

Corbett, Liddell Hart and the 'British Way in Warfare' in the 1960s

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The notion that there is, or at least was, a peculiarly 'British way in warfare', based around the use of maritime forces and the avoidance of major military commitments on the continent of Europe, has been the cause of one of the more enduring debates within the history of British defence policy. The debate has been a lively one that, in many respects, has revealed as much about the predilections of the various commentators as it has shed light on the past. Critics on both sides of the argument have not been averse to using and abusing the historical record for their own purposes. One of the reasons for this is that the debate is not just of academic interest. Arguments over the 'British way in warfare' have often been marshalled in support of a particular national strategy and, by extension, in favour of devoting greater or lesser resources to different military capabilities. To cut a complex story rather short, if one believes in the 'British way' then this suggests a focus on maritime capabilities whereas if one believes the alternative view, in the necessity and efficacy of a major military commitment to Europe, then the army and associated tactical air forces deserve a greater share. Such debates, always lively, take on a particular significance when resources are scarce and governments need to make hard decisions over priorities.

Hew Strachan wrote about these issues in the aftermath of the contentious 1981 defence review, discussions about which were often articulated in the terms of a 'traditional' British maritime strategy versus a continental commitment. He noted the manner in which historical writings underlay contemporary debates and also how modern arguments were reflected back when interpreting the past. Strachan identified the rather polemical nature of much of the commentary, including that by some of the most respected military historians of the time.¹ In this context it is worth remembering Sir Michael Howard's warning that history does not teach lessons, historians do, and that the agenda of historians is set by current controversies, whether

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they wish it or not. His suggestion that historians 'are as prone as anyone else unconsciously to formulate conclusions on the basis of temperament, prejudice and habit and then collect the evidence to justify them' is certainly borne out by an examination of many of the contributions to this debate, including, perhaps, his own.²

In many respects the terms within which this debate has been articulated have their origins with the work of Sir Julian Corbett. In contrast to Rear Admiral Alfred T. Mahan, who tended to emphasise the activity of navies at sea and whose main works pay relatively little attention to joint operations, Corbett viewed naval operations in a wider context of a maritime strategy combining all elements of national power. He viewed joint military and naval operations as the normal expression of the British method of waging war. Corbett believed that Britain, with its security assured through command of the sea, had historically been able to achieve success in war through the exploitation of a combination of blockade, economic support to allies, the seizure of its enemy's overseas territory and the application of limited military power at some point, or points, away from the main enemy force. Britain could thereby exploit maritime power to gain the maximum benefit from limited military resources at a fraction of the cost of a major campaign on the continent. Corbett recognised that the Navy could not achieve this alone. His belief in the requirement for a joint approach to national strategy is reflected in his most famous work, published in 1911, in which he made it clear that:

Since men live upon the land and not upon the sea, great issues between nations at war have always been decided – except in the rarest cases – either by what your army can do against your enemy's territory and national life, or else by fear of what the fleet makes it possible for your army to do.³

Corbett's ideas have been criticised, particularly for the faith that he appears to place in the ability of a maritime strategy to allow Britain to make unlimited gains at limited cost in unlimited wars.⁴ Perhaps the most obvious criticism of the approach is that it required Britain to find a continental ally willing to shoulder the main burden of a war while the British remained detached. The historical record suggests that when such allies were not available, as in 1805 or 1940, Britain's strategic position was extremely perilous. Nevertheless, Corbett's historical method was rigorous and professional and he articulated his ideas in a measured fashion. The main thrust of his work, as has been noted already, was to suggest that maritime and land forces needed to act in concert and that Britain's traditional maritime strategy was not an alternative to, but rather an extension of, continental strategies.

Basil Liddell Hart was less measured in his approach. Liddell Hart picked up and developed Corbett's ideas and those of other contemporary maritime strategists such as Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond. He articulated the value of the British way in warfare in a strident manner, most famously in a 1932 publication with that title.⁵ To Liddell Hart the mobility and surprise provided by maritime power could be used in support of an indirect strategy whereby continental opponents could be blockaded, their trade could be destroyed, their colonies conquered and their coastline harassed by raids and diversions without a major commitment of British manpower to the main theatre of operations. He was highly critical of British policy during World War I for slavishly following continental practices and deploying millions of men to fight in the mud of Flanders from whence all too many did not return. Michael Howard has described his analysis as nothing more than 'a piece of brilliant political pamphleteering, sharply argued, selectively illustrated, and concerned rather to influence British public opinion and government policy than to illuminate the complexities of the past in a serious or scholarly way'.⁶ In this Liddell Hart had some success in the interwar period, although Britain still deployed its expeditionary force to France in 1939 and planned to fight once more alongside its major continental ally, until those plans were shattered, along with the French Army, in the German offensive of 1940.

The 'British Way' Abandoned?

One can portray the remainder of Britain's war within the terms of the 'British Way', as did Captain Stephen Roskill in the official history of the Royal Navy in that war.⁷ However, post-war British planners quickly came to realise that a major military commitment to Europe was vital if Europe, with American assistance, was to build a credible counter to the Soviet Union and its allies. British participation in the treaties of Dunkirk (1947) and Brussels (1948) helped to lay the basis for the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1949 by demonstrating to the United States that Europe was willing to contribute to its own defence. Participation in NATO did not imply a specific formal commitment of British troops to Europe. This commitment came with the Paris agreement of October 1954 where Britain agreed to maintain four divisions and a tactical air force to Europe until 1994. This was the first time in 250 years that the British had accepted a commitment to maintain a major military force in Europe in peacetime. As David French notes, it is somewhat ironic that the actual force level had more to do with reassuring one ally, France, about the rearmament of another, West Germany, than with the actual military

threat from the Soviet Union.⁸ Equally ironic was the fact that, just as Britain accepted this commitment, British defence planners were beginning to recognise that there was little real prospect of fighting a conventional war in Europe.

From the time of the 1952 Global Strategy Paper, the British Chiefs of Staff had begun to emphasise the importance of nuclear weapons in deterring a Soviet attack and in reducing the chances of sustained conventional combat in Europe. By 1955, less than a year after the Paris agreement, the Chiefs were arguing that a major war was unlikely to break out and that, if it did, it would be characterised by an early and intense nuclear exchange. At the same time, however, Britain needed to be able to maintain its position in the Cold War and to meet limited aggression beyond Europe.⁹ In such circumstances the main priority was to maintain the nuclear deterrent, after that priority should be given to dealing with commitments and contingencies beyond Europe and the lowest priority could be given to forces designed actually to fight a major war against the Soviets.

A focus on continental priorities, allied to the perilous condition of the post-war British economy, had meant that relatively little priority was given to the type of mobile and flexible military forces that might be useful in meeting unforeseen contingencies overseas. The inability of the military to provide useable options within an appropriate timescale doomed plans to use force in response to the Abadan crisis in 1951 and doomed the actual use of force during the Suez crisis five years later.¹⁰ The debacle at Suez reinforced an impetus that already existed to change the emphasis within defence policy and this was manifest in the 1957 Defence Review that declared an end to reliance on large static conventional forces, ending conscription and announcing a reduction in the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) from 77,000 to 64,000 troops. Nuclear weapons were to deter war in Europe and improvements in strategic mobility would be used to meet limited contingencies further afield.¹¹

The Royal Navy had anticipated such changes and, even prior to the Suez crisis, it had drawn up a new concept for the future navy that envisaged a reduction in the emphasis on major war contingencies in Europe and a refocus on limited war tasks. At the heart of this was a new concept for a task group, based at Singapore, built around an aircraft carrier, a helicopter-equipped commando carrier capable of landing and supporting a Royal Marine Commando unit, a cruiser and four destroyers.¹² This emphasis on flexible limited war contingencies was codified in the famous 'autumn naval rethink' of 1958 and remained at the heart of naval policy and national strategy for the next ten years.¹³

Maritime power projection capabilities had been rather neglected in the post-war decade. The Navy's impressive wartime fleet of six fleet carriers, six small light fleet carriers and 40 escort carriers with 1,336 front-line aircraft was quickly reduced and ambitious plans to construct large 46,900-ton vessels were abandoned.¹⁴ Manpower shortages and the problems of operating a new generation of aircraft from older, unmodified carriers meant that the Royal Navy's operational carrier force in the late 1940s usually consisted of a small number of widely dispersed light fleet carriers carrying a limited number of low performance aircraft.¹⁵ The Navy's carriers retained a potential for power projection that was demonstrated in operations during the Korean War and later during the Suez crisis but it would take a shift in priorities for this to be their main rationale rather than air defence and anti-submarine warfare.

The Navy did seek to maintain and update its aircraft carriers, with mixed success. It proved far less concerned about maintaining amphibious capabilities. In World War II the British had played the leading part in developing the ships, craft, doctrine and techniques that made possible the successful landings in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and France from 1942 to 1944. By 1945 the British possessed an enormous amphibious fleet and Combined Operations, the organisation with responsibility for amphibious warfare, had grown into something akin to a fourth service with a major headquarters in Whitehall, a large training organisation and representation for the Chief of Combined Operations on the Chiefs of Staff Committee. A jealous Admiralty had wrested back control of the landing craft from Combined Operations Headquarters in 1943. One can understand their reasons for doing so. By 1944 there were over 60,000 officers and men of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines employed in manning landing ships and craft.¹⁶ By the time of the formal Japanese surrender Britain possessed an amphibious armada that consisted of more than 5,000 ships, craft and landing barges.¹⁷

Official policy was that all three services would retain their expertise in amphibious warfare. This called for the retention of the Combined Operations organisation and for a massive training establishment supported by a large amphibious fleet that could be used both for training and as a nucleus upon which to expand in wartime. Unfortunately, post-war stringency, allied to an overall lack of priority, particularly from a navy anxious to avoid diverting resources to something that was seen as a low priority, meant that these plans went unfulfilled. Initial plans for a peacetime lift sufficient for a division were pared down to brigade group lift, then a battalion group lift although such debates were somewhat academic as very few amphibious ships were actually maintained in service. It was 1951

before an Amphibious Warfare Squadron could be created, based in the Mediterranean. It was designed to cater for battalion lift but was frequently below strength. Equipped with ships of World War II vintage it provided a rather old-fashioned type of capability, slow, relatively short-legged and somewhat constrained in its beaching characteristics. Behind this small force was a large number of ships held in reserve ready to be mobilised if need be, given sufficient time to reactivate them. That this was not a quick reaction force was demonstrated by the long lead time before the military were in a position to respond to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in July 1956.

One of the reasons for the low priority accorded to amphibious forces was that it was recognised that, while major amphibious operations might become necessary in the later stages of any future conflict, they would not be possible in the early stage of any war. As such, one needed to develop new doctrine and prototype equipment, but it was not necessary to maintain a large operational force in peacetime. The requirement was limited to the minimum required for training and development and also a capability to conduct small-scale amphibious raids akin to the commando raids undertaken during World War II.¹⁸ The latter, at least, might provide a useful way of striking against an enemy occupied coastline. Post-war policy was based upon the conclusions of the 1944 Bottomley Committee (also known as the RAW Committee). That committee focused on maintaining the skills required to conduct large-scale operations on the model of the European landings of 1943–44 and explicitly ruled out the requirement to maintain specialist amphibious forces in peacetime in order to meet unforeseen contingencies overseas.¹⁹ A limited amount of training and development was possible but, overall, capabilities atrophied. Even the Royal Marines, who retained a commando raiding role, were able to devote relatively little time to amphibious warfare.

The 'British Way' Redefined?

In his post-war work Liddell Hart retained his faith in the mobility and flexibility provided by British sea power. In 1960, in his book *Deterrent or Defence*, he argued that in World War II the diversionary effect of allied amphibious forces meant that the Germans were never able to mass their full strength against the Soviets and that this played a key part in eventual Allied success.²⁰ He stressed that the threat posed was often of greater import than the actual effect that could be created by the small forces available before American strength had been mobilised but, as the Germans could not know where this small force might be employed, they were

driven to disperse significant forces over a very wide area. Liddell Hart was basically restating the argument in favour of the British way, arguing that:

It was through sea power and its 'companion' – the power to carry by sea a force that can be thrown ashore wherever desired or needed – that for centuries Britain helped her friends on the Continent to resist aggression, and averted its domination by any single nation or tyrant. The same coupled power also enabled this small island country of very limited strength to maintain a world-wide network of colonies and protectorates. In the Second World War this coupled power, immensely reinforced when the United States came into the war alongside Britain, was basically the decisive factor in liberating Europe from Hitler's tyranny, as well as in liberating the Far East from Japan's. For air power then had not the range to exert its effect until bases were gained within close enough reach of the enemy for it to operate effectively, while Russia's land power was not enough by itself to overthrow him.²¹

Most of Liddell Hart's work provides an excellent example of how contemporary debates impact upon historical analysis and he is far from alone in the world of strategic analysis for allowing the former to dominate the latter. However, by 1960 the terms within which the debate was being held had changed and Liddell Hart recognised this. Nuclear stalemate in Europe made a major continental war unlikely at the same time that Cold War rivalry increased the possibility of limited conflicts overseas. He argued that 'sea power and its amphibious companion' provided the most effective deterrent of and counter to limited aggression beyond Europe, preferable to airborne options due to its superior reach, reduced dependence on overseas bases and over-flight agreements and both the cost and tactical vulnerability of the air option. His argument directly supported the Navy in its new-found enthusiasm for amphibious sea power. Indeed, his conclusion, given below, could have been lifted straight from an Admiralty policy paper of the period:

An amphibious force of modern type, operating from the sea and equipped with helicopters, is free from dependence on airfields, beaches, ports, land-bases, with all their logistical and political complications. The use of an airborne force, or of any land-based force, is a more irrevocable step, since its commitment is more definite and its withdrawal more difficult. A self-contained and sea-based amphibious force, of which the US Marine Corps is the prototype, is the best kind of fire-extinguisher because of the flexibility, reliability, simplicity, and relative economy.²²

Liddell Hart's emphasis on the US Marine Corps was indicative of his penchant for specialist and elite forces. He reflected on the rather equivocal record of success that the British had enjoyed in amphibious operations in the twentieth century thus far and compared it unfavourably, some might say unfairly, with that of the Americans in the Pacific campaign of 1941–45. His conclusion was that the difference could be explained by the fact that the British had not had a dedicated elite force devoted to amphibious operations, whereas the Americans had in the form of the US Marine Corps. His argument did not reflect on the various complex reasons why the Royal Marines had never filled a role analogous to the US Marines, and this was hardly uncharacteristic of his approach to history.

Liddell Hart was not the only advocate of the British way to support the Navy's new emphasis on expeditionary operations. Stephen Roskill articulated a case in support of amphibious task groups supported by aircraft carriers and a balanced naval force in *The Strategy of Sea Power*, published in 1962, that was clearly based on contemporary Admiralty plans.²³ By this time the Navy had already converted two redundant light fleet carriers into helicopter-equipped 'commando carriers' and was pursuing a construction programme that would, within the next five years, see the obsolescent ships of the Amphibious Warfare Squadron replaced by two new assault ships, HMS *Fearless* and *Intrepid*, and by six new Logistic Landing Ships. The previous year the Admiralty had put forward a plan to deploy military power east of Suez from a Joint Services Seaborne Force with two amphibious groups, each built around two commando carriers and two assault ships and capable of landing and supporting in operations a balanced brigade group. Each group would have two aircraft carriers attached, providing a powerful air defence and strike capability, plus associated escort and support vessels. Once the requirement to cater for rotation and replacement vessels was accounted for this 'double stance', as it was known, would have required four commando carriers and four assault ships, double what was eventually deployed, and six aircraft carriers, albeit only with four air groups.²⁴

Unsurprisingly the key Chiefs of Staff study, *British Strategy in the Sixties*, ruled out the 'Double Stance' on the grounds of cost but did approve the concept of a single Amphibious Group requiring the deployment of all four major amphibious ships east of Suez. Aircraft carrier strength was limited to one, and later two such vessels maintained in commission in theatre.²⁵

The 1962 Defence White Paper articulated the logic behind the Navy's position, arguing that: 'We must insure against the loss of fixed installations overseas by keeping men and heavy equipment afloat, and by increasing the air and sea portability of the Strategic Reserve.'²⁶ As Britain withdrew from

empire it progressively relinquished most of the static bases and garrisons that had previously been the cornerstone of its presence beyond Europe. Political limitations on the use of such bases as remained, apparent during the Suez crisis and subsequently, allied to limitations on the over-flight of other states' territory by military aircraft, made the mobility and flexibility provided by maritime forces particularly valuable. Maritime forces could provide access to trouble spots without the need to negotiate basing or over-flight. They could do so unobtrusively and with as much or as little fanfare as desired. In many respects maritime forces could exploit precisely those characteristics of mobility and flexibility that had enabled the British way in warfare, as articulated by Corbett in reference to major conflict, to offer valuable military and political solutions in minor conflicts.

The Admiralty's approach to projecting British power overseas was built around amphibious forces and aircraft carriers but the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Caspar John, was at pains to emphasise its joint credentials. He stressed that the Navy was not trying to 'go it alone'.²⁷ Indeed, the Navy was so keen to involve the Army in this amphibious strategy that it agreed to limit the number of active Royal Marine Commando units so as not to alienate the War Office, somewhat to the chagrin of the Commandant General, Royal Marines.²⁸ The Navy was also willing to recognise that its approach did not rule out a requirement for land-based aviation, both in a transport and a strike role.

Just as Corbett saw maritime strategy within the context of a wider national strategy complementing any continental endeavours, the Navy in the 1960s saw its approach as complementing that of the other services. The Army would continue to provide ground forces whose impact would be dramatically enhanced by the mobility and support that could be provided by maritime forces. The Royal Air Force (RAF) would continue to provide both strategic and tactical air movements and to offer strike and air defence options when within range of the reduced number of bases that could be expected to be available in future. Maritime, land and air forces would act in concert. In operational terms this was a key strength of the approach.

In political terms it proved to be a fatal weakness. It was expensive, particularly as the Navy now sought to gain approval for a new generation of aircraft carriers. The RAF showed fewer scruples in advancing a rather less joint vision, based around the application of long range airpower using aircraft that had not yet been purchased from bases that did not yet exist. There was no place for aircraft carriers in their approach. The RAF lost the argument and in 1963 the Navy gained Cabinet approval for construction of CVA-01, the first of what they hoped would be two new large aircraft carriers.²⁹ Land-based aviation simply could not provide the kind of robust,

balanced intervention capability provided by the Joint Services Seaborne Force.

The renewed emphasis that was being placed on joint operations and expeditionary forces caused the development of a new concept of operations described as the seaborne/airborne/land concept or, more frequently, simply as the seaborne/airborne concept. This was developed by Amphibious Warfare Headquarters (AWHQ)³⁰ and the Joint Services Amphibious Warfare Centre at Poole, Dorset, in consultation with the School of Land/Air Warfare at Old Sarum, Wiltshire, and was based on the idea that the air and maritime aspects of expeditionary operations needed to be considered together. Unsurprisingly the concept was overtly joint, emphasising that the only way to maintain an adequate balance and level of force was for air-transported and amphibious forces to operate as part of an integrated team. The concept was designed to cater for rapid intervention by mobile forces in a highly politicised environment and with a reduced reliance on fixed bases. It recognised that a small balanced force that could be made available quickly was of more use than larger forces that were difficult to deploy within an acceptable timescale. For military force to be useful it had to be useable.³¹

The new concept was matched by institutional change. AWHQ and the Land/Air Warfare Committee were replaced by a new Joint Warfare Committee, supported by a Joint Warfare Staff, and a Joint Warfare Establishment was formed to replace the separate Joint Services Amphibious Warfare Centre and the School of Land/Air Warfare.³²

In 1962 the Joint Warfare Staff explained the rationale for the seaborne/airborne concept in the following way:

In the present concept of limited war our forces must be ready to counter sudden enemy intervention in a country that is neutral or friendly to us. The enemy will have the initiative and will be able to strike at the time and place he chooses. Even if his moves can be foreseen, our forces may not be able to land before his active intervention, for political reasons. The requirement is for a force that can act quickly and is ready to fight immediately in an area that may be far from its base; and that has the fighting power and mobility to take offensive action and get quick results to prevent the war from extending or from escalating to global war.

The concept envisaged 'amphibious and air transported troops landing at short notice and operating as a single team, each providing the forces best suited to its means'.³³ The principles outlined in the concept were incorporated into a new, multi-volume *Manual of Joint Warfare*, the first edition of

which was issued in February 1964. The Manual covered all aspects of joint operations in non-nuclear warfare beyond Europe and was replaced by a second and third edition in 1967 and 1970. By 1970 the Manual no longer focused on non-European contingencies, instead it included all aspects of joint warfare.³⁴ In this respect it reflected the shift within British defence policy towards a refocus on European contingencies and on the continental commitment.

That refocus on Europe was a result of two main factors. Under its new concept of Flexible Response NATO had begun to re-emphasise the requirement to bolster conventional forces on the continent in order to provide more flexible options in the event of a war against the Soviet Union. At the same time Britain's Labour Government faced a pressing need to control defence expenditure and, from 1966, began a reduction in Britain's ambitions and forces beyond the NATO region. Thus, CVA-01 was cancelled in 1966, not so much because of the strength of the alternative RAF case as due to the fact that British requirements had changed. Britain would no longer need the kind of robust intervention capability that the Joint Services Seaborne Force had sought to offer. In a series of defence reviews between 1966 and 1975 the British progressively reduced the scale and scope of their forces and commitments beyond Europe until, by 1975, they maintained only minimal forces outside the NATO area. That logic was carried further by the 1981 Defence Review that sought to reduce further those remaining elements of national (principally naval) power that did not focus on the major threat, that of war in continental Europe. It seemed that even in its new form the British way in warfare had fallen victim, once again, to the continental commitment.

The Return of the 'British Way'?

The Royal Navy was never entirely reconciled to a role that focused exclusively on protecting the Atlantic sea routes and it was assisted in its maintenance of balanced capabilities by the experience of the 1982 Falklands conflict, where the remnants of the expeditionary force of the 1960s proved vital to British success. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s and the subsequent accession of many former Soviet allies into NATO removed the threat of major war on the continent in the short and medium term. The military rationale for BAOR, in so far as it had ever really existed, was now gone. As the 2003 European Union Security Strategy statement made clear, 'Large scale aggression against any member states is now improbable'.³⁵ Whatever the political, administrative or financial advantages

of basing forces in Europe may be, the military case for a British 'continental commitment' has disappeared, at least for the time being.

Of course, this does not bring an end to the debate. The relative balance that should be maintained between maritime, air and land capabilities and the degree to which these should be land or sea based, deployed home or away, will continue to generate dispute and controversy. It is even possible that such debates promote a creative dialogue that supports efficient defence decision-making, although the history of defence policy since 1945 would seem to suggest the opposite.

The Royal Navy in the twenty-first century has chosen to articulate its case in a fashion that bears a close similarity to that of the 1960s. The policy-makers of the late 1950s and early 1960s would recognise much that has been written in support of the current 'Future Navy' once they had learned to decipher contemporary doctrinal jargon and to strip away some of the outrages that contemporary doctrine writers perpetrate against the English language.³⁶ Indeed, if one compares the basic rationale behind the seaborne/airborne concept and the solutions that it sought to provide one can find many similarities with the Navy's contemporary notion of Littoral Manoeuvre.³⁷ This, of course, is not surprising. Both are based on the opportunities presented by the flexibility and manoeuvrability of maritime forces. They are based on enduring features of maritime power and strategy that were articulated so ably by Corbett one hundred years ago. In this sense the 'British Way in Warfare' is still alive, it is just that in the twenty-first century it relates to the ability of maritime forces to contribute to a joint strategy to enable flexible military operations beyond Europe. I suspect that both Corbett and Liddell Hart would approve.

NOTES

- 1 Hew Strachan, 'The British Way in Warfare Revisited', *The Historical Journal* 26/2 (June 1983) pp.447–61.
- 2 Michael Howard, *The Lessons of History* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP 1991), p.2. For Howard's views on the 'British Way in Warfare' see Michael Howard, *The Continental Commitment* (Harmondsworth, UK: Pelican 1974) and Michael Howard, 'The British Way in Warfare: A Reappraisal' in idem, *The Causes of Wars* (London: Unwin 1984) pp.189–207.
- 3 Julian Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (London: Longmans 1911) p.14.
- 4 For example, see Howard, 'The British Way in Warfare' (note 3) p.194.
- 5 B.H. Liddell Hart, *The British Way in Warfare* (London: Faber 1932).
- 6 Howard, 'The British Way in Warfare' (note 3) p.192.
- 7 Stephen Roskill, *The War at Sea 1939–1945, Vol. 1 Part 1* (London: HMSO 1961) p.1.
- 8 David French, *The British Way in Warfare 1688–2000* (London: Unwin Hyman 1990) p.215.
- 9 The UK National Archives (henceforth TNA): DEFE 5/59, COS (55) 176, 25 July 1955.
- 10 See Ian Speller, 'A Splutter of Musketry: The British Military Response to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Dispute, 1951', *Journal of Contemporary British History* 17/1 (Spring 2003)

- pp.39–66 and Ian Speller, *The Role of Amphibious Warfare in British Defence Policy, 1945–1956* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan 2003) Chapter 7.
- 11 *Defence: Outline of Future Policy*, Cmnd. 124 (London: HMSO 1957).
 - 12 TNA: DEFE 5/70, COS (56) 280, *The Future Role of the Navy*, 20 July 1956.
 - 13 For a more detailed discussion of this see Ian Speller, 'The Royal Navy, Expeditionary Operations and the End of Empire, 1956–1975' in Greg Kennedy (ed.), *Britain's Maritime Strategy East of Suez, 1900–2000* (London: Frank Cass 2004).
 - 14 A.C. Hampshire, *The Royal Navy Since 1945* (London: Kimber 1975) p.1.
 - 15 Eric Grove, *Vanguard to Trident: British Naval Policy Since World War II* (London: Bodley Head 1987) p.37. The Navy usually had three or four operational carriers. These were often small *Colossus*- class light fleet carriers.
 - 16 For further details see Speller, *Role of Amphibious Warfare* (note 10) *passim*.
 - 17 TNA: ADM 210/17, Admiralty *Green List* for 3 Sept. 1945.
 - 18 The British retained an active interest in raiding after 1945, reflected in a continued activity to develop doctrine and equipment. For example, see TNA: DEFE 5/2, COS (47) 93, The inter-service organisation for raiding operations and the liaison between raiding units and special operations, 7 Aug. 1947 and TNA: DEFE 2/1771, *Amphibious Warfare Handbook No.10b. Amphibious Raids* (1951).
 - 19 TNA: CAB 80/44, COS (44) 166, *Report by Committee on Inter-Service Responsibility for Amphibious Warfare*, 29 June 1944.
 - 20 B.H. Liddell Hart, *Deterrent or Defence: A Fresh Look at the West's Military Position* (London: Stevens 1960) Chapter 11 also published as B.H. Liddell Hart, 'The Value of Amphibious Flexibility', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* 105 (Nov. 1960) pp.483–92.
 - 21 Liddell Hart, 'The Value of Amphibious Flexibility' (note 20) pp.490–1.
 - 22 *Ibid.* p.492.
 - 23 S.W. Roskill, *The Strategy of Sea Power* (London: Collins 1962).
 - 24 TNA: ADM 205/192, Presentation of alternative Long Term Naval Programme, 17 May 1961.
 - 25 TNA: DEFE 7/2235, COS (61) 499, digest of report of COS (62) 1, 20 Dec. 1961; TNA: CAB 131/27, D (61) 1st meeting, 12 Jan. 1961.
 - 26 *Statement on Defence 1962: The Next Five Years*, Cmnd. 1639 (London: HMSO 1962).
 - 27 ADM 205/192.
 - 28 See TNA:ADM 205/185 and ADM 205/191 and DEFE 5/150, The Royal Marines and the Requirement for Royal Marine Commandos, COS 133/64, 15 April 1964.
 - 29 TNA: CAN 128/37, CC (63) 50th Conclusions of Cabinet meeting on 30 July 1963.
 - 30 Combined Operations Headquarters changed nomenclature to Amphibious Warfare Headquarters in 1951.
 - 31 TNA: DEFE 5/114, COS (61) 180, Seaborne/Airborne/Land Concept, 8 June 1961.
 - 32 TNA: DEFE 5/123, COS (62) 12, Seaborne/Airborne/Land Operations, 4 Jan. 1962 and COS (62) 84, Joint Warfare Sub-Committees and Joint Warfare Staff, 28 Feb. 1962. TNA: DEFE 5/144, COS 365/63, Joint Warfare Committee – Terms of Reference, 8 Nov. 1963. TNA: DEFE 5/131, COS (62) 426, Joint Warfare. Training and Development, 31 Oct. 1962. TNA: DEFE 4/148, COS (62) 68 meeting, 20 Oct. 1962.
 - 33 TNA: DEFE 2/2074, Joint Warfare Staff, 31 July 1962.
 - 34 TNA: DEFE 73/1, *Manual of Joint Warfare: Volume 1. Concept, Planning and Control of Operations*. Volumes 2 to 6, plus annexes are available at TNA:DEFE 73/2, DEFE 73/3, DEFE 73/4, DEFE 73/5, DEFE 73/6 and DEFE 73/7.
 - 35 *A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy*, 12 Dec. 2003.
 - 36 For example see the *Future Navy Paper*, *Future Maritime Operational Concept*, and *The Naval Strategic Plan*, all or which are available online from RN Reference Site, <www.rnreference.mod.uk/>.
 - 37 Royal Navy, *Future Navy – Littoral Manoeuvre Concept*. Available from the RN Reference Site, <www.rnreference.mod.uk/>. For a more detailed discussion of this issue see Ian Speller, 'The Seaborne/Airborne Concept: Littoral Manoeuvre in the 1960s?', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29/1 (Feb. 2006) pp.53–82.