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The United States Marine Corps Way of War

Submitted by:

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the

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School of Humanities

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**Abstract:**

The United States Marine Corps Way of War

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Abstract:

This thesis examines the evolution of institutionalized doctrine, strategy and tactics relating to, but not limited only to maneuver warfare as adopted by the United States Marine Corps during the post-Vietnam period in the United States. The United States Marine Corps also ingrained aspects of Asian warfare as offered by Sun Tzu; as well a return to its historical DNA in fighting “Small Wars”. The time frame studied spans the 1970’s through to 2010, using traditional as well as first person accounts by the prime movers of this perceived paradigm shift from attritional warfare to a maneuverist approach to warfighting. This evolutionary period of development for the U.S. Marine Corps was mistakenly referred to as a Revolution in Military Affairs by members of the Congressional Military Reform Caucus. It has also been mis-portrayed as a highly disruptive forced evolution. These two outliers were not the case. The following areas that were affected by this institutionalization of maneuverism were the Marine Corps’ educational system, the actual battle space prosecution of warfare; be it humanitarian assistance, regular set piece warfare or irregular guerrilla type warfare, and the role that the leadership *cadre* of the Marine Corps played in this evolutionary transition to maneuverism for the United States Marine Corps. Since Gulf War I the United States Marine Corps has utilized a non-attritionist demeanor on the battlefield whenever possible.

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## Preface

The purpose of this work, first and foremost, was the to gain an understanding of how an iconic institution such as the United States Marine Corps operates in the current environment of warfare as it is used to project force on behalf of our nation's security. This force projection also encompasses non-war instances of providing worldwide humanitarian assistance in times of horrific disasters, natural or man-made. It became evident that the Marine Corps was different from the other branches of military service in America. And in all honesty I wanted to know why it was different, and how this difference had manifested itself.

I came to the above realization because of a business relationship with the Marine Corps that developed during both *Operation Enduring Freedom* and *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. This business relationship allowed me to develop both a professional insight, and a humanitarian understanding for the Marines who have either paid the ultimate price of giving their lives for the nation, and or possibly a higher price in lost limbs and mental anguish - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder - as they returned home to re-enter the American mainstream.

Having said this I need to acknowledge the roles that Colonel Pat Garvey, General Al Gray, General Peter Pace, General Jim Jones, General James Conway, Captain Dick Torykian, Sargent Major Pete Haas and Sargent Eddie Ryan have played in this story. All are "retired" Marines, and yes as the *cliché* states: There are no former Marines, just Marines! Garvey, Gray, Hass and Torykian became my mentors in business and in studying the Marine Corps itself. Torykian, Haas, Conway, Pace and Jones led me down the path of providing humanitarian support for those Marines who had been killed while on duty, or returned from their deployments severely wounded like Sgt. Ryan a Marine sniper. In particular I am referring to The Semper Fi Fund and the Marine Corps Law Enforcement Foundation; both are 5 Star charities that I am pleased to be a part of.

As to the specific work of this thesis Al Gray and Pat Garvey are front and center. On a plane trip with Al Gray we discussed this topic of maneuver warfare, both as a warfighting tool as well as a business tool. I drank the proverbial "Kool Aide" and learned OODA Loop and how to apply it in my life. Little did I know that Pat Garvey was an early "evolutionist?" The more I read Robert Coram's *Boyd* (a gift from Pat Garvey, because "I was the guy with as fast an OODA as Boyd") the more I wanted to get the rest of the story. The hook was set, and here I am writing the real history of an evolution in Marine Corps warfighting.

In closing this *Preface*, there are two important things to remember that will always be with me, one from General Gray and one from Colonel Garvey. Gray first – If you want a new idea, read an old book! I've read many old books to complete this work; and Garvey next – There is no such thing as coincidence; it is God's way of remaining anonymous! Little did I know how these two Marines would contribute to my education and my life!

Respectfully submitted and *Semper Fidelis*,

A. J. "Tony" Piscitelli

## Acknowledgement

Let me begin by acknowledging the two most important people at the University of Glasgow who have kept me focused, and on a track to complete this important part of my life. First and foremost is my mentor Dr. Phillips O'Brien who has been a true mentor in all sense of the word. He has offered invaluable guidance, understanding and when necessary the motivation to get this done. Next is Ms. Christelle Le Riguer, who kept me, enrolled in spite of the challenges of a long distance New York to Glasgow relationship! Christelle has done the impossible with accepting FEDEXed tuition payments when the "system" would not accept my credit card. She has been my bureaucratic mentor on campus and has run interference for me on the University of Glasgow web site. Thank you both for all you have done on my behalf, I will always be in both your collective debt.

For Giving me their time and thoughts I need to thank: General James Conway USMC 34<sup>th</sup> CMC, ret., 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Russ Cox USMC, Colonel Patrick Garvey USMCR ret., General Alfred M. Gray USMC 29<sup>th</sup> CMC, ret., Captain Bruce Gudmundsson USMC ret., General Jim Jones USMC 32<sup>nd</sup> CMC, ret., General John Kelly USMC CG Southern Command, Lieutenant General Bill Keys USMC ret., General Charles Krulak, USMC 31st CMC, ret., Mr. Bill Lind, General Robert Magnus, USMC ACMC ret., General James Mattis USMC ret., Major General Mike Myatt USMC ret., Mr. Damien O'Connor, Captain John Schmidt, USMC ret., Captain John Schmitt, USMC ret., Major General Ray Smith USMC ret., Colonel Greg Thiele USMC, Lieutenant General Bernard "Mick" Trainor USMC ret., Colonel G I Wilson USMCR ret., Colonel Bill Woods USMC ret., and Colonel Mike Wyly USMC, ret..

For all the help and support from those selfless Librarians at the Library of Congress, the USMA at West Points' Eisenhower Library, the General Al Gray Research Center at Quantico, VA, and those who shared their private files: Pat Garvey, Al Gray, G.I Wilson, Bill Lind and the Boyd Family files that are available at AGRC MCU.

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On the technical end I need to thank Cynthia Kushner my transcriptionist, who turned the audio interviews into meaningful typed documents. And, Karen A. DeVora for proof reading the thesis for grammar, sentence structure and spelling errors that "*Spell Check*" did not catch.

I must give very special thanks to my wife Diana and to all our children and grandchildren. I thank you deeply for all your love, support, and understanding when it seemed that this work came before you and family activities, as I know it did. I owe you all big time!

Lastly I wish to thank all the Marines who have come before, are here now and those that will add to this thesis in the future, by their service and sacrifice to our nation. You are all truly what this work is about. Thank you and *Semper Fidelis*.

If errors are evident, they were not intentional yet belong to me. If there are any, I apologize in advance for them. --- Again respectfully, A. J. "Tony" Piscitelli.

**Author's Declaration:**



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Signed /S/: ANTHONY JOHN PISCITELLI .....

## Abbreviations:

<b>AAA</b>	<b>Anti-Aircraft artillery</b>
<b>AAR</b>	<b>After Action Report</b>
<b>AAV</b>	<b>Amphibious Assault Vehicle</b>
<b>ACMC</b>	<b>Asst Commandant Marine Corps</b>
<b>AH</b>	<b>Attack Helicopter</b>
<b>AK</b>	<b>A K 47 Russian Assault Weapon</b>
<b>ALMAR</b>	<b>All Marine Communication</b>
<b>ANA</b>	<b>Afghan National Army</b>
<b>AOR</b>	<b>Area of Operational Responsibility</b>
<b>APC</b>	<b>Armored Personnel Carrier</b>
<b>AQ</b>	<b>al QAEDA</b>
<b>ARVN</b>	<b>Army of the Repub. of Vietnam</b>
<b>AT4</b>	<b>Anti-Tank Weapon</b>
<b>AVLB</b>	<b>Armored Vehicle Launch Bridge</b>
<b>AWS</b>	<b>Amphibious Warfighting School</b>
<b>AW</b>	<b>All Weather</b>
<b>AWC</b>	<b>Army War College</b>
<b>BIAP</b>	<b>Baghdad International Airport</b>
<b>BLT</b>	<b>Battalion Landing Team</b>
<b>BrigLT</b>	<b>Brigade Landing Team</b>
<b>C2</b>	<b>Command and Control</b>
<b>CAAT</b>	<b>Combined Anti-Armor Team</b>
<b>CANG</b>	<b>California Nat'l Guard</b>
<b>CAD</b>	<b>Combined Air Detachment</b>
<b>CALC</b>	<b>Conventional Air Launch</b>
<b>CAP</b>	<b>Civil Action Program</b>
<b>CAS</b>	<b>Close Air Support</b>
<b>CBIST</b>	<b>Chem. Bio Inspection site team</b>
<b>CDET</b>	<b>College of Distant Ed &amp; training</b>
<b>CENTCOM</b>	<b>Central Command</b>
<b>CFAC</b>	<b>Combined Force Air Command</b>
<b>CFLCC</b>	<b>Coalition Force Land Component Command</b>
<b>CG</b>	<b>Commanding General</b>
<b>CIC</b>	<b>Command Intel center</b>
<b>CID</b>	<b>Criminal Investigative Div</b>
<b>CLT</b>	<b>Company Landing Team</b>
<b>CMC</b>	<b>Commandant Marine Corps</b>
<b>COIN</b>	<b>Counter Insurgency</b>
<b>CONUS</b>	<b>Continental US</b>
<b>CP</b>	<b>Command Post</b>
<b>CSC</b>	<b>Command Staff College</b>
<b>DNA</b>	<b>Master Blueprint</b>
<b>DO</b>	<b>Distributive Operations</b>
<b>DEA</b>	<b>Drug Enforcement agency</b>

<b>EPAC</b>	<b>Eastern Provence area command</b>
<b>EPME</b>	<b>Enlisted Professional Military Ed.</b>
<b>EPW</b>	<b>Enemy Prisoner of War</b>
<b>EWS</b>	<b>Expeditionary Warfighting School</b>
<b>FA18</b>	<b>Fighter Jet</b>
<b>FAC</b>	<b>Forward Air Controller</b>
<b>FARP</b>	<b>Forward Arm Refuel Helo</b>
<b>FIE</b>	<b>Fly In Echelon</b>
<b>FLIR</b>	<b>Forward Looking Infrared Radar</b>
<b>FMFM</b>	<b>Fleet Marine Force Manual</b>
<b>FMFLANT</b>	<b>Fleet Marine Force Atlantic</b>
<b>FMFPAC</b>	<b>Fleet Marine Force Pacific</b>
<b>FMFRP</b>	<b>Fleet Marine Force Republished Publication</b>
<b>FOB</b>	<b>Forward Operations Base</b>
<b>FROG</b>	<b>Flame Resistant Organizational Gear</b>
<b>FSSG</b>	<b>Forward Supply Group</b>
<b>GBU</b>	<b>Guided Bomb</b>
<b>GDAY</b>	<b>Go Day</b>
<b>GWOT</b>	<b>Global War on Terrorism</b>
<b>HARM</b>	<b>Anti-Radiation Ordinance</b>
<b>HIDACZ</b>	<b>High Density Airplane Control Zone</b>
<b>HMH Heavy</b>	<b>Hilo Squadron</b>
<b>IED</b>	<b>Improvised Explosive Device</b>
<b>ILS</b>	<b>Integrated Logistic support</b>
<b>INTERPET</b>	<b>Internat'l Force East Timor</b>
<b>JDAM</b>	<b>Joint Direct Attack Munition</b>
<b>JSTAR</b>	<b>Joint tactical Radio</b>
<b>JTF</b>	<b>Joint Task Force</b>
<b>JTFAR</b>	<b>Joint Task Force Air</b>
<b>KIA</b>	<b>Killed In Action</b>
<b>KTO</b>	<b>Kuwait Theater of Operations</b>
<b>LAPD</b>	<b>Los Angeles Police Department</b>
<b>LAR</b>	<b>Light Armor Recon Company</b>
<b>LAV</b>	<b>Light Armored Vehicle</b>
<b>LCAC</b>	<b>Landing Craft Air cushioned</b>
<b>LCU</b>	<b>Landing Craft-Utility</b>
<b>LHD</b>	<b>Landing Hilo Deck</b>
<b>LIA</b>	<b>Linear Induction Accelerator</b>
<b>LPD</b>	<b>Landing Platform Dock</b>
<b>M1A1</b>	<b>Abrams Tank</b>
<b>MAD</b>	<b>Mutually Assured Destruction</b>
<b>MAGTF</b>	<b>Marine Air Ground Task Force</b>
<b>MARDIV</b>	<b>Marine Division</b>
<b>MAW</b>	<b>Marine Air Wing</b>
<b>MAWAS</b>	<b>Marine All weather Attack Squad</b>
<b>MCCS</b>	<b>MC Command &amp; Staff College</b>

<b>MCDP</b>	<b>Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication</b>
<b>MCLC</b>	<b>Military Coord &amp; Liaison command</b>
<b>MCU</b>	<b>Marine Corps University</b>
<b>MCWAR</b>	<b>MC War College</b>
<b>MCWW</b>	<b>MC Way of War</b>
<b>MEB</b>	<b>Marine Expeditionary Brigade</b>
<b>MEBMAW</b>	<b>Expeditionary Brig. Air Wing</b>
<b>MEF</b>	<b>Marine Expeditionary Force</b>
<b>MEU</b>	<b>Marine Expeditionary Unit</b>
<b>MEUARG</b>	<b>Marine Expeditionary Unit Air</b>
<b>MEU-SOC</b>	<b>Marine Expeditionary Unit Special Ops</b>
<b>MIG</b>	<b>Soviet Made Aircraft</b>
<b>MLSR</b>	<b>Machine Gun Self Loading</b>
<b>MOS</b>	<b>Military Occupational Specialty</b>
<b>MPF</b>	<b>Maritime Prepositioning</b>
<b>MPPS</b>	<b>Maritime Prepositioning</b>
<b>MPS</b>	<b>Maritime Prepositioning</b>
<b>NATO</b>	<b>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</b>
<b>NCO</b>	<b>Non Commissioned Officer</b>
<b>NFZ</b>	<b>No Fly Zone</b>
<b>NVG</b>	<b>Night Vision Goggles</b>
<b>OCS</b>	<b>Officers Candidate School</b>
<b>OEF</b>	<b>Operation Enduring Freedom</b>
<b>OES</b>	<b>Officer Education System</b>
<b>OIF</b>	<b>Operation Iraqi Freedom</b>
<b>OND</b>	<b>Operation New Dawn</b>
<b>OODA</b>	<b>Boyd Cycle</b>
<b>OP</b>	<b>Operations Post</b>
<b>OPAR</b>	<b>Operations Post Air</b>
<b>PME</b>	<b>Professional Marine Education</b>
<b>POTUS</b>	<b>President USA</b>
<b>PSYOP</b>	<b>Psychological Operation</b>
<b>PTA</b>	<b>Parents Teachers Association</b>
<b>RCT</b>	<b>Regimental Combat Team</b>
<b>REIN</b>	<b>Reinforced</b>
<b>RET</b>	<b>Retired</b>
<b>RMA</b>	<b>Revolution in Military Affairs</b>
<b>ROE</b>	<b>Rules of Engagement</b>
<b>RPG</b>	<b>Rocket Propelled Grenade</b>
<b>SA</b>	<b>Surface to Air</b>
<b>SAM</b>	<b>Surface to Air Missile</b>
<b>SECDEF</b>	<b>Secretary of Defense</b>
<b>SECNAV</b>	<b>Secretary of the Navy</b>
<b>SIMOL</b>	<b>Somalia</b>
<b>SPMMAGTF</b>	<b>Special Purpose MAGTF</b>
<b>SSE</b>	<b>Sensitive Site Exploitation</b>

<b>TACAIR</b>	<b>Tactical Air</b>
<b>TBS</b>	<b>The Basic School</b>
<b>TOT</b>	<b>Time On Target</b>
<b>UH</b>	<b>Marine Hilo</b>
<b>UNAMET</b>	<b>UN Mission East Timor</b>
<b>UNOSOM</b>	<b>UN Mission Somalia</b>
<b>UNPROFOR</b>	<b>UN Protective Force</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>US Army</b>
<b>USAF</b>	<b>US Air Force</b>
<b>USD</b>	<b>US Dollars</b>
<b>USN</b>	<b>US Navy</b>
<b>USMC</b>	<b>US Marine Corps</b>
<b>USMCR</b>	<b>US Marine Corps Reserve</b>
<b>VBIED</b>	<b>Vehicle Borne Imp. Explosive Device</b>
<b>VMFA</b>	<b>Marine Fighter Attack Squadron</b>
<b>VUCA</b>	<b>Volatility Uncertainty Complexity Ambiguity</b>
<b>WIA</b>	<b>Wounded In Action</b>
<b>WMD</b>	<b>Weapon of Mass Destruction</b>
<b>WWI</b>	<b>World War I</b>
<b>WWII</b>	<b>World War II</b>

## Introduction:

### UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS WAY OF WAR

An initial definition for maneuver warfare is offered by Robert M. Citino of the University of North Texas so as to provide a frame of reference for this work. This definition will be modified as required by the adaptation of maneuver warfare by the United States Marine Corps:

“..The Germans called it *Bewegungskrieg* – the war of movement on the operational level. The term did not refer to tactical mobility or ground speed in miles per hour. Instead, it meant the maneuver of large units to strike an enemy a sharp, even annihilating blow as rapidly as possible. It could be a surprise assault on an unprotected flank or, better yet, both flanks – or even better than that, his rear. Such a vigorous operational posture implied certain other characteristics, as we shall see: an army with an extremely high level of battlefield aggression, an officer corps that tended to launch attacks no matter what the odds, and a flexible system of command that left a great deal of initiative, sometimes too much, in the hands of lower ranking commanders... Thus the Germans evolved a certain pattern of war making from their culture and traditions..”<sup>1</sup>

Robert M. Citino: *The German Way of War*.

This dissertation will focus on the development of a Marine Corps Way of War (MCWW) both externally and internally during the post-Vietnam period to the present era of warfare in southwest Asia. It must be noted though that both the United States Army as well as the United States Marine Corps were simultaneously exposed to the efforts of the “Congressional Reformers” from the mid 1970’s through to the mid 1980’s.<sup>2</sup> The United States Marine Corps was able to further embrace maneuver warfare and its doctrine, strategy and tactics fully. The United States Army is just starting to investigate the potentials of maneuver warfare almost thirty years later. In the Army’s defense their tardiness in adopting maneuver warfare can be explained in its cautiousness in developing new military trends, coupled with its primary mission during the Cold War of keeping the Warsaw Pact nations from overrunning Western Europe using the defensive – offensive attritional way of war that had in essence won World War II for the Allies. Add in technological military one-up man-ship in battlefield development to counter the superior numbers of the Warsaw Pact, the U.S. Army did not really have the time or the needs to change its doctrine, strategy and tactics to

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<sup>1</sup>Robert M. Citino, *The German Way of War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), xiv.

<sup>2</sup> United States Military Academy Seminar Conference XX, June 1982 and follow on Break-Out meetings report summary unauthored, pages 35 -81.

incorporate a German style maneuver warfare, during the Cold War period.<sup>3</sup> At best, the Army's Special Forces light infantry posture can be considered a somewhat maneuver warfare element practiced within the U.S. Army. This work will cover the early 1970's through to 2010.

Maneuver warfare suited the numerically smaller U.S. Marine Corps force both from an intellectual as well as a practical basis. The United States Marine Corps has been unique from its beginnings due to its small numbers in comparison to the larger United States Army. One can almost equate it to the Prussian armies of Frederick the Great's small forces which found success on the battlefields of Western Europe in similar doctrinal situations to today's U.S. Marine Corps, partly because of their adoption of a form of maneuver warfare.<sup>4</sup> Although the United States Marine Corps had acquitted itself extremely well in the battle spaces of World War I and II, and in the Cold War engagements of Korea and Vietnam, it remained mired to a large extent in the traditional American or French option of attritional defensive-offensive warfare. It is costly in treasure and in most instances resulting in very high human losses.<sup>5</sup> In the years prior to the demise of the Cold War a perceived if not conscious transformation within the United States Marine Corps occurred. This transformation was described as a true Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) that set the stage for the current means of prosecuting warfare by the United States Marine Corps. My thesis is that no such RMA occurred. What took place was the evolution and institutionalization of a doctrinal approach that relied on modern maneuver warfare. It also incorporated the Boydian military philosophy, and the reliance on the Marine Corps own former strategies and tactics found in its "Small Wars" DNA. This work will focus on how this perceived "Revolution in Military Affairs" came about, and the ongoing progress of its application as the Marine Corps Way of War (MCWW) today.

American history and United States foreign relations helped to forge the United States Marine Corps into a military institution that has the unique make up of having been water borne - land and sea warriors in the American military experience; this can be seen in the very

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<sup>3</sup> United States Military Academy Seminar Conference XX, June 1982 General Myers (US Army) closing speech recorded side 14.

<sup>4</sup> John A. English and Bruce I. Gudmundsson, *On Infantry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1994), 63.

<sup>5</sup> Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 1973), 199.

DNA of the United States Marine Corps from its inception, and its concomitant history. In military actions, both bellicose as well as pacific / humanitarian actions fought by the United States Marine Corps, from the American Revolution to its present participation in the *Global War on Terrorism* the Marine Corps has transformed itself into a force in readiness capable of using a maneuver warfare way of war (MCWW), casting the attritional-defensive - offensive way of war aside. It also must be noted though that this may not always be the case when joint forces are deployed. Given the opportunity, the United States Marine Corps will utilize what will be termed a Marine Corps Way of War (MCWW). This transformation did not happen by coincidence or serendipitous encounters. The expeditionary nature of the United States Marine Corps history coupled with its participation in every major, and most “Small Wars,” has created a unique and agile fighting force as a department within the United States Navy. The Marine Corps Way of War (MCWW) is the product of thoughtful and deliberate development by certain vibrant, forward thinking and forceful leaders. Also there were a handful of politicians, civilians and other non-Marine members of the military that had seen in maneuver warfare a solution to the problems endemic in attritional-defensive offensive warfare for the United States. The adoption of a Marine Corps Way of War (MCWW) has led to the present success in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Here, I refer to a band of these mislabeled “Reformers” both in and out of the U.S. Marine Corps in the latter part of the twentieth century. This work also will focus on the efforts of all of the recent commandants of the Marine Corps along with certain field grade generals and their subordinates. It will examine how their leadership and initiatives have affected the United States Marine Corps over the last twenty two years, in particular surrounding the adoption of maneuver warfare and its application to a MCWW. Since General Gray the follow-on commandants and battlefield commanders have carried this vision and the intent of a MCWW into the future. It is a testament to all the “so called Reformers” (evolutionists or maneuverists) validity, timeliness, adaptability and foresight that maneuver warfare has added to the battlefield success’ of the Marine Corps.

General Gray has characterized this evolutionary development as follows:

“..You have to understand Maneuver Warfare is really a thought process ..... so it was much more of an impact and it is probably not even a good name but that’s what we gave it, but the point is, it was all about empowering people and letting people do what they think they had to do, letting people make mistakes and so on, so they learn and all that kind of thing so that was

one of the big leadership parts of the maneuver thought process. The empowerment of people, empowerment with an “E” not an “I” and the idea that the de-centralization, in other words, maybe decentralizing operations and all that and the very idea that intent has to be understood to which two echelons up, and two echelons down all that type of thing. So that thought process is very, very important I think that we in essence, we turned the Marine Corp loose. So the Marine Corp really did it. I just let them do it..”<sup>6</sup>

The work of these “Reformers” can be seen in the following areas: first, educational reforms that broadened United States Marines knowledge base to support a MCWW; second, the development of political agility within a governmental system that traditionally shunned the concept of standing armies, while at the same time it had created a political bureaucracy that wallows in its political maneuverings and intrigue; third, external and internal training designed to place the United States Marine Corps in the forefront of military action and live up to its reputation of being the “First to Fight;” fourth, maneuver warfare and the advantages derived from this type of engagement by a small, amphibious fighting force such as the United States Marine Corps; and its redefinition of doctrine, strategy and tactics for the United States Marine Corps that has adopted, defined and redefined maneuver warfare on all levels of battle as it applies to the United States Marine Corps; and fifth, the development of leadership skills to accomplish the successes in the preceding areas as it applies to a MCWW.

As stated above, this study concentrates on military leadership within the U.S. Marine Corps, both of which have not only withstood the rigors of warfare but also the warfare within the United States political system. The Marine Corps has survived and triumphed in both battle spaces simultaneously.<sup>7</sup> It must be realized that the United States Marine Corps is not an independent branch of service within the United States Department of Defense; but a department within the United States Navy. Yet, because of calculated, wise and determined leadership and in some instances outside guidance, the U.S. Marine Corps has been able to stand on equal footing with the four other independent military branches (United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force and United States Coast Guard). The focus of this work also revolves around the so called “Reformers” and the implementation of maneuver

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<sup>6</sup> General Alfred M. Gray USMC (ret.), in person interview by author. May 20, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Martin Binkin and Jeffrey Record, *Where Does the Marine Corps Go from Here* (Washington, D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1976), 66.

warfare into a MCWW; along with the follow on commandants that have refined, implemented and further utilized the MCWW successfully on today's battlefields.<sup>8</sup>

This U.S. Marine Corps leadership *cadre* as it relates to the political aspects of the Marine Corps leadership program is the reason for both internal and external successes. The Marine Corps leadership, has to rely on congressional efforts to maintain the Marine Corps *raison d'être*, of being an amphibious and seaborne provider of power projection -a "Force in Readiness." The Marine Corps must be able to secure a land position as the logical termination of a line of communication- pre, during and in all cases post military or civil action, so as to secure its place in the current United States military environment.

This was amplified by General James Amos, 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps in November of 2011 at Camp Lawton, Herat, Afghanistan, when he stated that:

".. while the Marines, willing and able to operate from dug in positions [attritional defensive - offensive doctrine] are uniquely equipped and trained to do much more: they can get to any crisis on land, sea or in the air, on a moment's notice ... [Commandant Amos] is eager to see the Iraqi and Afghanistan missions completed so that the Marines can return to their traditional role as [the] expeditionary force in readiness.."<sup>9</sup>

Military education is a major part of this evolution into a MCWW. In order for the MCWW to take hold there was a need for militarily educated warriors; it has become standard practice for all United States Marines to become readers.<sup>10</sup> And, these required readings encompassed all of the Marine Corps from the General Officer level, on down to newly minted Marine privates leaving the recruit depots of Paris Island and San Diego. Not only was reading now a fundamental aspect of being a Marine, it also became a socialization process within the Marine Corps itself, as these readings led to formal and informal discussion groups focusing on various aspects of military history, doctrine, strategy and tactics. This in part grew out of the "Reformers" *ad hoc* meetings for this MCWW development so as to get its center of gravity embedded within the Marine Corps.<sup>11</sup> Along with the academic benefits derived from

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<sup>8</sup> See Chapter IV of this document for complete discussion of the work of follow on commandants of the United States Marine Corps, page 85.

<sup>9</sup> Gen. James Amos, "For Marines Its Back to the Future after Iraq - Afghanistan," *Washington Post*: December 4, 2011, national edition, politics, A1.

<sup>10</sup> General John Kelly USMC, In person interview by author, January 23, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Colonel Gary I. Wilson USMC (ret.), In person interview by author, September 2013.

having Marines become readers at all levels, it must also be noted that future Marines would no longer be accepted into the Marine Corps if they did not have at least a high school diploma.<sup>12</sup> This benchmark requirement in effect would have a far reaching and positive spin on the men and women who would become future enlisted U.S. Marines. This in conjunction with college level and post graduate education, and the development of the Marine Corps University program *per se* has benefited the Marine Corps. Thus the internal development, and creation of a United States Marine by all standards, puts into the arena a warrior-scholar-practitioner of the modern art of maneuver warfare or a Marine Corps Way of War.

Starting with Commandant Gray's leadership of the Marine Corps, rather than stewardship, Gray changed how this military organization of sea borne soldiers operated in a post-Cold War world. These changes carried over into the current world which is now locked in battle with terrorism and irregular warfare, (4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> Generation Warfare).<sup>13</sup> From the outset, General Gray's objectives were first and foremost meant to take care of his Marines on and off the battle field. The United States Marine Corps needed, in General Gray's mind, to change how it would do business on this new battle field.<sup>14</sup> The impetus behind this initiative can be found in the post-Vietnam analysis of the effectiveness of the American campaign in Southeast Asia. Couple this with the bombing of the Marine 24th Amphibious Unit, Battalion Landing Team, HQ Barracks, Beirut, Lebanon in 1983, serious and immediate battle space changes needed to be implemented.<sup>15</sup>

The first to voice a critical note was Jim Webb, a highly decorated Marine Corps officer who served in Southeast Asia.<sup>16</sup> Vietnam was the "preverbal straw" that finally forced the need to seek change in Marine Corps thinking as it related to doctrine, strategy and tactics. The irregular and attritional action taken against the Marine Corps coupled with the previous

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<sup>12</sup> General Alfred M. Gray USMC (ret.), in person interview by author, May 20, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Colonel Thomas X. Hammes USMC (ret.), *The Sling and The Stone* (St. Paul: Zenith Press, 2006), 208. An added note is the refinements of the definition of 4GW into 5GW see also: John Robb, "The Changing Face of War," *Global Guerrillas*, October 16, 2006. <http://www.globalguerillas.typepad.com>. (Accessed September 2013).

<sup>14</sup> General Alfred M. Gray USMC (ret.), In person interview by author, May 20, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Colonel Michael Wyly USMC (ret.), In person interview by author, August 20, 2012. This was also supported by Colonel Gary I. Wilson USMC (ret.), In person interview, September 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Colonel Timothy J. Geraghty USMC (ret.), *Peacekeepers at War* (Dulles: Potomac Press, 2009), 131.

heavy battlefield losses of Korea and the Pacific campaigns of World War II emphasized the heavy human carnage suffered by the Marine Corps in both Killed In Action and Wounded In Action. These KIA's and WIA's were no longer an acceptable price to pay in human assets for the United States, and in particular the U.S. Marine Corps.<sup>17</sup>

Joined by General Gray's leadership and direction as provided by the so called "Reformers", the Marine Corps was better able to meet the threats of the 1990's into the 21st Century. Without the impetus provided by Bill Lind, Col John Boyd (USAF), Col. Mike Wyly (USMC) and Commandant Gray as well as the many others who were involved in dealing with the Congressional Caucus for Military Reform in the early 1980's.<sup>18</sup> The question remains is the Marine Corps in a better position today for success in the battle space, as compared to Beirut, Vietnam, Korea, World War II and World War I because of this maneuver warfare evolution that became doctrine, strategy and tactics of a Marine Corps Way of War?

The complexion of warfare and its complimentary carnage, at least for those in the Marine Corps was part of the history of the United States Marine Corps; it would not be a part of its future willingly if a MCWW was to be successful.<sup>19</sup> Does MCWW give the Marine Corps the ability to adapt into the warriors of today who fight smarter, and, lose less Marines while fighting for the same ideals of all Marines since their inception in 1776? Answering this question is the thrust of this dissertation.

The concept of Reform in Military Affairs (RMA) should be a broad brush stroke approach for this dissertation, although the United States Marine Corps on the whole does not accept the "Reform" wording. As stated by Col. Pat Garvey "the Marine Corps has "evolved" into a MCWW."<sup>20</sup> On the surface this evolutionary work centered on maneuver warfare as

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<sup>17</sup>See comparison chart of KIA and WIA: re US Army and US Marine Corps from World War I through OIF and OEF on page 42.

<sup>18</sup> See Wyly's Wheel Diagram at the end of this work, page 230.

<sup>19</sup> Colonel Michael Wyly USMC (ret.), In person interview by author. August 20, 2012. This was also supported by Colonel Gary I. Wilson USMC (ret.), in person interview, September 2013 and Mr. William (Bill) Lind in personal interview, February 10, 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Colonel Patrick Garvey USMCR (ret.) supported by personal interviews with General James Conway USMC, 34<sup>th</sup> CMC, and Generals James Mattis USMC (ret.), and John Kelly USMC / CG SOCOM.

developed by the German army during the inter war years of the 1920's and 1930's.<sup>21</sup> This fine point of word craft is elemental to understanding both the Marine Corps and those whose efforts led to bringing the United States Marine Corps into its future, with the implementation of its own variant of maneuver warfare.<sup>22</sup>

Referring again to the DNA of the Marine Corps' long history, the role of "Small Wars" and their prosecution by the Marine Corps brings the concepts of maneuver warfare full circle to the current conditions of irregular warfare in both Iraq and Afghanistan today.<sup>23</sup> Keeping this in mind, changes that may appear minor are, in the most part major paradigm shifts within such an iconoclastic and ethos bound institution such as the Marine Corps in the post-World War II environment.

The Cold War world changed the stakes but not the methodologies of warfare. Ground warfare was limited for the most part to surrogates; the mind set was still attritional and defensive offensive actions.<sup>24</sup> Changes were required in the face of large actions versus small military response to irregular warfare (4<sup>th</sup> GW)<sup>25</sup> within these larger military campaigns. This has always been a strong suit for the United States Marine Corps as it prosecuted its history of "Small Wars." Of the almost two hundred small military actions that the United States has participated in over the course of the Marine Corps history, the Marine Corps has been the primary American military arm in over one hundred and seventy interventions or eighty five percent of U. S. military deployments.<sup>26</sup> From aggressive military actions, to peace keeping, to military stabilization and on to humanitarian assistance, the Marine Corps "Force in Readiness" has excelled in these areas time and again. This was the impetus reflected in moving away from the former attritional mind sets of World War I to Gulf War I. This move

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<sup>21</sup> Michael B. Barrett, *Prelude to Blitzkrieg* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 2013), 308-309.

<sup>22</sup> Wyly, In person interview by the author, August 20, 2012.

<sup>23</sup> In person interview with General James Conway USMC: 34<sup>th</sup> CMC. Gen. Conway also referred to FMFRP: 12-15, *Small Wars Manual* 1940 (Reprinted: December 1990 by Major General M. Caulfield, under the direction of the 29<sup>th</sup> CMC, General A. Gray).

<sup>24</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

<sup>25</sup> Hammes, "*The Sling and the Stone*," 215-219.

<sup>26</sup> Max Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace* (New York: Perseus Books, 2002). All "Small Wars" were counted and either assigned to the U.S. Army or the U.S. Marine Corps. Averages were run to get the above statistical data.

away from the attritional side of battle was to be the frame of reference for the adoption of maneuver warfare as proffered by the “Reformer / Evolutionist” or “Maneuverists.” It was officially implemented and institutionalized by the United States Marine Corps in 1987.<sup>27</sup>

Prior to Gulf War I, the rescue of Americans in Grenada and the Invasion of Panama were two major actions where the Marine Corps would begin to integrate maneuver warfare tenets. The Panama campaign, *Just Cause* may have been the last invasion of the attritional type; or the second real opportunity to insert some of the lessons of maneuver warfare into practice on a limited basis.<sup>28</sup> *Operation Urgent Fury* utilized pre institutionalized concepts of maneuver warfare early in the Marine Corps’ move into its’ future warfighting paradigm.<sup>29</sup>

Prior to his becoming the 29th Commandant, General Gray was a key part of the vanguard that accepted the move to incorporate the lessons of Fredrick the Great, von Clausewitz, von Manstein and the German school of military strategy that developed during the interwar period of the 1920’s / 1930’s.<sup>30</sup> Future Commandant Gray should be considered as one of the prime movers of the “Reformers.” He entered this warfighting “evolution” officially a short time after the Beirut Bombing.

Here it must be noted that other non-Marine practitioners of this methodology or way of thinking volunteered or were recruited to help make this evolution become reality for the United States Marine Corps; in particular William (Bill) Lind and Col. John R. Boyd, USAF (ret). Boyd and Lind were just two of the maneuver warfare proponents tasked with this development and evolution as it moved into the maneuver warfare of the Marine Corps.<sup>31</sup> The “Reformers” also saw that the lessons of Sun Tzu, introduced by both Col. John Boyd and General Gray, and other Asian military strategists as a way of supporting and enhancing these

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<sup>27</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Warfighting*, Fleet Marine Force Manual 1(FMFM 1) PCN 139 000050 00, 6 March 1989.

<sup>28</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas E. Reynolds, USMCR, *Just Cause: Marine Operations in Panama, 1988 – 1990* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, HQ USMC, PCN 190 003134 00, 1996), 15 – 23.

<sup>29</sup> Major General Raymond Smith, USMC (ret.), telephone interview with the author, December 2013.

<sup>30</sup> Colonel Wyly, In person interview with the author. This is also supported by the Lind interview.

<sup>31</sup> Robert Coram, *Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed The Art of War* (Boston: Little Brown, 2002), 395.

aspects of a Marine Corps Way of War (MCWW).<sup>32</sup> Asian war philosophy had permeated the past history of the Marine Corps from the World War II usage of *Gung Ho* as a unifying unofficial motto for “*Can Do.*” It is similar to the more modern Marine Corps aphorism of *Improvise, Adapt and Overcome.*<sup>33</sup> General Jones incorporated the Asian hand to hand combat school during his commandancy further embedding Asian warfare attributes for all Marines.<sup>34</sup>

The areas in which specific and significant change for the Marine Corps can be noted are as follows:

1. Doctrine, Strategy and Tactics,
2. Command and Control,
3. Training and Education,
4. Leadership and Style of Leadership,
5. Operations.<sup>35</sup>

These five major areas are manipulated by the forces of bureaucracy and politics, within both the Marine Corps, as well as governmental politics. There is also internal jockeying within the U.S. Defense Department, and in the macro, the ongoing war efforts in Southwest Asia, as it affects the Marine Corps today since its inception of maneuver warfare.

The MCWW’s maneuver warfare and its subsequent legacy has positioned the Marine Corps and its warriors / scholars, into its future as the “Force in Readiness” for the nation, worldwide. No other branch of service in the United States can make that claim. More than lip service has been paid to a transition to Boyd’s maneuver warfare and the advantages derived from this type of engagement by a small, amphibious fighting force. The MCWW’s redefinition of doctrine, strategy and tactics that has adopted, defined and redefined maneuver

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<sup>32</sup> Wyly and Gray interviews reflect that Colonel John Boyd spoke to General Gray on numerous occasions, Boyd stated: “..... As this maneuver warfare doctrine is the beginning point, not the end piece of the operational art of fighting.....” to General Gray and others.

<sup>33</sup> Ming L. Pei, “Gung Ho, China Page, <http://www.chinapage.com/word/gungho.html>, (1995). (Accessed April 16, 2014).

<sup>34</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Close Combat*, (MCRP3-02B and MCCCTP), 12 February 1999.

<sup>35</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Operations*, (MCDP 1-0), 27 September 2001.

warfare on all levels are evident in Marine Corps battle posture today. In retrospect, the success of the German Army of the late 1930's, as it rolled up victory upon victory is the general back drop for this evolution for the Marine Corps. It is not the end point for Marine Corps doctrine.<sup>36</sup> The convergence of thought on maneuver warfare and combined arms are coupled with the fact that the Marine Corps leadership *cadre* became one of its strongest proponents that opened up the future to fighting better, more economically and smarter. It must also be noted that this was not to be an easy adaptation within the Marine Corps for numerous reasons, the strongest external perception being; "that this was not the way that the Marine Corps had fought in the past." The Marine Corps DNA though offers a very strong counter indication.<sup>37</sup>

The misnamed "Reformers, *etal*" appeared to be misguided with this methodology, prior to General Gray's advancement into the commandancy in 1987. Yet, even before this time as stated above, he was convinced that this would give Marines a new and utile tool to engage their enemies in a most efficient way, while achieving quicker and a more devastating success in the battle space.<sup>38</sup> The second major military action during the Gray commandancy took the Marine Corps to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq. The U.S. Marine Corps was responsible for liberating Kuwait during the First Gulf War, *Operation Desert Storm* (1990–1991). Their role in this action was based upon the primary use of the Marine Corps concepts of maneuver warfare (MCWW) as developed prior to, and refined during this period in the Amphibious Warfighting School by Colonel Mike Wyly and Colonel John Boyd.<sup>39</sup> In the course of developing these plans for this offensive the traditional form of attritional warfare was not used. Attritional warfare's other features included pitting strength against strength, massed and accurate fires, ponderous movement, and centralized control with an emphasis on procedures.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Wyly and Gray interviews with the author.

<sup>37</sup> General Mattis and General Kelly, In person interviews with the author. This is also supported by email correspondence with Lt. General Bernard Trainor USMC (ret.), dated 16 September 2012.

<sup>38</sup> Major General R. Smith, telephone interview December 2013, re: Grenada.

<sup>39</sup> Coram, "Boyd," 422-426.

<sup>40</sup> William S, Lind, *Maneuver Warfare Handbook* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 7.

As attrition warfare was superseded by the Marine Corps development of maneuver warfare in the late 1980s, there was much discussion within the Marine Corps as to what actually constituted maneuver warfare. Maneuver warfare and its follow on characteristics included attacking weak points by strength, reconnaissance pulls, a high tempo of operations, and decentralized control with the object to shatter the enemy's cohesion, organization, command and psychological balance. Further, MCWW's maneuver warfare required a higher level of military judgment and was riskier than attrition warfare.<sup>41</sup> In the course of developing these plans for this offensive posture, the Marine Corps' leadership sought to shorten their own force's cycle of observation, orientation, decision, and action, (the "OODA Loop" of Captain John Boyd),<sup>42</sup> to one that was faster than that of the Iraqi Army during Desert Storm; therefore giving the decided advantage to the U.S. Marine Corps.

The decision making vehicle for this was intelligence preparation of the battlefield along the lines of Boyd's *Patterns of Conflict*.<sup>43</sup> This system and doctrine provided an easily grasped series of milestone decisions as the battle progressed. In addition, the Marine Corps strategy planners under the able leadership of Lt. General Walt Boomer wanted to deceive and confound the enemy's command and control system so that the Iraqis would not be able to form an accurate picture of what was happening on the battlefield, and therefore would not be able to respond in a satisfactory way to Marine Corps actions.<sup>44</sup> Both Generals Bill Keyes (II MEF) and Mike Myatt (I MEF), by assaulting the Iraqi forces at their weakest points, had hoped to minimize their own casualties, and avoid the possibilities of chemical weapons being used against the Marines.<sup>45</sup> The Marine Corps, in the best example of lessons learned from maneuver warfare, would go quickly and violently, and with a rapid tempo of movement being maintained.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Lind, "*Maneuver Warfare*," 49.

<sup>42</sup> See OODA Loop Cycling Chart page 231.

<sup>43</sup> Colonel John Boyd USAF (ret.), "*Patterns of Conflict*" (unpublished lecture: January 1980), 88.

<sup>44</sup> Major General Mike Myatt and Lt. Gen Bill Keys, personal and telephonic interviews with the author, September and December 2013.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Keyes and Myatt, interviews with the author.

The question becomes: was this going to be the future of the United States Marine Corps development of (MCWW)? In the main, the MCWW's maneuver warfare suited the Marine Corps' ethos on and off the battlefield. As the "maneuverists" anticipated this evolution into maneuver warfare would take the terrible sting of attritional warfare's human carnage out of the Marine Corps DNA, while still keeping the ethos of the Marine Corps' fierce fighters in its hallowed place.<sup>47</sup> *Semper Fidelis* now had added a new wrinkle to its meaning. The other issue of *Desert Storm* and the Marine Corps as they fought in support of the U.S. Army and other coalition forces to liberate Kuwait brought the Marine Corps Way of War even more to the forefront as they shortened the overall mission by two and a half days, while successfully meeting their maneuver warfare mission objectives.<sup>48</sup>

The seeds of this development can be found in six different settings that eventually united in this evolutionary effort. The perceived Revolution in Military Affairs within the Marine Corps did not take place. The reasons for each independent evolutionary development will be further discussed in-depth and will provide new primary source information based upon interviews with each developer as previously mentioned. To further set the frame of reference it must be noted that non-Marine Corps sources for the use of maneuver warfare grew out of the political need to fund the military in general. And the other of these aspects was the follow on of downsizing of the Marine Corps in a negatively charged post-Vietnam economic, political and social environment.<sup>49</sup>

William (Bill) Lind must be credited with initially bringing the modern German Way of Warfare into the equation as a non-military subject matter expert. Lind, an academic with Ivy League credentials in European history, joined the Senator Taft staff in 1973 and proceeded to enmesh Senator Taft in military affairs. According to Lind:

".. The economics of downsizing would not weaken the overall military strength of the country if maneuver warfare were to be adopted.."

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<sup>47</sup> See comparison chart of KIA and WIA page 42.

<sup>48</sup> Michael R. Gordon, Lt. General Bernard Trainor, *The General's War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1995), 374.

<sup>49</sup> Walter Isaacson; et al., "The Winds of Change," *Time Magazine*, March 7<sup>th</sup> 1983, cover page story. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,953733,00.html>. (Accessed April 10, 2011).

It is here where Lind begins his push for a change.<sup>50</sup> At the same time that Lind had established himself in the fight to cut military spending while not lessening America's military abilities, Jeffery Record and Martin Binkin had published the Brookings Institute's *Where Does the Marine Corps Go from Here: Studies in Defense Policy Report* (1976).<sup>51</sup> It was less than hopeful for keeping a Marine Corps in America's future. Record later was to become Senator Nunn's military staffer along with Lind. Jeff Record was at this juncture a strong advocate of maneuver warfare.<sup>52</sup>

Col. John Boyd's (USAF ret.) long history of questioning U.S. Air Force military and spending practices came to the forefront of the economic-military debate in 1980. This debate played into this general scenario as the means necessary to affect the complete overhaul within the Department of Defense starting with fiscal responsibility and new weapons purchases. Boyd had advanced his evolutionary OODA Loop logic and warfighting philosophy into his fourteen hour lecture called *Patterns of Conflict* that was steeped in maneuver warfare with added emphasis on the philosophy of Sun Tzu.<sup>53</sup> Although the U.S. Army did not acknowledge maneuver warfare there were a small number of "Reformers" to be found that were trying to advocate for Army regeneration in this venue. Among them were Steven Canby (U.S. Army and West Point Graduate) and his civilian partner Ed Litwak, and their consultant / military historian from Israel, Martin vanCreveld. Colonel Huba Wass de Czege (U.S. Army and West Point Graduate) was also an advocate from within the Army War College. Maneuver warfare never took hold with the U.S. Army at this time.<sup>54</sup>

Internally, the Marine Corps completes this circle of prime movers when John Boyd is introduced to Col. Mike Wyly by Bill Lind.<sup>55</sup> Col. Wyly knew that regardless of the reports, the Marine Corps was in need of new doctrine, strategy and tactics after his two tours of duty in Vietnam. Col. Wyly dedicated his career to finding a better way for the Marine Corps to

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<sup>50</sup> Lind, In person interview with the author.

<sup>51</sup> Binkin and Record, *Where Does the Marine Corps Go from Here*, 1-3.

<sup>52</sup> This was confirmed in my interviews with both Col. Garvey and Mr. Bill Lind.

<sup>53</sup> Boyd, "*Patterns of Conflict*," 16. This is also addressed by Wyly and GI Wilson in their interviews.

<sup>54</sup> Garvey and Wyly, In person interviews with the author.

<sup>55</sup> Lind and Wyly, In person interviews with the author.

fight and win on its future battle fields. This center of gravity for Marine Corps maneuver warfare also includes some other key Marines that fostered this effort before the entry of the commandant's *cadre* and its future acceptance as Marine Corps Doctrine. Here we see Marines such as Major General Bernard Trainor, Capt. Jim Webb (Sec. of the Navy and later Senator from Virginia), and Col. Patrick Garvey (USMC Res) and the New York State liaison for military matters to Congress. In 1982, the issues concerning maneuver warfare were moving down the path that now included the Congressional Caucus for Military Reform which hosted a three day conference at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. In Senior Conference XX, this three day review and discussion on maneuver warfare by all those previously mentioned, maneuver warfare found its initial place within the Marine Corps, not the U.S. Army.<sup>56</sup>

In doing the necessary research on this topic, relatively little has been done on the history of maneuver warfare and its adoption by the United States Marine Corps into its own unique way of fighting wars. The bits and pieces that are written have either looked at the success of maneuver warfare as practiced in Gulf War I by Generals Boomer, Keyes and Myatt, or some master's thesis work on the overall education of Marines. Furthermore there are virtually no official records for its adoption by the U.S. Army to date. The Army has went in the traditional mode of *Air-Land-Battle* systems that concentrate on a preset bombing component with mass force projection of superior numbers and a linear attritional offensive-defensive, doctrine. The Army opted for *Netcentrics* capabilities overlaid on the Cold War model.<sup>57</sup>

My research will focus on the oral history model as used by the United States Marine Corps' History Division. Those to be interviewed will provide their actual contributions, and efforts that they personally performed in the development of a Marine Corps Way of War. These oral histories will go beyond the materials that have been archived at the Marine Corps University and the General Alfred M. Gray Research Center at Headquarters, Quantico, Virginia. The following in alphabetical order were interviewed either in person, by telephone or via email:<sup>58</sup> General James Conway USMC 34<sup>th</sup> CMC, ret. [in person], 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Russ

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<sup>56</sup> USMA Senior Conference XX, 70.

<sup>57</sup> John S. Brown, *Kevlar Legions: The Transformation of the US Army, 1989-2005* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2011), 35.

Cox USMC [phone and email], Colonel Patrick Garvey USMCR ret.[in person] General Alfred M. Gray USMC 29th<sup>th</sup> CMC, ret. [in person] Captain Bruce Gudmundsson USMC ret.[by phone and email] General Jim Jones USMC 32<sup>nd</sup> CMC, ret.[in person], General John Kelly USMC CG Southern Command [in person], Lieutenant General Bill Keys USMC ret [by phone and in person] General Charles Krulak, USMC 31st CMC, ret.[by email], Mr. Bill Lind [in person], General Robert Magnus, USMC ACMC ret. [by phone and email], General James Mattis USMC ret. [by phone and email], Major General Mike Myatt USMC ret. [in person], Mr. Damien O'Connor [in person, by phone and email], Captain John Schmidt, USMC ret. [by email], Captain John Schmitt, USMC ret. [by emails], Major General Ray Smith USMC ret. [by phone and email], Colonel Greg Thiele USMC, [by email], Lieutenant General Mick Trainor USMC ret. [by email], Colonel G I Wilson USMCR ret. [in person and by phone and email], Colonel Bill Woods USMC ret. [in person and by email] and Colonel Mike Wyly USMC ret. [in person, by phone and by email].

I will also have access to the personal and private papers of all those who will provide these oral recollections. Along with these major sources I have been granted full use of the U. S. Marine Corps' archives on maneuver warfare also housed at the General Alfred M. Gray Research Center at Headquarters, Quantico Virginia. Lastly, my secondary research will encompass all written as well as electronically published works on this topic. The Boyd family, Col. Mike Wyly, and Col. Pat Garvey as well as Col. Gary (GI) Wilson have also made their private papers, as well as Col. John Boyd's available for this dissertation. It must be noted that the above group's responses totaled more than 450,000 words in total contribution to this work.

This topic of U.S. Marine Corps Maneuver Warfare has not been written about since the publication of *Warfighting and Disruptive Technologies* by Captain Terry C. Pierce, U.S. Navy in 2004.<sup>59</sup> An additional work *Science, Strategy and War: The Strategic Theory of John Boyd*, written about Colonel John Boyd was completed by Frans P.B. Osinga in 2007.<sup>60</sup> The latest academic advance on Marine Corps maneuver warfare was a Master's Thesis written by Fideleon Damian in 2008. Damian's, (a student at Kansas State University), work focuses on

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<sup>58</sup> See page 232, Reference section for further documentation.

<sup>59</sup> Terry C. Pierce, *Warfighting and Disruptive Technologies* (New York: Frank Cass, 2004).

<sup>60</sup> Frans P.B. Osinga, *Science, Strategy and War: The Strategic Theory of John Boyd* (New York: 2007).

the 1979 to 1989 time period and looks at maneuverists' arguments as presented in the *Marine Corps Gazette* and FMFM-1.<sup>61</sup> There have been sporadic articles, blogs and internet discussions on the topic of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Generation Warfare, which have spurred the debate of maneuver warfare in dealing with irregular warfare today. The bulk of the materials written still remains in the near past of the 1970's and 1980's.

What this work has achieved as a research product is the history of the development of a specific and institutionalized Marine Corps Way of War. This Marine Corps Way of War is a unique application of maneuver warfare and other pertinent militaristic philosophical thought that make the Marine Corps' warfighting applications uniquely their doctrinal, strategic and tactical variant in the operational art of war. As a sub-theme it acknowledges the effects that one Marine officer, Colonel Mike Wyly, was able to affect Marine Corps wide as a result of his experiences during the Vietnam War. The serendipitous meeting of this cast of "evolutionists" centered on Col. Mike Wyly's idea that there had to be better solutions in the Marine Corps' warfare going forward, that eventually created the Marine Corps Way of War.

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<sup>61</sup> Damian Fideleon, Unpublished Master's Thesis: "*The Road to FMFM-1, The USMC and Maneuver Warfare Doctrine, 1979 – 1989.*"

## Chapter 1: Belleau Wood to Beirut

From World War I on into the later part of the twentieth century the Marine Corps was involved in fifteen engagements on two military levels; major national warfare initiatives (four) and minor or “Small War” deployments (eleven). The four major involvements were World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The eleven “Small War” actions during this period took place in Nicaragua, Honduras, Cuba, Mexico, Haiti, China, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Iran, Grenada and Lebanon.<sup>62</sup>

The national doctrine, strategy and tactics that were employed were that of traditional American Way of War (offensive - defensive methodology of warfare with synchronization as practiced by the French).<sup>63</sup> There are some possible exceptions that must be noted in the “Small Wars” category and which were codified in United States Marine Corps publication *Small Wars Manual*, 1940.<sup>64</sup> However this, did not play a major role in how America or the Marine Corps went about the business of warfare. It did however set the stage for the Marine Corps future evolution into a Marine variant of maneuver warfare and its misnamed “revolution” beginning in the early 1980’s. Of importance for this work is the frame of reference created by the utilization of what developed into an American Way of War.

The setting for the prosecution of war, by the United States during this period, was in essence the validation of the efforts utilized by General Ulysses S. Grant in successfully bringing the Civil War to a close with victory for the Union Army and the follow on reunification of the United States.

The educational undercurrent that can be seen in the influencing of men such as General Grant was inculcated at the US Military Academy in West Point, New York. General Grant’s early influence was centered on the Jominian study of the Napoleonic period as taught at West Point while General Grant was a cadet there. Jomini’s basic tenant of strategy according to Russell F. Weigley is a simple one:

“..the necessity to bring the maximum possible force to bear against the decisive point in the theater of operations while the enemy can muster only an inferior part of his strength

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<sup>62</sup> Colonel Jon T. Hoffman, *USMC: A Complete History* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2002).

<sup>63</sup> F. G. Hoffman, *Decisive Force: The New American Way of War* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1996), 9-10.

<sup>64</sup> *Small Wars Manual*, FMFRP 12-15.

there. To be able to bring superior [strength] against inferior strength [weakness] depends upon the proper ordering of one's lines of communication in relation to the enemies..”<sup>65</sup>

The reasons associated with Napoleonic warfare had considerable *gravitas* during the period. Napoleon had only lost two battles, while winning forty-eight, thus a perceived model for emulation. With this noted though, General Grant was not a totally committed adherent to this common line of military thought as it applied to his experiences during the American Civil War.<sup>66</sup> A number of factors can be seen in what eventually shaped General Grant's strategy and tactics that led to his victory. It became the seeds of an American Way of War that in some regards is still prevalent today. In preparing for the eventual defeat of the Confederacy, General Grant moved away from the concentration of winning battles. His strategy centered on what it would take in the long view to achieve a complete victory. His focus was now directed at a strategy of annihilation based upon the principle of concentration of mass, hitting the main Confederate armies with the concentrated thrust of massive Federal forces until the Confederate armies were smashed into impotence. The “offensive” became everything for the Union Army under the leadership of Grant regardless of winning battles. He understood the attritional disadvantage that had taken its toll on his adversaries; he had split the territorial Confederate battlefield and, now with assets beyond that of his enemies proceeded to engage them on his terms. Grant utilized a relentless pursuit that decimated the opposing forces regardless of the fact that some battles may be lost while winning in the long run being his only *raison d'etre*.<sup>67</sup> He extended this concept of battle until the battle became literally synonymous with the whole campaign. He would fight at all times, every day, keeping the Confederate army always within his own army's grip. Not allowing the enemy the opportunity for deceptive maneuver; always pounding away until his own superior resources permitted the Federal armies to survive while the enemy army disintegrated.<sup>68</sup> Carnage on the battlefield for both sides was to be an accepted price that had to be paid as long as the enemy was still able to fight or even resist. General Grant had the advantage of troop replenishment

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<sup>65</sup> Gunther E. Rothenberg, *Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1978), 243.

<sup>66</sup> Weigley, *American Way of War*, 83.

<sup>67</sup> Edward Hagerman, *The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare: Idea, Organization and Field Command* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1992), 244.

<sup>68</sup> Weigley, 142- 143.

as he pursued Generals Lee and Johnston, although the Confederacy may have been “winning” battles, attritionally, they were losing its human and material resources, that eventually could not be replaced.<sup>69</sup>

Ancillary to this doctrinal shift at the end of the Civil War, General Grant added a second dimension with the incorporation of destroying the Confederates means of supplying their war efforts. Behind the lines now were to be treated as prime battlefield targets. The home front was now exposed to the same ravages of war as the frontlines were. Generals Sheridan and Sherman were to destroy the economic life blood of the Confederacy thereby eliminating support to those armies now being pursued to annihilation by General Grant. General Grant now became the prophet of a strategy of annihilation in new dimensions, seeking the literal destruction of the enemy’s armies, its means of logistical supply and the psychological denigration of its non-combatant people as the means to an undeniable victory, in a word total war.<sup>70</sup>

Along with these tenets of warfare was the acceptance of large numbers of Killed in Action (KIA) and Wounded in Action (WIA). This annihilational approach was further exploited in America’s Indian Wars of the late 1800’s, with the same devastating effects that were evidenced in the final days of the Civil War. Lastly, the dynamics of war had been altered by a number of technological and industrial advances. The telegraph, the advances in weapons production and refinement of explosives, the use of motorized transportation, the railroads and steam ships added to the complexities of warfare on all levels. The effects of these advancements would be realized more in the near future of warfare. It must be acknowledged at this stage as a critical turning point in the evolution of warfare and its corresponding trinity of Grant’s doctrine, strategy and tactics.

The United States entered the twentieth century as a budding world power. Its military was now shaped by the successes evidenced on the final battlefields in the Confederacy and in the territorial Indian Wars. This legacy of General Ulysses S. Grant would shape the twentieth century’s American Way of War. It was now a model for total war that is an attritional, offensive-defensive concentration of force on force, seeking complete annihilation in an unrelenting manner. It takes place on a battlefield which now extends to all aspects of the

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<sup>69</sup> Weigley, *American Way of War*, 194.

<sup>70</sup> Hagerman, *The American Civil War*, 275 -289.

home front. This is the *modus operandi* that the American military brought to Europe when it entered World War I.

### **United States Marine Corps 1918:**

World War I provides the venue for the U.S. Marine Corps to enter into the larger picture of warfare as it will be played out in the twentieth century. World War I provided the Marine Corps the opportunity to live up to their *raison d'être* as an expeditionary fighting force. The Marine Corps' "soldiers of the sea" become the equals of the U.S. Army in all aspects of this warfare during World War I. The one exception for this is the size of Marine Corps enlistment numbers and the number of Marines sent to Europe. Of special note is the fact that this interservice equality extends into the doctrine, strategy and tactics of the way American warfare was conducted at this time.<sup>71</sup>

Jomini's principles of "lines of communication" coupled with the *gravitas* of General Grant's indelible marks in this methodology of warfare are reinforced by Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan's seminal works: *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783* (1890); *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812* (1892); and *Sea Power in Its Relation to the War of 1812* (1905).<sup>72</sup> This trilogy's main focus further supports and validates the doctrine, strategy and tactics of concentration of force upon force. It is unrelenting and dogged as can be achieved only by an offensive fighting force; that seeks annihilation of the enemy in total war that is attritional, economic, and psychological. The American military was willing to accept high losses of men and material. Although Mahan's work is directed at naval warfare, it is the same as that of land warfare in all its Jominian and Grant type aspects.<sup>73</sup> Thus an American Way of Warfare pervades the national character and is exemplified on the battlefields that the Marine Corps fought on during World War I.

The Marine Corps distinguished itself at Verdun, Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, Saint-Mihiel, Blanc Mont, Saint-Etienne and Meuse-Argonne. In all of these battles the national military psyche that pervaded warfare at the time can be evidenced in how the Marine Corps fought. Belleau Wood, a prime example, brings these principles of warfare to full view.

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<sup>71</sup> Major General John A. Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine* (Philadelphia: Dorrance Publishers, 1930), 273.

<sup>72</sup> Weigley, 173-174. This is supported by Captain A. T. Mahan, *Naval Strategy: Compared and Contrasted with the Principles and Practices of Military Operations on Land* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1911), 17.

<sup>73</sup> Mahan, 46-47.

As an offensive action to uproot the German forces which held their position at Belleau Wood, the Marines stepped off seeking to annihilate, at all costs, an enemy in a well-protected defensive position. And further, this force on force concentration in the best traditions of Grant military philosophy and the perfection of it by the Marine Corps was able to achieve this end result by its unrelenting, persistent and tenacious Marine Corps fighting ethic of these times, albeit carnage intensive almost to a fault.

On the attack with bayonets fixed, facing artillery as well as automatic machine guns,<sup>74</sup> the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Marines did not stop until the battle was won. The cost at Belleau Wood involved Killed in Action (1,750; or 71% of all KIA's for the Marine Corps during World War I), as well as Wounded in Action (3,450; or 39% of all WIA's for the Marine Corps during World War I) was close to 5,200 Marines.<sup>75</sup>

The following quote captures the price of this American Way of War at Belleau Wood for the Marine Corps:

"..I have only two men out of my company and 20 out of some other company. We need support, but it is almost suicide to try to get it here as we are swept by machine gun fire and a constant barrage is on us. I have no one on my left and only a few on my right. I will hold.. ” [Sent by Marine 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Clifton B. Cates, 96th Co. U.S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Division (Regular), 19 July 1918, 10:45 a.m.]<sup>76</sup>

Belleau Wood was a military success, yet the costs were extremely high in carnage. The die was cast. This action sets the tone for the Marines and their future of warfighting!

### **United States Marine Corps 1941:**

World War II provided a similar backdrop for the Marine Corps, where the tried and true Grant trinity of doctrine, strategy and tactics were concerned. The “offensive” was still paramount states Maurice Matloff.<sup>77</sup> The “offensive” of Grant, Jomini, Mahan and Pershing’s *protégés* who are now running the American military has not changed in theory. And it is enhanced by further technological advances offered by airpower, the tank and other armored mechanized vehicles, support technology and vast industrial developments that affect all

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<sup>74</sup> Alan Axelrod, *Miracle at Belleau Wood: The Birth of the Modern U.S. Marine Corps* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2007), 221-222.

<sup>75</sup> See KIA-WIA Comparison Chart at end of this chapter, page 42.

<sup>76</sup> Edward H. Simmons, *The United States Marines: A History* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2003), 102.

<sup>77</sup> Maurice Matloff, “The American Approach to War,” in *The Theory and Practice of War*, ed. Michael Howard (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), 240.

aspects of warfare.<sup>78</sup> Airpower, as applied to warfighting, of the time returned to the doctrine of total war, this time from bombers and fighter planes capable of destroying the enemy's means of production and morale; where Sherman and Sheridan left off; Douhet, Hart, Mitchell, Goering and Arnold fought their parts of total war on the social, economic and industrial fronts.<sup>79</sup> Airpower had an ancillary role in the area of combined arms being applied on the battlefield. Close air support for infantry and the new cavalry- the tanks and other armored vehicles, enhanced and extended the "offense" in its quest for rapid and decisive victory.

The interwar years found the Marine Corps preparing for its role as an expeditionary and amphibious fighting force in the Pacific basin. The lessons learned by the British at Gallipoli were corrected by the success of the Germans at Albion. New tactics were developed to insure that beach invasions would not turn into American Gallipoli's in the future.<sup>80</sup> To further advance this seaborne capability of the Marine Corps a suitable landing craft had to be developed to get these Marines onto the islands that were to be invaded. It was through the efforts of then Lieutenant Victor Krulak that these issues were resolved. While stationed in China during the Japanese occupation Lieutenant Krulak had the opportunity to see the innovations and designs of the Japanese landing craft. Their designs and structure afforded the Japanese vessels the ease of getting to the beach as well as disembarking their forces and equipment in a more utilitarian way. Lieutenant Krulak studied and then stole the designs necessary for the Marine Corps' landing craft development. In conjunction with Higgins Boat Company of Louisiana, they provided the Marine Corps with their "bridge to the beach."<sup>81</sup>

Coming back to the Marine Corps in World War II, this two front war for the United States gave the Marine Corps the opportunity to conduct the major effort in defeating the Japanese in the sea-land-air war conducted in the Pacific theater. Nothing had changed in respect to the dictums of General Grant for the American military in general and the Marine Corps in particular. The trinity of American doctrine, strategy and tactics for the Marine Corps

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<sup>78</sup> John Shy, "Jomini" in *Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 182.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 183.

<sup>80</sup> Robert Coram, *Brute: The Life of Victor Krulak, U. S. Marine* (New York: Little and Brown, 2010), 67.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 103, 60-103.

can be best expressed by a quote from Lt. Gen. H. M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith in support of the American Way of War:

“..Since I first joined the Marines, I have advocated aggressiveness in the field and constant offensive action. Hit quickly, hit hard and keep right on hitting. Give the enemy no rest, no opportunity to consolidate his forces and hit back at you..”<sup>82</sup>

Lt. Gen H. M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith was the Commanding General, Expeditionary Troops: Iwo Jima.

The Marine Corps' war in the Pacific would be just like Belleau Wood in terms of KIA and WIA at places that were mere dots in the Pacific Ocean. This apparently would also provide other watershed events in the history of the Marine Corps fighting ethos and the American Way of War in general. Guadalcanal, Makin Island, Mananikau, New Georgia, Bougainville, Cape Gloucester, Tarawa, The Marshalls, Eniwetok, The Marianas, Guam, Tinian, Peleliu, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa provided the beaches that saw the Marines leave the sea and fight the American Way of War on land. This time, the cost for the Marine Corps at Iwo Jima involved Killed in Action (5,931; or 8% of the 71,245 Marines who had gone ashore), as well as Wounded in Action (17,372; or 24% of all WIA's for the Marine Corps at Iwo Jima). All in all, of the 485,053 United States Marines deployed during World War II at total of 86,940, or 18% were KIA and WIA 19%. The costs again, for the Marine Corps were high as compared to the other services.<sup>83</sup>

### **United States Marine Corps 1950:**

The war in the Pacific theater during World War II did see a strategic change that also carried over to the Cold War Korean Conflict. Under the leadership of General Douglas MacArthur, contact with the enemy was not as encompassing as that experienced in the European theaters of operation. General MacArthur bypassed numerous enemy strongholds to bring the war effort directly to the Japanese mainland as soon as possible.

This strategic maneuvering came into play again in the Korean Conflict. The amphibious landing at Inchon had bypassed the underestimated North Korean forces that had gained the upper hand in the initial fighting for Korea. Prior to the Inchon landing, the U.S. Army had been pushed back to Pusan. The 5<sup>th</sup> Marines were sent in to hold a defensive line. Instead the Marines went on the attack and were able to regain the territory that the Army had yielded to the North Korean forces recent advances. Once in motion, the American Way of

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<sup>82</sup> Holland M. Smith, *Coral and Brass* (New York: Scribner, 1949.), 49.

<sup>83</sup> Simmons, 177. Also see KIA / WIA comparison chart at the end of this chapter, page 42.

War took hold and the Marines led the way in its bellicose delivery to the enemy. After the initial landing at Inchon, the Marine Corps continued on the offensive driving deep into what is now North Korea. General MacArthur had underestimated the enemy and its support from there Chinese Communist allies. As Coram states, concerning the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir:

“.. [The Marines] for their actions during the breakout, and the survivors of that battle, the “Chosin Few,” stand with those Marines who fought at the ‘Canal and at Belleau Wood..”<sup>84</sup>

The Marines, completely outnumbered, brought out their wounded, most of their dead, all of their weapons and equipment. Along the way the Marines inflicted at least 37,500 casualties on the Chinese Communist Army while suffering 4,418 casualties themselves, as they reversed direction and left the Chosin Reservoir. The Marine Corps tenacity was only matched by their ability to carry the tenets of Ulysses Grant to another enemy with unlimited human assets, who were willing to die for a geopolitical belief. The Marine Corps would give them the opportunity to die in battle at Pusan, Inchon, Seoul, Wonsan, the Chosin Reservoir, Hagaru-ri, and Yudam to Hungnam. This added to the next chapter in the history of The Marine Corps and the American Way of War. Of the 74,279 Marine Corps deployed during Korean Conflict a total of 26,043 or 35% were KIA and WIA. The costs again, for the Marine Corps were high as compared to the other services.<sup>85</sup>

### **United States Marine Corps 1962:**

The use of military force underwent considerable scrutiny because of the Cold War. Fears of nuclear Armageddon, Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), coupled with the proliferation of these nuclear devices and their possible deployment changed the stakes of conventional warfare at the doctrinal level. The strategies of deterrence coupled with limited warfare and surrogates fighting in the name of host superpowers did not alter the actual battlefields *per se*.<sup>86</sup> Vietnam was in some respects a continuation of the Korean War. The loss of the French to the Viet Min forces at Diem Bien Phu questioned the validity of conventional

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<sup>84</sup> Coram, “Brute,” 212.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 210.

<sup>86</sup> Morton H. Halperin, *Limited War in the Nuclear Age* (New York: John Wyly & Sons, 1966), 122-124.

total warfare in this high stakes game of geopolitics. Limited war and flexible response became the strategy to limit the growth and spread of communism for the west.

The Marine Corps was still guided by the tenets of the American Way of War for the most part in Vietnam. All out Marine Corps warfare is an attritional, offensive-defensive concentration of force on force. It still seeks complete annihilation in an unrelenting manner on the battlefield and the home front. To now temper these aspects of an American Way of War, General Maxwell Taylor incorporated the following:

“..an enhanced readiness to fight limited wars and a ... [added] strategy of flexible response..”<sup>87</sup>

The Marine Corps adopted these aspects of Cold War warfare as well, and initially their entry into the Vietnam War was to stop the guerrilla warfare being conducted by Ho Chi Min in South Vietnam. The Marine Corps “flexible response” came in the form of advisors and the Combined Action Program squads inserted into a large number (90) of villages.<sup>88</sup> Lt. Gen. Cushman viewed the Viet Cong insurgent forces as North Vietnam's operational center of gravity. He identified the South Vietnamese support of the Communists as the critical vulnerability to attack. Accordingly, he focused on small unit pacification efforts in the villages, believing that only the people of South Vietnam themselves could truly expel the Communists and eliminate the threat in the long term. The celebrated CAP program was a product of this approach. It was an outgrowth of the Marine Corps DNA in prosecuting the “Small Wars” strategy learned in the Caribbean and Central America.<sup>89</sup>

As conditions escalated, the Marine Corps returned to the more conventional battlefields in South Vietnam when and where the enemy would try to engage the Marines. The American Way of War in Vietnam according to Russell Weigley:

“..had given no place to static defense in American military doctrine if the means for a more active campaign existed; this fact goes far to explain the shift of the Marines’ role at Da Nang from defense of the airport to mobile counter insurgency within a fifty mile radius..”<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Weigley, 420.

<sup>88</sup> F. J. (Bing) West, *The Village* (New York: Bantam edition, 1992), xi. Also see Maj Norman L. Cooling, “Winning a Battle While Losing a War,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 2001 <https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/hue-city-1968>. (Accessed May 5, 2013).

<sup>89</sup> *Small Wars Manual*, 43.

<sup>90</sup> Weigley, 464.

In my interview with General Gray he spoke about a maneuver warfare experience he created while on duty in Quang Tri / Cồn Tiên with the 12<sup>th</sup> Marines in 1967. Because of his prior experiences in the Far East, hill commander Maj. Gray experimented with an unauthorized application of maneuver warfare that proved successful at the time:

“..So the Maneuver Warfare idea of course is not new per se and generally over time when you read about war and conflict and think about it and the like and every professional of course understands it and all that in Europe and how that grew it and in the 1800’s how we built tactical capabilities around the infantry regiment and all the countries adopted it all and that kind of thing, that’s a part of your schoolhouse along the way.

And so we came up with a concept that every night I would move the whole unit. I generally was more of a believer in the Eastern philosophy of warfare and strategy and thinking and how I spent a lot of time out in the Far East and so I was more of a Sun Tzu kind of guy and all that, and the way they [the Chinese] did it and of course I had my experiences in Korea and so on and the use of intelligence through recon before I got commissioned.

In Vietnam for example when I was a Commander at Gio Linh We were getting shelled every day up there Anyway, in April and May for example we took about 150 casualties each month with all this incoming and I made them dig down and all that..

You know I always believed that we could move as well at night as they [the North Vietnamese] could. Of course my orders were that I couldn’t leave Gio Linh we had to stay right there and protect Gio Linh and so I really didn’t follow these orders because I think we had a better chance to protect Gio Linh if we are not killed or wounded,

Except myself and a few people out of Gio Linh and I’d formed a mechanized task force and I put a different Marine Officer in charge and I’d give them the mission of going out between Gio Linh and here and there and move them around disrupting things if you will and setting up and continuing to fire all these counter-battery missions and counter-artillery missions in the southern part of North Vietnam militarized zone.

So we did that throughout the month of June and we continued of course to get all this incoming into Gio Linh. I was there myself and a couple of people and so in June we only had 4 slightly wounded and so I did that in June and early July. So I kept that in mind, it had a little bit to do with the new thought process, moving around and all that kind of thing

I didn’t call it that and didn’t realize that but I was actually using mission-type orders and stuff like that even then, go out there and tell what to do and not how we do it and all that kind of thing I was telling everyone underneath what they were doing and what to do if something went wrong and all that kind of thing and you have to understand for example on the 8 of May before we did this in 1967 We got severely attacked and we were basically the only outpost that could reach them [the North Vietnamese] it really well with artillery and direct support artillery and this and that and we fired about almost 4,000 rounds to help us survive that night. I had some very strong feelings about these kinds of things..”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

Returning to its base wartime beliefs at such places as Da Nang, Operation Starlite, Nine Village Program, Chu Lai, Phu Bai, Harvest Moon, Double Eagle, Operation Hastings, Operation Prairie, Operation Union, Tet Offensive, Khe Sanh I & II, Dong Ha, Con Thien and Hue City the United States Marine Corps became firmly re-ensconced in seek and destroy missions, offensive actions and concentration of force upon force efforts whenever the enemy chose to fight.

As serious in nature as Belleau Wood, Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima and the Chosin Reservoir, the battle for Hue City was the longest and bloodiest of the Tet Offensive for the Marine Corps. The battle lasted twenty eight days and a total of three Marine battalions and eleven ARVN battalions were eventually committed to retaking the city. The Marines lost 216 killed and 1,364 wounded in action, while the ARVN lost 384 killed and 1,830 wounded. Heavy street fighting followed the Marines all the way through the city for more than three weeks. Marines of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Regiments fighting alongside the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's 1<sup>st</sup> Division, and also supported by U.S. Army 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiments drove the North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces out of Hué City taking the city back one block at a time.

Many of the Marines of Task Force X-Ray had little or no urban combat experience, nor were they also trained for urban close-quarters combat. And since it was monsoon season it was virtually impossible for the Marine Corps forces to use air support and combined arms methodology. Again, attrition took its toll as Marines fought building to building and block to block to eliminate the dug-in Vietcong invaders in the Tet Offensive of 1968.<sup>92</sup>

The following two citations for the award of the Navy Cross are testament to the intensity of the fighting for Hue City:

Cheatham, Ernest C., Jr. Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps

Commanding Officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division (Rein.) FMF

Date of Action: February 3 - March 3, 1968

*Citation:*

The Navy Cross is presented to Ernest C. Cheatham, Jr., Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism while serving as Commanding Officer of the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in the Republic of Vietnam from 3 February to 3 March 1968. During Operation Hue City, Colonel (then Lieutenant Colonel) Cheatham led his battalion in extremely heavy house-to-house fighting

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<sup>92</sup> Cooling, USMC Gazette.

against a numerically superior North Vietnamese Army force. Advancing through the city on 4 February to assault the well-fortified Treasury Building/Post Office complex, his unit came under intense fire from concealed enemy positions. The enemy resistance halted the Marines' advance during two days of bitter fighting. Nevertheless, Colonel Cheatham remained steadfast in his determination to secure the enemy stronghold. Skillfully deploying a 106-mm. recoilless rifle squad into advantageous firing positions, he personally pinpointed the targets with M-16 tracer rounds and directed accurate fire on the enemy, which significantly reduced the pressure on his assaulting force. Completely disregarding his own safety, he joined the assaulting unit and aggressively led his men in routing the North Vietnamese from their entrenched positions. While proceeding through the city on 6 February, he organized his battalion for an assault on the enemy-held Provincial Headquarters Building. Ignoring the hostile fire all around him, he directed his men to covered positions while he fearlessly advanced to an exposed position from which he could locate the sources of enemy fire. Calling an Ontos forward, he directed effective suppressive fire on the enemy and then courageously led his unit as it continued the assault. Colonel Cheatham's dynamic and heroic leadership and his unflagging example inspired all who observed him and contributed greatly to the defeat of the enemy and to their subsequent withdrawal from the city. His dauntless courage and unflinching devotion to duty upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

CHRISTMAS, GEORGE R. CAPTAIN, U.S. MARINE CORPS

Company H, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division (Rein.) FMF

Date of Action: February 5, 1968

*Citation:*

The Navy Cross is presented to George R. Christmas, Captain, U.S. Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism while serving as the Commanding Officer of Company H, Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in connection with operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. On the afternoon of 5 February 1968 during Operation HUE CITY, Company H was attacking a complex of buildings known to be an enemy strong point consisting of mutually supporting bunkers, fighting holes, and trench lines. During the ensuing fire fight, two platoons seized the corner building of a city block, but intense hostile small-arms, automatic weapons, and B-40 rocket fire temporarily halted the advance. Realizing the seriousness of the situation and the urgent need to sustain the momentum of the attack, Captain Christmas, undaunted by the heavy volume of enemy fire, completely disregarded his own safety as he moved across thirty-five meters of open area to join the lead element and assess the situation. Returning across the fire-swept area, he rejoined the remaining platoon, issued an attack order, and then ran seventy meters across open terrain, ignoring automatic weapons fire, hand grenades, and satchel charges striking around him to reach a tank he had requested. Braving enemy fire and two B-40 rockets that hit the tank, he fearlessly stood atop the vehicle to direct accurate fire against the hostile positions until the intensity of enemy fire diminished. Immediately realizing the tactical advantage, he jumped from the tank, and directed his company in an aggressive assault on the hostile positions, personally leading his men in room-to-room fighting until the building complex was secured. In a large measure due to his bold initiative and courageous actions, he provided the impetus which inspired his men to aggressive action and enabled them to successfully accomplish the mission. By his dynamic leadership, unflinching determination and selfless devotion to duty in the face of extreme personal danger, Captain

Christmas upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.<sup>93</sup>

As in other conflicts mentioned, the Marine Corps paid a heavy price in terms of KIA and WIA during the Vietnam campaign. Of the 317,400 Marines to cycle through Vietnam, 32% were casualties, with 12,962 KIA and 88,542 WIA.

Vietnam is where the seeds were sown that grew into the evolution which eventually became the Marine Corps Way of War. It was here in Vietnam that Wyly, Webb and Gray were to begin the thought process of finding a “smarter way” for Marines to fight.

### **United States Marine Corps 1983:**

In the years leading up to Iran Hostage Rescue, Lebanon and Grenada, the Marine Corps spent most of its time in reorganization and internal development restructuring and downsizing for the peace. *Operation Eagle Claw*, Lebanon and Grenada were the warning bells going off that affirmed that the Marine Corps was not ready on many levels to be the force in readiness or the first to fight for the United States and its interests abroad.

While the Marine Corps was rebuilding, outside of the Corps there was a core element of disparate forces working in most cases unbeknownst to each other. In the long view these actors would aid in bringing about the institutionalization that would transform the Marine Corps into its maneuver warfare doctrine.

In closing this chapter a point made by the 31<sup>st</sup> Commandant, General Krulak captures the *force majeure* of the maneuver warfare evolution. It is here ultimately that the successes in this area can be attributed:

“..Marines, of course, have always shone most brightly when the stakes were highest. The NCO's that led the bloody assaults on the German machine-gun positions at Belleau Wood intuitively understood the importance of their role.

The Marines of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 28<sup>th</sup> Marines, who scaled the fire swept heights of Mount Suribachi, needed no one to emphasize the necessity of initiative.

The Marines of the Chosin Reservoir, of Hue City, and of countless other battles through the years did not wait to be reminded of their individual responsibilities. They behaved as Marines always have, and as we expect today's Marines and those of the future to behave, with courage, with aggressiveness, and with resolve. The future battlefields on which Marines fight will be increasingly hostile, lethal, and chaotic. Our success will hinge, as it always has, on the leadership of our junior Marines. We must ensure that they are prepared..”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> <http://valor.defense.gov/Recipients/MarineCorpsNavyCrossRecipients.aspx>. (Accessed April 2, 2014).

<sup>94</sup> Charles Krulak, "The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War," *Marines Magazine*, January 1999, [http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/strategic\\_corporal.htm](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/strategic_corporal.htm). (Accessed December 20, 2013).

**KIA / WIA Statistics for the USMC 1917 to 1991**

WAR	TOTAL FORCE	KIA	%	WIA	%	TOTAL CASUALTIES	%
<b>WW I</b>							
US ARMY	4,057,101	50,510	1%	193,663	5%	24,4173	6%
USMC	78,839	2,461	3%	9,520	12%	11,981	15%
<i>* USMC Combat</i>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>2,459</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8,907</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>11,366</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>WW II</b>							
US ARMY	11,260,000	23,4874	2%	565,861	5%	800,735	7%
USMC	669,100	19,733	3%	67,207	10%	86,940	13%
<i>* USMC Combat</i>	<b>485,053</b>	<b>19,733</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>67,207</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>86,940</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>KOREA</b>							
US ARMY	2,834,000	27,731	1%	77,569	3%	105,300	4%
USMC	424,000	4,267	1%	23,744	6%	28,011	7%
<i>* USMC Combat</i>	<b>74,279</b>	<b>4,262</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>26,043</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>30,305</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>VIETNAM</b>							
US ARMY	4,368,000	30,963	0.7%	104,723	2%	135,686	3%
USMC	794,000	13,039	2%	37,202	5%	50,241	6%
<i>* USMC Combat</i>	<b>317,400</b>	<b>12,926</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>88,542</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>101,468</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>DESERT STORM</b>							
US ARMY	782,000	98	0.01%	354	0.0%	452	0.1%
USMC	213,000	24	0.01%	92	0.0%	116	0.1%
<i>* USMC Combat</i>	<b>92,000</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0.03%</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>0.1%</b>

**CHART.**<sup>95</sup> \* Note the two sources cited below are not in agreement due to the Total Force calculations. The Chart reflects worldwide forces CONUS and OCONUS during these wars in lighter print. ***Bold italic print represents all USMC forces in combat conditions only.***

<sup>95</sup> Congressional Research Service, *American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics*, 26 February 2010, 2-3. (Accessed electronically at: <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL32492.pdf>, 14 May 2014). Simmons, "USMC History:" 100, 175, 210, 247 and 310.

## Chapter 2:

### The Congress, the Marine Corps and Maneuver Warfare Doctrine:

“..All the forces in the world are not as powerful as an idea whose time has come..”  
Victor Hugo<sup>96</sup>

This chapter will focus on the beginnings of what some have incorrectly termed a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA); and its early introduction by this disparate group of “Reformers” coming from inside and outside of the Marine Corps. The term “Reformer” is ambiguous at best, but suffice it to say that we should keep the concept in place at this point of the dissertation simply as a general frame of reference. The term “Reform” had been applied by the media during this post war period. It was carried over concerning maneuver warfare in general; as well as for the Marine Corps during this time period. This time frame will run from the early 1970’s to 1986 and will cover the unofficial doctrinal, strategic and tactical implementation by the Marine Corps’ II MEF at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.<sup>97</sup>

The concepts of maneuver warfare and its possible implementation by the U.S. military can be traced to four or five independent and somewhat unrelated sources working initially blind of each other’s efforts. All of these efforts were not from inside the military. On the contrary, the civilian sector can be credited with providing much of the initiative at first. In retrospect, a good analogy as to the birth of this reform or evolution into maneuver warfare is offered by the “prime mover,” Col. Michael Wyly (USMC, ret.) when he stated in this interview with the author that:

“..The beginnings maneuverism were akin to a 20 gauge shot gun blast of 000 buckshot hitting these targets of potential change..”<sup>98</sup>

Each significant and compelling projectile sought out the center of the target that would in effect give birth to this perceived Revolution in Military Affairs within the Marine Corps. Rather than debate the “chicken or the egg” conundrum, suffice it to say that the Wyly shot gun blast of maneuver warfare projectiles each may have had different terminal velocities, yet they all hit the target dead center and in a fairly close time frame for this advancement of the use of maneuver warfare by the Marine Corps. There would be no

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<sup>96</sup> <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/v/victorhugo136258.html>.

<sup>97</sup> Gray and Wyly, In person interviews with the author.

<sup>98</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

“Maggie’s Draws” on this target. The primary movers are Bill Lind, Colonel John Boyd - USAF, Brigadier General Al Gray- USMC and Colonel Mike Wyly- USMC.

Starting with William (Bill) Lind, (working for Ohio Senator Robert A. Taft, and later working on the Senator Hart staff), Colonel John Boyd, USAF, Brigadier General Al Gray (at the time the Commander of the II MEF), and Colonel Mike Wyly (a Gray and Trainor confidant and instructor at the Marine Corps’ Amphibious Warfare School) were the independent and driving forces. They were aided by a *cadre* of Marine Corps officers who were considered the “Free Thinkers” that helped to start this mislabeled Revolution in Military Affairs.<sup>99</sup> John Boyd, of whom it must be noted, was usually ignored or discounted in his scholarship within the U.S. Air Force as well as the Department of Defense when he ventured away from his specialty of fighter jet design and tactics. His biographer Robert Coram characterizes Col. Boyd as:

“..the founder, leader and spiritual center of this guerrilla movement within the Pentagon..”<sup>100</sup>

They all have different reasons that will be illustrated, but the end result is that it reintroduces, a German type way of maneuver warfare in general to both the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps. I use the term “*reintroduce German maneuver warfare*” because the fact is that the American military had a firsthand knowledge of these tactics, strategies and doctrine garnered by intelligence, and being under direct fire as the American military faced the Third Reich’s German army in both North Africa and Europe during World War II.<sup>101</sup>

The military / political climate within the United States at this time reflected the somberness of the perceived yet unwarranted perceptions of the U.S. military failures of the Vietnam War. This initiative was joined with the economic responsibility of also rebuilding the Defense Department at this time. Ancillary to this and with the need to create a peace time military, Congress had the fiscal responsibility associated with this draw-down of strength levels to accommodate the American postwar practices of shrinking all branches to prewar levels or lower. It became the magnet that would attract the “revolutionists or maneuverists.”

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<sup>99</sup> Col. Bill Wood, USMC (ret.) and Col. Gary I. Wilson USMC (ret.), In person interviews with the author.

<sup>100</sup> Coram, “*Boyd*,” 442.

<sup>101</sup> Gray interview, Supported by Lind and Wyly interviews with the author.

The use of the term Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) is not applicable as its original connotations did not really offer anything new in this development of general military history. And it would not pass the Michael Howard or Geoffrey Parker litmus tests for a true RMA. The term received significant traction and further general usage because of the press generated by the actions of the conservative Congressional Caucus and their need to move the country and its military back to a non-war footing socially, politically and economically.<sup>102</sup>

William (Bill) Lind is the first of the five major actors in this development. It must be noted that he more than any other civilian in this effort contributed not only to the political aspects but to a somewhat lesser degree the historical military foundations of maneuver warfare. I also offer the fact that a protagonist like Bill Lind needed to justify his role as a Senate staffer in downsizing the military at this time. Lind latched onto this concept of rebuilding and downsizing the military and made it his *raison d'être* during this period. Eventually Lind over stayed his welcome during the Krulak commandancy.<sup>103</sup>

Lind did bring his knowledge of German military strategy and tactics to this debate. He also enhanced the concepts that would eventually become the *modus operandi* of this “maneuverist” usage; and the eventual doctrinal changes institutionalized by the Marine Corps. This should not be taken to mean that Lind was not altruistically motivated, nor was his ultimate intentions of self-promotion his only driving force. As the earliest public non-military proponent, Lind’s transformational work helped set this in motion.<sup>104</sup>

Upon his graduation from Princeton University, with a Master’s Degree in German history, Bill Lind finds work in the office of Senator Howard Taft III, as a staffer in 1973. Once ensconced into this powerful advisory role, Lind was able to get the attention of the Marine Corps. Lind parlayed the need for the Marine Corps to be responsive to this Congressional call for downsizing while maintaining its distinct role as soldiers from the sea. However, Lind did not have the same traction with the U.S. Army. As evidenced by the lack of the U.S. Army’s acceptance to change its doctrinal perspectives to implement the German

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<sup>102</sup> Rep. Newt Gingrich, et al., To President Ronald Reagan, August 6, 1982, unpublished letter from Congressional Military Reform Caucus (personal papers of Col. Pat Garvey), (Peekskill, NY: 2012).

<sup>103</sup> Gen. Charles Krulak, “Re: Maneuver Warfare USMC,” e-mail message to author October 20, 2012.

<sup>104</sup> Lind, In person interview with the author.

style maneuver warfare.<sup>105</sup> The Marine Corps did not have that luxury. Lind's pitch was that maneuver warfare if properly copied from the German schools would reduce the costs of fielding an infantry as well as saving significant human assets by producing fewer casualties. It also must be noted that the Marine Corps owed its modern existence to the Congress who on more than one instance kept the Marine Corps from being absorbed by its bigger partner in warfighting, the US Army. A number of presidents had also tried to disband the Marine Corps at various points in American history. Therefore the Marine Corps had to listen to, if not accept the fact, that the current direction of the Congressional Military Reform Caucus on the subject of military reorganization was paramount to its continued role as a key, stand-alone, unique military arm of the nation. Lind insinuated himself into the Marine Corps paradigm development playing the "senatorial or congressional" card. Lind's demeanor and his hubris would eventually be the cause of his removal from this Marine Corps maneuver warfare development effort. Bill Lind and a few of the original developers (Boydians) to this day are the biggest critics of the Marine Corps' evolutionary maneuver development program.

The Congressional Caucus for Military Reform petitioned President Ronald Reagan to assist in these efforts to downsize the military while maintaining military effectiveness.<sup>106</sup> Under the leadership of the Congressional Representative from Georgia, Newt Gingrich, a letter was sent to the White House in 1982 outlining the problems facing the nation in this effort. In short the letter signed by the entire Caucus affirmed:

"..Seeking the aid of the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Advisor and the President in reforming the "Pentagon bureaucracy so that military spending would fall in line with the post war downsizing plans of the Congress..." [The letter finally concludes with the plea] "...to implement an action plan to adjust the military budget in spite of the fact that the Pentagon is the largest bureaucracy spender while cloaking itself under the banner of national survival.." <sup>107</sup>

Congress knew its responsibility not only to the nation but also to the military in resolving this fiscal dilemma. The politics of this situation would eventually play out in favor of the military industrial complex in the macro; while bringing a codified and institutionalization of maneuver warfare into the micro world of the Marine Corps.

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<sup>105</sup> USMA Senior XX Conference.

<sup>106</sup> Congressional Military Reform Caucus Letter to President Ronald Reagan dated August 6, 1982, from the private files of Colonel Pat Garvey.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

Prior to this missive to President Reagan a three day seminar was held at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point New York. In June of 1982, Senior Conference XX took on *The “Military Reform” Debate: Directions for the Defense Establishment through the remainder of the Century*. This conference focused primarily on how to downsize the Defense Department per the congressional mandate, while offering maneuver warfare thinking as a way to get a less expensive and lighter and more effective military for the Cold War. The attendees were representative of the factions that were in play that wanted, and or, did not want to adopt maneuver warfare while lessening the effects of attritional warfare on the armed forces. Of importance to this maneuver warfare work was the Marine Corps contingent that was in attendance, along with the Boydians and the likes of conservatives Newt Gingrich, Bill Lind and the other Congressional maneuver warfare advocates. The three day session concluded with a pronouncement by attritionist Gen. Edward C. Meyers. During his tenure he prosecuted an Army-wide modernization program with emphasis on quality over quantity. Meyers stressed the need for a long-term investment in land force *materiel*, and launched a unit-manning system to reduce personnel turbulence and enhance readiness. He was clear that the U.S. Army was not about to go in the direction of the maneuverist Marine Corps.<sup>108</sup> The Marine Corps on the other hand, was well down the path to this sought after institutional change in their doctrine, strategy and tactics for its future role in warfare. The maneuverists’ efforts on all fronts then turned to the Marine Corps and its perceived move into maneuver warfare as an operational art.

While the wheels were moving politically on the congressional level to reposition the American military in general, others were working in the same direction and with the same perceived solutions during this time frame to recast the Marine Corps. General Gray, as mentioned, previously, had throughout his Marine Corps career been a student of military history with a penchant for the work of the Chinese philosopher Sun Tzu as it applied to military strategy and tactics. Foremost in his mind was the concept of keeping Marines on the tip of the spear while limiting the carnage and costs that was evidenced from the attritionist’s results of World War I, World War II, the Korea Conflict, Vietnam and the recent attack launched upon the Marines’ United Nations peace keeping forces in Beirut.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> USMA Senior Conference XX, 38 – 39.

<sup>109</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

During this time frame, the American Way of Warfighting doctrine was an emulation of the French synchronization model and the American penchant to pit might against might until an enemy was beaten into total submission and total unconditional defeat leading to surrender.<sup>110</sup> General Gray came from a different perspective knowing that the Marine Corps had applied maneuver warfare in its “Small Wars” encounters successfully and also in the CAP program in Vietnam. It also had the disadvantage of being a smaller force in nature, as compared to the exceedingly larger U.S. Army. The Marines future role during the Cold War would pit it against the Soviet Union’s massive numbers in what would amount to a force on force attritionist meeting someplace in northwestern Europe.<sup>111</sup> The Marine Corps needed to find a better way for General Gray’s outnumbered Marines to fight. General Gray was looking for the *formula* for future warfighting for a Marine Corps success in a possible Cold War large scale encounter.

Colonel John Boyd was another prime catalyst that provided the recipe for this formative development of maneuver warfare for the Marine Corps. Boyd was a formidable thinker, if not a profound military philosopher in his own right. Through a Socratic process of understanding success on the battlefield, Col. Boyd was able to bring to bear the concepts of his personal combat successes in what he termed his OODA Loop (Observe –Orient- Decide- Act process).<sup>112</sup> The OODA opened up the doors for understanding and how to apply maneuver warfare in combat. OODA went hand in glove with the German aspects of maneuver warfare, especially at the tactical level. The key element for Boyd as well as the others in the movement was not the academic knowledge garnered from the study, but rather a transformation of the practitioner’s thought process in applying the tenets embodied in and by maneuver warfare.<sup>113</sup>

This would lead to the fluid adaptation of actions that would create the dynamics of pitting strength against weakness in tactical situations for the Marine Corps. The rate of speed

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<sup>110</sup> Michael Howard “Men against Fire” in *Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 514.

<sup>111</sup> Garvey, In person interview, re: USMC - Norway / NATO Training Exercises.

<sup>112</sup> See Boyd: OODA Loop Cycling Chart page 231.

<sup>113</sup> Wilson and Wyly, In person interviews with the author.

in which one cycles through the OODA, as opposed to his adversary will determine a successful outcome for the warrior using OODA Loop. This was done by creating disruptions or mismatches within the opponent's chain of command that became exploitable chinks in their armor. By rapidly cycling through the OODA process these mismatches enabled the user to pit his strength against an enemy weakness; especially if the enemy was seeking attritional warfare. Boyd's work went further and deeper in this understanding as he developed other theses of this philosophy. Boyd took the OODA from a personal expression as a Korean War jet fighter ace into a universal warfighting treatise when he applied the theories of the OODA Loop to significant battles throughout western military history in his *Patterns of Conflict*.<sup>114</sup>

This seminal work, *Patterns of Conflict* became the pivotal seminar that John Boyd would give over the years, to those interested in the fine points of maneuver warfare. Boyd had moved outside the box even before the *cliché* of "thinking outside the box" was put into the American lexicon. Eventually, General Gray heard the presentation. In fact before acting on it General Gray heard the presentation three or four times. With each presentation General Gray saw the values of this process of learning. Gray got nuance after nuance that reinforced the concepts of maneuver warfare and Sun Tzu. It was Col. Mike Wyly who introduced Col. John Boyd to General Al Gray.<sup>115</sup>

During this period Col. Mike Wyly was the Officer in Charge running the Amphibious War Fighting School at Quantico, VA. This was a key assignment for the movement's growth and development. Here is where Col. Wyly permeated his maneuver warfare methodology at the captaincy level; here was his fertile ground.<sup>116</sup> He was highly motivated by his two tours served in Vietnam. More than anything, Col. Wyly's efforts were focused on making the Marine Corps more proficient at its job of warfighting, while offering Marines a better military toolbox for survival and success in combat. Col. Wyly confided in an interview with me that if he was ever given the chance to better the abilities of his Marines in combat he would be on the front lines of this effort. He would:

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<sup>114</sup> John Boyd, "*Patterns of Conflict*" and "*Discourse on Winning and Losing*" (unpublished: from the personal papers of Col. Pat Garvey).

<sup>115</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

“..Stand up and be counted....as he put it!..”<sup>117</sup>

Colonel Wyly was deeply influenced by the death of one of his Lieutenants, Chip Pilkington.

As stated by Colonel Wyly:

“..For this change I know what I don’t want and I will find a better way for the Marine Corps..”

Col. Mike Wyly was given this opportunity.

Although approaching the end of his career as a Colonel of Marines, and with no apparent support from his immediate senior officers, he began what became known as the “basement seminars.”<sup>118</sup> It was made up of independent or “free thinkers” within the Marine Corps. In Wyly’s mind, he knew what was wrong with the current Marine Corps Way of War. He wasn’t sure what would make it better though until he discovered the precepts of the German Way of War; mixed with the Boydians philosophical tenets applied to maneuver warfare. Something needed to be done and the philosophical aspects that gave the German military the proverbial leg up and early success’ in World War II warranted further study, with possible adaption by the U.S. Marine Corps, according to Col. Wyly.<sup>119</sup> Colonel Wyly’s academic foundation was also in the area of European history with a focus on the German military.

The real work of making this a practical reality can be found in the younger Marine officer *cadre* of this post-Vietnam era who gravitated to Colonel Wyly. Here I refer to the other would be “free thinkers” within the Marine Corps. They looked at themselves as independent thinkers who were looking for better ways to be successful on the battlefield. Per Mike Wyly:

“..It was not [Gen.] Gray getting ideas and feeding them down. It was Gray having the wisdom to listen and encouraging his "troops" to think for themselves, [and to] have ideas, and send them up. We did just that. Gray learned from us. Not the other way around. And

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<sup>117</sup> Col. Michael Wyly USMC (ret.), “Re: Maneuver Warfare USMC,” e-mail message to author January 14, 2014.

<sup>118</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

that's the beauty of his [Gray's] leadership. I doubt that he himself can explain it. I can. I was there..”<sup>120</sup>

This in effect is the beginnings of this monumental work that mushroomed into a synthization from the Marine Corps past, into its future as smarter warfighters of a Cold War tomorrow. The “free thinkers” were the writers of articles, the compilers of lessons learned and the real *gravitas* that brought the concepts of maneuver warfare to the forefront that General Gray and Colonel Wyly envisioned. This bottom up approach taken by General Gray has its roots in the fact that General Gray started as an enlisted Marine when the Korean War broke out. In all of my observations of General Gray this fact has always been a constant. General Gray was a bottom up Marine – a “Mustang” who became the 29<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps. A Marine who takes care of other Marines:

“..As many as you can for as long as you can..”<sup>121</sup> This is still to this day an Al Gray mantra!

Col. Wyly has recalled that the following was the exact chronology of how the process of bringing a new thought process into the Marine Corps developed around, and by the support for the “Al Gray Bubbas” as they came to be disparagingly recognized. They were Marine captains, majors and colonels. Both Col. G. I. Wilson and Col. Bill Woods concur with Col. Mike Wyly that they were at the center of this early development emphasizing the use of maneuver warfare applications as then young Marine captains.<sup>122</sup>

Wyly stated the following to me in an e-mail:

“..I think as I already told you how it came about. I will repeat here the story in brief, perhaps with a couple of details I did not relay to you first iteration:

1. Gen. Gray, when he was a 1-star, [was] already known as a clear-thinker with an open mind, heard out the John Boyd brief.
2. Gen. Gray gets [his] second star and takes command of 2ndMarDiv.
3. One of my young maneuver warfare zealots in my “Den” (Conference Group) at the Amphibious Warfare School, then Captain W.A. “Bill” Woods, receives orders to report to 2<sup>nd</sup> MarDiv on graduation from AWS.

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<sup>120</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

<sup>121</sup> Edgar F. Puryear, *Marine Corps Generalship* (Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 2009), xix.

<sup>122</sup> Wilson and Wood, In person interviews with the author.

4. Woods and I see enormous opportunity for putting maneuver warfare into practice. Our plan: Woods to go to Gray in person when he gets down to Camp Lejeune.
5. Woods goes to Lejeune and allies himself with then Capt. G.I. Wilson, USMCR, long-time friend of Woods and already discovering maneuver warfare via Woods.
6. Woods and Wilson prepare an after-work “ambush”, [at the] Camp Lejeune O Club and close in on Gen. Gray when he walks into the bar. They sit down together and talk Maneuver Warfare [with him].
7. Subsequently Gray establishes the “2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division Maneuver Warfare Board,” Woods and Wilson are prominent members.
8. Maneuver Warfare concepts are tested via 2ndMarDiv field exercises. Wilson and Woods are key scribes. Gray, in typical “one of the Marines” fashion, is never bashful about inserting his own words in the draft [Gray’s *Maneuver Warfare Manual*].
9. Then 3-star CG, FMFLant (I can’t remember his name) comes to lecture at AWS while then Lt. Col. Mike Wyly (me) is still Head of Tactics. Via a question from a captain / student about maneuver warfare, the 3-star quips about it, is honest enough to say he doesn’t really understand it, leaves room for students to think it’s a bunch of nutty ideas if they want to, and finishes his response by saying “I’ve got a division commander down there [Lejeune] who says he’s doing it.” (Laughter from students).
10. I’m thinking “This is serious”. So, I contact Gen. Gray and make all the arrangements to get him up to AWS as guest speaker. My goal: to make captains realize this is something that is really happening out in the real Marine FMF.
11. Gray comes, raises the ire of my boss by coming straight to my little office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> deck, bypassing the corner-office of my boss on the 1<sup>st</sup> deck, Col. Don Hodgen. Then he (Gen Gray), from the platform before all the students, makes it clear to the captains, this is happening and this is serious. I continued to invite Gen Gray to speak at AWS which he does.
12. Maneuver warfare exercises continue at CLNC as long as Gray is CG and via after actions and notes, the *Maneuver Warfare Manual* takes form.
13. Gray takes over FMFLant – meets Jim Webb then SECNAV [Webb had served under Wyly in Vietnam. Wyly writes Webb up for the Medal of Honor which gets knocked down to a Navy Cross. Webb a firm believer in Wyly’s judgment is guided by Wyly’s perceived USMC changes in warfighting. Webb wants the USMC to be led by a “warrior.” Wyly confirms that fact that Al Gray is a warrior.]
14. Al Gray is appointed the 29<sup>th</sup> Commandant. The rest is history..<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Col. Michael Wyly USMC (ret.), “Re: Maneuver Warfare USMC,” e-mail message to author March 31, 2014.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> *Marine Division Maneuver Warfare Manual* was compiled by members of what Gen. Gray dubbed the “Maneuver Warfare Board”, which, before presenting itself to Gray called itself the “Maneuver Warfare Study Group.” Bill Woods, G. I. Wilson, John Schmidt and other key members, all officers ranging from captain through lieutenant colonel, decided on their own to start compiling their ideas in writing.<sup>124</sup> This initiative was not Gen. Gray’s but theirs. What they appreciated greatly was the “long leash” that Gen. Gray gave them. Gen. Gray, himself, often referred to what was going on as “free thinking.”<sup>125</sup> Gen. Gray was not tied to the term “Maneuver Warfare” though he did name the Board that. But what he wanted them to do was think freely! And they did. Bill Woods when interviewed told me how Gen. Gray used the term “free thinking tactics” more than he did “maneuver warfare tactics.” Woods also affirmed that neither John Boyd nor I [Woods] were enamored with the maneuver warfare term, either.<sup>126</sup> Bill Lind coined it and used it consistently; it must be noted that the negative connotations associated with “maneuver warfare” were more directed at the messenger and not the content.<sup>127</sup> Lind had managed to alienate most of the senior leadership within the Marine Corps because of his caustic and abusive behavior of those he lectured at while introducing the principles of maneuver warfare.<sup>128</sup> Suffice to say that Bill Lind was his own worst enemy in selling these ideas to most of the professional warfighters. Lind, having never been in the military at all; and was perceived to have no standing in this arena.<sup>129</sup> Other academics such as Martin van Creveld fared better at acceptance because of their less than condescending approach.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> This was an unpublished document, “*USMC Maneuver Warfare Manual, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, 1985*” by authorization of Major General A. M. Gray, CO: compiled by G. I. Wilson, Bill Woods and others, received from the private files of G. I. Wilson, January, 2014.

<sup>125</sup> Wyly and Woods, In person interviews with the author.

<sup>126</sup> Wyly, email, March 2014.

<sup>127</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

<sup>128</sup> Lind, In person interview with the author.

<sup>129</sup> Conway and Kelly, In person interviews with the author. Also see Trainor email dated 4 August, 2012.

<sup>130</sup> Garvey, In person interview with the author.

The maneuver warfare notes, which were to eventually be referred to as a “manual”, were written by MW Board members, according to their MOS’s. Bill Woods wrote both the infantry part and the recon part. In addition, there was an artillery part, a tank part, a logistics part (by Captain Denny Long), etc. Bill Woods served in the Division and on the Board from June 1981 through October 1982. When he left he considered the “manual” to be an unfinished product.

In October 1982 the project was passed to his successors. General Gray never wrote any of the parts nor did he edit or oversee them. After all, he wanted “free thinking” and that’s what he got. The book was the brain child of the “evolutionist” captains.<sup>131</sup> The work is seminal and far exceeds anything that was published by the Marine Corps. The work was to be a mind opener and expander for understanding how to implement maneuver warfare. The emphasis was that there are many actual tactics and the choice of implementation is guided by the commander’s intent (Mission Orders).<sup>132</sup> When combined with John Boyd’s *Patterns of Conflict* and, with the proviso that there are no set *formulae*, the captains and majors must make choices that are bracketed by the fluid situations in front of them so as to achieve success in regards to the commander’s intent.<sup>133</sup>

Very early in the formative days of Marine Corps maneuver warfare and just after the somewhat institutionalization of it by the 2<sup>nd</sup> MARDIV under then Brigadier General Al Gray an international incident prompted President Ronald Reagan to use military force to quell a Caribbean insurgency. The situation required the rescue of one thousand American citizens who were caught in the middle of a Grenadian *coup d’état*. *Operation Urgent Fury* was launched just two days after the Marines suffered its highest one day death toll since World War II in Beirut, Lebanon. Of significance is that the Marine Corps Commanding Officer for this operation, Major General Ray Smith was an early supporter of maneuver warfare. The then Lt Col. Smith’s beliefs in regards to maneuver warfare were:

“..To me, at least, the real issue [of Maneuver warfare] was that your mindset should be to know as much as you can about the enemy and to, as much as possible, attack him where he weakest not where he is strongest....I personally came to the deep conviction that attack of the enemy in his weakness and in his mind as much as much as in his body.... Less waste of your own resources for sure, less carnage on your own part and less carnage to them..... The greater

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<sup>131</sup> See footnote No.: 120, Re: “*Maneuver Warfare Manual*”, G. I. Wilson archives and personal papers.

<sup>132</sup> See page 232 for an example of Mission Orders.

<sup>133</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

likelihood of prisoners versus KIA's or surrender versus slaughter is without question the root of the argument in support of the maneuver argument..<sup>134</sup>

This would be a joint operation shared by the U.S. Army's 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and the Marine Corps Battalion Landing Team 2/8, 22 Marine Amphibious Unit, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic. At this point in the history of the American military, the U.S. Army was still deeply entrenched in attritionist doctrine. The Marine units from Camp Lejeune had begun to invest itself into the concepts of maneuver warfare. A single quote is offered as to the overall differences that were experienced by both the Army and Marine attacking forces in Grenada:

"..We've got 6,000 soldiers sitting on their ass in the airport, two companies of Marines running rampant over two-thirds of the island. What the [expletive deleted] is going on?.."135

This was the first inkling that the use of maneuver warfare offered much more to the American warfighter in general than the attritional doctrines of the past.

In my interview with Maj. Gen. Smith I asked if he was following mission type orders, his reply was:

"..Answer is I didn't have any commander's intent from anyone above me. No one above me had adopted or utilized the commander's intent concept at that time. I had commander's intent in my orders. But I didn't have commander's intent [i. e. maneuver warfare]. It was my command's intent, not anybody above me..<sup>136</sup>

Smith had the chance to put into practice the first modern maneuver warfare application for the Marine Corps under what appeared to be hostile conditions. Further Smith offers:

".. So my premise was that we would achieve complete surprise in terms of operational [art], it would be a complete surprise. We may not [have] achieved tactical surprise but we deployed with complete surprise and that the faster we could overwhelm the terrain and the people on it, the better it would be. So my commander's intent was to have at least a fire team on every intersection in our zone within the first twenty-four hours. Get there fast. Straight out get there fast because we were going ..... Be a complete surprise and once we were there, we would dominate them, which we did..... the secret to our rapid success was the fact that we went in with the idea that speed alone would make all the difference..<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Smith, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>135</sup> Otto Kreisher, "Operation URGENT FURY – Grenada," *Leatherneck Magazine*, October 8, 2013. <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/2013/10/urgent-fury-grenada> (Accessed January 20, 2014).

<sup>136</sup> Smith, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

The U.S. Army was doomed in this operation from the start doctrinally as Smith explained:

“..The 82nd Airborne which was the most agile, mobile element of the United States Army at that time was gathered on the airfield and getting organized for two brigades ..... A frontal attack on the highest piece of ground in Grenada with two brigades abreast. They spent a couple of days prepping to do that in spite of the fact that we [Marines 2/8 BLT] were already there and in place. .... The 82<sup>nd</sup> were building up and preparing for two brigades abreast attack on a piece of high ground....already owned by the Marine Corps..”<sup>138</sup>

For all concerned it must be noted that intelligence was nonexistent at best and or imaginary and completely false at worst.<sup>139</sup> While Smith had deployed his assets he began working with the local populace to garner intelligence. In the best spirit of Marine Corps “Small Wars” he was able to identify those members of the local militia who had posed the real threat to Grenada. His chief source of intelligence was a local woman named “Mama.” She and some of the other Grenadians [Keith Carter and Biko Renwick] began to identify the militia, and Smith began to capture them.

“Mama” eventually stated:

“..These thugs,"..... They all referred to the battalion that was the [Grenadian] active army which was also the [political] party, it was everything. They called them the "thugs." All of the locals called them the "thugs.." <sup>140</sup>

She said: "..These thugs are put on their civilian clothes and they're walking right through you guys and when you leave, they will come back out and we will all pay the price for that. You need to get these people and get them off our island.. " <sup>141</sup>

Smith asked if she would identify them and “Mama” agreed.

In the process, the 2/8 BLT was able to capture Major Gillespie. He was the operations office-(J3) for the People's Revolutionary Army [the thugs]. Gillespie was well educated, well trained, and had a diplomatic tour as the Grenadian Defense *Attaché* in Cuba. In debriefing Major Gillespie it was found that he had actually had a map with him that was the Grenadian military/militia field dispositions. Under questioning he updated it to the man. General Smith later recalled that by the time he ended up going into the second island Carricou at the end, he [Gen Smith] had a list of the names of all of the PRA members on both islands. It identified

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<sup>138</sup> Smith, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid..

which ones were also members of the party down to the detail of fire team breakdowns. We had complete freedom of maneuver in our zone. We even had the locals deliver the militia's weapons to the 2/8 BLT staging area at the "race track."

Then as Major Gillespie started getting more cooperative he (Gen. Smith) told me:

"..We did not expect you to land at Pearls. We thought you would land at Grand Ance Beach which is where the university was. Grand Ance Beach is the curve of beach that is between the city of St. George and Salinas Airfield. The main campus of that medical school is the Grand Ance Campus. It was right there that's where they thought we would land, and according to Gillespie, their operations officer: "We thought if you did anything you would land at Grand Ance Beach and we were prepared to fight you there." "And I suspect they would have. "We did not expect you to land at Pearl and then we were unprepared for the speed of your movement, and you appeared at places we did not expect you to be and others. And as I told my high command last night, we had no choice but to go into hiding until you left. And that's what Major Gillespie told me of the Grenadian reactions to 2/8 BLT's maneuver warfare actions.."

Major General Smith went on: "..Obviously the heart and soul of what we called maneuver warfare is trust in your subordinates. It's supporting you. If you're really going to exploit somebody's success, one, that junior officer has got to tell you and two, you've got to believe him and have enough trust in him to connect your forces to follow him. That's almost the heart of the maneuver warfare idea or as I interpreted it. That to me, the real essence of maneuver warfare is the commander gets a call from an unexpected subordinate saying, "Christ, I'm behind "xyz" I've got a wide open gap to go past "xyz".....And the essence of maneuver warfare is for the commander to one, get that report, two, believe in it, and three, commit his main effort behind it. You can't do that if you don't have a cohesive unit that you have trust and confidence in each other Unit cohesiveness is absolutely essential if you're going to exercise maneuver warfare. Period! If you don't have cohesive units, then maneuver warfare is not a viable operational philosophy. And from 1980 to 1984, three plus of those four years, three plus of those four years was I was in the 2/8 BLT.."<sup>142</sup>

It is at this point that one must recognize the simple aspects of commander's intent, mission orders, subordinated trust, recce pull against gaps, rapid tempo and unit cohesion are the building blocks of Marine Corps maneuver warfare prosecuted by then Lt. Col Smith.

Bill Lind went on to praise Major General Ray Smith. Lind stated that: ".. in which they [the Marine Corps Battalion Landing Team 2/8, 22 Marine Amphibious Unit, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic] did not follow a rigid plan but rather adapted swiftly to the circumstances as they changed. The speed with which the Marines acted and moved decisively, for example the surrender of the Grenadian platoon that surrendered rather than fight because your forces appear where they were not expected, this convinced the Grenadian high command that resistance was hopeless. Therefore, this is the best possible outcome of winning [using the tenets of maneuver warfare] without a fight.."<sup>143</sup>

According to Smith, the Lind quote is in essence a paraphrase of what their operations officer told him.

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<sup>142</sup> Smith, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>143</sup> Lind, In person interview with the author.

## Chapter 3: USMC in Desert Shield and Desert Storm

The new Marine Corps doctrine of maneuver warfare played a role in the success of both *Desert Shield* and *Desert Storm*. The major issues concerning the use of the newly institutionalized maneuver warfare doctrine for the Marine Corps focused on the key tenets found in FMFM 1 *Warfighting*<sup>144</sup> and FMFM 1-1 *Campaigning*.<sup>145</sup> In particular the following areas were the main focus of efforts (*Schwerpunkt*) for these Marine Corps' inaugural maneuver warfare applications:

1. Maritime Pre-Positioning Ships,
2. Shaping the battlefield;
  - A. Electronically,
  - B. Physically,
  - C. Psychologically.
3. Faints that identified gaps and surfaces,
4. Maneuver warfare logistical support.

As a frame of reference for the U.S. Marine Corps' actions in Gulf War I the following chronology hits the milestones that were significant in the overall operational aspects of the mission orders as they unfolded on the battlefields in Kuwait and Iraq:

### Chronology of major events and milestones for Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990:<sup>146</sup>

2 August: the elite Iraqi Republican Guard crossed into Kuwait and began to converge on the capital Kuwait City with their special operations division. This was a two pronged action to gain control of the tiny oil rich kingdom of Kuwait. The Iraqi Republican Guard divisions eventually crossed the Kuwaiti border and began to converge on the capital Kuwait City;

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<sup>144</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Warfighting*, Fleet Marine Force Manual 1(FMFM 1) PCN 139 000050 00, 6 March 1989.

<sup>145</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Campaigning*, Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-1 (FMFM1-1) PCN 139 000060 00, 25 January 1990.

<sup>146</sup> There are multiple sources used for the facts and details of specific battles and action taken by the US Marine Corps: Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *The Generals War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996), 164, 174-175, 271, 355-374,346-350, Edwin Simmons, *US Marines: A History* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2003), 286-311. Also "U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991" With the 1st Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, With the 2d Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmchist/gulf.txt>. (Accessed, 15 May 2014).

coordinating their movement with helicopter and their special-operations division of the elite Iraqi Republican Guards units. The forces linked up and by nightfall the Iraqi forces had fully captured Kuwait and its capital, Kuwait City. Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein had been making numerous threats against Kuwait but this actual invasion and the magnitude of the invasion caught the world by surprise. For the United States the first priority became the defense of Saudi Arabia. Also, the disruption of Kuwaiti oil supplies were inflicting losses to the global economy and the disruption of Saudi oil supplies threatened to be disastrous for all the western nations. The Saudis concurred with President Bush (41) and their leadership overcame an established national antipathy by allowing foreign troops into the kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

7 August: President Bush ordered U.S. military aircraft and troops to Saudi Arabia as part of a multinational force to defend that country against possible Iraqi invasion. A major deployment, the largest since the Vietnam War, was started for *Operation Desert Shield* that included major units from all four services. The U.S. Marine Corps forces rapidly began to move into Saudi Arabia. The initial forces had two F-15 squadrons that included: the Maritime Pre-positioned Squadrons 2 and 3, which were based on the islands of Diego Garcia and Guam; the two carrier battle groups; a brigade of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division and the Marine Corps I MEF; as well as an airborne warning and control system unit. The Secretary of Defense at the time, Richard B. Cheney, with the direction of President Bush, unleashed the most concentrated and complex projection of the American military power since World War II. Prior to full U.S. deployment Cheney sought the council of John Boyd to formulate the overall war plans. Boyd had three to four classified sessions with Cheney which in the estimate of Robert Coram set the tone for the use of maneuver warfare for Gulf War I.<sup>147</sup> The initial missions of these forces were aimed at protecting Saudi Arabia as a whole, and also the Saudi oil fields from Iraq as well as to prevent further Iraqi aggression in other parts of the region. This eventually led to the removal of Iraqi forces in Kuwait. Here for the first time, the U.S. Marine Corps' institutionalized maneuver warfare doctrine was put to its first real test in the modern battle-space against what appeared to be a battle hardened Iraqi army of half a million soldiers.

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<sup>147</sup> Coram, "Boyd," 422-425.

8 August: Major General Walter E. Boomer was promoted to the grade of lieutenant general and assigned as Commanding General of I Marine Expeditionary Force.

15 August: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps announced the commitment of 45,000 troops to the Persian Gulf area. This deployment consisted of elements of the I Marine Expeditionary Force including units from 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division and 1<sup>st</sup> Force Service Support Group (FSSG), 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), and 7<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB). Also enroute were elements of the 4<sup>th</sup> MEB including units from 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, 2<sup>nd</sup> FSSG, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW). The Maritime Pre-Positioning Ship Squadron 2 (MPS-2), dispatched from its normal anchorage at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean with enough supplies to sustain the 16,500-military force for 30 days.

31 August: By this date the U.S. Marine Corps had deployed approximately half of the required 92,000 Marines to the Southwest Asia. At full strength, this would include 21 helicopter squadrons, 24 infantry battalions, 19 fixed-wing and the associated command elements, combat forces, combat service support organizations and combat support. These forces were required to support a Marine expeditionary unit (MEU) afloat in the Persian Gulf and Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) ashore on the Arabian Peninsula, and two Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEB) consisted of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Divisions (MarDivs), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), and the 1<sup>st</sup> Force Service Support Group (FSSG) that was ashore in Saudi Arabia. Also afloat with the Marine forces were the 4<sup>th</sup> MEB, the 5<sup>th</sup> MEB with the 11<sup>th</sup> MEU embedded, and the 13<sup>th</sup> MEU. The buildup of the Marine forces validated the Marines' maritime force (MPF) concept, with the Marines falling in on the equipment from the three maritime prepositioning squadrons (MPS).<sup>148</sup> In this regard, it provided the first credible ground defense capability in that area after the invasion of Kuwait. The idea of prepositioning military assets by the Marine Corps is a vital aspect of maneuver warfare in that the logistical tail required supplying, as well as supporting ground forces and aids in the shaping of the battlefield prior to any engagement.

26 September: General Alfred M. Gray, Commandant of the Marine Corps, addressed a detachment of Marines in Saudi Arabia while touring Marine positions there and meeting with

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<sup>148</sup> Hopkins, "U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991," 22.

officials from Persian Gulf nations. He talked about a variety of topics ranging from relations with Arab countries to unit rotations, and challenged Marines to continue to do their jobs in the best way they knew how. It was the first visit to Southwest Asia during *Operation Desert Shield* for the Commandant.

8 November: President Bush announced that he planned to add more than 200,000 U.S. troops to those already deployed in *Operation Desert Shield* in the Persian Gulf area. When completed, this deployment doubled the number of Marines in the objective area, adding II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) units from the Corps' east coast bases and the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade from California.

15-21 November: About 100 miles south of the Kuwait border, American and Saudi Arabian military forces participated in Exercise *Imminent Thunder*. The exercise included an amphibious landing by more than 1,000 Marines of the 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade and tested the military's ability to command, control, and coordinate air and ground forces. It included air-to-air mock fighter combat and close air support of ground forces. At the same time, only 25 miles south of Kuwait, another 1,000 Marines from the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade conducted field exercises ashore.

10 December: More than 24,000 Marines of the II Marine Expeditionary Force mustered on the parade ground at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for a pre-deployment review by the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet in the largest formation of Marines in modern history.

1991

12 January: After three days of debate, Congress voted President Bush the authority to go to war against Iraq.

15 January: The V Marine Expeditionary Force (V MEF) was activated to assume missions and tasks assigned to I MEF prior to its deployment to Southwest Asia. V MEF was to form, train, and deploy units to reinforce and replace those employed in the Persian Gulf area.

16 January-*Operation Desert Shield* became *Operation Desert Storm* as forces of the allied coalition launched an all-out air assault against targets in Iraq and occupied Kuwait in an effort to liberate Kuwait and enforce the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

29 January: The first serious ground fighting of *Operation Desert Storm* broke out when Iraqi troops mounted an attack into Saudi Arabia along a 40-mile front. Company and battalion-sized Iraqi units centered their efforts on Khafji, a deserted port city, six miles south of the border. Saudi and Qatari troops, supported by artillery and attack helicopters from the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division and aircraft from the anti-Iraq coalition recaptured the town two days later. This, the Battle of Khafji, was a major ground combat action of the Gulf War

5 February: The Secretary of the Navy authorized the involuntary recall of up to 2,000 retired Marines who had completed at least 20 years of active duty and who were under the age of 60. The retirees were to be retained on active duty for as long as deemed necessary.

13 February: As of this date, the allied air forces had flown more than 65,000 sorties in Iraq and Kuwait, with a total of 28 planes lost in combat-19 from the United States and nine from allied forces. Of the 19 U.S. planes, four were Marine Corps aircraft-three AV-8B Harriers and 1 OV-10 Bronco. Marine artillery units, using 155mm towed and 8-inch self-propelled howitzers staged a series of nighttime artillery raids over the heavily defended border of Kuwait.

15 February: Allied commanders estimated that 30 percent of Iraq's armor, 35 percent of its artillery, and 27 percent of its other armored vehicles in the Kuwaiti theater of operations had been destroyed by this date.

24 February: The I Marine Expeditionary Force and coalition forces began a ground assault on Iraqi defenses in the final chapter of *Operation Desert Storm*. Located just south of the Kuwaiti border along the Persian Gulf, the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division with its four main task forces-Ripper, Papa Bear, Taro, and Grizzly-stormed into the teeth of Iraqi defenses and convinced the defenders that it was the main effort of attack. Meanwhile, heavily armored allied forces attacked the Iraqi defenses in Iraq from behind. At the same time, Marine units of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigades afloat in the Persian Gulf

pinned down large numbers of Iraqi troops who expected an amphibious assault. In just less than 100 hours, U.S. and allied forces defeated the Iraqi Army.<sup>149</sup>

28 February-*Operation Desert Storm* ended when the cease-fire declared by President George Bush went into effect. I Marine Expeditionary Force had strength of 92,990 making Operation Desert Storm the largest Marine Corps Operation in history.

In understanding the Marine Corps initial indoctrination of maneuver warfare the following two quotes help in this understanding of the mindset that was created by the “evolutionists” responsible for maneuver warfare’s institutionalization:

“.. Remember maneuver warfare to me is a way of life..... And if you think that way, you're always [ready] it's a six hour planning cycle. It's the anticipating. It's we're going to be ready to go. And I think that's the strength of the Marine Corps..”<sup>150</sup>

And;

“..War is not about physics, or pounds of steel, or targets. It's mental... It is two opponents trying to out-think each other. He's [General Gray] said to me something that I've never forgotten is that it's good to trick the enemy.... There's nothing against the law about tricking your opponent.....And the whole idea of deception. And every time you think of your opponent -- he actually talked about "the dark alley warrior".....Have you ever been in a dark alley and not known who's there but you got somebody behind you that makes you uncomfortable?....The dark alley warrior is always thinking about making his opponent uncomfortable and if you can make him or her so uncomfortable that they quit the battlefield without firing a shot, that's kind of what Sun Tzu said. So always think how you're going to make your opponent -- .....Like in wrestling.....we talk about certain leverage to put your opponent at a disadvantage. Little guys sometimes can pin much larger guys because they're good at that and that's how General Gray thought. He called it... "fighting smarter.”. And he says we really need to be thinking rather than just fighting. The most valuable weapon we have is the brain. The thinking warrior is always trying to figure out how you're going to trick the enemy, how you're going to put your opponent at a disadvantage, the dark alley warrior, makes him uncomfortable..”

Major General Mike Myatt.<sup>151</sup>

According to the U.S. Marine Corps’ FMFM-1 *Warfighting*<sup>152</sup> manual, maneuver warfare is a warfighting philosophy which seeks to shatter the enemy's

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<sup>149</sup> Gordon and Trainor, 346 -367.

<sup>150</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> FMFM-1, 77.

cohesion through a sequence of rapid, unexpected, and violent actions which create a rapidly deteriorating and turbulent situation for the enemy with which they cannot cope. Therefore, it is more than evident that all of the Marine Corps actions during the Persian Gulf conflict fit this definition in every major and minor action. In essence there are four separate aspects that exemplified the new doctrine first begun fifteen years before this massive Marine Corps military action.

The I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF), and the amphibious forces poised to launch a beach landing and the logistic tail all deceived the Iraqis with regard to the place of attack as well as its psychological operations that affected the enemy's will to resist. The coalition elements moved quicker against the Iraqi army than they had expected. The Iraqis were caught off-balance with no opportunity to respond effectively to the Marine Corps' subsequent actions in the Kuwaiti Area of Operational Responsibility (AOR). By the use of rapid maneuver and superior firepower support, the division had threatened the Iraqi commanders with encirclement of Kuwait City and Al Jahrah. When the Iraqis tried to escape, their fleeing movement was turned into a rout by the Marine Corps' timely and decisive actions.

It is now more than twenty years since the events that surrounded the invasion of Kuwait by forces of Saddam Hussein in August 1990; as well as the subsequent U.S.-led coalition that eventually ejected the Iraqis from this small oil producing nation. It was the first time the United State was openly and directly involved in sending major land forces to the Persian Gulf region. The success of those endeavors, *Operations Desert Shield* and *Desert Storm*, renewed the assertiveness and the confidence of the United States military and its projected foreign policy in the Near East. At first, *Desert Shield* entailed containing a resurgent Saddam Hussein and then eventually in *Desert Storm* dealt with the aftermath of driving the Iraqis back into their own country. The U.S. Marine Corps played a significant role in both operations and as evidenced by its exclusive use of maneuver warfare to shape its battle space, which would in effect, become the Marine Corps Way of War.

The United States established a coalition of nations to defend Saudi Arabia from further Iraqi aggression as well as to rid Kuwait of the Iraqi military takeover. These operations were later christened "Gulf War I." The mission was twofold: to protect Saudi

Arabia - *Operation Desert Shield*, as well as to expel the Iraqi military forces from Kuwait – *Desert Storm*. This was the largest deployment of U.S Marines since the Vietnam War. The Marines of the 7<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) had begun arriving in Saudi Arabia by late August, accompanied by equipment and other personnel of I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF): the First Force Service Support Group; the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing; and the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. The Marines were reinforced by units from the III MEF as well as the 4<sup>th</sup> MAW and 4<sup>th</sup> MarDiv (reservists) and other individual augmenters and Marine Reserve elements.

In less than 100 hours, the allied forces and the U.S. military defeated the Iraqi Army in Kuwait and at home. This culminated in what was to become a decisive victory with very few American casualties. The United States Marine Corps accomplished its missions in hours not the expected days. The unit commanders of the I MARDIV and II MARDIV attribute their rapid success to the tenets found and utilized in FMFM-1 *Warfighting*.<sup>153</sup> This operation for the Marine Corps provided a medium to study and improve the abilities of its Marines to integrate combined arms with the other services in various joint operations while utilizing its new, or in reality, codified and institutional “renewed” doctrine of a Marine Corps’ maneuver warfare applications.

*Operation Desert Storm* began 16 January 1991 and was marked by the initiation of the air campaign that was launched against the Iraqi forces occupying Kuwait. By the end of August 1990, the U.S. Marine Corps had deployed approximately half of the 92,000 Marines to Southwest Asia. At full strength, this would include 21 helicopter squadrons, 24 infantry battalions, 19 fixed-wing and the associated command elements, combat service support organizations and combat support. These forces were required to support a Marine expeditionary unit (MEU) afloat in the Persian Gulf and Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) ashore on the Arabian Peninsula, and two Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEB) consisted of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Divisions (MarDivs), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), and the 1<sup>st</sup> Force Service Support Group (FSSG) that was ashore in Saudi Arabia. Also afloat with the Marine Corps forces were the 4<sup>th</sup> MEB, the 5<sup>th</sup> MEB with the 11<sup>th</sup> MEU embedded, and the 13<sup>th</sup> MEU in reserve. The buildup of the Marine forces validated the Marines' Maritime Force (MPF) concept, with the Marines falling in on the equipment from the three maritime

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<sup>153</sup> Wilson, In person interview with the author. John Schmidt, Re: “Maneuver Warfare,” e-mail message to author, November 21, 2013.

prepositioning squadrons (MPS).<sup>154</sup> The idea of prepositioning military assets is a vital aspect of maneuver warfare in that the logistical tail required supplying, supporting ground forces and aids in the shaping of the battlefield prior to any engagement.<sup>155</sup>

On 15 January 1991, the Marine forces were preparing for combat. The reinforcement numbers that had been directed by the President had been long accomplished with the closure of the additional forces from the II MEF from North Carolina, as well as the arrival of the 5<sup>th</sup> MEB from southern California. The I MEF command post had moved to Safaniya and the 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv was then positioned around the northeast portion of the MARCENT AOR.<sup>156</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG established forward supply bases at Kibrit and Ra's al Mish'ab while continuing the offload at Al Jubayl. The 2<sup>nd</sup> MarDiv occupied the northwest portion of the AOR. The 3<sup>rd</sup> MAW supported I MEF, which provided a 24-hour combat air patrol station F/A-18's, and it was moving its tactical air control facilities to the north to Al Mish'ab.<sup>157</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> MEB afloat had completed highly publicized amphibious exercises while in Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, and was strategically located to effect an amphibious invasion of Kuwait. I MEF was under the command of Brig. General "Mike" Myatt.

The Marine Air-Ground Forces (MAGTF) was deployed around the world and was not limited to amphibious operations only. They were capable of projecting sustained, as well as combined arms combat power that was ashore so as to conduct a wide range of missions. MAGTF is essential to the protection of the national security interests; as well as the projection of power that may be required in the post-Cold War environment by the Marine Corps.<sup>158</sup> The other card that General Gray played focused on the use of maneuver style doctrine and tactics. This in and of itself would play out better than expected. General Myatt qualifies this over all thinking of the Marine Corps as it applied to *Desert Storm*:

"..An organization that's got decentralized decision making that doesn't have a common understanding of the commander's intent can actually come apart at the seams ..... He [Myatt] said orientation -- making the decision once after you observe what the enemy is doing, then you

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<sup>154</sup> Hopkins," *U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf: 1990-1991*," 22.

<sup>155</sup> Charles C. Krulack, *Operational Maneuver from the Sea: A White Paper* (Washington, DC: HQUSMC, PCN 145 00000100, January, 1996), 12.

<sup>156</sup> Myatt and Keys, Interviews with the author.

<sup>157</sup> Gordon and Trainor, 276.

<sup>158</sup> General Robert Magnus, ACMC USMC (ret.), Telephonic interview with the author, September 27, 2011.

orient yourself, you orient your command, you make the decision to interact as fast as you can. The orientation -- you have to have a common understanding of the commander's intent. So what we did in the Gulf War, getting ready to go into Kuwait, is that we spent hours making sure everybody understood the commander's intent..”<sup>159</sup>

*Operation Desert Shield*, was executed as planned by the Marine Corps, the 1<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigades which were to be deployed by air, taking virtually nothing with them but their individual equipment and arms. It was expected that their heavy supplies and equipment would have been brought to the AOR by Maritime Prepositioning Force. Each squadron was loaded with 30 days of supplies and most of MEB's combat equipment. Thirteen preloaded ships together with civilian crews were eventually dedicated to this deployment. These ships were not a substitute for the amphibious ships but rather, they provided an enhanced and sustainable assault capability. General Myatt added the following insight which puts the MPS in proper perspective:

“..The Army lands with about ten rounds of ammunition and three days of rations. They come in in late August, we're [USMC] in mid-August and over here are the MEF ships. All the Marines gear on it, ammunition, fuel, equipment to make water and all that. The Army is back here 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne; they're back in the rear. They were going into Jubal the third day there and trying to buy fast food because they were running out of food. They don't have much ammunition. These MEF stores fed all the Marines, 24<sup>th</sup> MEF and the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and then the 101<sup>st</sup> when they came in until they could get their own logistic chain going. The MPF ships were the thing that was a godsend..”<sup>160</sup>

On the East Coast, the II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) which consisted essentially of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Force Service Support Group and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division was based at Camp Lejeune. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing was based at the Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point in North Carolina. The II MEF called itself the "Carolina MAGTF." They bore the imprint of General Gray's time as the Commanding General of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division from 1981 to 1984, and the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic (FMFLANT) from 1984 to 1987. On 9 December the movement of the fly-in echelon (FIE) began and was set to continue until 15 January at the rate of approximately 1,000 Marines per day. There

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<sup>159</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

would be two more Marine Expeditionary Brigades together with a special-operations-capable Marine Expeditionary Unit that would be afloat thus, offering a very powerful landing force for any unexpected amphibious operations if required.<sup>161</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division had not been operationally deployed since World War II. Major General William M. Keys was the Commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division. When the ground offensive started, the Iraqi ground forces had remained in defensive positions in the KTO. The Iraqi front line units that included the 14<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry divisions in the I MEF zone as well as the 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division offered sporadic resistance. These forces were eventually bypassed (the idea of knowing when, or when not to give battle, is a key element in maneuver warfare), withdrew or surrendered.<sup>162</sup>

The Iraqi artillery units fired at the Coalition forces during the ground offensive and were not very accurate. The Iraqi army appeared to fire on various known points, but did not follow targets. Deserters and enemy prisoners of war (EPWs) who crossed the Saudi border just before the ground offensive began complaining of poor sanitation, poor morale, the lack of water and food.<sup>163</sup> The Iraqis were disorganized, scattered and by mid-afternoon, the number of EPWs had increased significantly.

This illustrated:

1. The breakdown of communications with higher headquarters,
2. The Iraq's weak battlefield intelligence capabilities,
3. The success of the Marine Corps in achieving maneuver warfare's element of surprise.

On 25 February the second day of ground combat, the I MEF continued to attack on zone thus advancing in the face of the moderate resistance. The 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv began on a line forward of the Burgan oil field. An immediate response to a division artillery time-on-target fire mission targeted suspected enemy assembly areas, and enemy armor. Close-quarters battle ensued and played out involving all elements of the division. The division finally prepared and consolidated to clear the enemy from the Al Jaber airfield. The 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv captured more than 2,000 enemy prisoners of war and destroyed 100 other vehicles as well as 80 enemy tanks.

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<sup>161</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>162</sup> USMC FMFM1-1, *Campaigning*, 24.

<sup>163</sup> Gordon and Trainor, "Generals War," 164, 184-185.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> MarDiv began south of Al Abdallya and attacked north towards an area called the "Ice Cube Tray."<sup>164</sup> Due to the artillery prep fires, many enemy prisoners of war began streaming toward the division lines. 4,500 enemy prisoners which included a brigade commander and an Iraqi general officer were captured and 248 tanks were destroyed. The 3<sup>rd</sup> MAW flew greater than 460 sorties which destroyed 52 tanks, striking elements of 6 enemy divisions, 6 artillery tubes, 9 armored personnel carriers as well as additional FROG and AAA sites. The 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG continued to move prisoners to the rear and push supplies forward to I MEF forces. General Charles Krulak who was the driving force of the USMC logistics tail had leap frogged ahead of the ground forces and set up a resupply FOB about 45 kilometers into the AOR. He has stated that:

“..the success of maneuver warfare as practiced in the Gulf War I by Generals Boomer, Keys, Myatt and myself...maneuver is not just to be focused on the combat forces...what enabled I MEF to do what it did was also attributed to the maneuver of the combat support and combat service support units. It is a “package deal..”<sup>165</sup>

The 4<sup>th</sup> MEB which was aboard Task Force 156 shipping was ordered to demonstrate important pre landing activity in the vicinity of Ash Shuaybah in order to support ground operations ashore. On 25 February using several deception activities, the naval gunfire from the 4<sup>th</sup> MEB's helicopters, and an amphibious demonstration was underway. This caused the Iraqis to focus their attention to the east and they fired off two Silkworm missiles towards the Marines offshore. The Iraqis then directed a few more divisions into positions that were along the coast and ordered another division north to provide reinforcements as a response to the assumed amphibious assault by the Marine Corps. This faint exposed the strengths of maneuver warfare and Marine Corps planned deceptions by creating gaps in the Iraqi defense that were easily exploited by both the I MEF and the II MEF.<sup>166</sup>

Future Commandant James Conway was off shore, he offered the following reinforcement on this issue of deception:

“..I was part of Keys' division but I was also 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade. We deployed on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August aboard ship. So we went to the Gulf War early. We were there about eight or nine months or so total. But we were the amphibious force at sea that was ready to go into Kuwait City or wherever they sent us and essentially we never did land. So I

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<sup>164</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>165</sup> Krulak email to author.

<sup>166</sup> General Jim Conway 34<sup>th</sup> CMC in person interview with the author, Annapolis, MD: July, 2013.

had a chance to see grown men cry when the war kicked off and we're still out there threatening, tying down divisions but not getting ashore and doing any maneuver..”<sup>167</sup>

In reality this diversion was a key element of Maneuver Warfare which enabled the Marine ground forces to totally envelop the Iraqis when the hostilities commenced. The off shore faint by the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade pinned down four Iraqi divisions thinking that this was the Marines Corps “storied” main approach.

After replenishing and refueling during the night into the early morning hours, the I MEF continued to attack north on 26 February. Their objectives were the Al-Mutl'a Pass and Kuwait International Airport. The I MEF had advanced with the 2<sup>nd</sup> MARDIV and attacked into the northwest towards Al Jahrah while the 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV turned towards the Kuwait International Airport. As the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division stepped off in the attack on 26th February, it immediately ran into Iraqi T-72 tanks. This was the result of a cloud of smoke from the burning oil wells restricting their visibility. Bad weather had combined with the oil well fire smoke and minimized visibility. From this darkness, there emerged two Marine AH-1Ws that flew at ground level. Marine Hellfire missiles had quickly eliminated the threat of these Iraqi tanks.<sup>168</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> MARDIV began the attack at 1200. The (U.S. Army)Tiger Brigade, 67<sup>th</sup> Armor was in the lead and was supported by USMC and USAF aircraft with 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, in joint operations smashed its way to the northwest of Al-Jahrah, thus destroying the remaining Iraqi resistance as well as cutting off further Iraqi retreat.<sup>169</sup> On 27 February at 0330, the 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV finally seized Kuwait International Airport. The I MEF reports reflect that more than 70 armored vehicles and 250 tanks were destroyed. By 27 February, the I MEF had secured all its assigned objectives and now awaited the arrival of JFC-N and JFC-E, which was to liberate Kuwait City. The honor of liberating Kuwait City was left to the Arab coalition partners once the Marine Corps finished off any Iraqi resistance.<sup>170</sup>

On 27 February, the 2<sup>nd</sup> MARDIV in the I MEF sector began the fourth day of the ground war. At around 0500, Tiger Brigade troops made contact with the Egyptian units and then four hours later, the JFC-N passed through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine

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<sup>167</sup> Conway, In person interview with the author.

<sup>168</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

<sup>169</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>170</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

Division remained on Phase Line Bear and Al-Mutl'a Ridge<sup>171</sup> until the offensive operations ended at 0800 28 February. The final day of the ground offensive found the I MEF in a defensive position outside Kuwait City. In 2<sup>nd</sup> MARDIV, the 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Marines spent the previous night planning to attack Al-Jahrah in order to seize the Kuwait military bases held by the Iraqis which were in the area, as well as secure the northern road. When these offensive operations eventually ended, the Marines again remained outside the city so that the Arab coalition partners once again were given the credit for the liberation.<sup>172</sup>

On 24 February 1991, the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division entered south Kuwait. They began the ground offensive aimed at ending the Iraqi occupation. The successful breach of the first obstacle belt had triggered a timed sequence of attacks by the coalition forces that were arrayed along the northern border of Saudi Arabia. The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division attack followed 38 days of allied air attacks. The ground offensive swept almost everything in a bloodless campaign. As stated above the Marines were given 100 hours for their coalition forces to remove the Iraqi army and recapture Kuwait.<sup>173</sup> Lieutenant General Walter E. Boomer, commanding general of I Marine Expeditionary Force, selected the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division to lead the attack. The division had been in the field since the advent of *Operation Desert Shield* and the units had many months in the desert training and rehearsing for the foreseen ground war against the Iraqi Army. The sentiments of Lt. Gen. Boomer are to be found in his step-off letter to the 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv:

After months of preparation, we are on the eve of the liberation of Kuwait, a small, peaceful country that was brutally attacked and subsequently pillaged by Iraq. Now we will attack into Kuwait, not to conquer, but to drive out the invaders and restore the country to its citizens. In so doing, you not only return a nation to its people, but you will destroy the war machine of a ruthless dictator, who fully intended to control this part of the world, thereby endangering many other nations, including our own. We will succeed in our mission because we are well-trained and well-equipped; because we are U.S. Marines, Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen: and because our cause is just. Your children and grandchildren will read about your victory in the years to come and appreciate your sacrifice and courage. America will watch her sons and daughters and draw strength from your success. May the spirit of your Marine forefathers ride with you and may God give you the strength to accomplish your mission.

*Semper Fi.* Boomer<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Gordon and Trainor, 404.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

<sup>173</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

<sup>174</sup> General Walt Boomer USMC, letter to I MEF 23 February 1991, " *U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991*," <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmchist/gulf.txt>. (Accessed 15 May 2014), 46.

The Marines of I MarDiv under the command of Major General Myatt were therefore physically, professionally, and psychologically ready. After the start of hostilities, the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division had the chance to prove its capabilities in the series of deception operations, artillery raids, screening operations, and combined arms raids, that finally made the division the first unit to bring the ground war to the Iraqi army.<sup>175</sup> The AOR border provided many ambiguous operations and or artillery raids that were designed as part of the Marine Corps shaping of the battle field.<sup>176</sup> The I MEF deception aimed at confusing the Iraqis as to the intentions and position of the allied forces. There were 12 combined arms artillery raids. On 21-22 January 1991 saw the first raid which was an attempt aimed to silence an Iraqi MLRS battery that was positioned near Khafji. The subsequent raids happened on the 26th and the 28th January, and then on 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 19, 20, and finally the 22nd February.

The preparations of the raids began 24-48 hours prior with a raid force planning cell that was formed to develop the support and targeting requirements. The division selected a target and then requested air support while the raid force was planning the assembly areas, tentative firing positions, routes, and checkpoints. During the raid, the raid force would depart in sufficient time for all the elements to be in their firing positions by nightfall. Immediately when the raid commander declared "ready to fire!" and the air support and airborne forward air controllers were on station, the battery fired on the designated targets and then withdrew under the covering fire from the support battery. The Iraqis were confronted by Marine defense of the border posts thus they began to retreat back to Kuwait after the dawn engagement with Company A which brought the Iraqis under fire.<sup>177</sup> For a few hours, the Marine companies called in artillery and air strikes on the withdrawing Iraqis.

The Iraqi air force remained grounded, leaving the ground attacks without benefit of air cover. The unsupported assaults did not put the Marines under pressure to force the division to reveal the tactical deployment of its units. General Keys, General Boomer and

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<sup>175</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

General Myatt, saw the attack as a positive event since it influenced the planning for the allied offensive.<sup>178</sup>

The Iraqi soldiers were poorly trained, ill led and unmotivated. The Iraqi defenses were not as formidable as the U.S. Marines had originally believed.<sup>179</sup> The attack showed the American commanders that there was a gap in the air surveillance of the battlefield that was sufficient enough to allow a sizable armored force to be able to move to the border without being detected; and that gap was immediately pressed. The Marine Corps was exposing the surfaces and gaps that they would exploit by the use of maneuver warfare.

General Myatt further discussed the effects of the initial recce pulls and probes prior to G-Day:

“.. What we had was Iraqi Artillery positions ..... Exact coordinates. There would be a battalion of artillery. They had 1,200 artillery pieces in the Iraqi's front lines facing us and combined between the First and Second Division the Marines had 240 artillery pieces. The Marines' heavy artillery is mobile and since we knew where they were at night -- and remember, we're still back here closer to Iraq than we were to Kuwait, but we moved up closer and we would take a battery of self-propelled artillery -- we still have self-propelled -- the battalion commander ... would take the battery of his self-propelled artillery, we gave him a light armored infantry company for security in the LAI and in that task force we would have what we called a Rat Pack, a pack of techies and that kind of worked as our jammers. Because when it started, the Iraqi's had three different kind of ground surveillance radar. They could see us and if they could see us moving, they would shoot at our positions.... So we would take the EA6B's and we were jamming Iraqi radar, they would move up to some pre-known position, fire artillery, if you know exactly where you are and know exactly where the target is, you get almost first round capability most of the time. So with GPS you know exactly where you are and the EA6B's would tell us exactly where the Iraqi artillery was. So we take that battery of artillery up there and we would be jamming the radar. They didn't know where we were. And then we would fire a battery of six on that Iraqi artillery position and then we would tear off in to the night and as the jammer and as these people started leaving, the Iraqi's would pick them up on their radar, then the Iraqis would start firing at them and we would have an airborne assault... as soon as they saw the Iraqi artillery flashes firing at us, they would then eliminate them. Why is that important? Because then we know the guns were manned. We did this, I think, six or seven different ways and what we were trying to achieve was screwing with their minds that whenever they heard Marine artillery they would hunker down rather than return fire.... and it worked..”<sup>180</sup>

On 21 February (G minus 3), all the elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division had already completed their movement to attack positions on the opposite side of the Saudi berm. Each

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<sup>178</sup> Keys and Myatt, interviews with the author.

<sup>179</sup> Gordon and Trainor, 104-105. Keys interview with the author supports this citation.

<sup>180</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

task force began immediate reconnaissance and screening actions upon arrival at their sectors. Within hours, the forward observers called in air and artillery strikes on the nearby Iraqi units.<sup>181</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division also conducted a diversion with its LAI battalion. Though previously intermittent, the fighting between enemy units and the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division continued across the division's front until seizure of the Kuwait International Airport that occurred seven days later. To cover their movement, on 21 February, General Myatt had requested the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 12<sup>th</sup> Marines, to fire 24 rounds at an Iraqi position near the minefield. He felt confident that the earlier weeks of the artillery raids had conditioned the Iraqi forward units to expect any harassing fire at uncertain points along their line. The Iraqi artillery then responded with a single volley which impacted about 100 meters in front of an observation post of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Marines. This appeared to be more a reflex action by the Iraqis.<sup>182</sup>

Task Force Taro was the second task force to be located near the Saudi berm by 21 February. Before moving to their sites, the battalions threw up several outposts aimed to destroy or turn back any Iraqi patrols that could have come into Saudi Arabia. Gen. Myatt further moved his antitank platoon HMMWVs along the berm as a precautionary measure against any enemy reconnaissance efforts.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine division was now close to the Kuwaiti border and ready to begin the preliminary offensive operations. On 27 January 1991, several days after arrival of the last elements, the division issued Frag Order 007 which ordered an artillery surface raid that was intended to destroy the selected targets across the border in the "agricultural area." The artillery surface raid was successfully conducted by the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 10<sup>th</sup> Marines. Batteries R and Q armed with M114 8-inch and M109A1 155mm self-propelled howitzers which were selected as the firing units. The 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion was to provide security and screening.<sup>183</sup>

The aim of the artillery surface raid was three-fold. It was aimed to first develop an offensive spirit in the division's units and secondly to destroy the targets chosen; a truck park and logistics site. Third, and most importantly, was to measure the enemy's reactions to the raid thus gauging the Iraqi's ability to detect as well as to counterattack the division.

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<sup>181</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

Throughout the fire mission, no attempt had been made by the enemy to return fire.<sup>184</sup> As a result; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division began to take the measure of the enemy through the first combat mission that gave the impression of Iraqi inability to bring artillery fires against the division.<sup>185</sup>

The division was planning to move into final assembly areas by the end of January, in preparation for its role in offensive operations which were assigned by the original MEF operational plan. The MEF established a deception unit, Task Force Troy to serve as an additional precaution in order to mask the disappearance of the division from its sector and had a special deception capacity which emitted the electronic signature of a division. This was meant to appear like the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division was still operating in the original area.

The division's forward CP personnel led the quartering party and were accompanied by representatives of the Tiger Brigade, the 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Marines, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reconnaissance Battalion, the 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion, and members of the CP were scouting the division's new zone, Al Khanjar. There they met with members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. 24 February 1991 had been set for G-Day. In order to have the entire division in its positions to conduct pre-assault operations and final maintenance, General Keys ordered the move be completed by 19 February.<sup>186</sup>

On 29 January the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine division engaged in its first skirmish of the war. Reports came to the division's combat operations center (COC) that large groups of Iraqi armored vehicles and tanks were moving below the Saudi-Kuwaiti border, heading south. These groups were reported at various points along the fronts of 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, the Eastern Province Area Command (EPAC) and 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. Other reports came from the Observation Posts 2 and 4 which was located close to the Saudi-Kuwaiti border that the enemy armored vehicles were entering the division's zone. Due to the forward movements of the 1<sup>nd</sup> and 2<sup>st</sup> Marine Divisions which were in preparation for the offensive operations, these Observation Posts were manned by elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Force Reconnaissance Battalion and the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. The Marine Corps forces at OP 2 engaged the enemy first bringing the column under TOW missile fire as well as calling in several air strikes.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Gordon and Trainor, 365-366.

Company C, the 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion had already engaged 29 armored vehicles, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion had reported that it was engaging enemy armored targets as well. This was actually the first 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division's ground combat kill during the *Operation Desert Storm*. The 6<sup>th</sup> Marines, responding to an earlier inquiry by General Keys who was concerned that the enemy could break through into the division's zone, stated that it could have a battalion of tanks and an infantry battalion ready to move in thirty minutes. The Tiger Brigade that consisted of 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division was given an order to provide one company in order to move forward so as to defend the Marines Direct Support Group.<sup>188</sup>

**Offensive Operations:**<sup>189</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines division's offensive operations had begun several days before G-Day, which was the opening day of ground attack by the Marine Corps forces. On 17 February 1991, 2<sup>nd</sup> Reconnaissance Battalion moved its teams to the insertion points in the Saudi berm which was in preparation for entering Kuwait. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Reconnaissance battalion was fulfilling the division's mission of conducting surveillance and reconnaissance of the area forward of current defensive positions which was in preparation for the offensive operations. General Keys' intent was aimed at identifying any gaps or weaknesses in the enemy defenses and if there were any enemy units south of the breach so as to enhance the Marines breaching operation by their absence.<sup>190</sup>

The battalion moved up to the berm on the night of the 17th and all its units were in their assigned positions by the 18<sup>th</sup>. It was also realized that the Marines had to operate in a small area of operations that was now occupied by major elements of Iraqi army; they could not use current methods such as helicopters for the extraction and insertion of teams, due to the strong enemy antiaircraft artillery. Therefore, Keys motorized his companies to be more effective in his AOR. Reconnaissance teams had six men of whom three were mounted in a High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) which was armed with a .50-caliber machine gun. The other three were mounted in a HMMWV with communications gear. On the night of 17 February, four reconnaissance teams walked over the berm. They moved to their initial positions, and then proceeded into Kuwait on the 18th. Two more teams crossed and occupied the positions of the earlier teams so as to act as a radio-relay for the Marines who

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<sup>188</sup> Gordon and Trainor, 295.

<sup>189</sup> See footnote 141 for source materials used in this section.

<sup>190</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

were farther forward using high frequency radios with limited range. Two teams were set up on the berm itself so as to provide an over watch for the operation and were equipped with long-range electrical optical systems. The 6<sup>th</sup> Marines were to provide an extraction force for all the reconnaissance teams.

Another battalion crossed the berm prior to the G-Day. The attack order had assigned the 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion to screen the division's flanks and front on the Kuwaiti side of the berm which was to start on G minus 3 on 21 February. The battalion was tasked to locate another breach site for Tiger Brigade in the Northwest and attempt to identify any gaps in the obstacle belt. The importance of the alternate breach site was that it would permit the Tiger Brigade to move the heavy armored power around the division's flank as well as to help to pull the remainder of the division through when required. The 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion was in contact with the enemy within an hour of beginning its operation. Mortar fire was received, and a HMMWV carrying a low-altitude air defense team that was attached to the battalion received a direct hit.<sup>191</sup>

Company C operated on the northwest flank of the battalion and it was preceding the other companies in the battalion movement into the Kuwait AOR. The actions of Company C, the 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion were illustrative of the entire battalion. The company's mission was aimed at seizing the key terrain which was overlooking the obstacle belts and the enemy's positions. The company's attack was aggressive and violent so as to draw attention to it and also away from the division breach sites. The company's attack was expected to draw fire from the Iraqi mortars and artillery and to expose them to the counterbattery fire of the 10<sup>th</sup> Marines. The attack exceeded expectations. After crossing the border, Company C came under considerable mortar fire, artillery, and antitank barrages. Many weapons were firing and counterbattery program proved it was inadequate to service the available targets. Company C withdrew until the fire support took the desired effect. Shortly thereafter, Company C returned to the attack maneuvering to assault the flank of Iraqi forces which were in the minefields. Company C advanced under continuing antitank fire and artillery to the edge of the minefield; it classified the mines, and also identified a gap for possible use by the Tiger Brigade.

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<sup>191</sup> There are multiple sources used for the facts and details of specific battles and action taken by the US Marine Corps: Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *The Generals War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996), 164, 174-175, 271, 355-374, 346-350, Edwin Simmons, *US Marines: A History* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2003), 286-311. Also "U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991" With the 1st Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, With the 2d Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmchist/gulf.txt>. (Accessed: 15 May 2014).

Company C maneuvered aggressively and also exploited Iraqi weaknesses for about two days.<sup>192</sup> By 23 February which was G minus 1, Company C had killed numerous infantry with supporting and organic arms and destroyed about eight wheeled vehicles and 10 tanks. The 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion reported information on enemy activities, equipment and troops. Operating almost continuously under indirect fire, antitank, and rocket, the battalion's companies engaged the enemy tanks, troops and artillery, on at least 17 occasions, using close air support, organic antitank weapons, and artillery fire from the 10<sup>th</sup> Marines. During the three days, the battalion accounted for numerous enemies KIA, the destruction of 35 tanks with air strikes, a further 12 enemy tanks, and the capture of 120 EPWs.

Of even greater significance was the activity by the LAVs which had the desired effect which was drawing the enemy's (Iraqi) attention away from the actual area of the division's assault as well as the breach. The 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion's operations were also significant because the Iraqis began using their artillery against it. The battalion frequently came under heavy artillery and mortar fires in a continuous contact with the enemy for three days. The casualties from enemy fire were light and the enemy disclosed the locations of batteries to the Marine's counter-battery radar. Using artillery and air, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division was fully able to put the numerous Iraqi artillery pieces out of action even before the G-Day assault. This was of utmost importance because if they had remained undiscovered, these weapons could have caused the division heavy casualties as it went through the breach.<sup>193</sup>

The positioning of the artillery units that were forward of the maneuver elements which they were about to support seemed to violate all doctrine with regard to the employment of the artillery at first glance. It however, made proper tactical sense. The intelligence had already reported that the Iraqi brigades to the division's flanks and front could reach the area of the breach with approximately five hundred guns. Many of these guns had out-ranged the 10<sup>th</sup> Marines' M198 155mm howitzers since their range was a little over 30 kilometers when using the Rocket-Assisted Projectiles (RAP). In order to ensure that the assault elements had accurate, timely and responsive fire support, it was worth taking the risk to move the artillery ahead of the maneuver units. A measure of security was provided to them

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<sup>192</sup> There are multiple sources used for the facts and details of specific battles and action taken by the US Marine Corps: Gordon and Trainor, *The Generals War*, 164, 174-175, 271, 355-374, 346-350, Simmons, *US Marines: A History*, 286-311. "U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991," "With the 1st Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm," "With the 2d Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm."

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Marines, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, and 2<sup>nd</sup> LAI Battalion, in the screening positions to the division's flanks.<sup>194</sup>

By the end of G Day, the desert was filled with the sounds of combat. By 0430, the division's artillery preparation fires had already begun. There were flaming MLRS rockets as well as tracers of the Iraqi anti-aircraft fire. 1,430 rounds were fired against 40 targets in approximately 11 minutes. The targets were artillery positions which received heavy attention. In effect, the Iraqi battery positions were then fired on by a Marine battalion with dual-purpose improved conventional munitions. The MLRS battery fired on four targets that were deep in the division's zone. Air strikes were also run against targets on Phase Line Red.<sup>195</sup>

At 0530, H-Hour, the lead elements of the 6<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment eventually crossed the line of departure and then followed the colored lanes that were assigned to its battalions. The 6<sup>th</sup> Marines had intensive training and preparation in the few months prior to their deployment. The regiment had the task of leading the assault through the Iraqi defensive lines as well as widening the gap on the other side of the second minefield in order to allow the rest of the division to be able to be pulled through. They had carefully rehearsed their role prior to the first day's battle. It had constructed a training range and also oriented on the azimuths which the assault battalions would follow in the weeks prior to the battle. Personnel were schooled in the use of the electronic navigation aids and a detailed fire support plan was prepared. The 6<sup>th</sup> Marines closed on the first of the obstacle belts. At 0600, the 6<sup>th</sup> Marines, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, reached the minefield. By 0615, both the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Marines and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines, were reported to have arrived at the edge of the obstacle belt in lanes Green 5 and 6 and Blue 3 and 4. The work of the special engineer unit attached to the 6<sup>th</sup> Marines, Task Force Breach Alpha, began. The enemy's defensive belts consisted of wire obstacles and two minefields which were noted in the intelligence reports developed by the Marine recon units. The task force was well-equipped with sixteen M60A1 tanks with track-width mine plow and 2 M60A1 dozer tanks, 4 armored vehicle launched bridges (AVLB), 39 M58 line-charge trailers, 4 M60A1 tanks with mine rakes, 18 AAV's with M154 three-shot mine-clearing line charges, 15 M9 armored combat earthmovers, 22 AAVs for the engineer

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<sup>194</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *The Generals War*, 164, 174-175, 271, 355-374, 346-350. Simmons, *US Marines: A History*, 286-311. Also " *U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991.* "

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

squads, and 6 M1A1 tanks with mine plows in order to accomplish its task.<sup>196</sup>

In preparation for attack, the 6th Marines ran several air strikes on the "ICE-CUBE TRAY." This exposed a built-up area that contained a large concentration of dug-in Iraqi tanks and bunkers. Another regimental TOT was fired into the center of the "ICE-CUBE TRAY" by the 10<sup>th</sup> Marines to serve as an additional assurance against disruption from this area. A final issue that had to be resolved before the division moved off was the location of the eastern boundary of their AOR. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division which was consolidated along Phase Line Red was some kilometers ahead of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division which had not yet captured the Al Jabir airfield. The previous boundary ran about one and a half kilometers west leading south from Kuwait City to Al Jaber placing the road within the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division's zone.<sup>197</sup>

The I MEF staff was eager for 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division to seize its objective at Al Jahrah as the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division began its move. This was critical since the reports that came in the morning indicated that the Iraqi forces were withdrawing back to Iraq. The intelligence reports as well as Kuwaiti resistance said convoys were forming in Kuwait City and were moving through to the Mutlaa Ridge and Al Jahrah area.

General Keys had convinced Lieutenant General Boomer, the commanding general of the I MEF, to order the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division so as to perform its separate breach of the Iraqi defensive lines. This separation of the II MARDIV's had produced a considerable end result with only six killed in action, and 38 wounded Marines. The light casualties serve to enhance the value of the victory that was won by the division which includes: high training and morale of the Marines, soldiers and sailors as well as it being fought properly on all levels: tactical, strategic and operational. Sometimes, the real and effective lessons learned are those that reaffirm the principles by which wars have always been won. Thus the lesson to be garnered from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division is that the execution of campaign is a validation of the training and thought that was developed by the Marine Corps over the years and punctuated with the use of maneuver warfare tenets that were now installed as Marine Corps doctrine.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *The Generals War*, 164, 174-175, 271, 355-374, 346-350. Simmons, *US Marines: A History*, 286-311. Also see "U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991."

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

According to General Keys, maneuver warfare is a way of thinking in regards to everything in combat, the ultimate goal which is the actual destruction of the enemy. He perceived this as the province of the division and higher-level echelons. Maneuver warfare enables the commanders at all levels to fight smarter than their opponents. This contributed greatly to the division's accomplishments. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division played a significant role with regard to accomplishment of the strategic mission which was freeing Kuwait from its occupation by the army of Iraq. The swift movement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine division alongside the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division through Kuwait led General Schwarzkopf to order the early advance of all other coalition forces.

“..All those who served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division during *Operation Desert Storm* are justly proud of their role, contributions and efforts to the final victory. It is an honor to serve though assisting in the liberation of a nation in this case Kuwait from tyranny is a privilege that is only accorded to few stated General Keys in his final assessment of this maneuver warfare victory for the U.S. Marine Corps..”<sup>199</sup>

A post war assessment of the Marine Corps use of maneuver warfare was offered by a Maneuver Warfare plank holder, Lt. Col. G. I. Wilson when he states:

“.. Gulf war’s operational art used tactical events (i.e. battles, engagements and the refusal to join battle) to strike directly at Iraq’s strategic center of gravity. The idea was to win strategically without resorting to a prolonged ground war....it was a matter of deciding where and when to fight and where and when not to fight....[Marine Corps] war winning operational art [maneuver warfare] centers on a decisive outcome quickly without visiting the butcher shop of a nasty ground war. The application of the operational art and correct identification of Iraq’s strategic center of gravity proved central to the [Marine Corps] maneuver style success. The refusal to enter the ground war prematurely let the [Marine Corps] planners shape the operation and focus on winning the war at the highest possible level – the strategic level.....Baghdad was much more than a geographic location on a map. It was the nerve network and infrastructure of the Iraqi’s political military organization. By throwing strength against weakness, allied air against Iraq’s weak air and air defense, Iraq’s command, control and communications were effectively erased.....loss of the ability to communicate and exercise command and control at the highest levels prevented Iraq from coordinating the defense of the Saddam Line and counterattacking.....also this served well in shaping the ground war’s actions by [the Marine Corps].....the quick in and out artillery raids by the Marines preempted Iraqi efforts.....the Iraqis were in severe trouble because the Marines were inside their (Iraqi) decision-making cycle [OODA Loop]..... it was also integrated and sequenced to throw Marine strength Iraqi weakness in the ground campaign....the Iraqi static defensive position played into the double dilemma of either staying put [making them

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<sup>199</sup> Keys, Telephonic interview with the author.

vulnerable targets from maneuver from the west, south and the sea]...if they abandoned the static defense they're vulnerable to the devastating air and artillery attack..”<sup>200</sup>

Lt. Col. G. I. Wilson was one of the original developers of General Gray’s “fighting smarter.” Maneuver warfare had now become the doctrine of “fighting smarter” and the battlefield tested doctrine of a Marine Corps Way of War.

While interviewing General James Mattis for this paper I asked him to share his personal thoughts about his actions during *Desert Storm* as it applied to the now institutionalized maneuver warfare utilized by the Marine Corps. Per General Mattis’ statement on this topic:

“.. Yes, no doubt about it ..... [And] as they put out the doctrine series it was just gobbled up. They [Marine Corps] couldn’t print them fast enough from war fighting to strategy and campaigning to tactics to logistics and all were adding to the body of understanding of how it all came together. You didn't just fight with the ground ... element of maneuver warfare, you fought it also with the air element, with the logistics fight, your command and control system was set up that way, like I said, for command and feedback. So as we got further into it and the years went by, during the Gulf War it was clearly [employed] I was in Mike Myatt's First Marine Division as a battalion commander, and one of his regimental commanders was a guy named Carl Colfert who had been with General Gray in General Gray's regiment and all at Lejeune, and so once again when I'm a battalion commander and I commanded one of the assault battalions to open the way into the obstacle belts into Kuwait, my regimental commander, my division commander were adherents to this [fighting smarter] This was the way we were going to fight. So ... freedom was left to us, we were given mission type orders, we knew what we were going to do. We rehearsed the basic maneuvers to the point that I don't think over about three or four days of fighting I had to give more than a couple of tactical orders the whole time. The battalion was so well trained and Colonel Colfert's regiment was so well trained ... that it was just a matter of maneuver and I / we had in those days ... batteries and I don't think I ever had fewer than sixteen artillery tubes firing for me as 3-11 maneuvered its artillery on its own. Nobody was telling them what to do; the artillery units picked them up and moved them as was needed. And yet I constantly have had -- I think it was fifty-five ... on the day we broke through to Kuwait City and the artillery guys were there lock, stock and barrel maneuvering ... artillery like it was self-propelled and getting us through there..”<sup>201</sup>

General Myatt in true maneuver warfare leadership found himself so advanced that he was surround by the Iraqi’s while in his command post. According to General Myatt the rounds were zipping through the Command Post. Captain Eddie S. Ray, Commanding Officer, Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> Light Armored Infantry Battalion, Task Force Shepherd, realized that I

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<sup>200</sup> G. I. Wilson, “The Gulf War, Maneuver Warfare, and the Operational Art,” *Marine Corps Gazette*.” June: 1991, 23.

<sup>201</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

MarDiv commander needed help. Captain Ray's actions during the early morning hours of G+1 of *Operation Desert Storm* earned him one of only two Navy Cross's awarded during Gulf War I. The following is a brief account of Captain Ray's action:

“..An Iraqi mechanized division counter attacked elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, in the vicinity west of the flame and smoke engulfed Burgan Oil Fields in Southeastern Kuwait. As dense black smoke shrouded the battlefield, an Iraqi mechanized brigade engaged the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division Forward Command Post security forces. During the ensuing intense ten hour battle, Captain Ray repeatedly maneuvered his Light Armored Vehicle Company in harm's way, skillfully integrating his Light Armored Infantry weapons, reinforcing TOW's, and AH-1W Attack Helicopters to decisively defeat main the Iraqi counter-attacks. Leading from the front and constantly exposed to large volumes of enemy fire, Captain Ray led swift, violent attacks directly into the face of the vastly larger enemy force. These attacks shocked the enemy, destroyed 50 enemy Armored Personnel Carriers, and resulted in the capture of over 250 Iraqi soldiers. Operating perilously close to the attacking enemy, Captain Ray's courage, composure under fire, and aggressive war fighting spirit were instrumental in the defeat of a major enemy effort and the successful defense of the Division Forward Command Post.” (Captain Ray created his own mission orders knowing General Myatt's intent and then proceeded to prosecute them in the form of maneuver warfare required to defeat this enemy.)..<sup>202</sup>

The final assessment of the use of maneuver warfare application by the U. S. Marine Corps can be found in *The Annual Report to the President and the Congress* from the then Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney in 1992 which also acknowledged this Marine Corps doctrinal change. Again as stated above, SECDEF Dick Cheney had conferred with Col. John Boyd concerning maneuver warfare on more than one occasion during both *Desert Shield* and *Desert Storm* operations.<sup>203</sup> He states in the official report to Congress and President Bush:

“..The effectiveness of our Marine Corps forces was most dramatically demonstrated by the brilliant maneuver method of the I MEF through numerically superior defensive forces into Kuwait City – revalidating the maneuver warfare doctrine adopted by Corps. The threat of an amphibious assault during Operation Desert Storm was a masterfully successful deception. It probably saved countless American and Coalition lives by diverting and fixing six Iraqi divisions to aid the ground assault phase of operations. Having the amphibious group in the Persian Gulf provided the Commander in Chief, Central Command with a unique and flexible power projection and strategic reserve force..<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Myatt, In person interview with the author. Also, US Navy Citation for Navy Cross recipient Capt. Eddie Ray USMC, Gulf War I. <http://www.socnet.com/archive/index.php/t-54591.html>.

<sup>203</sup> Coram, 422-425.

<sup>204</sup> Annual Report to The President and The Congress, *Dick Cheney Secretary of Defense* (Washington DC: February, 1992), 121.

In a recent “Boydian” seminar which took place February 15<sup>th</sup> 2014 San Diego, Colonel Mike Wyly aptly summed up Gulf War I’s adaptation of maneuver warfare as part of his telephonic lecture to the group:

“..August 1990. The first Gulf War. Our ground troops are staged in Saudi Arabia, ready to attack the Iraqi Army in Kuwait, while the Air Force bombs and bombs and bombs for 180 days – 6 months! Joint Chiefs of Staff are reluctant to start the ground attack. Mass casualties are predicted crossing minefields, barbed wire, and trenches filled with burning oil. But finally, 24 February 1991, we here in the U.S. are told via television, “Its ‘G-Day’, the ground attack begins! What you don’t know when G-Day is announced 24 Feb. is that the ground attack already began 39 hours ago when Maneuver Warfare-imbued Major General Mike Myatt, commanding 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division infiltrated thousands of Marines through the gaps and weak spots – a classic maneuver warfare tactic – leaving the Iraqi front-line defenders, who had anticipated an old-fashioned Marine Corps frontal assault a la Tarawa and Iwo Jima, receiving now the shocking news: “The Marines are behind us!” “How many [Marines are there]?” They don’t know. One enemy soldier inside your lines gets counted multiple times. “Are the Marines going to attack us now in the rear? Or are they going straight to Baghdad? Marine casualties light, Iraqis, mass surrender. They don’t know how to handle it!..”<sup>205</sup>

The I and II Marine Expeditionary Forces (I MEF and II MEF) had the strength of 92,990 Marines, making *Operation Desert Storm* one of the largest United States Marine Corps operation in its entire history.<sup>206</sup> A total of 23 Marines were killed in action or later died of wounds, from the time the air war was launched on January 16 until the cease-fire took effect forty three days later. In the final tally of Killed In Action and Wounded In Action, only 24 Marines would die, (14 were killed by friendly fire and 1 died in an accident leaving only 9 KIA’s) while only 92 were wounded.<sup>207</sup> These statistics would most certainly support and foster the development of maneuver warfare for the United States Marine Corps. Lastly the speed of bringing these actions to a successful close saved millions of dollars in daily war expenses as well. Lives and treasure saved plus success in the Kuwaiti battlespace earned maneuver warfare and fighting smarter its place in Marine Corps doctrine, strategy and tactics going forward.

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<sup>205</sup> Wyly, email to author, March 19, 2014.

<sup>206</sup> Simmons, 310.

<sup>207</sup> See chart KIA / WIA page 42.

## CHAPTER 4

### Fighting Smarter, Marine Corps Support from the Top:

Because of *Desert Storm*, the “fighting smart doctrine” of maneuver warfare was now entrenched within the fabric of the U.S. Marine Corps. To define this evolution at this point seems appropriate. Besides the obvious model presented by the “evolutionists” regarding the aspects utilized by the Germans in the early days of World War II, the following excerpts from FMFM 1 gives us the tenor and complete definition of this Marine-centric warfighting doctrine’s philosophy:

“..You will notice that this book [FMFM 1] does not contain specific techniques and procedures for conduct. Rather, it provides broad guidance in the form of concepts and values. It requires judgment in application...The thoughts contained here represent not just guidance for actions in combat, but a way of thinking in general. This manual thus describes a philosophy for action in war and in peace.....the object of war is to impose our will on our enemy. The means to that end is the organized application or threat of violence by military force..... [War] is the unique product of the dynamic interaction of myriad moral and physical forces. While founded on the laws of science, war demands, ultimately, the intuition and creativity of art.

The warfighting doctrine which we derive from our theory is one based on maneuver. This represents a change since, with a few notable exceptions-Stonewall Jackson in the Valley, Patton in Europe, MacArthur at Inchon-the American way of war traditionally has been one of attrition. This style of warfare generally has worked for us because, with our allies, we have enjoyed vast numerical and technological superiority. But we can no longer presume such a luxury. In fact, an expeditionary force in particular must be prepared to win quickly, with minimal casualties and limited external support, against a physically superior foe. This requirement mandates a doctrine of maneuver warfare.

By this time it should be clear that maneuver warfare exists not so much in the specific methods used-we eschew formulas-but in the mind of the Marine.....Maneuver warfare is a way of thinking in and about war that should shape our every action. It is a state of mind born of a bold will, intellect, initiative, and ruthless opportunism. It is a state of mind bent on shattering the enemy morally and physically by paralyzing and confounding him, by avoiding his strength, by quickly and aggressively exploiting his vulnerabilities, and by striking him in the way that will hurt him most. In short, maneuver warfare is a philosophy for generating the greatest decisive effect against the enemy at the least possible cost to ourselves – a philosophy of “fighting smarter..”<sup>208</sup>

The main critic of the adoption of Marine Corps’ use of these warfighting tools to this day is Bill Lind; and possibly a very small number of the original proponents of this doctrine.

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<sup>208</sup> FMFM 1, 1, 15, 37, 77.

They contend that in the post-Gray commandancy years it was forgotten or ignored by the future commandants and the Marine Corps leadership *cadre*.

This was clearly not the case and in point of fact maneuver warfare's doctrinal usage has been evident during the interwar years as being utilized by U.S. Marines in both humanitarian and military environments. It also played a significant role on how the Marine Corps went about warfighting during *Operation Enduring Freedom*, *Operation Iraqi Freedom* and the *Global War on Terrorism* (GWOT). The role maneuver warfare plays can be recognized in the actions of the senior Marine Corps leadership in the development and implementation of a Marine Corps Way of War from maneuver warfare doctrine, campaigning, strategy and tactics by the follow-on actions of this leadership *cadre*.

With the die having been cast by General Al Gray and aided by the initial proponents of maneuver warfare; there have been a number of efforts to further evolve this "smarter warfighting doctrine" into a Marine Corps Way of War. Again the "evolution" concept rather than "revolution" turnover is the key factor in this understanding. It is consistently referred to by the majority of Marines interviewed for this dissertation; and that were in this vanguard of "maneuverists" who fine-tuned the doctrine of Marine Corps maneuver warfare..<sup>209</sup>

When General Carl Mundy assumed the commandancy of the Marine Corps as the 30<sup>th</sup> CMC he continued the developments begun by General Gray which can be seen in an article he wrote for *National Security and Defense* as it applied to sea basing in the littoral environment:

"..Because of our ability to operate from the sea, from the amphibious and tactical aircraft platforms that are small moveable islands of our national resolve, unencumbered by basing requests or overflight problems, we can conduct subtle and controlled engagement across the broad spectrum of diplomatic and military interaction. Because of this, Marines can come ashore rapidly for humanitarian purposes, as we did in Bangladesh, Northern Iraq, and Somalia, and, when needed, we can move into rapidly planned and executed combat operations from low to medium-intensity conflict.....Maneuver warfare is the heart of *From the Sea*. It is a warfighting style that emphasizes our strengths: the use of rapid maneuver, quick decision making, and the inherent flexibility of sea basing. The rapid seizure or securing of ports and airfields by forward operating Marines can enable the entry of Army and Air Force elements, as necessary.... the United States Marine Corps will continue to provide what some have termed, the most general purpose of the general purpose forces with strategic agility, on-scene presence, self-sustaining, and high flexibility, for a variety of crisis response

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<sup>209</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

demands. Our ability to rapidly position two Marine Expeditionary Units off Somalia is illustrative of this point. We have got two powerful self-contained air-ground task forces sitting on the horizon there -- where they can be seen but not touched by clan violence. They have no logistic or political footprint ashore, but in minutes they can respond with an overwhelming combined arms team consisting of anything from attack helicopters to armored vehicles -- launched from the sea..”<sup>210</sup>

It was General Mundy’s efforts to further USMC maneuver warfare in the joint Naval Publication NPD-1 1994 entitled *Naval Warfighting* which essentially was a derivative of FMFM-1 *Warfighting* stressing the principles of initiative, exploitation, combined arms, and independent action by commanding officers at all levels. It was also an attempt to bring maneuver warfare, the Defense Department and U. S. Army driven Netcentrics into alignment. MCWW saw if properly used, Netcentrics could enhance the speed of command issues in order to generate a higher tempo of action than that of the enemy. In an environment of where chaos is the rule, speed of command will aid the naval forces to adapt to rapidly changing situations and exploit fleeting situations at much higher speeds than the adversary. These words echo not only General Al Gray but also Col. John Boyd as they position the Marine Corps to go beyond attrition as a means of success in the Marine Corps battle spaces to come.<sup>211</sup>

The 31<sup>st</sup> Commandant, General Charles Krulak was instrumental in not only promulgating the FMFM-1 *Warfighting* publication, but also adding to the depth and main focus of effort of the original intent of Gray’s “fighting smarter” doctrine, strategy and tactics. General Krulak applied maneuver warfare doctrine during the second phase of operations of *Desert Storm* to the logistics support necessary to support the offensive actions of both the 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV and the 2<sup>nd</sup> MARDIV. General Boomer the overall commander of the USMC efforts during this time period had the highest regard and praise for General Krulak’s logistical support efforts:

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<sup>210</sup> General Carl Mundy CMC, USMC, “The Role of the Marine Corps in the Post-Cold War Era,” *National Defense Magazine*, 1 November 1993, <http://www.heritage.org/about/staff/nonstaff/e/general-e--mundy>. (Accessed 17 May 2014).

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

“..I [Boomer] had commanders who were independent thinkers [a basic tenet of maneuver warfare] ....whenever they told me they could do something, I knew them well enough to know that they could do it even if it involved some risk..”<sup>212</sup>

General Boomer had to place his logistical support way ahead of his combat forces so as to support the maneuver warfare’s fast tempo of the Marine Corps 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV and 2<sup>nd</sup> MARDIV advances on the Iraqi army in Kuwait. Taking the initiative and commander’s intent Krulak without full combat support established the Al Khanjar support base 45 kilometers ahead of the advance. Not only was General Krulak a believer in fighting smarter he was also a successful practitioner of it as well. Because of his efforts the Marines were able to utilize the fast tempo and follow commander’s intent in driving the Iraqis out of Kuwait. This was accomplished much faster than had been planned for by General Schwarzkopf. The Marines in *Desert Storm* were an unstoppable force, and by utilizing the new doctrine of FMFM-1 they further added to the success’ realized by saving lives and treasure in this effort. Fighting smarter had its baptism under fire and proved that the impetus of maneuver warfare would become part of the ethos, spirit and practice of future Marine Corps actions.<sup>213</sup>

During his commandancy General Krulak expanded FMFM-1 and it’s follow on FMFM1, 1-1, 1-2 and 1--3 with his publishing of Marine Corps Doctrinal Publications (MCDP 1, *Warfighting*; MCDP 1-1, *Strategy*; MCDP 1-2, *Campaigning*; and MCDP 1-3 *Tactics*) which were intended to amplify and enhance the original publications and intent of the Gray institutionalization of “fighting smarter.”<sup>214</sup> In General Krulak’s forward to MCDP 1 he acknowledged that the current and emerging concepts such as operational maneuver from the sea derive their doctrinal foundation from the philosophy of FMFM 1.

In addition, he further stated that military doctrine cannot be allowed to stagnate, especially a dynamic doctrine like maneuver warfare. Doctrine must continue to evolve within the Marine Corps based on growing experience, advancements in theory, and the ever

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<sup>212</sup> General Walt Boomer, USMC, interviewer unknown, *Frontline*, PBS, November 1, 1994. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/gulf/oral/boomer/1.html>.

<sup>213</sup> Krulak email to the author.

<sup>214</sup> The Krulak commandancy produced the following enhancements to the Gray doctrine publications. United States Marine Corps, *Warfighting*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP 1) PCN 142 000006 00, 20 June 1997. United States Marine Corps, *Strategy*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP 1-1) PCN 142 000007 00 20 12 November 1997. United States Marine Corps, *Campaigning*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP 1-2) PCN 142 000008 00 20 1 August 1997. United States Marine Corps, *Tactics*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP 1-3) PCN 142 000002 00 20 30 July 1997.

changing face of war itself.<sup>215</sup> His goals were to enhance the description of the nature of war, to clarify the descriptions of the styles of warfare, and to clarify and refine important maneuver warfare concepts such as commander's intent, main focus of effort and critical vulnerability while retaining the spirit, style and essential message of FMFM 1. In the *Preface*, written by General Al Gray we find his hearty and glowing endorsement for General Krulak's MCDP 1's revisions. General Gray continues by stating that war is timeless and ever changing, while the basic nature of war is constant, the means and methods we use [must] evolve continuously.<sup>216</sup> Like war itself, our approach to warfighting must evolve continuously. The Gray *imprimatur* and initial guidance of fighting smarter continues its evolution into the Marine Corps' ethos, education and training. Commandant Krulak was so intent on the furtherance of FMFM 1, that he added two additional publications during his tenure as commandant; *Warfighting Cliff Notes*<sup>217</sup> and *Operational Maneuver from the Sea*.<sup>218</sup>

Before the completion of his term as commandant, General Krulak also provided two ideas that revolve around the Marine Corps new understanding of maneuver warfare. The coining of the terms: “*The Strategic Corporal*” and “*The Three Block War*” was an extension of the maneuver warfare tenets that were the core of the Gray efforts to keep the Marine Corps at the tip of the military spear. The *Three Block War*<sup>219</sup> is a concept described to illustrate the complex spectrum of challenges likely to be faced by all Marines on the modern battlefield. In Krulak's timeless example, Marines may be required to conduct full scale military action, peace keeping operations and humanitarian assistance within the space of three contiguous city blocks, and all at the same time. The thrust of the concept is that modern militaries must be trained to operate in all three conditions simultaneously, and that to do so, leadership training at the lowest levels needs to be a high priority. The latter condition caused Krulak to

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<sup>215</sup> Boyd, “this is just the beginning and change would always be part of the process.” This also answers the critics concerning the evolution of maneuver warfare by the US Marine Corps.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Warfighting Cliff Notes*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP Synopsis of MCDP 1: *Warfighting*), 10 May 1998.

<sup>218</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Operational Maneuver from the Sea*, Distribution 145 00000100,4 January 1996.

<sup>219</sup> General Charles Krulak CMC, “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War,” *Marines Magazine*, January 1999.

invoke what he then called out as the "*Strategic Corporals*."<sup>220</sup> The Marines who are the low-level unit leaders able to take independent action and make major decisions as the battlespace and tempo reshaped itself during the chaos or fog of war being encountered. This is also a core function of commander's intent, albeit in real time. Krulak was able to extend free thinking and fighting smarter in the utilization of a Marine Corps Way of War.

The continuation of the institutionalization of maneuver warfare was carried to the next level by the succeeding commandant General James L. Jones with his timely publication of MCDP 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations* in 2001.<sup>221</sup> The progression is now directed towards the aspects of maneuver warfare in the combined arms section of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF). This MCDP describes the role of the Marine component in providing, sustaining and deploying of Marine Corps forces at the operational level of war. It also directs how the MAGTF conducts expeditionary operations at the operational and tactical levels. This document in essence is the continued evolution of a Marine Corps Way of War that is doctrinally based in maneuver warfare as it applies to expeditionary maneuver warfare and its supporting concept operational maneuver from the sea.

As MCDP 1-0 states:

“..Maneuver warfare is the Marine Corps warfighting philosophy and forms the basis for the concept of expeditionary maneuver warfare. During the late 1970s and the 1980s Marines embraced the theory of maneuver warfare and developed their own institutional approach to maneuver warfare. This process of debate, discussion, and experimentation culminated in the publication of Fleet Marine Force Manual 1, *Warfighting*. This seminal document subsequently provided the foundation for the training and education of Marine leaders who conducted maneuver warfare with great success in Operation Desert Storm. *Warfighting* was followed by a series of doctrinal publications [Krulak MCDP's] that provided further guidance on the theory and nature of strategy, campaigning, and tactics in maneuver warfare. The continued development of new concepts and doctrine, along with the refining of accepted doctrine, will help ensure that the Marine Corps provide the Nation with a balanced force in readiness to conduct expeditionary operations in a dangerous and uncertain world..”<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Krulak, “The Strategic Corporal.”

<sup>221</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Operations*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP 1-0) PCN 142 000014 00, 27 September 2001.

<sup>222</sup> USMC, “*Marine Corps Operations*,” 67.

Throughout this document the initial terms, concepts and tenets of FMFM1 can again be evidenced. All aspects of this new guidance are the central points of General Gray's initial "commander's intentions" as they relate to fighting smarter.

The other major development to enhance the basis of maneuver warfare under the Jones' commandancy was the incorporation of the V-22 Osprey a hybrid airframe used for the combined arms air component. The Osprey enables and enhances the concept of MAGTF to be extended well beyond the 200 mile mark for Marine Corps insertion of troops. The use of the V-22 enhances maneuver warfare because it can deliver Marines at speeds equivalent to traditional airframes instead of the slower helicopters. This adds to the rapid tempo of attacks, shaping the battle space, and expands maneuver itself into new possibilities. This has increased the vertical as well as horizontal application of envelopment and rapid tempo and it has become the compliment to a fighting smarter MCWW.

The Commandant to follow General Jim Jones was General Michael Hagee; a "wartime commandant." Based upon interviews with Generals Conway, Mattis and Kelly the practice of Marine Corps maneuver warfare tenets were applied in both Iraq and Afghanistan under the Hagee commandancy.<sup>223</sup> As for the furtherance of the institutionalization of fighting smarter General Hagee revamped the Commandants Required Reading List. According to Commandant Michael W. Hagee,

"..Warfighting excellence demands that our Marines not only maintain physical endurance and technical proficiency, but, just as importantly, they also continue to develop intellectual adaptability along with effective problem solving skills.."<sup>224</sup>

*All-Marine Message 007/05* announced an updated Marine Corps professional reading program. It was a first step in reinvigorating a key element of Marine Professional Military Education (MPME) according to General Hagee. The revised program maintains an emphasis on warfighting and is designed to instill wisdom and judgment needed in a MCWW.

In November 2006, a panel of retired and active duty military personnel met to update the professional reading program, formally known as the Commandant's Reading List. "There were one hundred and twelve separate books on its required reading list: forty five books for the enlisted reading list and eighty three books for the officer reading list. According to

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<sup>223</sup> Interviews by author with: Generals Conway, Kelly and Mattis.

<sup>224</sup> Puryear, *Marine Corps Generalship*, 270.

Colonel Jeffery Bearor, Training and Education Command's Chief of Staff, there are sixteen books shared between the enlisted and officer lists.<sup>225</sup> The panel concluded that revisions were necessary to reinvigorate the program. They noted that the strategic environment is ever-changing and will become progressively more complex and challenging.<sup>226</sup>

General Hagee approved the revised program, seeing it as a clear continuation of Gray's reading program designed to promote lifelong learning. He recognized that full implementation of this goal, however, would require a new sense of ownership and creative inspiration. General Hagee went on and wrote:

".. All Marines must develop a disciplined approach to studying, thinking, and discussing our profession, fully fostering a higher level of shared competency within our Corps. In addition, we will not achieve continuous improvement in warfighting proficiency without guided professional growth and a sense of comradeship that only leaders at all levels can instill. The revised reading list has a number of books assigned to multiple ranks and provides a starting point for these goals. The selected books will facilitate a common understanding, stimulate intellectual curiosity, and enhance unit cohesion. But a reading list is not enough. The readings become more meaningful when discussed with others..<sup>227</sup>

Further, General Donald Gardner, USMC (Ret.), president of the Marine Corps University, points out:

"..While the individual books give Marines historically-based information that emphasizes warfighting, the discussion of the readings among Marines that follows, properly contextualizes the works and place them in the proper perspective. The group discussions serve to encourage critical thinking skills, create an environment where ideas are introduced and debated, promote higher levels of professional understanding, and raise the intellectual bar of the individual Marine. Those who lack sufficient understanding of the lessons learned in the various works would gain greater comprehension by listening to their peers discuss the material in a manner that they can easily grasp. This approach fosters both unit cohesion and intellectual development, whereas the prior programs only seemed to increase an individual Marine's knowledge of a particular topic. One of the key components in emphasizing a discussion-focused program is selecting appropriate works that are both timeless and relevant to today's geostrategic environment. In addition to classical works, the program now contains contemporary works that emphasize terrorism and the Middle East, such as *The Arab Mind*, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, and *Terrorism Today*. Both sets of books encompass broad topics and are timeless in application. Furthermore, works such as *The Face of Battle*, *This Kind of War*, *Rifleman Dodd*, and others are found on both enlisted and officer lists because these

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<sup>225</sup> General Hagee, *ALMAR 007/05* (Unclassified message to: ALL Marines, 8 Feb 2005).

<sup>226</sup> Boyd, "this is just the beginning and change would always be part of the process." This also answers the critics concerning the continued evolution of maneuver warfare by the US Marine Corps.

<sup>227</sup> Puryear, 271.

books apply across the board and demonstrate sound lessons on basic leadership for all Marines. It is important to note that the works in the program are not set in stone. While all of the selections are essentially timeless and formative in relation to their academic standing, the program will not remain stagnant in terms of its composition. Marine Corps University now manages the Professional Reading Program and will establish a Board to make recommendations concerning what material will best meet the program's enduring objectives in the future.

The senior leadership chose to attack the stagnation of the reading program at a crucial time in our Corps' history. By placing this program at the forefront of his agenda, General Hagee insisted upon high intellectual standards during a time that requires mental agility and analytical versatility. Dialogue and discussion groups can facilitate the critical-thinking skills that are necessary for the professional growth and creativity of Marines, regardless of rank or background. Today's warfare continually demands flexibility and split-second decision making skills from Marines at all levels. Thus, the Professional Reading Program serves as a mechanism to develop the individual Marine's intellectual framework and tactical calculations. The future of our Corps continues to depend on strong leadership and a prodigious pursuit of lifelong learning. This program seeks to encourage all Marines to become creative thinkers in an age where the individual Marine is faced with constant battlefield dilemmas..<sup>228</sup>

### **The Commandant's Reading List:**

In an Unclassified message *ALMAR 007-05* dated 8 Feb 2005, from the Commandant of the Marine Corps describes the current makeup of the Marine Corps Professional Reading Program. As the 33<sup>rd</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Michael W. Hagee, published his list of professional readings, stating that:

"..In order to increase the depth of our professional education, we will reinvigorate the Professional Reading Program.."

The purpose of this *ALMAR* is to initiate actions that will accomplish that goal, to contribute to the growth of aggressive and informed leaders, and above all ensure that their main effort as serious practitioners of the profession of arms remains excellence in *Warfighting*. This is the continuation of the maneuver warfare thread that has characterized the making of modern Marines..<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Puryear, 272.

<sup>229</sup> Hagee, *ALMAR 007/05* Unclassified message *ALMAR 007-05* dated 8 Feb 2005. Hagee *ALMAR* 270.

Gen Hagee’s objective in continuing the Professional Reading List echoes the reason 29th Commandant of the Marines Corps, Gen A.M. Gray originally published the list in 1989. General Gray identified in his initiating documents, six objectives for the Professional Reading Program in order to provide a continuum of study for all Marine leaders. These objectives remain unchanged and are reiterated as follows:

- A. To impart a sense of Marine values and traits.
- B. To increase knowledge of our profession.
- C. To improve analytical and reasoning skills.
- D. To increase capacity of using printed media as a means of learning and communication.
- E. To increase knowledge of our Nation’s institutions and the principles upon which our country and way of life were founded.
- F. To increase knowledge of the world’s governments, culture, and geography.<sup>230</sup>

The background of the Marines Professional Reading Program is that Professional Military Education (PME) serves as a bridge between an understanding of the strategic landscape and the unique decision-making requirements for each combat situation. Today’s strategic environment, characterized by uncertainty and lethality, requires leaders at all levels that are mentally as well as physically agile and capable of making difficult, timely decisions in the midst of complex and stressful situations. Repetitive and varying decision-making opportunities create competent judgment, flexibility, and adaptability. Field training and exercises are just one means to improve the thought processes. However, these opportunities will always be limited. The tremendous experiences that men and women have gained over the ages concerning the nature and conduct of war can, if properly studied and understood, serve as an important force multiplier providing myriad opportunities to “experience” decision making in war.<sup>231</sup>

Discussions with leaders during our recent operations in the *Global War on Terrorism* confirm this assertion. As General Gray stated:

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<sup>230</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

<sup>231</sup> Puryear, 272.

“..Success in battle depends on many things, some of which we will not fully control. However, the state of preparedness of our Marines (Physical, Intellectual, Psychological, Operational) *IS* in our hands. The study of our profession through selected readings will assist each Marine’s efforts to achieve operational competence and to better understand the nature of our ‘calling’ as Leaders of Marines..”<sup>232</sup>

“..A perfect list is always subject to debate and discussions; but that spirit of discussion is what is required to achieve a shared increase in “our” Professional competency and foster increased cohesion of effort. The revised Professional Reading List meets the enduring objectives stated above and will greatly assist in achieving my guidance goal of excellence in Warfighting through competence and comradeship. It was developed based on the following guidance:

- A. The list does not incorporate fleeting trends.
- B. It emphasizes Warfighting.
- C. It is historically based.
- D. It uses serious literature that has an established permanence.
- E. It encompasses a broad context.
- F. And, it is achievable by all Marines..”<sup>233</sup>

### **The Reading List:**

The Professional Reading list is a component of the Professional Reading Program that is, in turn, an element of our Professional Education Program. It serves as a standardized guide that provides a common understanding throughout the Marine Corps and stimulates intellectual curiosity. A number of books are on the reading list of multiple ranks (e.g. Privates /Private First Class /Lance Corporals and 2nd and 1st Lieutenants) for the benefit of all in each audience. The following is the reading list that supports the program and is formatted by Title and Author only:<sup>234</sup>

### **Privates /Private First Class /Lance Corporals:**

*A Message to Garcia*, Hubbard, *Blackhawk Down*, Bowden, *Rifleman Dodd*, Forester, *The Defense of Duffer’s Drift*, Swinton, *The Killer Angels*, Shaara, *The Soldier’s Load*, Marshall, United States Constitution.

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<sup>232</sup> Gray, In Person interview with the author.

<sup>233</sup> Hagee, *ALMAR*, and Puryear, 270.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

### **Corporals / Sergeants:**

*Battle Leadership*, Von Schell, *Fields of Fire*, Webb, *Flags of Our Fathers*, Bradley, *Gates of Fire*, Pressfield, *The Bridge at Dong Ha*, Miller, *The Last Full Measure*, Shaara, *The Red Badge of Courage*, Crane, *The United States Marines: A History*, Simmons, *Tip of the Spear*, Michaels, *With The Old Breed at Pelelieu and Okinawa*, Sledge.

### **Staff Sergeants:**

*Attacks!*, Rommel, *Pegasus Bridge*, Ambrose, *Phase Line Green: The Battle for Hue 1968*, War, *The Arab Mind*, Patai, *The Art of War*, Sun Tzu (Griffin), *The Forgotten Soldier*, Sajer, *The Village*, West, *This Kind of War*, Fehrenbach, *We Were Soldiers Once*, Moore and Galloway.

### **Gunnery Sergeants:**

*Breakout*, Russ, *Citizen Soldiers*, Ambrose, *Command in War*, Van Creveld, *My American Journey*, Powell, *Navajo Weapon*, McClain, *Savage Wars of Peace*, Boot, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the U.S. Marine Corps*, Millet, *Unaccustomed To Fear*, Willcock.

### **Master Sergeants / 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeants:**

*Band of Brothers*, Ambrose, *Bayonet Forward!*, Chamberlain, *Defeat into Victory*, Slim, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence, *Strong Men Armed*, Leckie, *The Face of Battle*, Keegan, *The Mask of Command*, Keegan, *War in the Shadows*, Asprey

### **Master Gunnery Sergeants / Sergeant Majors:**

*First to Fight*, Krulak, *Fortune Favors the Brave*, Myers, *No Bended Knee*, Twining, *Reminiscences of a Marine*, Lejeune.

### **Warrant Officer - 1:**

*Leading Marines: MCWP 6-11 Small Wars Manual*, *The Armed Forces Officer*, Marshall, *The Quiet American*, Greene, *Victory at High Tide*, Heinl.

### **Midshipmen and Officer Candidates:**

*A Message to Garcia*, Hubbard, *Beat to Quarters*, Forester, *Chesty*, Hoffman, *The United States Marines: A History*, Simmons, *Warfighting MCDP 1*.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants:**

*Cleared Hot*, Stoffey, *Chancellorsville*, Sears, *Fields of Fire*, Webb, *On Infantry*, English and Gudmundsson, *Rifleman Dodd*, Forester, *The Arab Mind*, Patai, *The Easter Offensive*, Turley, *The Face of Battle*, Keegan, *This Kind of War*, Fehrenbach.

### **1<sup>st</sup> L Lieutenants / Chief Warrant Officer -2:**

*A People Numerous and Armed, Shy, All For The Union, Rhodes, Attacks!, Rommel, Company Commander, Macdonald, Once an Eagle, Myrer, Reminiscences of A Marine, Lejeune, The Forgotten Soldier, Sajer, The Storm of Steel, Junger, The Ugly American, Lederer and Burdick, Utmost Savagery, Alexander.*

### **Captains / Chief Warrant Officer -3:**

*Command In War, Van Creveld, Eagle Against The Sun, Specter, Field Artillery and Firepower, Bailey, Fields of Battle, Keegan, From Beirut to Jerusalem, Friedman, Goodbye Darkness, Manchester, Infantry in Battle, Marshall, Savage Wars of Peace, Boot, Stonewall in the Valley, Tanner, Terrorism Today, Harmon, The Art of War, Sun Tzu (Griffith), Unaccustomed To Fear, Willcock*

### **Majors / Chief Warrant Officer -4:**

*A Bright Shining Lie, Sheehan, Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era, McPherson, Crucible of War, Anderson, European Armies, Strachan, For The Common Defense, Millet and Maslowski, Grant Takes Command, Catton, On War, Von Clausewitz (Howard and Paret), Strategy, Hart, The General, Forester, The Glorious Cause, Middlekauff, The Guns of August, Tuchman, The History of The Peloponnesian War, Thucydides (Landmark Version by Strasser), The Mask of Command, Keegan.*

### **Lieutenant Colonels/ Chief Warrant Officer -5:**

*A Revolutionary People at War, Royster, Defeat into Victory, Slim, Frontiersmen in Blue, Utey, Masters of War, Handel, One Hundred Days, Woodward, Patton: A Genius for War, d'Este, Seven Pillars of Wisdom, Lawrence, The Army in Viet Nam, Krepinevich, The Lexus and the Olive Tree, Friedman, The Roots of Blitzkrieg, Corum, Supplying War, van Creveld.*

### **Colonels through Generals:**

*Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution, McPherson, All Quiet on the Western Front, Remarque, Carnage and Culture, Hanson, Crusade In Europe, Eisenhower, Dereliction of Duty, McMaster, Diplomacy, Kissinger, Eisenhower's Lieutenants, Weigley, Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat, Hughes, Feeding Mars, Lynn, Generalship; Its Diseases and Their Cures, Fuller, Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command, Sumida, Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman, Edited By McFeely, Military Innovation In The Interwar Period, Murray and Millet, Supreme Command, Cohen, The Campaigns of Napoleon, Chandler, The Conduct of War, Fuller, The Rape of Nanking, Chang, War and Peace, Tolstoy.*

The Commandant outlined several actions that would take place to implement the professional Reading Program. However, he orders that all Marines are to actively read and discuss books from the reading list. There are intentional cross linkages of books among ranks

to help achieve this goal, as discussion and dialog are the best means to increase means to increase common understanding.

Closing comments from the Commandant [CMC Hagee]:

The emphasis of this program is on Warfighting. It is a dynamic program and recommendations and contributions that meet our objectives and my guidance are highly encouraged. I expect all Marines to continue their personal development through reading. I challenge each Marine to actively spend time preparing for the next battle. Prepare yourself in body, mind, and spirit. Share what you learn by discussing your reading with fellow Marines. By reading and discussing, you participate meaningfully in our Warfighting culture.

Keep attacking,

M.W. Hagee

General, U.S. Marine Corps, Commandant of the Marine Corps<sup>235</sup>

CMC Generals Hagee and Conway supported this educational warfighting philosophy and the current CMC General Amos has issued *ALMAR 001/ 13* revamping the reading program also in the spirit of furthering the intellectual developments of all Marines. It must be noted though that the commandant's intent is guided by the original principles that General Gray instituted in the original Commandants reading list. The original reading list was created by Colonel Paddy Collins and then major John Kelly in 1990 – '91.

General Kelly details this development during my interview with him:

“ .. So I [Gen. Kelly] get promoted. I go to TBS [The Basic School]. Lucky enough to get assigned to TBS [when] Gray becomes the commandant and he then goes to TBS at Quantico and says to the CO at Quantico Paddy Collins, a fascinating Marine of old, colonel, and he was one of the henchmen that -- and I say that in a positive sense -- he was one of the henchmen that Gray hired, General Gray hired, to make these changes and to make them in a draconian way: We're going to make this happen in the Marine Corps. So Paddy comes down to TBS. He has a TBS CO and a bunch of us. I was a major at the time, a brand new major. And he starts in. This was about '90, '91.... I guess. This is what the commandant wants and you guys are going to do it and its maneuver warfare and so on and you're going to write it. And oh, by the way, he wants a book list. He wants a reading list..... a reading program. And so he leaves and a good friend that was a CO at The Basic School, Terry Ebert at the time said: "Does anyone know what the hell he was talking about? What is this maneuver warfare thing? What is this?" And I said, "I do." And so I became the front guy at The Basic School and when Paddy left, he said, "And by

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<sup>235</sup> Hagee, *ALMAR 007/05*.

the way, he wants the reading list this week -- or [Gray] wants the reading program this week." So I went home and literally wrote down every book on my shelf which were several hundred on 3 x 5 cards and then came in and met with Paddy Collins at Headquarters Marine Corps and I said, "Okay, this is what I think the program should be and the reason I did 3 x 5 cards was because I thought that we could arrange the books in like what should a private through lance corporal [should] read. That would be a different reading than what the corporal and sergeant should read. Corporal, sergeant, staff sergeant, and oh, by the way, those lieutenants should read those books too. And the gunnery sergeant, the senior enlisted. That's where the captains, the majors and all of that. And it went from soup to nuts. The Marine by Drew Davis, books about Chesty Puller are on the list. Everyone ought to read that one, their PFC's. Easy read book and it's about one of our great heroes, all the way to Dowdy's book on futuristic warfare and all of this and everything in between. And so we presented that to the TBS CO. I arranged the cards and commandant looked at it and said, "Publish it." General Van Riper was a one star at the time at Quantico and he looked at the number. He couldn't add a book to the list so that became the reading list and the reading program the next day essentially. They published it -- they went to work on it a couple of weeks later. It came out in a letter and said okay, this is it. And we should be reading constantly, all the time. And that's where the reading program came from..<sup>236</sup>

In the almost twenty five years since this development, the Marine Corps has fostered a reading program for its warriors focusing on the profession of arms that has set apart these warfighters; and further enhanced maneuver warfare or "fighting smarter" by these educated warriors. Without these educated warriors the Marine Corps Way of War would not exist.

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<sup>236</sup> Kelly, In person interview with the author.

## **Chapter 5 Education and Training:**

“..I also wanted a program created that would go through all the necessary “wickets” and give our people (Marines and civilians working directly for the Marine Corps) Master’s Degrees when they graduated out from our school and that type of thing..”

General Alfred M. Gray, 29<sup>th</sup> Commandant United States Marine Corps.<sup>237</sup>

The purpose of Marine Corps training and education organizations is to establish a highly specialized military force educational system for use throughout the Marine Corps. This applies to all education and training conducted by all Fleet Marine Force units. In order to gain essential competency, Marines require a full spectrum of learning opportunities. The basic foundation for the skills that are required in the Marine Corps consists of education and training at the tactical-through operational level. This education and training is a shared responsibility that is distributed among the schools and also the units in the Fleet, and the branches of Education and Training Command to include the Marine Corps University.<sup>238</sup>

The challenge for Marine Corps teaching and learning establishments is providing the kind of dynamic education and training to officers and enlisted leaders at all the levels which prepare them to demonstrate new skills in rapidly and ever-diversifying operational environments. It ensures that they retain traditional Marine Corps capabilities, doctrine and ethos. The doctrine, in this case is maneuver warfare as adopted and adapted by the Marine Corps in the 1980’s, and enhanced through to today.

Education incorporated with training is an extremely important part of all the Marine Corps *syllabi*. However, different tools are to be used in order to develop an effective Marine Corps fighting force. Education and training complements each other since they are tightly interwoven at each and every level of professional development.<sup>239</sup> Early stages of a Marine’s career are often weighted more heavily toward training and; education dominates the later stages of a Marine’s career.<sup>240</sup> The exception is the Commandant’s reading program. Training is, and has been defined as the conduct of discipline, instruction and, the building in of

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<sup>237</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

<sup>238</sup> For a general frame of reference of educational possibilities, the Marine Corps University site can be accessed at [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx).

<sup>239</sup>, Gilbert Ariely, “Operational Knowledge Management in the Military,” in *Encyclopedia of Knowledge Management*, D.G. Schwartz, Editor. (Hershey, PA: Idea Group Inc., 2006), 281-288.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.281-288.

information as well as various procedures incorporated into the progressive repetition of tasks. The product of training is aimed at tactical skill development and proficiency.

General Gray further elucidated this aspect with the following clarification and guidance when he stated in our interview:

“.. I think that the training was a very important part, almost separate bullets, was training and education but they are two different things so the idea of going back to the basics you had to understand what we meant by basics it was a pretty large thing and not just basic training and things like that. So when we said back to the basics we meant in many ways back to the principles of what got us there every year and back to the things that are tried and true and sort of like what I have said many times “if you want a new idea, read an old book” and so going back to that, making sure that everybody was an infantryman, making sure that everybody understood that the country and indeed the world thinks that they are commandos so why not be commandos? That’s what it’s all about, be what you’re supposed to be and so going back to that was a major structural step to going forward. Going back and creating a school of infantry, creating the institutionalizing squad leader school and all of that type of activity coupled with the effort to create an professional military education program that allowed for continuing education forever because if you don’t continue to study you get behind in any profession and its deadly if you get behind in the profession of arms. What the other thing about the education was that it embraced all, not just Officers, but staff, commissioned officers and noncommissioned officers, in the Marines. It embraced the NCO schools and modified that, it embraced the Staff NCO academies and the like; it embraced all professional schooling whether it was done by the Marine Corps all under the umbrella of the newly formed Marine Corps University..”<sup>241</sup>

Today for Marines, education is the process of mental as well as moral development. It has also been defined as the drawing out of students in order to initiate the learning process and to bring their own energies, and interpretations so as to bear the product of education which is a creative and receptive mind.<sup>242</sup> Education also provides a framework under which civilian and military leaders gain a profound understanding of operations and strategy, as well as to develop critical thinking skills that are required for dealing with surprise and uncertain factors, to be fully proficient in joint matters, and also to be able to comprehend the warrior environment.<sup>243</sup> This has been an ongoing process since the Gray commandancy and the establishment of the Marine Corps University in 1990.

Here in lies the foundations of maneuver warfare or fighting smarter that were the end results of the evolution incorporated into the institutionalization of Gray’s ideas. Colonel Mike

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<sup>241</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

<sup>242</sup> Ariely, “The Interrelationships of Knowledge Management and Intellectual Capital.”

<sup>243</sup> Frank, W. "A Time for Change." *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 1988, 37-38.

Wyly was at the core beginning of these modern educational developments concerning maneuver warfare and Marine Corps education and follow on training procedures.

Wyly stated the following in this evolutionary process for the Marine Corps:

“.. You have to “be there” [lead from the front] to make effective change. It cannot be done by remote control or from far away. Contact with the people who do the work of the organization must be continuous. Making change in an organization is not something you get to do subtly or by halves. My connection with John Boyd, the OODA Loop, and “Patterns of Conflict” began in 1979 when I was just being promoted from major to lieutenant colonel and a 2-star general was looking for someone to take over teaching tactics to Marine captains in the Marine Corps “schools” at Quantico.

The general wanted to liven up the tactics course, make it relevant to modern war, and raise the intellectual level of the schools. He chose me to be Head of Tactics Instruction for the 9-month September to June course conducted annually for about a hundred and twenty captains each year. I had done what I could to keep my pledge to make change[Chip Pilkington Obligation] but the breadth and width of the area I could influence had been relatively small – until the general gave me my mission in 1979. The General was Bernard Trainor, then a 2-star and Director, Marine Corps Education Center. The typical scenario was that a new lieutenant colonel would report to the general’s Education Center and then be handed down to one of the schools. The schools were directed by colonels. So had my case been typical, it would have been, “Colonel, here’s Lieutenant Colonel Wyly, put him to work where you see fit.” But in my case the general already knew me and, instead, told the colonel, “Here’s Lieutenant Colonel Wyly, your new Head of Tactics Instruction.” This approach of arriving “force-fed” caused me to come with a bit of a cloud over my head and is one of the reasons that the Colonel told me that, while I would be in the position where the general wanted me, I would not be assigned as leader of one of the ten conference groups, each consisting of twelve captains (students of the school) apiece into which the 120 captain-students were organized. The stated reason was that I was unmarried and the school liked to include officers’ wives in as many after-hours activities as possible.

The social life and family life of officers arriving as students were important. I was disappointed because, having been a student of the Amphibious Warfare School, myself, previously, I well knew that it was within the small conference groups that serious thinking happened and minds were molded. But most of all, it was the “feedback” that I was going to get from the 12 captains in that small Conference Group. And their wives! How am I doing, captain? Are you inspired? Is this making sense? How do we make it Marine Corps-wide? And - yes – a captain’s wife - does he come home and talk about it – excited? Talking about battle...maybe even about what Napoleon traditionally had cooked up for him for supper on the eves of his great victories. It was three days before Labor Day Weekend and the school would be in session the day after Labor Day. So, getting myself a Conference Group became my first conscious application of Colonel Boyd’s OODA Loop as a means of bringing about a desired end – this even though my first meeting with John Boyd lay a month in the future.

I’d been dating a young home economics teacher – dating, not living with (I am an old-fashioned sort of guy) – and we seemed to be getting along; that is Observation and

Orientation had already happened between us. So I telephoned her, proposed, and explained we had to Decide and Act right away in order to get with the mission at the outset of school. She gave me a “Yes” and we went to the county Justice of the Peace the next morning. At 0800 on the next working day I was in the Colonel’s office with a notarized [marriage] certificate. The Colonel’s sense of honor prevailed and I was a full-fledged member of the faculty, leader of a conference group as well, who would imbue our captains with our high tempo way of war. I owed and still owe a tremendous debt of loyalty to General Trainor for the opportunity he gave me.

I went right to work, first, doing everything I could to “liven up the course”. I had already discovered military history as the vehicle for teaching about real battle both from the lessons it taught and the interest it stimulated. I scrapped old lesson plans that had been followed by the school’s faculty for years. I substituted combat history. Together with General Trainor, I created a list of books we would require the students to read. I changed exercises in planning to exercises in executing tactics – making decisions instead of producing long written orders. And I met Colonel Boyd! All this would lead to an opportunity to spread the word Marine Corps-wide instead of unit by unit, job by job, as I had tried to do up until now. The Amphibious Warfare School drew captains of every military specialty Corps-wide, educated them, and sent them back to duty throughout the Corps, both Coasts of the United States, the Atlantic and the Pacific, the Mediterranean – everywhere.

General Trainor would soon receive his third star and a new two-star would replace him. But I was already “in the saddle” for a three-year tour of duty, fall of 1979 until the spring of 1982. I also set to work to use the three years that lay ahead, conceptualizing “modern tactics.” It was a 3-year task in itself. I published articles in our Corps-wide professional magazine *The Marine Corps Gazette*. Marines wrote responses in the Letters to the Editor column. We responded to the responses.

Often I found myself saying “I still don’t know where I am going but I know what I want to leave behind. I wanted tactics relevant to the fast-moving battles of today, large and small. I wanted to leave behind the set-piece, methodical warfare, some of it still carryover from the days of trench warfare. Colonel Boyd was a breath of fresh air. An entrée into the answer to “Where am I going” and more importantly; where “We, our Corps, are going.” John Boyd and I became fast friends. He visited our school on my invitation, often, lectured, walked around and met young captains during exercises.

General Trainor gave me his strong support at every turn. Privately – often in late night phone calls at home, he [Boyd] would relate his discoveries about air to air combat. I would say, “The same is true on the ground!” and we would share the same concept in a ground context – or the other way around as I described fire fights I’d been in in Vietnam. Each year a crop of captains would graduate. With them they carried the message of what they had learned from our study of history, our exercises preparing for decision-making in battle, and what they had learned from Colonel Boyd.

Just as General Trainor was being promoted and transferred, I learned that a change of command was taking place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division down at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The new commander was Major General Al Gray. I had never met him. But I knew him by reputation. He was bright, extra-energetic, held by some to be a maverick – and – he had heard out John Boyd’s four-hour presentation and liked it! It was the spring of my

second year teaching at the Amphibious Warfare School. I found out who was going down to join General Gray's 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division. We made plans. "Get to General Gray – tell him what's happening!" They did. The chemistry was perfect. General Gray needed no help from me. His goals for our Corps were the same as mine. The General needed no help from me but I needed help from him! It was time to break apart the notion that learning Boyd's ideas, or studying modern tactics under me, was something that happened at Quantico but would be left behind when our captain-students joined combat units in the fleet! My captain –students needed to know that and hear it. This was important. Here at Quantico they were preparing for what they would find happening in combat units – in General Gray's 2nd Marine Division! I invited General Gray to come up to Quantico and lecture to our captain-students. He did it. He motivated and inspired them. Down at Camp Lejeune General Gray was experimenting with new ideas – some of his own – some of the ideas brought from Quantico from our Amphibious Warfare School graduates. It was happening now – change being made Marine Corps-wide. The movement only expanded. It never shrunk back..<sup>244</sup>

In discussing this major development for the Marine Corps with General Trainor I had asked him why he chose Colonel Mike Wyly. His response simply put: "..Wyly uses the Socratic method of pedagogy!.."<sup>245</sup>

Educating leaders is critically important for the continued and efficient advancement of professional military excellence, in order to meet this challenge; it has become a Marine Corps priority. In the ever changing and rapidly developing combat environment that affects Marine Corps leadership, the process of refining and evaluating the educational experience is a continuous effort.<sup>246</sup> Improving the Marine Corps officers Professional Military Education (PME) is vitally important to ensure the continued excellence of this officer *cadre*. The common challenge for the Marine Corps is finding the correct balance that will exist between providing an applicable education for the current as well as for future leaders while they are meeting the operational requirements in any wartime or peacetime environment.

In order to fully understand the education program at the Marine Corps University, it is important to understand the educational foundation as well as the founders of the education and training system at this university. Marine Corps University was founded in August 1989. It was founded by order of Commandant Alfred M. Gray. It must be acknowledged that the Marine Corps University schools have a much longer history that began in 1891. Today's Marine Corps University is the initial legacy of Generals Breckinridge, Butler, Lejeune and

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<sup>244</sup> Wyly, Email to the author.

<sup>245</sup> Trainor, Telephonic interview with author. Also Garvey, In person interview with the author.

<sup>246</sup> This further confirms the guidance of both John Boyd and General Al Gray that maneuver warfare is an ongoing and growing flexible process. This also incorporates the Krulak concepts of the "Strategic Corporal."

Gray. Even before the formal institutionalization of Marine Education, General Gray began the process of bring education into the scheduling of Marines daily time expenditures:

“..At Cadina the Air Force base I found twenty six Air Force officer wives that had Master’s Degrees and educational experience and they came up with the teachers and we paid them and all that and I had this program, you went to school, period and I put it right on the training schedule and we got it down within a couple of months if you were a Marine or sailor no matter where you came from you need to check into Camp Hanson the first thing you did was show your education credentials and tear-away forms, [and you] would go back to school or schools where this kid [Marine] had been and get their transcripts and we had an open learning center kind of a concept where we would then test these people. We had batteries of tests from math and science and English and all that and so we tried to stay away from a kid having to study something he already knew, or something he already had credit for so we place him where he should be and that kind of thing. You know all my experience with education in Marine Corps all through years you know it was all for the non-warriors, if you will, it was all for the supply people, the logistic people you couldn’t go to school if you were in infantry or artillery or something like that there was no time, you were training and out in the field and all that. So I put it right on the training schedule with infantry. Well you know they were, you know, fit to be tied first the pilot unit was the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion 4 Marines under Colonel Slade, who was one of my boys who had worked with me before and a really, really, really good man and he was all for it. Anyway we put it right on the training schedule and all these Company Commanders were griping and grouching because they don’t have enough time to train and all that kind of thing. So I’d meet with all the Officers once a week up at the club they had so many different units there and grouching about it so I said “you know I am not going to tolerate this anymore and unless you prove to me that while you’re waiting for the trucks to take you to central training you are doing gun drill, motor drill or something like that, machine gun drill you have nothing to complain about there is plenty time. Effective immediately, you are now members of the PTA, the Parent Teachers Association, I want you to go down there once a week and see how your sons are doing at school (we didn’t have any woman Marines in Okinawa) and you take those teachers out to lunch and thank them for what they are trying to do.” They grumbled but they did it. And to make a long story short we had a graduation; full up kind of graduation sponsored by the Division, the Division Band was there, we had caps we had everything and all that kind of thing and speakers. Of course we had integrated this with Kawasaki High School which was the DOD school in Okinawa and so [it was] all accredited and all done the right way..”<sup>247</sup>

Further support for Marine Corps educational development can also be attributed to a post-Vietnam issue as stated by General Gray as follows from our interview:

“..There was one other aspect, and I will get back to particularly in Vietnam, we commissioned many of our Staff NCOs and what was left was pretty good but not as good as it could be. We moved up a whole bunch of young people and we never, in my judgment, never adequately prepared them to be Staff NCOs, we didn’t send them for school training or anything like that. The Officer Corps generals was pretty down on the Staff NCOs,

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<sup>247</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

particularly the people who were not out in the field who were not living through the “mud times” as I call them. So, they were very critical and in the mid-70s they had some big conferences about that topic and the like and I took exception to many of the people who were commenting. I said “You got it all wrong, we commissioned our best people. We put out a whole bunch of new people in. We didn’t do anything to teach them or educate them on what they had to do. So it is our fault”. The officer corps fault of course some of enlightened Generals like General Wilson and General Bauer they agreed completely. So we started the Staff NCO academy and got back to doing what we ought to do but that was how that all went down. The lesson there is leadership at the grass roots level and taking care of people is really what it is all about. You know you never forget that kind of thing and if you ever do, you ought to be kicked in the rear end..”<sup>248</sup>

The efforts of the Marine Corps so as to give its personnel formal military schooling started in 1891. This was when the School of Application was established and it was the first resident school for all future Marine officers. The School of Application became the Officers Training School in 1909. It eventually relocated to the Marine Corps base at Quantico, Virginia following America’s entry into World War I. It then became the nucleus of Marine officer instruction. Throughout World War I, many experienced veterans who were returning from France were employed in order to train those who were preparing to deploy in the war effort. World War I demonstrated to Major General Lejeune the need for the education of Marines of all ranks. General Lejeune later insisted for adequate time to be allotted for the study of various weapons and also for their proper tactical employment. As a consequence, the Marine Corps Officers Training School was opened in the fall of 1919, also at Quantico, Virginia.<sup>249</sup> Brigadier General Butler also realized the importance of military education for the professional officers. He continued General Lejeune’s concepts by developing plans for two more courses of instruction. The first course was the Field Officers Course. The second course was the Company Grade Officers Course. The basic Marine Corps Officer Training School together with additional courses formed the foundation that was termed as “Marine Corps Schools” by General Lejeune. This laid the ground work of the Marine Corps University that exists today.<sup>250</sup>

During the interwar years, some key visionaries such as Major Earl Hancock (“Pete”) Ellis foresaw the need for other studies in amphibious warfare. As a result, comprehensive

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<sup>248</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

<sup>249</sup> Lejeune, *The Reminiscences of a Marine*, 460.

<sup>250</sup> Kenneth J. Clifford, *Progress and Purpose: A Developmental History of the United States Marine Corps 1900-1970* (Quantico, VA; U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973). Also see Simmons, 110.

instruction in amphibious operations increased dramatically in the late 1920s, as the Marine Corps foresaw the need to train its officers in this anticipated mission.<sup>251</sup>

In order to expand the Marine Corps Schools, correspondence courses were eventually established to parallel the already established resident courses. In 1930, special groups were then formed from selected Field Officers School students and graduates to work on amphibious landing requirements and doctrine. Brigadier General Breckinridge rewrote the entire *curriculum* into a Marine Corps orientation that consequently championed the “new science” of amphibious and close air support warfare. Breckinridge therefore required his officers to become skilled instructors and specialists in this new Marine Corps “science.”

This amphibious landing from the sea concept became so significant that the Field Officers School was temporarily discontinued. This was done to allow the students and the staff to devote their full time in order to develop the needed doctrine. Two schools were later re-designated Junior Courses for Field Grade and Amphibious Warfare Senior Officer and Company Grade Officer. This reflected the importance of the Marine Corps’ new mission. In 1943, an operationally oriented Command and Staff Course was opened at Quantico, Virginia. This course was based on the need for school-trained field grade officers who had acquired commensurate skills to serve in the Pacific Theater during World War II.<sup>252</sup>

In 1946, the Marine Corps eventually reestablished a three-tiered professional military education system.<sup>253</sup> The lessons that were learned from World War II as well as various new concepts that were based on atomic warfare theory were incorporated into the *curricula* of the Junior Courses as well as the Amphibious Warfare Senior School.<sup>254</sup> In the 1950s, the Marine Corps’ *curriculum* was modified again, and it must be stressed that it incorporated the use of helicopters with amphibious warfare. In 1964, the Junior Course, the Staff College and the Senior Course were re-designated into the new Amphibious Warfare School. The AWS

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<sup>251</sup> James P. Etter, "The Intellect and Officer Education," *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 1988, 34-36. Also see Edward S. Miller, *War Plan Orange: The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897 – 1948* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1991), 115-119.

<sup>252</sup> Simmons, 111. Also see T. A. Caughan, “Educating the MAGTF Officer” (Quantico: Marine Air-Ground Training and Education Center, 2008), Military Issues Research Project.

<sup>253</sup> U.S. Marine Corps. Command and Staff College. Syllabus of Instruction, Quantico, 1990.

<sup>254</sup> U.S. Marine Corps. Advanced Amphibious Study Group Concept Paper Guidelines for Forming a Composite MAGTF, Third Edition. Washington, 1985.

combined sea/air emphasis remained the theme in the courses throughout the 1970s. In 1971, the course for the Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy convened at Quantico, Virginia, and in 1981, the Noncommissioned Officer Basic Course was then established at 18 different sites. The Senior Course for the Staff Sergeants was also implemented at Quantico, Virginia. In 1982, Master Sergeants as well as the Advanced Course for First Sergeants were effectively implemented at the same institution at Quantico, Virginia. Thereafter, a dynamic and effective refinement of the Marine Corps' professional military education system underwent significant *curriculum* changes. The late 1970's into the early 1980's saw maneuver warfare theory being introduced which eventually focused on Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) operations which were then implemented.<sup>255</sup>

In 1989, under the influence of General Alfred M. Gray, the five independent Marine Corps schools were organized and joined into the Marine Corps University.<sup>256</sup> In 1990, the Art of War Studies program was formed and it eventually matured to be fully incorporated into the Marine Corps War College, a senior-level officer professional military education school.

In 1990, the Advanced Course became a course for the Gunnery Sergeants. MCU adjusted itself throughout the 1990s to fit the needs of the Marine Corps. Thereafter in 1993 the Commanders' Program was fully established for all Lieutenant Colonels. E-9 Symposiums and annual E-8 Seminars were established. In 1995, the Logistics Instruction Branch was developed to teach all ranks the art of logistics.<sup>257</sup> In 1996, the First Sergeants course was established, and in 1997 the College of Continuing Education was formed to integrate all officers in long distance education programs within a single college. These events demonstrate how Marine Corps University institutionalized fighting smarter and maneuver warfare for its future.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Wyly, In person interview with the author.

<sup>256</sup> U.S. Marine Corps. Command and Staff College. Syllabus of Instruction. Quantico, 1990. This is also supported by the Trainor and Wyly interviews with the author.

<sup>257</sup> See General Krulak "Three Block War" paper; and email to the author on the topic of logistics during Gulf War I.

<sup>258</sup> Donald F. Bittner, "The Basic School," *Professional Military Education in the United States: A Historical Dictionary*, ed. William E. Simons (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000).

In 1999, Marine Corps University was eventually accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. MCU was accredited to award a Master's of Military Science degree for the Command and Staff College. Thereafter in 2001, MCU was accredited to award a Masters of Strategic Studies to the graduating students who were at the Marine Corps War College. In 2003, MCU was accredited so as to award a Masters of Operational Studies to the graduates of the School of Advanced War fighting. Later on in 2002, the Command and Control Systems Course and the Amphibious Warfare School successfully merged to finally become the Expeditionary Warfare School. Also in 2003, the Logistics Instruction Branch was then renamed the School of MAGTF Logistics (SOML). The Senior Leader Development Program (SDLP) was thereafter established in order to manage the General Officer education program. This program has since grown into the Lejeune Leadership Institute which is now responsible for the development of all leadership programs throughout the Marine Corps.<sup>259</sup>

The Marine Corps War College has been employing a very active teaching methodology that provides professional educational experience where students should be, and are also accountable to their peers as well as the faculty and for their own professional and academic contribution. Instructional techniques and methods also include extensive seminars, case studies, reading, war games, presentations, tutorials, decision exercises, research, writing and examinations, and contribution to actual field exercises. The College also acknowledges that civilian leaders and senior military should complement the competence in Marine Corps national defense matters with an effective understanding of informational, economic, political, and social environments which influence the basic formulation and foundation of the countries' over all national strategy.<sup>260</sup>

### **Marine Corps University Colleges and Schools**

Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME)

School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW)

Marine Corps War College (MCWAR)

Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS)

Marine Corps Command and Staff College (MCCSC)

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<sup>259</sup> [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx). (Accessed May 19, 20 14).

<sup>260</sup> Gudmundsson, interview with the author.

### **School of Advanced Warfighting**

The mission of the School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW) is to provide a graduate-level professional military education for all the selected field grade officers who have already completed the Marine Corps Command and the Staff College; the sister services Intermediate Level School (ILS) programs, or the non-resident ILS programs. Building upon the experience of SAW, ILS broadens and eventually deepens the education of the selected officers in regard to the preparation for high impact MEF / Corps level or the higher planning billets at the service and the joint level through rigorous development of problem solving skills and also decision-making at the strategic and operational theater level of war.<sup>261</sup>

### **The Educational Philosophy of School of Advanced Warfighting**

The School of Advanced War Fighting (SAW) is a decision-making and problem-solving course rather than a “planning” course. However, planning is also widely used as a vehicle for study and preparation of the course.<sup>262</sup> The majority of the learning exercises included in the School of Advanced War fighting can be described as: A Marine is often presented with a mass of different and vast types of information and also given some problems to solve. The problem may also be used to devise a campaign plan, to make decisions in a war game, conduct a staff study, answer a discussion question, craft a brief or point paper, or to even carry out additional research for an essay that has been assigned on a specific topic. The process becomes iterative by breaking the problem into its various elements, to solve these elements, relate them to partial solutions to the greater problem, and also to identify the question on which the whole problem turns and to finally, resolve that question or problem. Implied is the potential for an inherently greater experience and tempo in recognizing as well as discarding distracting non-critical information.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Accessed at: [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx).(Go to PME programs to each site), (Accessed may 19, 2014).

<sup>262</sup> Ibid. (Go to PME programs at each site).

<sup>263</sup> See PME programs. [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx).

This study of military history helps the learners to enhance the understanding of military issues, to develop the analytic mind of the officer and also facilitates the officer's future decision-making efforts when they have eventually graduated. The historical studies are not often used didactically but rather, they are usually approached without bias so that all the conclusions that result through the analysis of established facts can also be later on evaluated without any prejudice. The learner will be unable to anticipate the problems that they might face after graduation and in their further military service. The School of Advanced Warfighting seeks to equip the graduates to solve any kind of problem that might arise later on in the course of their service to the nation.<sup>264</sup>

### **Foundations of the Operational Art**

The Foundations of the Operational Art course examines the science and the art of war at the operational level. This course sets and achieves many intermediate goals that are meant to lead to the attainment of a campaign goal. The core campaign goal is what is to be achieved and the operational art is the how it is achieved. Furthermore, the campaign goal is often set by strategy. The operational art focuses on the arrangement, employment as well as the synchronization of joint forces in terms of space, time and purpose. The Foundations of the Operational Art course, explores the principal issues that surround decision-making and informed thinking as they contribute to achieving the campaign goals in support of central strategic objectives. The basic emphasis and foundation of this course is on the integration of evidence, theory and the development of critical analytical skills. The learning methodology is employed in case-study manner that is informed by doctrine and theory.<sup>265</sup>

### **Operational Planning**

The Operational Planning Course consists of a series of planning various problems during which the learners are expected to execute various selected steps of the staff planning process. The emphasis is mainly placed on the mission course and analysis of action

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<sup>264</sup> Accessed at: [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx). Go to PME programs to each site. (Accessed may 19, 2014).

<sup>265</sup> Curt B. Southwick, "The Marine Corps Art of War Studies," *Marine Corps Gazette*, (1991). 48.

development which are further refined into functional and sound concept of operations. The Marine Corps Planning Process is usually presented by members of MAGTF Staff Training Program. This provides the framework for fundamental planning development in every exercise. Additionally, learning is reinforced through the requirement to teach, the SAW students often act as the Operational Planning Team as well as the facilitators in teaching of the Marine Corps Planning Process that is directed to the Command and Staff College students.<sup>266</sup>

### **The Learning Objects/Outcomes of Operational Planning:**

1. To evaluate the impact of the local conditions and the actual terrain on the conduct of the military campaigns and operations.
2. To assess the effectiveness of the various historical and conceptual methodologies for the campaign design and also for operational-level decision-making.
3. To develop the operational level mission concepts of operations, analyses and also MEF level operations orders.
4. To synthesize the processes, inputs as well as the outputs of the Marine Corps Planning Process and also other planning or design methods in developing the operational orders.<sup>267</sup>

### **Future War Fighting:**

Future War Fighting deals with the central importance of recognizing the eventuality of the existing paradigms that lose their relevance under the culminating pressure of ever changing conditions (Fog of War - *Schwerpunkt*). Several lessons that are offered under Operational Art use an illustrative evidence of future war, past history and how change had been confronted.<sup>268</sup> The Future War Fighting course also provides the learners a platform with readings on and exposure to the existing agencies, institutions and also their efforts to anticipate and further prepare for the future. In addition to these sub courses, each learner is

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<sup>266</sup> R. E. Loehe, "The MAGTF Headquarters Element," *Marine Corps Gazette*, (March 1981).

<sup>267</sup> See PME programs. [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx).

<sup>268</sup> William Kennedy, "What Future for the Service War Colleges." *Armed Forces Journal International*, June 1988.

required to develop a formal paper that deals with the consequences of the significant change negating the underlying assumptions that concern the operational practice, equipment, organization or doctrine.

### **The Learning Objectives/Outcomes of Future Warfighting:**

1. To enable the learners to effectively evaluate how the military organizations adapt, innovate, and change.
2. To assess the likely impacts for a military organization when the basic tenets of that organization change.
3. To enable the learners to evaluate the nature of innovation and also the changing character of war.
4. To analyze the impact of the regional, political and cultural elements on the employment of future military forces.<sup>269</sup>

The College of Distance Education and Training (CDET) became an issue for General Gray. As a former in-listed, General Gray by his very nature of looking out for all Marines felt this area of Marine Corps education was just as important as the rest of the Marine Corps University.

He stated in our interview that:

“..one of the things that really bothered me was that only 25% of the officers would get to go to residence school and the other 75% were left out in the cold or would have to take it by correspondence or extension and so one of the chief parts of the professional military education program I directed, amongst other things, that I wanted the non-residence school effort to be as good or better than residence school effort..”<sup>270</sup>

### **PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION SCHOOLS:**

These are formal schools that are specifically meant to accommodate the requirements of professional military education programs that are set for the noncommissioned officers (NCO's), the Staff NCO's and other officers. Currently, these schools include NCO schools, the Amphibious Warfare School, the Staff NCO Academies, the Command and Staff College,

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<sup>269</sup> See PME programs, [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx).

<sup>270</sup> Gray, In person interview with author.

The Basic School, Communication Officers School, all of which comprise the Marine Corps University. Included within the course offerings at the Command and Staff College are the new top level Art of War Studies Program and the new postgraduate School of Advanced Warfighting.<sup>271</sup>

### **Officer Candidate Schools:**

This is the entry-level training for Marine officers that is equivalent to recruiting and training (Boot Camp) for the enlisted Marines. The majority of the Marine Corps officers often complete OCS in order to earn a commission. The officer candidates go through a 10-week, or two 6-week courses that are spread over separate summers, and are designed primarily to screen, as well as evaluate the candidates' fitness to lead Marines by placing them in various leadership positions in a stressful environment. The students are evaluated during 2-3 day garrison command billets at the squad and fire-team level tactical billets, platoon and company level, during field exercises.

### **The Officer Education System Objectives and Goals:**

The main goal of OCS is to produce a cadre of broadly based officer leaders who:

1. Demonstrate critical judgment, integrity, confidence, and responsibility;
2. Are knowledgeable of "how the Marine Corps runs;"
3. Can adapt and solve problems creatively;
4. Can operate in an environment of ambiguity, complexity, and rapid change;
5. Are fully competent in tactical leadership and technical leadership;
6. Can build effective teams amid continuous technological and organizational change.<sup>272</sup>

At this juncture there seems to be a divergence of thought within the Marine Corps and occasionally from the outside by the lone critic (Mr. Bill Lind) as to the efficacy of teaching the doctrinal changes that comprise maneuver warfare's "fighting smarter". There also seems to be a small but growing group of Marine officers that feel that they are far from the mark in their professional development regarding maneuver warfare methodology as outlined by the

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<sup>271</sup> See PME programs, [www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx).

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

three commandants cited above; Gray, Krulak and Jones. These small groups, who are seeking more in depth maneuver warfare education, have gravitated to Bill Lind. The Lind objections, as well as the some of the current staff tasked with the furtherance of “fighting smarter” seem to be the basis for these young officers position.<sup>273</sup>

What seemingly appears on the surface as an abandonment of the initial efforts to inculcate the doctrine of maneuver warfare into the ethos of the Marine Corps in reality is the conundrum that was offered by Col. John Boyd and reinforced by Col. Mike Wyly that once you are exposed to maneuver warfare it is not the end all and be all; but the starting point of a continual and ever changing military environment based on political, economic, social and militaristic aspect that make up of the Clausewitz’s Fog of War and Friction of War.<sup>274</sup>

In addition, Marine Corps battlefield(s) Commanders who have utilized the concepts and motivation that are inculcated with “fighting smarter” were responsible for the success’ in Iraq (OIF) and Afghanistan (OEF) and the *Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)*.<sup>275</sup>

Colonel Mike Wyly captured the essence of this in his description of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division in Iraq in 2003:

“.. Fast forward to 2003: 1st Marine Division... again this time under the command of past-master maneuverist Major General Jim Mattis. The order of the day is “Move! Fast! Go where the enemy is not. There is security in speed! Keep the enemy off balance. Subordinates don’t wait for orders. Use high initiative! Find the weak spots and go! Twenty days after the forward thrust begins the Marines have covered four hundred miles and made it to Baghdad. Not even the vaunted World War II German Blitzkrieg across France moved that fast! .... Now – what about the small unit actions that ensued *after* the march up? Young lieutenants and captains can relate to you, fire fight after fire fight where it was their initiative, speed, flexibility, and license to make decisions on their own that saved American lives and threw the enemy off balance. They will tell you about “the other side of the coin”, too. *Frustrated* young captains can relate when “rules of engagement” and “bureaucracy” – the nemesis of maneuver warfare – held them back, stifled initiative. Many of those captains are back in Quantico now. I am in touch with them now. They are committed to ensuring that the Marine practice of maneuver lives and grows – along with the heavy influence of John Boyd and his OODA Loop..”<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Lt. Colonel Gregory Theile USMC; and Damien O’Connell, interviews with author.

<sup>274</sup> Wyly, In person interview with author.

<sup>275</sup> Generals Conway, Mattis and Kelly USMC, interviews with the author.

<sup>276</sup> Wyly, In person interview with author.

It is evident that these up and coming officers, some of their current instructors and Bill Lind as well, need to reassess their respective positions as what fighting smarter actually means as it is applied by the Marine Corps. Lind, in his fashion, appears not to be flexible. Any deviance from strict adherence to the German model with its attending German vocabulary and the required “six book Lind Canon” is not acceptable!<sup>277</sup> Couple this with the fact that Boydian maneuver warfare development needs to be dynamic and fluid; as dynamic and fluid as the changing complexion of each military engagement. Each militaristic event effects, and is effected by the operational art of warfare as it unfolds before the “*Strategic Marine Corporal*” and up through to the commanding Marine general officer. Of consequence, the Lind pontifications are unfounded and illogical in light Col. John Boyd’s guidance that this is just the starting point of his military philosophy.<sup>278</sup>

Maneuver warfare as proffered by Generals Gray, Krulak and Jones is a part of the educational systems found at the Marine Corps University, OCS and The Basic School.

A retired “maneuverist” Marine and prolific author on the subject of maneuver warfare who is currently under contract with MCU states that these topics of maneuver warfare are to be found within the *syllabi* of School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW), Marine Corps War College (MCWAR), Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS), The Future War curriculum, OCS and The Basic School curriculum in some form or other.

As stated by Bruce Gudmundsson:

“.. I think that having watched this for about thirty years popping in and out at various points, I first joined the Marine Corps Reserve in 1977 and have since then spent three different active duty tours and actually two tours after that. First tour was boot camp and such. And then having worked with the Marine Corps on and off since then mostly at Quantico, you see things ebb and flow. It's very much like the tides if you'll forgive a maritime analogy.

And the maneuver warfare thread is always there but it's got competitors. Not so much in schools of thought sometimes but also in schools of non-thought. That's to say the competing schools of thought are -- first of all, the Air Force dogma which keeps getting renamed every

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<sup>277</sup> Lind, Interview with the author. Bill Lind’s “mandatory” reading list which he called the “Maneuver Warfare Canon” in our interview. The following books of the canon had to be read in the order presented by Lind: 1. *Enlightened Soldier*, C. E. White; 2. *Seeds of Disaster*, Doughty; 3. *Storm Trooper Tactics*, Gudmundsson; 4. *Command and Control*, Samuels; 5. *Breaking Point*, Doughty; 6. *Fighting Power*, von Creveld; 7. *Transformation of War*, von Creveld. There is no evidence that this was the forerunner of the Commandants Reading List. Today these works are being touted as the Canon of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Generation Warfare at the following website: <https://www.lewrockwell.com/2004/06/william-s-lind/the-canon/>.

<sup>278</sup> Gray and Wyly, In person interviews with the author.

decade or so but remains basically the idea that if you pick the right targets and service them, you're problem is solved. So that effects base warfare, what have you ... And that's been going on since the 1930's and goes all the way back to Giulio Douhet and 1918, 1919 or so. So that idea is there. And that, of course, is probably the least powerful idea in the Marine Corps but it's got a lot of contractor money behind it and if you find yourself in the defense procurement world or certain circles, the Pentagon, that's an idea. The Navy has bought into it too. The Navy and the Air Force have made peace with each other and with this air-sea battle document and the Navy has basically said we're also in the target servicing business. So that's one competitor.

The second competitor is what I'll call the Army way which is this idea that there is an ideal type of operation we want to conduct. We work it out in detail. We design our forces for it. And anything that deviates from that is an interruption in our real job. It's something we don't want to do. I've called it neo-classism (sic). It's conventional warfare and it's based on the idea that you work things out in doctrine. Some clever person writes a script. You learn your lines and you do it. A friend of mine, Bill Lind, who'd played a big role in the maneuver warfare movement, compares it to an opera company that only does Aida. They do a great job of Aida. Their paper Mache pyramids and elephants and the whole shebang but that's all they do. The trouble is when you're called upon to do everything at the Improv which is what most operations are like. So that's a second school of thought.

And the schools of non-thought are the idea that we'll just sort of muddle through, the idea that there is some grand wisdom somewhere in the institution and we'll be taught what we need to know before we need to know it. So these schools of thought have been competing for a long time and at any given time one predominates, one over the other.

So at certain schools, The Basic School traditionally, the Expeditionary Warfare School, The School for Captains, for the O3's, because O3's are ranked on an MOS, are very much influenced by the Army way, that opera company doing Aida model. And in fact they use the word "doctrine" improperly. By improperly I mean that officially the Marine Corps doctrines is only little white books, there's only war fighting and its companions. Everything else is just technique. But they tend to use the word "doctrine" in the same way as the Army does which is to say these scripts for various types of operations.

The Air Force idea gets pretty powerful once you get to the staff colleges, and part of that is because all the service staff colleges tend to borrow material and personnel from each other. When you have political sciences, the easiest sort of military technique or military approach to adopt is, again, that Air Force approach, where it's very simple ... It's simple and it's predictable in its outcome, at least that's the theory. So you have all these intellectual threads going, and maneuver warfare is one of them. It's [maneuver warfare] been enshrined in war fighting but there are a lot of people who don't read it or who've read it and not embraced it. I'd probably include the current commandant in that, General Amos.

And the Marine Corps like the Coast Guard is a monarchy. The other services are oligarchies where you have a lot of four star barons and there's a counsel of barons and the chief of staff or chief of naval operations is merely the most senior of them. The Marine Corps and the Coast Guard actually have a commandant and commandants have a lot of influence, both ceremonial and practical. And a lot of people, of course, will take their cues from the commandant.

So what's the state of maneuver warfare? It doesn't have the energy it had during the Al Gray days but it has influenced the culture. For example, I'll use the anecdote 1984, maybe '85, I was a young officer serving in Okinawa, and I was discussing military history at dinnertime and colonel comes up to me and chews me out. He says why can't you talk about something normal like sports? Now fast forward to the Gray years. It's now 1990. He's been assigned as an instructor at The Staff College and he is ostentatiously reading the same book, one book, but he makes sure that every time he reads it his door is open and that people can see him doing his professional reading. So twenty, thirty years ago if you were seriously into your profession, you were seen as an odd duck and in some cases actively -- persecuted is much too strong a word but it was not the type of thing that made you one of the group. Nowadays those who don't do it apologize for it. I think a lot more people are doing it..<sup>279</sup>

In responding to the following question that it's a maneuver warfare evolution and that the Marine Corps in one way, shape or form throughout its history and into its DNA, if you will, has used maneuver warfare whether it's been institutionalized by General Gray or it came serendipitously through *schwerpunkt* in battle. Gudmundsson stated:

“..I think that's fair. I think that there are underlying -- I'll use the analogy of a river and that the water is always coming in, it's always going out, and it comes from various places but there is a mainstream. And there is, I think, a mainstream in the Marine Corps culture, the DNA to use your term that might be called maneuver warfare “lite”. So for example, you have two officers both of whom are partaking of the Aida view They're people who when it comes to putting together a course or describing what the Marine Corps does have taken a small “d” doctrinaire approach. They want to have the scripts. But when push comes to shove and you tell the Marine to do something different, he'll do it. You give him a different mission, he'll do it; whereas the Army guy will go off and say “no thank you” if he can. And if he can't say “no thank you” he'll stamp his feet and grouse about how this is not real soldiering. So I'm not saying all Army guys are like that. I'm just saying that's sort of the mainstream view that comes out.

So there is an ad hocery about the Marine Corps which comes from self-perception, it comes from history, it comes from pride in being different, adaptive, having a tradition that's not based on any particular mode, any particular technique. So if you look at the way Marines celebrate their own history -- and Marines are very much aware of their history in a way that members of other services aren't. There is a celebration of doing lots of different things. So that creates an inherent flexibility and there is a celebration of the innovator which has a particularly interesting effect during the Krulak years. And I think the reason that the maneuver warfare movement took hold in the Marine Corps and persists, I'm not saying its dominant, but it certainly captured the debate in the Marine Corps. Now, the difficulty, of course, is that there are a lot of people who just don't care about debate, but for the Marine Corps, for Marine Corps ideology it is enshrined in *Warfighting* and the other documents. So it's official.

Anyway, what I'm trying to say is that there's a natural affinity, that there are two phenomena here. There is the maneuver warfare movement per se and there's a broader culture and the broader culture in the Marine Corps again, to use your term, the DNA, is more conducive to the maneuver warfare mindset than the DNA in other services .. “

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<sup>279</sup> Gudmundsson, Telephonic interview with the author.

Further discussion with Gundmunsson provided the *de facto* realities in regard to maneuver warfare and the current posture of the Marine Corps:

“.. I'm not looking for 100% maneuver warfare purity. I'm happy with the 80 percent solution. My central point is that the maneuver warfare movement even though it often had that Teutonic flavor to it because of Bill Lind and because of the accessibility of literature and what was available at the time, is in keeping with a current within Marine Corps history, a broader current within Marine Corps history; and, whether it's a dominant current or not; it's certainly a major current today.

So that's going on. The other thing that's going on is that now that maneuver warfare is official, now that MCDP1 has been enshrined, there's a tendency to use the vocabulary of maneuver warfare whether or not you're drinking from that particular well. This was certainly the case, I think, with General Krulak.

So no commandant is going to argue against maneuver warfare but you get a lot of what I call superficial understanding and not just among commandants, among a lot of Marines in general.

Our mission is to promote the use of the case method within the Marine Corps. And we actually work for a private foundation. We don't work for the Marine Corps. We work for The Marine Corps University Foundation. What happened was that there was a gentleman who had served in the Marine Corps in the late '70's, then gone to Harvard Business School and then went to make a whole lot of money as a venture capitalist. And he wanted it to be said that the secret to his success was a combination of the Marine Corps and the Harvard case method. And so he gave a bunch of money to do that, to promote the use of the case method within the Marine Corps. Quite independently of that, years ago I came to the conclusion that the “lost wax” of maneuver warfare in the German tradition and the thing that we were missing in our maneuver warfare movement was the use of problems, simulations, games.

And a big part of the German system was the combination of these tactical decision games, these map problems, staff rides, things like that. And by staff ride I don't mean a history lesson on the ground as the Army calls the staff ride, but actually going out to a place where you expect a battle to take place, an operation to take place, and working through theoretical situations, fictional situations.

That, plus the attention to the military history I think was at the heart of the German tradition and that was largely -- not entirely -- missing from what we were doing and that it was a practice rather than a theory. So we tended to over-emphasize reading. By "we," we in the maneuver movement because that's how we learned rather than emphasizing these exercise, these games. And the games constantly saying here's the situation, what do you do, what are your orders? And asking people for their decisions rather than some pat answer, some recited -- we're not looking for recitation. We're not testing knowledge, we're asking for a decision. That belief has very much colored what we do. So I am taking this project to use the Harvard case method which is similar in many respects. And I borrow the prestige of Harvard and the fact that once they hit middle age, most military officers' start fantasizing about being businessmen; this adds that missing element in our own maneuver warfare movement.

We are developing these cases and teaching the instructors how to teach these cases. And these are situations that are drawn from history, and drawing them from history is the key,

because I think the critical mistake the Germans made was that the majority of their problems were fictional. Let's just say they take real terrain but invent the situations. And that gave them a bias towards tactics as opposed to the higher arts of war. They tend to neglect logistics, neglect grand strategy, and neglect just anything that wasn't tactics, so they ended up with these tactical geniuses but strategic nincompoops. What we're doing is we're promoting maneuver warfare by promoting the case method. These problems that are open-ended problems that require custom-tailored solutions and we're constantly saying "what's your plan, sir, what do you do" have a big element of role play, work hard to make sure that we draw from a wide selection of historical periods so we're often playing different people from different perspectives. We don't just play Americans. We don't just play Marines. We play all sorts of people. We'll often say okay, we've done it from this point of view, now let's do it from the other point of view. So we have Red Teams who are doing red teams. That's what we do. So our official job is both the case method, our unofficial drive is to promote maneuver warfare through the case method and we're both learning from the Germans but also learning from the Germans' mistakes..<sup>280</sup>

My next question probed the idea that maneuver warfare was embedded in the entire course materials offered at these schools. Gudmundsson replied:

“.. What happened during the Gray years is the maneuver warfare movement captured the vocabulary, and that was certainly a victory and there's a lot of legitimacy in that. Whether that translates into actual belief or action is a different story. But, there certainly has been the triumph for maneuver warfare vocabulary.... I think it was a partial success but the other currents are still there. And what's the dominant current? I think it really depends on what people you're talking to. Our strategy is to start from the bottom and work up. That's a function of who are the most receptive. The people who are the most receptive to this are NCO's. The second group is junior officers and so on and so forth and moving up. The approach is very non-theoretical; it may even be anti-theoretical. But we don't go in there with theory. We just go in there with "here's the situation, here's your role." We start addressing the student in that role so it definitely becomes a game and there is the sense that this is something a little bit different, this is something fun. And then we say "what do you do?" And if somebody throws out maneuver warfare jargon, we say "well, what do you mean by that answer?" The point here is not to get people to recite the decree. The point is to say, "Okay, here's the situation. What do you do?" And if somebody says, "I'm going to get inside their Oodaloop," I say what do you mean by that?" How do you plan to do that? How do you communicate that? What are your orders?" It's very deliberately Socratic and not the dogmatic Socrates of Plato but the open-ended Socrates of the Discourse. A good way to get at our approach is by looking at Mortimer Adler, stuff he was writing in the '40's and '50's; actually he was writing through the '80's. You have to be very Socratic if not dogmatic so that the question is / are we teaching maneuver warfare? I would say we're teaching pre-maneuver warfare. This is the empirical action-oriented approach, open-architecture approach of which maneuver warfare is a part. I think the mistake we mad -- I won't say "mistake" -- this may have been unavoidable given what we had, the resources we had but the imperfection of what we did in the '80's and early '90's, by laying out a dogma and the attempting to lay out a theory and that is something that few people are able to learn from and that is not appealing to a lot of people. So I think what we're doing I think will draw in more

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<sup>280</sup> Gudmundsson, Telephonic interview with the author.

people and give people a deeper understanding and better yet set them on a path of self-education. Kind of like General Mattis [who has a] thirst for reading military history. But, the difference is that it's not just a matter of reading. If we tell people just to read -- first of all a lot of people don't read. We're in a post-literate age. It's a Golden Age for people who do read but it's never been easier to find books but competitors for books are legion as well. But even among those who do read, do people know how to read? And the trick to knowing how to read is to go into the book with lots of questions. So a lot of what we do is we get people thinking. We give them lots of questions. We leave them with questions because our job as instructors is to ask questions not to provide answers..<sup>281</sup>

I then posed to Gudmundsson the following thought; I think the Marine Corps as it approaches maneuver warfare, puts a Marine *imprimatur* on it, a customized version if you will of MCWW maneuver warfare.

He replied:

“..This is something that the Marine Corps culture, the way of doing business that will always evolve. And, again, the point of the maneuver warfare movement was not to create a pure ideal and then judge the Marine Corps against it. The point, I think, was to take a tradition and build upon it. There was a pre-existing inclination and that maneuver warfare pushed the Marine Corps further in that direction. I think that essentially all the military sciences are based on history. That's how you get at them unless you're dealing with something that's purely physical like ballistics. Your way to understand things is history. Our official motto is that there is no goddess by Clio and Michael Howard is her prophet. That's another big part of what we're doing. We're trying to plug Marines into that treasure trove of history, make it relative to them, and make it accessible to them. Fundamentally this is about education because we don't know what they're going to be called upon to do tomorrow, let alone ten years from now. There's a great deal of uncertainty out there, and that uncertainty is inherent for the warrior. So we don't want to give them a blueprint that they're going to have to dismiss anyway. We want to give them the ability to sketch their own blueprints the ability to think openly..<sup>282</sup>

In concurrence with what has been offered by certain faculty of the MCU, the following has been offered by a future Marine officer as he completes the required curriculum of The Basic School:

Question 1: To what extent is the tenets of *FMFM-1* (CMC Gray) and the follow on *MCDP 1* (CMC Krulak) taught at The Basic School today?

“..MCDP1 is the back bone of The Basic School Curriculum in my opinion. Initially, we are told to read the doctrine at least once. After this point, we have a number of discussion groups regarding the doctrine. Most of these groups were roughly within two weeks upon the read completion date of the book. Following these discussion groups, the elements of Friction,

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<sup>281</sup>Gudmundsson, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

Uncertainty, Fluidity, Disorder, Complexity, Human Factors, Violence and Danger, and Physical moral and Mental Forces are witnessed every day. There has yet to be a day to date that we have not been exposed to some kind of element of war listed above. This includes the weekdays when we are in garrison (uncertainty of the schedule, complexity of the classwork, and physical moral and mental forces from PT, class work, and time management). The weekends are not much better, as every weekend is a time to prepare as much as possible to limit your uncertainty for the next week and limit the disorder of gear prep, study time on the weekdays. Finally the field, this is where every aspect of warfighting is implemented. Whether it be an instructor dropping artillery sim [ulation device] next to your patrol, causing you to make a decision on a next course of action as quickly as possible. These situations bring problems because of the disorder. They essentially are testing the fluidity of your order, how can you adapt to a terrible situation, how long does it take you to react, how tactical is your solution, how to you adapt to your plan b going to hell, etc. Other situations could be lack of Intel when going on an attack. A 6 digit grid point is only as accurate up to 100 meters. So when you're only given Intel from higher on an enemy location in the vicinity of a 6 digit point, the uncertainty is always high. In addition to this, the visibility in the tree line only reaches up to 200 meters. Forcing you to develop a plan encompassing any kind of contact you may encounter, because as we all know, you will not be attacked when you are ready, it is when you are most exposed, and in the worst possible position to form any solid counter attack, will you be attacked. These situations force the leader to make an aggressive decision and maneuver on the enemy, reinforcing the violence of action and thought process of bringing the fight to the enemy with a tempo that YOU control, not the enemy..<sup>283</sup>

Question 2: How are the principles of *OODA Loop* and *Patterns of Conflict* by Col. John Boyd presented to these future officers of the Marine Corps?

“..The OODA Loop is a continuous cycle presented to Junior Officers and is preached in hope that we will understand what Col Boyd was trying to say. Essentially, the leader who can process information and data faster will make a decision faster. This rapid information processing starts with knowledge. I was told by one of the staff officers here at TBS that "The Marine Officers best weapon is his mind." We fine tune that weapon by constantly reading and engaging the weapon. Everything we are taught is meant to be interpreted differently, because there should never be one solution or answer to anything. The knowledge gained off of reading is then discussed in groups, and geared toward how we can implement these readings. The idea of "getting in the enemy's OODA" is something that we must always be attempting to accomplish. It is never good enough, to just say what the enemy is doing, but what he is thinking, and what he will think/do upon contact, or maneuver, or any other variable thrown in to combat. This is developed in our Period of Instruction and described as the Enemy's most Likely Course of Action. This is where we make assumptions based on Intel and previous enemy actions on the current enemy situation. This is to include his MG orientation, fields of fire, defensive positions, etc. After that, we establish conditions which will force the enemy to conduct some type of movement (Defend heavily, reinforce from others, attack, withdraw, or delay our advance). Essentially the purpose in this is to get inside the enemy's OODA. What he will be doing before we get there, what will he do when we get

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<sup>283</sup> Russell Cox email to the author dated March 15, 2014. Russell Cox is currently completing The Basic School at the Marine Base, Quantico Va. He anticipates graduating TBS by August 31, 2014.

there, and then what will he do when we impose our will on him. This is called "red ceiling" the enemy, because as we all know, nobody stands still like crazy Ivan on the range, the enemy is moving and as we adapt to his movements he adapts to ours. Thus the constant struggle of getting inside the enemy's OODA ties directly to warfighting's fluidity. The faster our Tempo and more friction forced on our enemy, the less likely he is to cycle his OODA..<sup>284</sup>

Question 3 How is this doctrine of USMC maneuver warfare presented to these future officers getting ready to lead Marines on an off the battlefield?

“.. Maneuver warfare is presented to the young Lts. of the Marine Corps as theory, to which we apply it in our own means. Much like MCDP 1, MCDP 1-3, and all other Marine Corps doctrine, Marine Officers are expected to grasp concepts and theories, and run wild with them. This is the beauty of small unit leadership. Maneuver warfare is presented to us as fluidity and tempo on the battlefield. The instructors are always pushing and probing, especially in the field, to force the unit leaders to make clear and concise decisions faster and faster. Every moment spent "thinking" of what to do next is another moment spent in a kill zone, and that is the mindset pushed on us. In Garrison, the tempo at which we keep activities and keeps Marines engaged helps keep them in tactical mindsets. We may have a tactical discussion group where we are a squad leader on a patrol and we are faced with a combined arms dilemma, or on a squad attack and in route to the objective you take fire and have the ability to destroy an enemy platoon, but it is not near your objective. It is in these discussion groups where the mind is sharpened after the tactics are taught. These groups are where maneuver theories are applied in possible real life theories in garrison..<sup>285</sup>

The question has been posed concerning a Marine officer's current education based upon the Cox interview:

Do I [the author] think this interview's responses are shared widely at The Basic School? And additionally how could I prove it. In response I offer the following thoughts:

1. All the maneuver warfare doctrine has been defined and incorporated in the educational and training processes.

2. Every commandant from General Gray to today has in their own way, signed off on and expanded Gray's "intent" in FMFM-1 *Warfighting*; so *de jure*, the die is cast until this doctrine changes by some future commandant's direction.

3. *De facto*, the responses to my questions are in the traditions and exposure to the original intent of Colonels Wyly and Boyd and General Gray before and during his commandancy.

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<sup>284</sup> Cox, Email to the author.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

4. It seems per Bruce Gudmundsson it is taken seriously by the NCO and the younger junior officer *cadres* within the Marine Corps.

5. Albeit small in number Marine Corps generals such as Mattis, Conway, Kelly questioned have attested to the success won because of Marine Corps battlefield applications in Iraq and Afghanistan. This also implies that there are a large number of Majors through Colonels and Brigadiers of Marines serving under them and utilizing the maneuver warfare doctrine; as their predecessors did in Grenada and Gulf War I, Somalia and other “Small War” applications.

For those who have been the torchbearers, evolutionists; and past, current or future practitioners for this doctrine it must be noted that there is nothing more important than this idea of fighting smarter for the Marine Corps by using the doctrine of maneuver warfare. And, any abrogation of this exposure for Marines’ military education would not be acceptable especially in the current 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Generation Warfare environments. Lastly it may be added that this error of omission would be a throwback to the days of the attritionist ways of American warfare.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Hammes, 208. The 5<sup>th</sup> Generation warfare thesis is currently being debated as to its validity.

Also see Derek K. Barnett, “The Fallacies of Fourth and Fifth Generation Warfare,” *Small wars Journal*,” (2010). <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-fallacies-of-fourth-and-fifth-generation-warfare>. (Accessed May 19, 2014).

Also see Maier and Marvis, “Fifth Generation Warfare – A Special Forces Concept Or An Inevitable Perspective?,” *Romanian Military Thinking*, (January 2014), [http://www.mapn.ro/smg/gmr/Engleza/Ultimul\\_nr/maier,mavris-p.100-105.pdf](http://www.mapn.ro/smg/gmr/Engleza/Ultimul_nr/maier,mavris-p.100-105.pdf). (Accessed May 19, 2014).

## Chapter 6: 1991 to 2001 Small Wars to Big Wars

This chapter will discuss the use of maneuver warfare by the Marine Corps. The chapter's main focus will be on strategy and tactics used by the Marine Corps and its use of maneuver warfare principles in small actions. It will span the military actions and humanitarian assistance in the post *Desert Storm* period through to the start of *Operation Enduring Freedom* in 2001. To recap the concepts of warfare in general, there are three accepted warfare theories today:

1. Attritional warfare,
2. Revolutionary or Irregular warfare,
3. Maneuver Warfare.

This time period exemplifies what has been acknowledged as “Small Wars.” It is a projection of force employed by the United States Marine Corps for what could be considered an emergency use of military assets to either join in combat or carry out life sustaining operations in times of natural or man-made disaster.

The term is defined in the 1940 Marine Corps publication *Small Wars Manual*, FMFRP 12-15 as follows:

“.. Small wars defined.....The term "Small War" is often a vague name for any one of a great variety of military operations. As applied to the United States, small wars are operations undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our Nation..”<sup>287</sup>

It must also be noted that this publication was written in the post “Banana Wars” era. The kinetic memory of these Marine deployments, are still fresh in the DNA of Marine Corps’ “Small Wars” history. It defined the doctrine, tactics, campaigning and strategy that eventually was incorporated into the Maneuver Warfare Doctrine that was refined and enhanced by Gen. Al Gray and his *cadre* of evolutionists. It was during the Gray Commandancy that the *Small Wars Manual*, FMFRP 12-15 went into a reprint and redistribution to all Marines.<sup>288</sup> The *Small War Manual* finds its way into the current military environments of *Operation Enduring Freedom* and *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. A redefined

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<sup>287</sup> *Small Wars Manual*, 1-1, 1.

<sup>288</sup> Formally available as NAVMC 2890, *Small Wars Manual*, originally printed in 1940. This was reprinted at the direction of Gen. Gray CMC, Marine Corps Combat Development Group, (Quantico VA: 1990).

joint *Army / Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (U.S. Army No. 3-24 / U. S. Marine Corps MCWP No. 3-33.5) was published in 2007 and co-authored by General David Petraeus (US Army) and Lt. General James Amos (U.S. Marine Corps / Asst. Commandant). Of importance here is the fact that close to ninety percent of this publication comes from the original Marine Corps 1940 *Small Wars Manual*, FMFRP 12-15.<sup>289</sup>

The United States Marine Corps had over its long and successful history integrated maneuver warfare doctrine, strategy and tactics into its combat and humanitarian approaches. The concept of maneuver warfare, for the layman, is nothing more than a “clever” plan, action or movement to gain the upper hand in an “adversarial” event. An adversary may mean the enemy and or the elements that are the cause(s) of natural and man-made disasters. This therefore would mean that maneuver warfare can be expressed not only through military actions but also through non-military actions such as humanitarian assistance.

As stated in the previous parts of this dissertation, the success of maneuver warfare depends on the use of these following principles:

1. The military force that applies this form of warfare has to be decentralized.<sup>290</sup>
2. If an action has to be communicated to the highest rank, then the decision transmitted all the way back through the process will prove time consuming and ineffective.
3. Time is a major aspect of every military operation; maneuver is about gaining a time advantage over the opposing military or a non-military event.
4. Decisions have to be made as per the situation,<sup>291</sup> and then communicated later to the chain of command; this done in order to give the headquarters a gist of the military’s performance so that it can carry out its oversight role effectively.
5. Maneuver warfare is characterized by a disorganized approach to combat, the military has to be ready to adopt and work with the disorder and chaos.<sup>292</sup>
6. Communication through the entire rank is at times decentralized since it is hard to tell what path the action is taking from the components of higher ranks.

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<sup>289</sup> Conway, In person interview with the author.

<sup>290</sup> Lind, “Maneuver Warfare Handbook,” 13.

<sup>291</sup> This concept of NCO’s making key decisions was further developed by General Charles Krulak’s “Strategic Corporal.”

<sup>292</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with author.

7. Spreading confusion or chaos to the enemy gives the attacking military an advantage over the opposing military.<sup>293</sup>

8. Operating under such chaotic conditions can take its toll on the attacking military as well.

9. There should never be a set battle space *formula*, there are no guidelines as the military's actions are to remain unpredictable to the opposition.

10. It is very important to remain as subtle as possible and keep the opponent guessing.<sup>294</sup>

11. In humanitarian assistance actions, speed not deception is the desired outcome.

The United States Marine Corps has used this approach in most of its operations to an extent that it is actually the main focus of effort for these operations. This chapter will focus on its strategies and tactics in selected operations while giving special attention to the application of maneuver warfare. The core areas of operations addressed in this section include: *Operation Provide Comfort*; *Operation Fiery Vigil*; the Los Angeles Riots; Somalia *Operation Restore Hope*; Balkans *Operation Deny Flight*; *Operation Distant Runner*; Haiti *Operation Uphold Democracy*; Liberia; Central African Republic; Bosnia / Kosovo; Albania; Sierra Leone; Eritrea; *Operation Desert Fox*; Balkans *Operation Allied Force*; East Timor.

Marine Corps General John Kelly (CO, U.S. Southern Command) reflects on “Small Wars” and the importance of them to the Marine Corps:

“..I think the Marine Corps was actually very, very maneuverish prior to World War II, and a lot of that just had to do with the nature of warfare in the Caribbean and the fact that we didn't have -- this is, I think, important -- we didn't have any written doctrine.

The Marine Corps really didn't have truly written [code or doctrine] we had a Small Wars Manual. Small Wars Manual is mostly a discussion about warfare but there's no "how to" in the suggestions about it. But there's no "how to" if you will.

Even if you go back to World War I, as we prepared to go overseas, we essentially were taught methodical warfare by the attritionists in it and that is the French. And so from that we fell in on the French style of warfare in World War I. But then when we came out of that, totally methodical -- the firepower intensive and all that

-- and then when we came out of that and operated in the Caribbean, we just had a bunch of NCO's and young officers who were doing warfare and thinking through the challenges they had with no written doctrine. Small Wars Manual gets written, which didn't then pertain to World

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<sup>293</sup> Conway and Kelly, In person interviews with the author.

<sup>294</sup> Mattis and Gray, Interviews with the author. This is also a derivative of the incorporation of the Asian military philosopher Sun Tzu's concepts applied to the Boydian posture of warfighting. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Ralph D. Sawyer and Mei-chun Lee Sawyer (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1994), 134-137.

War II really. But you had a bunch of guys, NCO's and young officers, who had been in the Caribbean fighting and thinking and adjusting and they were very intellectually agile guys.

So we took that jungle war experience to the first battle, Guadalcanal, and we were very good at it. We were very, very, very good. The Japanese were supposed to be the best jungle fighters in the world and the first time they met Americans on a battlefield they met their match in the U.S. Marines because of the experiences coming out of the '20's and '30's from Haiti and Nicaragua and Dominican Republic, all that..<sup>295</sup>

The lessons learned from small wars and humanitarian assistance throughout the twentieth century became a continuing thread in the evolution of the Marine Corps and its institutionalizing maneuver warfare into a MCWW.

### **Operation Provide Comfort**

The 1980's to 1990's witnessed the cruel reign of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. During his dictatorship, he caused immense suffering and inflicted numerous atrocities on the citizens of Iraq. One ethnic group that bore the greatest of Saddam's horrors was the Kurdish minority in northeast Iraq. The Kurds were a segregated people whose lives revolved around Kurdish tribal loyalties. To this end, their undying loyalty to their tribal heritage earned them the enmity and animosity from other Iraqi tribal and political groups, as well as the Ba'athist regime in particular. Saddam Hussein unleashed a deathly campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Kurds. His tool of inflicting this ethnic cleansing was the Iraqi military and the ultimate use of chemical warfare. He escalated the brutality when the Kurds openly revolted against his Ba'athist regime. The reports estimate that over five thousand Kurds perished in this 1988 chemical warfare attack.<sup>296</sup> As the suffering escalated, the Kurds fled Iraq for neighboring countries. They lived in refugee camps in the rugged mountainous regions of Turkey. The temperatures there were extreme and harsh, usually below the freezing point. The sanitation was poor and this was worsened by disease and famine. Conditions in these camps made it difficult for the refugees to be thankful to the Turkish government. Turkey had naturally been reluctant about the influx of Kurdish refugees but obliged after international pressure made them yield. As their relationship with the Turkish government became more

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<sup>295</sup> Kelly, In person interview with the author.

<sup>296</sup> Edward Wong, "Chemical Weapons: As Trial Begins, Poison Attack Haunts Kurds" *New York Times*, August 21, 2006, National Edition, World, A1.

strained, the Kurds' plight caught global attention and the focus of the United Nations.<sup>297</sup> President Bush (41) ordered the formation of a Joint Task Force (JTF) whose mission was to protect the Iraqi Kurds. This military response action was *Operation Provide Comfort*. The principal objectives of the operation as stated by President Bush were to enable the Iraqi Kurds to return home and to live in peace, free from oppression, free to lead their own lives.<sup>298</sup> This military operations revolved around delivery of humanitarian aid in the demilitarized zone as JTF fighter planes patrolled the skies above Iraq's 36<sup>th</sup> parallel.

The 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and a battalion of the Army's 325<sup>th</sup> Airborne Infantry was taken to Zakhu, Iraq. It was named JTF Bravo. They were to oversee the return of the Kurds to their homes. Moreover, they were charged with the duty of building resettlement camps where the Kurds would have access to food, water, sanitation and security. They were also charged with handling unexploded ordnance within the camp and creating avoidance awareness of these explosives. They effectively carried out their tasks as assigned. It was quite difficult to promote peace while at the same time warding off the Iraqi Army which posed possible assaults at every opportunity. The policy applied by the Marine Corps was called "aggressive restraint." This involved not condoning any Iraqi attacks, but at the same time it was supposed to allow the Iraqi military to withdraw peacefully from the Kurdistan region in this post-Gulf War I environment. This became essential because the Marines were in this operation at a numerical disadvantage.<sup>299</sup> Instead of engaging with military force they resorted to peaceful but aggressive means of approaching the conflict. This is a tenet of maneuver warfare's refusing to give battle unless it was to the benefit of the aggressor, in this case, the Marine Corps. This caused general confusion within the Iraqi Army, but saw the success of this operation in the long term.

The Marines also involved the Kurds in the decision making process and the Kurdish resettlement plan. In addition, the Marines let the Kurds take part in the construction of the settlements. This brought Kurdish loyalty, giving the Marines an advantage over the Iraqi

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<sup>297</sup> Department of the Army, Operation Provide Comfort, *Humanitarian Intervention: Assisting the Iraqi Kurds in Operation PROVIDE COMFORT, 1991*, CMH Pub 70-78-1, 29.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>299</sup> Brown, "Humanitarian Operations in Northern Iraq 1991: With Marines in Operation Provide Comfort 1995," 18.

Army by winning support of the population. It was a very subtle way of bringing maneuver warfare to humanitarian assistance. This was a page taken from *Small Wars Manual*, FMFRP 12-45 and the DNA of the Marine Corps.<sup>300</sup> *Operation Provide Comfort* integrated a sub-operation which was named “*Encourage Hope*”. It was mainly concerned with the psychological aid given to the refugees. The integration of this operation has made *Operation Provide Comfort* one of the most successful operations in the history of humanitarian assistance as provided by the Marine Corps to date.

### **OPERATION FIERY VIGIL-PHILLIPINES**

Mount Pinatubo, a volcano that had been dormant for 600 years, suddenly erupted in Philippines. The volcano sent ash and smoke 40,000 feet into the air, plunging the Philippine island of Luzon into darkness. For the next two days lava flowed out of the mountain completely covering the landscape. In addition, a typhoon hit the Philippines coastal area at the same time. The rain water mixed with the ash that was suspended in the air and gave the appearance that it was raining mud. The weight of this mixture made roofs collapse. The ash that had settled around the mountain also mixed with the water and flowed down the Pinatubo River. In response to this growing humanitarian crisis, a United States Marine Corps military contingent was deployed. It was made up of 6,000 Marines and sailors from III MEF and Marine Barracks at Subic Bay Naval Base. Their mission was to help the 50,000 U.S servicemen, and dependents as well as thousands of Philipinos who had been displaced by the onset of the volcanic eruptions and the typhoon.<sup>301</sup>

The operation was named *Fiery Vigil*. It was led by MAGTF 4-90, in which Col. Marshall B. Darling was in command. MAGTF 4-90 was later joined by the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) and MAGTF 2-91 which were led by Col. Terrence P. Murray and Lt. Col. Larry E. Johnson respectively. Despite their recent departure from the Gulf War, the III MEF was to aid in the relief effort by delivering the required supplies for the Marines in the Philippines.<sup>302</sup> The Marines had several missions during the operation which entailed assisting the topographical

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<sup>300</sup> *Small Wars Manual*, 17-32.

<sup>301</sup> Adam B. Siegel, Requirements for Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Operations: Insights From Seven Case Studies, *Center for Naval Analyses* (Alexandrea VA: 1995), 71.

<sup>302</sup> Matthew Robinson, Operation Fiery Vigil: Philippine Relief Effort 1991, *Marine Corps Gazette*; Nov 1991; 75, 11; 110.

experts in studying the volcanic activity, conducting surveys to determine where mudflows were likely to develop, deploying security detachments, constructing potable water units, distributing food, evacuation, repair of power sources and conducting cleanup operations. Marine Corps helicopters that were involved in the evacuation included HMH-772, based with MAG-36 on Okinawa, backed by HMM-163 from the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) and Helicopter Squadron 12 from the USS *Midway* (CV 41). By 28<sup>th</sup> July, the entire evacuation exercise was completed. The speed and agility evident during the operation was a vital insight into maneuver warfare as it was applied to humanitarian assistance. In this case, a high rate of tempo coupled with a main focus of effort paid off for the Marine Corps. An estimated 20,000 people were evacuated from the Philippine island of Luzon. The greatest percentages of these evacuees were sent to displacement centers on Cebu, aboard Seventh Fleet ships that were also dispatched. Other evacuees boarded aircraft to continental United States, after a short stopover at Guam for processing. The naval base at Subic Bay was in operation during the entire relief operation even though it was damaged. The employment of the MAGTF 4-90 and MAGTF 2-91 shows the relevance of maneuver warfare in this entire combined air, land and sea operation.<sup>303</sup> The Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) is an asset of the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) program whose main characteristic is its ability to respond quickly to all incidents ranging from humanitarian operations to main theater war efforts.

### **LOS ANGELES RIOTS**

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1991, Los Angeles Police Department officers brutally beat Rodney King, an African American. The beating was preceded by an intense car chase across LA County between the victim, and LA Police Department. A resident video recorded the beating incident from his balcony, then later made it available to the local television station, KTLA. The video only showed Rodney King being struck by the police batons over 50 times. More than twenty officers were present at the scene. King sustained serious injuries including twelve fractures. King was released without any charges being pressed against him while the arresting officers were charged by an LA grand jury in connection with the incident. The judge in the case declined to press charges against the seventeen officers who watched the

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<sup>303</sup> COL. Carl D. Matter, Maritime Prepositioning: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow in *National Security Challenges for the 21st Century*, Williamson Murry, Ed., (Carlisle, PA.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2003), 266. [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2003/ssi\\_murray.pdf](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2003/ssi_murray.pdf). (Accessed 20 May 2014).

incident including the four officers who had administered the beating. In a change of venue the four officers who had beat King were also later acquitted.

Because of the legal rulings, a county-wide riot took place in Los Angeles County. It was instigated by its minority population of African Americans. The tipping point of the riots was reached when a white truck driver was pulled out of his truck and beaten almost to death by the now out of control rioters. Governor Pete Wilson declared a state of emergency and National Guard troops were called upon to contain the situation. Heavy patrols were authorized on the streets by the California National Guards (CANG) and a Marine Corps Reserve component. The Marines which were engaged did not escalate their actions in force projection levels. However, the Marine Corps mere presence on streets provided enough incentive at keeping the rioters at bay and prevented further looting and destruction of public and private property. With strategic locations and active patrols the Los Angeles streets became pacified.<sup>304</sup>

A key tenant in maneuver warfare is shaping the AOR and then deciding when to offer force projection to an adversary. The Marine Corps Reserve component's posture acted as an intimidation measure for the rioters. In this regard, the riots came to a sudden end as law and order was restored. A major part of *Warfighting* is imbued with not only Boyd's OODA Loop, but also the Asian military philosophy of Sun Tzu which offers the guidance required to understand one's adversary before thoughtful force projection is applied. In this case the Marine Corps had the situation well in hand by not delivering force projection.<sup>305</sup>

### **BALKANS OPERATION DENY FLIGHT, BOSNIA/ KOSOVO/ ALBANIA, OPERATION ALLIED FORCE**

I have taken the liberty of combining three different yet independent Marine Corps actions as they played out in the dissolution of the nation state of Yugoslavia into its original ethnic entities' boundary lines. The first was *Operation Deny Flight*. Its importance for maneuver warfare applications is minimal, yet when coupled with the other operations in Bosnia it helps shape this future battlefield as well as disrupt the actions and developments of the Bosnian Croats and Serbs war plans and strategy. The second and third operation; Bosnia,

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<sup>304</sup> Jonathan Peterson et al, "South LA Burns and Grievous" *Los Angeles Times Archives*, May 1, 1992. National Edition: A1. <http://graphics.latimes.com/riots-pages/#2>. (Accessed, 20 May 2014).

<sup>305</sup> FMFM1-3 "*Tactics*," 77-85.

Kosovo and Albania along with *Operation Allied Force* are excellent examples of employing maneuver warfare for the Marine Corps in the area of combined arms as well as employing other maneuver warfare strategy and tactics.<sup>306</sup>

Bosnia lies in the middle of the former Yugoslavia. It is made up of three major socio-ethnic groups. These are the Muslims who make up about forty four percent of the population, the Christian Serbs who are thirty one percent and the Croats who are seventeen percent. In total the population constitutes 4.6 million people. In 1992 a referendum that sought Bosnia-Herzegovina's independence from Yugoslavia was approved which caused fighting to break out. In a bid to expand the boundaries of their territories and to link them, the Serbs embarked on a military campaign. The campaign was also aimed at cleansing the Muslim ethnic tribes that were not of Serb origins. This entailed the extensive use of murder, rape and forced relocation as a way of forcing the Muslims and Croats out of the territory that the Christian Serbs believed was theirs. The Bosnian Croats employed the same methods in the regions they sought to capture. Bosnia-Herzegovina was therefore thrown into a series of socio-ethnic cleansing campaigns that led to enormous bloodshed.<sup>307</sup>

The United Nations employed their UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in an attempt to bring the sectarian fighting to an end and restore peace. This became a non-starter because there was insufficient political support from the key countries in the European Union. It was perceived that the strength of the Bosnian Serb position was too formidable to risk UN action. The United States also refused to engage in this conflict. Eventually the Clinton Administration agreed to work alongside the French and the British in resolving the conflict. The Bosnian Serbs were viewed as the initiators of the conflict, but using extreme force against them was not condoned by the world court of public opinion; including a reconstituted post-Cold War Russia. Russia which had maintained close ties with the Serbs would never tolerate use of such force against the Serbs. Acting within the limits of United Nations mandate and resolutions remained the only U.N. option to retain its position of neutrality and

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<sup>306</sup> Hoffman, 642 -644. Also Simmons, 339.

<sup>307</sup> Chuck Sudetic, "Envoys Offer New Report of Serbian 'Ethnic Cleansing' in Bosnia," *New York Times*, Published: September 27, 1992, National edition, A1.

still be able to effectively employ its combined military power. These provisions led NATO to offer their air assets to UNPROFOR in October 1992.<sup>308</sup>

The mission of *Operation Deny Flight* revolved around three objectives. Foremost, was to carry out aerial monitoring and ensure adherence to the U.N. Security Council Resolution 816, which enforced a ban on all fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft in the airspace of Bosnia-Herzegovina, also known as the “No-Fly Zone” (NFZ). Second, it was to provide protective air cover, Close Air Support to U.N. forces on the ground upon request and under the jurisdiction of the U.N. peace keeping forces as per the U.N. Security Council Resolutions 836, 958 and 981. Third, it was to carry out airstrikes, with U.N. approval, against designated targets that put at risk the security of the U.N. safe areas which included Bihac, Gorazde, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Tuzla and Zepa.<sup>309</sup>

The Marine Corps’ Marine All Weather Attack Squadron 533 (VMFA (AW)-533) commenced on their bombing missions. These attacks were aimed at preventing Serbian planes from assaulting the Bosnians. The Ubdina airfield was struck. This airfield was used by the Bosnian Serbs in their operations. The airstrikes came as a result of Bosnian Serbs’ violation of the U.N. no-fly zone. This led to the closure of the airport when it was rendered ineffective by the MAWAS bombing sorties. When the Bosnian troops shelled the U.N. safe areas, the military response was to conduct airstrikes on the Pale ammunition storage bunkers. This too, was given as a primary mission to the MAWAS.<sup>310</sup>

In addition, the 26<sup>th</sup> MEU was involved in active combat with the insurgents within two weeks as the Marines prepared to utilize an amphibious landing from the USS *Kearsarge* Amphibious Ready Group anchored in the Adriatic Sea. It is at this time that they gave credence to the Marine Corps maneuver warfare doctrine that ensures training of Marine units as special operations capable in multiple missions. Marines must be ready for rapid deployment from the sea by immediate embarkation for land operations. This doctrine is

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<sup>308</sup> Sudetic, 'Ethnic Cleansing' in Bosnia, A1.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>310</sup> Dean Simmons, Phillip Gold, Verena Vomatic, and Col. Philip Walsh, “Air Operations over Bosnia,” *Proceedings*, May 1, 1997, Vol. 123/5/1, 131. <http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/1997-05/air-operations-over-bosnia>. (Accessed May 20, 2014).

especially important in a world where crises have a tendency of quickly getting out of hand. The MEU is a small unit, made up of 2,000 Marines and sailors, and it is self-sustainable. In the face of combat, the MEU is capable of projecting force to the limits of America's military arsenal in order to achieve their specific missions.<sup>311</sup>

On June 8<sup>th</sup> the 26<sup>th</sup> MEU prepared to take off from the amphibious landing helicopter ship USS *Kearsarge* (LHD3), landing platform dock (LPD-15) and the landing ship dock USS *Gunston Hall* (LSD-44). They were to join North Atlantic Treaty Organization's multinational peacekeeping force, assuming the role of an enabling force for power projection as needed. The Marines became the first American troops involved in the Kosovo region combat operations. They landed at Greece's Litoro Beach. The orders they had received were to proceed into Macedonia and merge with the British, Italian and French troops that had already arrived in Skopje.<sup>312</sup>

The Marines approached Skopje by 12<sup>th</sup> June where they put up a forward support base as they provided security alongside troops from the other NATO nations. The forward operating base was then advanced to the southwest of Kosovo, at Gnjilane. Meanwhile, the Marines who remained in Skopje ensured that the supplies to Gnjilane never ceased. The air wing of the Marines busied itself with the construction of an airfield which was named Camp Able Sentry. It is from here Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 365 was able to take off and land in the course of the operations. The Marine Battalion Landing Team was engaged in patrolling the neighboring villages and towns trying to keep the peace in their part of the AOR.<sup>313</sup>

They captured over a hundred weapons, grenades and munitions which had formed the arsenal of the Kosovo Liberation Army as well as the Serbian Army's arsenal. The 23<sup>rd</sup> of June came with its share of problems for the Marines as the temperatures dropped to the fifties coupled with a harsh, cold wind that did not improve the operational conditions in the field. Furthermore, there were thunderstorms whose end result was muddy terrain conditions; which also posed major problems for the Marines. In spite of this, the Marines held their positions and provided the returning refugees with needed security. That same evening the Marines

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<sup>311</sup> D. Simmons et al, "Proceedings."

<sup>312</sup> Keene, "Kosovo: On the ground 1999."

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

were involved in an assault with some insurgents to the south of Gnjilane. Another such assault occurred on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, which left one of the gunmen dead. Within two weeks the 26<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit had moved far beyond the coast of the Balkans, and restored peace and order per its mission orders.<sup>314</sup>

The main objective of *Operation Allied Force* was to destroy the military and security structure that Yugoslav President Milosevic had employed in the vast depopulation and extermination of the Muslim Albanian majority in Kosovo. Toward this end, the goals of NATO required that the airstrikes would be continued until the Yugoslavian president satisfied five conditions. Foremost, he was required to ensure a credible end to all the military actions and put an immediate stop to all the violence and repression. Second, it was pertinent that he ensured that the military, police and paramilitary troops withdraw from Kosovo. Third, it was paramount to provide approval for an international military presence within Kosovo. Fourth, Milosevic was required to agree to the non-negotiable return of the refugees and displaced persons and uninterrupted access to them by the humanitarian aid organizations. Finally, he was required to give credible assurance of his readiness to cooperate on the basis of the Rambouillet Accords in putting in place a political framework for Kosovo in compliance with international law and the charter of the United Nations.<sup>315</sup>

The enemy forces were composed of ground troops, anti-aircraft troops, air force, and mechanized troops. In this regard, the composition total of the enemy forces were as follows; the ground troops were composed of 114,000 active duty soldiers and 1,400 artillery specialists. The anti-aircraft troops were in possession of 100 surface-to-air missiles. These missiles posed a considerable threat to NATO airpower. The Yugoslavia forces were also in possession of 1,850 air defense artillery pieces. Much as these were not as sophisticated as the STA missiles, yet they were still a threat to NATO aircraft. Their air force was made up of 240 war planes which consisted of MiG-21s and MiG-29s, 48 attack helicopters. The mechanized troops had: 1,270 tanks which consisted of T-72s, T-74s, T-55s and M-84s. They also had 825 armored fighting vehicles. Moreover, there were about 40,000 Serb forces within

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<sup>314</sup> J. J. Keene, "The Quick, Deadly Trip to Kosovo," *Marine Corps Gazette*, (August 1999). <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/kosovo-ground>. (Accessed, May 29, 2014).

<sup>315</sup> Martin J Sullivan, "NATO, Serbia, and Operation Allied Force," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2001, <http://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2001/11/nato-serbia-and-operation-allied-force>. (Accessed 20 May 2014).

and outside Kosovo. These forces were equipped with tanks and APCs. The Serbian forces patrolling the Kosovo border had formed various units of reserve forces, deployed forces and garrison forces. The deployed forces were in possession of 96 tanks while the garrison forces were equipped with 30 of these tanks. There was a particular concentration of Serb troops in the region around the border Kosovo shared with Macedonia. These forces increased in number as the weeks passed by.<sup>316</sup>

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, the Marine All Weather Fighter Squadrons (VMFA (AWs) 332 and 533 commenced their flights from Hungary in order to stand by as the military operations began. The decision was made not to integrate ground forces in combat at this point. This was aimed at keeping the NATO troops casualties as low as possible. Much as this made the Serbian fighters take advantage of the unopposed battle space; but this also exposed them to the airstrikes that were to be conducted. Here the tenet of maneuver warfare as to “when and how to give battle” was again employed. It is important to note that, the air defense of the Serbians was rendered ineffective. They could barely stand up to NATO’s air attacks. Serbian attacks were met with more air strikes that eventually annihilated their air defense system, further shaping the battle field for Marine maneuver. In total, 70 of the Serbian aircraft were destroyed in this operation. Five of these were destroyed during an air-to-air assault. Also, oil refineries were destroyed. This was done in a move to hinder the Serbian operations by cutting off their fuel supply. True to this strategy, the Serbian operations were halted on three occasions due to the lack of fuel. This was a manipulation of the Serbians’ center of gravity by disrupting their already overburdened OODA Loop. Communication systems that were charged with the command and control of the Serbian troops were equally disrupted on a large scale. Marine Corps forces did their best in isolating Yugoslav troops in Kosovo. This was accomplished by controlling the roads and rail links, and further by disrupting field command posts. By April 22, in spite of some adverse weather conditions present in Kosovo, NATO struck an artillery battery, six tanks, 23 vehicles, a column of troops and a field command post. The Serbians finally withdrew, having incurred huge losses in terms of artillery and warfighters. Most of their munitions had been destroyed in the attack and not much of their

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<sup>316</sup> Keene,” The Quick, Deadly Trip to Kosovo.”

ground forces had been left to continue fighting. Their infrastructure had also been largely destroyed in this military campaign. They eventually withdrew from Kosovo.<sup>317</sup>

### **OPERATION DISTANCE RUNNER -RWANDA AND BURUNDI**

In 1994, Rwanda's population was close to seven million people. Its population consisted of three ethnic tribes: the Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa. The Tutsi were fourteen percent of this population, the Hutu were eighty five percent and the Twa were one percent. A group of Hutu extremists accused the Tutsi elite of being responsible for the social, economic and political upheavals in Rwanda; and also complained about the Tutsi's involvement with the rebel group Rwandan Patriotic Front. The rebel group was made up of a large Tutsi population. The Rwandan president, Habrayimana, added to these issues. He and his team incited the Tutsi community against the Hutu, which resulted in forming a wide rift between the Hutu and the Tutsi. The Hutu lived in fear of the minority, based on their oppressive rule and government support. On April 6<sup>th</sup> 1994, a plane with President Habrayimana aboard was shot down. This sparked immediate violence in the country. The Hutu formulated plans that would wipe out all of the Tutsi. Any of the existing political leaders who may have averted it were immediately assassinated. The same was done to anyone who had in the past shown a particular dislike or disregard of the Hutu extremists' activities. Once sure that nobody would contain them, the Hutu embarked on a war of genocide. They killed anybody who they thought to be a Tutsi or had any affiliations with this minority tribe. Whole families were wiped out, women and children were raped and murdered. An estimated 200,000 people were eliminated in this tribal genocide. The following weeks saw the killing of 800,000 Tutsi men, women and children. This number was more than half of the Tutsis' total population. Thousands of Hutu were also killed alongside the Tutsi when they voiced their opposition to this genocide. There were some Americans and other expatriates who had been caught up in the genocide. They sought to be evacuated from Rwanda.<sup>318</sup>

The 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit was ordered to carrying out the evacuation of these U.S. nationals. The 11<sup>th</sup> MEU was in Bujumbura, Burundi's capital. On April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, the 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit evacuated the U.S. nationals who had been caught up in

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<sup>317</sup> Keene, "The Quick, Deadly Trip to Kosovo."

<sup>318</sup> Donatella Lorch, "Anarchy Rules Rwanda's Capital And Drunken Soldiers Roam City," *New York Times on the Web*, April 14, 1994, <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/04/14/world/anarchy-rules-rwanda-s-capital-and-drunken-soldiers-roam-city.html>. (Accessed May 21, 2014).

the neighboring Bujumbura clashes. The Marines were a force of 330. The Marines flew six hundred and fifty miles after taking off from the helicopter assault vessel USS *Peleliu* to Bujumbura. On the April 12<sup>th</sup>, they also crossed the Burundi border into Rwanda where they rescued foreign citizens and U.S. nationals. In less than twenty four hours the 11<sup>th</sup> MEU had accomplished its mission by expediting their actions in a rapid tempo.<sup>319</sup> There were no military actions needed or taken by the U. S. Marine Corps.

### **HAITI OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY**

In the December 1990 Haitian elections, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a former priest garnered the majority of the Haitian votes to become Haiti's president. However, his power was usurped through a military *coup d'état* and Joseph Nerette was put in office as Haiti's next president. This led to the political destabilization of the country and eventual intersession by the United Nations. In June 1993, the United Nations voted a ban on the import of oil and arms into Haiti to force a return to the legitimate government. Since the military ousted President Aristide, the Haitian people had suffered greatly at the hands of the Nerette military *junta*.

The disenfranchised Haitians risked their lives on a daily basis, trying to cross the sea to the United States, all in an attempt to flee the terror that reigned in their country. The Haitian refugees numbered close to twenty one thousand daily. The Haitian economy went into a steady decline that saw inflation rise up to an estimated forty percent. This came as a result of the oil and arms embargo that the United Nations had placed on Haiti, in accordance with its Resolution 917.<sup>320</sup> The UN efforts bore fruit when the survival of the military was threatened by impending attacks by United States forces as well as other United Nations troops. Once the United Nations delegation had approved of military intervention the Haitian government acquiesced. The military invasion was replaced by a humanitarian assistance

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<sup>319</sup> Mike Stroup, "Africa: Operation Distant Runner Rescues Americans," *Leatherneck Magazine*, Volume 77, Issue 8, <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/1994/08/africa-operation-distant-runner-rescues-americans>. (Accessed, may 21, 2014).

<sup>320</sup>"Mission in Haiti; Aristide's Talk: 'Yes to Reconciliation,'" *New York Times on the Web*, " October 5, 1994, <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/10/05/world/mission-in-haiti-aristide-s-talk-yes-to-reconciliation.html>. (Accessed May 21, 2014). Also see Herbert Friedman, "U.S PSYOP OPERATIONS (OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY," 2005)', <http://www.psywarrior.com/HerbHaiti.html>. (Accessed May 21, 2014).

operation lead by the United States. It was aimed at helping the Haitian people who were in dire need of food and medical relief.

The U.S. Marine Forces Caribbean, based at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba was deployed to this region, and conducted an amphibious entry from the sea into Haiti. The amphibious landing was made at the Cap Haitien from the American warship USS *Wasp*.<sup>321</sup> Once within the country, the U.S. Marines provided needed security as well as humanitarian aid. The Marine patrols within the island were enforced and the military *junta* toppled. The PSYOPs were conducted and proved effective in informing the Haitian people on the importance of a good government and the need for shunning future rebel activities. *Operation Uphold Democracy* brought the Marine Corps back to Haiti using those tenets of irregular warfare and maneuver from its *Small Wars Manual*, FMFRP 12-45 as now indorsed by the Marine Corps' new maneuver warfare doctrine. This was a further evolution of the principles originally learned and used by the Marine Corps in the beginnings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Haiti. Marine Corps history was repeating itself both by having the Marine Corps return; and by prosecuting this mission true to its previous and now current maneuver warfare DNA.<sup>322</sup>

#### **OPERATION ASSURED RESPONSE- LIBERIA and OPERATION QUICK RESPONSE-CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

In 1996, civil war broke out in the Republic of Liberia. This small scale conflict quickly escalated to massive violence within the country. Within the first week of the hostilities, owing to the violent street fighting five hundred people went to the American Embassy grounds seeking refuge. Another twenty thousand were huddled in the nearby American Embassy housing compound. In April 2006, the President of Liberia petitioned the United States Ambassador in a request for security aid, resupply; and evacuation of all foreign nationals in harm's way.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Thomas R. Wilson, "Joint Operations and Uphold Democracy 1995," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Spring 1995, 54. <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a528898.pdf>. (Accessed, May 21 2014).

<sup>322</sup> Max Boot, *Invisible Armies* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2013), 537-843. Also see Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace* (New York: Perseus Books, 2002).

<sup>323</sup> Reuters, "Marines at U.S. Embassy in Liberia Again Fire on Gunmen," *New York Times*, May 7, 1996, <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/05/07/world/marines-at-us-embassy-in-liberia-again-fire-on-gunmen.html>. (Accessed, May 21, 2014).

Although the factors involved in the evacuation of Liberia were urgent, it was an overall small operation. With Marine Corps units from the USS *Guam's* (LPH 5) amphibious ready group and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC) which were ordered to Monrovia to conduct this mission, the Marine Corps began this operation. On arrival, the 22<sup>nd</sup> MEU (SOC) commanding officer took over the command of Joint Task Force- *Assured Response* (JTF-AR). The Joint Task Force *Assured Response* comprised of Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps troops. With more support from the HC-4 MC-53 helicopter detachment and a number of both Navy and Marine aircrafts, security at the embassy was enhanced and transportation began to normalize. This resulted in the evacuation of three hundred and nine noncombatants, forty nine of whom were from the United States. Meanwhile, the USS *Portland* had dropped anchor some distance of the coast of West Africa. It had come to provide additional support for the operation. This combined arms application under Marine Corps guidance furthered the Marine Corps utilization of maneuver and fighting smarter doctrine.<sup>324</sup> Again as in Rwanda and Burundi, these two operations became nonmilitary actions. The quick response of the Marine Corps eliminated the need of force projection.

In February 1996, the Central Africa Republic was in a state of financial crisis in which payments to civil servants had been delayed for several months. A state of unrest ensued in which a number of soldiers rebelled against the government. This mutiny was joined by other civil servant and it soon turned into a myriad of protests and riots. The government in turn employed brutal measures to quell the surge of riots in Bangui the capital.<sup>325</sup> This compelled the U.S ambassador to ask for assistance from the U.S. government. The assistance came in form of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Marines Expeditionary Unit, which was at the time involved in *Operation Assured Hope* in neighboring Liberia.

The MEU immediately began its execution of these evacuation orders. The thirty five man Marine Corps force was to carry out the mission; the majority of this force consisted of riflemen from the Marines' ground combat unit, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines (2/2). The 2/2

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<sup>324</sup> Military: "Operation Assured Response," *Global Security*" [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/assured\\_response.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/assured_response.htm). (Accessed, May 21, 2014).

<sup>325</sup> Howard W. French, "Jean-Bedel Bokassa, Self-Crowned Emperor Of the Central African Republic, Dies at 75," *New York Times*, November 5, 1996, <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/11/05/world/jean-bedel-bokassa-self-crowned-emperor-central-african-republic-dies-75.html>. (Accessed, May 21, 2014).

boarded helicopters provided by the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 162, their destination being the airport of Freetown, Sierra Leone. On arrival, Marine KC-130R flew the detachment into the Central African Republic where U.S. State Department officials were waiting with the evacuees. The quick offloading of the aircraft was immediately followed by setting aboard the American citizens and other foreign expatriates. They were flown to Yaoundé in Cameroon. Meanwhile, the U.S. Embassy was secured in Bangui and the Marines focused themselves with subsequent evacuations. The Marines remained unshaken in the midst of the clashes between factions in the streets around them. Later, a second rifle platoon was flown in to reinforce a security unit already in place. Their positions were often hit by stray rounds but the Marines and civilians who sought refuge from them were never faced with serious security threats. Ultimately, the Central African Republic's Presidential Guard in alliance with French paratroopers managed to restore order within the city. The last of the U.S. Marines left Bangui on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, having evacuated four hundred and forty eight people from the Central African Republic aboard the Marine Corps and Air Force C 130's.<sup>326</sup>

### **OPERATION NOBLE OBELISK-SIERRA LEONE**

In 1997, Sierra Leone experienced another *coup d'état*. It was staged by their army's junior officer *cadre*. They were led by the thirty three year old Major Johnny Paul Koroma. The *coup d'état* had left one hundred people dead and the city of Freetown at the mercy of this rogue military *junta*, common looters and street gangs.

The Marine Corps' Amphibious Task Force from Camp Lejeune can quickly establish its presence in a region of conflict without necessarily obtaining the permission or support of the host nation for over flight rights. The U.S. Marine Corps' Amphibious Task Force made a landing in Freetown in spite of a flight ban by the junior army officers who had removed President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah forcefully from power. The *coup* had plunged the country into political and social upheavals that raised the concern of the American government about the safety of its citizens in Sierra Leone. A pre-dawn Marine Corps rescue operation began after the release of helicopters from the USS *Kearsarge*, a warship that had anchored about

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<sup>326</sup> Craig W Larson, "From "Assured" to "Quick" Response 22D MEU Evacuates Americans from the Central African Republic," *Leatherneck Magazine*, Volume 79, Issue 7, <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/1996/07/assured-quick-response-22d-meu-evacuates-americans-central-african-republic>. (Accessed May 21, 2014).

twelve miles offshore. Nine hundred people were evacuated from the country, of which three hundred were Americans. They would then be taken to Conakry, Guinea.<sup>327</sup>

### **OPERATION SAFE DEPARTURE- ERITREA**

In 1998, Eritrea was caught up in the middle of a border dispute with Ethiopia. American citizens and other foreign nationals' safety were at great risk. The American government moved to evacuate its nationals alongside citizens from other countries. The noncombatant operation was named *Operation Safe Departure*, which took place in the Eritrean capital, Asmara. By the end of the operation, a total of one hundred and sixty seven people had been safely evacuated. These evacuees included one hundred and seven American nationals.<sup>328</sup>

The 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) was deployed from there base in Camp Pendleton to carry out the rescue operations. The 11<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) was at this time on a six-month long deployment. They had been aboard the USS *Tarawa* Amphibious Ready Group whose ships are usually home ported in San Diego. The Amphibious Ready Group Consisted of USS *Tarawa*, USS *Mount Vernon* and USS *Denver*. The contingent was made up of a Forward Command Element which basically comprised of a support team and a liaison team. The evacuees were flown to Amman, Jordan by the Marines' KC-130 Hercules aircraft. The team consisted of 30 Marines and sailors plus a small security element that was draw form the unit's infantry section.<sup>329</sup>

### **OPERATION DESERT FOX**

A special UN commission had been set up to look into allegations that Iraq was manufacturing chemical and biological weapons. This commission was headed by Richard Butler, the Australian ambassador to the United Nations. In 1998, Butler publicly asserted that

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<sup>327</sup> Larson, "From "Assured" to "Quick" Response.

<sup>328</sup> Eritrea's "Chief Sees No Halt in Border War with Ethiopia," *New York Times*, June 7, 1998, <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/06/07/world/eritrea-s-chief-sees-no-halt-in-border-war-with-ethiopia.html>. (Accessed, May 21, 2014).

<sup>329</sup> "Leathernecks Evacuate 172 from Eritrea," *Leatherneck Magazine*, Volume 81, Issue 8, <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/1998/08/leathernecks-evacuate-172-eritrea>. (Accessed May 21, 2014).

he had been unable to carry out his investigations to a satisfactory completion. However, he maintained that Iraq was concealing most of its illegally produced chemical and biological weapons, despite not having concrete evidence in support of his claims. The turning point to this operation came when on October 31<sup>st</sup>; Saddam Hussein announced that the inspections would no longer be welcome in Iraq. In response to Saddam's declaration, President Clinton promised that the inspections would go on even if it meant resorting to the use of force.<sup>330</sup>

This operation, named *Desert Fox* was to be a Marine Corps Air application in conjunction with the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force. *Operation Desert Fox* was designed to weaken Saddam Hussein's power base, believed to be his Republican Guards and his cache of weapons of mass destruction. One hundred targets were assigned to tactical aviation (TacAir); the majority of the assigned targets were large buildings such as Republican Guard barracks, headquarters, and command-and-control sites consisting of radio relay towers and bunkers. The campaign was planned for a concurrent naval TacAir/Tomahawk Land-Attack Missile (TLAM) strikes on the first night, followed up by combined TacAir (U.S. / British) TLAM and Conventional Air-Launched Cruise Missile (CALCM) strikes the following three nights. Tomahawk and cruise missile strikes were planned against targets that were heavily protected by Iraqi air defenses, in and around Baghdad.<sup>331</sup>

The following account of the Marine Corps' mission is offered by Major Ross Roberts, a Marine aviator and the operations officer for VMFA-312, a Marine F/A-18C squadron attached to CVW-3, which was deployed on board the USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65) during *Operation Desert Fox*:

Special Note: I have used the [*brackets in Italics*] to incorporate and highlight maneuver warfare tenets in use by the Marines in the VMFA-312 unit during *Operation Desert Fox*.

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<sup>330</sup> Steven Lee Myers and Barbara Crossette, "Iraq Accused of Arms Violations That Could Result in Air Strikes," *New York Times*, December 16, 1998, <http://events.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/iraq/981216iraq.html>. (Accessed May 21, 2014).

<sup>331</sup> Major Robert Ross, USMC, "Desert Fox the Third Night," *Proceedings Magazine*, April 1999, Vol., 125/4/1 154. <http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/1999-04>. (Accessed May 21, 2014). Major Roberts, a naval aviator and former artillery officer, was the operations officer for VMFA-312, a Marine F/A-18C squadron attached to CVW-3, deployed on board the USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65).

“..General Anthony Zinni, U.S. Marine Corps, Commander-in-Chief, Central Command, visited us on 10 December and gave us the news. He said the window of opportunity was here, and that "All of the slack has been removed from the trigger." Once again we were on the uphill climb of the emotional roller coaster that always accompanies preparations for combat. The decision to implement Desert Fox depended on Richard Butler's report to the United Nations scheduled for release on 15 December. On 14 December, we got the 72-hour warning order and broke out the target folders and strike plans we had been fine-tuning.

As I walked to my Hornet late on the evening of 16 December, I saw the glow of Tomahawk launches from the surface ships to the south. It was 2306. Our first scheduled launch time was 2345, and I thought that we would go. Thirty-three combat-loaded aircraft and bomb carts were crowding the deck. I knew that we had passed the last hurdle in the execution timeline—and we went.

By night three, I was on my third mission, but this one was different: I was leading it. The target was in south central Iraq. It was also the longest range of all the strikes during the operation, 420 nautical miles one way, and required aerial refueling. Most of the strike leads had flown in their assigned target vicinity during Operation Southern Watch and were familiar with the target area, inertial navigation system update points, targets, and key terrain features.

The day prior to execution (day two of Desert Fox) I gave my final concept of operations brief to the battle group and air wing commanders. With the plan approved, I set to work on finishing the details with my strike team. A month earlier, we had planned a westerly attack heading because the prevailing winds were light at altitude. The latest forecast winds at our altitude averaged 80-120 knots from the west. This changed our plan and reduced the fuel margin, but it was still manageable. The success of the aerial refueling plan was critical to mission success and it concerned me. [*Main Focus of Effort vs. Fog of War*]

Most of the missions into southern Iraq during Southern Watch were single cycle, autonomous day strikes that did not require aerial refueling; missions that required tanker support were in the daytime. Desert Fox, on the other hand, was conducted at night.

The first Desert Fox night strikes were all single cycle, designed that way to keep the element of surprise on our side [*a prime aspect of maneuver warfare*]. We hoped that by not alerting host bases of land-based tankers and combat search-and-rescue we could [*maintain the element of surprise.*] We took every precaution to maintain secrecy. For this reason, the first night of the campaign was to be a naval show, demonstrating one of the greatest capabilities of sea-based air power coupled with the [*element of surprise*]. [*Combined Arms Application*]

Without the assistance of Air Force tankers, we were limited to targets in southeastern Iraq. Organic aerial refueling was available to assist the recovery of aircraft low on fuel only. Beginning with night two, we had several long-range strikes planned, all of which required extensive tanking. U.S. Air Force and Royal Air Force aircraft were involved now, making the campaign a coalition effort. We refueled from Air Force KC-10s.

My strike brief was uneventful. I spent extra time explaining the tanker plan, and "what if's" [*Fog of War*] the alternate plans thoroughly in the event a tanker did not show. This paid off, as we discovered on the premission tanker rendezvous. The tankers were not in the briefed formation, nor did they have the briefed fuel off-load, because they were doing

their best to cover all of our strikes with a limited number of aircraft. [*The fog of war and the unexpected in the battle space*]

The tankers were not in visual formation, and they were using separate frequencies. I locked my radar on to what I perceived was my tanker, but, as I lined up on the drogue, something obviously was wrong. This tanker had a center-line drogue, while my assigned tanker—the one I was talking to on the radio—was supposed to have wing-mounted drogues. It turned out that I had the right radio frequency but the wrong tanker; mine was twenty nautical miles away on the opposite end of the tanker track. To make matter worse, my tanker had only enough gas to give each receiver 2,500 pounds of fuel—instead of the 4,000 pounds we had planned on.

As luck would have it, 8 of the 14 aircraft made the same mistake I did. At this point, I was pretty busy trying to figure out who was on what tanker on what frequency. I could already see the "Rolex" coming [*a term used to cover the unexpected and delay the time on target in increments, allowing for unforeseen circumstances*]. After much consternation over the radio, I finally reassigned aircraft to the planned tankers, but this lengthened the time I had allotted for refueling. I used our two S-3 Vikings (sea-control aircraft, with a secondary mission of aerial refueling), which I had planned to use as hose multipliers, to top off my wingman and me (who had been short-changed on the initial off-load in an effort to get all the aircraft refueled more quickly).

I completed the aerial refueling five minutes prior to the push time. I looked at the mass of circling aircraft through my night vision goggles thinking, "How the hell am I going to get this mess joined and pushed on time?" It was time for the Rolex word, and I broadcast "Rolex five" on the strike common frequency; all acknowledged. Three minutes into the Rolex, we were still not joined. I finally had the strike package roll out on the ingress heading. I thought it would be easier to sort the formation out if we were straight and level heading in the same direction.

I had planned the ingress route to avoid probable Iraqi antiaircraft artillery (AAA) and surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) [*when to offer battle*]. The strong head winds complicated the suppression of enemy air defense (SEAD) package (one EA-6B and two FA-18s carrying two High Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARMs)). I pushed the SEAD package three minutes ahead, planning to catch up with them as we turned the corner from west to east in the final attack from the initial point.

I had not updated my inertial navigation system (INS) at Fahlaka Island (off the coast of Kuwait) as planned because of the mess at the push/rendezvous point. We usually planned at least two and sometimes three update points along the route to correct for the inaccurate ship's inertial navigation system. We found this step was the most critical in successful target location. I hoped my INS would be accurate enough to at least find my second update point (a road intersection) with the FLIR. It took some searching, but I found it and was able to tighten up my INS. This was fortunate because my system was three-quarters of a mile off and would have made target location very difficult if not impossible. At the initial point all of the strikers checked their lasers and FLIRs and I was surprised to hear everyone check in with operational systems. We always planned and briefed detailed back-up buddy-laser plans to enable a wingman to guide the bombs of an aircraft with a malfunctioning laser or FLIR. [*Insure that rapid tempo was not slowed at the point of attacks if malfunctions occurred*]

The strike package was composed of four strike F/A-18s, each loaded with two GBU-16s (1,000-pound laser guided bombs); two F-14s, each with two GBU-10s (2,000-pound laser guided bombs); two F-14s as fighter escorts; two F/A-18s doubling as HARM shooters and escorts for the EA-6B.

The target was a Republican Guard base. [*Disrupt the ability to command for the enemy; therefore shaping the battle space*] The aim-points were a headquarters building and three barracks. One of the barracks was long, similar in design to those on U.S. bases. All of the buildings were concrete two-story structures. The three small buildings were assigned one F/A-18 per building with the remaining Hornet and two F-14s on the long (about 100 meters) barracks.

With all of our inertial systems updated, I had confidence we would be able to find the target(s). At the initial point, we turned right 120 degrees to place the target on the nose. As we began our turn my wingman called over the strike common frequency: "SAM launch nine o'clock!" I immediately responded, "Those are the HARMs!" They were on the way to their target just as planned, searching for the SA-2 and SA-6 postulated to be in the target area. It felt good to see them arc over us and into the target area looking for Iraqi surface-to-air radar emissions to guide on, giving us a short window of protection. [*Protecting the ability to put strength against weakness*]

The base was a small complex in a large expanse of desert. We were hoping the roads on the base would still be hot enough to provide a thermal contrast, which could be transformed by the FLIR into a green-and-white television picture in the cockpit. As we came in nose on to the target, the road complex that I had burned into my memory over the last couple of days was visible on my cockpit display. I picked the road where I had predicted my aim point would be and waited for the FLIR picture to build (as the range to target decreases, the FLIR picture gets better). I positively identified my target, the headquarters building just to the east side of a road intersection. [*We always tried to limit collateral damage and this target was isolated, which lessened my concerns.*]

I made one last check of my weapon systems as my wingman found his aim-point. I talked myself through my air-to-ground checklist, "Air-to-ground master mode, GBU-16 selected, quantity two, fuse delay one, laser armed, master arm on, tapes on (if it's not on tape it didn't happen), sweeten the laser aim-point, finger on the pickle, everything is looking good." Precisely at the planned distance from the target, the aircraft rocked as the 1,000-pound bombs were ejected from the bomb racks two-thirds of a second apart.

The next 30 seconds is always the longest. As the bombs fall ballistically toward the target, all you can do is continue to refine the FLIR aim-point to ensure the laser will fire precisely where desired; things are intense in the cockpit. Looking outside just shows you what is being sent back at you. Ten seconds to go, all right! The laser starts its automatic firing sequence. The laser-guided bombs (LGBs) fall ballistically until the last ten seconds and then guide on the reflected laser energy to the target. Five seconds . . . three . . . I could see the bombs fly to the target on the FLIR . . . one second . . . Direct hit. "Shack," I shouted over the radio. (That's one term we picked up from our Air Force friends.) My wingman achieved the same results.

As I pulled off target and looked over my shoulder, I saw the AAA I was oblivious to during my delivery while I was concentrating on my FLIR display. It was all bursting below our altitude just as on the previous two nights. Two more impacts, both Shacks.

The third section (two F-14s) approached the target area last, searching for their aim points. All of the targets were smoking holes only half of the long barracks was still standing. Some quick work by the Tomcat crews flattened it. So far, everyone had hit and destroyed his assigned aim point; for the sixth and final bomber, there was nothing left but the alternate target, similar in size to the headquarters building I had just pulverized. He expertly guided the two GBU-10s into the building and completely removed it from the desert floor. We always briefed an alternate target to limit collateral damage if the primary targets already were destroyed. [*Collateral Damage Deficits see Small Wars Manual*]

Quick fuel checks off target confirmed that the detailed fuel planning had worked out so far. As planned, we climbed to altitude to maximize fuel efficiency (120 knots of wind at our back) and to avoid being targeted by the dreaded, unallocated SA-6. Some members of the flight had 800 pounds less fuel than planned, but this was manageable as long as the tankers arrived on schedule. Ten minutes away from tanker rendezvous I called the tankers to let them know we were inbound. The strike package cycled through the single KC-10 (two-hose) tanker remaining without incident. Two S-3s provide the much-needed post mission fuel as briefed. Everyone took only what he needed and pressed home for the ship. The landing was dark and scary as usual, but uneventful. After the debrief we went to the various ready rooms to review the FLIR videos. It was amazing to see the amount of destruction we caused that night. Morale was high. Electro-optical imagery taken the following day confirmed the destruction we witnessed on our FLIRs. Five aim points destroyed, one heavily damaged and unusable—and all this with just six bombers.

The four-day campaign resulted in an unprecedented number of assigned targets either damaged or destroyed. Navy TacAir alone chalked up 72% of assigned targets damaged or destroyed. This can be attributed to an environment extremely conducive to the use of FLIRs and LGBs and air crew familiarity of the target areas and terrain [*prior Intel shapes the battle field*]. The Tomahawks damaged or destroyed a very high percentage of their assigned targets. Most of their targets were deep within Iraq and heavily protected by SAMs and AAA. The Tomahawks appeared to be more effective and efficient at bombing large fixed targets than TacAir. Manned aviation was extremely effective at destroying hardened bunkers.

If naval aviation is going to capitalize on the success of Desert Fox, future [*employment of strike aircraft should focus on missions requiring surprise and flexibility. Manned aircraft are optimized for rapidly changing scenarios and proper planning enables them to change their missions once airborne.*] As described, however, our strikes required detailed planning well in advance of execution. There was little flexibility because target assignments and times-on-target (TOT) were controlled centrally. During Desert Fox, Tomahawk planners worked in the space next to our strike planners, yet we were not able to integrate them into our plans, even though the majority of targets assigned to aircraft were perfect Tomahawk targets. We were simply handed a target folder with a desired probability of destruction, a TOT, and the rest of the plan was up to us [*Mission orders*].

Fixed targets are vulnerable to Tomahawk and Conventional Air-Launched Cruise Missile attacks, and potential foes may counter our strength here with mobility. Shifting TacAir to mobile targets should counter this gambit. Tomahawks and TacAir are complementary; defending against both is a true dilemma..<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Roberts, Proceedings.

## OPERATION RESTORE HOPE- SOMALIA

After the fall of President Siad Barre in 1991, civil war broke out in Somalia between supporters of General Mohamed Farah Aidid and supporters of President Ali Mahdi Mohamed. The United Nations sought to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia through *United Nations Operation in Somalia 1* (UNOSOM 1). Its objective was to provide a safe environment that would enhance delivery of humanitarian assistance and help rebuild the social, political and economic life of the Somalis. Local warlords fuelled the internal war to the point that UNOSOM could not reach its goals. UNOSOM's efforts to provide a relief supply was a total failure, as aircrafts carrying the supplies were looted as soon as they made their landings. Troops sent into Somalia were shot at, aircraft carrying aid were shot down and ships were attacked in Somali waters and were prevented from docking. Meanwhile, the Somalis' plight escalated with an estimated fifty thousand being killed, with three hundred thousand plus dying of starvation and an estimated two million rendered homeless.<sup>333</sup>

President George H. W. Bush (41) proposed that U.S. troops be sent into Somali. In December 1992 twenty five thousand U.S. troops and ten thousand troops from other allied states were deployed to Somalia. This coalition's agenda was to make the trade routes to Somalia secure so as to enable the safe delivery of relief supplies to the Somali' people.

The U.S. Marine Corps came ashore in Somalia on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1992. The invasion had not been communicated to the relevant Somali state authorities. The entry was considered forced. Forcible entry from the sea enables the Marines to exploit the gaps in the enemy's defenses by involving naval and joint capabilities, surprise, projecting sustainable power into an AO and keeping the entry safe for follow-on forces.<sup>334</sup> The Marines then proceeded to secure the Mogadishu International Airport and the American Embassy. Once the Airport was

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<sup>333</sup> United Nations, Security Council, "Report Of The Secretary-General On The Situation In Somalia," General Distribution, S/1996/42, 19 January 1996, 1-10. Also see Walter Clark and Jeffrey Herbts, "Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention in the Future," *Foreign Affairs*, " March / April 1996. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/51844/walter-clarke-and-jeffrey-herbst/somalia-and-the-future-of-humanitarian-intervention>. (Accessed May 21, 2014).

<sup>334</sup> Col. Dennis P. Mroczkowski USMCR (ret.), "*Restoring Hope: In Somalia with the Unified Task Force, 1992-1993*, (Washington, DC: History Division USMC, 2005). [www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Publications/Publication%20PDFs/Restoring%20Hope.pdf](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/historydivision/Pages/Publications/Publication%20PDFs/Restoring%20Hope.pdf). (Accessed, May 21, 2014).

secure, bringing in the relief supplies would go on as planned. The I MEU provided security for the convoys that transported the relief supplies. Maneuver warfare requires evaluation of both the enemy and attacking their military's weakness with your own strength. By securing the airport and ports, one of the hindrances to transport of the supplies was remedied. This added to the threat for Somali fighters as the U.S. troops would increase thereby protecting logistic replenishment. The Somali fighters also had to withdraw from Mogadishu which was the focal point of their operations. Once ashore, the I MEF maintained its presence there for some time. This was done to sustain the Joint Task Force as well as the U.S. Army until the arrangement for theater support was complete.

Here in Somalia both Marine Corps FMFM- 1 *Warfighting* doctrine and *Small War Manual* FMFRP 12-15 were the standards set for the United States Marine Corps deployment. The lead Marine was Brig. General Anthony C. "Tony" Zinni who had vast experience (*Operation Provide Comfort*, Iraq) within this area of expertise. Zinni was also a student of Gen. Gray but was not considered an "evolutionist" plank owner *per se*. The following exemplifies the Zinni infusion of Marine Corps DNA and the then current doctrine of maneuver warfare during the Somali deployment for the Marine Corps:

Small Wars Principles: The numerous planning considerations outlined in the SWM still apply to today's complex operating environment. The SWM outlines the requirement as follows:

1. Unity of Effort: The SWM describes unity of effort by stating that the actions of Marines need to coincide with the actions of State Department officials, non-government aid agencies, the local supported government, and the community in general. The SWM stresses the need for a singular commander with designated authority to avoid both contradictory actions among organizations and the transmission of conflicting messages to the local populace. The manual also indicates that unity with the State Department is crucial to maintaining the political objective [von Clausewitz, *On War*].<sup>335</sup> In addition, the manual explains that the best way to remain united with the local government and populace is by developing and supporting a constabulary. Cooperating with the local government, army, or constabulary keeps U.S. forces

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<sup>335</sup> FMFRP 12-15, SWM, 1-18, 33. Also see Mroczkowski, "Zinni's reference to Von Clausewitz *On War*," 51.

in accordance with the intricacies of the resident culture(s), which greatly helps to foster local support.<sup>336</sup>

2. Security: The SWM stresses that Marines should plan for their own security (force protection) and for the security of the local populace (force projection). The manual describes the need for a balance in security. Marines need to protect their operating bases, but not to such an extent that they isolate themselves from the locals. The SWM indicates that Marines need to interact with the locals and become familiar with their culture and social system. By doing this, Marines will gain the locals' trust and valuable intelligence which will further support security.<sup>337</sup>

3. Restraint: The SWM indicates that minimal destruction and loss of life is necessary to be able to achieve a lasting peace. The Manual states,

“..Caution must be exercised, and instead of striving to generate the maximum power with forces available, the goal is to gain decisive results with the least application of force and consequent minimum loss of life..”

The use of restraint will be perceived as a sign of mutual respect and cooperation. The SWM also indicates that educating Marines will result in restraint.

4. Perseverance: The campaign examples used in the SWM indicate that the Marine Corps should not plan small wars as small tactical operations. Major Allen Ford, USMC, in his thesis “*The Small Wars Manual and the Marine Corps Military Operations Other Than War*,”<sup>338</sup> identifies five phases within the SWM that a small wars campaign may follow:

Phase 1: Initial demonstration or landing and action of vanguard.

Phase 2: The arrival of reinforcements and general military operations in the field.

Phase 3. Assumption of control of executive agencies, and cooperation with the legislative and judicial agencies.

Phase 4: Routine police functions and elections.

Phase 5: Withdrawal from the Theater of Operations.

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<sup>336</sup> FMFRP 12-15, SWM, 12-5, 5.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., 6-67/68, 39-40.

<sup>338</sup> Major Allen Ford, USMC, Master's Thesis “*The Small Wars Manual and the Marine Corps Military Operations Other Than War*,” U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2003, 59-64. <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/ford.pdf>. (Accessed 22 May 2014).

The SWM phases above are still applicable to today's operating environment, and they indicate the need to consider a larger campaign mentality during planning.<sup>339</sup>

5. Legitimacy: The SWM's reference to legitimacy is related to the political objective of the operation. The manual emphasizes the importance for the actions of Marines to portray an image of legality, morality, and righteousness. If Marines abuse their authority or break local laws, they should receive adjudication quickly and appropriately. The actions of all organizations within in an area of operation should not give the perception of favoritism or alienate a certain group. Most importantly, the military actions taken should resolve the problem at hand. The above SWM planning considerations provide a model for planning contemporary expeditionary operations. The SWM's content is still relevant to today's operating environment and should be used in current planning.

The following from General Tony Zinni set the tone for this operation as well as the implantation of Marine Corps maneuver warfare doctrine:

“..General Zinni's Twenty Lessons Learned from Somalia (*Operation Restore Hope*) (See below the intended effects of Marine Corps FMFM- 1 *Warfighting* doctrine)

1. The earlier the involvement, the better the chance for success.
2. Start planning as early as possible, and include everyone in the planning process.
3. If possible, make a thorough assessment before deployment.
4. In the planning, do a thorough mission analysis. Determine the center of gravity, end state, commander's intent, and measures of effectiveness, exit strategy, cost-capturing procedures, and estimated duration.
5. Stay focused on the mission and; keep the mission focused. Line up military tasks with political objectives. Avoid mission creep; allow for mission shift.
6. Centralize planning and decentralize execution during the operation.
7. Coordinate everything with everybody. Set up the coordination mechanisms.
8. Know the culture and the issues.
9. Start of restarting the key institutions early.
10. Don't lose the initiative/momentum.
11. Don't make enemies. If you do, don't treat them gently. Avoid mind-sets.

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<sup>339</sup> Gen. Tony Zinni USMC (ret.) and Tony Koltz, *The Battle for Peace: A Frontline Vision of America's Power and Purpose* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 143-153.

12. Seek unity of effort/command. Create the fewest possible seams.
13. Open a dialogue with everyone. Establish a forum for each individual/group involved.
14. Encourage innovation and nontraditional approaches.
15. Personalities are often more important than processes.
16. Be careful whom you empower.
17. Decide on the image you want to portray, and stay focused on it.
18. Centralize information management.
19. Seek compatibility in all coalition operations: political compatibility, cultural compatibility, and military interoperability are crucial to success.
20. Senior commanders and their staffs need the most education and training for nontraditional roles. The troops need awareness training and understanding.<sup>340</sup>

### **OPERATION STABILIZE- EAST TIMOR**<sup>341</sup>

Since the late 1800 the island of Timor has had conflicting political goals that in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century required military intervention. There were three political parties vying for the leadership of the country. These three parties held very different views concerning the attainment of independence and, what would be the post-independence posture of the country. By 1999, tens of thousands of East Timorese had either been killed or their whereabouts were unknown because of the political conflicts. It is at this time that the Indonesian president B. J. Habibie gave in to international pressure. He presented the East Timorese citizens with two choices; to attain complete independence from Indonesia or seek political autonomy. Seventy eight percent of the East Timorese voted in favor of complete independence in spite of intimidation by the Indonesian pro-annexation militia gangs. The violence that erupted after the elections was extreme. The government of Indonesia did not attempt to quell it. This resulted in two hundred and fifty thousand plus refugees fleeing to West Timor.

Australia was approached with the request take the leading role of a multi-national force that would deal with the crisis. Three U.N workers had lost their lives at the hands of these insurgents in West Timor while two of them had also been killed in East Timor. This

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<sup>340</sup>Center for Naval Analysis, "Military Support to Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: From Practice to Policy Conference," *Proceedings* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analysis, 1995), 30. Also see Zinni, "Battle for Peace," 143 153.

<sup>341</sup> James F. Glynn USMC, *Operation Stabilize: U.S Joint Force Operations in East Timor*, (Master's Thesis, Univ. of Kansas, 2001), 50.

force came to be known as International Forces East Timor (INTERFET). The objectives of INTERFET were: To establish peace and security in East Timor, to protect and render support for the UNAMET which had already arrived in East Timor, and lastly to try its best to carry out humanitarian operations.<sup>342</sup>

The U.S. Marines moved into the country, their mission was to provide humanitarian aid; while at the same time warding off the threat of the gangs. They were augmented by four U.S. Navy ships, which included the guided missile carrier USS *Bunker Hill*. The Marines began by transporting the relief supplies to the inhabitants of the island, in order to avoid any more killings of UN aid workers. The 13<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit was dispatched to provide them with security as they went about their duties. The Marines acted as a good role model for ensuring doctrinal and organizational flexibility into the regular workings of the Timor military troops. The Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) played a major role in the operation. The MAGTF, as stated above, is a task organized combined arms team that has been cultured to fit into every mission.<sup>343</sup>

Such success in task organization that is displayed by the Marine Corps accrues from enhancing of habitual relationships that foster maneuver warfare applications. Unit cohesion is a key element in this symbiotic relationship. This apparent relationship led to familiarity and in-depth understanding of each aspect of the mission. This would also lead to more effective support at the Joint Task Force level. According to the American and Australian commanders, the turning point of the operation came with the arrival of the Marine Expeditionary Unit and Naval Amphibious Ready Groups (MEU/ARG) off the coast of Dili. This occurred on October 5<sup>th</sup> 1999. Their presence led to the daily improvement of conditions in East Timor as they worked in alliance with the INTERFET troops.<sup>344</sup>

Major General Cosgrove, Australian Defense Forces, had been adamant about deploying his forces to East-West Timor border where the pro-Indonesian militia gangs

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<sup>342</sup> John Pike, "Operation Stabilize East Timor Crisis," *Global Security*, 2003. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/timor-orbat.htm>. (Accessed, 22 May 2014).

<sup>343</sup> United States Marine Corps, *Campaigning*, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication, (MCDP 1-2, PCN 142- 000008 00 20), 1 August 1997, 1-30. Also see: United States Marine Corps, *Operational Maneuver from the Sea*, Distribution 145 00000100, 4 January 1996, 1-28. These two manuals were the work of General Krulak 31<sup>st</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps.

<sup>344</sup> Pike, "Operation Stabilize East Timor Crisis."

launched sporadic attacks. The arrival of this MEU/ARG not only increased the mission capability, but also fostered the securing of the border quickly, just by its imposing presence. This MEU/ARG had in their possession more firepower than the militia gangs in total arms. Success was followed by success as the 31<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit left the island and in its place came the 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit Amphibious Ready Group on 26<sup>th</sup> October. Arriving also was the Marines Special Purpose MAGFT (SPMMAGFT) which embarked from the USS *Juneau* (LPD 10) in 2000. The flexibility with which the MEUs conducted themselves allowed them to participate in many missions both humanitarian and military in nature. By recycling MEU troops on a daily basis, the USFORINTERFET never went beyond its force limit requirements. Apart from that, each of the MEUs provided USFORINTERFET with more functional area skills.<sup>345</sup>

General Tony Zinni, USMC set the tone for this operation based upon his long history of successful humanitarian and expeditionary warfare actions garnered in his forty year career as a Marine. His “Twenty Lessons Learned” (See above from Somalia *Operation Restore Hope*) also was the template for East Timor. It set the tone for this operation as well as the implementation of Marine Corps maneuver warfare doctrine in general.<sup>346</sup>

In summary of this chapter, Small Wars to Big Wars, the use of a Marine Corps Way of War for the period of the 1990’s to 2001, to include Bosnia, Somalia and other Marine Corps actions or interventions, it must be noted that maneuver warfare applications were in evidence both on the battle field as well as in the village square. Of further importance is the concept that the Marine Corps was using its “Small Wars” DNA within the context of maneuver warfare doctrine. The evolutionary character of the Gray Commandancy was now melding the “lessons learned” with the proposition that “free thinking” and Boydian “outside the box” ideas were compatible in the classroom as well as on the training fields of the Marine Corps. Add in the work of Gen. Krulak’s “*Three Block War*” and his “*Strategic Corporal*” concepts that in effect further validate a unique U.S. Marine Corps Way of War.

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<sup>345</sup> Glynn, *Operation Sbrabilize*, 55.

<sup>346</sup> Center for Naval Analysis, “Military Support to Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: From Practice to Policy Conference”, *Proceedings*. Also see Zinni, 143-153.

## **Chapter 7 OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM- AFGHANISTAN**

In the post 9-11 aftermath, the United States wanted to bring an end to the ongoing practices of terrorist-type, irregular or guerilla warfare which it had faced since the late 1970's. The 9-11 attacks on New York, and Washington DC were the final straw; and now formal military actions were commenced with Congressional approvals in place. Western civilization's warfare and its prosecution, as the western world had experienced for the last five thousand years were to be the calculus to solve this problem of both attritional and irregular warfare.

To a very large extent the enemy was an amorphous, transnational, non-state belligerent now based in the tribal areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. They were under the leadership of al Qaeda's Osama Bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Omar. Bin Laden was a veteran of the *Mujahedeen Jihad* which had sought to expel the Soviet Union from Afghanistan. He had previously based his operations in Sudan. However, al Qaeda had to relocate to Afghanistan when the United States applied heavy diplomatic pressure on Sudan to end the support and fostering of al Qaeda's exporting of terrorism. Al Qaeda is a group of Islamist extremists made up of various nationalities. With these battle hardened *mujahedeen*, al Qaeda unleashed an international low technology form of terrorism or irregular warfare on the western world in general, and on the United States in particular.

Al-Qaeda is a radical transnational Islamist terrorist group that was the creation of Osama Bin Laden. He formed it in the late 1980s. To this end, he set aside three hundred million dollars (\$300,000,000.00 USD), all his personal wealth, and aimed at wiping out the Western presence in the Islamic world, while at the same time waging acts of terrorism or irregular warfare based against the United States. Bin Laden started in 1993, when a group of *jihadists* unsuccessfully tried to blow up New York's World Trade Center. President Clinton dismissed the act as a civil crime, not as a terrorist act, or even the possible act of war which it was. On 11 September 2001, the terrorists carried out a successful attack on United States territory. This attack has since been dubbed "9/11," two Boeing 767 airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center, leading to the eventual collapse of the business complex. In addition to this, over one hundred lives were lost in a simultaneous attack at the Pentagon. And yet still, another terrorist controlled plane crash landed in Pennsylvania. The plane was supposed to have been flown into the White House. Not less than three thousand civilians and some

military lost their lives in this so called act of war attributable to an al Qaeda *fatwah* against the United States

As the reality of this *jihadist* attack filtered through national and international parameters, President George W. Bush (43) called for a *Global War on Terrorism* (GWOT). This came on 12<sup>th</sup> of September, just a day after the attack. He was later to learn that the attack had been orchestrated by al Qaeda's Osama Bin Laden who was now currently based in Afghanistan. The attack was of course carried out by the al-Qaeda *jihadist* militia. Apart from the 9/11 attacks, the United States reportedly had other economic interests in southwest Asia. The emphasis here is on the region's rich oil deposits. Apart from that, by successfully initiating a terror attack on America's home soil, doubts were cast pertaining to America's superpower status. There was a need in these downward political spirals to restore the country's image as the reigning superpower. This further fuelled the need for American forces to be deployed to Afghanistan and destroy the *jihadists* of the al Qaeda and their protector, the Taliban.

In the prosecution of *Operation Enduring Freedom*, there were three major issues. These issues were: First, the message that the assault would relay to other nations that had such terrorists' ambitions, Second the message that would be relayed to other Muslim nations in Southwest Asia and the Middle East as a whole and third, the message that would be relayed to the Afghanistan civilians after the destruction of the Taliban.<sup>347</sup>

This operation was very delicate considering all the risks that were involved. The first point of action taken by the United States was to order the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to hand over Osama Bin Laden. As expected, the Taliban regime was unwilling to comply with the order. Consequently, President Bush declared the launch of *Operation Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan. The operation was to officially start on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2001. Some days before this, Special Forces operatives were deployed in Pakistan and Uzbekistan. This was done following the counsel of the then commander of Coalition Forces in Afghanistan, General Tommy Franks. Black Hawks made their entrance into the Afghan skies undetected. What followed was the placement of recce units that were charged with gathering information

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<sup>347</sup> 115 STAT. 224 PUBLIC LAW 107-40—SEPT., 18, 2001,—S.J. Res. 23 (H.J. Res. 64):CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 147 (2001): Sept. 14, considered and passed Senate and House. WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 37 (2001): Sept. 18, Presidential statement. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107publ40/pdf/PLAW-107publ40.pdf>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

and guiding the air raids to key terrorist targets. Ready to step off were 15<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) and the 26<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) which were prepositioned in the Arabian Sea on the USS *Peleliu* (LHA-5). They were later reinforced by the 13<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) from the USS *Bonhomme Richard* for the anticipated assignment against the Taliban fighters.<sup>348</sup> The initial combat depended solely upon U.S. air power. This was a strategy employed to achieve two main effects. Foremost, it was designed to keep al- Qaeda and Taliban forces in, or to have them retreat into caves or other observed shelters. Second, it was to wipe out most, if not all, of the Taliban forces before the military carried out joint ground operations. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, the F/A-18 Hornets escorted bombers from the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps This pre-structuring of the battlefield signaled the beginning of *Operation Enduring Freedom*.<sup>349</sup>

It had been ascertained that the Taliban were not only a problem to the United States but were also a problem for the traditional tribes of Afghanistan. There already existed an anti-Taliban organization, the Northern Alliance, whose sole purpose was to do away with the Taliban. The Marine Corps Special Operations units partnered with the Northern Alliance in a bid to exterminate their common adversary. The strategy for this operation was to develop liaisons with such anti-Taliban factions who would on their behalf fight the Taliban and cause their downfall. The Marines achieved a rapport with the most powerful of the Northern Alliance leaders. This can be likened to the Civil Action Patrols devised to fight the communist based warriors from North Vietnam. The Marine Corps CAP units trained and supported the South Vietnam villagers, while also helping in protecting these villages almost fifty years prior. The DNA of the Marine Corps had evidenced itself again.<sup>350</sup>

They were provided with air support to help them extend this semi home grown force projection over Northern Afghanistan. In effect the Marines created a force multiplier as both entities opposed the Taliban. This was to be accomplished before the Afghan winter season. Winter in Afghanistan meant serious difficulty in movement. The employment of surrogate

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<sup>348</sup> “Operation Enduring Freedom Update,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, 2002, Vol. 86, 2. <https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2002/02/operation-enduring-freedom-update>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> West, “The Village,” ix-xvii.

forces that were more familiar with the country's terrain was in itself a major blow to the Taliban. Having to contain the Northern Alliance and at the same time worry about the looming Marine Corps maneuver warfare efforts in the Afghan skies posed both a military and political dilemma for the Taliban.<sup>351</sup> The Northern Alliance accepted the Marine's invitation. This was done because the Taliban had one of their military leaders, Ahmed Shah Masoud, killed. This created bitter feelings towards the Taliban and the al-Qaeda.

An initial glimpse into the Marine Corps practice of doctrinal maneuver warfare was offered by General Mattis when he stated:

"..The Marines first went in to Helmand [province]..... I don't recall us ever being in traditional warfare..... The Marines were brought in by a heliborne assault ..... Instead of attacking from the outside of Sangin in through the irrigated area of the river valley, they landed in the middle of town and worked outward which completely screwed up the enemy..... The Marines brought in 850 men in the first two hours of the assault. They completely cornered the Taliban / al Qaeda forces.... It was maneuver warfare. The enemy knew we were coming. They'd seen the Marines forming south of Sangin an area named by Alexander the Great.....The squads [of Marines] manned and moving from inside Sangin had worked outwards forcing the enemy into their own IEDs as they retreated. The enemy never recovered from that fundamental tactical mistake. The military leadership of the enemy left much to be desired in handling this unexpected attack route of the Marine's ... Now, the Taliban were good at one thing, dying.." <sup>352</sup>

The Marines first priorities was to destroy the terrorist training camps in and around Afghanistan, and at the same time provide humanitarian assistance to the civilians while protecting critical infrastructure. Maneuver warfare presented itself in two ways: initiating surprise and creating confusion. The Taliban had underestimated the technology the Marines brought to the fight. The Taliban's realization that they did not have near equal technology compared to that of the Marines was enough to throw them into a panic. Panic more often than not ultimately stirs confusion and disorder among enemy combatants, making them easier to subdue.<sup>353</sup>

Another maneuver strategy the Marines Corps utilized was to annihilate the heads of Taliban / al-Qaeda terrorist organizations. This Taliban / al-Qaeda partnership was by then under the Taliban reign. The Marines therefore developed a major interest in the countries

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<sup>351</sup>Conway, In person interview with the author. Marine Air Ground Task Force ( with its own air support and logistics).

<sup>352</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>353</sup> MCDP 1 (Krulak) 1997. Also see: Chet Richards, *Certain to War* (Richmond: Richards, 2004), 13-28.

leaders. The Taliban had publicly offered their support for al-Qaeda. The Taliban gave Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda network security and Osama bin Laden offered them financial support in return. There was a very thin line that separated the al-Qaeda organization and the Taliban forces. In some instances there was no separation line. By capturing the key leadership *cadre* of either or both organizations, its operations would be interfered with or disrupted to the point of stagnation.<sup>354</sup> This would bring the Marines' desired effect of winning at the least possible costs in lives and treasure. Boydian philosophy of faster OODA cycling by the Marine Corps enhanced their maneuver prospects.<sup>355</sup>

In the next two weeks, the Marines made a clean job of the Taliban's air defenses. The Northern Alliance helped in orchestrating the air strikes. Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM's) were employed in bringing down the Taliban air defenses. These munitions were GPS-guided. This alone was enough to cripple the entire opposition and it would be expected that the attacking military would withdraw after such an assault. However, the aim of maneuver warfare is not just to destroy the enemy on the battle field. It is equally aimed at breaking the enemy's will as well.<sup>356</sup> This meant that the Marines did not want to give the al-Qaeda a chance to rise again. Therefore, initiation of ground warfare was essential for the complete elimination of whatever al Qaeda or Taliban pockets of resistance that may have remained.

Here a high tempo with ruthless abandon was the essence of another maneuver tactic employed by the Marine Corps in Helmand Province.<sup>357</sup> Another attribute of this combined arms approach of the air campaign is that the civilian casualties were minimal. By accomplishing the control of indiscriminate bombings, the Marines sought to win over a portion of the Afghanistan civilians to their side. This was also done by providing food supplies and infrastructure development to the Afghani populace. It eventually won over civilian loyalty. This fact alone of employing maneuver warfare's "soft side" came from not only the lessons learned by the CAP program but also from the Marine Corps DNA found in

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<sup>354</sup> Small Wars Manual.

<sup>355</sup> See OODA Cycling Chart, page 229.

<sup>356</sup> FMFM 1, and, MCDP 1.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

FMFRP 12-15 *Small Wars Manual* since the Taliban's morale would also be negatively affected when they realized their own people were now against them.<sup>358</sup>

The major functions of the Marine MAGTF were to provide support for the air operations by destroying as many Taliban and al-Qaeda military facilities and camps as possible. Also they were there to support the Northern Alliance who was working in conjunction with U.S. Special Forces and U.S. Marines. The three carrier strike groups employed in the air campaign were: The *Enterprise* Strike Group- from the Arabian Sea; *Carl Vinson* Strike Group- from the Arabian Sea; and the *Theodore Roosevelt* Strike Group- from the Mediterranean Sea. The *Kitty Hawk* and *John Stennis* Strike Groups were at hand when it came to providing combined air support as well. In the initial stages of the attack, there was wide application of cruise missiles fired into Afghanistan. These sea borne attacks helped in launching surprise ground attacks on the unsuspecting Taliban targets by Marine special operators. Eighty eight cruise missiles were used in the first ten days of the attack. While the Marines were better suited to utilize rapid maneuver warfare strikes that quickly finished the adversary, the ground warfare in *Operation Enduring Freedom* took longer than expected. It was referred to as a marathon rather than a sprint by Brigadier General James N. Mattis in the beginnings of OEF.<sup>359</sup> *Operation Enduring Freedom* had earlier been known as *Operation Swift Freedom*. The realization that freedom would not be as swift as anticipated might have been the reason for the change in mission names. This operation would last for some time as numerous missions were carried out in the longest war of record for the United States.

A key decision combined the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) and the 26<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) which resulted into the formation of Task Force 58. The Task Force 58 played a big role in the eventual downfall of the Taliban. Task Force 58 was made up of two infantry battalions, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Regiment and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion; two helicopter squadrons (HMM -165 and HMM-365) and two logistic support groups that entailed MSSG 15 and MSSG 26. They numbered about twenty five hundred Marines and sailors. Additionally, there was an Australian Special Air Service Squadron and a U.S. Naval Construction Battalion (NMCB 133). The Task Force headquarters was on the USS *Peleliu*, with a forward Observation Post (OP) coupled with a jump Command Post (CP). The headquarters was made up of thirty two

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<sup>358</sup> *Small Wars Manual*.

<sup>359</sup> Mattis, telephonic interview with the author.

personnel. This was a small number of people who enabled the missions to be carried out with agility and precision. Unlike the conditions in Northern Afghanistan where the Marine Corps had allies, the Marines in southern Afghanistan had no such backing. This meant they could make no advancement until they received permission to fly over Pakistan. This fact affected the strategic tempo of Marine Corps maneuver against the Taliban.<sup>360</sup>

The Marines did not view the sea as a stumbling block to their operations but rather looked at it beneficently as maneuver space. They used it as a geographical advantage, such that the enemy would never be able to decide the location of the assault. This would throw the adversary into a dilemma as to whether to defend the coast or proceed inland. This was maneuver warfare 101 in action. At the same time, it gave the Marine Corps the freedom to choose where, when and how to attack. Entry into Afghanistan was of course opposed by the Taliban, making it essential for the entry to be carried out with violent force. Forcible entry strategy owes its foundation to the maneuver warfare. The principles that were applied in operating this maritime maneuver were:

1. Complete focus on operational objectives,
2. Viewing the sea as a maneuver space,
3. Quick generation of tempo and momentum,
4. Being conversant with both parties' strengths and weaknesses,
5. Concentration on deception and intelligence,
6. Merging of all organic joint and combined assets in order to give or refuse battle.<sup>361</sup>

Another aspect of the application of maneuver warfare by the Marine Corps focused on the need to shape the battlefield and all operators within it. It is important to note that the Marines had gained a meaningful amount of local support. Pashtun tribes, though few, held common views with the Marine Corps towards the Taliban. This inspired their attack against the Kandahar Taliban faction. On November 14<sup>th</sup> Kandahar was basically the spiritual base of the Taliban; but by November 15<sup>th</sup>, they began withdrawing from Kandahar. The Pashtun

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<sup>360</sup> Col. Vincent Goulding, USMC (ret.), "Task Force 58: a Higher Level of Naval Operation," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August, 2011. <https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2011/08/task-force-58-higher-level-naval-operation>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

<sup>361</sup> Conway and Kelly, In person interviews with the author.

allies paved the way; the U.S. Marines launched a major offensive. Charlie Company, Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1/1 left the USS *Peleliu* to make an amphibious landing on Afghanistan soil. The long flight was sustained through nocturnal aerial refueling. This was risky but aided in the surprise nature of the Marines shaping the battle space. The flight was 450 miles, from the USS *Peleliu* to Objective Rhino over Pakistani airspace.<sup>362</sup> Calculated risks in seeking soft gaps paid off for the Marines in this effort.

Although “official” Pakistani approval did not exist, a *de facto* agreement had been reached between the Marine Corps and the Pakistani Marine forces that provided the necessary support for this operation. The U.S. Marines were given Pakistani Marine support in these operations. As this operation unfolded, the Pakistani Marines would surround the airstrip and provide maximum security. However, the internal politics of Pakistan was a sensitive issue. The government could not announce their alliance with the U.S. Marine Corps and denied such allegations when confronted by the journalists. In prepositioning the necessary logistical tail required many trips and eventual sea landings took place. The Marines took to a cycle of hiding their logistical support in the sand dunes during the day and bringing in ships with more supplies only at night. Without the aid of the Pakistani government the operation’s success would have been hard to achieve. Pakistan eventually granted the Marines’ access to a small fishing village where supplies could be offloaded. The Amphibious Ready Group made use of more than thirteen Landing Craft Air Cushioned, (LCAC); as well as, four Landing Craft Utility ships (LCU) used to ferry troops and supplies during these amphibious landings. Upon landing, trucks would carry the supplies to the airfield. Only two trucks could travel in a night. The Marines had to limit the number of active warfighters to a minimum, until *Operations Rhino* was to step off.<sup>363</sup>

Task Force-58 chose the village of Shamsi to be the Forward Arming and Refueling Point (FARP). It became an important refueling center for Marine aviation from the ships, enroute to Camp Rhino. Until then, the Taliban thought they had Pakistani backing. The Marine Corps thought this as well since maneuver warfare requires one to have full knowledge of the opponent’s strengths and weaknesses. The Marine Corps cut right through

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<sup>362</sup> Jay. M. Holterman, “The 15Th Marine Expeditionary Unit's Seizure of Camp Rhino,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 86-6, 2002. <https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2002/06/th-15th-marine-expeditionary-units-seizure-camp-rhino>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

what the Taliban saw as their core strength base. They won over the Pakistani government which made the operation smoother than it would have been under the current circumstances. The Taliban and al-Qaeda meanwhile went through their operations normally, counting on the lack of Pakistani support for the Marines hoping to make any Marine attack feeble. The Taliban were deceived into a false sense of security and were greatly surprised when they were eventually attacked.<sup>364</sup> Deception is a major principle of maneuver warfare and its integration with surprise yielded the desired results for the Marines. Eventually a number of CH-53Es made it ashore in the company of AH-1W Cobras and UH-1 Hueys. The helicopters from the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) landed two hundred U.S. Marines to establish the Forward Operating Base at an abandoned airfield fifty five miles to the south of Kandahar. They secured the airstrip with no resistance. Once *Operation Rhino* became Camp Rhino, the very first assault came shortly; two Marine Cobras encountered three al Qaeda / Taliban armored vehicles. The attack left two of the armored vehicles destroyed and scores of Taliban fighters dead. In one week one thousand Marines were in the AOR at their new FOB, Camp Rhino.<sup>365</sup>

The Marines using maneuver warfare tactics were always on the alert, never ignoring even the most minor signals offered by their foe during an operation. Maneuver warfare works best with a team being able to pick out gaps in the enemy's deployment and exploiting it to their advantage. This was exemplified on December 6<sup>th</sup> when flashes were seen in the northern horizon. The Marines were later informed by a recce Naval P-3s that enemy vehicles were indeed getting loaded for some intended action. BLT 1/1 assaulted the enemy with 81mm mortar fires. This piece of information proved vital in the Marines operation, such that knowing the enemy had planned to surprise attack the Marines, instead the roles were reversed! The Marines were to ensure there was no re-occurrence of the same enemy activity. A Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) was therefore deployed to explore the site, and they found nothing substantial.<sup>366</sup>

To all appearances, the day seemed to have ended with this assault but that was not to be the case. A Lockheed P-3 Orion Maritime Patrol Aircraft had spotted a convoy of six vehicles making their way towards a Marine roadblock on Route 1. This Marine post was

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<sup>364</sup> Holterman, "The 15Th MEU Seizure of Camp Rhino."

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid.

being manned by units from Light Armored Reconnaissance Company (LAR), Combined Anti-Armor Team (CAAT) and Marine Force Reconnaissance platoon. The vehicles came to a halt at the roadblock. One of the vehicles sped towards the wire that blocked the road. It only stopped when it got trapped by the wire. By then the Marines had opened fire on the vehicle and it soon burst into flames. An enemy who tried to escape from the burning truck was cut down by a Marine sniper. The explosion that followed scattered the other occupants of the vehicle on the road. The P-3 observers worked closely with a Forward Air Controller (FAC) guiding fire for CAS aircraft. One hundred and twenty of the al-Qaeda militiamen died and movement on Route 1 by the al Qaeda ended for the enemy.<sup>367</sup> This incident showed an excellent application of the maneuver warfare. The units in Task Force 58 did not work on a designed schedule. They received a mission type order so as to go and interdict the road. Knowing commanders intent that is exactly what they did. An aside benefit of this action also rid the terrorists of many of its ardent followers and possible future recruits.<sup>368</sup>

Maneuver warfare needed an assessment of the current situation and forming immediate judgments based on them. The rapid airstrike that followed threw the Taliban into massive confusion from which they did not recover. In the end they had heavy casualties and in addition, all their vehicles were destroyed. If the Taliban could replace their troops with ease, they would not be able to replace the lost vehicles with ease. This frustrated their efforts and the resistance dwindled with time. This incident is an example of military success obtained through rapid deployment and good intelligence gathering.<sup>369</sup>

The airport in Kandahar city was taken over by the Marines in mid-December 2001. This was done by the LAR Company from the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC). The operation was named Task Force Sledgehammer. At dawn, helicopters from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> MEU (SOC) carried reinforcements into the airport. These helicopters carried the 6<sup>th</sup> Marines, India Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion. The surrounding area was explored for unexploded devices and booby traps. The Taliban / al Qaeda army had been cunning enough to carpet the runways with mines and miscellaneous metal pieces. A few planes were lost to this tactic, much as the Marines tried as

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<sup>367</sup> Col. Nathen S. Lowrey, *From The Sea: U.S. Marines in the Global War on Terrorism* (Washington DC: USMC History Div., 2011), 89.

<sup>368</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>369</sup> Conway, In person interview with author.

possible to avoid such accidents.<sup>370</sup> The intent of capturing the airport meant cutting off communication between the northern and southern Taliban, which would be detrimental to their operations. It also meant that the al-Qaeda was cut off from their supplies and reinforcement as well. In this application of maneuver warfare where the Marines took hold of a location which was critical to the Taliban a soft spot in the enemy's position created a gap that would splinter the enemy's forces and start the process of isolation of enemy combatants. Also with no apparent threat to the Kandahar Airport, it became easy for the Marines to penetrate deeper into southern Afghanistan.<sup>371</sup>

In January 2002 a platoon from Alpha Company joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Marines BLT attached to the 26<sup>th</sup> MEU. They concentrated their operations within Kandahar province as before, seeking to bring the area under total control. There was no relaxation with the patrols and the recons were still conducted to ensure the enemy had been subdued. Some prisoners of war were captured by the Marines. They were questioned by Marine Interrogator Translators, the 202<sup>nd</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion, the CIA, the Drugs Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Criminal Investigative Division (CID) and MI-5 British Intelligence. They sought to know more about the prisoners and garner any useful information from them. General Mattis allowed full access to the prisoners on the grounds that any useful information gathered would be shared by all.<sup>372</sup> Moreover, "alarm type" information which included pending attacks and actionable intelligence was to be made known to General Mattis immediately. Meanwhile, a team of specialists under Lieutenant Commander Runkle were sent to support a team from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) in scouring of the Karnak Farm, which served as an al-Qaeda training ground. The farm became one of the several Sensitive Site Exploitation (SSE) missions that Task Force 58 had carried out alongside Task Force K-Bar.<sup>373</sup> The team found a large number of files that contained reference and training manuals along with paperwork that would be essential sources of intelligence for the operation. The task force also carried out the Sensitive Site Exploitation missions in a place that was suspected to have ties with chemical and biological warfare research. A special Chemical Biological Inspection Site Team (CBIST) was dispatched to

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<sup>370</sup> Lowrey, "From the Sea," 107.

<sup>371</sup> MCDP 1.1.

<sup>372</sup> Mattis, Telephonic Interview with author.

<sup>373</sup> Lowrey, "From the Sea," 42.

provide support for the Australian Task Force 64. These units together with the Marine security elements were deployed in the Dewaluk region where they searched eight villages. The elements did not find anything substantial during that particular mission. However, in the early days of January 2002, Task Force 58 and Task Force K-Bar were sent on a mission to clear a number of caves in the Zhawar Kili area. Contrary to all expectations, the mission took twelve days instead of a few hours. The caves were found to be holding a large amount of intelligence together with ammunition and explosives.<sup>374</sup>

On January 19<sup>th</sup>, the 26<sup>th</sup> MEU handed over the responsibility of the airport to units on the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, Task Force Rakkasan. On February 5<sup>th</sup> General Mattis' team proceeded to exit Afghanistan. The three months Task Force 58 had spent ashore, had been of great importance to the war effort. Maneuver type actions of demonstrable importance by this Task Force were:

1. Sealing off of the western escape routes that lay along the Highway 1,
2. Securing the U.S Embassy in Kabul,
3. Securing a special operations facility in Khowst,
4. Capturing the Kandahar International Airport,
5. Putting up a short time holding facility that served as detention grounds for enemy prisoners,
6. Carrying out successful Sensitive Sites Exploitation missions (SSE),
7. Taliban's hold of Kandahar had slackened,
8. Many of the Taliban fighters had withdrawn from the city and surrounding regions.<sup>375</sup>

The Marines redeployed to Afghanistan when Taliban insurgency again became apparent. Helmand province and its constituent districts offered the Taliban a haven for their renewed operations. In March 2008, the 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit was dispatched to Afghanistan in order to support the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Marines who had already redeployed in Afghanistan. They were supposed to conduct operations that would eliminate or neutralize the Taliban threat in volatile Helmand Province. The Marines began their patrol in the areas which had been occupied by the Taliban. The Marines made their way to the south of the province, and into Garmser and Nawa districts which were inhabited extensively by the Taliban. Their advancement into these districts came sooner than the Taliban anticipated. The Marines spread out into the villages of the lush farming districts so as to stay put and establish a Marine Corps presence. The Marines gave this operation a different strategical maneuver

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<sup>374</sup> Lowrey, "From the Sea, K-Bar" 229.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid, Also see MCDP 1. And, Mattis telephonic interview with the author.

approach. Their first priority was to ensure that there were no civilian casualties. In the other operations, they had come to pursue and eliminate the Taliban but this would not be the case in this operation. New rules of engagement (ROE) were the commander's intent on this redeployment. They received strict orders that required them to withdraw from an engagement with the Taliban and reconnect later if civilian lives were at risk. Although the Taliban fired at them, the Marines did not respond with fire unless it was ROE compliant. The response was the same when they encountered roadside bombs. The Marines aimed at winning civilian confidence and assuring them that they would be safe in Marine Corps hands. The Marine Corps intent with maneuver in mind was to erase the picture that had been painted in the civilian minds that Americans were responsible for all the violence and destruction. This was the beginning of General Mattis' Distributive Operations which were an adaptation from the original CAP applications of the Vietnam War.<sup>376</sup>

In a predawn attack, the Marines proceeded to the town of Dahaneh. This town had been under Taliban control for an extended period. The launch of this mission was aimed at securing the area for the important upcoming elections. The Marines were flown into Dahaneh, where they were then dispatched behind the enemy lines. The Taliban / al Qaeda insurgents responded to the assault with heavy fire from mortars, small arms and the rocket propelled grenades, the standard insurgent tools that have grown synonymous with these militia forces. The Marines returned the fire and engaged with combined air support and with helicopters flying overhead dropping numerous flares to mark the enemy forces. The intent for the Marine Corps in this action at Dahaneh was the hope that they would manage to isolate the insurgents from the civilian population.<sup>377</sup>

They hoped to confine the enemy to the mountains and forests areas so that they would leave the civilians to participate peacefully in the Afghanistan presidential elections. The Taliban had sworn to do everything in their power to disrupt the elections. The battle raged on for an extended period. Between seven to ten Taliban militiamen were left dead after the

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<sup>376</sup> Carter Malkasian, "War Comes to Garmser: Thirty Years of Conflict on the Afghan Frontier" *Afghan Scene*, (2009) 1-22..<http://www.afghanscene.com>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

<sup>377</sup> Alfred de Montesquiou, "Taliban-held town focus of latest assault," *Leatherneck Magazine*, August 12, 2009 <http://www.leatherneck.com/forums/showthread.php?87762-Taliban-held-town-focus-of-latest-assault>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

assault. The battle was slowed down by the insurgents who had resorted to firing rounds from the rooftops. However, this was neutralized by the airstrikes that were called in by the Marines. At the onset of the action, nearly one hundred civilians fled the town, leaving the attacking troops confident that the remaining Afghani's in the town would only be insurgents.

Great care was being taken to eliminate any occurrence of civilian casualties. This is because capturing of Dahaneh was secondarily aimed at winning the civilian's hearts and minds. The Taliban had levied heavy taxes at Dahaneh's checkpoints because it had been an important trade route in the region north of the Helmand province. These taxes, together with funds garnered from the drug business formed the major source of finances for the Taliban. The mission was therefore conducted in a bid to reclaim the important market center from the Taliban and hand it over for civilian use.<sup>378</sup>

A large quantity of opium was seized by the Marines in this operation, alongside of a large *cache* of weapons. The insurgents had made Dahaneh a home, such that they even rejected their earlier strategy of shooting and running. In this battle, they stood their ground and fought back. This fact points to the level of importance attached to Dahaneh by the militants. Dahaneh was a Taliban-center of gravity. By attacking and ejecting them from the town, the Marine's action further demystified the strength of the Taliban. The Taliban forces in Dahaneh were deprived of their supply lines and would stand out from the civilians, therefore exposing them to Marine Corps forces.<sup>379</sup>

In the post engagement time frame, the first ever patrol was mounted in the town following the retreat of the insurgents. A contingent of Afghan soldiers and female Marines (FET's) set out to find civilians who might have gone into hiding within the town when the attack began. There were no civilian casualties in the assault. The response of the Marines had been strictly proportional so that any civilians in the compounds would not be harmed. By these actions of a subdued yet intentional ROE the aspects of maneuver warfare achieved the intended intent of pacification in Dahaneh.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> de Montesquiou, "Leatherneck," 2009.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> "Marines Storm Taliban Town in Afghanistan," *Fox News*, August 12, 2009. <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2009/08/12/marines-storm-taliban-town-in-afghanistan>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

The U.S. Marines took over Sangin,<sup>381</sup> a district to the north of Helmand province, from the British in mid-October. Sangin was one of the most violent places in Afghanistan. It was a major Taliban stronghold and their attacks reflected as much. The Taliban had not taken the presence of the Marine and Coalition troops in Sangin lightly. Sangin is where the insurgents' activities obtained another major source of their funding. Sangin is a lush valley in which opium and heroin was processed. The lucrative drug business ultimately funded their battles. It was also the last of such havens in Helmand as all the others had been disrupted by the U.S. Marine and Coalition forces.<sup>382</sup>

Sangin was also situated at a major choke point where all the drugs were funneled. Weapons and fighters also made this their juncture for their movements to other provinces. When the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment took over Sangin, they planned to give it a more aggressive approach than before. The British had been more lenient in their approach, losing almost a third of their troops which had been deployed in the area. The withdrawal of course raised a lot of worries as to whether the Marine Corps would be able to finish a task in which the British had encountered difficulties in their operation. It was then announced that the British withdrawal was an action that was taken in order to put the British focus into central Helmand province while the Marine Corps took care of the north and south.

The first action of the Marines was to shut down a dozen of the twenty two patrol bases the British had constructed throughout the Sangin district. This clearly indicated that they never intended to employ the British neighborhood policing tactics. These bases had been aimed at improving the security situation in the districts. However, the British ended up deploying most of their troops to the bases leaving the other parts of this AOR to the Taliban. The British FOB's were closed down in order to free the maneuver forces which would then pursue the enemy without the fear of the bases being attacked and or captured.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Herschel Smith, "US Marines More Aggressive than British in Sangin," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 November 2010, national edition, nation.  
<http://www.latimes.com/search/dispatcher.front?Query=archives&target=all>.

Also see "The Captain's Journal True Confessions of British Counterinsurgency," <http://www.captainsjournal.com/2011/05/13/true-confessions-of-british-counterinsurgency>. (Accessed 23 May2014).

<sup>382</sup> See OODA Cycling Chart, 231.

<sup>383</sup> Smith, "Marines More Aggressive in Sangin."

The initial intent shifted for the Marines in Sangin. The Marines conducted many patrols in the area and were very aggressive during these patrols. They would respond to the Taliban with heavy gunfire instead of retreating to their bases, as the British had done. The Taliban in Sangin were a different breed of insurgents. They did not wait to be attacked; instead they came looking for the Marines. The Marine Corps resorted to employing small unit maneuver warfare as their *modus operandi*, owing to the fact that their numbers were far too small to take on the Taliban in a major combat. The small units would take advantage of their numbers to involve the Taliban in maneuvers that would entrap them. The Taliban never stayed long while engaging in combat with the Marines. They knew this was an invitation for air strikes that would earn them unwanted casualties. They eventually adopted a “shoot and scoot” strategy against the Marine warfighters. They would attack, drop their weapons and then flee. The Marines, instead of seeking cover when the Taliban ambushed, counterattacked the Taliban forces.<sup>384</sup> The Marine snipers would then take full advantage of this confusion and eliminate the insurgents. Perhaps the most effective weapons utilized by the Taliban were the Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). These were always hidden in the most unimaginable places in the district. The Taliban fired at the Marines when they had planted these IEDs in the space between them. They sometimes directed fire at the Marines which was meant to act as bait and lure them into these minefields. However, the Marine Corps ability to out think or cycle faster through the OODA process eliminated, if not lessened the Taliban threats. The Marines maneuvered to fix these Taliban units so that other squads of Marines would attack the insurgents from a direction they least expected.<sup>385</sup>

*Operation Moshtarak*<sup>386</sup> was launched to deal with civilian needs as part of a strategy of counterinsurgency (COIN). This operation took place in the Nad Ali district, of the Marjah region which had been in insurgents control for many years. This region is infamous for its multi-hundred million dollar narcotics business. The growing of opium is limited not only to the Taliban, but also to the civilians and senior government officials who have stakes in this

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<sup>384</sup> Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Knoff, 2014), 495. Quote: “..... Marines are insane. They run toward the sound of our guns rather than run away....” Also Conway in person interview with the author, re: Marine Corps snipers.

<sup>385</sup> General Conway, In person interview with the author.

<sup>386</sup> Senate Committee, Armed Services, Briefing *On Operation Moshtarak in Helmand Province, Afghanistan*, 111 Cong. 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess. 2010, S. Doc.6.

business model. This operation had no hint of surprise in it. This is because the Coalition forces had made the people's safety and reduction of collateral damage their first priority.<sup>387</sup>

Leaflets were air-dropped to the civilians to inform them of the upcoming offensive and to also warn them against hosting the insurgents. Local elders convened meetings with the Coalition forces so that they would be updated on their plans and be informed on what to do once the offensive started. Female Marines (FET) also went from one compound to another, trying to get the Afghan women to tell them their major needs and as well as garner information on the Taliban.<sup>388</sup> *Operation Moshtarak*, meaning "Together" in the Afghanistan Dali language, saw the integration of a large Afghan force within the coalition units. The Afghans to all appearances led the operation. This integration of the Afghan force was meant to do away with the reservations that the Afghan people had about the coalition forces, viewing them as invaders. In these operations, the Coalition forces defeated the Taliban on the battleground, and then left a small number of the troops to guard the area. The moment the Taliban noticed that the coalition forces were depleted after the offensive; they would come back and retake these areas. After this they would spread propaganda that they had in fact defeated the coalition forces. This was evidenced during *Operation Anaconda*,<sup>389</sup> now a lesson learned. Going forward for the Marine Corps, the tactic of clear, hold and build was brought into play.<sup>390</sup>

The Marines did not want a repeat of the Taliban resettlement once the clearance operations were over. They sought to merge the military missions with the socio-political operations in the Marjah area. Order was not supposed to be temporary, as long as the Afghan military were in place. Rather the Marines wanted to restore order and governance that would be there in the long term. That is why the Afghan forces were to be inserted in these operations. The withdrawal of the Coalition forces would not create an administrative

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<sup>387</sup> Alexander Jackson, ICOS, "Operation Moshtarak: Lessons Learned," *Small Wars Journal*, "(2010), 27.: <http://www.smallwarsjournal.com/documents/moshtarak1.pdf>. and [file:///K:/Downloads/moshtarak1%20\(1\).pdf](file:///K:/Downloads/moshtarak1%20(1).pdf). (Accessed 24 May 2014).

<sup>388</sup> Ibid.

<sup>389</sup> J. R. WILSON, "MEU (SOC) in OEF-A Special Operations Forces and Operation Enduring Freedom," *Defense Media Network*, (2011): <http://www.defensemianetwork.com/stories/operation-enduring-freedom-the-first-49-days-8/> (Accessed 24 May 2014).

<sup>390</sup> Jackson, "Operation Moshtarak," 1- 29.

vacuum. The Marines also aimed at making the civilians their friends. Hopefully the civilians would then give them information concerning the Taliban who were in their midst. Moreover, they would tell them where the Taliban had already planted their Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and other items of intelligence value.<sup>391</sup>

The Coalition offensive had begun with numerous British and American airstrikes. This went on for some time before the ground troops became engaged in this effort. The *Moshtarak* offensive, which brought together over fifteen thousand NATO forces, to fight alongside a large number of Afghanistan forces is a prime example of applying the Boydian OODA process.<sup>392</sup> This was to be the largest military assault ever launched by NATO on the Afghanistan soil. This assault was the first experiment of the strategy that NATO had adopted in which success was not to be determined by the number of Taliban casualties (a typical attritionist mind set). Still, NATO officials had warned that there was a strong likelihood that the operation would result in the highest insurgent casualties ever seen in Afghanistan. This operation was meant to break the Taliban's back.<sup>393</sup>

The ground combat had been preceded by RAF Tornados. They flew over central Helmand Valley where combat was expected to take place. The region below was scanned with target pods from helicopters that aimed at getting intelligence and looking for anything that pointed to Taliban locations or activity. This intelligence was sent to mission headquarters at the Kandahar airfield; and once there, analysts would sift through it. Both the U.S. and British spy planes were integrated into the order of battle. These sophisticated aircraft sought to jam and disrupt the communication between Taliban commanders. The first of the Taliban casualties came from an unmanned Predator aircraft and Marine AH-64 Apache attack helicopters. These were directed at insurgents who had been in the process of laying roadside

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<sup>391</sup> *Small Wars Manual*.

<sup>392</sup> See OODA Cycling Chart, 229.

<sup>393</sup> Sean Rayment, Patrick Sawyer and Ben Farmer, "Afghanistan: First Stage Of Operation Moshtarak Declared A Success," *The Telegraph*, (2010), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/7230940/Afghanistan-first-stage-of-operation>. (Accessed 24 May 2014).

Improvised Explosive Devices and putting anti-aircraft guns into place. These air strikes resulted in the death of eleven of the Taliban.<sup>394</sup>

The initial attacks began immediately following the air strikes. The U.S. Marines proceeded to capture a number of canal crossings situated to the south of Nad Ali. Nad Ali is one of the most densely populated regions in the Helmand Valley. The first Marine Chinooks made their landing at around 0225. The night sky was lit up by their infra-red flares which were visible to the pilots but not to the naked eye. The RAF pilots had been provided with night vision equipment which had been given to them by Marine Corps' Harrier AV-8B jet pilots. At 0400, the operation entered a critical phase as Marine helicopters filled with coalition soldiers, Afghan forces and Marines made their landing in the Taliban-dominated area of Showal, Chah-e-Anjir region. As soon as the helicopters landed, the soldiers and Marines scrambled out to their positions. The "break-in" was underway. As the British forces went about capturing their designated areas, a one thousand-man force consisting of Marines and Afghan National Army were dispatched in Marjah.<sup>395</sup>

In Marjah, just like Dahaneh, the Taliban were expected to stand and fight instead of their usual retreating after their initial assault. This resistance again meant that the number of casualties would be high on both sides. In the next one and a half hours, more and more Marines arrived in the CH-53 Super Stallion transport helicopters. Daylight saw additional troops arriving into the area by land maneuver. They made use of makeshift mobile bridges to get across rivulets and irrigation canals. Meanwhile, the heavily armored MRAP trucks were plowing away at the mines, making a safe path through which the troops could enter the city. The Marines immediately secured many of their objectives.<sup>396</sup> They encountered very little resistance, in some cases none at all. The operation had taken quite some time to plan, about two months in the making. This had been followed by rigorous shaping operations that ensured that the strikes were carried out with the greatest of speed when the attack was finally launched. The operation took place as planned, with each of the Afghani soldiers or Marines keeping in mind that the operation was not aimed at the annihilation of the Taliban, but rather

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<sup>394</sup> Jackson, "Operation Moshtarak," 1- 29.

<sup>395</sup> Rayment, et al., "Operation Moshtarak."

<sup>396</sup> Conway and Kelly, Personal interviews with the author.

to secure the province for the local population; a pacification technique in line with FMFRP 12-15 *Small Wars Manual*.<sup>397</sup> The most encouraging aspect of the operation was that some of the captured Taliban had an epiphany. They showed signs of wishing to be reconciled with the local community instead of remaining with the insurgency.<sup>398</sup>

In the latter parts of the operation, the Marines took another tactic to counter-insurgency (COIN) in Helmand. Borrowing heavily from Combined Action Platoons (CAP) in Vietnam, the Marines embarked on a long-term mission that saw them living next to the Afghan fighters. The major tenets behind this stratagem were:

1. To live and interact with the Afghan populace,
2. To form a liaison with the local forces,
3. To establish a rift between the local populace and the insurgents with the help of the local troops.<sup>399</sup>

General James Mattis encouraged the adoption of this strategy. He maintained that if these cohesive small contingents, which had undergone vast training that did not stop at fire and maneuver lived with the people, victory could be assured. He linked this to Iraq where the Marines had noted that al-Qaeda had been brought down to its knees the moment the people of Al- Anbar province withdrew their support of al-Qaeda.<sup>400</sup> However, the fact that the Marines had established a rapport with the local populace alone did not make them immune to ambushes. The insurgent ambushes were still laid despite these relationships. There was widespread corruption that at times prompted the local forces to shift loyalty away from the Marines. This posed a great threat that required the Marines to maintain high levels of

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<sup>397</sup> *Small Wars Manual*.

<sup>398</sup> Senate Committee, Armed Services, "Operation Moshtarak."

Also see: Rob Johnson, *The Afghan Way of War: How and Why They Fight* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 267-268 and 287.

<sup>399</sup> Combined Action Platoons of Vietnam have been reintroduced in Afghanistan under the guidance of Gen. Conway and Gen. Mattis they have been renamed "Distributed Operations" This is a recent development that is being tried as a COIN initiative. For the most part it is still a classified endeavor of the Combat Development Group and the Warfighting Lab at MCHQ Quantico. It can be considered a combination of the Marine Corps Raider Battalions of WWII mixed with the Marine Corps CAP of the Vietnam War. Add in the lessons learned from *Small War Manual*, FMFM-1, MCDP-1 and *The Three Block War* Concept with smaller numbers per se reducing the BLT to the CLT (Company Landing Team). See Conclusions for further discussion of D.O.

<sup>400</sup> Conway and Mattis, interviews with the author.

alertness. This strategy was an employment of the CAP-style maneuver warfare as a method of counterinsurgency.<sup>401</sup>

The Marines spent very little time in their forward operating bases (FOBs). Rather, they spent the bulk of their time interacting with members of the community. The community's trust had to be earned and this was not going to be possible if the Marines stuck to the safety presented within the FOBs. The Marines lived without air-conditioning systems, television and internet connection, or food served at the dining facilities in order to unite with the community. These Marines dined on the same food as the locals and experienced the lack of amenities just as the locals did. The Afghans would ultimately develop a feeling for the Marines and recognize that the real trouble lay with the Taliban and not the Marines.<sup>402</sup>

The Marines mounted patrols in the regions they lived in, up to three patrols every day. The frequency of these patrols outdid that of all other forces deployed in the area. This ensured maximum security and further enhanced the Afghans' belief that the Marines were in truth concerned with their security.

A case in point for the successes of the Marines' interaction with the people was in Garmsir. When the 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived in Garmsir in 2008, the area was racked with the frequent insurgent assaults in a bid to capture it. The British in the district, backed by the surge of 24<sup>th</sup> MEU, finally achieved a semblance of stability and put the district under the jurisdiction of the Coalition forces. The British handed over the responsibility of the district to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Marines in May 2009. There was not much fighting when the battalion, also known as "America's Battalion," arrived in Garmsir. There was considerable insurgent activity in the surrounding districts but Garmsir was a different story, most of the activity having been neutralized by the Marine Corps and Afghan national forces. This mission was far from over for the Marines. They had meant to pass the baton for all the security operations to the Afghan troops and this would definitely take more time.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> Combined Action Program / "Distributed Operations" was under the guidance of Gen. Conway and Gen. Mattis. For the most part this is still a USMC "Classified" program.

<sup>402</sup> Mattis, Conway and Kelly, interviews with the author.

<sup>403</sup> Reece Lodder, Cpl. USMC "Future of Garmsir in Afghan Hands," *Marines Magazine*, May 15th, 2012, <http://marinesmagazine.dodlive.mil/2012/05/15/future-of-garmsir-in-afghan-hands>. (Accessed 24 May 2014).

The “America’s Battalion” had reached Afghanistan while the military operations were entering a critical phase of the entire campaign. The previous battalions had focused on clearing Garmsir and bringing stability to it. The “America’s Battalion” concerned itself with the building and shaping of the district’s future. The battalion succeeded in handing over thirty nine of their positions to the Afghan troops, apart from redeploying a hundred million dollars’ worth of gear to the Afghans.

It was obvious that the future of Garmsir leaned heavily of the presence of an Afghan-led security force. However, the Afghan forces were hardly equipped for such a mission. Afghan forces formed a good backing for the Marines patrols but their manpower was barely enough to enable them to hold positions without partnering with the Marines.

The Afghan National Army (ANA) deployed a single battalion, indigenously known as a “*kandak*” to the entire district. Their coverage of the district was extremely thin and hardly relevant. The Afghan National Police Force, on the other hand, consisted of about three hundred men but was largely marred by corruption, lack of skills and the presence of insurgents within this force. The Marines recognized the Afghan Police as Garmsir’s best bet for security. They put in place a twenty five-man Police Mentoring Team, and a total of two hundred and ten ground combat Marines from Kilo Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 3<sup>rd</sup> Marines. They jointly identified the causes of corruption in the police force and attacked it.<sup>404</sup>

At the same time they increased the magnitude of the partnered missions and operations. Two Marine Corps directed police academies increased the number of Afghan Local Police from one hundred and twenty to three hundred and sixty nine patrolmen. The number of the Afghan Police Force eventually doubled from the previous three hundred to six hundred. A second ANA battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Kandak, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 215<sup>th</sup> Corps, was deployed to Garmsir district from Marjah district. They started operating in the south of Garmsir, backing the Afghani 2/1/215 unit that had been deployed to the north of the same district.<sup>405</sup>

The now strong Afghan National Army spread out into the entire district and carried out operations under the watchful eye of their Marine mentors. With time, they segued into more independent operations. This largely revamped their confidence and they soon began

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<sup>404</sup> Lodder, “Future of Garmsir.”

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

taking the lead with little Marine supervision. As the Afghan forces became larger, the Afghan citizens started experiencing their positive impact on security.

Their confidence in the capabilities of their forces was further displayed when, following several tips, thirty two improvised explosive devices were located and destroyed while ten caches of weapons and other insurgent paraphernalia was recovered. The people here were so impressed by the Marines' efforts to get closer to them that they put the Marines in the "know" concerning the insurgents' acts of violence which included destroying footbridges in their village, occupying their houses without their consent, planting Improvised Explosive Devices in their fields and stealing their property and food.<sup>406</sup>

As to these facts, Colonel Peter Petronzio, the commanding officer of the 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit, observed and noted that the Taliban lacked the means to fight their own war. They resorted to stealing from and intimidating the Afghan civilians yet still maintain that they were there to help the same people. Since the Marines' stay in Garmsir, the Afghan citizens have showered them with gifts of gratitude and information. They have also presented the sick and injured among them to the Marines for medical care. These actions point to increased trust for the Marines and support for their presence in the area. The Marines held a lot of conversations with the Afghan citizens, seeking to know what they needed most and what troubled them. In the conversations, the Afghans blamed all their problems on the Taliban, a display of their shift in perspectives. Security was first in priority and they asked the Marines to provide them with this.<sup>407</sup>

The people of Garmsir, in a move to give their government more credence, participated in the free district community council elections. The elections were overseen by the Afghans and recorded no incidents. The government had made very little sense to the people of Garmsir before the elections had been held. Most areas lacked representation. They had a serious water deficiency and an economy that was headed on a downward trend. The lack of education and the desire for medical services were a negative for the civilians. The government now offered all these services to the people. With such security and coherent administration, Garmsir's economy has been on an upward trend over the years. The economy

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<sup>406</sup> CAP / DO and *Small War Manual* guidance.

<sup>407</sup> Malkasian, "War Comes to Garmser."

was previously strained with most of the civilians being fully dependent on opium and subsistence farming. With security assured, most of the Afghans went back to the business centers like the Safar Bazaar. Both the buyers and the sellers conducted their transactions in safety, business was beginning to prosper. The number of shops also went from two hundred to four hundred in a matter of months. The shops remained opened for most of the day. This was different in comparison to when the insurgents reigned; now there was no intimidation of the shop owners.<sup>408</sup>

Most of schools had been closed down and education for girls had been completely banned. The Marines' Female Engagement Teams (FET)<sup>409</sup> had done a great deal to create awareness of the rights of the women in the district. Though the Islamic law is restrictive for women, such extreme Taliban measures as refusing the movement of women were done away with. The same was done in encouraging the education of girls and boys in general. This would influence the future decisions of the village regarding national governance. The Afghans realized the implications of these advances and now began to turn away from the Taliban.

Today, Garmsir is the paragon of freedom in Afghanistan. Twelve schools have since been built and opened to the community in a period of just seven months. People shop for their needs openly and without fear of intimidation. District security forces are always on call wherever the need for security arises. Life in this district is normal today. The Marines still stay on for follow-up activities, but the bulk of the security operations rest on the shoulders of the Afghan forces. Garmsir is a success story of the U.S. Marines' approach to counterinsurgency.<sup>410</sup> Its effect spread to most of Helmand province.

This maneuver warfare tactic proved effective in a country that had grown used to warfare and crime. Maneuver warfare employed throughout *Operation Enduring Freedom* by the Marines either in combat or civil operations, proved to be an effective tool of the modern day Marine Corps Way of War.

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<sup>408</sup> Lodder, "Future of Garmsir in Afghan Hands."

<sup>409</sup> "Female Engagement Teams" (FET), *Regional Command Southwest Afghanistan*, (2012). <http://regionalcommandsouthwest.wordpress.com/about/female-engagement-team>. (Accessed 23 May 2014).

<sup>410</sup> Lodder, "Future of Garmsir."

In closing this chapter a recent posting of an After Action Report (AAR) of *Operation Apache Snow II* by Bravo Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 9<sup>th</sup> Marines launched an interdiction operation near the Bari Gul Bazaar in Nad Ali District, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Dec. 4, 2013. Approximately 96 Marines, sailors and Afghan personnel engaged Taliban forces during the 14-hour operation, which included nearly four hours of sustained combat with insurgents in and around this bazaar. *Apache Snow II* was designed to deny Taliban forces free movement in the area and strike against their ability to gather armaments. A transcription of this video report which was conducted by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James Salka, Platoon Commander, Bravo Company, 1/9, Washingtonville, NY; Sgt Steven Pendleton, Squad Leader, Bravo Company, 1/9, Knoxville, TN is an excellent example of the use of maneuver warfare tactics used in this Marine operation. The following AAR as told by Lt. Salka focuses on the current maneuver warfare doctrine and tenets employed by Marines today in the battlespace. The bracketed, underlined italicized print [*Italics*] will further support the thesis of this paper:

“.. So obviously the mission was to [*disrupt the enemy within that area*]. That was outside of Ariel. So we did a partnered heliborne raid. Since we hit the deck, obviously it was still dark. We started to make movement to the north with [our] Afghan partners in the lead to kind of push up and talk to some people. And it started to get a little bit light out. We established our security perimeter with machine guns, snipers, as well as mortars and then we pushed our south element from compound to compound. The atmospherics in the area at that time -- there's a lot of motorbikes driving around along the peripheries as there usually is prior to an attack. So [there was] a lot of movement.

Air was reporting what was going on around us. Some families, women, children started to kind of flee the area. Once we started to cross this big, open, muddy field from about half-way through, that's when it began, they opened up on us with machine gun fire from a couple of different compounds so at that point the security element [Marines] started to suppress to allow them to run for cover. During this contact, I was in the middle of that field with the assault element so we got pinned down for a second and then we made the call once we had some good suppression from machine guns as well as snipers.

They had positive identification on several enemy fires around us so once they started to engage those targets that would alleviate a little bit of pressure off of (sic) us and we were able to kind of bound back to a compound for some cover. We got the vibe right off the bat that we were going to get hit so everyone's head was on a swivel and then when it happens, of course you don't know where it's going to come from, then at that point it came from about three or four different locations, pretty accurate rounds. One Marine got struck in his Kevlar when we were in that field so they pinpointed us pretty good. Instincts just kick in at that point for all the Marines. [*They did exactly what they were trained to do*]. As we were taking contact, I just want to make sure that everything is in place to help those guys out.

Obviously I was pinned down there so couldn't do too much to assist myself as well as them, but the Marines who were in those security positions already knew what they had to do

[commanders intent]and they immediately reacted to engage the enemy to alleviate that pressure off of (sic) us so we could bound back. Once [we] bounded back, I was able to start the battle attack. I had six different elements moving all over the battlefield [seeking gaps], just making sure I had positive communication with all of them over the radio or connecting fires so we could keep those Marines safe, which were in the open. Marines are amazing.

Once we took contact, they immediately snapped to and did what they were supposed to do. Like I said, one Marine got shot in the Kevlar, rounds are bouncing off guys' protective armor, then of course that one Marine got struck and we took a casualty at that point. They immediately responded with what they were supposed to do. Marines ran out into the open, dragged him to safety while other Marines were suppressing, immediately given a quick task.

The guys were already sweeping the LZ proving first and then getting that casualty ready for extract. So they made my job easy cause they knew exactly what they needed to do. [It was] definitely a big difference with the amount of guys that we have on the deck, Afghans as well as Marine forces.

Once we land, [we definitely have the element of surprise] right off the bat but obviously everyone is going to wake up and start to amass around our position and we don't have those vehicles to provide that cover. So kind of moving from compound to compound we expose ourselves to a pretty good amount of risk every single time. So we don't have that cover that the vehicles would provide. [It does give us some advantages in the fact that they don't know exactly where all of us are so which allows our geometries of fire as long as we're tracking where everyone is, to kind of isolate their positions and then neutralize the enemy] which obviously we did plenty that day.

Sustaining casualties is always a concern of mine as well as all the Marines on the deck. With those Afghans, we've been partnered with them a couple of time[s], we fought alongside them so we know how each other work and they are in the lead. So they'll be pushing at those compounds first every single time ... the locals, and the locals are pretty scared once the rounds start flying. So they hunker down. [They understand we're there for security]but between linguists and the Afghans themselves, it's no problem dealing with the locals and communicating our intent to them because the Marines are definitely feeling it, but again kind of the preparations that go into it is the physical side as well.

So they're well prepared, take a break inside compounds, [take that tactical pause, set the conditions if you will and move only when we have fires]. The Marines [made it a little bit easy for me just their initiative, being able to act on their own accord, knowing the end state]. I had to report up to higher as well as push down my commands to my subordinates so the two radio piece and just battle tracking on the map so I know exactly where everyone is, so then we can have fires which ultimately support us.

Overall, there was probably like a three hour chunk of time that we were under some pretty heavy fire and then about twenty minutes, thirty minutes of that was real heavy fire. So we're taking medium machine gun fire, small arms fire, RPG's grenade launchers, and again those are some real accurate rounds at the time we seem to be pinned down inside of a compound.

During this season especially it's a little bit muddier out as it gets colder going into the rainy season. So that also adds some difficulty for the Marines as we cross these fields getting slowed down and bogged down in the mud. The Marines did their job 100 percent. The second

we took contact, they immediately kicked in and reacted. I was just impressed at how good the Marines did that day and their actions saved that Marine's life..”

Stg. Pendelton completed the AAR as follows:

“.. [We pushed into the first compound that was available for us to push into. Once we were there we find out where the compound was that we needed to be so we kept pushing, kept pushing more north]. We went into the compound, talked to a couple of individuals who gave us some good information. Then we started pushing across about 450 meters in open terrain.

Once we crossed across there we were about 200 meters in and started catching good sporadic fire. It's a pretty good rush. It's pretty good to have. [It] calms you down at the same time. If you're used to it, it will calm you down. It will make everything go a little bit smoother (sic) because most people can operate better when they're under pressure.

Our objective was mainly to try to get information, clear the compounds, get information from individuals and see if they could help us out through any Intel throughout the village of insurgence. We caught contact with the security element. [Usually they would take most of the firepower off of (sic) us so we can continue the clear]. [But we were getting hit from three different directions so we had to continue and help the security out].

Going to the compound, my first step is to just make sure everyone gets to that next compound alive. Once we get over there, we support the ATF 444, let them do their clear piece, they do whatever they need to do to try to get kind of Intel and then we get ready.

We sit in a ... firewall over there just in case we do catch contact. It's different. [You don't really know what to expect when you go in there]. It could be booby-trapped or if there's ID's everywhere or narcotics or anything. And if that would be the case, we'd call up our support element and they'd come in there and take care of it. It's a lot different because you've never really seen the terrain when we work up the terrain model. Hopefully get as much knowledge we can about the place before we land and you don't really know if you're going to land in the right spot or not. So once you land, you're trying to get everything ready, trying to figure out where you're at, trying to get the grids. Once you get the grids, find out where you're at, it's kind of simple but there would be no lume [illumination] on that last mission. It was hard to see where you were going..”<sup>411</sup>

Summing up this U.S. Marine / Afghani assault exhibited the following doctrinal aspects of a Marine Corps Way of War:

1. Commanders intent,
2. Mission type orders,

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<sup>411</sup> Video: Interview: “1/9 Firefight During Lethal Aid Interdiction in Afghanistan,” 2013. DOD. Nad Ali District, AF, <http://www.dvidshub.net/video/311736/interviews-1-9-firefight-during-lethal-aid-interdiction-afghanistan#.UyHHLT9dXT5>. (Accessed 31 March 2014).

3. Recce pull,
4. Shaping the battle space prior to and during (Schwerpunkt) this operation.

This has been, for the most part, how the tenets of Small Wars, FMFM 1 (Gray) and MCDP 1 (Krulak) *Warfighting* doctrine(s) have been successfully executed by the Marine Corps in their actions, missions and operations conducted in Afghanistan during *Operation Enduring Freedom*.

General John Kelly completes this maneuver warfare discussion when he stated in our interview:

“...a few of us that have done pretty well ....that are maneuverists..... The point of this is the Marine Corps from a very early age, certainly since Gray, had been taught to be problem solvers and not to be limited by or confined by doctrine, if you will. Every Marine I know is a problem solver. And the Marines I know, which are a lot, don't fall back on "this is the [only] way you do it." Actually the Marine mentality -- the way we think about war, I believe, is light infantry. That's the way we think about war. We may ride the war in V-22's and helicopters and we may call air strikes by Harriers, but our mentality is light infantry in all of that and all that that has meant throughout Marine Corps history.

We can fight and fight very well without our vehicles. So the light infantry mentality -- John English's book on infantry is just superb in the way it lays this out. But if you have the light infantry mentality, even if you're in tanks and ... armored vehicles, you're still thinking light infantry.....back to the [rear door] thing. Avoid the surfaces, locate the gaps. Get in behind them.

I used to say to the lieutenants, look, if you're standing at a bar and someone brushes by and touches your fanny, what do you do? Well, you're going to look. It could be a beautiful girl who's kind of coming onto you. It could be a handsome guy who's coming on to you. Or it could be just an accidental brush-by. But you're going to turn and look. That's what light infantry tactics is. Get in their rear and make their front lines irrelevant. ...

Jim Mattis and myself and some others, Joe Dunford and others, managed to actually have the opportunity to do it [practice maneuver warfare operationally]. It minimized the casualties on both sides which is always important I think even for the enemy. And at the end of the day we showed the world what Al Gray forced us into was a good thing.....even the PFC's, they've never been to the schools and everything, but when we went from heavy conventional warfare in the attack and then immediately dropped the helmets and flak jackets and started helping people rebuild the countryside and then as it turned violent it rolled right into counterinsurgency tactics. You look at what we did in terms of civilian casualties where we lived in Afghanistan..... Minimal civilian casualties.... You look at the other side, heavy civilian casualties because even in COIN, they never got away from the big punch, the big crushing use of fire power. They're attritionists.

Jim Mattis, myself, we said we don't want to know how many of them we're killing. We want to know how many of them are waving to us as we drive by. That's what's important to us.

That's why Mattis and Kelly never flew in helicopters. We'd drive down the roads and you can tell how the people are reacting to you and over time -- it took three years -- it took two of -- my tours were over a six year period -- but if they were looking down when you drove by, or if they were waving at you when you drove by, you knew you had them when they started waving. We never flew. Very seldom! .... I remember reading about the criticism of the Vietnam generals -- they always flew so they never knew what the guys were putting up with on the ground. They flew over the battlefield but they didn't know the battlefield..<sup>412</sup>

The Marine Corps Way of War especially in Afghanistan put into practice a Marine Corps centric evolution directed from its primary resource, its DNA and the further guidance from the military history archives of other successful Marine Corps warriors. The only caveat is the advice of Col. John Boyd that this was just the starting point in this evolution of the Marine Corps future. The Marine Corps evolution has been true to form in regard to Col. John Boyd's advice.

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<sup>412</sup> Kelly, In person interview with the author.

## **Chapter 8 OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**

The United States viewed Saddam Hussein's Iraq as a nation providing a socio-political base that had fostered international terrorism locally and internationally. It was a nation that had violated the United Nation's sanctioned directive to remove all of its perceived Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The question of WMD was later proved to be unfounded; and this cause for invading Iraq albeit argumentative, does not hold any significance for this work's focus on the operational art of maneuver warfare as practiced by the Marine Corps. These issues as stated eventually led to the invasion of Iraq by a United States led NATO coalition to reign in this perceived rogue state. On March 17, 2003 President Bush (43) gave Saddam Hussein a forty eight hour ultimatum during which Saddam and his sons were to abdicate control of Iraq. Failure to do so would result in a military conflict that would begin when the coalition deemed it in their best interest. Saddam Hussein paid no heed to this warning. The war began twenty minutes after President George W. Bush's ultimatum expired.<sup>413</sup>

As per General Frank's ground combat plan, the Army's 5<sup>th</sup> Corps was to cross the Iraq- Kuwait border and attack Baghdad from the desert which lay west of Euphrates River. The Marine Corps was to attack through the east of the Euphrates River, an area that was largely populated. The following message to the U.S. Marines 1<sup>st</sup> Division (REIN) from General Mattis set the tone of what is to be expected from the Marine Corps Way of War:

### 1<sup>st</sup> MARINE DIVISION

Commanding General's Message to All Hands:

"For decades, Saddam Hussein has tortured, imprisoned, raped and murdered the Iraqi people; invaded neighboring countries without provocation; and threatened the world with weapons of mass destruction. The time has come to end his reign of terror. On your young shoulders rest the hopes of mankind.

When I give you the word, together we will cross the Line of Departure, close with those forces that choose to fight, and destroy them. Our fight is not with the Iraqi people, nor is it with members of the Iraqi army who choose to surrender. While we will move swiftly and aggressively against those who resist, we will treat all others with decency, demonstrating

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<sup>413</sup> Anthony DePalma, "A Nation at War: An Overview: Bombarding Baghdad, Deaths In Battle, And Rising," *New York Times on the Web*, March 21, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/22/world/nation-war-overview-march-21-2003-bombarding-baghdad-deaths-battle-rising.html>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

chivalry and soldierly compassion for people who have endured a lifetime under Saddam's oppression.

Chemical attack, treachery, and use of the innocent as human shields can be expected, as can other unethical tactics. Take it all in stride. Be the hunter, not the hunted: never allow your units to be caught with its guard down. Use good judgment and act in best interests of our Nation.

You are part of the world's most feared and trusted force. Engage your brain before you engage your weapon. Share your courage with each other as we enter the uncertain terrain north of the Line of Departure. Keep faith in your comrades on your left and right and Marine Air overhead. Fight with a happy heart and strong spirit.

For the mission's sake, our country's sake, and the sake of the men who carried the Division's colors in the past battles – who fought for life and never lost their nerve carry out your mission and keep your honor clean. [You will] demonstrate to the world, there is "No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy" than a U.S. Marine."

/s / J.N. Mattis

Major General, U.S. Marines<sup>414</sup>

The Marines would face six Iraqi divisions which stood guard of this AOR that was put into the Marine Corps' mission orders. The traditional route for any invasion of the area went along the Tigris River from Basra proceeding north to Baghdad. Saddam Hussein therefore positioned four of his divisions along that route. The fifth of the divisions was deployed in the south near Rumalia oil fields while the sixth was based near the capital city of Baghdad. A few hours of aerial bombing set the war's clock ticking, with the First Marine Division capturing the oil fields before Saddam could contemplate setting them on fire.<sup>415</sup>

When the 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv captured the Basra airport, the Iraqis were sure that the offensive would follow the route along the Tigris as they had anticipated. This was the first instance of maneuver warfare deception applied by the Marine Corps. The Marines were then to make an advance towards Nasiriya, cross the river in a formation that would result in a parallel advance with other friendly forces.<sup>416</sup> The British were to capture the city of Basra with the U.S. Marine Corps' help. On March 21<sup>st</sup>, the Coalition began its bombing campaign which targeted

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<sup>414</sup> General Mattis' "Step Off" Letter to the Marines 1<sup>st</sup> Div. recommended by the writer to the author, January 2014.

<sup>415</sup> F. J. Bing West, "Maneuver Warfare: It Worked in Iraq," *Proceedings*, The Naval Institute Press, February 2004, [http://www.military.com/NewContent/0,13190,NI\\_WAR\\_0104,00.htm](http://www.military.com/NewContent/0,13190,NI_WAR_0104,00.htm). (Accessed 27 May 2014).

<sup>416</sup> West, "Maneuver Warfare." *Proceedings*.

Hussein's palaces and ministries. This image of leadership decapitation was meant to prove to the Iraqi people that it would be favorable to rebel against the Ba'athist regime. As the American forces advanced towards the Iraqi border, they observed the decomposition of the regular Iraqi troops. These troops were already weary and resorted to taking off their uniforms and infiltrating into the civilian population.<sup>417</sup>

Contrary to this, the British faced resistance on their arrival into the outskirts of Basra City. The resistance came from regular forces and the Uday led *Fedayeen* troops. The *Fedayeen* were an extremely loyal Iraqi militia. The British besieged the city, and allowed the civilians to leave, as their MI-6 agents within the city did their best to incite a Shia uprising. The British wait and see posture took its toll on the coalition as some American commanders argued that not advancing into Basra made Saddam look invincible. The British defended their course of actions saying that it was done in a bid to minimize civilian casualties.<sup>418</sup>

The port of Um Qasr situated at the head of the Persian Gulf was then secured by the Marines. This was done by the 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit in conjunction with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandos, Royal Marines. The capture of the port made it easy for the arrival of the relief supplies that were needed by the Iraqi people. Thus the international aid agencies (NGO's) began streaming these needed supplies through the port and into Iraq.

The I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) was made up of a logistical support group, an air wing and three basic ground maneuver units.<sup>419</sup> These units comprised the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division (1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv), a brigade-size force that was part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division named Task Force Tarawa, and British forces that were just a bit more than a division. The Marine units were made up of both active-duty and reserve forces. Task Force Tarawa and the British were deployed in the south of Iraq while the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division was to take Baghdad. I MEF, which was the supporting effort, was supposed to keep the Iraqis at bay so that the Army 5<sup>th</sup> Corps could make it to Baghdad with the least Iraqi opposition.

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<sup>417</sup> Gen Ray Smith and F. J. "Bing" West, *The March Up: Taking Baghdad with the United States Marines* (New York: Bantam Books, 2003), 26, 258.

<sup>418</sup> "UK Troops enter Basra," *Mail on Line News*, March 22, 2003, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-175445/UK-troops-enter-Basra.html>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

<sup>419</sup> West, "Maneuver Warfare: It worked in Iraq."

U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated the objectives of the military operations in Iraq are as follows: [The items delineated below will be cited throughout this chapter, as they set the political end results that are supported by the Marine Corps doctrine, strategy and tactics that were adhered to in *Operation Iraqi Freedom*]:

1. Bring the reign of Saddam Hussein to an end.
2. Identify, separate and destroy Iraq's weapon of mass destruction.
3. Seek out, capture and eject terrorists from of Iraq.
4. Gather information that is pertinent to the terrorist network.
5. Gather information that relates to the global network of illegal weapons of mass destruction.
6. Put an end to the sanctions and immediately provide the displaced and needy Iraqis with relief support.
7. Secure Iraq's oil fields and all resources, since they belonged to the people of Iraq.
8. Create such conditions that would enable the Iraqis to have good government.<sup>420</sup>

The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) had captured the gas oil separation plants (GOSP), crude oil export facilities and oil wells in the Rumalia oil fields. The oil infrastructure had been laced with booby traps but it was made safe by the U.S. Marines and British. Oil fire-fighting units arrived into the areas to extinguish any fire that might occur. This was a reaction to finding some trenches filled with oil that had been deliberately set ablaze by the Iraqi forces. Also some of the deserted oil plants had also not been shut down correctly, causing the oil from the wells to overflow into the station tanks. This posed a serious threat of fires, if the oil came into contact with the burning wells. This threat was dealt with by Marine Combat Engineers. This was one of Rumsfeld's mission's objectives of this operation.<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> Jim Garamone, "Rumsfeld Lists Operation Iraqi Freedom Aims, Objectives," *American Forces Press Service*, March 21, 2003. <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=29253>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

<sup>421</sup> West and Smith. 183.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, the Marines were facing resistance at several locations. General Mattis had shifted the combat advance of the Marines about one hundred kilometers west and laid out an assault on two highways that lay between the Euphrates and Tigris.<sup>422</sup> This meant that the Marines had abandoned the traditional invasion route which the Iraqi fighters had been made to believe the Marines would be taking. The soggy landscape in this area could not bear the weight of either tanks or artillery; therefore, it was undefended. General Mattis split the division into three units; each allocated one thousand vehicles. The Marines began to rapidly proceed up the one hundred kilometer stretch towards Baghdad.

Because the highway infrastructures were so worn out the bridges had to be tested before the Marine tanks and heavy equipment made their crossing. This strategy set the Marines' time table back. Yet because the Marine doctrine centered on maneuver warfare; this tactic was what was needed in the Marine's march up to Baghdad. The principles of "when and where to engage the enemy, seeking strength against enemy weakness," had now become a Marine Corps warfighting tool.

Elsewhere in Nasiriya, the Marines engaged the Iraqis in sustained and heavy combat. Quickly the Marine Corps' MAGTF arrived on station to reinforce them. In a blue on blue event the MAGTF accidentally struck some of the Marines positions, which increased the number of American casualties. This blue on blue miscalculation was not only costly for the Marines; many Iraqi civilians died in the attack. This narrowed the probability of the civilians participating in overthrow of the Saddam regime.<sup>423</sup> This was an issue that although avoidable, would mar the process of the Marine Corps warfighting agenda based upon the *Small Wars Manual* dictum at this time.<sup>424</sup>

The Forward Command Element of the Military Coordination and Liaison Command (MCLC) reached the north of Iraq, under the command of Marine Corps Major General Pete Osman. General Osman convened meetings with some key Iraqi leaders and Kurdish

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<sup>422</sup> West, *Maneuver Warfare*.

<sup>423</sup> West and Smith, *March Up*.

<sup>424</sup> Col. John R. Andrews USMC, *Battle of An-Nasiriyah* (Washington DC: USMC History Div., PCN: 10600000700, 2004), 32-34.  
[http://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/U.S.%20Marines%20in%20Battle\\_An-Nasiriyah%20%20PCN%2010600000700\\_3.pdf](http://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/U.S.%20Marines%20in%20Battle_An-Nasiriyah%20%20PCN%2010600000700_3.pdf). (Accessed 27 May 2014).

opposition leaders. He informed them about the U.S. intentions and further explained the operational plans the Marines wanted the Kurds to carry out. The MCLC's presence in that area made it stable as they encouraged dialogue and coordinated efforts among the organizations that were providing humanitarian assistance in northern Iraq. This occurred in the earliest days of the war. It was to lay the frame work for the Marine Corps' efforts in nation building and enemy pacification or "light maneuver warfare." General Osman stated that his mission was three fold:

“..First, to assist in the deconfliction of military activities [This became a juggling act between the Turks who were concerned with possible Kurdish nationalism and the Kurds hoping to gain nation status supplying sixty thousand armed troops].

Second, to synchronize humanitarian assistance and military operations [the coordination of NGO's, the coalitions, and the needy Iraqis-(Kurdish and non-Kurdish)].

Third, assist in the general coordination of relief operations in northern Iraq..”<sup>425</sup>

Because Iraqi Air and Air Defense never materialized the coalition's air dominance amounted to a major force multiplier. This aspect enhanced MAGTF intelligence gathering. It could now dispatch slow and vulnerable planes like the E-8C JSTARS close to the battle space with the intended possibility of unlimited logistical support of refueling tankers. This greatly aided in shaping the battlefield. The JSTARS were fitted with Doppler radars which had the ability to detect vital Iraqi ground weapons and movements over an area of hundreds of square miles. Intelligence was gathered from other ground sources and merged in order to give the precise positions of the Iraqi insurgents who thought themselves well protected from the air by the adverse weather conditions. The continued air and ground campaign pressed on, despite the harsh weather, with such speed that the Iraqi troops could not handle the F-16's; which would then advance and lay an assault on the targets despite the current poor weather conditions.<sup>426</sup>

The divisions that were hit the hardest during these assaults were the Hammurabi, Al Nida and Medina units. The intended effect of these attacks was that the Iraqi troops stopped

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<sup>425</sup> Ben Wedeman, CNN Correspondent, "Military Mission Coupled With Humanitarian Goals," *CNN.Com Transcripts*, Aired March 25, 2003 - 00:00 ET, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0303/25/se.19.html>. (Accessed on 27 May 2014).

<sup>426</sup> USMC MAGTF combines ground, logistic and air into a combined arms unit within the USMC ready forces. They fight as a Marine Corps unit. See: <http://www.marines.com/operating-forces/structure>. for current status. The MAGTF becomes doctrinal in: MCDP 1-2 *Campaigning*.

fighting as a cohesive force. There was no organized pattern of maneuver within the Iraqi forces since they found it hard to deal with the I MEF's advance. The Marine Corps maneuver warfare doctrine was again bringing success by shaping the battlefield, by confusing and dividing the enemy, and by eventually enveloping them.<sup>427</sup>

The I MEF captured a hospital near Nasiriya which had been transformed into paramilitary headquarters, staging area and a storage center. Among the items recovered within the hospital's campus were two hundred weapons, Iraqi military uniforms, one tank, three thousand chemical protective suits and nerve agent antidote injectors. This pointed to the fact that Iraq had possibly been planning a chemical attack that was eliminated by the Marines. The Marines worked hard in expanding the cleared channel of Khor Abdullah. The channel was opened up in Um Qasr, a distance of sixty yards. In the process of expanding it in order to obtain a pathway about two hundred yards wide, the Marines bumped into bottom-influenced mines. These subsurface mines can be programmed to count the number of hulls that pass over them, and when a certain number is reached, depending on the programming, they detonate. The Marines combat engineers cleared them from the channel, and made the port secure for the arrival of the humanitarian assistance.<sup>428</sup>

Marines and soldiers from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marines', 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division and 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division engaged the Iraqi regular army, Republican Guard and the Iraqi terror squads. The Marines also captured a bridge near the town of Al Handiyah. The bridge had been rigged with explosives in a bid to delay the coalition's advance. The Marines' 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Engineers Team rid the bridge of all explosives and once again preserved the Iraqi infrastructure that was now not to be destroyed.<sup>429</sup>

As per the 1<sup>st</sup> of April the status report of the Iraqi ground forces was as follows:

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<sup>427</sup> MCDP 1, *Warfighting*.

<sup>428</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Iraq War: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Lessons*, Significant Issue Series, Vol. 25, No., 5 (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2003) 78-80.

<sup>429</sup> Operation Iraqi Freedom March 31, Day Twelve, *GlobalSecurity.org* (2003).  
[http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/iraqi\\_freedom\\_d12.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/iraqi_freedom_d12.htm).

## Regular Army:

The Iraqi 4<sup>th</sup> Corps consisted of one armored division and two infantry divisions. Its headquarters and major command, control, communications and intelligence facilities had suffered massive damage due to the air strikes. Its armor and artillery had also been destroyed. It was making its way towards the U.S. Marines with units dispatched near Al Kut and Al Hillah and others around Najaf and Karbala.

The Iraqi 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps comprised of three divisions; one armored, one mechanized and one infantry. Its headquarters based in Nasiriya had been seized. The 51<sup>st</sup> Mechanized Division had been badly destroyed during the battle for Basra. The 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division had also been destroyed during an assault in Nasiriya. The 6<sup>th</sup> Armored Division had been hit in an air strike following an engagement with the U.S. Marines.

## Republican Guard Forces:

The Iraqi 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps of the Republican Guards had their headquarters at Al Hafreia and Al Fateh al Mubin Command Center. Most of its facilities had been destroyed by air strikes.

The Iraqi Medina Division, which had been the major threat for the advance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mechanized Division, was made up of three brigades. These included the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored and 14<sup>th</sup> Mechanized. Most of its communication facilities, artillery and equipment had been hit hard from the air. The unit was perceived to have lost between thirty five to sixty five percent of its effectiveness.

The Iraqi Nebuchadnezzar Infantry Division was usually based at Al Husseinia al-Kut. However, with the advance of the U.S. Marines, it shifted west to counter the threat. It also had its headquarters bombed along with its key communication facilities, artillery and other major equipment. Its effectiveness had been reduced by approximately ten to twenty percent.

The Iraqi 2<sup>nd</sup> Baghdad Infantry Division which was usually based at Maqloob Maontin Mosul shifted their attention to the Al Kut area where the U.S. Marines had engaged them in serious combat. It suffered the same losses as the other forces as it lost its headquarters, key facilities, and artillery to the air strikes. It had lost twenty to forty percent effectiveness in the war.

The Iraqi Hammurabi Mechanized Division had departed Al Taji region, and units that defended the Tikrit region were combating the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry and the U.S. Marines in Karbala and Najaf region when participation of the Medina Division became suicidal. However, its headquarters and facilities had not been spared either in the onslaught of air strikes. Its effectiveness had been reduced by ten to twenty percent.<sup>430</sup>

The above report showed how the Marines' attacks had a crippling effect on the Iraqi operations. They left a U.S. Marine Corps footprint in all the Iraqi divisions, always aiming at their center of gravity and increasing the fog and friction of war for the Iraqis. For the Iraqis this usually resulted in the loss of their command and control element i.e. their headquarters

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<sup>430</sup> Cordesman, *The Iraq War*, 85-91.

and communication facilities. The effect this had was that now the Iraqi's lack of coordination resulted in sporadic attacks. These made them even more vulnerable to the coalition's fires, most of which they could not return due to the destruction of their artillery assets.<sup>431</sup>

The American forces began to make their way towards the Iraqis main defensive positions that lay on the east of the Euphrates. Two Marine Corps regimental combat units were positioned on Highway 1, facing Baghdad. The Iraqis had dispatched a division to block the road. General Mattis decided to use a side road that saw the Marines crossing the Tigris at a spot between the artillery fans of the Iraqi forces.<sup>432</sup> This was a critical application of maneuver warfare. Saddam's son, Qusay, convened a meeting in Baghdad with the Iraqi commander of the region, General Raad Al-Hamdani. The general was advised that the military action for the past two weeks by the coalition was a case of strategic deception and that the main combat would come from the north of Baghdad. Hamdani was reluctant about this intelligence. For him, the Americans were attacking from the south. Hamdani was conflicted; he had to obey Qusay's orders. The coalition forces had now seized the bridges over the Euphrates and their tanks were in position.<sup>433</sup> Hamdani was ordered to reject the earlier advice and turn his troops around to counter the American threat. Hamdani chose the best brigade out of the Republican Guard for the assault. What ensued was a massive slaughter of the Iraqis, while not a single casualty was reported by the Marine Corps.

Forces from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division arrived at the Baghdad International Airport and captured it. They were, however, met with young Iraqi fanatics of the *Fadeyeen* militia who put up stiff resistance. Most of *Fadeyeen* were killed in the attack. The Marines were tentative about the final assault in the city of Baghdad. The question, as to the position of the units of the Republic Guard, had bothered them. It then became apparent to Marine Corps command that they had been positioned south of the city of Baghdad and that the Marines had by-passed many of them enroute to Baghdad. Since the mission against Baghdad could not begin without this imminent threat being neutralized, a Marine brigade was deployed south of the city to

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<sup>431</sup> MCDP 1, *Warfighting*.

<sup>432</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>433</sup> Rusiya al-Yaum, "Interview with Raad Al-Hamdani," *RT NEWS*, April 10, 2008 06:07, <http://rt.com/news/interview-with-raad-al-hamdani/>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

deal with them.<sup>434</sup> It turned out that the forces had been hidden among the palm groves to deter detection from the air reconnaissance assets. The combined air strikes had not been bombing the correct positions. The Marine Corps advance to Baghdad had been extremely rapid [a prime maneuver warfare tactic], such that the members of the Medina Division were caught by surprise. General Mattis had sent his Marines to attack from a direction which the Iraqi division at al-Kut never anticipated. The U.S. Marines were by then attacking from the north and the dug in Iraqi tanks were facing the wrong direction; which forced the Medina Division to retreat.<sup>435</sup>

On April 5<sup>th</sup> Baghdad was in the middle of a surprise armed reconnaissance pull referred to as a “Thunder Run.” This tactic came on the orders of General Mattis. The speeds at which these “Thunder Runs” were conducted unhinged the Iraqi army. It created an imbalance they never foresaw. The Marines, heavily armed were to press on as far into Baghdad as possible. The Marines were met with morning commuter traffic coupled with Iraqi forces now dressed in civilian clothes trying to flee. It was not easy identifying the Iraqi forces from the civilians. By mid-day the Marines had woven their way through the southwestern suburbs of the city and made it back to the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) safely.<sup>436</sup>

The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force meanwhile did their best to isolate Baghdad. This denied the Iraqi insurgents any escape routes or reinforcements. While the U.S. Army’s 5<sup>th</sup> Corps controlled the regional gap between Karbala and Baghdad in the east, the Marines controlled the corridor that ran from Salman Park to Baghdad. The Marines’ conducted aggressive assaults in a bid to secure the cities that lay on the way into central Baghdad. The

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<sup>434</sup> Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, “U.S. Generals Divided as War Began,” *Leatherneck Magazine*, MARCH 12, 2006, <http://www.leatherneck.com/forums/archive/index.php/t-27452.html>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

<sup>435</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>436</sup> Operation Iraqi Freedom: The Six Week invasion of Iraq, Frontline Documentary, *Public Broadcasting System*, (2003). <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/invasion/cron/>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team captured a palace that was believed to be the headquarters of the Special Republican Guard, further crippling their operations capability.<sup>437</sup>

In Baghdad, U.S. Army's 5<sup>th</sup> Corps was joined by the Marine Corps. They were supposed to attack to the east of the city. They advanced expecting fierce resistance that did not materialize. The Iraqi Forces had simply drifted away from combat. As has been noted in previous sections of this work, the Marines won the day with no KIA's and WIA's. The employment of a Marine Corps Way of War had eliminated much of the carnage and costs of this war.<sup>438</sup>

The Coalition Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC) had ordered that raids be conducted into Baghdad rather than seize it. The Marine Corps, ready to get back to their rapid tempo of combat had sufficient tanks and three regiments poised to comply with the mission commander's intent. Carrying out raids on the already damaged bridge made very little sense to the I MEF and 1<sup>st</sup>MarDiv. To them, they had come to liberate Baghdad and had no intention of besieging it. The I MEF therefore split Baghdad into 36 zones. In each zone they identified "targets of interest." Three regiments were then deployed across the bridge with orders to attack one zone to the next until the all the zones were occupied.<sup>439</sup>

The air campaigns concentrated on kill box interdiction which involved the perpetual bombing of ground targets, close air support, command, control, and intelligence and surveillance missions. Planes conducting the intelligence missions made Baghdad their focus so that emerging targets were dealt with immediately. A fifth of the air strikes were aimed at insuring that the Iraqi forces were not able to launch any aircraft. After the first "Thunder Run," the Marines realized that the Iraqis were unable to deal with attacks from directions that were not predetermined by the Iraqi commanders. The Marines now focused on "Thunder Runs" that were aimed at the Iraqi rear. This ultimately led to the capturing of Baghdad earlier than expected and with minimum casualties. The initial Marine Corps application of the MCDP 1 *Warfighting* manual validated their actions as had been the case in Gulf War I.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>438</sup> See Bill Lind quote re Gen. Smith: Chapter 2 of this work.

<sup>439</sup> West, *Maneuver Warfare*.

<sup>440</sup> *Operation Iraqi Freedom: Frontline*.

The Marines on the other side of Baghdad conducted another “Thunder Run” into the city. This time they took a direct route for the palaces, thus throwing the Iraqi defenders into further panic. The U.S. Army’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division followed the Marines’ two tank battalions. They captured and held three major clover-leafs dubbed- “Moe,” “Larry” and “Curly.” This was aimed at keeping the roads secure for the arrival of the Marine logistical resupply trucks. The Marines spent that night in one of Hussein’s palaces. In less than a month, the U.S. and Coalition forces had reached the geographic heart of the Ba’athist regime. These “Thunder Runs” were a successful and effective application of maneuver warfare. The combination of the three Marines’ brigades saw the destruction of thirty military vehicles, thirty technical vehicles, three T-72 tanks and three armored personnel carriers. The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force also eliminated an enemy training camp near Salman Park. This camp, based on the intelligence report had been used to train foreign forces by the Iraqis in the tactics of terrorism and irregular warfare.

On April 10-11, the coalition had stripped Baghdad of all its resistance and began their movement towards the city of Tikrit. Neither the 5<sup>th</sup> Corps nor I MEF experienced any Iraqi resistance enroute to Tikrit. U.S. intelligence affirmed that most of the Republican Guard had been destroyed. There was no doubt that one of the Republican Guard’s brigades together with elements of the Special Republican Guard, were in the Tikrit area. Many of the combat units of the Iraqi Army had come under heavy air strikes but no substantial ground attack. Therefore they remained a threat to the coalition. A good number of the other ten Iraqi regular army divisions either surrendered or simply collapsed. The 5<sup>th</sup> Corps and I MEF only encountered a single brigade of the Adnan Division of the Republican Guard which was based in Tikrit. What was left of the Adnan Division did not pose a major threat because it had been deemed mediocre by coalition intelligence before the bombing raids. It still remains unclear why Saddam left the bulk of his army to the north even after it had become obvious that the coalition forces were not making an entry through Turkey. These forces were eliminated through persistent air strikes. This can be linked to the dilemma that was caused by Saddam during the war, leaving him with no idea where the coalition forces would strike next. This strategy helped ward off imminent threats to the Marines advance while it exposed the Iraqi

regular forces for air attacks. This faint from the north distracted the Iraqi's and masked the true intent of the invasion.<sup>441</sup>

Maneuver warfare as practiced by the Marine Corps was applied in this war by the use of mission-type orders. This is where a commander stated why the mission was to be carried out but did not give the tactical details on how the mission was to be accomplished. General Mattis had discussed his plan with the whole division prior to the war. Each Marine had more than a basic idea of his intent.<sup>442</sup> In meetings held before the war, the three regimental commanders went over the various selected routes and objectives again and again. Once the war started, each commander worked independently. General Mattis or Brigadier General John Kelly, his deputy, would often look in on the regiments. The battalions also had maneuver warfare independence. The distance between the regiments was tactically too far apart. Coupled with the shortage of helicopters and heavy road traffic, centralized control was impossible; not that this was a doctrinal option, as the Marines came ready to execute the operational art of Generals Gray and Krulak "fighting smarter" doctrine.<sup>443</sup>

*Operation Iraqi Freedom* has been referred to as the "Colonels' War." This is due to the fact that the regimental commanders and the battalion commanders were the major decision makers during the operations. Every night each battalion would gather separately. The battalion commander and his sergeant major would then visit their subordinates within the battalion. Patrolling was only allowed during security missions or during combat in the open terrain. The battalion commanders were to direct movement of their particular companies.<sup>444</sup> Decentralized control fostered the furtherance of the Marine Corps Way of War.

The 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv applied maneuver warfare under decentralized control coupled with mission-type orders. *Operation Iraqi Freedom* was a successful application of maneuver warfare that saw the Iraqi army rendered ineffective in less than a month. On the 1st of May,

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<sup>441</sup> Operation Iraqi Freedom, *Frontline*.

<sup>442</sup> West, *Maneuver Warfare*.

<sup>443</sup> Mattis and Kelly, interviews with the author.

<sup>444</sup> *Organization of Marine Corps Forces*, (MCRP) 5-12D (Washington, DC: HQ United States Marine Corps, 1998). This directive superseded (FMFRP) 1-11, *Fleet Marine Force Organization 1992*.

President George W. Bush officially announced an end to the military operations in Iraq; technically this was the case as in “conventional warfare.” This part of the operation was a “mission accomplished” for all intents and purposes. As conventional warfare ceased, the internal collapse of Iraq rapidly began to take place. Iraq now experienced what Carl von Clausewitz termed a war of national interests.<sup>445</sup>

The vacuum created by the decapitation of the Ba’athist regime needed to be filled as there were many factions vying for political control which would ultimately lead to the rise of insurgency and irregular warfare for the Marine Corps. There was little semblance of order before the wave of insurgency was tamed. The humanitarian supplies found their way to the targeted population and plans for the reconstruction of Iraq’s infrastructure and government were begun. This operation was credited as being one of the most successful applications of “Small War” maneuver warfare exercised by the U.S. Marine Corps since Gulf War I.

### **From Conventional to Irregular Warfare: The Marine Corps Gets Away From The Basics Found In Their “Small War” DNA.**

Fallujah is a city that is located adjacent to the so-called “Sunni Triangle.” The city is densely populated, and it had not been decimated by the coalition’s air campaigns in 2003. By 2004, Fallujah blossomed into a haven for insurgents, weapon smugglers, criminals and foreign terrorists. The coalition troops within Iraq were struggling to contain the insurgents. A massacre that was carried out in front of the school situated on Hay Nazzal Street in April made the U.S. forces withdraw to the city’s perimeter. The Fallujah leadership requested that the Americans remain on the outskirts of the city and let the Iraqis deal with the security within the city. This was ignored by the coalition.<sup>446</sup>

The Iraqi militia refused to cooperate with the United States led coalition. In February, resistance fighters attacked an Iraqi police center that was coalition sponsored. The attack was well-organized and was carried out in the daytime, leaving twenty three soldiers dead and

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<sup>445</sup> Paret, *On War*, 479-483.

<sup>446</sup> Jeremy Scahill, *Blackwater: The Rise of the World’s Most Powerful Mercenary Army* (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 53-99. Also see: <http://blackblawg.blogspot.com/2007/10/2004-fallujah-incident-was-ambush.html>. (Accessed on 27 May 2014).

many prisoners freed. The Iraqi militias openly patrolled the streets of Fallujah but the Marines could not rely on these militia actions to be non-sectarian.<sup>447</sup>

The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force was handed the mission to pacify Fallujah; when the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne was rotated out of this zone.

General Mattis set the tone for this deployment with the following “to All Hands” letter; and again the evidence of a Marine Corps Way of War in this letter is more than evident:

March 23, 2004

Letter to all Hands:

We are going back in to the brawl. We will be relieving the magnificent Soldiers fighting under the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, whose hard won successes in the Sunni Triangle have opened opportunities for us to exploit. For the last year, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne has been operating against the heart of the enemy's resistance. It's appropriate that we relieve them.

When it's time to move a piano, Marines don't pick up the piano bench- we move the piano. So, this is the right place for Marines in this fight, where we can carry on the legacy of Chesty Puller in the Banana Wars in the same sort of complex environment that he knew in his early years. Shoulder to shoulder with our comrades in the Army, Coalition Forces and maturing Iraqi Security Forces, we are going to destroy the enemy with precise firepower while diminishing the conditions that create adversarial relationships between us and the Iraqi people. This is going to be hard, dangerous work. It is going to require patient, persistent presence. Using our individual initiative, courage, moral judgment and battle skills, we will build on the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne's victories.

Our country is counting on us even as our enemies watch and calculate, hoping that America does not have warriors strong enough to withstand discomfort and danger. You, my fine young men, are going to prove the enemy wrong - dead wrong. You will demonstrate the same uncompromising spirit that has always caused the enemy to fear America's Marines.

The enemy will try to manipulate you into hating all Iraqis. Do not allow the enemy that victory. With strong discipline, solid faith, unwavering alertness, and undiminished chivalry to the innocent, we will carry out this mission. Remember, I have added, "First, do no harm" to our passwords of "No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy." Keep your honor clean as we gain information about the enemy from the Iraqi people. Then, armed with that information and working in conjunction with fledging Iraqi Security Forces, we will move precisely against the enemy elements and crush them without harming the innocent.

This is our test, our Guadalcanal, our Chosin Reservoir, our Hue City. Fight with a happy heart and keep faith in your comrades and your unit. We must be under no illusions about the nature of the enemy and the dangers that lie ahead. Stay alert, take it all in stride,

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<sup>447</sup> Mattis and Conway, Interviews with the author.

remain sturdy, and share your courage with each other and the world. You are going to write history, my fine young Sailors and Marines, so write it well.

*Semper Fidelis,*

J.M. Mattis, Major General U.S. Marines<sup>448</sup>

I MEF immediately continued to impose the coalition's will over the residents of Fallujah, who were against all foreign occupation in the region. Major General Mattis already had laid out a plan on how to deal with the Fallujah threat in what he termed as a "handover" ceremony.<sup>449</sup> This would have the Marines establish friendly contacts with the Iraqis while at the same time giving those Iraqi's who wanted to fight just that opportunity to die for the beliefs. A recollection of this by General Mattis provides a clear picture of this situation:

"..I got the order on November 10th that we were going back in, this time to replace the 82nd Airborne Division and would be in al Anbar Province. I lost only two men killed by enemy fire down, al Kut. And those were probably killed by criminals to tell you the truth, not even real enemy. So we had managed to stay friendly one month longer, one week longer, one day longer, one hour longer than some of the distrustful Arabs thought we could and it had paid off.....

Going back in to al Anbar was very different and I sent in my Assistant Division Commander, John Kelly, and he came back and he said it's going to be difficult but he said we could turn al Anbar around. And so we went back in and there was a young Army major named Adam Souk and he identified a tribe out in the west, the Al-DhaFeer tribe..... which had risen up against us. And at the start of the meeting with the Sheiks ..... We keep telling the Sheiks we know you're fighting against us, that you're in bed with the wrong people. You're going to rue the day they hooked up with the Al Qaeda.

Day by day we keep fighting and talking and fighting and talking and this goes on. But Adam Souk has identified the Al-DhaFeer Tribe and then a Marine Lieutenant Colonel, Terry Alpert out at Al Kine where a lot of Sunnis ... due to the Sunni - Shia fighting and they are willing to work with the Marines. They realize now the Marines are their best hope as Sunnis in a country dominated by Shia.

It still takes us [along time] of intense fighting but what happens is, again, the enemy makes ... what you and I would call a [gross blunder]... and the killing of children, young boys, and the killing of a Sheik who wasn't even on our side, by the way. He was clearly not on our side but he also hated Al Qaeda and by the time they were done they'd made enough mistakes that eventually they turned in 2005..<sup>450</sup>

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<sup>448</sup> General Mattis' Step Off letter (Fallujah II) to the Marines 1<sup>st</sup> Div. recommended by the writer to the author, January 2014.

<sup>449</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>450</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

Just two days after their arrival, the Marines were engaged in fierce street battles with the Iraqis in the al-Askari neighborhood of Fallujah. This battle went on for hours and it left one Marine dead and seven others wounded. Fifteen Iraqis died in the assault. The Marines then mounted a crackdown of the entire city; and this aggressive invasion of Fallujah by the Marines narrowed its inhabitants' options to three possibilities:

1. Abandon their earlier reservations and surrender to this foreign occupation.
2. Leave their homes or put up a resistance. (Some of them opted to leave, fanatically clinging to their hatred for the foreign occupation.)
3. However, some put up a resistance and lost their lives in that course of action.<sup>451</sup>

The more the inhabitants died, the more the remaining Iraqis became emboldened in their attacks against the Marines. General Mattis frankly offered the following on this subject:

“..al Anbar it was almost uniquely designed for Marines because we explained to them hey, number one, if you want to fight for honor, we're eager to pay for honor. Bring it on. We will kill every one of you and you will regret it. But number two, we know what it's like to be a minority, trust us. As U.S. Military we're a minority and we can teach you how to survive and keep your ethos if you want to listen. And eventually I go back there and guys come up and hug me and say, remember me, you put me Abu Ghrab prison. I said yeah, I told you it would turn out [that] we're really your friends. And it worked. So that's kind of the path it eventually took ..... This is going to sound like modesty now. Any Marine who had been brought up by Puller and Zinni and Al Gray and Van Riper who had lance corporals like I had and NCOs like I had, any of us could have done this. I simply was at the right place at the right time,

I could see how they [al Qaeda] had screwed it up.....pretty soon I didn't care how brave the enemy was or how many guns they had or how short they cut their hair, they were going to die because they had dumb generals..”<sup>452</sup>

Just about the same time as the incident just mentioned another incident occurred in Palestine, which further fanned the flames of resistance within Fallujah. Israeli troops had publicly assassinated Sheikh Ahmed Yassin who was the spiritual leader of Hamas. He had been hit by a missile fired from an Israeli attack helicopter. Six people in his entourage also

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<sup>451</sup> Col. Gary W. Montgomery and CWO-4 Timothy S. McWilliams, *Al-Anbar Awakening: Iraqi Perspectives from Insurgency to Counterinsurgency* (Quantico: Marine Corps University Press 2009).

<sup>452</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

died in the assault. This incident, which was referred to by the media as targeted assassination angered Muslims throughout the world. Muslim clerics issued a *fatwah* for *Jihad* against any foreign occupation in Iraq as a result. They held the notion that all these foreign occupiers were allied to the Israelis and would sooner or later unleash violence on them as part of their hidden agenda. The United States in particular was especially believed to be working hand in hand with the Israeli forces. This coupled with the abuses being reported about prisoner treatment at Abu Ghraib, as well as the other civilian killings of innocent Iraqi civilians further added fuel to this fire. These negative feelings towards the U.S. Marines were only worsened after these incidents. This led to the Marines conducting even more house-to-house search operations. The Marines sealed off all the entrances to the city with tanks and armored vehicles in a bid to stop more resistance forces trying to join the fight for Fallujah. Graffiti in praise of the resistance sprung up on the walls of the buildings while Muslim clerics publicly echoed their support for the resistance.<sup>453</sup>

There were hospitals, schools, and electricity power stations being built throughout Iraq yet Fallujah would have none of it. It seemed at this point that the Marines were never going to win the affection of these people. They decided to put an end to the friendly contacts and use maximum force to flush out the terrorists. It is in this spirit that the launching of *Operation Vigilant Resolve* became necessary. The Marines, wanted to finish what they had begun. *Vigilant Resolve* was to restore some semblance of order in Fallujah.<sup>454</sup>

Elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment assaulted Fallujah's industrial center, while 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Marines proceeded south through the northwestern urban district. They encountered serious resistance and by April 10<sup>th</sup>, the battle had reached its peak.

The move to abandon the original war plan and wage a retaliatory war did not sit well with General Mattis. He felt that such a move would give the insurgents what they wanted and the Marines would never win. The Marines were deployed to the city either way. As the battle for the city surged on, Al Jazeera released very negative propaganda. By an unfortunate twist

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<sup>453</sup> John Borger, "Israel Trains US Assassination Squads In Iraq," *The Guardian*, 8 December 2003. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/dec/09/iraq.israel>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

<sup>454</sup> Ross W. Simpson, "Fallujah: A Four Letter Word," *Leatherneck Magazine*, 2005. <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/fallujah-four-letter-word>. (Accessed 27 May 2014).

of fate, there was an uprising in the south of Baghdad that was not even pertinent to the Marines presence in Iraq. This was the Shiite rebellion; but these riots were used to put *Operation Vigilant Resolve* into a negative light. To compound matters, the Marines' logistical supply of fuel, ammunition, and water was also steadily decreasing, making it difficult to keep up with the tempo of this battle. With the above events reaching a critical mass President Bush called *Operation Vigilant Resolve* to a premature end.<sup>455</sup>

Generally, *Operation Vigilant Resolve* had been approached with so much passion that did not give Marine Corps' "Small War" logic its due place for this mission. The troops wanted revenge. This led them to make decisions that were misinformed and whose results proved fatal to the battle plan. The earlier battle plans were abandoned for new ones that were aimed at making Fallujah an example as quickly as possible.<sup>456</sup>

The lessons learned from *Operation Vigilant Resolve*, would lead to the success of the future operations in Fallujah and other Iraqi missions. Among the lessons learned from *Operation Vigilant Resolve* were:

1. Information operations (IO) were a great determinant of success in today's battlefield, and their effect on every lethal or non-lethal decision called for deep consideration.
2. Commanders ought to seriously think about the consequences of their decisions and always bear it in mind that failure to make a decision is in itself a decision.
3. The doctrine must be followed to the letter; because that is the reason it was promulgated.
4. Keen eyes must always be maintained on the logistic support.
5. When battling with a host nation in a counter insurgency (COIN), there is need to start the battle together, to stick together and finish the combat together.
6. The young leaders in brigades, battalions and regiments have a remarkable ability to fight jointly with such superior effectiveness in the current situations of the battlefield. Senior leaders must, therefore, support them in their maneuvers.<sup>457</sup>

The Fallujah Brigade which had been put in place to aid in the security of the city turned out to be a terrible mistake. The leadership of this brigade was in total concert with the

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<sup>455</sup> Simpson, Fallujah, A Four Letter Word.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid.

insurgents. The brigade became an enemy within, as they shifted their loyalty from the coalition forces to the insurgents, allowing them to gain more traction and to flourish. This proved to the Marines that Iraqi forces were completely unable to control the city. If, any order was to be achieved, it would not be obtained from the Iraqi leadership of the city.<sup>458</sup>

### **The Return to the Marine Corps' DNA**

A second operation was put in place to remedy this situation. The insurgents who thought that by the withdrawal of the U.S. Marines, they were now free to go about their business as usual. This was not to be the case. This time the operation was carefully planned with no saber rattling for the insurgents' blood. Fallujah was packed with the insurgents. In effect it became a target rich environment for the Marines. A special operation was initiated. This time the media did not give it as much coverage as they previously had done during *Vigilant Resolve*. An IO Threshold was therefore determined.

An IO Threshold is a non-doctrinal term which simply refers to the boundary below which the media's attention is caught and above which has little value to the media. The employment of this concept played a very significant role in this subsequent operation. Below are two positions on the work of the media and the war in Iraq. Both offer magnitude of intended media manipulation:

“..I say to you: that we are in a battle and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma. Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, 9 July 2005..

If I were grading I would say we probably deserve a "D" or a "D-plus" as a country as to how well we're doing in the battle of ideas that's taking place in the world today. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, 27 March 2006..<sup>459</sup>

The violence in Fallujah escalated. This insurgency was rapidly spreading to other regions in Iraq. It had made its presence known in Mosel, to the east of Baghdad and to the southern Sunni regions. The Sunni rebels were in an advantageous position for disrupting the

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<sup>458</sup> Conway, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>459</sup> Lt. Gen R. P. MILLS USMC, CG, *Marine Corps Operating Concept for Information Operations* (Quantico: Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 2013), 14.

coalition troops' vital supply route into Baghdad. Recapturing Fallujah was the only option available.

The preference for retaking Fallujah was to be left solely to the U.S. Marine Corps. The supplies in Iraq were therefore increased twofold. The storage of diesel fuel rose from the 7,000,000 gallons up to 15,000,000 gallons. The same was done for water and ammunition. There was mass involvement of the subordinate commanders throughout the Marine Corps in the drafting of this new battle plan. This operation code-named *Phantom Fury* was launched.<sup>460</sup>

There was some concern raised over the fact that the launching of the operation almost coincided with the beginning of the elections. With the complete support of the entire command structure, there were several options that presented themselves. The special commands gave important real-time intelligence while Iraqi battalions were recruited, equipped and trained. The 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry's Blackjack Brigade's Combat Team did not leave as early as planned. One of the United Kingdom's battalions was dispatched to the southeast of Fallujah. This was done in a bid to free more Marines for the looming 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle for Fallujah.<sup>461</sup> The coalition managed to win over not only Prime Minister Allawi but also the confidence of the fledgling Iraqi government. Winning over Prime Minister Allawi led to making the upcoming operation easier. This was done by:

Doing away with the ineffective Fallujah Brigade,

Putting into place a 24-hour curfew,

Prohibiting the possession of arms in Fallujah.

These actions fanned the flames of success of the operation which had by then been renamed *Operation New Dawn* which was aimed at winning the Iraqi leaders' support. The Iraqis had named it *Operation al-Fajr* which translates to "Daybreak" hence the name

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<sup>460</sup> Dick Camp, *Operation Phantom Fury: The Assault and Capture of Fallujah, Iraq* (Minneapolis: Zenith Press, 2009), 123-156.

<sup>461</sup> Richard S. Lowry, *New Dawn: The Battles for Fallujah* (New York: SB Publishing, 2010), 48.

*Operation New Dawn*. This name came from a passage in the Quran that talked of the returning of the evil people to the light of Allah through His grace.<sup>462</sup>

The Marines prepared for the up-coming operation. The team work that was exercised among the Coalition forces was off the charts. What still caused some doubt was the Information Operations. Generally, the forces met most of the standards in the Information Operations domain. The deception feints and the psychological operations were carried out with great success. Almost ninety percent of the population agreed to leave Fallujah before the battle began. The exodus of two hundred thousand people had raised certain humanitarian fears.<sup>463</sup>

The efforts aimed at electronic warfare were just as well executed. The coalition had the networks at their disposal; listening whenever there was need and jamming them to prevent the insurgent's exchange of information. The insurgents still held the belief that the Marines would not attack, and even if they did, they would never succeed. The prepositioning of massive combat power was something that could not be easily concealed, but operational security was in full control of the Information Operations efforts. This drove the insurgents into a state of confusion before and during the battle. *Operation Vigilant Resolve* had failed because of the negative press that revolved around it, much of it derived from baseless propaganda.<sup>464</sup> Therefore, great care needed to be taken on how this combat mission would be carried out regarding the media. The Marines intrinsic trust in their troops left no doubt they would adhere to the Marines doctrinal rules of engagement. The command tactical element of the battle was now in the hands of the Marine's operational commanders. The Marines would not let the media interfere with the operation until the enemy was defeated.<sup>465</sup>

The night of November 4<sup>th</sup> 2004 the soldiers, sailors and Marines of the Task Force Wolfpack were speeding towards the north in their LAVs, M1A1 Abrams tanks and trucks. They were headed towards the "Shark's Fin" which is a large peninsula which lied west of Fallujah. Four Marine infantry battalions with the reserve support of two Army mechanized task forces were poised to attack the city from the north. In this particular operation the

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<sup>462</sup> Lowry, 106.

<sup>463</sup> Gates, 473.

<sup>464</sup> Mills, USMC IO historical exmple, 14.

<sup>465</sup> Ibid.

surprise element of maneuver warfare was impossible to achieve. The rebels knew and had prepared for the assault that they perceived as inevitable. Barricades had been put up, IEDs set and trenches dug in preparation for the battle. There were in excess of four thousand *mujahedeen* who had made it their priority to fight and die in Fallujah. The actual attack came on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November, with two Marine regiments sweeping through the city. The Regimental Combat Team 1 (RCT-1) was preceded by the Army's 2-7 Cavalry to the northwest of the city. And, the Army's 2-2 Infantry Battalion played out an assault to the east of the city in association with the Marines' Regimental Combat Team-7.<sup>466</sup>

The integration of MAGTF Close Air Support (CAS) in this operation was one of the major aspects of maneuver warfare that stood out. The integration was almost seamless. The CAS plan was founded on the Marine Corps C<sub>2</sub> basics that involved procedural control and unity of command, which was made even more effective with a common map or Grid Reference Graphic (GRG). This widened the spectrum of the capability of aviation precision weapons and targeting technology. Therefore, a fixed wing CAS was a necessary option for the supporting fires in this operation, further emphasizing the urgent need for tactical aviation (TacAir) for the Marines.<sup>467</sup>

The main assault began with the dropping of targeted munitions from the Marine Fighter All Weather Squadron 242, F/A-18Ds. The eight GBU 31s joint direct attack munitions (JDAM), each which weighed two thousand pounds hit the railroad topped berm that lay to the north of Fallujah. These bombs made breaching lanes that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Marines would make excellent use of hours later. In the follow-on battle, as the Marines, soldiers and coalition forces engaged in house to house battles in the city, supporting fires were endless and precise. The airstrikes were in complete harmony with the ground fires that came in rapidly. The penetrating attack went as per commanders' intent. This was facilitated by the Marine Close Air Support (CAS).<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>466</sup> Lowry, *New Dawn*, 106.

<sup>467</sup> MCRP 5-12D.

<sup>468</sup> Maj Fred H. Allison, USMCR, "Close Air Support," *Marine Corps Gazette*, Volume 92, Issue 10, October, 2008. <https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2008/10/close-air-support>. (Accessed, 27 May 2014).

The attack utilized in Fallujah was maneuver warfare at its best. The involvement of CAS in the history of urban warfare has never been any less complex and demanding. In Fallujah, it was made worse by the specter of counterinsurgency and the collateral damage that possibly could result. This required that collateral damage was to be kept on the low, or no side! Minimal collateral damage was the goal in order to win the favor of the many observers of the war and the Iraqi civilians. This was not an easy task. Although risky as to collateral civilian damage, there was also the chance for blue on blue incidents. Besides the enemy, there were coalition fighters on the ground, which numbered ten battalions in the five kilometer square that made up Fallujah. It consisted of many buildings that resembled one another in their low heights and brownish-gray hue. The risks were, to all appearances, high; but this did not deter the Marines from employing CAS in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle for Fallujah.<sup>469</sup>

Historically, the tactical strike fighters were the major strong points of the CAS, but the employment of these in urban counterinsurgency combat was considered to be inappropriate, and generally avoided. The advent of precision ordnance alongside sophisticated targeting systems brought CAS to the insurgent forces successfully. This was a calculated warfare risk that had to be taken at this juncture in the overall fighting.

Tactical jets are capable of surgical CAS because, their great speed and high operating altitudes reduce their vulnerability to enemy fire. In Fallujah the enemy's anti-air capability was only limited to small arms and rocket-propelled grenades. The new application that was presented in this operation was the JDAMs. This ordinance is rarely used in urban warfare, but in the event that a group of insurgents were jammed into a building; or coalition artillery and other sources of fire support could not neutralize them fast enough, JDAM's were to be the weapons of choice in Fallujah.<sup>470</sup>

However, there were certain times when it was necessary to resort to the traditional attack of an area, with strafing from low-flying aircraft. This way the enemy would either be killed or intimidated or both with great success. The Marines' TacAir, AV 8B Harriers and F/A -18d Hornets, had not yet been deployed. When the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fallujah battle began and the Regimental Combat Team 1 was in urgent need for a fixed-wing CAS, the combined forces

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<sup>469</sup>Allison, "Close Air Support."

<sup>470</sup>Ibid.

air component commander (CFACC) of CENTCOM was approached. He was in charge of the air war in Iraq. The CFACC's air control agencies together with the combat air operations center (CAOC) and air support operations center (ASOC) provided air support in response to Marine specific requests.<sup>471</sup>

The Marine Corps' perspective was entirely different from that of the U.S. Air Force or the Army. The Marines' readiness to employ CAS into urban warfare boggled the minds of the pilots of National Guards F-16s. These pilots were quick to notice the gaping difference between the Marine and Army ground units. They reported that the Army never gave them clearance to strike and the ASOC being tentative in calling them in. The Marines, on the other hand, were quick to request supporting air. No delays were experienced when the Marine Direct Air Support center (DASC) was contacted as was the case when the Air force/ Army control system was involved. The other TacAir pilots soon joined in and flew CAS missions to support the Regimental Team Combat 1. MAGTF had conditioned the ground forces successful utilization of non- Marine air support.<sup>472</sup>

The Marines did not bomb for effect; each bomb was only delivered after a quick analysis that left the bomb as the only means to handle the threat. Forward air controllers (FACs), air officers and the pilots went to a great extent to ensure either the bombs or strafing's only hit the targets for which they were intended. The issues at hand did not stop joint air support; the major task would be to "integrate all the division fires, CAS, artillery and mortars" in order to provide support for the ground battle unit's speedy and rapid penetrating attack plan. This plan would insure the quick securing of Fallujah as well as reject the media's "CNN-theater" effect to negatively influence the outcome of this Marine Corps effort.<sup>473</sup>

The Marines were given the command role in *Operation Phantom Fury* In order to avoid the traffic jams that sprung up as a result of dual C<sub>2</sub> set-ups. Altitude deconflictions were very unlikely to work in this type of operation. The Marine Corps was therefore left to handle the assault on Fallujah while the CFACC gave their full attention to the regions where the insurgent activities were most likely to spring up. The request for unity of command was therefore granted, giving the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force a cylinder of airspace around

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<sup>471</sup> USMC Way of War combined arms practices started in World War II and further perfected in Korea and Vietnam.

<sup>472</sup> MCWW.

<sup>473</sup> Mills, USMC IO, 16-17.

Fallujah which was designated a high-density airspace control zone (HiDACZ). This HiDACZ was 25,000 feet high, and spanned a 15-mile radius. There was an additional inner circle, with a 5-mile radius, within the 15-mile radius.<sup>474</sup>

A “push” fixed wing CAS system was put into place together with a “pull” rotary wing element. TacAir would hover around the 5-15 mile orbit while the rotary wing CAS providers based in battle positions would respond only when the ground units put in a specific request for air assists. The CAS carried out missions between the RCT-1 and RCT-7 to which all the ground elements were attached. The operation of the two regiments would be parallel; they brought Fallujah into center focus. The success of the CAS also leaned heavily on the Marine Corps procedural control. This would involve the presence of many aircraft in a confined place at a given time. This allowed the pilots to make their maneuvers without much restriction. All they needed to do was stay within the limits of the laid down procedures. The Air force would regard this as loss of control but the Marines employment of this aspect led to the ultimate success of the CAS in this effort.<sup>475</sup>

The 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv, also known as Task Force Blue Diamond, led this invasion with their tanks. The fact that the tanks weighed up to 70 ton did not deter their movement inside the city of Fallujah. They rolled into the city, smashing through the barricades and running over fanatical insurgents who were suicidal enough to stand their ground. Behind them were four more Marine infantry battalions. Tanks with plows and rollers simply made their way through the minefields and brought down the barricades to the edge of the city. The insurgents planned to destroy the tanks and take an early win. However, the tanks response to the insurgent threats was to lay on all the firepower available. The two tanks elements were ordered to make an advance further into the city, so that more mobile artillery could be brought into the city. The coalition tanks advanced forward into the fight, leaving a gap between them and the reinforcing Marine tanks and the Bradley Fighting Vehicles. On seeing this, the insurgents tried to lay assaults from behind the coalition tanks, only to be caught unaware by the Marine tanks which were rolling in to join the first two waves. The tanks then spread out to the west of the city. There was an endless flow of artillery fires into the city. The mass and the speed with which the Marines moved through the insurgents into a panic state; their fighting was now greatly diminished. If the insurgents engaged the Marines as they approached, or shot as

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<sup>474</sup> Allison, Close Air Support.

<sup>475</sup> Ibid.

the Marines came into view, the response was artillery and mortar fire that would collapse the building around them. If they chose to remain in hiding and wait for the Marines to approach them, 60mm mortar shells coupled with Marine .50 caliber and 7.62 mm machine guns were directed at their position. The insurgents encountered M1A1 Abrams tanks which would fire point blank at them. 40mm grenades, AT4 rockets and Javelin missiles would also be directed at the insurgents.<sup>476</sup>

Major Doug Zembiec (KIA Fallujah) not only further validates the level of combat but also the doctrine and ethos of the Marine Corps Way of War. The following is the citation that was written which awarded Major Zembiec “The Lion of Fallujah” the Silver Star:

*Citation:*

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the Silver Star Medal (Posthumously) to Douglas A. Zembiec, Major, U.S. Marine Corps, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving as a Marine Advisor, Iraq Assistance Group, Multi-National Corps, Iraq, in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM on 11 May 2007. Attacking from concealed and fortified positions, an enemy force engaged Major Zembiec's assault team, firing crew-served automatic weapons and various small arms. He boldly moved forward and immediately directed the bulk of his assault team to take cover. Under withering enemy fire, Major Zembiec remained in an exposed, but tactically critical, position in order to provide leadership and direct effective suppressive fire on the enemy combatant positions with his assault team's machine gun. In doing so, he received the brunt of the enemy's fire, was struck and succumbed to his wounds. Emboldened by his actions his team and supporting assault force aggressively engaged the enemy combatants. Major Zembiec's quick thinking and timely action to re-orient his team's machine gun enabled the remaining members of his unit to rapidly and accurately engage the primary source of the enemy's fire saving the lives of his comrades. By his bold initiative, undaunted courage, and complete dedication to duty, Major Zembiec reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.\*

Prior to his posthumous award he was also cited for a Bronze Star with a Valor device for the following action:

A Marine patrol was taking heavy fire, and Zembiec's unit was called in to lead a retaliatory assault. Right after arriving, Echo Company rushed toward the enemies, who launched a heavy volley of fire toward the new arrivals. Instead of directing from the back, Zembiec himself led the men toward the fire, determined to help the trapped patrol. His men moved to a roof to counter the insurgents who had been firing down from above. The enemies wasted no time and focused their AK-47- and RPG-fire on the Marines on the roof. The Marines tried to radio an Abrams tank to fire on the enemy, but the tank didn't respond. As

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<sup>476</sup> Bing West, *No True Glory: A Frontlines Account of the Battle for Fallujah* (New York: Bantam, 2005), 62-63.

they continued to call for assistance, Zembiec decided to take matters into his own hands. He raced down the stairs and directly into the line of fire, heading toward the tank. He climbed up to the hatch even as mortar rounds exploded nearby and bullets ricocheted off the metal. Unscathed, he told the tank operators where to fire. The tank made quick work of the enemy, and Zembiec ran back to the roof.

A few weeks later, insurgents opened fire on Zembiec's platoon from three sides, with thousands of rounds. Grenades flew back and forth between the enemy and his men with only 20 feet between them. Zembiec, wounded by shrapnel, moved to a better position to direct the counterattack. He then moved from house to house, encouraging and motivating his men and repositioning the outnumbered Marines. Even as the battle raged, Zembiec coordinated the evacuation of nine injured Marines.

Those who opted to wait until the Marines were on their door step were surrounded by the Marines who would not leave until everyone in the house had been killed or captured. If any of the insurgents did not care to die they would simply surrender; but for the most part, the insurgents were given the opportunity to die for their beliefs, which most opted for.<sup>477</sup>

After a week, the Marines and soldiers reached the southern end of the city. The Marines' 2<sup>nd</sup> Recon Battalion alongside the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division's Blackjack Brigade guarded the city to the south. The Marine Regimental Combat Teams beat down the enemy in the north. The RCT's pushing them until they found themselves in the hands of the Marines and soldiers awaiting them in the south. They were in effect surrounded by the joint forces in a classic "Hammer and Anvil" MCWW.

This first week the insurgents suffered huge losses, but they were not completely defeated. A good number of them found refuge in fortified buildings throughout Fallujah. It would take seven weeks for the Marines to completely liberate Fallujah. *Operation Phantom Fury* was the largest action of the Marines' urban warfare encounters since Vietnam's Battle for Hue City. It was a successful operation. The city was set free of insurgents. Moreover, the Iraqis' anti-occupation attitude was transformed into a strong hatred for the al-Qaeda in the region.

Before becoming the 34<sup>th</sup> Commandant General James Conway led the I MEF in Iraq. Gen. Conway stated in our interview that:

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<sup>477</sup> Kelly, In person interview (supported by General Mattis) with the author.

“..In OIF on our way to Baghdad, we had twenty-three decision points. And we felt that using Boyd, our OODA loop was so much faster than the enemy's that..... Hey, you want to change the battlefield? Go ahead. We will out-think you, we will out-pace you, we will out-speed you in terms of our decisions and you won't stand a chance.

In fact, what we found was that when we used deception, And we wanted to dangle a leg out there [as bait] for maybe twelve to sixteen hours; we had to dangle it out there for a couple of days before they could digest and start to respond against something. So we could see that their decision cycle was so much slower than ours that we had to adjust, in some ways, to their rhythm if we were going to make our deceptions work and pick up the chatter on a radio and those types of things.

Early on, this is lower in the attack, and I think it was probably a little faster once we were settled, once we were [static] -- I'll use that term, it's not too strong a term. But back to your basic question, I think -- I said it in some ways earlier, but I think earlier there was resistance more than later when you look at the aggregate of what's being proposed and you realize that -- some of it is not terribly different, some of it is sufficiently different that we need to understand this kind of warfare..”

On the subject of urban warfighting General Conway stated:

“..It was tough especially in Ramadi and Fallujah. I think it's fair to say. The advantage goes over the enemy in urban warfare by and large. They can pick and choose the timing. They can take advantage of lots of escape routes and narrow files where you can't bring all your power to bear; certainly it almost eliminates your ability for air support unless it's really truly precision weapons..

In the early going, the thing that made a difference for us were snipers. When we had the first fight in Fallujah, we got told to pull back and negotiate with the Iraqi leadership. [They] didn't want to do it and within three days we thought of taking the city and the bad guys were swimming, they were out of ammunition and it was essentially over.

It was a bad mistake to do it; it was a worse mistake to stop it in terms of Fallujah and it taught the whole nation, I think, a lesson in terms of how the hell you do this.

I remember when we pulled back and I met with these clowns for the first time, they said, "You must move your snipers." And I said, "Well, that's an interesting way to start the conversation. I've got tanks that have penetrated well down into your streets. “How about the [our] tanks" "We don't care about the tanks but you must move your snipers." And only then did we come to realize that our snipers controlled the battlefield. As far as they could see they could control any guy in a black outfit with an AK [they] dare not move across the street as they tried to dash first one killed, the second guy started to go and he gets killed and the third guy ..... He didn't have a chance either.

There were some lessons learned. It's tough to move around a city. You don't get a lot of maneuver warfare working for you but we learned some things. Historically there had been the belief that tanks are vulnerable to combat in the built up area. [Marine Corps] tanks were the prime mover in the built up areas. Where you had a house that maybe had eighteen bad guys in it and all the avenues were mined and covered, the tank would just blow the hell out of the thing and move on. You had to protect them [the tanks]. You couldn't let them get too far out in front of the infantry but protected, that sort of armored pillbox impervious to just about anything the

bad guy could throw at them was huge. I think we probably learned that lesson initially in the Najaf. Someone said that we learned it as early as Nasiriya on the way up but after a time and certainly in the second battle of Fallujah tanks were invaluable to us as we went through. And the tank is still the gold standard in the Middle East. Everybody respects a tank. Tanks are, I think, absolutely essential. They give you this opportunity for maneuver warfare and it's a good piece of kit.

We [the Marine Corps] might use them differently. The Army would amass tanks and go mano a mano through the Republican Guard. We'd be hard pressed to do that. We're much better using it the way the French intended when they got attacked by the Germans, that's disseminating the tanks amongst the infantry and using it. It must be said though that Marines are capable of doing anything with them. The fire power of these modern tanks is really incredible. And so you combine tanks with Cobras [combined air component] and you got a powerful package. You can take on a lot of stuff and do damage with that. I think tanks are absolutely essential. I've always believe that. Nothing has changed that thinking..<sup>478</sup>

In summing up for both Chapter 7 (OEF) and Chapter 8 (OIF) the following is notable concerning maneuver warfare. MCWW's most important tool to the overall warfare setting for the Marine Corps is the maneuver doctrines of Gray *et al.* It can be applied both on the traditional / conventional battle field and during urban warfare leading into 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> generation irregular applications. And, maneuver warfare when applied in urban warfare; it is effective so long as there is good mastery of the urban architecture and war planning developments. Maneuver warfare is essential when your ground force is small in number. Speed is essential to the success of maneuver warfare. It throws the opposing enemy into shock and makes them resort to actions that are retrogressive to their defense. A good number of insurgent leaders when interviewed admitted to making the wrong decisions when the advance of the Marines came quicker than they had expected. What followed were actions that would make them more vulnerable to the Marine's fire.

In seeking to complete this work on OIF I asked General Mattis to offer his thoughts on how the successful finalization occurred that led to getting control of Fallujah:

Q: As *Vigilant Resolve* proved to be a disaster, and correct me if I'm wrong, it necessitated the second battle of Fallujah.

A: "...Well, I think the enemy had something to do with necessitating the second battle of Fallujah as well. We were trying to roll back the cycle of violence but by the time we'd arrived there, the momentum was carrying it forward and so we had to play the ball where it lay. We at the same time continued right through the worst fighting in Fallujah and Ramadi. I would come back every night to my CP and oftentimes have sheiks there. I'd have them over for dinner; I knew they were fighting me. They were sending their

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<sup>478</sup> Conway, In person interview with the author.

boys to fight me. And we just kept telling them, "You're lining up with the wrong folks." So what we had to do was get through the mud, the blood and the beer but we never lost sight of the fact that we would turn al Anbar against Al Qaida. It certainly threw us off track in terms of what we had desired for the timeline but war is one improvisation after another, one darn thing after another.

We still had out in the western Euphrates River Valley a young Army major, Special Forces guy, working with the Abu Neemer tribe. And if you use the cancer model, we were infecting the enemy with that cancer and it just kept happening over the years and it's rotated in and out. A lot of people took credit for it when it finally happened but in fact it started in the spring of 2004 with a young Army major named Adam Souk. But I would just say it was just normal adaptations to the enemy situation. As maneuver warfare teaches you, you're up against an enemy with an independent will. So your plan is nothing more than Hagel's dialectic. You have a thesis. The enemy countered for something so you have an antithesis. Out of that you come up with a new synthesis. And all that really is, is your new thesis and you just keep playing the ball forward in the give and take and the heave and ho of warfare..”

Q: Sounds like John Boyd’s OODA Cycling Loop in disguise.

A: “..Well, Boyd's thinking is very, very prevalent in the Marine Corps, but you're absolutely right..”<sup>479</sup>

Maneuver warfare from Gray, Wyly, Boyd and Sun Tzu and the rest of its trappings on up to and including FET’s and Distributive Operations as the Marine Corps *modus operandi* has therefore proved essential in their past and now in Marine Corps contemporary combat efforts.

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<sup>479</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

## **9 Conclusions:**

### **I. Revolution in Military affairs:**

The United States Marine Corps did not experience what could be termed a Revolution in Military Affairs in its doctrinalization of maneuver warfare during the Gray Commandancy. Sir Michael Howard has defined a RMA as:

“For a major RMA to have occurred there must have taken place a military turning point in the history of mankind.”<sup>480</sup>

Needless to say there are few examples of developments of this magnitude. The introduction of the equestrian spur that would enable the use of heavy cavalry, the introduction of gun powder, the rifled musket, the use of electronic communications equipment, the introduction of mechanized armored vehicles and the development of airpower as an element of combined arms set the standard for inclusion into the RMA pantheon.

The United States Marine Corps from its inception to its position today as a major military force can be seen unofficially as well as officially practicing maneuver type warfare. In the near recent past the concepts that were institutionalized by the Marine Corps can be traced in part to its roots, including what has been termed a German Way of War.<sup>481</sup> Initially during the Marine Corps’ “evolution,” *Bewegungskrieg* tactics did not sit well within the hierarchy of the *cadre* that made up the Marine Corps’ leadership. This included both officer and noncommissioned officer. At first, the “maneuverists” influence was not positive when it came to “evolving” Marine Corps fighting traditions.

In brief, one of the messengers or proponents of the use of the modern German tactic managed to alienate a large part of the Marine Corps warrior population. Yet, some inroads were made that eventually led to the official institutional adherence of this military doctrine within the current Marine Corps.<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>480</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1-5.

<sup>481</sup> Lind, “*Maneuver Warfare*,” and, Citino, “*German Way of War*.”

<sup>482</sup> Bill Lind, In person interview with the author.

However this change was much more an *evolution* and not a *revolution*. The ethos and military ethic that is part and parcel of the Marine Corps had unified *ad hoc* ways of warfighting both in its conventional attritional doctrine, as well as nonconventional maneuver warfare. It also combined with aspects of the Asian Way of War philosophy of Sun Tzu.

Even a designated sub prime mover of this concept, General Al Gray stated that “maneuver warfare is not new *per se*.”<sup>483</sup> And, Lieutenant General Bernard Trainor noted that in adopting / adapting the maneuver warfare doctrine, the Marine Corps was returning to its roots in warfighting learned during the Banana Wars, but shelved during World War II, Korea and to some extent the war in Vietnam. The reemergence of the stated concept of maneuver warfare by General Gray was a reflection of the Marines’ experience in Vietnam and the demoralizing effect of Beirut and its aftermath.<sup>484</sup>

The term that was bandied about in the press during this time frame was “Reformer(s).”<sup>485</sup> This is a misnomer of the highest magnitude, because it eventually was applied to those within the Marine Corps seeking serious revisions as to how the Marine Corps would fight future battles. In an interview, Marine General John Kelly set the “Reformer” name aside and stated that the correct term is and should have been “*maneuverist*”, and those who would be opposed to the maneuver warfare concept “*traditionalists*.” Using these new designations it is apparent that the gap in understanding is considerably narrowed within the Marine Corps family thanks to the Kelly interjection of correct terms.<sup>486</sup>

The history of the U.S. Marine Corps is replete with examples of maneuver warfare. It existed during the attacks at Trenton and Princeton during a bleak time in the American War of Independence, to the successful amphibious landing in Nassau, the Bahamas during this same conflict. It was practiced by Lt. Presley N. O’Bannon during his attack on Tripoli, and through to the Marine amphibious landings during the Spanish American War at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 1898. It also has been suggested that the Marine efforts at Belleau Wood had a

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<sup>483</sup> Gray, In person interview with the author.

<sup>484</sup> Trainor email correspondence with the author.

<sup>485</sup> Walter, Isaacson, “The Winds of Reform,” *Time Magazine*, (Mar. 07, 1983).

<sup>486</sup> Kelly, In person interview with the author.

maneuverist element because the NCO's in the wheat fields were using mission type orders. Perfecting the amphibious landing techniques by Major "Pete" Ellis and the then Lieutenant Victor "Brute" Krulak that were the bread and butter of the Marines in the Pacific Campaign in World War II, and the break out at the Chosin Reservoir by the Marine Corp during the Korean action, onto Hue City in Vietnam. All witnessed the Marine Corps application of maneuver warfare. And I am more than certain that in Grenada, the Gulf War, Somalia, OEF and OIF maneuver warfare was heavily in evidence.

This conclusion is best supported by General Jim Mattis when he stated:

"..in its own way the Marine Corps had always allowed a great deal of freedom to tactical commanders but at least now we had a better framework for what we were doing and it was maneuver warfare's tenets. And so actually it was more of an upgrading of tactical proficiency and operational art. It was not really replacing something.."<sup>487</sup>

## **II: Colonel Michael Wyly (USMC) "The Prime Mover":**

This doctrinalization of maneuver warfare as it occurred within the U.S. Marine Corps would not have happened without Colonel Mike Wyly's efforts in response to his experiences in Vietnam. While doing this research, it became most evident to me that there was one prime mover that can be attributed with this Marine Corps maneuver warfare evolution. This "Marine Corps Evolution" only happens as we know it today because of a Marine officer with a vision and the determination to make it happen.

It started with Wyly in Vietnam when he lost one of his two best Lieutenants, Chip Pilkington, after a fire fight in the An Hoa Basin. The death of this young and promising Marine left Wyly in a conflicted state, and he vowed then and there that he would find a better way to fight wars for the Marine Corps. Colonel Wyly shared the following:

"..A unique feature of my personal story is that that I became personally dedicated to making change in our Corps years before I met John Boyd. After two tours in Vietnam I made a pledge to myself that were I to remain in the Marine Corps, I would commit myself to making us as powerful a fighting force as I could, not just for the strength of our nation, but for the sake of the wonderful young combat Marines I had come to know and who had given so much, and, for the sake of their successors, who would serve our country in the next war.

"The next war," I presumed, would be waged against the Soviet Union. I did not rule out more wars "by proxy", such as the North Vietnamese fought for their Soviet supporters. In either scenario, significant reform was imperative.

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<sup>487</sup> Mattis, In person interview with the author.

When I made the decision to dedicate the rest of my career to change and reform, I had to come to terms with the fact that doing so might well stifle or end my career. I was a Marine major, “fresh caught”, and it was 1973. I would sustain my career as long as possible “for the greater good of our Corps”; however, I had to be ready to “hang it up” as a Marine Corps major if the demands of my commitment were to lead to that..”<sup>488</sup>

### Sub-Prime Movers:

1. Jim Webb (USMC): The other young Marine lieutenant of note in Wyly’s company was Jim Webb. Wyly and Webb have to this day remained very close friends. After his time in Vietnam, Webb became a successful writer, Secretary of the Navy and Senator from Virginia. Because of his actions in Vietnam, Webb became the recipient of the Navy Cross, the nation’s second highest award for valor in combat; and was also the recipient of two Silver Star awards.<sup>489</sup> It was his company commander, Wyly, who nominated Webb for the Medal of Honor; and it must be noted that Wyly shared his vision with this like-minded *protégé* on numerous occasions. Webb would eventually provide the bureaucratic *gravitas* to restructure the leadership of the Marine Corps (to shake off the negative stigma of Vietnam and Beirut) by seeking a “warrior type” Marine to be the 29<sup>th</sup> Commandant. General Al Gray, who was not nominated for this position, was to be SECNAV Jim Webb’s choice.

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<sup>488</sup> Wyly, email exchange and in person interview with the author.

<sup>489</sup> I have included the Navy Cross citations to illustrate that Jim Webb had the credentials to discern what a “warrior” was. Webb was clear that General Al Gray was that warrior leader.

**Webb Citation:** The Navy Cross is presented to James H. Webb, Jr., First Lieutenant, U.S. Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism while serving as a Platoon Commander with Company D, First Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in connection with combat operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. On 10 July 1969, while participating in a company-sized search and destroy operation deep in hostile territory, First Lieutenant Webb's platoon discovered a well-camouflaged bunker complex which appeared to be unoccupied. Deploying his men into defensive positions, First Lieutenant Webb was advancing to the first bunker when three enemy soldiers armed with hand grenades jumped out. Reacting instantly, he grabbed the closest man and, brandishing his .45 caliber pistol at the others, apprehended all three of the soldiers. Accompanied by one of his men, he then approached the second bunker and called for the enemy to surrender. When the hostile soldiers failed to answer him and threw a grenade which detonated dangerously close to him, First Lieutenant Webb detonated a claymore mine in the bunker aperture, accounting for two enemy casualties and disclosing the entrance to a tunnel. Despite the smoke and debris from the explosion and the possibility of enemy soldiers hiding in the tunnel, he then conducted a thorough search which yielded several items of equipment and numerous documents containing valuable intelligence data. Continuing the assault, he approached a third bunker and was preparing to fire into it when the enemy threw another grenade. Observing the grenade land dangerously close to his companion, First Lieutenant Webb simultaneously fired his weapon at the enemy, pushed the Marine away from the grenade, and shielded him from the explosion with his own body. Although sustaining painful fragmentation wounds from the explosion, he managed to throw a grenade into the aperture and completely destroy the remaining bunker. By his courage, aggressive leadership, and selfless devotion to duty, First Lieutenant Webb upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service.

2. Lt. Gen. Bernard Trainor (USMC): Lt. General Bernard Trainor is responsible for appointing Wyly onto the faculty of the Marine Corps University hierarchy where he eventually introduced maneuver warfare into the *curricula*. Prior to this however, General Trainor was aware of Wyly's value to Marine Corps educational systems as he stated in the following email:

“..When I was at the Ed. Ctr., I sought to have the faculties at Command & Staff College (CSC) and Amphibious Warfighting School (AWS) broaden the students minds by having them think outside the box. However, I was mindful that my job was to educate the students in the nitty gritty of their profession as Marines. This was particularly needed at AWS.

At CSC I emphasized command responsibility, the importance of clear commander's guidance and then of letting subordinates get on with the job. Inherent in the teaching was adaptability and initiative at all levels of command. It came out of my studies of WWII battles where troops would end up in the wrong place with no comm to higher command. Some troop leaders handled it well. Many were left floundering for direction.

Mike Wyly and his Socratic pedagogy, was [like] a breath of fresh air on the faculty of AWS. I became (and remained) his ardent supporter. I encouraged his innovative thinking at AWS and his unique understanding of mission orders and subordinate freedom of action. I tried to shield him thereafter from those who were critical of his independent mind..”<sup>490</sup>

Without General Trainor's behind the scenes efforts, Colonel Wyly would not have had the protection in place to further this endeavor.

3. William (Bill) Lind: a political player who insinuated himself into the process by initially courting Wyly. Lind's *bona fides* are his Ivy League education with emphasis on German history; and the *gravitas* of two senatorial administrative positions (Sen. Taft of Ohio and Sen. Hart of Colorado) during this post-Vietnam military reorganization period. The following excerpt from the Lind interview provides the motivation for his entry into the Process:<sup>491</sup>

BL: “..It starts with Senator Robert Taft, Jr. in Ohio..”

TP: Why did he get into it?

BL: “..Basically I [Lind] led him into it. Taft understood that the job of the committee [Armed Services] was to look at the governance of the country, an independent look at what the services were doing and whether it made sense.... whether what we are doing

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<sup>490</sup> Trainor, email correspondence with the author.

<sup>491</sup> (BL is William “Bill” Lind), and (TP is the author of this work).

makes sense not just about are we wasting money, not just about getting contracts for the state [Ohio] and your district but independently looking at it and saying does this make sense for the military or is the military missing something and that starts with Taft..”

TP: Well it starts with you who convinced Taft.

BL: “..Right. Essentially the point is Taft is open to it ..... and then Gary Hart was on the committee for 2 years 1974-1976 with Taft and when Taft was defeated, Hart knowing I was politically conservative asked me to come with him to continue the work I was doing with Taft to the point where we put out a second edition of the Taft White Paper as a Taft/Hart paper; and then eventually by the late 1970’s Gary Hart and a few other members of congress were giving speeches on the floor [of the Senate] talking about maneuver warfare doctrine .....and that’s important in terms of the Marine Corps’ interest in this [maneuver warfare] because of the Marine Corp sensitivity to the hill [Congress, both houses]..”

BL: “..Hart was genuinely interested in new ideas and he was genuinely interested in governing the country. So Hart/Taft both were people who were actually interested in governing the country but there was a political calculation as well. Politically the country was moving to the right particularly in military stuff at this point. The Cold War is still very much under way and Hart is looking for a 3<sup>rd</sup> way where he can be pro-military without sounding like John Tower, he is looking for a 3<sup>rd</sup> way between the Kennedy liberal anti defense people and John Tower’s ‘give the Pentagon anything they want’ and military reform .... So there is a political calculus in that for him [Hart] as well..”

TP: By 1976 you have gotten maneuver warfare on the front burner.

BL: “..Yes..”

TP: Do you personally think it is more effective as a fighting tool in terms of carnage, in terms of wounded in action?

BL: “..What maneuver warfare? Oh yeah! Obviously yes it enormously lowers casualties. The Panzer divisions of WW II changed the operational mobility differential but the point is it brings men to it quickly; it isn’t an endless, bottomless bloodbath that was always one of my motivations for this thing [maneuver warfare] to attrition warfare [which] always struck me as morally appalling. Also what you have is a marriage of people looking for something different after Vietnam with me being able to point out there is a different model which they were not aware of because the German military lost their war; it’s not just different tactically as fighting power will point out, it is different in everything, it’s a different military culture. It’s worked extremely well..”<sup>492</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> Lind In person interview with the author.

4. Colonel John Boyd USAF (ret.): Colonel John Boyd is the non-Marine who entered into the intellectual and philosophical heart and soul of this evolutionary process. As a maverick within the Defense Department, his sole aim was to “reform the military and it’s spending.”<sup>493</sup> He eventually found his way to the U.S. Marine Corps as it has going through the post-Vietnam adjustments of downsizing while reviewing their *raison d’etre* of being the Force in Readiness for the country. He brought Wyly into the Boydian ranks while he was teaching the young Marine officers the intricacies of *OODA Loop*, *Patterns of Conflict* and his *Discourse on Winning and Losing* as they apply to maneuver warfare.<sup>494</sup> Boyd is also a student of Asian military philosophy. Wyly introduces him to General Al Gray who took an immediate liking to Boyd and his military philosophy. At the time of Boyd’s death well over 300 Marines attended his burial, placing their Marine Corps iconic Eagle Globe and Anchor (EGA) devices on his coffin as an acknowledgement of thanks for all he had done in their military education. (See OODA Loop Chart at the end of this chapter)<sup>495</sup>

5. General Alfred M. Gray: The “mustang” Marine responsible for endorsing the process within the Marine Corps, from the II MEF level, and on to the Commandants level, Gray was eventually responsible for institutionalizing this process Marine Corps wide. General Gray is brought into this development by Colonel Wyly’s plan to “ambush him” at the Officers Club at Camp Lejeune.<sup>496</sup> Wyly had sent Captain Bill Woods to lead the ambush; accompanied by Captain G.I. Wilson, a classmate of Woods from The Basic School. These two junior Marine officers get General Gray’s attention and Maneuver Warfare gets a protector and future benefactor. Mike Wyly was also responsible for introducing General Gray to Jim Webb. Webb as Secretary of the Navy would eventually push through the promotion of General Gray into the commandancy of the Marine Corps.<sup>497</sup> At this juncture Gen. Gray institutionalizes maneuver warfare or “fighting smarter” by issuing FMFM-1 *Warfighting* and also by creating the Marine Corps University. Colonel Wyly writes the *syllabi* and *curricula* inculcating

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<sup>493</sup> “Reformers,” *Time Magazine*, 1983.

<sup>494</sup> Coram, *Boyd*.

<sup>495</sup> See OODA Chart, 229.

<sup>496</sup> Wyly Wilson and Woods interview with the author.

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid*.

maneuver warfare and Boydian philosophy into the courses offered by the Marine Corps University.<sup>498</sup>

6. The Apostles: the young “Captains and Majors” who laid the pipe and carried the work load for this evolution: G.I. Wilson, Bill Woods, John Schmidt and Bruce Gudmundsson. These were the writers and planners who actually put pen to paper; from putting together the *Gray Maneuver Warfare Handbook* (unpublished but privately distributed to the rest of these adherents),<sup>499</sup> to the actual writing FMFM-1 *Warfighting* by then Captain John Schmidt.<sup>500</sup>

7. The Practitioners: These were those Marines [just a few of the many Marines given below] who successfully employed maneuver warfare as a Marine Corps Way of War: Maj. Gen. Ray Smith, Gen. James Conway, Gen. Jim Jones, Gen. Charles Krulak, Gen. James Mattis, Gen. Tony Zinni, Gen. John Kelly, Gen. Joe Dunford, Maj. Gen. Mike Myatt, and Lt. Gen. Bill Keys.

With the exception of this last group, the shakers and movers listed in this cabal of “*maneuverists*” all are directly connected to Colonel Mike Wyly in some significant way. It was Wyly who brought them all together in various developmental stages to devise a better way to fight wars on behalf of the nation and the Marine Corps. None of these individual members of this famous, or “infamous” evolutionary group could have knit this together to get the same end results that we see today on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. Some might think that coincidence or “good luck” was responsible; but neither is the case. With his vision Wyly was the real luck: “Opportunity meeting preparation: this will create the space for an idea whose time had come.”

If this were to be visualized, the idea of a wagon wheel (instead of the Wyly analogy of a shot gun blast) would be more appropriate.<sup>501</sup> Mike Wyly would be at the hub, and each spoke would be those mentioned above. If there is a “father” of a Marine Corps Way of War the honor belongs to Colonel of Marines Mike Wyly.

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<sup>498</sup> Trainor, Telephonic interview with the author.

<sup>499</sup> Wilson, files shared with the author.

<sup>500</sup> Schmidt, Email to the author.

<sup>501</sup> See The Wyly Wheel At The Ends Of This Chapter, 228.

### **III Abandonment of an American Way of War:**

Marine Corps attritional warfare is mostly over except where specifically selected as a strategy. With the continued use and development of fighting smarter techniques garnered from the Marine Corps University's schools of maneuver warfare, the U.S. Marine Corps can take full advantage of the options regarding strategy and tactics. Attrition is therefore still a choice, not "THE" choice.

This was made clear by the statement from General James Conway, 34<sup>th</sup> CMC: "...I want all my options open going into battle and if need be attrition is an option.."<sup>502</sup>

This was amplified by General James Amos, 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, in November of 2011 at Camp Lawton, Herat, Afghanistan, when he stated that:

"..While the Marines, willing and able to operate from dug in positions [attritional defensive - offensive doctrine] are uniquely equipped and trained to do much more.."<sup>503</sup>

The schools within the Marine Corps are exposing young Marine Officers to programs that are not just rote memorization of static facts. Bruce Gudmundsson currently teaches the Harvard case method approach that develops the needed skills for critical decision making at The Basic School and the Marine Corps University. These cases prepare these Marines to assume leadership qualities that are part and parcel of decentralized command needed in the practice of maneuver warfare and the Marine Corps Way of War.

### **IV. Why the Marine Corps Was Able to Doctrinalize Maneuver Warfare:**

The U.S. Marine Corps, as an organization, has some special characteristics that militated in favor of the Marine Corps ability to make change when change was needed. The basic advantages that General Gray enjoyed as pre-existing in the Corps were the following:

1. A common cause and sense of mission in which all Marines strongly believe in.
2. The instinct for physical survival together with the likelihood of being faced with possible death.
3. All Marines have common training which gives them common reference points and common language.

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<sup>502</sup> Conway, In person interview with the author.

<sup>503</sup> Robert Burns, Postwar Marines: Smaller, Less Focused On Land War, *Boston Globe on Line*, December 5, 2011, [http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2011/12/05/postwar\\_marines\\_smaller\\_less\\_focused\\_on\\_land\\_war/](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2011/12/05/postwar_marines_smaller_less_focused_on_land_war/). (Accessed 27 May2014).

4. *Esprit de Corps* that binds Marines together and motivates them to work together.
5. Our first identity as Marines is to be a Marine.
6. Every Marine has to be qualified as a rifleman. Every Marine is a fighter.
7. Marines feel stronger about their traditions than any other service.
8. Marines carry a sense responsibility for the Marines who came before them.
9. Marines make the most detailed and specifically significant demands on our Marines in terms of iron discipline and precise standards.
10. Marines have a reputation for innovation.
11. Marines are extremely flexible.
12. Marines are by our nature expeditionary.<sup>504</sup>

This was the legacy that Commandant Gray parlayed to institutionalize Maneuver Warfare within the Marine Corps. Without this institutional buy-in, by a rather small force, there is no change.

Much has been written concerning the negatives of this means of prosecuting warfare by the Marine Corps. Yet all questioned only attested to the fact that one of the messengers was the cause of the negative sentiments encountered by the Marine Corps “maneuverists.” General Mattis offered the following to support the overall acceptance of maneuver warfare’s institutionalization:

“..I’m rather a student of history -- I saw the logic to it, it made sense to me. People like Tony Zinni who at the time was a regimental commander, and Van Riper -- everywhere I went I ran into people above me who were strong advocates. And among the younger officers it was easy to embrace. The changes weren’t that severe because in its way the Marine Corps had always allowed a great deal of freedom to tactical commanders but at least now we had a better framework for what we were doing and it was maneuver warfare’s tenets. And so actually it was more of an upgrading of tactical proficiency and operational art. It was not really replacing something. It was almost like you’d come out of high school and now you were going to college, if you know what I mean..”<sup>505</sup>

Another critical opinion concerning the maneuver warfare landscape was offered by retired General Bernard Trainor:

“..The Marine Corps was not hostile to the ideas behind Maneuver Warfare and the Boydian concepts. Bill Lind was the source of friction. He publicly criticized Marine leadership and ascribed to it a calcified commitment to attrition warfare where it did not exist to the degree he claimed.

The Marine Corps had a well-deserved reputation for innovative thinking and took umbrage at Bill Lind’s charges. Matters were exacerbated when he consciously or

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<sup>504</sup> Clancy and Zinni, 142-143.

<sup>505</sup> Mattis, Telephonic interview with the author.

unconsciously undercut the leadership by encouraging company grade officers to become “Young Turks.” Resentment to Lind and his works was the unintended consequence.

As a Marine, I deplored Lind’s deploration. As for his concepts, I welcomed the free thought and debate his advocacy brought to the table as refreshing and healthy. I applauded the critical thinking aspect of Maneuver Warfare; the freedom of thought that it engendered and the greater freedom of action for subordinate under mission orders that it embraced. But I considered his Maneuver Warfare a sub-set of war fighting options whose essence was already resident within Marine concepts of warfare.

This was minus a key element -There was so much attention to Boyd’s getting inside the enemy’s OODA loop that little was being paid to killing him. It could be interpreted as over time the term Maneuver Warfare took on mystical proportions. This I found potentially dangerous if it was to become the keystone of the way to fight. To me, Maneuver Warfare was heavily influenced by Jomini’s “scientific / art” of warfare with its decisive battle philosophy and by its subsequent German army derivative. I believed the Boyd-Lind concept maneuvering the enemy into defeat without the Jomini and German “decisive battle.”

A point I made to Bill Lind from the sidelines years ago was that you can’t maneuver an enemy into defeat. At some point he has to be actually beaten - and concede it. (I make the same argument to victory through airpower advocates). My basic problem was that Maneuver Warfare was a prescriptive formula based on the assumption that attack was the only way to go; the enemy was of an equal genre to self, the object of an engagement was the complete capitulation of the enemy and the environment, terrain etc. were incidental. But I held/hold that wars are largely *sui generis* and don’t fit such a constant mold.

Paradoxically it calls for subordinate freedom of action within a framework of dogma. It turned out that Desert Storm did fit the mold, but even without Maneuver Warfare, the USA/USMC operational plans would have been what they were, but were credited as examples of maneuver warfare. I fought in Korea as a rifle platoon leader and upon reflection can state with confidence that Maneuver Warfare would have had no place during the Outpost War phase of the Korean War short of another Inchon style landing. The enemy had too much defense in depth.

I commanded two battalions on Vietnam tours and Maneuver Warfare would not have worked there either; it was not the Maneuver Warfare ordained conventional war. Iraqi Freedom I (OIF), started out as Maneuver Warfare at its best, but came-a-cropper early when the enemy did not turn out to be the Republican Guard, but the *Fedayeen* on our flanks. The following eight years of Iraqi Freedom II saw no Maneuver Warfare option and became a war of attrition, so detested by Bill Lind.

The German model Maneuver Warfare in World War II was also found wanting because of its essentially narrow application to offensive action against peer enemy on accommodating terrain. The German’s were at a loss when offense failed them and they had to revert to the defense. Even then they held to their doctrine in the form of the counter offensive, e.g. Kursk, Caen, the Ardennes and Tunisia. In all cases they failed. Kesselring fighting in Italy had the good sense to fight a war of attrition after his counterstrike failed at Salerno.

The totem of Maneuver Warfare is alive in the Marine Corps, but hopefully with a far more mature understanding of the principles that it should have embodied. We have legions of officers who have seen the elephant, are battle wise and realize that there is no magic recipe. Fighting and success in battle involves myriad non-military factors. I think today's Marine culture has at least benefited and internalized Lind's mantra of mission orders and has incorporated the best of Maneuver Warfare in two words, adapt and innovate..”

General Trainor also offered an outside opinion from an anonymous Marine that further explains the Marine Corps experience viz. maneuver warfare and institutionalization:

“..To this day there is deeply held antagonism towards Lind on the part of an earlier [Marine Corps leadership] generation. When I received your e-mail I mentioned it in correspondence to a friend of long standing. He is a retired [Marine] colonel of eighty seven years; an infantry veteran of three wars who had a reputation for brilliance and was a top planner when on active duty. He was not involved in Lind/ Maneuver Warfare brouhaha.

He replied that he considered the Maneuver Warfare exercise as an empty vessel that didn't focus on maneuver or any other fundamental facet/principle/practice of warfare. He felt that Bill Lind had set up a straw man that represented many if not most of the poor examples of leadership, tactics and strategy and implied that the straw man was representative of the Marine Corps of that time.

He [Lind] then cast into the empty vessel of Maneuver Warfare all the acknowledged good practices of leadership, tactics and strategy and labeled them Maneuver Warfare. He then contrasted existing conditions with the contents of the once empty vessel that was filled with all the sound practices accepted by serious students of the art.

My friend thought the exercise was at the core a fraud, but nonetheless, was most useful because it prompted a whole generation of Marines to think seriously about the art of war..”<sup>506</sup>

## **V. Removing The Impediment For Inclusion Of Maneuver Warfare Doctrine:**

It may appear that the US Marine Corps' evolution into a maneuver warfare doctrine was straight forward. This is not the case. The issues in this regard tend to be judgmental from within the Marine Corps and only centering on the how, and the when of maneuver warfare becoming inculcated. Maneuver warfare as applied to Marine Corps combat has not failed in practice and or application on the battlefield.

Failure of a MCWW based on maneuver doctrine seems to be in the eyes of some of the original apostles. They were known as “Gray's Bubbas.” Failure has also been recognized by some of the current junior officers. The center of this discontent is still Bill Lind. Lind has

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<sup>506</sup> Trainor, email to the author.

a condescending demeanor and uniquely negative and caustic pedagogical style. It was reported that if you did not “get it,” Lind would castigate the officer on the spot. The blow back from within the Marine Corps towards Lind’s approach was less than kind and yet truthful. (How could Lind who never served a day in uniform tell a Marine battle-hardened veteran how to do his job?) They despised him, his arrogance, and his demeanor and to some extent the vast depth of his tactical maneuver knowledge.

This internal friction in regards to Bill Lind is finally eliminated when General Charles Krulak, 31<sup>st</sup> Commandant, and strong proponent of FMFM-1 *Warfighting* pronounces Lind *persona non grata* at all Marine Corps facilities. At this juncture the internal strife and acrimony connected with the evolution and further adaption of conceptual maneuver warfare within the Marine Corps stopped. Lind still continues his attack on the leadership of the Marine Corps. He still writes articles condemning the triumph of “Careerism” over the proper implementation of maneuver warfare doctrine. If this was a concrete fact, how do Marine Generals such as, Conway, Kelly, Dunford and Mattis lead Marines using maneuver warfare in battle today? How did they ever rise to these leadership roles as practicing “*maneuverists*”?

In his work *Warfighting and Disruptive Technologies*,<sup>507</sup> U.S. Navy Captain Terry C. Pierce used the case study method to analyze and conclude that the work of the Marine Corps’ evolutionists reflected a process that was negative and / or not wanted by the rank and file before its inculcation as Marine Corps doctrine. This is clearly not the case. Based on this research and primary interviewees statements including that of General Al Gray and General Bernard “Mick” Trainor, maneuver warfare tenets were in evidence throughout the history of the Marine Corps. It was made official doctrine with the issuance of FMFM1 *Warfighting*. General John Kelly confirms the notion that once the impediment for acceptance was removed, the Marine Corps was able to assimilate the doctrinalization of maneuver warfare or the Marine Corps Way of War: “..Some get it, some think they get it, and some will never get it is the reality. Once the commandant says it is so that ends the argument and you then get on with it..”<sup>508</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> Terry C. Pierce, *Warfighting and Disruptive Technologies*, 85-115.

<sup>508</sup> Kelly, In person interview with the author. This thought was echoed by Generals Conway and Mattis in their interviews with the author.

## **VI. Boyd's Forward Looking Advice:**

Colonel John Boyd's guidance to General Al Gray's query of "What's next?" sets the tone for the future of Marine Corps Way of War. His response was simply put: "This is just the beginning!"

Because of Boyd's death in early 1997, it is my opinion that the continued criticism from Lind *et al.*, of how the Marine Corps furthers this evolution is unfounded, and somewhat anti-Boydian in its spirit and nature.

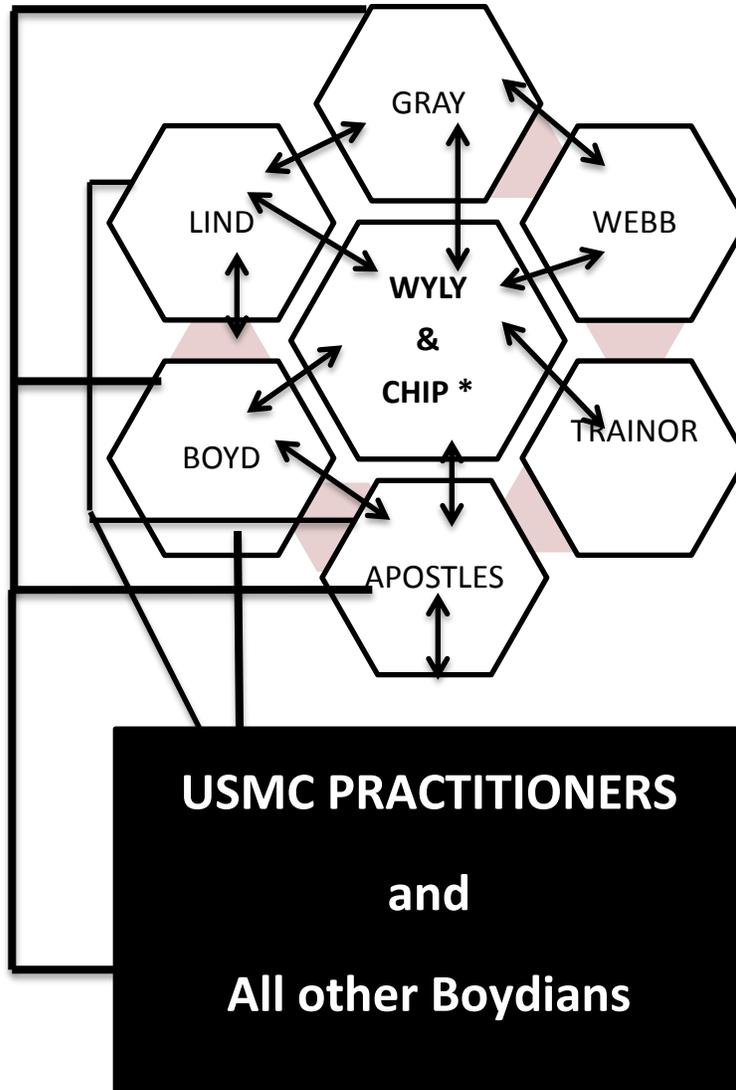
John Boyd would be the first to acknowledge that the philosophical basis of this evolution will always be ongoing and developmental. It is just like the OODA Loop's orientation process. It is as dynamic and as fluid as the situations it may come up against in any of the battle spaces. It is a dynamic, free thinking experience, not a static doctrine!

It is more than apparent that the U.S. Marine Corps has not abandoned its progress where maneuver warfare is concerned. It has adapted it into its own ongoing dynamic and versatile operational art of warfare that is also agile and flexible. The Marine Corps Way of War critics have not given the institution it due justice of evolving a Marine Corps Way of War.

I can only speculate on how John Boyd would further the development of his philosophy. I think based upon the *OODA Loop Cycling Process* that Boyd would have joined Commandant Conway and Generals Kelly and Dunford, and Mattis and continued the evolution based upon the Marine Corps DNA born at Princeton New Jersey 1777; and still evolving today in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

**WYLY’S WHEEL: Connecting the dots. . . .**

**APPENDIX:**



**Motivation**

\* Lt. “Chip” Pilkington  
 USMC  
 KIA May 1969

**APOSTLES**

G. I. Wilson  
 Bill Woods  
 John Schmidt  
 Pat Garvey  
 Etal .....

**Practitioners**

Gen. Ray Smith  
 Gen. Jim Conway  
 Gen. Jim Jones  
 Gen. Chas. Krulak  
 Gen. John Kelly  
 Gen. Jim Mattis  
 Gen. Joe Dunford  
 Gen. Mike Myatt  
 Gen. Bill Keys  
 Gen. Tony Zinni

**Prime Mover: Col. Michael Wyly and \*Chip**

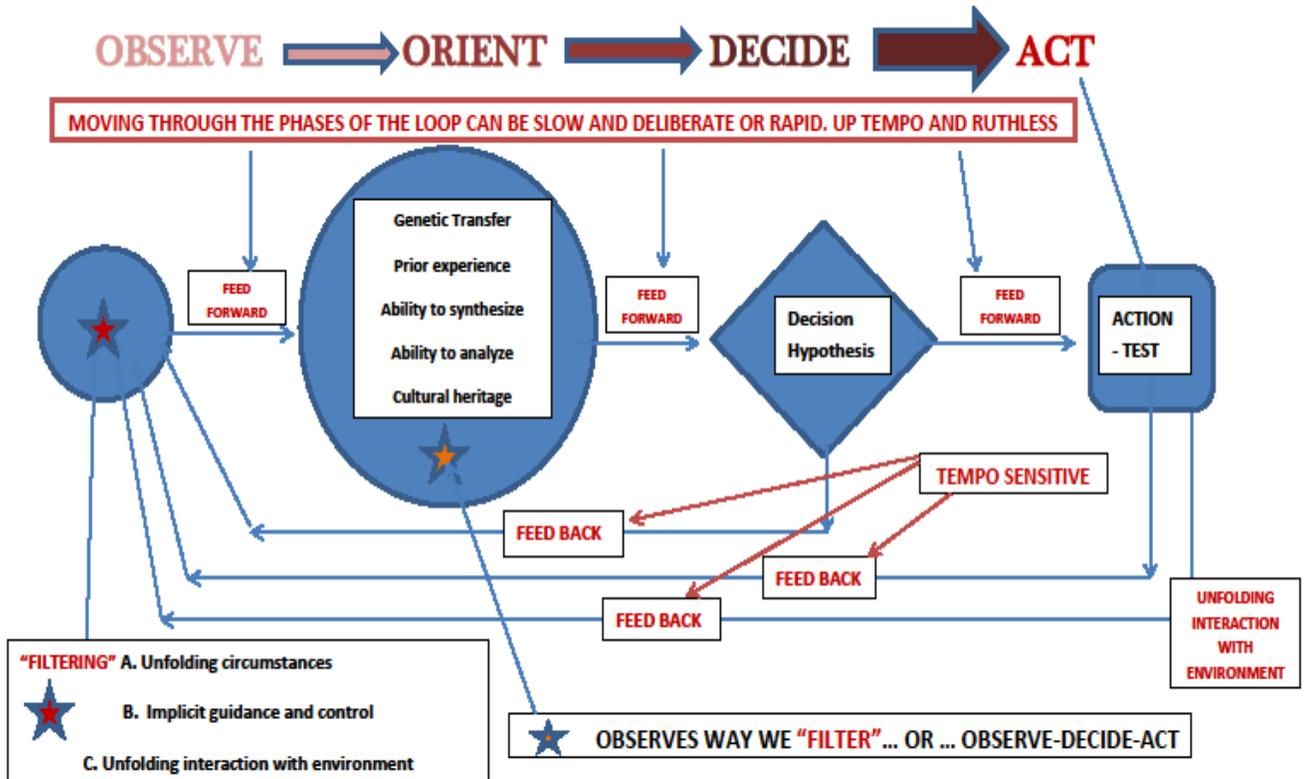
**2<sup>nd</sup> SUB MOVERS - USMC Leadership: Gen. Al Gray, Lt. Gen. Bernard Trainor, Capt. Jim Webb and the “Apostles”**

**2<sup>nd</sup> SUB MOVERS - Non USMC Leadership: Col. John Boyd USAF ret., Bill Lind & Jeff Record**

# APPENDIX: BOYD'S OODA LOOP CYCLING CHART:

JOHN BOYD: O-O-D-A LOOP  
(40 SECONDS - \$40.00)

PROF. TONY PISCITELLI – GBAT – SUNY MARITIME



1. INTERACTING LOOPS. 2. IN CONTINUOUS OPERATION DURING COMBAT (OR EVENT). 3. PHASE OF BATTLE (OR EVENT) HAS IMPORTANT BEARING ON THE IDEAL ALLOCATION OF ONES ENERGIES, 4. THE FASTER THE TEMPO WE HAVE GETS US INTO THE OPPONENTS O-O-D-A; WHERE WE CAN DO MORE DAMAGE, ADD CONFUSION AND DISRUPTION FOR THE OPPONENT; 5. CONFUSE THE OPPONENT WHILE WE CAN GET CLEAR ON WHAT IS TO BE DONE; 6. WE CAN CHANGE SPEED AND DIRECTION FASTER THAN THE OPPONENT IN THE O-O-D-A, 7. O-O-D-A ENABLES US TO THINK AND ACT FASTER THAN THE OPPONENT CAN THINK AND ACT – WE GET INSIDE AND SHORT CURCUIT HIS O-O-D-A; 8. THIS IS A RECURRING RAPID CYCLE OF EVENTS, OBSERVATIONS AND DECIDED ACTIONS; 9. IF YOU PROCESS THIS CYCLE QUICKLY OBSERVING& REACTING TO UNFOLDING EVENTS MORE RAPIDLY THAN YOUR OPPONENT YOU GET INSIDE HIS O-O-D-A, AND, YOU GAIN THE ADVANTAGE; THEREFORE YOU WIN.

## **APPENDIX: Comparison of a Five Paragraph Orders and Mission Type Orders**

### **Five Paragraph Order:**

#### 1. Situation:

- a. Enemy Forces
- b. Friendly Forces
- c. Attachments/Detachments
- d. Commanders Evaluation (Optional).

2. Mission: A statement of the issuing unit's mission, emphasizing seizure of terrain objectives.

#### 3. Execution:

- a. Concept of operations. Summary of scheme of maneuver and fire support plan.
- b. Subordinate missions. (Usually given in terms of terrain).
- c. Coordinating instructions.

#### 4. Service support.

#### 5. Command and Signal

- a. Signal Instructions
- b. Command Post, location of commander.

### **Mission Type Order:**

#### 1. Situation:

- a. Enemy Forces
- b. Friendly Forces
- c. Attachments/Detachments

*d. Commanders Intent: (Required) a clear statement of the next higher commander's operational intent*

*2. Mission: A clear statement of the operational intent of the issuing Commander, orienting on the enemy situation.*

*3. Execution:*

*a. Concept of operations. (Designation of focus of main effort [Schwerpunkt], initial axis of advance, and any limiting restrictions).*

*b. Subordinate missions. (Given in terms of operational scheme, rather than terrain).*

c. Coordinating instructions.

4. Service support.

5. Command and Signal

a. Signal instructions

b. Command posts, location of commander.

## **APPENDIX: General questions asked of interviewees**

### I. Primary questions asked of all interviewees.

Dear Interviewee,

I have taken the liberty of sending some question to you before our interview. This is not an assignment but rather a frame of reference as to where I am going with my work.

Thank you again.....Tony Piscitelli

Questions Maneuver Warfare:

1. Is the Marine Corps today the Corps that you enlisted in it? What position did you take to facilitate both a personal change as well as a "corporate" or military change re maneuver warfare for our Corps?
2. What were your initial thoughts or concerns about moving in the direction to maneuver warfare re the Marine Corps?
3. How did you personally become involved in this evolution into maneuver warfare?
4. We're you exposed to Col. John Boyd.....your reactions? Bill Lind? Martin von Creveld?
5. How have you used Boyd's OODA Loop in the USMC development of maneuver warfare, in the battle space?
5. Do you feel that the Corps has developed its' own version of maneuver warfare? Please focus on your own experiences.
6. What were the major changes that you had to work through as the Corps adopted (or adapted) its own version of maneuver warfare?
7. What were your personal battle space experiences in the use of maneuver warfare?
8. How have the tenants of maneuver warfare helped in winning in Iraq and Afghanistan?  
How did it provide for the Marines at the tip of the spear?

9. In the following works from the Commandant's Reading List (First to Fight Krulak; Brute Coram; Chesty Hoffman) there are many, many references as to how the Corps successfully operated before the institutionalization of maneuver warfare .... Not taking anything away from Gen Gray's initiatives, did the DNA of the Marine Corps have the intellectual and practical genetic mapping to set the stage for the maneuver warfare reforms?
10. Can you share any particular examples of USMC maneuver warfare that either promotes or possibly detracts from its incorporation in to USMC strategy and tactics?
11. Are you familiar with the term 4<sup>th</sup> Generation Warfare as developed by Col Hammes in his book Sling and the Stone – your thoughts on this concept vs. USMC participation in the “small wars” and on into today “low intensity wars... or Long Wars”?
12. Gulf War I was the real first test of the USMC and it application of maneuver warfare: how were you affected by the use of maneuver warfare as it was applied by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> MarDiv's?
13. Why did Al Gray want to replace Gen. Boomer and what were your feelings at this time re this request to Schwarzkopf?
14. When the 1<sup>st</sup> MarDiv's command post was deep into the Republican Guard's position during Desert Storm ... Was this maneuver warfare running away?
15. How would you categorize maneuver warfare as it is applied by the Corps during your time and on into today?
16. How does maneuver warfare compliment the Corps: “First to Fight” or “Force in Readiness” objectives?
17. What kind of leadership did Gen. Gray exhibit and why?
18. What were the influences that were exerted on Gen. Gray that helped shape this leadership model?
19. What was Gen. Gray's intent when he assumed command of the USMC?
20. Why did Gen. Gray move in the direction of operational decision making and maneuver warfare. And, how did he adopt it to the strengths and weaknesses of the USMC?

21. What external events did Gen Gray use to determine what the future USMC would become?
22. What was his leadership experiences as well as those who were around him (pro and con)?
23. Who had Gen. Gray chosen as his leadership team? And have they continued beyond the tenure of Gen. Gray to implement his evolution of the USMC?
24. What was Gen. Gray's personal experience that motivated him to lead this transformation of the USMC?
25. What were the actual changes required to accomplish this transformation?
26. What were the operational tools required to effect this transformation?
27. Why was Gen. Gray able to make these changes; that effected this internal evolutionary transformation of the USMC?

## II. Additional Questions directly for Gen. Gray and Col. Mike Wyly:

- A. On the surface, the USMC looks, sounds and acts similar to all other periods of its development and national history. Every Marine has taken the same oath to defend the country and the Constitution, yet there has been an evident transformational evolution of The Corps on and off the battlefield. How did this come about?
- B. What was the motivation behind this change?
- C. What were the actual events that sparked this change for The Corps? And why did they occur?
- D. What was necessary in the Corps for these changes to be accomplished?
- E. How were the changes identified and implemented? And, by who?
- F. What were the reactions from all echelons' within the Corps regarding these changes?

G. Who were the implementers of this change? And how were they brought into the “inner circle”?

H. Who were the opposition and why did they oppose the RMA?

I. What are the innovations that you put into USMC Doctrine that further puts the Corps on a different level than the rest of the other branches of the US military?

J. When, why and how did you realize the Corps needed to transform?

K. What keeps the Corps moving in the direction that you set it on?

L. Is there room for further transformation for the Corps? Are there still items in your estimation that did not get accomplished during your tenure that are vital for the future of the Corps?

M. What are the legacy institutions that you created with this transformation, and how do they continue to keep the Corps on the cutting edge of Doctrine, Strategy and Tactics readiness?

N. Is there still resistance within the Corps regarding this transformation?

O. From your entry into the USMC – what actually changed under your leadership?

P. Why did you and your cadre feel there was a need for the transformation?

Q. How did this cadre come together to effect the changes of your plan for the Corps?

R. Have the other services emulated your ideas at the levels of doctrine, strategy and tactics?

S. Would there effectiveness of today in Iraq and Afghanistan be realized without these transformational modifications?

T. What is your legacy in respect to the Corps, the military in general and the nation as a whole?

U. Why were these particular aspect chosen over other changes that could have been implemented?

V. Having been in the Corps since the Korean War what were the factors that lead you to think about transformation and in particular the changes you implemented. And have they worked out to your expectations?

W. What was the resistance, or if you will the internal friction in implementing the transformation?

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**1. Interviews granted to the author:** This dissertation relied to a large extent on primary source information from those sources listed below and from the partial bibliography that follows. Some interviews lasted minutes, some hours. Some of the interviews were onetime events and some were multiple time events. Interviews took place on the phone, by email and face to face. Documents from their private files were also used as primary source materials in some instances. The following were interviewed either in person, by telephone or via email:

General James Conway USMC 34<sup>th</sup> CMC, ret.: In person interviews, 10-11 July 2013,

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Russ Cox USMC: Interviewed by email, 10 March, 2014,

Colonel Patrick Garvey USMCR ret.: In person interview, 28 April, 2011, 13 May 2011; some documents cited were also provided by this interviewee,

General Alfred M. Gray USMC 29<sup>th</sup> CMC, ret.: In person interviews, 24-25 May 2011; some documents cited were also provided by this interviewee,

Captain Bruce Gudmundsson USMC, ret.: Interviewed by phone 28 Feb. 2014 and email, 16 March 2014,

General Jim Jones USMC 32<sup>nd</sup> CMC, ret.: In person, 8 Sept 2011,

General John Kelly USMC CG Southern Command: In person interview, 26 January 2014,

Lieutenant General Bill Keys USMC, ret.: Interviewed by phone 23 January 2014,

General Charles Krulak, USMC 31st CMC, ret.: By emails; 28 September 2012, 10 October 2012, 22 November 2012 and 25 November 2012,

Mr. William S. "Bill" Lind: In person interviews. 7-8-9 February 2012, some documents cited were also provided by this interviewee,

General Robert Magnus, USMC ACMC ret.: By phone 11 September 2011,

General James Mattis USMC ret.: Interview by email 26 November 2013; by phone 20 February 2014 and 19 April 2014,

Major General Mike Myatt USMC, ret.: In person interview, 17-18 September 2013; By Email 20 November 2013,

Mr. Damien O'Connor: In person interview 5 January 2014; and emails 28 February 2014, 5 March. 2014,

Captain John Schmidt, USMC ret.: Interviewed by email, 16 November 2013.

Captain John Schmitt, USMC ret.: Interviewed by emails, 13 November 2013,

Major General Ray Smith USMC ret.: By phone and email, 27 December 2013],

Colonel Greg Thiele USMC: Interviewed by emails , 11 October 2013 and 15 December 2013,

Lieutenant General Bernard “Mick” Trainor USMC, ret.: Interviewed by phone 9 September 2012 and email 14 September 2012, 10 October 2012,

Colonel G I Wilson USMCR ret.: Interviewed in person 18-19 September 2013; and by emails 29 October 2013, 11-13-28 November 2013, 1-15-8-27 December 2013, 1-7-15-17-25 January 2014, 14-27 February 2014, 1-4 April 2014; some documents cited were also provided by this interviewee,

Colonel Bill Woods USMC ret.: In person interview 8 February 2014; and emails 25 January 2014 and 25 March 2014,

Colonel Mike Wyly USMC ret.: In in person interview 21-22 August, 2012; Interview by phone 19 February 2014; and emails 19 January 2014, 30 January, 14 February 2014, 7-15-31 March 2014, 1-4 April 2014.

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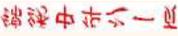
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