of performing many special operations missions *and* collateral activities.”⁷⁹⁰ According to Kyser, “The continued emphasis on ‘collateral’ missions only is indicative of SOCOM’s continuing belief that Marine Forces are not capable of executing missions that SOF considers theirs and theirs alone.”⁷⁹¹ In response to General Jones’ offer to provide a liaison officer from each MEU, General Holland only considered it a “great topic for discussion at the next combatant commanders’ conference” and did not agree to accept them.⁷⁹² General Holland did, however, agree that observing a special operations capable certification exercise would be a useful learning opportunity.⁷⁹³

⁷⁸⁷ Kyser, “Analysis of the COMUSSOCOM P4 Response.” It is unclear whether Kyser is arguing that the Corps’ future force contributions to SOCOM belong on ship or would simply use ships as platforms from which to launch such a mission. MARSOC Marines on ship would later hamstring the development and operational effectiveness of MARSOC units and was part of the Corps’ larger effort to retain control of these forces.

⁷⁸⁸ Personal for General Jones from General Holland, “Actions to Improve,” R 071558Z JAN 03.

⁷⁸⁹ Holland.

⁷⁹⁰ Kyser, “Analysis of the COMUSSOCOM P4 Response.” Emphasis added.

⁷⁹¹ Kyser.” Kyser listed SOF “collateral” activities as combat search and rescue, counterdrug activities, coalition support, countermine activities, humanitarian assistance, security assistance, and special activities. Kyser lists SOF primary missions as direct action, combating terrorism, foreign internal defense, unconventional warfare, special reconnaissance, psychological operations, civil affairs, information operations, and counterproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

⁷⁹² Kyser.

⁷⁹³ Personal for General Jones from General Holland, “Actions to Improve,” R 071558Z JAN 03.

General Jones' successor, General Hagee, replied in late January, echoing General Jones' commitment to maintaining the momentum behind the initiatives General Jones had begun with General Holland. General Hagee said he looked forward to hearing back concerning the liaison officer exchange, noting "[t]he instant link and coordinated planning between the TSOC and the ARG/MEU enabled by such an exchange will ensure our forward deployed Marines are better able to support SOF requirements."⁷⁹⁴ Worded in this manner, Hagee was implicitly making the argument that his Marines could already meet these requirements and not just serve as a platform for SOF.

As the Marine Corps and SOCOM continued to refine the details of their renewed working relationship, the activation of Det One sparked a debate within the Marine Corps. In the May 2003 *Proceedings*, a retired Marine and former officer in the reconnaissance community, Colonel W. Hays Parks, recounted a brief history of the Marines' "history of flirting with special operations forces."⁷⁹⁵ Noting "an institutional bias that does not augur well for Marine special forces longevity," he questioned "whether the Corps' leaders will sustain this latest endeavor."⁷⁹⁶ He referenced the "broken" state of Marine reconnaissance when General Jones became Commandant as a demonstration of the Corps' lack of commitment to special operations. Parks claimed Marines in conventional units would "resent money spent on special forces for training and equipment," making an unsubstantiated claim that "[s]ome special forces units expend more small arms ammunition in annual training than a Marine division."⁷⁹⁷ He opined that a Marine special forces element would likely face manning problems because commanders would neither encourage nor allow their best Marines to leave their own units to pursue such an ambition. Additionally, he feared officers would put their careers

⁷⁹⁴ Personal for General Holland from General Hagee, "Response to COMUSMACV P4 071558Z JAN 03 Actions to Improve Interoperability Between the Marine Corps and the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)," R 291730Z JAN 03, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers. General Hagee assumed the duties of Commandant of the Marine Corps on January 14, 2003.

⁷⁹⁵ W. Hays Parks, "Should Marines 'Join' Special Operations Command?" *Proceedings* 129, no. 5 (May 2003): 4.

⁷⁹⁶ Parks, 4.

⁷⁹⁷ Parks, 4.

in jeopardy, claiming officers previously assigned to JSOC and SOCOM had been promoted at a lower rate than the rest of the population. While the Corps stood to gain from the experience Marines would bring back to conventional Marine units, Parks concluded, “I truly hope the Marine Corps can become a useful member of the USSOCOM team. Many Marines can perform at that level. My concern is that the other 99% of the Corps will not support this effort and will resist it actively.”⁷⁹⁸

In the *Gazette* that same month, Captain Owen West lamented that in the first year following the 9/11 attacks, the Marine Corps was “no longer the first to fight,” but rather “now ‘assists’ special soldiers,” despite the Corps’ seemingly natural affinity for, and documented history of success in, fourth-generation warfare.⁷⁹⁹ In Afghanistan, for example, West argues TF-58 merely supported a main effort: “tiny pockets of ‘special soldiers’ driving the Taliban south with laser designators, global positioning systems (GPSs), and satellite phones.”⁸⁰⁰ SEALs, not Marines were tasked with supporting Filipino Marines in 2002; Army Rangers, not Marines, were tabbed to conduct a seabased heliborne raid from a carrier; and, Army units conducted offensive operations in the mountains of Afghanistan despite the Corps’ infantry battalion training iterations at its Mountain Warfare Training Center in the Sierra Nevadas.⁸⁰¹

West laid the blame at the Corps’ forcing its MEU reconnaissance elements to spend too much time during its workups on missions it would never be called upon to execute—for example, direct action raids and gas/oil platform and ship seizures. The opportunity cost, West argued, was expertise in “sending small teams forward in deep reconnaissance to direct supporting arms.”⁸⁰² West also criticized the Marine Corps for restricting control of airstrikes to aviators, in contrast to SOF allowing even enlisted Navy petty officers terminal control of air. Thirdly, despite evidence from its own

⁷⁹⁸ Parks, 4.

⁷⁹⁹ Owen O. West, “Who Will Be the First to Fight?” *Marine Corps Gazette* 87, no. 5 (May 2003): 56.

⁸⁰⁰ West, 54.

⁸⁰¹ West, 55.

⁸⁰² West, 55.

experiments, West argued the Marine Corps invested too much in “non-lethal technologies to dominate rioting crowds” at the expense of greater familiarization with the technological developments that proved critical to operations in Afghanistan.⁸⁰³ He recommended the Corps replace its reconnaissance assets’ direct action missions with “a coordinated strike team capability” that would locate the enemy and call in fires.⁸⁰⁴ West’s overarching thesis was that by joining SOCOM, the Marine Corps was simply admitting defeat and relinquishing its role as the “first to fight,” in spite of the fact that the MEUs are “floating antiterror platforms” that “remain the best positioned forces to tackle the global war on terror.”⁸⁰⁵ Admitting defeat would lead to recruiting problems as more and more potential recruits would opt for the relevancy of the special operations community instead of the sidelined Marine Corps.

Owen West and his father, Bing West, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs during the Reagan administration and a Marine himself, had already been offering their opinions—largely driven by these parochial concerns—at upper levels within the Pentagon before the Captain West and Parks articles were published. In fact, POE-30 had previously invited both Owen and Bing West to meet and discuss the matter. The Wests declined the invitation, and Owen West then opted to air his criticisms of the Marine Corps’ roles and focus publicly instead.⁸⁰⁶ The Parks and West articles highlight one of the downsides to the role professional military journals play in facilitating debate, teaching informal doctrine, and refining concepts, policies, and formal doctrine. In contrast to other Marines who entered the debate, Parks and West never contacted the Marines in POE-30 charged with working the issue to ensure their articles were at least factually accurate, regardless of whether or not this would have changed their overall opinion concerning the issue. Articles in professional military journals that gain traction while not being entirely factually accurate can create more

⁸⁰³ West, 55.

⁸⁰⁴ West, 55.

⁸⁰⁵ West, 55.

⁸⁰⁶ Neil Schuchle, email to author, August 6, 2018.

work for these action officers, who are left having to set the record straight.⁸⁰⁷

Establishing and agreeing to the facts that concern an issue from which competing sides and opinions can then diverge is a necessary, but oftentimes overlooked, aspect of productive debate.

The debate concerning the Marine Corps' role in the special operations community also took place in student theses at DoD PME institutions. In April 2003, Lieutenant Colonel Mark Clark, a Marine pilot at the U.S. Army War College with vast special operations experience, noted the changing operational environment and the DoD's increasing reliance on SOF and explored potential long-term solutions to SOF shortages and what SOF roles, if any, the Marine Corps could fill.⁸⁰⁸ Importantly, Clark established that using conventional forces for missions usually assigned to SOF ignored "the requirement for a unique specialized force to execute them successfully" and would degrade a conventional force's ability to execute its normal mission requirements.⁸⁰⁹ Additional training required more money and equipment, and "[t]his money would most likely come from their normal training funds."⁸¹⁰ Clark continued, "This could quite possibly lead to a situation where the unit is ill prepared to do either mission leading to potential mission failure. We should not forget the reasons why SOF was formed."⁸¹¹

Clark evaluated four potential courses of action: maintaining the status quo of not directly contributing forces to SOCOM and discontinuing Det One after its deployment; limiting direct involvement to a Det One type unit; contributing some or all MEUs to SOCOM; and, transforming 4th MEB (AT) into "a special operations MAGTF

⁸⁰⁷ Neil C. Schuehle to Owen O. West, "Who Will be the First to Fight," undated. It is ironic that on December 18, 2017 Owen West was confirmed by the Senate in a 74–23 vote to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. See Andrea Scott, "Meet the Recon Marine Vet Who Is Now a Top Adviser for Mattis," *Marine Corps Times*, December 21, 2017, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/2017/12/21/meet-the-recon-marine-vet-who-is-now-a-top-adviser-for-secdef-mattis/>.

⁸⁰⁸ Mark A. Clark, "Should the Marine Corps Expand Its Role in Special Operations?" (master's thesis, U.S. Army War College, 2003), accessed August 13, 2018, <https://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a413580.pdf>.

⁸⁰⁹ Clark, 2.

⁸¹⁰ Clark, 2.

⁸¹¹ Clark, 2.

contribution force to SOCOM.”⁸¹² As the basis for evaluating these options, Clark opined, “In identifying a unique contribution the Marine Corps can offer SOCOM, the one niche the Marine Corps has that SOCOM does not, is the expeditionary MAGTF concept,” which should form “the nucleus in developing a unique contribution to SOCOM.”⁸¹³ Det One did not provide a “unique capability,” but rather was simply a “commitment to strengthen the ties between the two organizations” that did not adequately address SOCOM’s needs.⁸¹⁴

The first two options, Clark argued, did not address the DoD’s requirements. The third option would require standing MEUs to mitigate turnover in personnel since the units that comprise a MEU—except for the command element—disband following each deployment. Clark reasoned, “The MEU does fulfill the requirements . . . but the risk and price may be too high for the Marine Corps to pay.”⁸¹⁵ Clark proposed modifying 4th MEB (AT), as shown in Figure 2, to comprise a command element and battalion reinforced similar to those on MEUs, including 4th MEB’s Chemical Biological Incident Response Force, Marine Corps Security Force Battalion, and Marine Security Guard, as well as a brigade service support group and ACE; adding Force Recon and ANGLICO; developing a psychological operations unit; and, employing the Marine Corps Reserve Civil Affairs Group in support of the special operations MEB (SOMEb).

⁸¹² Clark, 30.

⁸¹³ Clark, 29. “AT” denotes anti-terrorism.

⁸¹⁴ Clark, 44.

⁸¹⁵ Clark, 34.

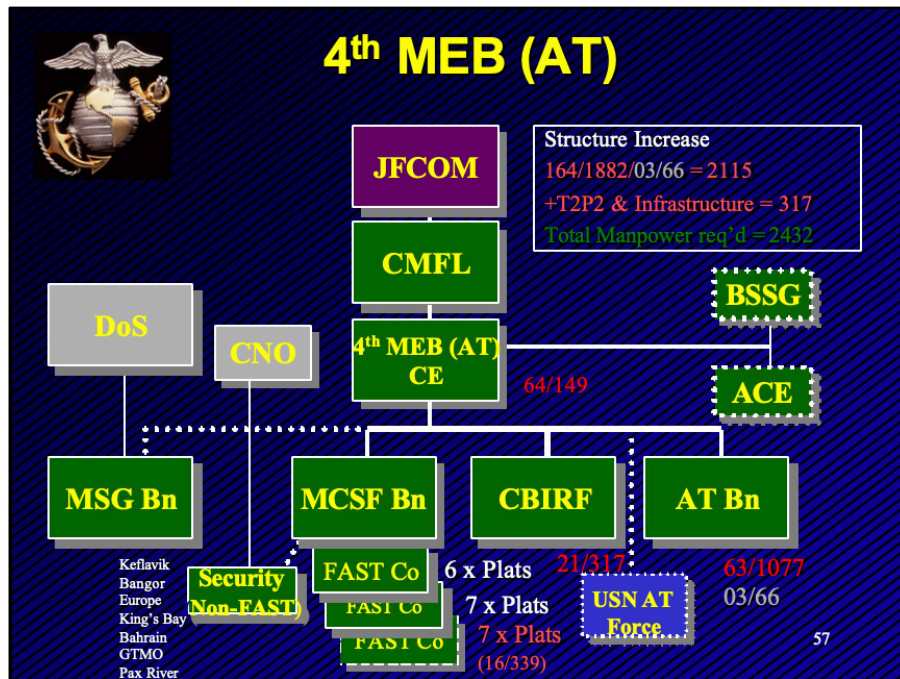


Figure 2. Lieutenant Colonel Clark's Proposed Modification of 4th MEB (AT)⁸¹⁶

In order to provide the connective tissue between the SOMEb, SOCOM, and the Marine Corps, Lieutenant Colonel Clark introduced the concept of a special operations headquarters, which would be commanded by a two-star general. This headquarters—MARSOc—would also include the SOTG, which would not only provide training for the SOMEb, but continue to do so for the MEUs (see Figure 3).⁸¹⁷

⁸¹⁶ Source: Mark A. Clark, "Should the Marine Corps Expand Its Role in Special Operations?" (master's thesis, U.S. Army War College, 2003), 35, accessed August 13, 2018, <https://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a413580.pdf>.

⁸¹⁷ Clark, 39.

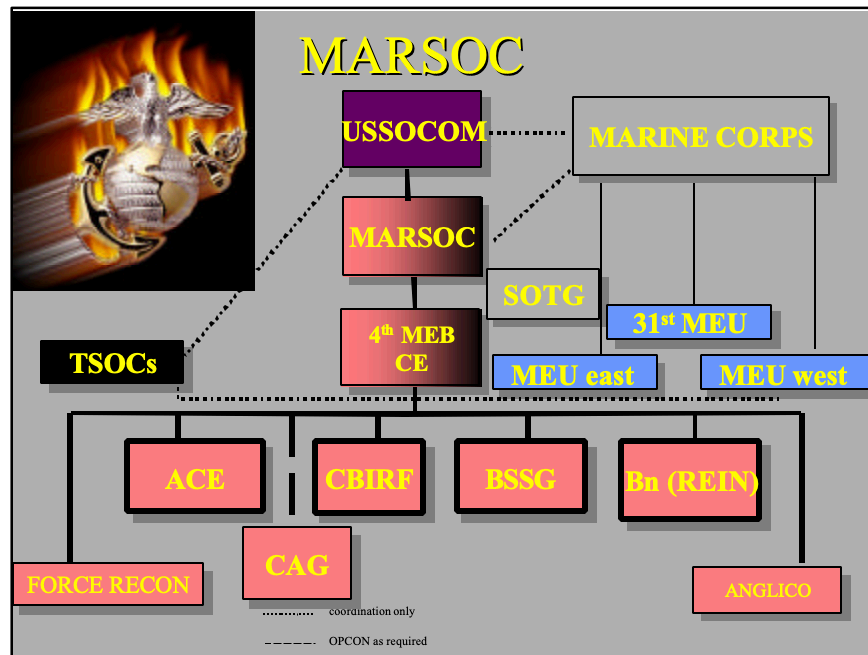


Figure 3. Lieutenant Colonel Clark’s Proposed MARSOC Structure⁸¹⁸

Clark noted that even though the Marine Corps deployed as MAGTFs, they did not maintain permanently structured MAGTFs or train like one, which “often creates an environment of inefficiency, scarcity of resources, and lack of cohesion.” Clark advocated for eliminating excess hierarchical structures, such as regiments, Marine Air Groups, divisions, and wings in favor of “restructuring into MEFs—MEBs—MEUs.” This would increase continuity, streamline training, and “eliminate the normal chaos associated with no notice deployments requiring a MEU sized or MEB sized SPMAGTF. The plug and play unit would already be formed and would have been training together in all type of environments . . . unlike the pickup team forces we deploy as today.”⁸¹⁹ This would increase the credibility of the force in the special operations community. Given the disproportionate amount of discussion and conceptual development he put into evaluating the fourth option, it is no surprise that Clark ultimately recommended it. He concluded, “The Marine Corps has no choice than to venture outside its ‘general-purpose force’

⁸¹⁸ Source: Mark A. Clark, 39.

⁸¹⁹ Clark, 43.

protective shell and provide a ‘show of faith’ commitment to SOCOM; provide a capability that is a unique niche and is not a duplication of effort.”⁸²⁰

Lieutenant Colonel Kyser once again took to the pages of the *Gazette* in July 2003 to similarly advocate for a component. Documenting SOF’s intentions to expand their presence aboard naval shipping, Kyser again argued that this would come at the expense of Marines, which would lead to Marine MAGTFs becoming smaller, less capable, and less relevant.⁸²¹ Kyser advocated, “To mitigate/counter this trend, the Marine Corps’ long-term goal should be to meet USSOCOM’s need for expeditionary/amphibious SOF with Marine forces permanently assigned under its command. Our current contribution should be expanded to a full-fledged component dedicated to providing that capability.”⁸²²

Recounting SOF’s inability or unwillingness to employ the Marine MAGTF to its fullest extent in Afghanistan, which led to Taliban and al Qaeda operatives’ ability to escape, Kyser argued that a Marine component would be better able to leverage the MAGTF, which would “highlight Marine Corps/MAGTF relevance and thereby protect Marine roles and missions with conventional and SOF Marine forces.”⁸²³ Conventional Marine forces do not have the experience, training, or equipment necessary to “execute special operations missions to SOF standards.”⁸²⁴ The Marine Corps would not lose its best Marines to SOCOM. Rather, the Marines who would go to SOF billets would “return . . . to the other MAGTFs in the Marine Corps as a means to solidify the bridge between SOF and the Corps by expanding and socializing the number of Marines with experience with operating as part of USSOCOM.”⁸²⁵ In case this did not quell critics, Kyser highlighted an overlooked talent drain to SOF that was already occurring unbeknownst to

⁸²⁰ Clark, 45.

⁸²¹ Kyser, “Fix Recon,” 20.

⁸²² Kyser, 20.

⁸²³ Kyser, 20.

⁸²⁴ Kyser, 20.

⁸²⁵ Kyser, 21.

many in the Corps. More than 600 former Marines were already assigned to U.S. Army SF, having left the Corps. Given the zero-sum nature of DoD resources and the increased manpower commitment to SOF, Kyser contended, “The Marine Corps can be a part of this, or a victim of it.”⁸²⁶

The following year, Captain G. John David also argued in favor of a force contribution to SOCOM—one that can “give an honored tradition coupled with striking power that stresses the strengths of the Service.”⁸²⁷ In comparison to Det One, Captain David recommended the Marine Corps increase the size of its commitment to that of a battalion, 1st Marine Raider Battalion, which would be named after the Raiders of World War II. The battalion would consist of a recon company, a strike company specializing in direction action, ANGLICO, and a headquarters and services company consisting of the usual staff functions. David’s proposal avoids the conceptual debates concerning a force contribution and lacks any detail concerning how such a proposal would be implemented. Instead, he focuses on consolidating a lot of what he deems the Corps’ unique or most impressive capabilities into one unit. His rudimentary solution to initially getting SOCOM to employ such a battalion is naming the unit after the Raiders: “Getting these Marines employed is served first and foremost by the title that they are given—1st Marine Raider Battalion . . . The raider battalion—its history of performance and success, its Marine traditions and spirit—invokes immediate recognition.”⁸²⁸ David does not explain how Marines focusing on one specific skill would be superior to SOF who are cross-trained in multiple skills, and he argues that the Strike Company would provide “the primary striking power of the battalion and the Marine-specific special missions capability that sets the organization completely apart from other Services” even though what he describes sounds a lot like a light infantry Army Ranger mission.⁸²⁹ Despite these shortcomings, David stands out as one of the few Marines who entered the debate

⁸²⁶ Kyser, 21.

⁸²⁷ G. John David, “A Marine Raider Battalion: Giving USSOCOM a Unique Capability,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 88, no. 6: 46.

⁸²⁸ David, 47.

⁸²⁹ David, 47.

concerning a force contribution, as the pages of the *Gazette* were largely consumed with operations in Iraq. His allusion to the Raiders of World War II would also prove prescient.

Major John Van Messel, a Marine student at the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, however, countered, arguing against a Marine Corps force contribution, feeling the Corps should instead settle for increased interoperability initiatives, such as the SOCOM-USMC Board, sourcing permanent and augment billets in SOCOM, and exchange tours.⁸³⁰ Van Messel was very narrowly focused on Det One and did not consider the viability of other alternatives or Det One's possible role as a stepping stone to a larger force contribution. He argued that the Det One mission was redundant with those already performed by Army SF and SEAL units and would be funded at a cost to the Marine Corps and manned with some of its most experienced Marines.⁸³¹ Past history, according to Van Messel, had proven that an "elite within an elite" concept did not work well in the Marine Corps and that "[t]ime and time again the Marine Corps has found that the basic Marine can train to skills required of the mission."⁸³² Van Messel continued, "While Marines may not have the skill level of some special operations units, they don't need to have those skills in order to accomplish their assigned mission. When Marines require more specific skills, they train to them."⁸³³ Van Messel also questioned the investment of sending Marines to become SOF operators if they would not be allowed to specialize in the job and seemed to argue that if they were, it would run "counter-culture to the 'well rounded' Marine concept."⁸³⁴

As the debate concerning the Marine Corps' relationship with SOCOM continued, Det One began to take shape. Lieutenant Colonel Kyser met with senior representatives

⁸³⁰ Van Messel, "USMC-USSOCOM Relationship," 24–31.

⁸³¹ Van Messel, 33–34.

⁸³² Van Messel, 34.

⁸³³ Van Messel, 34.

⁸³⁴ Van Messel, 35. Van Messel does not consider how a Marine specializing in special operations would somehow be different from a Marine logistician specializing in logistics or a Marine communicator specializing in communications for the entirety of their respective careers.

from the Marine Corps intelligence, reconnaissance, and fire support communities during the fall of 2002. Together, they reviewed the record jackets of hundreds of Marines and selected those they wanted for the unit.⁸³⁵ Given recent deployments to Afghanistan and pending operational commitments in Iraq, the Marine Corps' granting this degree of flexibility to hand select individual Marines demonstrated a certain degree of institutional-level support for the success of the proof of concept.

Det One's key leaders stood out for their non-traditional (to the Marine Corps) career experiences—namely, in the special operations and reconnaissance communities. The commanding officer, Colonel Dan Coates, checked in from SOTG at I MEF. Colonel Coates had served as an advisor in El Salvador in the 1980s, in an external billet at the CIA, and recently as the commanding officer of 1st Force Reconnaissance Company before moving to SOTG. He had even completed Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training.⁸³⁶ His executive officer, Major Craig Kozeniesky, previously served at 1st Force Reconnaissance Company when Colonel Coates was the commanding officer. He had also done a tour with battalion reconnaissance and an exchange tour with the British Royal Marines.⁸³⁷ Det One's intelligence officer and intelligence element leader, Major Jerry Carter, grew up in the radio reconnaissance community as an enlisted Marine, served as the assistant intelligence officer for a MEU(SOC) staff, and had a "black" SOF tour on his resumé.⁸³⁸ The reconnaissance platoon commander, Captain Eric Thompson, had also served in 1st Force Reconnaissance Company along with Colonel Coates and Major Kozeniesky.

On February 20, 2003, the Marine Corps and SOCOM signed an MOA concerning the nature of Det One's relationship with NSW. The MOA stated that Det One "shall be employed in such a manner as to fully evaluate the MCSOCOM Det and its

⁸³⁵ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 14.

⁸³⁶ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 14; Craig Kozeniesky, personal conversation with author, August 19, 2018.

⁸³⁷ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 19; Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

⁸³⁸ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 23.

potential value to SOCOM.”⁸³⁹ The MOA specified the responsibilities of both parties and even provided room for unilateral termination before the expiration of the agreement. Det One would be attached to an NSW squadron, and Colonel Coates would then step aside when the unit deployed, granting the NSW Squadron One commander full command and control authority. Importantly, the MOA was written to preserve the cohesion of the unit so that it could be leveraged to its full potential and not be thrown piecemeal, in support roles, at a multitude of various problems the squadron faced.⁸⁴⁰

Det One was officially activated on June 20, 2003.⁸⁴¹ As Det One continued to find and purchase equipment and add additional Marines when the original table of organization, particularly the logistics section, proved inadequate, they began to ramp up training despite not knowing to where they would deploy just three or four months prior to the scheduled deployment.⁸⁴² Afghanistan was thought to be one possibility. Based in Djibouti, the DoD mission on the Horn of Africa had just stood up and was also considered. Another idea was to make Det One the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) force, or possibly even splitting the unit between both PACOM and CENTCOM. The Marine Corps, however, wanted Det One to be in the fight, and Lieutenant Colonel Kyser pushed the interested parties to make it happen. During the course of the workup, a demand signal for direct action capabilities in Iraq emerged, leading the SEALs to aggressively seek Det One to meet it, which the interested parties sold as the best way to validate the concept—“combat in the toughest conditions.”⁸⁴³

The first Marines deployed on April 6, 2004, but no sooner had they touched down in Iraq than the NSW Squadron One commander, Commander William (“Bill”) Wilson, began dispatching task units to outlying cities from the “hub” in Baghdad. Det One’s 30-man intelligence section, for example, was left with just seven Marines in direct

⁸³⁹ As quoted Piedmont, 17.

⁸⁴⁰ Piedmont, 23.

⁸⁴¹ Piedmont, 28–29.

⁸⁴² Piedmont, 24–27.

⁸⁴³ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 43; Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

support of Det One's Task Unit Raider. Major Kozeniesky remained as commander, and Colonel Coates ultimately deployed to Fallujah with I MEF as a liaison officer for Marine Corps Forces Central (MARCENT). As the deployment continued, Det One conducted a series of direct action raids and the staff, including Colonel Coates, began discussing the way forward after the deployment and gathering lessons learned to incorporate into their post-deployment briefs and what they hoped would be a new training cycle.⁸⁴⁴

There had never been any guarantee of a life beyond Det One's initial deployment. It was, after all, a proof of concept. The possibility of life after deployment seemingly ebbed and flowed as power brokers came and went. Lieutenant General Jan Huly took over for Lieutenant General Bedard at PP&O, and Det One relied on the CG, Marine Corps Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC), Lieutenant General Earl Hailston, to line up funding and resources for when it redeployed stateside. In October 2004, the Marine Corps and SOCOM held a meeting at Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) in Tampa to discuss a "Way Ahead" as a prelude to the Warfighter talks scheduled for December. Det One's key personnel, including Colonel Coates, recently promoted Lieutenant Colonel Kozeniesky, the fires liaison element Major Wade Priddy who had fledged up to operations officer on the deployment, and Major Carter, flew to Tampa soon after they returned from deployment earlier that month.⁸⁴⁵

There had been signals throughout the deployment that Det One might not have a future. When General Hagee and the SOCOM Commander, General Bryan ("Doug") Brown, visited Task Unit Raider during the deployment and went on a ride along with Major Kozeniesky and the staff, they provided further indications the unit would be disbanded, essentially telling the Marines: "We have no doubt you're going to do great, but this is way above you."⁸⁴⁶ On November 17, Colonel Coates and the Det One staff, along with Commander Bill Wilson, briefed their AARs to the commander of NSW, Rear

⁸⁴⁴ For an abbreviated summary of Det One's deployment, see Dick Camp, "Task Unit Raider: Unit Proves the Value of Marine Special Ops," *Leatherneck* 99, no. 4 (Apr. 2016): 14–17 and Dick Camp, "Task Unit Raider: In the Battle for the City of the Dead," *Leatherneck* 99, no. 7 (Jul. 2016): 24–27.

⁸⁴⁵ Kozeniesky, personal conversation; Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 91.

⁸⁴⁶ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

Admiral Joseph Maguire. Rear Admiral Maguire praised Det One, but others questioned the MAGTF model, thinking the “enablers,” such as the intelligence and fires sections, should continue but not the operators.⁸⁴⁷ The Commodore of NSW Group One told the Marines, “Love you guys, but you’re going to be competitors if we let you in now.”⁸⁴⁸ Colonel Coates emphasized the unique capabilities Det One brought to SOCOM by virtue of its task organization as a unit capable of operating as a standalone entity that could perform the six warfighting functions.⁸⁴⁹ Commander Wilson did not throw his support behind Det One despite the value the unit provided him during the deployment. He preferred to stay out of the middle of the brewing parochial battle between the Marine Corps and SOCOM and noted that there was a lot of sentiment in the NSW community that Det One should not be allowed to go forward.⁸⁵⁰

At the SOCOM-USMC Warfighter talks in December, Colonel Coates and Lieutenant Colonel Kozeniesky briefed their AAR again, this time to General Hagee and General Brown. It quickly became evident that neither the Marine Corps nor SOCOM wanted Det One to continue. Lieutenant Colonel Kozeniesky recalls the meeting being fairly contentious. General Hagee even asked, “What *did* you guys do?”⁸⁵¹ Colonel Coates remembers General Brown saying he “did not see a requirement for Det One or any other Marine force contribution to SOCOM.”⁸⁵² General Hagee and General Brown did not owe a final recommendation to Secretary Rumsfeld until January 2005, but it was rather apparent what that recommendation would be.⁸⁵³

⁸⁴⁷ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 91.

⁸⁴⁸ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

⁸⁴⁹ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 91.

⁸⁵⁰ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

⁸⁵¹ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

⁸⁵² Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 91–92.

⁸⁵³ Piedmont, 92.

D. ORGANIZING AND ACTIVATING A COMPONENT

General Hagee believed the Det One experiment had proven that Marines were capable of conducting special operations, but he disputed there being a requirement for it to continue. General Hagee instead favored a similar course of action to the one the Marine Corps took in the 1980s: refining and enhancing existing capabilities and focusing on increased interoperability in lieu of a force contribution. General Hagee was also willing to assume foreign military training missions in order to reduce the demand on SOF assets. He and General Brown recommended against continuing the Marine force contribution.⁸⁵⁴ On February 7, 2005, Secretary Rumsfeld wrote General Brown to thank him for the brief, but he was far from satisfied. While General Hagee and General Brown almost certainly thought their recommendation concerning Det One would put to rest the question of a force contribution of any kind, Rumsfeld told General Brown that they needed “to push harder and faster” in involving the Marine Corps in special operations.⁸⁵⁵ Specifically, he wrote, “I am interested in the question of whether the Marines should have a special operations command like the other Services. It seems to me that is an idea worth considering.”⁸⁵⁶ Rumsfeld gave him 30 days to provide “an evaluation of such a command, what it might look like, how many Marines might be involved, where it might be located, and so forth.”⁸⁵⁷

JSOU and the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) each wrote a study on the performance of Det One and its value to the future of the Marine Corps and SOCOM. These studies ostensibly should have also informed any evaluation of a Marine special operations component. The JSOU study, *MCSOCOM Proof of Concept Deployment Evaluation Report*, chartered by SOCOM, concluded, “Research and analysis strongly indicate that the initial force contribution was an overall success and should be continued.

⁸⁵⁴ Piedmont, 93.

⁸⁵⁵ Secretary Rumsfeld to General Doug Brown, “Marine Special Operations Command,” February 7, 2005, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3268/2005-02-07%20To%20Gen%20Doug%20Brown%20re%20Marines%20Special%20Operations%20Command.pdf#search=%22brown%20marine%20special%20operations%20command%22>.

⁸⁵⁶ Rumsfeld.

⁸⁵⁷ Rumsfeld.

The Marine Corps successfully demonstrated the ability to interoperate with SOF during combat operations.”⁸⁵⁸ The study recommended maintaining “current detachment structure with minor changes from lessons learned,” including increasing the size of the unit from 98 to 130 personnel to “address personnel shortfalls identified during the Proof of Concept deployment” and establishing “a requirement for continuous availability . . . at the soonest time practical.”⁸⁵⁹ However, even as Det One was trying to make the case for its survival, they were unable to obtain a copy of the study until a year after it was finished.⁸⁶⁰

The CNA study, *MCSOCOM Det: Analysis of Service Costs and Considerations*, “questioned the validity” of Det One’s deployment as “a comprehensive evaluation,” only crediting Det One with conducting direct action.⁸⁶¹ In contrast, the JSOU study credited the unit with effectively conducting both direct action and special reconnaissance and conceded that “[g]iven their personnel qualifications, training and equipment it is reasonable to suggest the Detachment could also conduct or support Foreign Internal defense (FID), Counter Terrorism (CT), Special Activities, selected Theater Security Cooperation Plans (TSCP), and other tasks as required.”⁸⁶² The CNA study noted the high price tag associated with the detachment and expressed concern regarding the Marine Corps’ insistence on the MAGTF model and operating independently.⁸⁶³

Det One continued training through another pre-deployment workup while being held in limbo. At the behest of the CG, MARFORPAC, Lieutenant General Wallace (“Chip”) Gregson, Det One developed continuity briefs for possible Det Two and Det

⁸⁵⁸ Joint Special Operations University, *MCSOCOM Proof of Concept Deployment Evaluation Report* (Hurlburt Field, FL: U.S. Special Operations Command, 2005), II, accessed November 11, 2018, http://proceedings.ndia.org/warfare_division/Readaheads/MarSOCEvalReport.doc.

⁸⁵⁹ JSOU, *MCSOCOM*, II-III.

⁸⁶⁰ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 94.

⁸⁶¹ Piedmont, 93. The original study could not be located in CNA’s publication archive at <http://www.cna.org/research/2000.2001.2002.2003.2004.2005.2006.2007.2008.2009>.

⁸⁶² JSOU, *MCSOCOM*, II-III.

⁸⁶³ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 93–94.

Three models, including aviation models, focusing on the MAGTF full-functionality concept. Some models doubled the size of what Det One was, while others increased personnel to as many as 4,000 Marines, including a full-fledged ACE. They even considered defining what special operations would mean for the Marine Corps. Det One briefed Brigadier General Joseph Dunford, the Director of the Operations Division at PP&O. Brigadier General Dunford informed Det One that as long as General Hagee was Commandant, the ideas had no chance of going anywhere.⁸⁶⁴ The briefs also did not make it to the officers in POE-30 who were developing their own alternative models.⁸⁶⁵

Major Neil Schuehle was working in POE-30 at the time and would play an integral role not only in the development of the Marine special operations component, but also as the first commanding officer of 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion (MSOB) as a lieutenant colonel and later of Marine Special Operations School (MSOS) as a colonel.⁸⁶⁶ Like Lieutenant Colonel Kyser and the key leaders of Det One, Major Schuehle's career path was non-traditional by Marine Corps standards. Major Schuehle was an enlisted reconnaissance Marine. After being commissioned and serving two company command tours, he returned to battalion reconnaissance and Force Recon. He left the reconnaissance community as a major for an external tour at CIA, as Colonel Coates had done.⁸⁶⁷ During one of the SOCOM-USMC Warfighter talks at Hurlburt, Major Schuehle and his counterpart action officers at SOCOM started to flesh out different alternatives. The design of these different alternatives actually preceded that of Det One. One option was focused on geography: assigning the future component responsibility for Africa. This would have consolidated language training and regional expertise and made the component on par with a Special Forces Group, but with a two-

⁸⁶⁴ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

⁸⁶⁵ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 24, 2018.

⁸⁶⁶ Giles Kyser even credits Schuehle with resurrecting the idea of MARSOC after General Brown and General Hagee "tried to kill it through neglect and minimization." Giles Kyser, email to author, August 5, 2018.

⁸⁶⁷ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 11, 2018. Then Brigadier General Neller, who would become the 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps, was the Director, Operations Division, at PP&O at the time. When he was Commanding Officer of 6th Marines, then Captain Schuehle was a company commander in 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines.

star general in command. Another option, which was stopped fairly quickly, was a merger with NSW, which would have created a three-star command with a SEAL commanding and a Marine as deputy. Varying levels of discussions occurred to discuss what MOSs the Marines would contribute to the command. The SEALs remained adamant the Corps would never have any operators. However, the Marines drew a line in the sand at operators being a part of any component. Once again, NSW viewed what the Marines had to offer not as a standalone entity, but rather as an exotic set of enablers into which to tap.⁸⁶⁸

The Programs and Resources (P&R) Department at HQMC even found a way to “streamline” various Marine commands to free up close to 30,000 Marines from support and staff roles and shift those numbers to the operating forces. In response to an “emergency” tasker only befitting the Pentagon, the various departments at HQMC, including POE-30, were tasked one Thursday afternoon after lunch to draft a plan for these 30,000 potential Marines. The plan was due at close of business. Security Division at HQMC came up with a plan to send them to the Marine Corps Security Force Regiment, and other communities developed their own plans to lay claim to the emancipated staffers. Major Schuehle’s fighting hole was SOF, MEUs, and Recon. He recalls that it was late, and he did not want to spend all night on the projects, so he put together a four-slide proposal for a 30,000 Marine MEF(SOC), including MEBs, all of the MEUs, and “a host of other goodies.”⁸⁶⁹ All L-Class shipping would have supported traditional MEB/MEF missions, and the MEUs would embark on MAERSK Class shipping. The ground combat element would have been one Marine Special Operations Company (MSOC), one company of LAVs, and 120mm mortars. The ACE would have included additional V-22 Ospreys since the MAERSK Class ships would not have been able to come nearly as close to shore. At 0630 the following morning, Major Schuehle felt a tap on his shoulder. He turned around to come face-to-face with Lieutenant General Emerson Gardner, Deputy Commandant for P&R. Gardner asked, “You do this?” “Yes,

⁸⁶⁸ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 5, 2018; Neil Schuehle, personal conversation with author, December 2, 2018; Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

⁸⁶⁹ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 6, 2018.

Sir,” Schuehle replied. “Come with me, we’re talking to the Commandant,” Gardner ordered. Following the meeting with General Hagee, Major Schuehle asked Lieutenant General Gardner why he had dragged him before the Commandant. Lieutenant General Gardner explained, “Whatever we do go forward with will look extremely palatable compared to this!” After the Commandant referred to the proposal as a “hostile takeover” of SOCOM, the slide deck was renamed “Apocalypse.”⁸⁷⁰

When Lieutenant Colonel Schuehle was selected to be commanding officer of 1st Force Reconnaissance Company, knowing it would become 1st MSOB, he even designed an organizational chart for MARSOC that had two regiments, one on each coast. When Major General Hejlik eventually stood up MARSOC, Hejlik gave a speech during which he said that he saw no need for regiments; all of the battalions would work directly for him. Lieutenant Colonel Schuehle was in the audience and introduced himself to Major General Hejlik after the speech for the first time. Hejlik asked Schuehle why he had included the regiments. Instead of simply telling him that that is how every organization in the Marine Corps is organized, Schuehle said the reason why there were regiments on the slide was so that after serving as a battalion commander, there would still be the opportunity for upward mobility within the command for him. Hejlik checked the slide properties and found Schuehle’s name on them.⁸⁷¹ While a somewhat tongue-in-cheek story, the need for a regiment proved rather prescient, as MARSOC would eventually create a regiment to free up the component from the daily training and administrative matters required to prepare Marines to deploy, freeing up the component to focus on the bigger picture instead.⁸⁷²

SOCOM and the Marine Corps each had their own designated offices to work on these organizational constructs to meet Secretary Rumsfeld’s deadlines. The basic lateral limits had already been addressed at the Warfighters. Now the offices were working together, sequentially. Major Schuehle would develop a brief, and Brigadier General

⁸⁷⁰ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 6, 2018.

⁸⁷¹ Neil Schuehle, emails to author, August 6, 2018 and November 13, 2018.

⁸⁷² CC, MARSOC, July-December 2009, Folder 1, “Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010,” 14.

Robert Neller, the Director of the Operations Division at PP&O, and Lieutenant General Jan Huly would provide their feedback and revisions. Schuehle would then send the brief to SOCOM, who would do the same thing and send an updated brief back to HQMC. The offices would eventually get General Hagee and General Brown to agree, only for Secretary Rumsfeld to inform them that it was not what he wanted—“try again.”⁸⁷³ Major Schuehle recalls a version 17.xx of the brief, which was primarily the result of Secretary Rumsfeld’s unwillingness to simply order General Brown and General Hagee to activate a component, which he could have done immediately. Instead, by prolonging this process over the course of multiple years, he encouraged General Brown and General Hagee to believe that if they maintained a steadfastly united front against the idea of a component, the idea would go away.⁸⁷⁴

Once the proverbial writing was on the wall that the Marines would establish a component, Brigadier General Hejlik, who was the Chief of Staff at SOCOM, and Brigadier General Steven Hummer, who was the Chief of Staff at JSOC, came together to establish a component, which they did independent of both Det One and POE-30.⁸⁷⁵ Variations of the same basic plan began to emerge that called for a component commanded by a one- or two-star general (see Figures 4 and 5).

⁸⁷³ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 8, 2018.

⁸⁷⁴ Neil Schuehle, personal conversation with author, December 2, 2018. General Brown argued that if he needed Marines, he could request them through his operational commanders. General Hagee reinforced this line of argument, confirming he would provide Marines if the operational commanders requested them. This process, however, did not require a component.

⁸⁷⁵ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

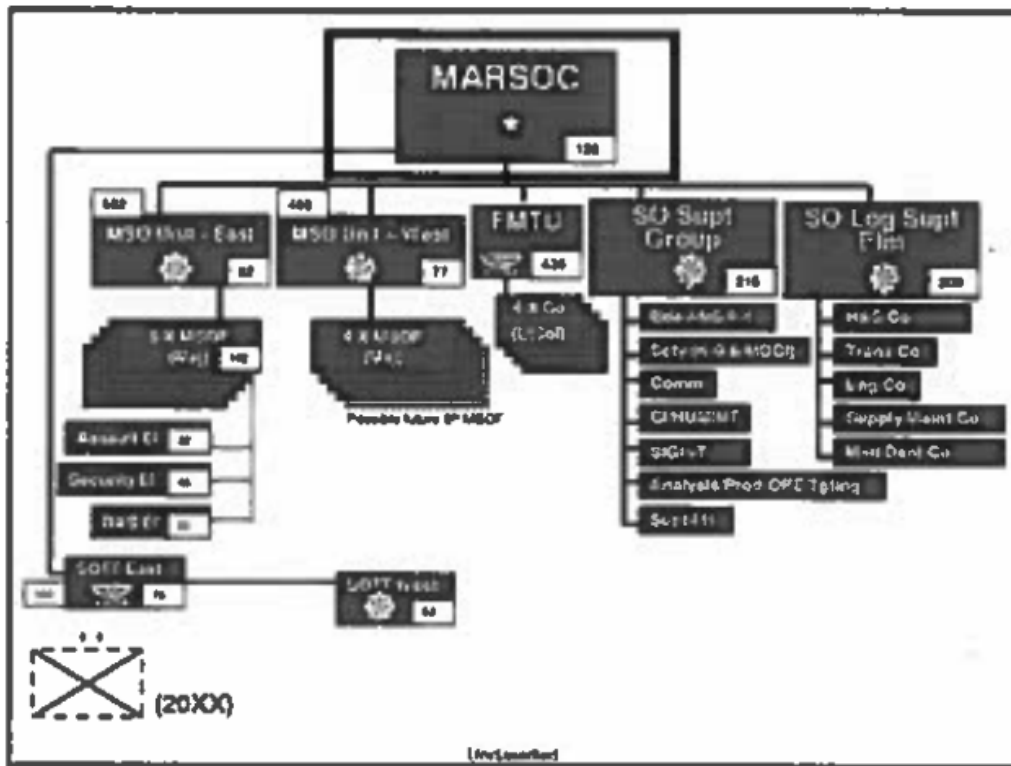


Figure 4. Proposed MARSOC Organizational Structure⁸⁷⁶

⁸⁷⁶ Source: "Marine Corps Special Operations Command," undated, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

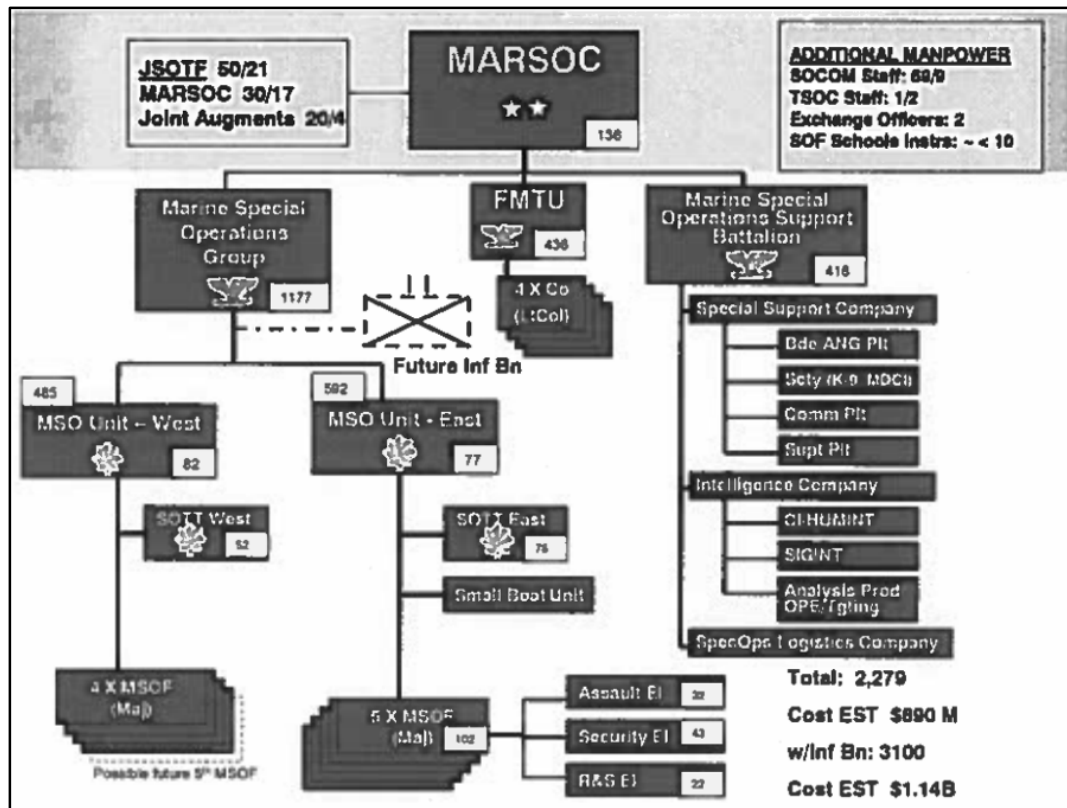


Figure 5. Second Proposed MARSOC Organizational Structure⁸⁷⁷

The headquarters structure would come from 4th MEB (AT), as Lieutenant Colonel Clark had suggested in his thesis. Comprised of the Marine Security Force Battalion, the Marine Security Guard Battalion, the Chemical and Biological Incident Response Force, and an antiterrorism battalion, 4th MEB (AT) had been activated on October 20, 2001 in direct response to the 9/11 attacks. Its mission was to deter terrorist attempts and respond to homeland defense situations.⁸⁷⁸ 4th MEB (AT) was also billed as being “prepared to defend embassies abroad; respond to other attacks overseas, such as the USS *Cole* in 2000; and assist during major chemical or biological attacks against Marines in battles overseas.”⁸⁷⁹ 4th MEB (AT) was created to garner 2,400 additional

⁸⁷⁷ Source: Joseph G. Settelen, III to James L. Lones and Jan C. Huly, “MARSOC Verses [sic] MC SOCOM Dets,” May 17, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

⁸⁷⁸ “Antiterrorism Brigade Stands Up,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no. 11 (Nov. 2001): 4.

⁸⁷⁹ “Antiterrorism Brigade Stands Up.”

boat spaces for the Marine Corps, but it became something of a paper tiger. Many of these new billets were farmed out to other units, so while the command provided a convenient, semi-organized staff to fall in on, the headquarters did not provide much in terms of real capability and lacked any kind of SOF experience.⁸⁸⁰

Beneath the headquarters would be a Marine Special Operations Group (MSOG), commanded by a colonel, with two Marine Special Operations Units (MSOU) commanded by lieutenant colonels falling under that. Variations of this proposal eliminated the O-6 command in favor of the two MSOUs reporting directly to the commander.⁸⁸¹ Nine Marine Special Operations Forces (MSOF), five on the east coast and four on the west coast, would fall under the two MSOUs. The component would also absorb the Foreign Military Training Unit (FMTU), which was “designed to provide tailored training on basic military and combat skills and advisor support for foreign military forces identified by the geographic Combatant Commanders.”⁸⁸² The FMTU was commanded by a colonel. Lastly, the “enabler” functions would either be grouped together under a Marine Special Operations Support Battalion (MSOSB), commanded by a colonel, with a Special Support Company, Intelligence Company, and Special Operations Logistics Company, or split amongst a Special Operations Support Group and Special Operations Support Element, both commanded by lieutenant colonels.

⁸⁸⁰ Neil Schuehle, email to author, November 5, 2018.

⁸⁸¹ As previously noted, as Commander, Major General Hejlik was in favor of eliminating this O-6 command and having the battalions (i.e., MSOUs) work directly for him.

⁸⁸² General Michael Hagee to Secretary Rumsfeld, “Foreign Military Training Unit,” September 29, 2005, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3182/2005-09-29%20From%20M%20W%20Hagee%20re%20Foreign%20Military%20Training%20Unit.pdf#search=%22hagee%20Foreign%20Military%20Training%20Unit%22>. It is worth noting that General Hagee sent this letter to Secretary Rumsfeld prior to Rumsfeld officially reaching a final decision concerning MARSOC, but well after that was the likely outcome. Still not offering up his Marines to SOCOM, Hagee explained that the unit would be “organized into four companies that will support the four regional Combatant Commanders (CENTCOM, EUCOM, SOUTHCOM and PACOM) *in close coordination with SOCOM*.” Emphasis added. Hagee also clarified that the FMTU was “neither designed nor organized to support the Transition-Training Team requirement in Iraq or Afghanistan.” In contrast, prior to FMTU falling under MARSOC, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Milburn and Major Mark Lombard argued that FMTU should be in charge of these missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. See Andrew R. Milburn and Mark C. Lombard, “Marine Foreign Military Advisors: The Road Ahead,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 90, no. 4 (Apr. 2006): 62–65.

Colonel Coates and the Marines of Det One felt increasingly marginalized, their frustrations only mounting due to the lack of clarity concerning their future. They felt the new component “was constructed with virtually no input from the detachment,” and they assessed there to be serious shortcomings with the proposed organizational constructs.⁸⁸³ The Marine Corps’ SOCOM component, which General Hagee insisted be tied to the MEU, would be MEU-based with a command relationship designating combatant command (COCOM) to SOCOM and tactical control (TACON) to the Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG)/MEU during the pre-deployment workup before transitioning operational control (OPCON) to the Theater Special Operations Commander and TACON to the MEU during the deployment. Neither the MSOUs nor the MSOFs were capable of executing all battlefield functions as a standalone entity and would instead remain reliant on the MEU for mobility. Their being tied to the MEU would lead to a competition for resources between the TSOC and the Fleet—namely, the ESG/MEU. The proposal mirrored a SEAL Task Unit and thus did not represent a unique contribution. Deactivating 1st and 2nd Force Company and transferring those Marines to MSOU West and MSOU East would limit the experience and leadership base from which MARSOC could draw in the future and would undermine General Jones’s “Fix Recon” initiative. Furthermore, the “enabler” functions were not task organized to support deploying MSOFs and MSOUs. Rather, they were designed to serve as a “toolbox” from which SOCOM could benefit, but not the Marine Corps, which would always remain relegated to serving as a support element.⁸⁸⁴

Det One’s proposed alternative recommended a component commanded by a major general, and their evaluation of any organizational construct was based on the following criteria and assumptions:

- Deploy task organized MAGTFs capable of being the main effort and executing all battlefield functions

⁸⁸³ As quoted in Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 94.

⁸⁸⁴ “Marine Corps Special Operations Command,” undated, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

- Marine Corps SOCOM component should not be viewed as a toolbox for SOCOM (low density MOS's)
- MARSOC units must maintain USMC service-unique character
- SOCOM contribution should not be dependent on or sourced from MEU(SOC) program
- MEU(SOC) program not broken and remains relevant (but may be less so if MSOF does not achieve expectations)
- MEF commanders still require services of Force Reconnaissance Co's⁸⁸⁵

An MSOG and FMTU would fall under the headquarters. The MSOG would consist of two MSOUs, which would be task organized to operate as standalone elements that could perform all of the warfighting functions and conduct direct action, special reconnaissance, coalition support, advanced special operations, and combating terrorism missions. Det One would become MSOU One and be deployable in the 2nd Quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2006. MSOU 2 would reach full operational capability in FY 2007, MSOU 3 in FY 2010, and MSOU 4 in FY 2011. The MSOG could also deploy and function as a JSOTF. Det One's proposal also included an aviation detachment, which would be activated in FY 2008, and eventually grow into a Marine Special Operations Aviation Group.⁸⁸⁶ The MSOU would be task organized with organic "force multipliers" and could execute all battlefield functions and all phases of the targeting cycle. In their minds, the proposal would thus represent a unique contribution to SOCOM. It would, however, require additional structure, since their proposal would not be drawn from current Marine Corps structure.⁸⁸⁷ Neither of the proposals contained the structure for a schoolhouse, which was something of an afterthought but would prove crucial for meeting manpower requirements after the command was activated. It was clear the component would need SOTG-like capabilities, but once that was sourced, there were not

⁸⁸⁵ "Marine Corps Special Operations Command," undated.

⁸⁸⁶ "Marine Corps Special Operations Command," undated; Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 94.

⁸⁸⁷ "Marine Corps Special Operations Command," undated; Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 94.

enough resources or personnel left to build a formal school, which would require additional structure before it came to fruition.⁸⁸⁸

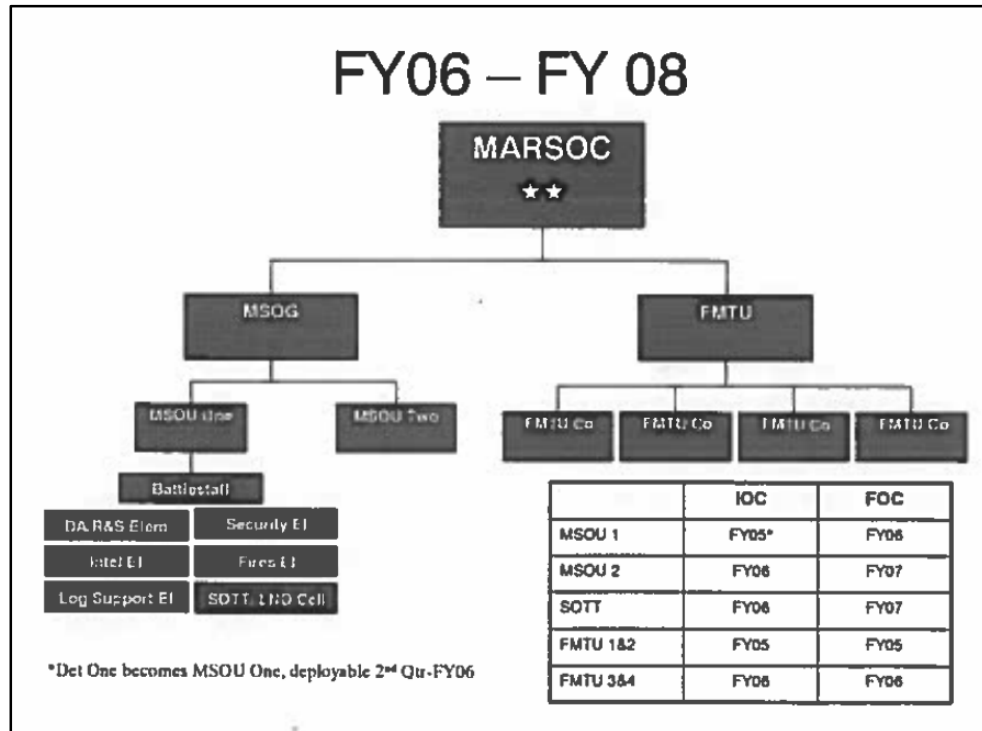


Figure 6. Det One and Settelen Proposed Organizational Structure⁸⁸⁹

⁸⁸⁸ Neil Schuehle, email to author, November 5, 2018.

⁸⁸⁹ Source: Settelen, III to James L. Lones and Jan C. Huly, “MARSOC Verses [*sic*] MC SOCOM Dets,” May 17, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

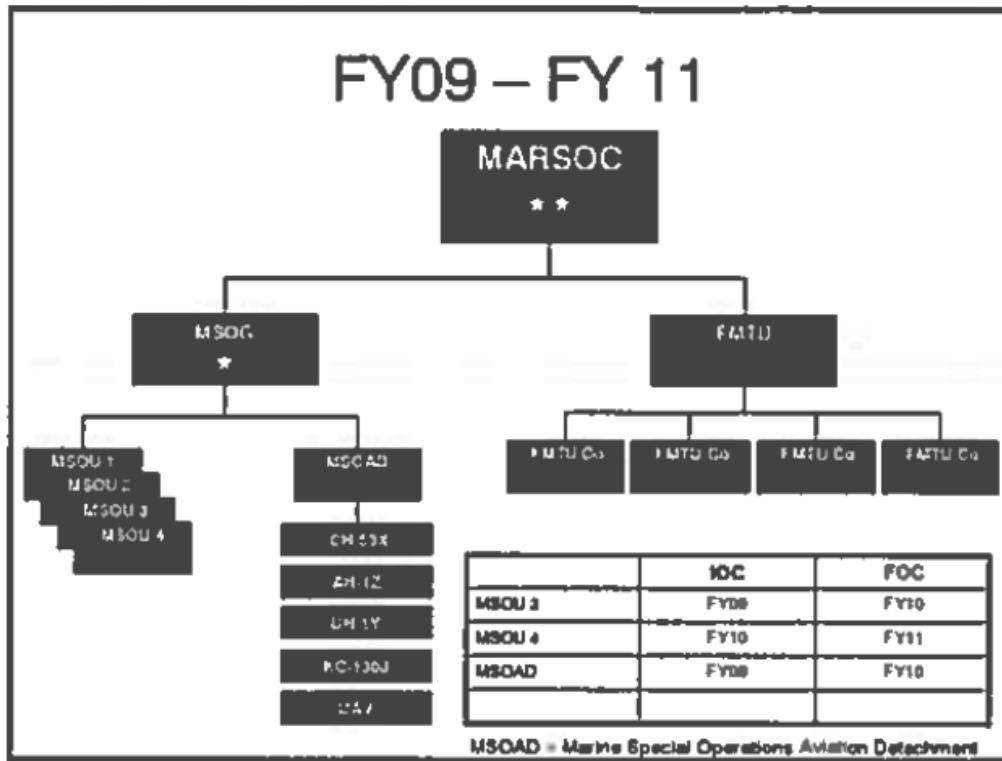


Figure 7. Development of Marine Special Operations Aviation Detachment⁸⁹⁰

⁸⁹⁰ Source: “Marine Corps Special Operations Command,” undated, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

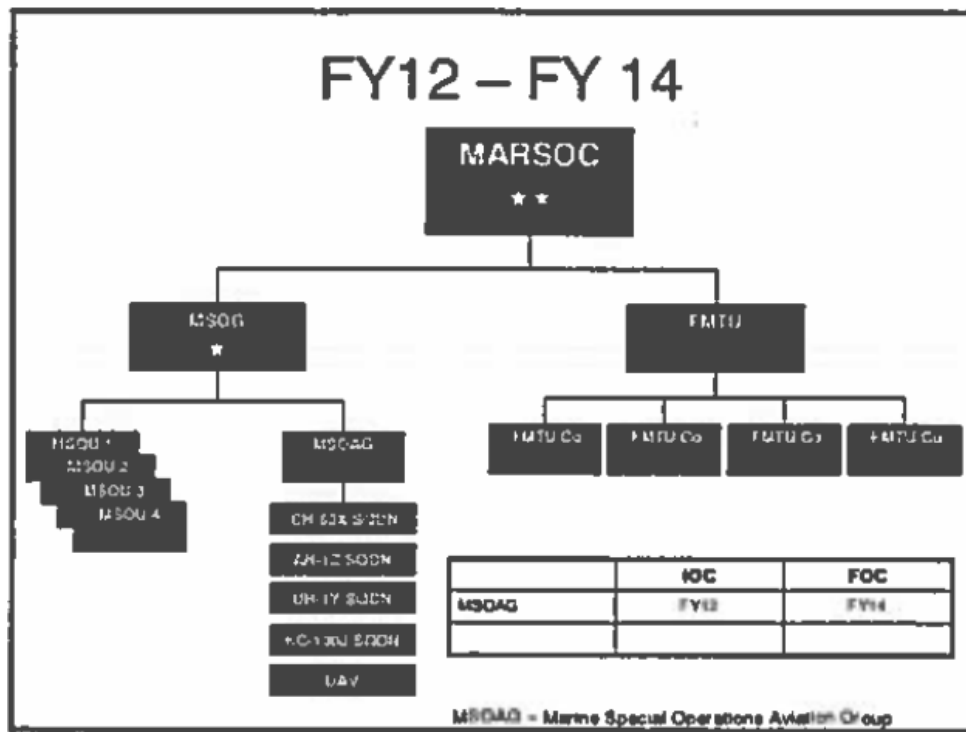


Figure 8. Development of Marine Special Operations Aviation Group⁸⁹¹

Master Gunnery Sergeant Settelen, who had helped design Det One, also reentered the debate, sending a personal email to General Jones, who was then Commander of U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander Europe at the time, and Lieutenant General Huly—the equivalent of a last-second Hail Mary pass at the end of a football game. Detailing his unique SOF experience, his involvement with the “Fix Recon” and “USSOCOM Force Contribution” initiatives, and noting that his email might be “somewhat audacious” and “inappropriate,” Master Gunnery Sergeant Settelen explained that he did not intend “to sack the esteemed planning and perspectives of BGen Hummer.”⁸⁹² Rather, he wanted to ensure the subject matter was “understood holistically” before the Corps “pave[d] a final brief to the Secretary of Defense,” since the current planning efforts had taken place without any involvement from Det One, the

⁸⁹¹ Source: “Marine Corps Special Operations Command.”

⁸⁹² Joseph G. Settelen III to James L. Lones and Jan C. Huly, “MARSOC Verses [sic] MC SOCOM Dets,” May 17, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

original SOCOM force contribution planning team, or prior PP&O leadership.⁸⁹³ Settelen wrote, “I hope that you will weigh this information and get through to our Commandant that we are weakening our Corps [*sic*] future with the thought that we can MEU base this force from existing structure and resources . . . While a detachment could sometimes join a MEU, what is needed is a force that builds a bridge to the MEU.”⁸⁹⁴ The proposed force contribution was simply “trying to throw the MEU format at USSOCOM as the solution.”

Settelen attached an information paper written by Det One and including his input, which reiterated many of the same points Lieutenant Colonel Kyser had made before.⁸⁹⁵ For example, the information paper argued:

- SOF employed the MEU(SOC) as a tool box of individual capabilities in Afghanistan, allowing Taliban and al Qaeda operatives to escape
- Det One had been split apart when it deployed so SOCOM could make the case that the detachment’s intelligence and fires capabilities were of benefit but that its operatives were a redundant capability.
- The force contribution merely renamed the MEU(SOC) Maritime Special Purpose Force (MSPF) the Marine Special Operations Force (MSOF) and the MEF’s Force Reconnaissance companies the Marine Special Operations Units (MSOUs).
- The proposed MSOF was too junior in rank and experience and was not structured to operate independently.
- The MEU would lose its organic special operations capability, and the MEF would possibly lose its organic reconnaissance assets.⁸⁹⁶

⁸⁹³ Joseph G. Settelen III to James L. Jones and Jan C. Huly, “MARSOC Verses [*sic*] MC SOCOM Dets.”

⁸⁹⁴ Joseph G. Settelen III to James L. Jones and Jan C. Huly, “MARSOC Verses [*sic*] MC SOCOM Dets.”

⁸⁹⁵ Joseph G. Settelen III to James L. Jones and Jan C. Huly, “MARSOC Verses [*sic*] MC SOCOM Dets.”

⁸⁹⁶ “Evaluation of Current HQMC OPT MARSOC Proposal and Recommended Alternative COA for Way Ahead,” Information Paper, May 16, 2005, attached to email, Joseph G. Settelen III to James L. Jones and Jan C. Huly, “MARSOC Verses [*sic*] MC SOCOM Dets.”

The information paper included Det One's alternative proposal, which spared the Force Recon companies and the MEU(SOC) MSPF. Settelen also noted that the Det One alternative was already included in the POM 2006 Budget Plan. Master Gunnery Sergeant Settelen believed Secretary Rumsfeld wanted to add more structure to the Corps and would fund it if it was in special operations.⁸⁹⁷ This assumption, however, proved incorrect. On May 20, 2005, just a few days after Settelen sent his email, Secretary Rumsfeld asked his Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), Tina Jones, and his Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, David Chu, to "get together with USMC and SOCOM to examine the resources required for us to go forward on their proposal to create a Marine Component for SOCOM."⁸⁹⁸ He explicitly noted that he wanted the component established from the Corps' existing manpower since the Corps had already received an increase in troop levels. After Jones and Chu sent him a memo approximately one month later on how to resource the component, Secretary Rumsfeld reiterated that he only wanted to use existing manpower and that it should be done "essentially within existing resources."⁸⁹⁹ He asked Jones and Chu to figure out how to drive the cost down since the proposed costs, especially those concerning

⁸⁹⁷ Joseph G. Settelen III to James L. Jones and Jan C. Huly, "MARSOC Verses [*sic*] MC SOCOM Dets."

⁸⁹⁸ Secretary Rumsfeld to Tina Jones and David Chu, "Special Operations Command—USMC Component," May 20, 2005, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3713/2005-05-20%20to%20Tina%20Jonas%20et%20al%20re%20USMC%20Special%20Operations%20Command-USMC%20Component.pdf#search=%22jones%20chu%20Special%20Operations%20Command%20USMC%20Component%22>.

⁸⁹⁹ Secretary Rumsfeld to Tina Jones and David Chu, "USMC Component of Special Operations Command," June 15, 2005, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3690/2005-06-15%20to%20Tina%20Jonas%20et%20al%20re%20USMC%20Component%20of%20Special%20Operations%20Command.pdf#search=%22jones%20chu%20Special%20Operations%20Command%20USMC%20Component%22>. Secretary Rumsfeld reiterated this message again following his decision to create MARSOC. He viewed the question of the Marine Corps' permanent end strength as "fundamentally a separate and distinct issue from how to proceed on MARSOC." He informed the CJCS, General Peter Pace, General Hagee, and General Brown that a proposal for an increase in end strength would have to go through the Quadrennial Defense Review and budget approval process so that it could "be properly evaluated and weighed against other Department priorities." Until then, the Marine Corps would be capped at an end strength of 175,000. See Secretary Rumsfeld to General Peter Pace, General Mike Hagee, and General Doug Brown, "Marines Special Operations Command," November 4, 2005, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3840/2005-11-04%20to%20Pete%20Pace%20et%20al%20re%20Marine%20Special%20Operations%20Component.pdf#search=%22pace%20hagee%20brown%20marsoc%22>.

infrastructure, seemed high to him, and he requested a decision brief to be ready in two weeks.

Negotiations between the Marine Corps, SOCOM, and OSD, however, carried on through the summer. On July 22, 2005, General Brown provided Secretary Rumsfeld with an update on designing the Marine component. While resourcing and stationing still had to be resolved, General Brown was confident they had reached a point where Secretary Rumsfeld could make a decision concerning the activation of a Marine component. General Brown reminded Secretary Rumsfeld of the need to make a decision soon if they were to meet the secretary's goal of standing up the headquarters by October 1, 2005.⁹⁰⁰ This goal would not be reached. It was not until November 1, 2005 that Secretary Rumsfeld finally announced that he had approved a SOCOM and Marine Corps joint recommendation to create the Marine Special Operations Command.⁹⁰¹

MARSOC was officially activated on February 24, 2006. Brigadier General Hejlik was appointed Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, and he added a second star.⁹⁰² FMTU was the first operational subordinate command transferred to MARSOC, from 4th MEB (AT), by Marine Corps Bulletin 5400 dated February 23, 2006. FMTU consisted of a staff with the normal functional areas, a training cadre, and a projected two companies of 12 teams, each made up of 11 Marines. Company A was activated in April 2006, and Teams 1–6 were already formed and

⁹⁰⁰ Personal for the Honorable Donald Rumsfeld from Commander USSOCOM MacDill AFB FL, "Marine Component to USSOCOM (Personal For)," 2221332 JUL 05, Donald Rumsfeld Archives, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/3200/2005-07-25%20From%20CDR%20USSOCOM%20MacDill%20AFB%20FL%20re%20Marine%20Component%20to%20USSCOM.pdf#search=%22brown%20Marine%20Component%20to%20USSOCOM%22>.

⁹⁰¹ R. R. Keene, "In a Historic Move, the Corps to Stand Up a Special Ops Command," *Leatherneck* 88, no. 12 (Dec. 2005): 46–47.

⁹⁰² CC, MARSOC, February 24–June 30, 2006, "MARSOC Headquarters," 6. General Hagee chose Brigadier General Hummer to be the first commander, but SOCOM countered with Brigadier General Hejlik, who was a known quantity at SOCOM, since he was the Chief of Staff when General Brown was Deputy Commander. Neil Schuehle, email to author, November 5, 2018. Hejlik had also done a tour at OSD SO/LIC when he first became a brigadier general. Then Colonel Hummer had been part of a group of colonels who were tasked to design a basic concept of MARSOC and its mission sets six or seven months before Secretary Rumsfeld made his decision. CC, MARSOC, January–June 2008, Folder 1, "Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008," 1–2.

conducting pre-deployment training when MARSOC was activated. Company B was scheduled for activation in spring 2007. FMTU's core competencies included FID with integrated language skills and a projected UW capability.⁹⁰³ FMTU's first deployment outside the continental United States was a two-week pre-deployment site survey in Chad from February 25-March 9, 2006.⁹⁰⁴ Four teams subsequently deployed in August 2006 to Chad, Kenya, and Colombia, marking MARSOC's first operational deployments.⁹⁰⁵

Marine Special Operations Support Group (MSOSG) was activated along with the component even though it only consisted of "the skeleton of a Logistics company (Log Co) and the beginnings of an Intelligence Company (Intel Co)."⁹⁰⁶ 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion was activated on May 15, 2006, the first battalion to be activated. Marine Corps Bulletin 5400 dated April 28, 2006 directed 2nd Force Reconnaissance Company to "transfer five platoons of structure and three platoons of inventory to MARSOC to form the core of 2nd MSOB."⁹⁰⁷ 2nd MSOB initially stood up with only a headquarters element and one of five projected companies, MSOC F. Secretary Rumsfeld designated MARSOC as "SOF for all purposes" on July 17, 2006,⁹⁰⁸ and 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion was activated on October 26, 2006 aboard Camp Pendleton.⁹⁰⁹ Two platoons from 1st Force Reconnaissance Company were reassigned to

⁹⁰³ CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006, "Foreign Military Training Unit," 7; "The Foreign Military Training Unit," *Marine Corps Gazette* 90, no. 8 (Aug. 2006): 41-43. Major General Hejlik reiterated that the command was developing a UW capability in an oral history interview on September 20, 2007. The command hired a UW subject matter expert in the second half of 2007. See CC, MARSOC, January-June 2007, Folder 1, "Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC)," September 20, 2007, 5 and CC, MARSOC, July-December 2007, Folder 2, "Individual Training Course Development Cell," 112. MARSOC soon stopped pursuing a UW capability due to concerns associated with encroaching on U.S. Army Special Operations Command's "turf." Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 23, 2018.

⁹⁰⁴ CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006, "Foreign Military Training Unit," 8.

⁹⁰⁵ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2006, "Foreign Military Training Unit (FMTU)," 12.

⁹⁰⁶ CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006, "2d Marine Special Operations Battalion," 10.

⁹⁰⁷ CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006, "2d Marine Special Operations Battalion," 9-10.

⁹⁰⁸ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2006, "Narrative Summary: Command, Control, and Operations," 6, 19 (TAB A: Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness).

⁹⁰⁹ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2006, 50 (TAB L).

1st Reconnaissance Battalion. The remaining three platoons were transferred to 1st MSOB.⁹¹⁰

Since its activation, MARSOC's history has seemingly also been a history of reorganizations. FMTU was quickly redesignated the Marine Special Operations Advisor Group (MSOAG). On May 11, 2009, Company A and Company B were redesignated 3rd MSOB and 4th MSOB, and later that September, MSOAG was redesignated Marine Special Operations Regiment (MSOR).⁹¹¹ All four battalions were put under MSOR, and 3rd MSOB and 4th MSOB were merged to save structure in order to grow the number of enablers to keep pace with the growth of operators, something that had previously been overlooked.⁹¹² The MSOBs and MSOAG had been on different tracks prior to the creation of these additional MSOBs. This resulted in drastically different experience, training, and abilities and thus necessitated a lot of cross-leveling within the command to balance the force.⁹¹³ The creation of MSOR reduced some of the staff responsibilities initially left to the battalions and served as "a tactical component that, in essence, is responsible for the training, the equipping, the certifying, the deploying and recovering of the operational force," pushing the component staff up to look outward.⁹¹⁴ MARSOC's original manpower plan called for 14 companies, 54 teams, two battalions outside MSOAG, and two companies in MSOAG. That evolved into four battalions (two in MSOAG, two out), 12 companies, and 48 teams, saving six companies and six teams

⁹¹⁰ MARSOC Public Affairs Office, "1st MSOB Stand Up Marks Evolution of 1st Force Recon," December 13, 2006, in CC, MARSOC, July-December 2006, 93–95 (TAB T).

⁹¹¹ Steven King, "MSOAG Re-designates Its Two Subordinate Units," U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, May 11, 2009, <http://www.marsoc.marines.mil/News/News-Article-Display/Article/513688/msoag-re-designates-its-two-subordinate-units/>; CC, MARSOC, July-December 2009, Folder 3, "MARSOC Public Affairs Office (PAO): List of Significant Events and Accomplishments," 110.

⁹¹² CC, MARSOC, July-December 2008, Folder 1, "Jul – Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009," 4–5.

⁹¹³ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 23, 2018.

⁹¹⁴ "Jul – Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009," 6; CC, MARSOC, July-December 2009, Folder 1, "End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander, 9 November 2009," 7.

worth of structure to create a schoolhouse.⁹¹⁵ Marine Special Operations School was formally activated on June 27, 2007 and became a command on January 22, 2008.⁹¹⁶

Today, MARSOC has three O-6 commands: Marine Raider Regiment (MRR; formerly, MSOR), Marine Raider Support Group (MRSG; formerly, MSOSG), and Marine Raider Training Center (MRTC; formerly, MSOS). Marine Raider Regiment has three Marine Raider Battalions (MRBs) consisting of four MSOCs, each with four Marine Special Operations Teams (MSOTs). MRSG similarly consists of three Marine Raider Support Battalions (MRSBs), each one being paired with an MRB. In theory, an operator deploys for six months every 24 months and devotes six-month blocks of training to individual, team-level, and company-level training during each pre-deployment workup. Enablers conduct their own individual and section-level training while part of an MRSB. They then “chop” to the MSOC with which they are slated to deploy 180 days before the deployment date in order to conduct company-level training and form a “fully enabled” MSOC. The march to this current organizational structure has been long, windy, and at times painful.

Some of these growing pains were natural, some were self-induced, and others were driven by external factors. Major General Hejlik readily admits the original table of organization could have been designed better, but that is with the benefit of hindsight. The process involved some degree of trial-and-error: “Well intended men trying to do the right thing, and only because we just didn’t know—it’s that thing that you don’t know what you just don’t know.”⁹¹⁷ The original organizational design was not based on mission analysis, but more so on convenience and making the most of the line numbers they were given. In his oral history exit interview, Major General Hejlik said he had “no

⁹¹⁵ “Jul – Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009,” 5.

⁹¹⁶ Josephh Stahlman, “MSOS Activates; MARSOC Steps Toward Future,” U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, July 9, 2007, <http://www.marsoc.marines.mil/News/News-Article-Display/Article/513624/msos-activates-marsoc-steps-toward-future/>; CC, MARSOC, January-June 2008, Folder 2, “Marine Special Operations School (MSOS): Narrative Summary,” 110.

⁹¹⁷ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC),” September 20, 2007, 3.

idea” from where the original 2,600 number came.⁹¹⁸ Similarly, a Government Accountability Office study published in September 2007 found that “[a]lthough the Marine Corps has made progress in establishing its special operations command (Command), the Command has not yet fully identified the force structure needed to perform its assigned missions.”⁹¹⁹

General Hejlik disagreed with the component-regiment-battalion headquarters structure and eliminated the regiment,⁹²⁰ which led to some of the ensuing reorganization. The strict personnel cap also likely played a factor in this decision. Eliminating the regiment further exacerbated the challenges the component staff, which had minimal staff experience above the battalion level and lacked any kind of SOF experience, faced.⁹²¹ Secretary Rumsfeld was also applying pressure to get SOCOM added capacity since their components were stressed at the time, and there were gaps in missions that MARSOC needed to fill. This urgency shortened what was supposed to be a five-year build plan to two and a half years,⁹²² necessitating MARSOC to pull Marines from the Force Reconnaissance community even though this was not part of the original construct.⁹²³ However, the preponderance of these growing pains, which hamstrung MARSOC’s early development, were due to the Marine Corps’ cultural and institutional resistance to supporting a special operations component.

⁹¹⁸ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 3.

⁹¹⁹ *Special Operations Forces: Management Actions Are Needed to Effectively Integrate Marine Corps Forces into the U.S. Special Operations Command*, GAO-07-1030 (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2007), under “What GAO Found.”

⁹²⁰ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 2.

⁹²¹ Neil Schuehle, email to author, December 2, 2018.

⁹²² “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 5–6.

⁹²³ Neil Schuehle, personal conversation with author, December 2, 2018.

E. CULTURAL INTRANSIGENCE

The Marine Corps, which has carefully cultivated its elite image and jealously guarded its independence and status as a separate service, proved very resistant to resourcing an “elite within an elite” within its ranks and ceding control of any of its Marines to SOCOM. This resistance manifested itself in undermining any possible continuity between, or bridge from, Det One to MARSOC. Additionally, General Hagee insisted that MARSOC Marines remain tied to the MEU, and MARSOC Marines were not given a viable career path and were only allowed to stay at MARSOC for 3–5 years, thus undermining the experience of the force and unnecessarily straining the manning of the force. SOCOM also remained resistant to welcoming a new Marine Corps component.

When asked in his oral history exit interview what shortages, other than facilities and personnel, he came up against, Major General Hejlik provided a one-word response: “Culture.”⁹²⁴ MARSOC’s operating expense its first year came out of the GWOT Supplemental, resulting in a bit of a honeymoon period. However, this grace period and the newness of MARSOC quickly wore off. Hejlik explained, “But what we found as we went through this, after about the first year is, that there are people in the Marine Corps and SOCOM, you know throughout the SOCOM community that really didn’t want to have much to do with MARSOC; didn’t think MARSOC would work.”⁹²⁵ Neil Schuehle recalls several senior Marine officers present at an Executive Offsite (EOS), which was attended by all Marine three stars and above, a handful of years after MARSOC’s activation continuing to challenge the resources and commitment required to make MARSOC work and questioning when it would stop.⁹²⁶

⁹²⁴ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 9.

⁹²⁵ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 9.

⁹²⁶ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 6, 2018. In contrast, even though Admiral Eric Olson opposed the creation of a Marine component initially, once the decision was made to activate the component, Admiral Olson carried out the order smartly. He turned to the Marines in attendance and said, “We need you to succeed. What do you need?” Neil Schuehle, personal conversation with author, December 2, 2018.

Part of this resistance was due to parochialism and simple bureaucratic politics, which was exacerbated by the Corps' penchant for control. This parochialism was evident at the MARSOC Standup Conference, which included representatives from every party with a vested interest.⁹²⁷ Additionally, Lieutenant General Sattler, the commander of I MEF at the time, noted even while there was "a price to be paid in facilities, infrastructure and manpower," commanders did not want their own manpower and resources to be affected.⁹²⁸ In particular, there was a concern MARSOC would "gut existing force recon units."⁹²⁹ Other Marines were less diplomatic. One lieutenant colonel quoted in a feature story by *National Defense* said, "If I were commandant, I'd say, 'damned if I'll give up my best-trained troops to SOCOM.'"⁹³⁰

The misgivings against MARSOC, however, went deeper than normal politics. The cultural arguments against MARSOC fall into two broad categories. First is the belief that MARSOC (and even before that, Force Recon) Marines and SOF in general are cowboys. The belief is that SOF come into a given area of operations without telling the battlespace owner, break things, and leave the battlespace owner to clean up the mess. SOF have lax grooming standards, do not wear their uniforms correctly, and generally think they are above playing by the rules. Marines who do a tour in the SOF community supposedly do not want to give back to the Corps and have turned their backs on the Corps so they can do cool things instead.⁹³¹ Of course, there are always exceptions that fit this description and taint the collective reputation of the professional majority. During

⁹²⁷ These commands included MARSOC/FMTU, all three MEFs, 4th MEB (AT), 22d MEU, MARFORPAC, Marine Corps Forces Atlantic, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Training and Education Command, Marine Corps Systems Command, Headquarters Marine Corps, Marine Corps Base Pendleton, Marine Corps Base Lejeune, and SOCOM. Lieutenant Colonel W. I. Driggers to Distribution, "MARSOC Standup Conference Trip Report, December 21, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

⁹²⁸ As quoted in Harold Kennedy, "Shift to Special Operations Will Not 'Gut' the Marine Corps, General Says," *National Defense* (Mar. 2006), CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006 (TAB L).

⁹²⁹ Gidget Fuentes, "Boom or Bust? MarSOC's Creation Could Gut Existing Force Recon Units," *Marine Corps Times* March 27, 2006, CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006 (TAB N).

⁹³⁰ As quoted in Kennedy, "Shift to Special Operations."

⁹³¹ Colonel Neil Schuehle recalls a group of general officers he was briefing at a board accuse him of "turning his back on the Corps." Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 8, 2018.

MARSOC's first combat deployment to Afghanistan, for example, MSOC F infamously opened fire on a group of civilians near Jalalabad.⁹³²

The second strand of this cultural argument is that Marines are all elite and thus do not need an “elite within an elite.” This tribalism, however, neglects the sub-tribes that form within each MOS community and that come together to form a tribe that is stronger than the sum of its parts—the MAGTF. Additionally, pilots have always enjoyed something of a privileged status as an elite with an elite, and just as the job of a pilot should not be a secondary MOS and a non-pilot should not command an aviation squadron, it similarly makes little sense to operate like that in the special operations community. These cultural misgivings were exacerbated by the fact the Marine Corps had found little need for reconnaissance since Vietnam, leading to a generation of senior officers seeing no need for the community.⁹³³ As a result, the Marine Corps tried to half-step and undermine the effort.

This first manifested itself in how the Corps dealt with Det One following their deployment. The Marine Corps treated it as a proof of concept that had served its purpose of proving the Corps could do special operations. It then needed to be disbanded. The Corps left Det One in limbo for over a year following its deployment and seemingly did not seek any lessons learned from the deployment or input from Det One regarding the design of the component. More inexplicably, following the activation of MARSOC, Det One was simply disbanded. The manpower structure returned to the 42 commands from which it had been sourced, the equipment was transferred to Marine Corps Logistics Command, and only approximately two dozen of the Marines received orders to MARSOC.⁹³⁴ In contrast, the SEALs and Army SF immediately began incorporating

⁹³² Jerome Starkey, “Rumsfeld’s Renegade Unit Blamed for Afghan Deaths,” *Independent*, May 16, 2009, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/rumsfelds-renegade-unit-blamed-for-afghan-deaths-1685704.html>. For a five-part apologia of MSOC F and its commander’s professed innocence and victimhood, see Andrew deGrandpre, “Task Force Violent: The Unforgiven,” *Military Times*, March 4, 2015, <http://www.militarytimes.com/special-projects/task-force-violent/2015/03/05/task-force-violent-the-unforgiven-part-1/>.

⁹³³ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 8, 2018.

⁹³⁴ Piedmont, *DET ONE*, 96,

lessons learned from Det One, particularly those concerning logistics and intelligence. NSW even created two entirely new intelligence units, Naval Special Warfare Support Activity One and Naval Special Warfare Support Activity Two, that were in part influenced by the Det One experience.⁹³⁵

This lack of institutional interest and support did not go unnoticed by some of the plank holders at MARSOC. Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Naler, who had previously done a tour at JSOC and was MARSOC's first future operations officer (i.e., G35), in part blamed the Marine Corps for some of the difficulties associated with organizing the component initially. Naler explained,

And I think 2006, as I said earlier when you said, "Why was it so difficult?" Because the Marine Corps didn't want us, period. There was a strong contingent at the colonel level, and at the GO [General Officer] level; they, on face value, probably looked at General Hejlik and said, "Hey, Denny, I hope things are going well." But the reality is, the bucket head colonels below all those one-stars and two-stars, did everything they could not to help us in a myriad of areas; particularly in PP&O, and somewhat in I&L [Installations and Logistics].⁹³⁶

Naler recounted how in a fairly public video teleconference a colonel once told him, "Well, you guys probably won't even be around in a year from now."⁹³⁷ He also noted that MARSOC was not listed among the Marine Forces Commands ("MARFORs") in either the 2007 or 2008 *U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs*, also blaming

⁹³⁵ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 23, 2018; Sean D. Naylor, "2 New Intel Units Will Support SEALs," *Navy Times*, March 5, 2007 and Brad Graves, "SEALs, Related Units Appear to Be Moving to New Headquarters," *San Diego Business Journal*, February 26, 2007, both found at <http://navyseals.com/nsw/2-new-intel-units-will-support-seals/>.

⁹³⁶ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2008, Folder 1, "End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler, MARSOC G-35, 20 May 2008," 13.

⁹³⁷ "End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler," 14.

MARSOC for failing at strategic communications.⁹³⁸ SOCOM did not exactly welcome MARSOC with open arms either. Lieutenant Colonel Naler recalls Lieutenant General David Fridovich, the Director, Center for Special Operations at SOCOM, at the time saying at a meeting in reference to MARSOC: “We don’t need you. Everybody here knows this is nothing more than a shotgun wedding, so let’s just sit back and see how it works out.”⁹³⁹ Similar frustrations were felt on the west coast, too. The Marine Corps essentially tried to prevent MARSOC from bringing its people, equipment, and anything else of value to the new component. Lieutenant Colonel Schuehle, the first commanding officer of 1st MRB, recalls having to ignore the Marine Corps 5400 Bulletins for the “idiocy” they were, or else 1st MRB would not have had enough weapons for all of its companies.⁹⁴⁰

F. “SEPARABLE BUT NOT SEPARATE”

Despite the demand for SOF in Iraq and Afghanistan and SOCOM’s becoming “the lead combatant commander for planning, synchronizing, and as directed, executing global operations against terrorist networks” in the Unified Campaign Plan 2004,⁹⁴¹ General Hagee ensured MARSOC Marines remain tied to the MEU, which he spelled out in Commandant of the Marine Corps Bulletins 1, 2, and 3.⁹⁴² The MSOC would be OPCON to the geographic combatant command (GCC) and TACON to the MEU, meaning it would ostensibly be available to accomplish missions assigned by the GCC

⁹³⁸ “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler,” 14. These documents can be found at <http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/pandr/Concepts-and-Programs/>. MARSOC addressed this issue by publishing an article in the *Gazette* and producing a publication, *MARSOF*, to explain who they are and what they do. See Staff, Marine Corps Special Operations Command, “MarSOC: A Bridge Between Our Corps and USSOCOM,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 92, no. 8 (Aug. 2008): 66–68; U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, *MARSOF* (Camp Lejeune, NC: MARSOC, 2011); “Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010,” 2.

⁹³⁹ “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler,” 26.

⁹⁴⁰ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 23, 2018.

⁹⁴¹ Edward J. Drea, Ronald H. Cole, Walter S. Poole, James F. Schnabel, Robert J. Watson, and Willard J. Webb, *History of the Unified Campaign Plan: 1946–2012* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2013), 91–92.

⁹⁴² “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler,” 26; Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 5, 2018.

while also performing the MEU missions that had been performed by the MSPF. This arrangement put MARSOC in the position of trying to enhance the relevance of the Corps' capital ship investment and the MEU construct rather than prioritizing requirements in Afghanistan and Iraq. It also challenged the guidance in *Joint Publication 3-05.1, Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations*, which directs combatant commanders to "[p]rovide for a clear and unambiguous chain of command" and "[a]void frequent transfer of SOF between commanders."⁹⁴³ Instead of questioning the relevance of the MEU's mission during counterinsurgency campaigns in the Middle East or adapting to the new operational environment, the Corps attempted to escalate its investment in an existing construct, which undermined MARSOC's ability to task organize as a standalone unit. When the Secretary Rumsfeld made his decision to activate a Marine special operations component, Lieutenant General Huly said, "We finally came to the realization that unless we were a full partner with U.S. Special Operations Command, we probably weren't making maximum use of the Marine Corps' capabilities."⁹⁴⁴ Inherent in this statement is the notion that the Marine Corps looked at MARSOC to make it more relevant so that it could more effectively leverage its capabilities. Activating MARSOC was not simply a matter of meeting DoD and SOCOM requirements.

In late September 2005, when the Marine Corps and SOCOM were negotiating the terms of the Corps' force contribution in preparation for the final decision brief to Secretary Rumsfeld, Brigadier General Dunford, Director of the Operations Division at PP&O, requested input to gauge the impact on the MEU(SOC)'s capabilities if the MSOC onboard was tasked by the TSOC for a contingency that did not involve the rest of the MEU.⁹⁴⁵ In other words, "Is a MEU truly 'special operations capable' when that

⁹⁴³ As quoted in David F. Bean, "Command and Control for Marine Special Operations," *Marine Corps Gazette* 90, no. 8 (Aug. 2005): 44-45.

⁹⁴⁴ Christian Lowe, "SOCOM and You: The Corps Wants Snake Eaters, and You Could Be One of Them," *Marine Corps Times*, November 14, 2005, CC, MARSOC, February 24-June 30, 2006 (TAB A).

⁹⁴⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Wisniewski to Lieutenant Colonels Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Anthony Herlihy, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith, "Is a MEU Still SOC Without the MSPF?" September 29, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

capability resides largely with an element that can—and will—be tasked with missions having no direct correlation to the Marine mission?”⁹⁴⁶ The consensus was that the MEU(SOC) would lose 50 percent of its ground reconnaissance assets (the most senior and most capable 50 percent) and 100 percent of its deep reconnaissance assets, and its amphibious reconnaissance capability would be degraded, but the MEU would still be able to perform all but one (i.e., direct action, including its subset—visit, board, search, and seizure) of the 23 mission essential tasks the MEU(SOC) was advertised as being capable to perform and would thus still be special operations capable.⁹⁴⁷

The manner in which HQMC framed the question, however, overlooked many of the second and third order effects of putting the MSOC on the MEU in the first place. Inherent in this construct was the MSOC would be reliant on the MEU for all of its combat support and combat service support needs, leading to another question: “Is the MSOC special operations capable without the MEU?”⁹⁴⁸ The MSOC would not be task organized as a standalone, MAGTF-like entity as Det One had been, thus setting the MEU up to become a “parts bin” from which to “poach” assets to support the MSOC when it was retasked and make the MSOC no different from the SEALs, who rely on the help of other units when they show up in their battlespace. This would also potentially gut the GCC’s strategic reserve of critical assets to support the MSOC, which would be

⁹⁴⁶ Bean, “Command and Control for Marine Special Operations,” 46.

⁹⁴⁷ Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Wisniewski to Lieutenant Colonels Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Anthony Herlihy, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith, “Is a MEU Still SOC Without the MSPF?” September 29, 2005; Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Herlihy to Lieutenant Colonels Daniel Wisniewski, Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith and Major Keith Ragsdell, “RE: Is a MEU Still SOC Without the MSPF?” September 30, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers; Lieutenant Colonel Warren Driggers to Lieutenant Colonels Daniel Wisniewski, Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Anthony Herlihy, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith and Majors David Bohn and Wade Priddy, “FW: Is a MEU still SOC Without the MSPF? (I MEF Dep G-7),” September 30, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

⁹⁴⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Herlihy to Lieutenant Colonels Daniel Wisniewski, Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith and Major Keith Ragsdell, “RE: Is a MEU Still SOC Without the MSPF?” September 30, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers. The infamous MSOC F would later use this lack of self-sufficiency, lack of clarity concerning their mission, and lack of logistical support from adjacent units as part of their defense, which centered on their being set up to fail. See Andrew deGrandpre, “Task Force Violent,” *Military Times*, March 12, 2015, <http://www.militarytimes.com/special-projects/task-force-violent/2015/03/12/task-force-violent-the-unforgiven-part-2/>.

doing TSOC work ashore, when the MEU would still be responsible for other operational requirements.⁹⁴⁹ Furthermore, there was no reason to assume that the TSOCs would not just leave the MSOCs onboard ship to atrophy as they had done with the SEALs assigned as naval support elements.⁹⁵⁰ The SEALs provided another example from which lessons were seemingly ignored. Following the inception of SOCOM, NSW was tasked with supporting both SOCOM and naval support elements. However, as the GCC—then commanded by the geographic Commanders-in-Chief, or CINCs—and TSOC gained more power as a result of Goldwater-Nichols, the value NSW assets provided as part of the Carrier Battle Group or Amphibious Ready Group was effectively undermined. The GCC tasked special operations requirements early in the planning phase to joint force SEALs, meaning even in littoral environments the assets aboard ship would go untasked.⁹⁵¹

Prevailing Marine Corps sentiment was that the Corps' strength resided in the MAGTF and the MEU(SOC), and the Corps should maintain control of its assets and capabilities since it knew best how to employ the MAGTF to its fullest capabilities. One recommendation even entailed changing the command relationship to make the MSOC OPCON to the MEU(SOC) and TACON to the TSOCs to ensure the MAGTF remained

⁹⁴⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Herlihy to Lieutenant Colonels Daniel Wisniewski, Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith and Major Keith Ragsdell, "RE: Is a MEU Still SOC Without the MSPF?" September 30, 2005; Lieutenant Colonel Warren Driggers to Lieutenant Colonels Daniel Wisniewski, Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Anthony Herlihy, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith and Major David Bohn and Wade Priddy, "FW: Is a MEU still SOC Without the MSPF? (I MEF Dep G-7)," September 30, 2005.

⁹⁵⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Herlihy to Lieutenant Colonels Daniel Wisniewski, Kelly Alexander, Mark DeLuna, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith and Major Keith Ragsdell, "RE: Is a MEU Still SOC Without the MSPF?" September 30, 2005.

⁹⁵¹ Gregory W. Strauser, "Naval Special Warfare Deployments in Support of Theater Commanders: Special Operations Forces or Naval Support Elements?" (master's thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2000), accessed November 13, 2018, <https://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a526321.pdf>.

intact, ostensibly as the same Tier II-like force the MEU(SOC) had always been.⁹⁵² The sea-based MSOC, the Marine Corps assumed, would serve as the trigger that pulled the MEU into the fight along with it. However, this assumption seemingly ignored the operational history of the MEU(SOC), as well as SOCOM and the TSOCs' intent not to change the status quo of marginalizing the MEU(SOC).⁹⁵³ After all, if conventional forces could be trained to conduct missions previously thought the domain of special operations, that would mean the mission was no longer special. SOCOM had thus always viewed the MEU(SOC) as a threat to its missions.⁹⁵⁴

Colonel Carl ("Sam") Mundy, who commanded the 13th MEU when it was employed ashore as part of OIF 06–08.1, and Major Robert Sotire, who commanded MSOC A when it was separated from the 13th MEU and was sent to the Philippines and Afghanistan (MARSOC's second deployment there, after MSOC F) as part of OEF, wrote an article in the *Gazette* following their deployment addressing employment options for the MEU(SOC) given the assumption that TSOC commanders would continue to employ the MSOC separate from the MEU(SOC)—a situation they describe as "separable *and* separate."⁹⁵⁵ Colonel Mundy and Major Sotire proposed three alternatives: making the entire MEU(SOC) OPCON to the TSOC; the MSOC remaining OPCON to the TSOC while supporting the MEU, and employing the MEU(SOC) and MSOC in the same geographic location when both were ashore, and the MSOC remaining OPCON to the TSOC while being supported by the MEU. The reasoning

⁹⁵² Lieutenant Colonel Kelly Alexander to Lieutenant Colonels Daniel Wisniewski, Anthony Herlihy, Mark DeLuna, Jeffrey Kenney, James McGrath, Michael Saleh, Neil Schuehle, and Russell Smith and Major Keith Ragsdell, "RE: Is a MEU Still SOC Without the MSPF?" October 4, 2005, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers. Major General Hejlik was also against removing the MSOC from the MEU due to concerns regarding the long-term employment of the force beyond Iraq and Afghanistan. See CC, MARSOC, January-June 2008, Folder 1, "End of Tour Interview with SgtMaj Matthew P. Ingram, 3 March 2008," 16–18.

⁹⁵³ Lieutenant Colonel Neil Schuehle to Colonel Daniel Yoo, Sergeant Major Matthew Ingram, Jason Schauble, Colonel Daniel Rogers, and Lieutenant Colonel Robert Tanzola, "RE: Article on MEU(SOC)," November 8, 2007, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

⁹⁵⁴ Major Cliff Gilmore to Lieutenant Colonel Neil Schuehle, "RE: Recon Training vs. MSOC Training," December 21, 2007, Neil Schuehle Personal Papers.

⁹⁵⁵ Carl E. "Sam" Mundy and Robert B. Sotire, "MEU Plus MSOC: Trying to Keep the SOC in MEU(SOC)," *Marine Corps Gazette* 92, no. 7 (Jul. 2008): 50–54. Emphasis added. Mundy would later serve as MARSOC Commander from August 2016-August 2018.

behind the third proposal was this notion that the relevance of the MSOC would make the MEU(SOC) relevant: “Minimally, however, a MEU offers an MSOC additional aviation and fire support, quick reaction forces, and combat service support. Getting more Marines from the MEU into the fight, and making the MSOC more capable, would clearly enhance the TSOC’s mission success.”⁹⁵⁶ Rather than reorganize in order to become relevant again itself, the Marine Corps opted to escalate its commitment to the status quo and risk both forces becoming irrelevant. In the Afghanistan context, transiting on the MEU made the MSOC a less attractive option since it led to a lack of operational continuity as gaps were created when one MSOC had to leave theater early to transit back on the MEU and the other MSOC was still transiting to Afghanistan with the next MEU, thus undermining the very premise of this alternative.

In order to transit with the MEU to the CENTCOM AOR before being subsequently retasked by the TSOC to go to Afghanistan, MSOCs on west coast MEUs would only spend about one day in Afghanistan for every one day in transit, and MSOCs on east coast MEUs would spend roughly two days in Afghanistan for every day in transit.⁹⁵⁷ This created gaps of anywhere from 45 to 90 days, which was “a disastrous way to do business” in a counterinsurgency fight.⁹⁵⁸ Events slowly began to chip away at this policy until the MARSOC Commander, Major General Robeson, ended it. In February 2008, MSOC H deployed to Afghanistan with the 24th MEU. Both the MEU and the MSOC flew into Afghanistan and operated for 210 days, setting the precedent of an MSOC flying into theater. MARSOC developed a plan to deploy a team from the MSOAG to bridge the gap between MSOC H and its replacement, MSOC I, since MSOC H was assigned to conduct operations in Regional Command-West, where Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) had not previously

⁹⁵⁶ Mundy and Sotire, 53.

⁹⁵⁷ “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler,” 16.

⁹⁵⁸ “End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander 9, November 2009,” 1–2.

operated.⁹⁵⁹ MSOC H partnered with an ODA and a commando battalion from the Afghan Commandos. MSOC H was also eventually partnered with a second battalion of indigenous forces—not, however, special operators. By the end of the deployment, MSOC H had its four MSOTs (one more than usual), two Afghan battalions, a psychological operations (PSYOPS) company, and a Civil Affairs team, effectively putting the MSOC commander on par in terms of assets with a Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) commander.⁹⁶⁰

Using the MSOT from the MSOAG to build the operational continuity between MSOC H and MSOC I became unnecessary. That summer, shortly after assuming command, Major General Robeson ordered a west coast MSOC, MSOC B, to remain in Afghanistan to ensure operational continuity with MSOC C, which had also been tasked by the TSOC to operate in Afghanistan. This effectively established a two-MSOC presence in Afghanistan.⁹⁶¹ When Major General Robeson briefed the Commandant, General James Conway, the Commandant replied, “I don’t know if that was your call.”⁹⁶² Robeson explained that he was not trying to dissociate MARSOC from the MEU and the Marine Corps. However, incorporating the MEU into the TSOC’s Theater Security Cooperation Plan seemed preferable to putting MSOCs on MEUs. Lieutenant Colonel Travis Homiak, MARSOC’s G35 at the time, explains in more detail the reasoning and sensitivities involved in this decision:

⁹⁵⁹ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2008, Folder 1, “Oral History Interview with Colonel Lewis D. Volger, MARSOC G-33 LNO to CJSOTF-A (Afghanistan) Jan-Jul 2008, 26 August 2008,” 2–4. MSOC H’s deployment marked another first. MSOC H was the first one to deploy in MSOTs. MARSOC created the MSOT as part of an internal reorganization to make its forces more modular in structure, more closely resemble the “industry standard” (i.e., a SEAL platoon or ODA), and more balanced between the direction action and FID missions. See “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler,” 26–29; “Oral History Interview with Colonel Lewis D. Volger, MARSOC G-33 LNO to CJSOTF-A (Afghanistan) Jan-Jul 2008, 26 August 2008,” 3–4.

⁹⁶⁰ “Oral History Interview with Colonel Lewis D. Volger, MARSOC G-33 LNO to CJSOTF-A (Afghanistan) Jan-Jul 2008, 26 August 2008,” 15–16.

⁹⁶¹ “Oral History Interview with Colonel Lewis D. Volger, MARSOC G-33 LNO to CJSOTF-A (Afghanistan) Jan-Jul 2008, 26 August 2008,” 7–8; “End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander 9, November 2009,” 1–2.

⁹⁶² “End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander 9, November 2009,” 2. It is worth noting that this comment either demonstrates a lack of understanding on the Commandant’s part or a fundamental unwillingness to accept that these Marines did not belong to him.

You know when MARSOC came about, we were operating under those three Marine Corps Bulletins, and that was what we were putting stock in, as kind of the three foundation documents that everybody who came to the Command and Staff would, “Hey, you have to read these.” When truth be told, at the end of the day we came to the conclusion that these things aren’t authoritative, and so they stipulated this relationship between the MEUs and the MSOCs where the MSOCs would be TACON. They had no authority to do, whatsoever. So once we figured out what the relationship would be, that basically as we run now, we own our forces OPCON from Admiral Olson, and we give them OPCON to the TSOCs or the Geographical Combatant Commanders who then delegates that down to the TSOCs. Well once we were straight on that, it became kind of walking a tightrope with some Marine Corps sensitivities in that, hey, I hate to break it to you guys, but you really don’t have a vote in this. And that became one of the bigger challenges, especially as you would have to put this forth to Marine Corps audiences. I mean we . . . were pretty much reviled; we were not received warmly by any stretch of the imagination.⁹⁶³

The increase in the size and scope of MSOC H’s responsibility led to a natural follow-on requirement: a SOTF. On Major General Robeson’s first visit to Afghanistan, the CJSOTF-A Commander, Colonel Sean Mulholland, asked him if MARSOC could stand up a SOTF. The MARSOC staff spent three months analyzing the request, and nobody on the staff thought it was a good idea.⁹⁶⁴ The staff thought it was too early in MARSOC’s life cycle, and it would be difficult to do it on a reoccurring basis. As he thought about it more and more, however, Major General Robeson felt that despite all of the obstacles, MARSOC had to do it. He met with the SOCOM Commander, Admiral Eric Olson, in December 2008 and told him, “[I]t’s not that I can’t do this, it’s just that it’s going to be very painful, and this has to be something that you, no kidding, think is that important for me to pull my Command through this knot hold.” Admiral Olson replied, “Unless this breaks your Command, you need to do this. I need it and, to be

⁹⁶³ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2010, Folder 1, “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Travis Homiak, MARSOC G-35, 21 April 2010,” 2. Homiak explains further that there was no unity of command or common commander with the MEU. The first common commander between the MEU and MSOC was the Geographic Combatant Commander, or possibly joint Task Force Commander. See “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Travis Homiak, MARSOC G-35, 21 April 2010,” 8.

⁹⁶⁴ “End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander 9, November 2009,” 6.

candid, you need it more than you realize.”⁹⁶⁵ Major General Robeson committed to sourcing the SOTF in order to capitalize on the opportunity OEF provided to enable MARSOC’s battalion commanders to exercise command and control over forces in combat and set “a precedent for who we are and what we do.” This would bring MARSOC credibility in the SOF community and would prevent the Marine Corps from looking at MARSOC’s battalions as administrative force providers as opposed to warfighters. This would make its Marines more competitive for future promotions and command opportunities and provide MARSOC with more leverage to hand select its commanders and staffs.⁹⁶⁶ MARSOC deployed its first SOTF the following year.⁹⁶⁷

As operations in Afghanistan ramped up and rotations became enduring, MARSOC focused on increasing its enabler support. MSOCs began providing command and control for the equivalent of 6–7 teams and accounting for several years’ worth of theater provided equipment, necessitating a bigger headquarters and more logistics personnel, especially to cover an expanded area of operations. Having broken the tether, the MEU could not be relied upon to provide the requisite combat support and combat service support. This support had to be organic to enable a commander to deploy forces rapidly. Having to go through a request for forces undermines the expeditionary capability of a unit. MARSOC finally began to resemble the task organization and heavy enabler emphasis of Det One.⁹⁶⁸ This ability to task organize and fight as a standalone, MAGTF-like entity constitutes MARSOC’s unique contribution to SOCOM.

⁹⁶⁵ “End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander 9, November 2009,” 6.

⁹⁶⁶ “End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander 9, November 2009,” 6–7; CC, MARSOC, January-June 2009, Folder 1, “January-June 2009 Command Chronology Interview, Major General Mastin Robeson, 21 August 2009,” 4–5.

⁹⁶⁷ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2009, Folder 1, “MARSOC G-3 Current Operations,” 27.

⁹⁶⁸ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018; CC, MARSOC, January-July 2010, Folder 1, “MARSOC Deputy Commander Interview for the Jan-Jun 2010 Command Chronology, 8–23-10,” 2–3.

G. MANPOWER STRAIN

When it was first activated, MARSOC Marines had no viable career path in the larger Marine Corps. Not only could they not stay in the special operations community for the rest of their respective careers, but they also left the community without even an MOS that could have allowed MAROC or the Marine Corps to track their special operations experience. Their time at MARSOC, which oftentimes entailed serving in some of the most demanding operational assignments, carried a significant opportunity cost to their careers. It did not make financial sense for MARSOC to invest so much training into Marines who would then be lost back to the Marine Corps, and it also simply was not sustainable, even though MARSOC did its best to refine its recruiting and training models. MARSOC's quest to stabilize its manpower model challenged two of the Marine Corps' most cherished tenets—its elitism and independence—and thus ran into institutional obstacles. Major General Hejlik explained some of the cultural factors involved:

The other one, really, the biggest challenge for us was the whole cultural shift of, “You’re a United States Marine, you know, you wear the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor, so you are already “Special.” True. And that’s why we get a trained Marine, the way we’ve been training Marines for two hundred and thirty-one years, so to take a Marine, to take “Corporal Hayden,” for instance, who is a bona fide NCO in the Marine Corps, and to run him through our Recruiting, Screen, Select, and Assess, and he doesn’t make it, that’s pretty tough, culturally, for the Marine Corps to swallow.⁹⁶⁹

MARSOC did not have to recruit its first operators since they were transferred from 1st and 2nd Force Reconnaissance Companies. However, MARSOC had to develop a system for recruiting, assessing, selecting, and training more operators to grow the force and to replace these original operators as the original operators returned to the Marine Corps. MARSOC's recruiting efforts started out rather primitively, and this was reflected in the low acceptance rates yielded from early iterations of Assessment & Selection (A&S), which lasted a little less than three weeks. Major General Hejlik noted that the

⁹⁶⁹ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC),” September 20, 2007, 2.

initial selection rate was below 25 percent, which he attributed to “the way we were screening people.”⁹⁷⁰ MARSOC formed its own recruiting team and refined its processes, leading the selection rate to jump to 56 percent by the fifth A&S.⁹⁷¹ The selection rate never did stabilize at a rate any higher than this, however.⁹⁷² This eventually led to questions from the Commandant about why the attrition rate was so high even while MARSOC was asking him to approve an MOA to allow operators to stay at the command for five years.⁹⁷³ This exacerbated the resentment towards MARSOC’s “elite within an elite” status. In April 2010, the MARSOC Commander, Major General Paul Lefebvre, decided to create a G9 Division to house the Recruiting and Screening Branch, A&S, and the Marketing and Advertising Officer, further professionalizing this effort.⁹⁷⁴ The impact on recruiting can be seen in the sharp uptick in the number of Marines who attended each iteration of A&S.

Professionalizing the A&S process was complicated by an immaturity in the orders process. Those Marines already assigned to 1st and 2nd Force Reconnaissance Companies were, for the most part, grandfathered in, meaning these Marines could skip A&S. However, Marines from outside the command initially received orders assigning them directly to the major subordinate elements (MSEs) before attending A&S. These Marines could remain at MARSOC even if they did not pass A&S—in some cases, even holding operator-type billets.⁹⁷⁵ This ran counter to Major General Hejlik’s guidance.⁹⁷⁶ For example, at A&S Class 002, the MSEs could not support sending Marines that were

⁹⁷⁰ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2007, Folder 1, “Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, MARSOC, for the Jul-Dec 2007 Command Chronology,” 1.

⁹⁷¹ “Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, MARSOC, for the Jul-Dec 2007 Command Chronology,” 1.

⁹⁷² For a partial list of A&S accession rates, see Appendix G. The command added an additional phase to the beginning of A&S to filter out candidates before they started A&S, which mitigated investing resources into unqualified candidates.

⁹⁷³ “Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010,” 3.

⁹⁷⁴ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2010, Folder 1, “MARSOC G-1,” 9; “MARSOC Deputy Commander Interview for the Jan-Jun 2010 Command Chronology, 8-23-10,” 2.

⁹⁷⁵ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018.

⁹⁷⁶ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2007, Folder 2, “Individual Training Development Cell,” 124.

already assigned or had orders pending to the course because many of them were either already assigned to other training or were already slated to deploy with a company or team. The MSEs could ill afford to lose these Marines should they have failed A&S, since this would have had a negative impact on the MSEs' ability to meet deployment requirements.⁹⁷⁷

In part due to these problems associated with recruiting and A&S, MARSOC created an Individual Training Course (ITC). ITC initially lasted approximately 34 weeks, consisting of a core skills training block of approximately 26 weeks and a language training block of approximately eight weeks integrated throughout the course.⁹⁷⁸ The intent was to create a level playing field for graduates from all MOSs and teach them the basic requirements for SOF missions.⁹⁷⁹ ITC would also serve as a homogenization asset for FMTU and the MSOBs.⁹⁸⁰ An amphibious phase was later added to ITC so that graduates could be awarded the 0321 Reconnaissance Marine MOS as an equivalent to the Marine Corps' Basic Reconnaissance Course (BRC). In lieu of a PMOS for its operators, MARSOC intended to carve out a subset within the 0321 MOS community.⁹⁸¹ Doing so would prevent Marines from coming to MARSOC for five years, getting promoted once or twice, then returning to the Marine Corps with no credibility to operate in their PMOS or ability to get promoted.⁹⁸² MARSOC initially only took Marines with the 0321 MOS and then Marines from the infantry occupational

⁹⁷⁷ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2007, Folder 2, "Individual Training Development Cell," 125.

⁹⁷⁸ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2007, Folder 2, "Individual Training Development Cell," 111.

⁹⁷⁹ "Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, MARSOC, for the Jul-Dec 2007 Command Chronology," 3.

⁹⁸⁰ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2008, Folder 3, "End of Tour Interview with LtCol Thomas G. Sullivan, MARSOC G-37 and MSOS Operations Officer, 15 May 2008," 31.

⁹⁸¹ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018.

⁹⁸² "Jul-Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009," 14; "Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010," 4.

field (03XX). ITC enabled the command to expand its aperture and recruit and select the right Marine regardless of MOS.⁹⁸³

While ITC increased the initial pool from which MARSOC could recruit, it also initially cost MARSOC one million dollars a year to run the program, which was run by instructors internal to MARSOC, thus leading to significant manpower costs as well. The time students spent at ITC also counted against their allotted time at the command,⁹⁸⁴ and the instructors who initially served at the schoolhouse lacked special operations experience, leading the schoolhouse to rely on a lot of contractor help.⁹⁸⁵ Furthermore, establishing enough throughput remained a challenge the command was never able to adequately resolve. In 2011, for example, MARSOC only graduated 128 Marines from ITC.⁹⁸⁶ In developing its own training pipeline, the command was also struck with the somewhat startling realization that SOCOM did not have any formal joint mission essential task lists to which the force was expected to train. MARSOC, in a way, forced SOCOM to resolve this issue and professionalize the training process.⁹⁸⁷

MARSOC received a lot of assistance from U.S. Army Special Operations Command and the John F. Kennedy Special Operations Center and School, in particular, in developing its ITC and Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) Course. This did not come without some growing pains along the way. Major General Hejlik recalls, “I think early on we were met with a lot of resistance and received a whole lot of

⁹⁸³ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2008, Folder 1, “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 13; “Jul-Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009,” 1–2.

⁹⁸⁴ “Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, MARSOC, for the Jul-Dec 2007 Command Chronology,” 3. ITC also created the existential question of who, exactly, an operator is. See also CC, MARSOC, January-June 2008, Folder 3, “Oral History Interview with LtCol Sean Conley, Marine Special Operations School (MSOS) Executive Officer, Individual Training Course Standup, 9 June 2008,” 2, 20. It took time for the MSOS to get the course validated by Training and Education Command so this period of time was not counted against the students’ five-year tour.

⁹⁸⁵ “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Thomas G. Sullivan, MARSOC G-37 and MSOS Operations Officer, 15 May 2008,” 21.

⁹⁸⁶ See Appendix F for a partial list of ITC graduate numbers.

⁹⁸⁷ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 14.

advice and very little assistance; two different things. But some of that was pure culture; some of that was we needed to make sure that we knew exactly what we were asking for and why we were asking for it; in other words, capacity and capability.”⁹⁸⁸

In order to meet its manpower demands and work around the time tax associated with ITC, Marines holding the 0321 MOS initially could bypass ITC after going through A&S. Those not holding the 0321 MOS had to go through ITC after A&S. This was called the “dual-track” solution. The command made this decision with the realization that it simply was not possible to regenerate enough enlisted operators if the only Marines to enter MARSOC came through ITC.⁹⁸⁹ Major General Lefebvre eventually got rid of the dual track because requirements in theater and the basic mission requirements of the command and SOF writ large necessitated that MARSOC be more than a direction action force. He explained,

We are a Direct Action, Strategic Reconnaissance, and have huge responsibilities from a Foreign Internal Defense standpoint, training other countries. And our 0321s were coming to us, the first seven panels, and they weren’t getting any training, they weren’t going to ITC. And ITC gives you all that, and it gives you all the area warfare skills that you need to operate in the distributed SOF environment that we’re in.⁹⁹⁰

This decision, however, put even further strain on an already overtaxed manpower system and required a lot of cross-leveling between the MSOBs and MSOAG to meet deployment requirements, especially as Marines got orders to leave the command. The system simply could not regenerate the population. Manpower levels started going negative in the 2008–2009 time frame. This decline became more precipitous in 2011 despite the command running three iterations of ITC annually. MARSOC began running short on officers, in particular. During the Marine Corps’ ramp up in Afghanistan, not as

⁹⁸⁸ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 15.

⁹⁸⁹ “Jul-Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009,” 14; Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018.

⁹⁹⁰ “Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010,” 11.

many ground combat officers volunteered to go to A&S and execute orders to MARSOC, ostensibly because they did not want to miss out on the war. This led to half of the officers coming from a non-ground combat MOS. The number of infantry officers, in particular, continued to decline. The perception surrounding MARSOC at the time was that an officer would do his team time but then would not be competitive going back to the Marine Corps and competing within his PMOS, forcing him to get out of the Marine Corps.⁹⁹¹

There was a lot of truth to this perception. Officers not holding the 0202 MAGTF Intelligence Officer or 0302 Infantry Officer MOS fared very poorly at higher-level promotion, command, and PME boards in comparison to their peers in their PMOS.⁹⁹² As a result, the command contemplated a course of action (COA) that would have limited the officer population to Marines with the 0202 or 0302 MOS, but doing this would have made it impossible to get enough volunteers to meet end strength goals.⁹⁹³ Team commanders had also initially been senior majors, but in the second half of 2009, that policy changed. The command stopped recruiting majors for MSOT billets. Recruiting was instead limited to first lieutenants and captains with less than two years' time in grade.⁹⁹⁴ As a result, in the 2012–2014 time frame, the command was left with too many team commanders who were still too junior to become company commanders, creating a gap between the senior majors who initially populated the command and these new lieutenants and captains. There also simply were not enough officers graduating from ITC to fill all of the team commander billets. MARSOC had to pull some Marines directly from the FMF as a Band-Aid solution to address manpower issues. During this

⁹⁹¹ Justin Dyal, personal conversations with author, July 26, 2018 and August 17, 2018.

⁹⁹² Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018. Marine intelligence officers have a reputation for not following a “cookie cutter” career path, meaning, for example, platoon commander as a second lieutenant, company executive officer as a first lieutenant, company commander as a captain, and a department head tour as a major. The 0302 MOS is the biggest officer MOS, and while the most successful are typically those who hold high-profile key billets (e.g., The Basic School and Infantry Officer Course instructor, Recruit Station Commanding Officer, etc.) during the course of their careers, there is more room for outliers as long as you hit the “cookie cutter” key billets. The author contacted Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA) at HQMC for specific aggregate-level data, but M&RA refused to cooperate.

⁹⁹³ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018.

⁹⁹⁴ CC, MARSOC, July–December 2009, Folder 1, “MARSOC G-1,” 9–10.

time period, MARSOC had to bring in as many as four majors to serve as MSOC commanders even though they did not go through A&S or ITC.⁹⁹⁵ While it might have initially been “painful” to source two MSOCs and a SOTF to deploy to Afghanistan, MARSOC’s manpower issues finally reached a point where they were no longer tenable.

The Marine Corps, however, was also suffering from manpower issues. Emerging requirements following the 2012 Benghazi attack led to a competition within the Marine Corps for manpower for crisis response. Following the attack, Lieutenant General Richard Tryon, Deputy Commandant for PP&O, had II MEF establish Special Purpose MAGTF-Crisis Response (SPMAGTF-CR) to fill the gap created by the lack of a MEU in the AFRICOM AOR. Then Lieutenant General Neller, CG, MARCENT, wanted a similar force as well even though he already had MEU in his AOR. This levied a tremendous strain on Marine Corps readiness and maintenance, in addition to manpower.⁹⁹⁶

H. MARINE CORPS PERCEPTIONS AND POST-OEF PLANNING

The Marine Corps’ discussion of MARSOC in the pages of the *Gazette* and in student theses was somewhat muted following its initial activation. When the debate picked up, two sides emerged: those in favor of embracing MARSOC as a means for effectively posturing the Marine Corps to remain a relevant force, and those that saw MARSOC as a drain on the Corps’ resources. The former nested their arguments in the larger debate concerning the long-term future of the Marine Corps while the latter implicitly assumed that debate had already been resolved and rested their argument on a fairly circular logic: the missions of the Marine Corps are relevant because the Marine Corps only conducts relevant missions.

In addition to Colonel Mundy and Major Sotire’s consideration of the employment of the MEU(SOC) and MSOC following MARSOC’s first two

⁹⁹⁵ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018 and August 17, 2018.

⁹⁹⁶ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

deployments,⁹⁹⁷ Captain John Hunt also made an early foray into the consideration of MARSOC, arguing in favor of creating a special operations MOS and SOF career progression model. Encouraging the Marine Corps to learn from the Army's mistakes regarding how it treated SF-qualified soldiers and officers before SOCOM was established, Hunt argued an MOS was necessary due to the experience required to perform SOF missions, the significant costs associated with SOF training (and thus, the longer timeline necessary for recouping an investment), and the likelihood that Marines serving at MARSOC would be less competitive for promotion and forced out of service.⁹⁹⁸

In his thesis at the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Major Eric Thompson argued that the Marine Corps needed to increase its force contribution to SOCOM to support irregular warfare (IW) requirements associated with the GWOT.⁹⁹⁹ Thompson recounted his experience sitting on an amphibious ship off the coast of Pakistan as Army SF initiated the toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, even recalling that a JSOTF visited his ship, the USS *Bonhomme Richard*, in order to evaluate its utility as a potential JSOTF “lily pad.”¹⁰⁰⁰ This would have necessitated disembarking the Marines onboard ship in Kuwait to make room for SOF personnel. As long as the country's political leadership viewed SOF as a better option than a MEU(SOC), Thompson argued, the Marine Corps would no longer be the “first to fight” unless it adapted and increased—potentially even doubling—its force contribution to SOCOM. Seemingly ignorant of the operational history Thompson cited, Major Todd Simmons, in a School of Advanced Military Studies monograph, embraced the

⁹⁹⁷ Mundy and Sotire, “MEU Plus MSOC,” 50–54.

⁹⁹⁸ John M. Hunt, “Creating a MarSOF MOS: A Lesson in History,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 92, no. 10 (Oct. 2008): 43–48. Hunt originally presented his argument in a student paper for the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College. See John M. Hunt, “Creating a MARSOF MOS: A Lesson in History” (student paper, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2008), accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a511289.pdf>.

⁹⁹⁹ Eric N. Thompson, “The Need to Increase Marine Corps Special Operations Command” (master's thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2009), accessed November 18, 2018, <https://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a508084.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Thompson, *iv*.

MEU(SOC) so thoroughly he recommended the MEU(SOC) should be made OPCON to the TSOC if the Marine Corps was going to provide SOCOM a component. Promoting the MEU(SOC), Simmons declared, “In the GWOT, the MEU(SOC) is the ideal force to provide the power, resilience, and ensure the unity of command for the SOC commander of all forces involved in a special operation.”¹⁰⁰¹

In contrast, Captain R. L. Diefenbach proved less enthusiastic about a force contribution, arguing in an Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS) student paper that the Marine Corps should not allow MARSOC Marines to remain in the SOF community for the entirety of their careers. Demonstrating the cultural resistance MARSOC faced, Diefenbach argued,

Part of the strength of the Marine Corps is its ethos and history, it is the most selective service, an elite unit in which every member can rise to service: “every Marine a rifleman.” Should MARSOC achieve its closed-loop goal, this policy would serve only to cause divisions in the Marine Corps rather than increasing SOF interoperability. The Marine Corps tries to achieve a quality spread in its ranks, but those individuals who pass the RSAS [Recruiting, Screening, Assessment, and Selection] will consist of some of the highest quality warfighters the Marine Corps has to offer, effectively removing them from the operating forces and weakening the foundation of excellence on which the Marine Corps rests.¹⁰⁰²

Even though he buried his thesis five pages into a six-page article, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Crabb, who served four years at MARSOC as the operations officer of

¹⁰⁰¹ Todd P. Simmons, “MARSOC: A Way Ahead” (master’s thesis, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2006), 47, accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a451022.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰² R. L. Diefenbach, “Do Not Sacrifice the Marine Corps for MARSOC to Succeed” (student paper, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2006), 5, accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a509401.pdf>. Captain Jason Schermerhorn made a similar argument concerning Marine intelligence officers serving at MARSOC, claiming the Marine Corps would be negatively affected by sending Marine intelligence officers to MARSOC since it would establish “a separate intelligence community that exacerbates manning shortfalls and diminishes the expertise base of the average intelligence officer.” See Jason Schermerhorn, “Investing Marine Intelligence Capital in MARSOC: Are the Rewards Worth the Risks to the USMC?” (student paper, Expeditionary Warfare School, 2008), 1, accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a508969.pdf>. In contrast, Major Joseph Moye found great benefits to providing logistics and CSS structure to MARSOC for both the Marine Corps and SOCOM. See Joseph E. Moye, “U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command (MARSOC) Logistics: The ‘Return on Investment’” (master’s thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2012), accessed November 21, 2012, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a600616.pdf>.

FMTU and director of the Special Operations Training Branch at MSOS, was the first Marine in the *Gazette* to tackle the collective futures of MARSOC and the Marine Corps in the future operating environment. Crabb argued that the Marine Corps could not afford to exclude IW from conventional amphibious operations. Rather, the MAGTF commander should leverage MARSOC Marines, who are trained as “full-time IW professionals,” to meet his purported requirement of embedding an IW capability “at every level of the MAGTF.”¹⁰⁰³ According to Crabb, “And while the Marine Corps of the 21st century clearly needs the capabilities offered by the MarSOC, the MarSOC needs the Marine Corps even more.”¹⁰⁰⁴ Arguing that MARSOC had no niche in the SOF community, Crabb recommended that “providing a special operations and IW capability to the MAGTF is a natural and complementary fit. It is a role that would be mutually beneficial and ensure the healthy survival of Marine SOF when the ‘long war’ ends and dollars become scarce.”¹⁰⁰⁵ He then seemingly undermines his own argument by acknowledging that the MEU(SOC) needed MARSOC to avoid being “typecast as a purely ‘conventional,’ central Pacific WWII-style assault force.”¹⁰⁰⁶ Thus, rather than question the efficacy of the MEU(SOC), Crabb instead proposed MARSOC build the MEU(SOC) a bridge to relevancy. Crabb also accepted with blind faith that MARSOC Marines on ship would be called upon to perform the IW tasks he identified and overlooked the value of maintaining a persistent presence in a given area when conducting IW.

Less than a year later, Captain Shawn Miller also addressed the future of MARSOC and the Marine Corps through the lens of IW, although there is no indication the article was in response to Crabb’s. Miller recommended that in order to meet the burgeoning IW requirement, “the Marine Corps should adjust its core capabilities and force structure to assume the majority of roles and responsibilities currently held by U.S.

¹⁰⁰³ Andrew Crabb, “Irregular Amphibious Warfare: Why the Marine Corps and MarSOC Need Each Other,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 93, no. 11 (Nov. 2009): 82.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Crabb, 82.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Crabb, 82.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Crabb, 83.

Special Operations Command.”¹⁰⁰⁷ The Marine Corps would become an “independent Marine Corps Service department,” and SOF from the other services would be employed by their respective services to meet service-specific needs.¹⁰⁰⁸ While incredibly farfetched, Miller did question the Marine Corps’ role in the defense establishment, acknowledging there is “no guarantee that in the future the American people will still want a Marine Corps in its current form.”¹⁰⁰⁹

The debate in the *Gazette* started in earnest with the January 2011 issue. Sergeant Paul Frick asked, “So why is it that at this time of necessity the Marine Corps is doing everything it can to encourage the best and the brightest of the NCOs in the infantry to leave the regular forces?”¹⁰¹⁰ He acknowledged the allure of and increased pay entitlements in the SOF community and noted the impact force requirements in the SOF and reconnaissance communities were having on the infantry community. He then accused SOF of lacking knowledge of the situation on the ground and using “heavy-handed tactics” that only worsen matters.¹⁰¹¹ In the same issue, Lieutenant Colonel Glen Butler addressed the topic of MARSOC and aviation: “Too many other opportunities have already been missed, and MarSOC’s full potential will never be reached without an aviation component.”¹⁰¹² Somewhat perplexingly, Butler then spends an inordinate amount of time discussing missed opportunities to train foreign aviation elements and very little on enhancing MARSOC’s warfighting capabilities. Butler concluded by recommending “a clear, wide, and honest dialogue on the topic of MarSOC aviation.”¹⁰¹³ That is what he got.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Shawn A. Miller, “An Old New Role for the Marine Corps: Going Back to the Future,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 94, no. 8 (Aug. 2010): 44.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Miller, 46.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Miller, 44.

¹⁰¹⁰ Paul A. Frick, “MarSOC: The Effect on the Rifle Squad,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 95, no. 1 (Jan. 2011): 44.

¹⁰¹¹ Frick, 45–46.

¹⁰¹² Glen Butler, “MarSOC Aviation: Ways to Reseize the Initiative,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 95, no. 1 (Jan. 2011): 38.

¹⁰¹³ Butler, 39.

The June 2011 issue featured two articles that responded directly to Butler's article. Lieutenant Colonel A. Che Bolden considered the matter of aviation support to direct action or FID to be a matter of "simple coordination rather than integration" and noted that on a recent deployment of his as the operations officer of 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), the preponderance of aviation support SOF had requested was assault support—but one of the six Marine aviation functions.¹⁰¹⁴ In doing so, Bolden remained oblivious to the sizeable intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and close air support requirements SOF undoubtedly had in theater to facilitate targeting and force protection. Bolden argues with an eye on the status quo, making the obvious observations that "MarSOC is not a MAGTF" and "[i]n order to step outside current structure, it's going to cost the Marine Corps, somewhere."¹⁰¹⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Scott Clifton said Butler made a compelling case for "a much needed discussion regarding a dedicated aviation component" for MARSOC.¹⁰¹⁶ Clifton continued, "I would agree that this discussion needs to happen, not as a means to implement but as a means to put the idea to rest as not possible."¹⁰¹⁷ He argued the Marine Corps did not have the assets, budget, or manpower or career path structure in place for aviators to support such a

¹⁰¹⁴ A. Che Bolden, "MarSOC Aviation: The Capability Already Exists," *Marine Corps Gazette* 95, no. 5 (May 2011): 50–51.

¹⁰¹⁵ Bolden, 51.

¹⁰¹⁶ Scott B. Clifton, "A Case Against MarSOC Aviation: The Discussion Needs to Happen," *Marine Corps Gazette* 95, no. 5 (May 2011): 39.

¹⁰¹⁷ Clifton, 39.

recommendation.¹⁰¹⁸ Such reasoning, however, simply argues for the status quo by making no allowance for changing priorities to make more resources available.

The Frick, Bolden, and Clifton articles prompted Major Eric Thompson to write a spirited defense of MARSOC in the October 2011 issue. Chiding those that viewed MARSOC as a drain of Marine Corps resources as “parochial,” Thompson then argued, “The Marine Corps needs to take advantage of the current operational tempo of the U.S. military to go ‘all in’ with US-SOCom by fully staffing and manning the current MarSOC table of organization, adding an air component element or detachment, and providing anything else that would enhance the capabilities of MarSOC and its operators.”¹⁰¹⁹ Thompson cited multiple operations for which SOF was selected over the MEU(SOC) and noted the trend would continue in the future operating environment: “Politicians and combatant commanders are going to execute missions using the most highly trained, best equipped, and most mature forces available in order to reduce risk and increase the chances of success. USSOCom provides the forces that meet these criteria.”¹⁰²⁰ In fact, when Afghanistan came to a close, SOCOM and MARSOC would “continue to operate at the ‘tip of the spear’ . . . while the conventional military, including the Marine Corps and its MEUs, returns to trifling missions better suited to the United Nations and the Peace Corps.”¹⁰²¹ The Marine Corps, according to Thompson, should

¹⁰¹⁸ Clifton, “A Case Against MarSOC Aviation,” 40–41. MARSOC aviation became a fairly trendy topic for student master’s theses and papers as well, with several students recommending providing MARSOC some form of ACE. See Stephen V. Fiscus, “A MAGTF Solution for MARSOC” (master’s thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2009), accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a509870.pdf>; M. E. Woodard, “Marine Special Operations Companies Need Marine Air” (student paper, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2009), accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a509045.pdf>; David N. Payne, “A Dedicated Aviation Combat Element to MARSOC” (master’s thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2010), accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a600520.pdf>; Michael J. Saddler, “MARSOC Aviation: An Incremental Approach” (master’s thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2012), accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a601456.pdf>; Lauchlin D. Byrd IV, “Marine Special Operations Helicopter Unit: Viability in the Joint Force of 2020” (master’s thesis, U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2013), accessed November 21, 2018, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a601688.pdf>.

¹⁰¹⁹ Thompson, “It’s About the Future,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 95, no. 10 (Oct. 2011): 61.

¹⁰²⁰ Thompson, 62.

¹⁰²¹ Thompson, 62.

support MarSOC, especially since SOF lacks the ability to support itself for long durations.

In that same issue, Lieutenant Colonel J. Darren Duke, the Commanding Officer of 3d MSOB, and MARSOC's Public Affairs Officer, Major Jeff Landis, urged *Gazette* readers to embrace MARSOC, arguing that the establishment of MARSOC was in line with the Corps' heritage and roles and missions and would "yield future tangible and vital benefits for the Marine Corps, improving the quality of our force and strengthening our place among the Services as America's force-in-readiness."¹⁰²² The article was largely educational, as Duke and Landis recounted the Corps' history conducting special operations and explained how the actions expected by the SOCOM Commander and the Commandant were not mutually exclusive, but rather reinforcing. Duke and Landis then proceeded to explain MARSOC's training pipeline and how its forces are employed and attempted to dispel some of the "myths" about MARSOC.¹⁰²³

While a certain segment of Marines seemed unconvinced of MARSOC's value, the Marine Corps as an institution once again began to scrutinize the return it was getting on its MARSOC investment, paying particular attention to the value it would glean in a post-OEF context. SOCOM and the Marine Corps conducted a wargame from April 15–26, 2013 to "explore options through which ARG/MEUs and MARSOF/SOF can leverage each other by combining their capabilities, strengths and advantages, to achieve greater synergy in servicing GCC objectives."¹⁰²⁴ Representatives from SOCOM, MARSOC, NSW, JSOC, and Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC) represented the SOF community. From HQMC, PP&O, I&L, Combat Development and Integration (CD&I), and Aviation attended, as did I MEF and II MEF.¹⁰²⁵ MARSOC had already committed to operationally align with three designated sub-regions: PACOM,

¹⁰²² J. Darren Duke and Jeff Landis, "Embracing MarSOC," *Marine Corps Gazette* 95, no. 10 (Oct. 2011): 56.

¹⁰²³ Duke and Landis, 56–60.

¹⁰²⁴ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2013, Folder 1, "USSOCOM-USMC Wargame Reference: 15–26 April 13," Wargame Purpose and Objective.

¹⁰²⁵ "USSOCOM-USMC Wargame Reference: 15–26 April 13," Mechanics of a Game.

CENTCOM, and AFRICOM.¹⁰²⁶ The wargame evaluated three different COAs concerning how best to respond to a crisis event in Bamako. COA 1, “Deliberate Coordination,” entailed no dedicated SOF element (i.e., no liaison or operational unit) embarked, a robust coordination and liaison capability in steady state operations, the exchange of “rolling updates” between the TSOC and ARG/MEU, and the exchange of liaison officers (LNOs) as required. COA 2, “Adaptive Joint Force Packaging,” entailed a SOF LNO attached to the ARG/MEU to educate the ARG/MEU staff on SOF capabilities and serve as “linkage” between the ARG/MEU and the TSOC. COA 3, “Embarked MSOT,” explored embarking the MSOT both stateside and when the ARG/MEU chopped into a given AOR.¹⁰²⁷ MARSOC wanted to avoid COA 3 for fear of being relegated to what operational history had proven to be an irrelevant mission.

COA 2 was deemed best able to achieve the wargame objective of providing the best support to the GCC. COA 1 was essentially a marginally improved version of the status quo that was subject to ad hoc solutions. COA 3 was deemed the least able to support GCC requirements since the TSOC would effectively “lose” the MSOT that would otherwise have been employed in steady state engagements. Command and control relationship challenges would have resurfaced with an embarked MSOT, the MOST would not have adequately met a liaison requirement, and the missions the MSOT could have performed would have been artificially constrained.¹⁰²⁸ MARSOC was thus spared returning to the MEU. The SOF Liaison Element (SOFLE), the hallmark of COA 2, is comprised of a roughly six-person liaison element on the Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD)/Landing Helicopter Assault (LHA) of an ARG with a command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence system that can link the ARG/MEU with the Global Services Network, which “seeks to interconnect SOF, the Services, interagency, allies, and partner nations to rapidly and persistently address regional contingencies and threats to stability.”¹⁰²⁹

¹⁰²⁶ “USSOCOM-USMC Wargame Reference: 15–26 April 13,” Facts.

¹⁰²⁷ “USSOCOM-USMC Wargame Reference: 15–26 April 13,” COAs.

¹⁰²⁸ “USSOCOM-USMC Wargame Reference: 15–26 April 13,” Conclusions.

¹⁰²⁹ Robert S. Bunn, “MAGTF-SOF Integration,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 99, no. 1 (Jan. 2015): 80.

MARSOC had its doubters outside the Marine Corps, too. The Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation within OSD explored two separate initiatives to eliminate MARSOC during the Obama administration budget crunch, supposedly due to MARSOC's being an inefficient excess of resources. SOCOM and even the Marine Corps declared their intentions to fight any attempts to do so, preventing the initiatives from gaining any traction.¹⁰³⁰ Colonel Neil Schuehle, then the Commanding Officer, MSOS, was responsible for providing several training and A&S related tours to senior OSD civilians. He recalls that the support capacity MARSOC can provide proved important. The assessors left these tours knowing that, while not cheap on a dollar-for-dollar basis, MARSOC could project greater integrated, task organized capabilities and capacity than its SOF counterparts.¹⁰³¹

MARSOC's first several years were long, painful, and arduous. The command remained caught between a rock and a hard place. Both the Marine Corps and SOCOM did not want MARSOC initially, and then they both wanted MARSOC to demonstrate value to each of them. At times, these were not complementary objectives. However, three events—creating a closed loop for its officer corps and adopting the Raider name and insignia—all roughly around MARSOC's 10-year anniversary, solidified MARSOC's place both within the Marine Corps and SOCOM.

I. “MARINES ARE WHO WE ARE; SPECIAL OPERATIONS ARE WHAT WE DO”

In order to alleviate its manpower strain, MARSOC had to create a viable career path for its operators. Two possible COAs were creating a PMOS or creating a PMOS and also creating a closed loop wherein Marine operators could remain in the SOF community for the rest of their respective careers. The Marine Corps, reticent to give up control of any of its Marines and create a permanent “elite” class within its ranks, demurred and made a series of smaller allowances to avoid both possibilities until the

¹⁰³⁰ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018; Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 6, 2018.

¹⁰³¹ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 6, 2018.

situation was no longer tenable. When the Marine Corps finally did grant MARSOC its own officer MOS, three aviators—serving as Commandant, Deputy Commandant for PP&O, and MARSOC Commander—who did not bring the same emotional baggage to the decision-making process ultimately facilitated the change.

Even while Major General Paul Lefebvre was in discussions with the Commandant concerning an MOS and trying to alleviate the command from the burden of daily fights with the monitors at HQMC over individual Marines, he recognized the gravity of what he was requesting:

So you could have a lot of really good policies if they were codified, my sense though is that when you put an MOS on that, and say here are the policies that belong to a certain organization, everybody knows what they are. So we don't have to be doing things like we've been doing here forever, which is fight with Monitors on why they can't take two people. So we get involved in these tactical fights because we don't have an MOS. If we had an MOS, you would look up and say, hey, here's what happened with Gunnys; here's what happens with this; here's what we agreed to do inside an MOS Manual with policies that go with it. The Marine Corps is reticent to give use one, especially an independent one where we are by ourselves, because they lose control of us like they lost us from ships.¹⁰³²

Knowing the resistance it would inevitably face, MARSOC had already begun a concerted strategic messaging campaign to stress that their operators would remain Marines first and foremost. Comparing MARSOC Marines to other SOF units, Major General Hejlik, for example, stressed that being Marines is what sets MARSOC apart from the rest of the SOF community: "What makes a Marine special is his training and discipline. That really is what makes him special. It's not MARSOC, it's how we get that guy when he first comes to MARSOC . . . The other Components, as I've watched it, I don't know so much."¹⁰³³ Major General Robeson continued to echo this sentiment, coining the phrase "Marines are who we are; Special Ops are what we do." Robeson explained, "What they don't fully grasp is that right now what you are getting is not a

¹⁰³² "Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010," 16.

¹⁰³³ "Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008," 23.

Marine Special Operator who has been through our ITC that is designed to shape the way they think and act; they are getting Marines with some special training . . . We believe that Marine Special Operators will always consider themselves Marines.”¹⁰³⁴ According to Robeson, boot camp was a transformational event that simply made MARSOC’s recruiting pool better in comparison to other SOF components: “So I was convinced that the quality of who we recruited was significantly higher than what SF and SEALs were recruiting. We weren’t recruiting sailors, and we weren’t recruiting soldiers, we were recruiting Marines, and we were selecting Marines.”¹⁰³⁵ While it is nearly impossible to measure the impact of such messaging, it was clearly intentional.

In a January 31, 2007 statement before the House Armed Services Committee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities, Major General Hejlik discussed MARSOC’s intentions to create a closed loop for its personnel: “MARSOC plans to have a ‘closed loop’ for its personnel. MARSOC is currently working with Headquarters, Marine Corps (HQMC) as well as USSOCOM to design the ‘closed loop’ while minimizing the impacts on the careers of the Marines and Sailors transitioning from a conventional to a special operations manpower model.”¹⁰³⁶ His initial goal was to establish a five-year tour length,¹⁰³⁷ which he achieved in early 2008, signing an MOA with M&RA.¹⁰³⁸ While still acknowledging the necessity of a longer tour to recoup MARSOC’s investment in training dollars in its personnel, Hejlik then changed course with respect to a closed loop in an early 2008 oral history interview, claiming people have a tendency to become complacent. He wanted people who were always fresh, since

¹⁰³⁴ “Jul – Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009,” 14–15.

¹⁰³⁵ “Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010,”

¹⁰³⁶ *Statement of Major General Dennis J. Hejlik, U.S. Marine Corps, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, before the House Armed Services Committee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities, 110th Cong., 1st sess., January 31, 2007.*

¹⁰³⁷ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC),” September 20, 2007, 2.

¹⁰³⁸ “Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, MARSOC, for the Jul-Dec 2007 Command Chronology,” 7. MARSOC then had to define exactly what an “operator” was. The tour length did not apply to majors.

they would have to deploy a lot while at MARSOC, and he specifically drew a parallel to the Army Rangers, who do not have a closed loop. MARSOC Marines would raise the capability of the Marine Corps by returning to Marine units. Hejlik was thus now against a closed loop and noted the challenges posed by grade shaping and having to compete within a separate community.¹⁰³⁹ In his end of tour oral history interview, Hejlik expressed his hope that MARSOC would have its own MOS, but he remained convinced that some Marines should go back to the Marine Corps.¹⁰⁴⁰

Major General Robeson was more forceful about the need to establish an MOS and close the career loop, especially for enlisted: “We absolutely want the MARSOC career track to be a career track; particularly for enlisted. We want enlisted to come here and stay here forever, and never go away, and significantly reduce the number of 07XX that we have to produce a year or every two years or every five years. The right answer would be we’re only running one ITC course a year and only producing sixty-five people because that’s all we need given the turnover.”¹⁰⁴¹ Without an MOS, there was no way to even know if a Marine had served in the command.¹⁰⁴²

When manpower levels started going negative, MARSOC got approval from Manpower Management Enlisted Assignments and Manpower Plans and Policy for a Critical Skills Designator, enabling the command to pay a \$15,000 kicker starting in FY 2010 for Marines who graduated from ITC. While a step in the right direction and better than nothing, this did not resolve the problem of operators in the command still holding different PMOSs and thus receiving unequal reenlistment bonuses, which oftentimes did

¹⁰³⁹ “Interview with MajGen Dennis Hejlik, Commander, MARSOC, for the Jul-Dec 2007 Command Chronology,” 7–10. For example, Lieutenant Colonel Naler did not think an officer MOS was necessary initially because the population was too small and would require too many resources to manage. See “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Christopher Naler, MARSOC G-35, 20 May 2008,” 37.

¹⁰⁴⁰ “Oral History Interview with MajGen Dennis J. Hejlik, MARSOC Commander, on Stand Up of MARSOC and End of Tour, 14 July 2008,” 21–22.

¹⁰⁴¹ “Jul – Dec 08 Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 3 April 2009,” 15.

¹⁰⁴² “Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010,” 16.

not match the work they were called upon to do at MARSOC.¹⁰⁴³ In December 2008, the Commandant decided to revert MARSOC's proposed PMOS to a secondary MOS due to concerns that the SOCOM Commander's Title 10 responsibilities gave him the authority to insert himself into the promotion and assignment process for these 07XX Marines. This created additional work for MARSOC as the command sought to take the unprecedented step of tying bonuses, career and incentive pay, and assignments to a secondary MOS.¹⁰⁴⁴ This hurt both enlisted recruitment and retention. MARSOC's MOA with M&RA concerning officers also was not working. The MOA stated that an officer could stay at MARSOC for up to five years and laid out certain business rules, but it did not trump being selected for resident PME or for promotion and outgrowing an assigned billet. The MOA thus became fairly meaningless.¹⁰⁴⁵

The eventual creation of the 0372 Critical Skills Operator (CSO) MOS was a much less emotional topic than was creating a PMOS for officers. The Marine Corps finally accepted that there simply were not any alternative models that worked, and SOCOM helped demonstrate the sunk cost of training these Marines and then having them go back to a conventional Marine Corps unit.¹⁰⁴⁶ The Commandant approved the 0372 PMOS on January 24, 2011; it became effective October 1, 2011.¹⁰⁴⁷ MARSOC also got the 0370 Special Operations Officer (SOO) free MOS (FMOS) and the 0871 Special Operations Capabilities Specialist (SOCS) necessary MOS (NMOS) approved. In April 2011, MARSOC held an MOS Board to select Marines to populate the 0372

¹⁰⁴³ "January-June 2009 Command Chronology Interview, Major General Mastin Robeson, 21 August 2009," 1–2. See also HQMC, "MCBUL 7220. Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10) Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) Program and FY10 Broken Service SRB (BSSRB) Program," MARADMIN 0378/09, June 24, 2009, <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/MARADMIN/Article/889440/mcbul-7220-fiscal-year-2010-fy10-selective-reenlistment-bonus-srb-program-and-f/>.

¹⁰⁴⁴ "Command Chronology Interview with MajGen Paul E. Lefebvre, Commander, Marine Forces Special Operations Command, 6 May 2010," 6–7.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018.

¹⁰⁴⁷ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2011, Folder 3, "MARSOC G-9," 117–118. See also HQMC, "Initial Lat Move Opportunity for MARSOC Critical Skills Operator and Primary MOS 0372 Establishment Guidance," MARADMIN 202/11, March 29, 2011: <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/888257/initial-lat-move-opportunity-for-marsoc-critical-skills-operator-and-primary-mo/>.

PMOS, 0370 FMOS, and 0871 NMOS. The board selected 547 CSOs, 416 SOCS, and 85 SOOs.¹⁰⁴⁸

The lack of a PMOS for officers led to another *Gazette* article calling for one,¹⁰⁴⁹ as well as concerns that enlisted would develop a lack of respect for officers due to their relative inexperience. This could foster a “tourist mindset” wherein enlisted could simply stonewall, knowing the officer would be leaving in a year or two—a problem that some think befell the reconnaissance community.¹⁰⁵⁰ The Marine Corps, however, makes manpower decisions reactively to data, and there had never been enough data to demonstrate the specific pressures and challenges MARSOC was facing with its officers. The data was not always conclusive and was largely anecdotal. The Marine Corps oftentimes countered MARSOC’s arguments by pointing to their A&S pass rates, noting the command was rejecting half the officers that wanted to get there.¹⁰⁵¹ MARSOC held a series of working groups with Manpower Management Division at HQMC in 2011–2012 to develop a set of business rules for assignments to MARSOC, including establishing boards to ensure the most qualified officers received assignments to A&S.¹⁰⁵² The effort to secure a PMOS for officers, however, would require a story with a face to make the argument resonate.

In addition to the systemic manpower strain, a fortuitous encounter between then Commandant General James Amos and a SOO, Captain Nathan Golike, occurred that proved influential in generating momentum for a PMOS for officers. General Amos was on a battlefield circulation in Afghanistan when he asked Golike, an MSOT commander at the time, what his career plans were after his deployment ended. Golike told General

¹⁰⁴⁸ CC, MARSOC, January-June 2011, Folder 1, “G-1,” 7–8. An FMOS annotates that a Marine has a certain set of skills unrelated to his PMOS; any Marine, regardless of PMOS, can hold an FMOS. An NMOS annotates particular skills held in addition to a PMOS; it can only be held by Marines with certain PMOSs.

¹⁰⁴⁹ David M. Walsh, “PMOS for Special Operations Officers,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 97, no. 9 (Sep. 2013): 55–58.

¹⁰⁵⁰ “End of Tour Interview with LtCol Travis Homiak, MARSOC G-35, 21 April 2010,” 23.

¹⁰⁵¹ Justin Dyal, July 26, 2018.

¹⁰⁵² CC, MARSOC, July-December 2011, Folder 1, “G-1,” 7; CC, MARSOC, July-December 2011, Folder 3, “MARSOC G-9,” 127.

Amos that he was getting out of the Marine Corps. General Amos was about to get on a helicopter but stopped to talk to Golike, who explained that he had to leave MARSOC because his tour was coming to an end, and there was no guarantee he would ever be able to come back to MARSOC.¹⁰⁵³

At the next SOCOM-USMC Warfighter talks, in April 2014, MARSOC recommended the Marine Corps and SOCOM focus on talent management, although the topic was intended to be broader than just about a PMOS for officers. Lieutenant General Milstead was the Deputy Commandant, M&RA at the time. He was a former cobra pilot and had lived through being a cobra pilot before the community had its own MOS. General Amos was also an aviator and thus not an infantry officer, so his view of potential solutions did not carry the same emotional baggage of an infantry Marine. As a result, he was more open-minded about exploring solutions to the problem. General Amos and the SOCOM Commander, Admiral William McRaven put the officer PMOS on the list of items to discuss at the Warfighter talks. During the discussions, they arrived at a joint agreement to look at different models and develop some recommendations. MARSOC Commander Major General Clark and Lieutenant General Milstead verbally agreed that the answer was likely a closed loop.¹⁰⁵⁴

A working group at HQMC evaluated alternative models, but the closed loop solution proved the most feasible. The working group also considered the Ranger model, which would have entailed a serpentine career path moving back and forth between the FMF and MARSOC. This model works for the Rangers because they are all infantry, and the Army views going to 75th Ranger Regiment as a higher status than being an instructor, for example. In contrast, being an instructor at TBS and Infantry Officer Course (IOC) has always been viewed favorably by the Marine Corps and would likely have continued to be preferred over MARSOC. The model also works for the Rangers

¹⁰⁵³ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018. MARSOC's manpower levels started going negative again in 2013 when the command decided to go from three iterations of ITC per year to two. Additionally, more Marines started getting out of the Marine Corps than had been anticipated.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018; Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

because they begin this serpentine career path earlier in their careers than do officers at MARSOC. MARSOC's model, for example, is offset by one rank: MSOT commanders are captains, not lieutenants. As a result, the same movement patterns do not work in the Marine Corps. The working groups also considered other COAs that fell short of a PMOS, including first right of refusal, but there were too many exceptions and exemptions to manage, leading M&RA to oppose this COA. The working group presented its closed loop recommendation at the next Marine Corps EOS. General Amos approved the recommendation, which was immediately implemented.¹⁰⁵⁵

Marine Administrative Note (MARADMIN) 491/14 announced the convening of a selection panel for the new 0370 Special Operations Officer MOS.¹⁰⁵⁶ Officers already holding the 0370 FMOS simply needed to communicate whether or not they wanted to be considered. Officers not holding the 0370 FMOS could apply for the PMOS if they had “special operations experience outside of MARSOC or significant equivalent experience within SOF core activities of direct action, special reconnaissance, preparation of the environment, and/or security force assistance.”¹⁰⁵⁷ These Marines had to provide additional information to document their experience. Lieutenant Colonel Justin Dyal, the head of Special Operations Directorate (PO-SOD) at PP&O at the time, immediately removed those who had failed to demonstrate some type of SOF equivalency. The board then chose the final population. A small percentage of officers holding the 0370 FMOS—mostly more senior officers who were happy as intelligence or infantry officers—chose not to apply, likely believing they would remain more competitive in the broader Marine Corps. For example, Johnathan Smith, the 2007 Leftwich Award winner, chose not to take the 0370 PMOS. In contrast, Eric Thompson, the current Commanding Officer, Marine Raider Training Center, was “brought in sideways” and given the PMOS due to

¹⁰⁵⁵ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018.

¹⁰⁵⁶ HQMC, “Convening of Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) 0370 Special Operations Officer Selection Panel,” MARADMIN 491/14, September 29, 2014, <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/896672/convening-of-primary-military-occupational-specialty-pmos-0370-special-operatio/>.

¹⁰⁵⁷ “Convening of Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) 0370 Special Operations Officer Selection Panel.”

his experience with Det One and in the reconnaissance community.¹⁰⁵⁸ Nearly all of those applying based on equivalent SOF experience were brought in at more senior ranks. There was only a small number of majors awarded the PMOS based on equivalent experience, and most had already served at MARSOC, but not directly in an 0370 coded billet. To be selected as a captain, an officer had to have served as an MSOT commander. However, some of those with the 0370 FMOS were not given the PMOS due to performance issues.¹⁰⁵⁹

MARSOC's manpower levels are now stable and sustainable. In fact, the FY 2019 budget plans to grow MARSOC by 300 more Marines to make up for its 11 percent (or 368 Marines) manpower shortage across the command, down from an end strength goal of 3,110. These shortages were the result of sequestration.¹⁰⁶⁰ On August 16, 2013, the Marine Corps directed to freeze MARSOC structure at FY 2013 authorizations due to additional force structure pressures resulting from the Budget Control Act. MARSOC essentially "lost" 370 line numbers worth of structure that were scheduled to be added to the command from FY 2014-FY 2016. This resulted in the loss of 50 CSOs, 1 SOO, 125 SOCS, and 194 Special Operations Combat Service Support (SOCSS).¹⁰⁶¹ This new growth will target the SOCS and SOCSS communities. The journey has been long and painful, but MARSOC has finally reached a degree of institutional-level stability.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018. The author contacted M&RA at HQMC for the results of this board, but M&RA refused to cooperate. The author also contacted Total Force Structure Division (TFSD) for information concerning the decision to create the 0370 PMOS. TFSD similarly refused to provide any information. For a list of the officers selected, see Headquarters Marine Corps, "Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) 0370 Special Operations Officer Selection Panel Results," MARADMIN 653/14, December 16, 2014, <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/MARADMINS/Article/896856/primary-military-occupational-specialty-pmos-0370-special-operations-officer-se/>.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Shawn Snow, "Faced with MARSOC Shortages, the Corps Boosts Budget Request," *Marine Corps Times*, March 14, 2018, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/03/14/faced-with-marsoc-shortages-the-corps-boosts-budget-request/>.

¹⁰⁶¹ CC, MARSOC, July-December 2013, Folder 1, "MARSOC AC/S G-3," 28-29.

J. THE RAIDERS

While independent efforts by design, the Marine Corps' redesignation of MARSOC's subordinate units as "Marine Raiders" and its approval of a new Raider insignia served as two powerful symbols of MARSOC's permanence in, and grudging acceptance by, the Marine Corps. Det One had named itself Task Unit Raider as part of an effort to build momentum for a component,¹⁰⁶² but this affiliation with the Raiders did not immediately carry over to the new component. When Major General Robeson was in command, MARSOC strongly resisted the association, which became embroiled in a larger debate concerning the proper role of MARSOC, the most important skills and attributes to value in operators, and establishing the right balance between direct action and more FID-like capabilities. Lieutenant Colonel Justin Dyal, who was initially recruited to the command to serve as a MSOT commander at MSOAG, recalls elements within the command that felt MARSOC also owned the Marine Corps' OSS heritage and was more than just Edson and Carlson's Raiders. The MSOBs might have considered themselves Raiders, but MSOAG was more aligned with the Marines from the Corps' colonial infantry era and with the OSS Marines.

Major General Lefebvre hung the Raider banner at the headquarters building for the first time, and the command made an informal pitch to Commandant General Conway to assume the Raider name. Urban legend recounts Conway telling the command "No, not right now." General Conway also supposedly told MARSOC to tell its Marines to stop wearing Raider patches while deployed. In 2011, General Amos similarly rejected a proposal, saying "your allegiance, your loyalty . . . is to the Marine Corps, based on the title you have on your uniform."¹⁰⁶³ The Marine Raider Association continued to lobby General Amos, who attended the Association's reunion in August 2013 as the Guest of Honor. The World War II Raider veterans in attendance strongly implored General Amos to pass the legacy on to MARSOC, even putting a Raider patch on Amos as

¹⁰⁶² Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

¹⁰⁶³ "MARSOC Units Renamed for the Marine Raiders," *Marine Corps Times*, August 6, 2014, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2014/08/06/marsoc-units-renamed-for-the-marine-raiders/>.

photographers snapped pictures of him.¹⁰⁶⁴ Colonel Schuehle, Commanding Officer, MSOS, became the project lead. He and John Daily, a Det One alum and the Director of the Training and Education Branch at MSOS, wrote a point paper for Major General Clark saying the title “Marine” was enough.

General Amos remained non-committal and wanted to discuss it with Admiral McRaven first. He did not want simply to bestow the honorific himself. McRaven said he not only supported it but recommended the command create some kind of distinguishing device. Colonel James Christmas wrote a second point paper for Major General Clark recommending the command embrace the Raider moniker; the underlying calculus had changed.¹⁰⁶⁵ At the next Marine Corps EOS, Major General Clark informed Marine Corps leadership that he wanted to bring the name on. This EOS also served as the turnover brief between General Amos and General Dunford, both of whom agreed to it. General Dunford, however, knew the Marine Corps History Division would not be happy. Ironically, MARSOC’s own command historian would not be either. General Dunford told Major General Clark to try to get the lineage as well. The History Division rebuffed this request.

Beth Crumley, a Unit Historian at the History Division, explained that the Raider battalions had not simply been deactivated. Rather, they had been redesignated as battalions that comprised 4th Marines, which was “activated almost entirely from the Raider units on Feb. 1, 1944.”¹⁰⁶⁶ 4th Marines kept the honors earned by the Raider battalions. Since “[l]ineage and honors cannot be shared by two units, nor can lineage and honors be arbitrarily changed,” the redesignated MARSOC units would be paying homage to the World War II Raiders, but “[t]he lineage and honors of the World War II Raider battalions remain, rightfully, with the 4th Marines.”¹⁰⁶⁷ MARSOC’s own

¹⁰⁶⁴ “MARSOC Units Renamed for the Marine Raiders”; Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 23, 2018; Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Neil Schuehle, emails to author, August 11, 2018 and August 23, 2018; Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Beth L. Crumley, “Sound Off: Choosing Words Carefully Matters,” *Leatherneck* 98, no. 11 (Nov. 2015): 2.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Crumley, 3.

command historian was less magnanimous: “MARSOC claims to the Raider title are based on a perceived legacy that is largely mythological. MARSOC has no claim to the Raiders’ lineage and honors, which are currently held by organizations that were formed directly from the original Raider battalions.”¹⁰⁶⁸ The command historian did not stop there: “I have studied, taught, and written history for three decades, and while I am familiar with the battles they fought in, I have never encountered the glamorization of the Raiders that one encounters at MARSOC. Frankly, it is based on a misinterpretation of history that is so farfetched it borders on fabrication.”¹⁰⁶⁹

While MARSOC was unable to claim the Raider lineage, it did get the name. In MARADMIN 039/14, published on October 16, 2014, General Amos officially redesignated MARSOC subordinate units as “Marine Raiders.”¹⁰⁷⁰ MARSOC held an official ceremony on June 19, 2015. Charles Meachem, who served as a machine gunner with the World War II Raiders reflected, “This is a proud moment for me, and my fellow Raiders who can’t be here today. We are grateful to know that our legacy will not be forgotten, and is being carried on by the extraordinary Marines of MARSOC.”¹⁰⁷¹

Marine Corps leadership at the same EOS asked Major General Clark if he also wanted some kind of insignia, but Clark did not want to hurt his chances of getting the name by tacking anything else on to it. He said he did not have a perfect design but would get back to them. Major General Clark did not direct any further activity, so the insignia became a bottom-up project. In early 2015, MARSOC’s E-9s held their first

¹⁰⁶⁸ As quoted in Joseph Trevithick, “Use of Raider Moniker for Modern Special Ops Marines Was Hotly Contested Internally: Though There Was Significant Public Support for Bringing Back the World War II Title, Some of the Service’s Own Historians Opposed the Idea,” *The Drive*, June 5, 2018, <http://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/21334/docs-show-modern-specops-marines-use-of-storied-raider-moniker-was-hotly-contested-internally>.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Trevithick, “Use of Raider Moniker.”

¹⁰⁷⁰ HQMC, “Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) Subordinate Unit Redesignation as Marine Raiders,” MARADMIN 039/14, October 14, 2016, <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/896707/marine-corps-forces-special-operations-command-marsoc-subordinate-unit-redesign/>.

¹⁰⁷¹ Donovan Lee, “MARSOC Re-designates Subordinate Commands,” U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, June 19, 2015, <http://www.marsoc.marines.mil/News/News-Article-Display/Article/601236/marsoc-re-designates-subordinate-commands/>.

symposium, and during the out brief, they asked MARSOC leadership if they could take the insignia project on. PO-SOD stepped in to help with some policy background research and design work. Major General Joseph Osterman, who had succeeded Major General Clark on August 6, 2014, endorsed the proposal and forwarded it to the Marine Corps Uniform Board. The Uniform Board, however, is designed as a tool to resist change. Most Uniform Board actions are Commandant-directed. The proposal sat with the Uniform Board for the better part of a year until Major General Osterman leaned on the Commandant, General Neller, secured some briefings, and ultimately got it approved.¹⁰⁷²



Figure 9. Raider Insignia¹⁰⁷³

¹⁰⁷² Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, July 26, 2018. The Commandant approved the “Marine Special Operators breast insignia” on August 17, 2016. See HQMC, “Marine Special Operators Breast Insignia,” MARADMIN 490/16, September 16, 2016, <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/Messages-Display/Article/946753/marine-special-operators-breast-insignia/>.

¹⁰⁷³ Source: Mark Clark, “The Marines’ New Raider Insignia Gives Special Operators Street Cred,” *Marine Corps Times*, September 19, 2016, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/opinion/2016/09/19/the-marines-new-raider-insignia-gives-special-operators-street-cred/>.

In his 2010 *Commandant's Planning Guidance*, General Amos declared his intentions to “fully embrace MARSOC and capitalize on its unique capabilities, while we strengthen the relationships between our operating forces and special operations forces.”¹⁰⁷⁴ Creating the 0370 PMOS and approving the Raider name and insignia were symbols of this embrace. They also had a very real impact on SOCOM’s embrace of MARSOC. Retired Colonel Craig Kozeniesky, the MARSOC Deputy Commander when the Raider name and insignia were approved, recalls the Raider name meaning a lot to SOCOM. It conveyed that MARSOC and the Marine Corps were “in it to win it.” Both would also help market the Marine Corps special operations brand.¹⁰⁷⁵ Noting the joint environment in which MARSOC almost always operates, retired Major General Mark Clark explained to *Marine Corps Times* readers, “Special operations credibility is a must immediately in this environment. The insignia offers that credibility without having to state it.”¹⁰⁷⁶ He was quick to reiterate that Raiders remained Marines first and foremost, which is what sets Raiders apart in the special operations community.

MARSOC’s road to acceptance was fraught with challenges stemming from both SOCOM and the Marine Corps. These challenges were exacerbated by the Marine Corps’ unique cultural and historical inheritance, which prided itself on its elite image and jealously guarded its independence and control over its own assets. Marines with non-traditional career backgrounds and previous SOF experience played key roles in intellectually justifying and then organizing a force contribution to SOCOM. In order to maintain some semblance of operational control over MARSOC, the Marine Corps initially banished MARSOC to operational irrelevance aboard the Corps’ crown jewel, the MEU(SOC). Rather than conduct any meaningful introspection concerning the continued merits of the MEU(SOC), the Marine Corps accepted it at face value and

¹⁰⁷⁴ James Amos, *35th Commandant of the Marine Corps Commandant's Planning Guidance* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Marine Corps, 2010), accessed November 20, 2018, <http://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/35th%20CMC's%20Planning%20Guidance.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Mark Clark, “The Marines’ New Raider Insignia Gives Special Operators Street Cred,” *Marine Corps Times*, September 19, 2016, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/opinion/2016/09/19/the-marines-new-raider-insignia-gives-special-operators-street-cred/>.

attempted to refine it at the margins by having MARSOC build it a bridge to relevance and employment. Even after MARSOC demonstrated its unique capabilities on the battlefields of Afghanistan, the Marine Corps again felt inclined to clip its wings to suit its own purposes. Facing a systemic manpower issue that could have crippled the force, a group of senior Marine aviators who brought less cultural baggage to the consideration of MARSOC finally helped solidify MARSOC's position in the Marine Corps establishment.

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XI. CONCLUSION

Bin Laden described his mission quite clearly years ago: “to kill Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.” This, then, is the face of our adversaries in this new war—very different foes than we or Europeans or others have ever faced in the modern era.

This new kind of foe has dramatically changed the SOCOM world—thrusting special operators into a new role as the lead component in the fight. The Ferrari is out of the garage. Special operations had for many years been training precisely for the kind of conflicts in which we now find ourselves: prolonged, messy engagements where tactical success does not necessarily yield strategic success; where cultural knowledge and language skills often mean a great deal more than raw fire power; where victory ultimately is measured not by how well we do the job but by how well we can train and empower other nations to protect themselves.¹⁰⁷⁷

—Robert Gates, former Secretary of Defense, May 21, 2008

Despite its newfound institutional stability, MARSOC is still trying to determine what it should be as a command when it “grows up.” When MARSOC started planning for the post-OEF operating environment, the command decided to regionally align the force: 1st MSOB with PACOM, 2nd MSOB with CENTCOM, and 3rd MSOB with AFRICOM.¹⁰⁷⁸ Admiral McRaven was the SOCOM Commander at the time and liked the concept because it spread capabilities across multiple GCCs.¹⁰⁷⁹ However, some of the limitations of this course of action quickly emerged and were tied to the lack of capacity MARSOC has as an organization given its relatively small size. As part of this

¹⁰⁷⁷ Robert Gates, “Secretary of Defense Speech,” May 21, 2008, Special Operations Forces International Conference (Tampa, Florida), <http://archive.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1245>.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Dan Lamothe, “Marine Corps Realigns Its Special Operations, Sends Elite Troops to Middle East,” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2015/01/20/marine-corps-realigns-its-special-operations-sends-elite-troops-to-middle-east/?utm_term=.a8c4487f0de9.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Kozeniesky, personal conversation. Regionally aligning the force was also consistent with a perceived need to disaggregate SOF to facilitate persistent engagement as opposed to deploying SOF in response to crises. See Jim Thomas and Chris Dougherty, *Beyond the Ramparts: The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment, 2013), 89–90.

construct, MARSOC teaches eight different languages, which is manpower and resource intensive. Running a nine-month ITC while also providing persistent support to three different AORs effectively eliminates a reserve capacity to respond to emerging (and more relevant) requirements.¹⁰⁸⁰ The regionalization concept also initially emphasized the reinforced MSOC instead of operational command, which MARSOC has had to fight to establish in each AOR.¹⁰⁸¹

When the fight against the Islamic State began and in theater capabilities proved insufficient, MARSOC tried to “flex” to meet increased demands for command and control capabilities in Iraq. This somewhat undermined the regionalization concept, and the component staff was not terribly happy its deployment models, which enabled the staff to operate largely on a “cruise control” mode, had to be readjusted. However, Colonel Kozeniesky, the MARSOC Deputy Commander at the time, recalls he and MARSOC Commander Major General Osterman concluding that “you’re either in the fight, or you’re not” and that the command’s relevance would only continue to increase if it demonstrated its ability to command in combat.¹⁰⁸²

MARSOC and NSW developed a “maritime solution” to source Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Iraq (CJSOTF-I), an O-6 level headquarters, to meet the demand for more command and control capabilities.¹⁰⁸³ MARSOC agreed to source an O-6 commander for every third iteration; for the other two, it would source an O-5 deputy commander and NSW would source the commander. The staff would be weighted more heavily to MARSOC when MARSOC held command and more heavily to NSW when NSW held command. MARSOC had to agree to this one-to-two relationship because it simply did not have the capacity to share the burden equally, let alone on its own.¹⁰⁸⁴ The SOCOM Commander, General Joseph Votel, approved this arrangement on

¹⁰⁸⁰ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 6, 2018.

¹⁰⁸¹ Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

¹⁰⁸² Kozeniesky, personal conversation.

¹⁰⁸³ CC, MARSOC, April-September 2015, “MARSOC G-3,” 22.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Based on author’s personal experience at MARSOC.

December 23, 2014, and the first rotation, which consisted of 17 MARSOC personnel and an NSW-led staff, deployed in August 2015.¹⁰⁸⁵ In May 2016, MARSOC also deployed a SOTF (SOTF-North), an O-5 level headquarters, to provide additional command and control capabilities in northern Iraq.¹⁰⁸⁶ Command of this SOTF would rotate through the three MRB commanding officers. CJSOTF-I and SOTF-N would provide MARSOC personnel opportunities to command in combat at the O-6 and O-5 levels, respectively, enabling these commanders to remain competitive with their peers in the joint SOF community. However, MARSOC was also asked if it could provide additional MSOTs to partner with Iraqi forces, but the command was unable to do so.¹⁰⁸⁷ MARSOC had already committed its forces to other missions based on the regionalization construct and could not recant on them, thus demonstrating the delicate balance the command must maintain between keeping its forces employed and demonstrating value, and keeping them relevant, since these two objectives can be mutually exclusive at times.

MARSOC and HQMC must develop a solution to provide MARSOC an aviation element. MARSOC still lacks a Tier II UAV capability even though its SOF community peers (who also function as competitors)—namely, Army SF and NSW—have this capability. Maintaining this capability organic to the force is especially valuable when conducting operations outside major theaters of war or major contingency operations because there simply are not other resources available. Even if HQMC remains unwilling to commit to additional capabilities beyond a Tier II UAV capability, at the very least, MARSOC needs to keep pace with its SOF competitors or risk losing relevance. Nearly a decade ago, in his oral history exit interview, Major General Robeson said he thought MARSOC could have an aviation element in ten years that would also be of value to the Marine Corps:

I think it is possible, ten years out, for it to be a MAGTF concerning the Aviation element. I think if the Marine Corps did that right it could be of

¹⁰⁸⁵ CC, MARSOC, April-September 2015, “MARSOC G-3,” 22.

¹⁰⁸⁶ CC, MARSOC, April-September 2016, “MARSOC G-3,” 28.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Based on author’s personal experience at MARSOC.

benefit to the Marine Corps because you could establish an Advisor Squadron and then you could rotate the Marine Corps' air frames through that squadron, and take advantage of SOF upgrades that SOF air frames get . . . that I think would make us even more compatible with SOCOM operations.¹⁰⁸⁸

MARSOC and HQMC have made very minimal progress on this initiative ever since. At the SOCOM-USMC Warfighter talks in April 2014, Admiral McRaven and General Amos discussed aviation—not so much regarding MARSOC having an ACE, but rather in terms of training and interoperability initiatives. SOCOM and HQMC reached a tentative agreement in 2016 to test case Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron (VMU) support to MARSOC.¹⁰⁸⁹ Major General Clark had originally designed the concept of VMU support to MARSOC as the “seed corn” for a MARSOC ACE. VMU-2 sent a detachment to support MARSOC's SOTF in northern Iraq. MARSOC funded the deployment, but the support was fraught with problems.

The VMU detachment was relatively inexperienced in comparison to the SOF community, leading to lapses in discipline such as a negligent discharge and rolling a vehicle during a routine administrative movement. The VMU detachment deployed incapable of providing the signals intelligence capability they had advertised due to a lack of training and ability. This lack of training and experience also manifest itself in frequent air craft crashes. The Marine Corps prioritized VMU support for the MEU and SPMAGTF detachments ahead of the detachment in Iraq despite the fact that the detachment in Iraq was supporting clearance operations in Mosul. As a result, the detachment was unable to acquire enough replacement parts or air craft to provide the number of daily hours of coverage it had advertised. VMU-2 was only able to provide half as many hours of coverage as contracted ISR support despite their having a detachment nearly seven times the size of the contractor detachment (40 to 6). The quality of the VMU's full-motion video (FMV) capability was also of much lesser quality. HQMC eventually issued a reclama on the VMU-2 mission in Iraq, claiming it

¹⁰⁸⁸ “End of Tour Interview with MajGen Mastin M. Robeson, MARSOC Commander, 9 November 2009,” 12.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018.

could no longer support the mission while also meeting stateside training requirements and supporting its MEU and SPMAGTF detachments.¹⁰⁹⁰ Since then, MARSOC and HQMC created an operational planning team (OPT) during the summer of 2018 to consider the topic of MARSOC and aviation again. The OPT was prompted by discussions between MARSOC Commander Major General Mundy and the Deputy Commandant for Aviation. Despite cooperation at the senior leader level, the action officers at HQMC behaved rather predictably, deriding the issue and claiming there are not enough resources to support a MARSOC aviation element.¹⁰⁹¹

MARSOC is now also faced with the challenges of managing its own, relatively small, officer population and designing a variety of tailored career options within an established career path. Command opportunities are a major challenge for a small MOS population. Prior to the closed loop, the selection rate for intelligence officers and infantry officers with MARSOC operator experience was approximately ten percent above average. This was possible because they were being compared to the bottom third of the population within their PMOS. However, the 0370 PMOS created its own bottom third and limited itself by policy to service averages. If the Marine Corps does not change its view about MARSOC and view it as the Army does the Rangers, then MARSOC could face the very real risk of creating a glass ceiling for the 0370 MOS community due to limited command opportunities. In order to mitigate this risk, MARSOC has been proactive in seeking command opportunities for its SOOs outside of those specifically coded for the 0370 MOS. For example, then Lieutenant Colonel Eric Thompson was selected to command 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion after he accepted the 0370 MOS, setting the precedent that a SOO could command a reconnaissance battalion.¹⁰⁹² While Thompson had prior reconnaissance experience, the next logical step in this process of

¹⁰⁹⁰ Based on author's personal experience deployed as part of SOTF-N. VMU-3 supported MARSOC's mission in the Philippines to greater effect, not only due to a more competent detachment, but also because there were no other Tier II or higher FMV UAV assets in the Philippines. MARSOC agreed to support the Marine Corps' Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course to demonstrate its commitment to I3 with the conventional Marine Corps.

¹⁰⁹¹ Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018.

¹⁰⁹² Justin Dyal, personal conversation with author, August 17, 2018.

expanding command opportunities would be to place a SOO with no prior reconnaissance experience as commanding officer of a reconnaissance battalion to set another precedent.

PO-SOD and M&RA have discussed developing career templates for SOOs that facilitate a degree of cross pollination, as well as the possibility of SOOs serving in conventional Marine Corps billets during the course of their careers. For example, a post battalion command SOO might one day be placed as the operations officer for a MEU to facilitate that SOO's possibly becoming a MEU commander one day. Recruiting Station Commanding Officer billets present other viable command opportunities outside of MARSOC, and a reconnaissance tour presents yet another possibility for cross pollination.¹⁰⁹³ Now that MARSOC has the requisite manpower capacity, the command is also trying to push its SOOs and CSOs to external and joint billets to build their bona fides in the SOF community. MARSOC, however, is still struggling to gain ownership of some of the Corps' external billets that are still coded for Marines holding the 0321 MOS—a legacy from the days before MARSOC existed and a product of senior leaders at MARSOC lacking SOF experience and not understanding the importance of these billets.¹⁰⁹⁴

The one downside to resolving its early manpower problems is that the 0370 MOS community is no longer immune from paying its share of “taxes” to the Marine Corps in the form of sending some of its SOOs to serve as series commanders at the Corps' two recruit depots, or of serving on recruiting duty, for example. SOOs are now only guaranteed to serve one tour as a team commander due to a number of factors. The community generates enough new manpower and has to support these other Marine Corps billets. Operational tempo has also slowed down so it not possible to deploy again as quickly, and SOOs simply join the SOF community later in their careers in comparison to their peers in the other SOF components, meaning they have less time left on their

¹⁰⁹³ Kozeniesky, personal conversation. When Colonel Peter Huntley was the Commanding Officer of Marine Raider Regiment, he served on the Marine Corps' O-5 command selection board and played a key role in placing Eric Thompson at 3rd Recon Battalion. He also specifically identified grooming and placing a SOO as a MEU commander as an initiative the command was pursuing. Based on author's personal experience at an officers' call with Colonel Huntley at 1st MRB in 2016.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Neil Schuehle, email to author, August 11, 2018.

career clock before being promoted to O-4. Of the four MSOT commanders in each MSOC, one of them is selected to serve as executive officer for an MSOC, while the other three are reassigned within the command—at the MRTC, for example—or elsewhere. The pyramid for the 0370 MOS community thus becomes very narrow very quickly, which could deter some otherwise good Marines from seeking a career at MARSOC.¹⁰⁹⁵

Given current political trends, MARSOC will inevitably have to develop a solution for incorporating female Marines as CSOs and SOOs. Female Marines have served commendably at MARSOC in combat support and combat service support roles since the command's inception, but they have never operated at the team level in either a support or operator role or earned the 0370 or 0372 MOS. In September 2018, Sergeant Bailey Weis became the first female Marine to pass the second phase of A&S. She ultimately was not selected to continue on to ITC and is leaving the Marine Corps,¹⁰⁹⁶ but there will come a time when a female Marine is selected, or the command is told it has to select a certain quota of female Marines.

MARSOC should be aided by a gradual cultural embrace from the rest of the Marine Corps as more and more Marines, especially senior Marines, serve at the command and then continue on in their respective careers in the regular Marine Corps. MARSOC's previous two commanders, for example, continued on in their Marine Corps careers after relinquishing command. Lieutenant General Osterman served as SOCOM Deputy Commander and is now CG, I MEF. Lieutenant General Mundy is now CG, MARCENT.¹⁰⁹⁷ They can continue to serve as educators and advocates on behalf of MARSOC and special operations at increasingly senior ranks. As more senior officers in the Marine Corps gain an appreciation for and understand the unique capabilities

¹⁰⁹⁵ Based on author's personal experience when this one-tour policy was implemented at 1st MRB.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Shawn Snow, "First Female Completes Second Phase of Marine Raider Selection," *Marine Corps Times*, October 22, 2018, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/10/22/first-female-completes-second-phase-of-marine-raider-selection/>.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Shawn Snow, "Raider Commander to Lead Marines Operating in the Middle East," *Marine Corps Times*, May 18, 2018, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/05/18/raider-commander-to-lead-marines-operating-in-the-middle-east/>.

MARSOC brings to the battlefield, there should continue to be a gradual cultural shift away from the days when the Marine Corps tried to oppose the command at every juncture.

The Marine Corps is still struggling to handle some of the effects of MARSOC's manpower and resource costs, as well as how best to pursue integration, interoperability, and interdependence ("I3") with the SOF community and posture itself for conflict with a near peer power. The reconnaissance community, for example, continues to compete with MARSOC over the same basic pool of talent but lacks much of the new gear, equipment, funding, and missions that MARSOC has to offer. As a result, the reconnaissance community now has an "inverted grade pyramid" within the 0321 MOS. There are more E-3s than E-4s, which has a significant effect on promotion timing. Additionally, attendance at BRC, which already suffers from a high attrition rate, dropped from a high of 526 Marines in 2013 to a low of 280 Marines in 2016.¹⁰⁹⁸ Furthermore, while MARSOC continues to herald the "successes" of the SOFLE concept,¹⁰⁹⁹ a cynic might presume the command is doing so to avoid calls for an increased MARSOC troop commitment to the MEU.

Rather than continuing to refine at the margins of the relationship between MARSOC and the MEU, the Marine Corps must more fundamentally examine its concept of employment and the relevance of the MEU in a near peer power operating environment. MARSOC's proven history of task organizing at lower levels of command and fully enabling MSOTs and MSOCs provides a viable model on which the Marine Corps can base these concepts. The Marine Corps is already in the process of implementing a series of initiatives that push more capabilities down to the infantry company and infantry squad to facilitate increasingly distributed operations in a contested

¹⁰⁹⁸ Shawn Snow and Andrea Scott, "Recon Shortage: Why These Elite Marines Are Facing a Manpower Crisis," *Marine Corps Times*, October 8, 2018, http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/10/08/recon-shortage-why-these-elite-marines-are-facing-a-manpower-crisis/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ebb%2010/9/18&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief.

¹⁰⁹⁹ MARSOC, "ARG/MEU SOFLE Successes," *Marine Corps Gazette* 102, no. 1 (Jan. 2018): 27–32.

littoral environment.¹¹⁰⁰ These include a forward air controller, an operations and intelligence section, and a logistics cell within each rifle company, and enhanced communications equipment to increase shared situational awareness at the squad level.¹¹⁰¹ However, these new capabilities will prove irrelevant if the Corps' capital investments do not reflect its new concept of distributed operations. The Marine Corps continues to invest in amphibious ships designed for maintaining forward presence and not conducting distributed operations in a contested environment. The Marine Corps needs to diversify its investments and identify what platforms best support distributed operations in the littorals.¹¹⁰²

MARSOC's "special" status as an "elite within an elite" will hopefully serve as a very small first step towards the Marine Corps acknowledging that not all Marines are created equally and doing away with its industrial age manpower model that treats its personnel as interchangeable cogs in a machine. When Brad Carson, a former Congressman from Oklahoma, OIF war veteran, General Counsel of the Army, and Undersecretary of the Army, was nominated to be the Undersecretary of Defense for

¹¹⁰⁰ U.S. Marine Corps Concepts and Programs, "Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment," accessed November 24, 2018, <http://www.candp.marines.mil/Concepts/Subordinate-Operating-Concepts/Littoral-Operations-in-a-Contested-Environment/>.

¹¹⁰¹ HQMC, "Marines Announce Changes to Ground Combat Element Aimed at Improving Lethality and Agility," May 9, 2018, <http://www.marines.mil/News/Press-Releases/Press-Release-Display/Article/1516580/marines-announce-changes-to-ground-combat-element-aimed-at-improving-lethality/>; Shawn Snow, "Modernizing Infantry Marines: Big Changes Coming as Grunts Take on More Special Ops-Style Missions," *Marine Corps Times*, January 22, 2018, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/marine-corps-times/2018/01/22/modernizing-infantry-marines-big-changes-coming-as-grunts-take-on-more-special-ops-style-missions/>; Todd South, "12-Man Rifle Squads, Including a Squad Systems Operator, Commandant Says," *Marine Corps Times*, May 3, 2018, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/05/04/12-man-rifle-squads-including-a-squad-systems-operator-commandant-says/>. Retired Army Major General Robert Scales, chairman of the Close Combat Lethality Task Force, even recommended that the Marine Corps should recruit infantry Marines on a second enlistment rather than focus on new high school graduates. See Shawn Snow, "Go Four Before Grunt: The Controversial idea Posed by Mattis' Task Force Adviser," *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 31, 2018, <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/07/31/go-four-before-grunt-the-controversial-idea-posed-by-the-head-of-mattis-task-force/>.

¹¹⁰² In a somewhat controversial article, Lieutenant Colonel Lloyd Freeman called on the Marine Corps to adapt in order to survive by becoming "a special operations force that functions in a sustained combat mode." Since SOF cannot operate in sustained combat mode or against significant opposition, the Marine Corps could fill this gap. In contrast, remaining infantry-centric could result in "its eventual irrelevancy." See Lloyd Freeman, "Can the Marines Survive? If America's Amphibious Force Doesn't Adapt, It'll Be Dead in the Water," *Foreign Policy*, March 26, 2013, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/03/26/can-the-marines-survive/>.

Personnel and Readiness, he ran into stiff DoD opposition concerning his proposed personnel reform initiatives, which ultimately torpedoed his chances at confirmation. These initiatives included ending the “up or out” promotion system, changing the manner in which the DoD recruits, and allowing individuals with special skills to commission into the officer corps at a mid-career rank.¹¹⁰³ The DoD and its allies in Congress quickly circled the wagons. Senator McCain, for example, referred to Carson’s efforts as “an outrageous waste of official time and resources.”¹¹⁰⁴ The Marine Corps has historically proven the most skeptical of all the services in considering changing the longstanding DoD personnel rules already in place.¹¹⁰⁵

The activation of MARSOC demonstrates the limitations of a senior civilian’s ability to intervene and prompt innovation and change in a military organization, especially after his perceived indecision encourages additional resistance. Military culture, quite simply, matters. The Marine Corps adopted an “acknowledge and evade” strategy to retain control of its Marines, prevent the creation of an “elite within an elite” in its ranks, and thus undermine Secretary Rumsfeld’s eventual desire to create a Marine special operations component. Andrew Grove notes the ability of middle managers to adjust the strategic posture of a company during the course of making routine daily operating decisions independent of any specific strategic direction by senior management.¹¹⁰⁶ These “helpful Cassandras” operate on the front lines of a company and are thus more readily equipped to recognize upcoming change.¹¹⁰⁷ Such was the case with Det One and MARSOC. The non-traditional backgrounds of officers like Giles Kyser and Neil Schuehle, senior enlisted like Joe Settelen and Troy Mitchell, and the

¹¹⁰³ Austin Wright, “Military Reform Effort Claims Latest Casualty,” *Politico*, April 18, 2016, accessed June 12, 2018, <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/04/defense-pentagon-brad-carson-222064>.

¹¹⁰⁴ Andrew Tilghman, “Pentagon’s Top Personnel Official Resigns,” *Military Times*, March 14, 2016, accessed June 12, 2018, <http://www.militarytimes.com/2016/03/14/pentagon-s-top-personnel-official-resigns/>.

¹¹⁰⁵ Leo Shane III, “Congress Is Giving the Officer Promotion System a Massive Overhaul,” *Military Times*, July 25, 2018, <http://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/07/25/how-officers-are-promoted-will-get-its-biggest-overhaul-in-decades-heres-what-that-means-for-the-military/>.

¹¹⁰⁶ Grove, *Only the Paranoid Survive*, 96–97.

¹¹⁰⁷ Grove, 108–109.

leadership of Det One exposed them to unique career opportunities and experiences that better equipped them to recognize the need to adapt and change to meet the demands of the post-9/11 political and operating environments.

These Marines represented a fundamental disconnect between the culture of the Marine Corps as an institution and how that culture manifested itself in the actions of its members. These Marines believed in the special operations mission and its importance to the future of the Marine Corps and helped prepare the Marine Corps for its development of a special operations component. Motivated by professional duty, exhibiting courage and a dogged determination, and guided by the vast knowledge they possessed, they embodied what it means to be a Marine. They helped Secretary Rumsfeld overcome an intransigent senior leadership and the obstacles this senior leadership put in their path. These quiet professionals, including those Marines who populated the ranks of the reconnaissance community for years before becoming the plank holders at MARSOC, are the unsung heroes of the Marine Corps' journey to a special operations component.

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APPENDIX A. LIST OF PERSONAL CONVERSATIONS

Lieutenant Colonel Justin Dyal, USMC (ret.)	Section Head, Special Operations Directorate, Headquarters Marine Corps
General Alfred M. Gray, USMC (ret.)	29th Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps
Colonel Craig Kozeniesky, USMC (ret.)	Executive Officer, Marine Corps Special Operations Command Detachment One; Deputy Commander, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command
William S. Lind	Former aide to Senators Robert A. Taft Jr. and Gary W. Hart
Colonel Neil Schuehle, USMC (ret.)	Commanding Officer, 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion; Commanding Officer, Marine Special Operations School
Colonel Gary I. Wilson, USMCR (ret.)	

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APPENDIX B. LIST OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

A. PERSONAL PAPERS

Brigadier General Henry C. Cochrane. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Rear Admiral William F. Fullam. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

General Alfred M. Gray. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Steve Patton. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Major General Wesley H. Rice. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. <http://rumsfeld.com>.

Colonel Neil Schuehle. Retained by Colonel Schuehle, copies retained by author.

B. RECORD COLLECTIONS

Command Chronology (CC). Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC). Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Gerald R. Turley/Alfred M. Gray Research Collection. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Historic Amphibious File. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Individual Research Papers, 1992–1993 McM-Q. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Center for Marine Corps History, Quantico, VA.

Record Group 45. Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, National Archives, Washington, DC.

Record Group 80. General Records of the Department of the Navy, 1798–1947, National Archives, Washington, DC.

Record Group 127. Records of the United States Marine Corps, 1775–1981, National Archives, Washington, DC.

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APPENDIX C. COMMANDERS, MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Lieutenant General Dennis J. Hejlik, USMC (ret.)	February 24, 2006—July 24, 2008
Major General Mastin M. Robeson, USMC (ret.)	July 24, 2008—November 20, 2009
Major General Paul E. Lefebvre, USMC (ret.)	November 20, 2009—August 24, 2012
Major General Mark A. Clark, USMC (ret.)	August 24, 2012—August 6, 2014
Lieutenant General Joseph L. Osterman, USMC	August 6, 2014—July 26, 2016
Lieutenant General Carl E. Mundy III, USMC	July 26, 2016—August 10, 2018
Major General Daniel D. Yoo, USMC	August 10, 2018—Present

* Chart notes current rank; MARSOC is a two-star command.

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APPENDIX D. AVERAGE MONTHLY END STRENGTH

	<u>USMC</u>		<u>Navy</u>		<u>Army</u>		<u>Civilians</u>
	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	
Feb-06	Activated February 24, 2006						
Mar-06	62	170	0	5			
Apr-06	90	190	0	5			
May-06	93	206	0	5			
Jun-06	108	457	0	14			
Jul-06	124	527	0	14			
Aug-06	133	597	4	16			
Sep-06	140	620	6	21			
Oct-06	145	668	7	31			
Nov-06	147	854	8	50			
Dec-06	163	971	11	49			
Jan-07	165	1134	10	64			
Feb-07	168	1151	10	65			
Mar-07	174	1183	10	71			
Apr-07	179	1209	11	76			
May-07	184	1247	12	81			
Jun-07	194	1250	12	86			
Jul-07	212	1285	12	94			
Aug-07	233	1294	14	106			
Sep-07	241	1296	14	106			
Oct-07	241	1293	14	115			
Nov-07	240	1326	17	126			
Dec-07	240	1351	18	126			
Jan-08	239	1379	19	131			
Feb-08	241	1372	19	129			
Mar-08	243	1406	19	135			
Apr-08	246	1441	19	133			
May-08	252	1478	21	144			
Jun-08	249	1529	20	146			
Jul-08	251	1576	21	147			
Aug-08	262	1611	21	145			
Sep-08	270	1596	22	150			
Oct-08	269	1584	22	151			
Nov-08	268	1474	22	150			
Dec-08	270	1576	23	150			

	<u>USMC</u>		<u>Navy</u>		<u>Army</u>		<u>Civilians</u>
	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted	
Jan-09	268	1585	23	150			
Feb-09	271	585	24	159			
Mar-09	271	1587	24	157			
Apr-09	278	1597	23	154			
May-09	274	1672	23	154			
Jun-09	266	1624	22	149			
Jul-09	268	1534	22	151			
Aug-09	278	1650	26	154			
Sep-09	281	1694	24	156			
Oct-09	281	1707	23	152			
Nov-09	281	1712	22	155			
Dec-09	282	1724	21	153			
Jan-10	295	1755	25	154			
Feb-10	304	1756	25	155			
Mar-10	305	1794	26	152			
Apr-10	297	1729	24	149			
May-10	292	1719	22	157			
Jun-10	286	1722	21	160			
Jul-10	286	1712	22	165			
Aug-10	285	1720	25	161			
Sep-10	286	1736	25	160			
Oct-10	291	1732	25	160			
Nov-10	290	1726	25	157			
Dec-10	287	1735	25	155			
Jan-11	288	1744	25	151			
Feb-11	292	1758	25	147			
Mar-11	290	1785	24	146			
Apr-11	291	1779	24	160			
May-11	291	1774	26	154			
Jun-11	286	1757	25	153			
Jul-11	284	1775	23	152			
Aug-11	284	1770	20	153			
Sep-11	287	1776	18	154			
Oct-11	291	1746	21	17			
Nov-11	293	1737	22	160			
Dec-11	295	1772	24	163			
Jan-12	289	1775	26	162			
Feb-12	294	1782	26	159			

	<u>USMC</u>		<u>Navy</u>		<u>Army</u>		<u>Civilians</u>
	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted	
Mar-12	292	1767	27	170			
Apr-12	290	1770	27	175			
May-12	290	1800	26	185			
Jun-12	282	1817	16	187			
Jul-12	281	1826	26	190			
Aug-12	289	1842	26	186			
Sep-12	299	1903	28	190			
Oct-12	315	1961	27	193			
Nov-12	320	1977	27	192			
Dec-12	306	2009	28	186			
Jan-13							
Feb-13							
Mar-13							
Apr-13							
May-13							
Jun-13							
Jul-13	307	2158	26	208			
Aug-13	324	2185	26	208			
Sep-13	335	2199	23	212			
Oct-13	334	2193	29	223			
Nov-13	333	2199	29	200			
Dec-13	330	2234	29	204			
Jan-14	328	2237	28	199			
Feb-14	345	2245	28	200			
Mar-14	344	2225	29	208			
Apr-14	345	2212	29	216			
May-14	344	2203	27	220			
Jun-14	348	2188	26	214			
Jul-14	342	2189	27	225	3	1	199
Aug-14	360	2178	27	226	4	1	199
Sep-14	353	2155	27	221	2	1	199
Oct-14	356	2134	29	226	3	1	199
Nov-14	367	2117	30	225	2	2	199
Dec-14	367	2116	30	227	2	1	199
Jan-15	364	2127	29	234	2	1	199
Feb-15	368	2118	29	233	2	1	199
Mar-15	366	2118	30	229	2	1	199
Apr-15	373	2125	28	229	3	1	196

	<u>USMC</u>		<u>Navy</u>		<u>Army</u>		<u>Civilians</u>
	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted	
May-15	370	2158	28	224	3	1	192
Jun-15	374	2141	27	226	3	1	191
Jul-15	373	2148	25	221	3	1	192
Aug-15	372	2157	27	216	3	1	188
Sep-15	368	2121	28	215	3	1	189
Oct-15	365	2115	29	211	3	1	190
Nov-15	370	2143	29	211	3	1	192
Dec-15	372	2161	27	207	3	1	189
Jan-16	370	2158	28	217	3	1	186
Feb-16	378	2143	31	219	3	1	185
Mar-16	376	2138	32	212	3	1	186

* Derived from information reported by the G-1 in the command chronologies for Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command.

APPENDIX E. AVERAGE MONTHLY DEPLOYED PERSONNEL

Jan-11	473	
Feb-11	489	
Mar-11	484	
Apr-11	323	
May-11	290	
Jun-11	292	
Jul-11	320	
Aug-11	265	
Sep-11	276	
Oct-11	327	
Nov-11	266	
Dec-11	270	
Jan-12	431	
Feb-12	536	
Mar-12	501	
Apr-12	509	
May-12	580	
Jun-12	512	
Jul-12	505	
Aug-12	521	
Sep-12	645	
Oct-12	506	
Nov-12	596	
Dec-12	578	
Jan-13	551	
Feb-13	575	
Mar-13	616	
Apr-13	597	
May-13	465	
Jun-13	346	
Jul-13	321	
Aug-13	308	
Sep-13	283	
Oct-13	306	
Nov-13	264	
Dec-13	173	<u>Countries</u>
Jan-14	276	10

Feb-14	456	12
Mar-14	465	14
Apr-14	499	13
May-14	534	16
Jun-14	525	15

* Derived from information reported by the G-3 in the command chronologies for Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. This information was only reported for the above time period.

APPENDIX F. INDIVIDUAL TRAINING COURSE

<u>Course Identifier</u>	<u>Started</u>	<u>Graduated</u>
2-10	74	
1-11 (Class #5)		25
2-11 (Class #6)		42
3-11 (Class #7)	81	61
1-12 (Class #8)	66	
2-12	71	
1-13		44
2-13		52
14-1	83	
14-2	82	71
15-1	62	40
15-2	64	64
16-1	85	80

* Derived from information reported by the Marine Special Operations School in the command chronologies for Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. This information was not regularly reported, and the manner in which it was reported oftentimes changed.

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APPENDIX G. ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION

<u>Course Identifier/Date</u>	<u>Phase I</u>	<u>Phase II</u>	<u>Selected</u>	<u>Selection Rate</u>
001		43	12	27.91%
003				54.00%
004		70	39	55.71%
005		42	21	50.00%
006		69	28	40.58%
007		79	28	35.44%
008		60	32	53.33%
01-09		68	56	82.35%
03-09		76	37	48.68%
04-09		77	26	33.77%
05-09		65	29	44.62%
06-09		83	52	62.65%
01-10		69	36	52.17%
03-10		86	54	62.79%
04-10		59	22	37.29%
2-11	140	114		
03-11		119	75	63.03%
Jan-Feb 2011	147	116	85	74.00%
May 2011	149	119		74.00%
Sep-Oct 2011	145	108	95	74.00%
1-12	107	97	71	66.36%
Jan-12	129	103	72	55.81%
Apr-12	154	120	78	50.65%
Jan-Feb 2013	129		47	36.43%
Mar-Apr 2013			45	
Aug-Sep 2013	122		22	18.03%
14-1	131		47	35.88%
14-2	129	129	43	33.33%
14-3	167	98	47	28.14%
15-1	167	120	69	41.32%
15-2	168	120	65	38.69%
15-3	167	105	48	28.74%

<u>Course Identifier/Date</u>	<u>Phase I</u>	<u>Phase II</u>	<u>Selected</u>	<u>Selection Rate</u>
16-1	177	130	72	40.68%
16-2	200	130	54	27.00%
16-3	182	112	41	22.53%

* Derived from information reported by the Marine Special Operations School in the command chronologies for Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. This information was not regularly reported, and the manner in which it was reported oftentimes changed.

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