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## “NEITHER FISH NOR FOWL NOR YET GOOD RED HERRING”

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### Joint Institutions, Single-Service Priorities, and Amphibious Capabilities in Postwar Britain

*Ian Speller*

**I**n December 1948, the U.S. *Marine Corps Gazette* published an article by Lieutenant Colonel Rathvon M. Tompkins, who reported on British policy on and organization for *combined operations*, the term the British used at the time to describe amphibious operations.<sup>1</sup> Tompkins was a U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) veteran of landings at Tarawa and Saipan during the Second World War and had just completed a period working with the British at their School of Combined Operations in North Devon.<sup>2</sup> He praised them for their development of amphibious techniques during the war, but was less than complimentary about their postwar structures. In particular, he was critical of the “joint” (interservice) nature of the Combined Operations Organization, stating that “[b]elonging to no one in particular and belonging to everyone in general, it is neither fish nor fowl nor yet good red herring.” Reflecting on the lack of priority given to amphibious operations, Tompkins argued that, as it was not “squarely the responsibility of any one service,” the

subject tended to “take on the aspects of an orphan child dependent on the indulgence and generosity of older members of the family.”<sup>3</sup> When times were hard, as they were in Britain in the postwar years, the family was unlikely to be indulgent.

Tompkins clearly did not believe that the joint approach provided a model to be emulated. Perhaps inevitably, given his own experience and institutional loyalties, he believed that a more logical solution would be to give the naval service,

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specifically the Royal Marines, primary responsibility for amphibious warfare. In contrast, British policy consistently had emphasized the importance of joint approaches and joint structures or institutions in one form or another.

In the years immediately before the war, interservice activity in this field was enabled by work at the staff colleges, by joint committees, and at a small joint training and development center. Next, wartime requirements saw the establishment of an entirely independent joint organization, with responsibility for amphibious policy, training, and development and the conduct of minor raids. Major operations remained the responsibility of the established services, relying on nonspecialist forces. This system survived the end of the war and the independent organization endured, in truncated form, until the early 1960s. At that point, the existing institutions were absorbed into a wider “joint warfare” structure, losing their independent status. In some respects, the result was a return to the prewar system, with interservice coordination achieved through joint committees and a small joint-training establishment. However, the Royal Marines now were identified as the “parent arm” for amphibious warfare, giving the naval service primacy in a role that previously had been considered entirely joint. This represented an important break from previous practice.<sup>4</sup>

This article explores institutional responsibility for amphibious warfare from the late 1930s until the reforms of the 1960s. It will argue that a joint approach served British needs during the Second World War but contributed to poor results after 1945. British capabilities did not recover until amphibious warfare became the particular responsibility of the naval service, lending credence to the argument that Tompkins advanced. The key point is that joint imperatives tend to prosper when they have the support of a powerful patron or when key furnishers of support and material (usually the army, navy, or air force, or some combination thereof) recognize the value of the service or capability provided and are willing to make sacrifices to support it. This case study suggests that the most effective way to promote the development of joint capabilities is to link these explicitly to the self-interest of the key provider(s) and to build joint structures that encourage rather than inhibit this. These issues have wider relevance, and the article’s conclusion explores them with reference to contemporary joint initiatives in the United Kingdom (U.K.) and U.S. armed forces.

## THE EMERGENCE OF JOINT INSTITUTIONS

It sometimes is argued that, discouraged by the failure at Gallipoli in 1915, the British ignored amphibious warfare during the interwar period. This was not the case. The army and navy both retained an interest in amphibious operations in the 1920s and 1930s and some useful training and experimental work was undertaken, particularly at the staff colleges, which combined annually to conduct

a joint exercise. Lack of funds and lack of priority meant that the results were relatively modest, but practical exercises were conducted, doctrine was updated, and prototype landing craft were built. In accordance with long-standing practice, amphibious operations were understood to be a joint responsibility, and coordination among the services was achieved by employing joint committees and through cooperation at the staff colleges. The idea of employing the Royal Marines as a specialist amphibious force gained occasional backing within naval circles but had little support elsewhere.<sup>5</sup>

In 1936, a subcommittee of the Deputy Chiefs of Staff Committee was established to support interservice training, and this group (DCOS[IT]) also was given responsibility for updating doctrine, in the form of the *Manual of Combined Operations*. The new manual, completed in 1938, addressed all forms of "combined" (interservice) operations, although over half the text was devoted to topics relating to amphibious operations.<sup>6</sup> DCOS(IT) also proposed the creation of what became the Inter-Service Training and Development Centre (ISTDC), established at Fort Cumberland (Portsmouth) in 1938.<sup>7</sup> The ISTDC was tasked with training and development across the range of interservice operations, but amphibious considerations quickly came to dominate its work.

The ISTDC was an overtly joint organization. Prior to its establishment the naval staff college had proposed an entirely different approach, in which a training and development center would be built around a military force provided by the Royal Marines and supported by joint assets "as requisite." The notion was that the navy and the marines would be given primary responsibility for amphibious warfare and that joint cooperation would be maintained on that basis.<sup>8</sup> These ideas did not gain support from the other staff colleges or from DCOS(IT), despite the support of the deputy chief of the naval staff. The joint vision prevailed.<sup>9</sup>

The ISTDC had a small staff consisting of a naval commandant, one staff officer each from the army and air force, and a Royal Marines (RM) adjutant. It was instructed to study all joint operations and not to focus primarily on amphibious matters, in accordance with the prevailing view that *combined operations* encompassed any operation that the army, navy, or air force might have to conduct in cooperation with another service.<sup>10</sup> In the event, the ISTDC ended up devoting much of its time to amphibious warfare. This reflected the sympathies of its first commandant, Captain Loben E. H. Maund, Royal Navy (RN), who was enthusiastic about amphibious operations and was able to push the center's focus in that direction. However, his attempts to win for the ISTDC a role in planning such operations proved unsuccessful.<sup>11</sup>

The ISTDC managed to do some good work before the war, particularly in supporting the design and construction of a small number of new, modern landing craft. In this respect Britain was ahead of the United States.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately,

amphibious capabilities were not accorded a high priority in prewar British defense planning. Lacking any obvious requirement for amphibious operations in the war they expected to fight, the British naturally prioritized other capabilities in an environment in which both time and money were desperately short. The approach was logical, but it left Britain ill prepared to deal with the unexpected realities of war. Lack of a dedicated amphibious force available at short notice undermined the British response to the German invasion of Norway in April 1940. The absence of such a force made evacuation from Dunkirk more difficult in May–June 1940, and it forced the army to leave all its supplies and equipment on the beach. The fall of France brought a new requirement for raids to harass the enemy coast and a need to prepare for the kind of large operations that eventually might allow Allied armies to return to Europe, but Britain was not well placed to perform either role in the summer of 1940.

#### THE COMBINED OPERATIONS ORGANIZATION

The story of the wartime Combined Operations Organization has been told many times and will not be addressed in detail here.<sup>13</sup> This new joint organization began as a tiny directorate set up within the Admiralty in June 1940, safely under the control of the navy. Within weeks, however, the prime minister intervened and appointed Sir Roger Keyes as Director of Combined Operations. Keyes, an old acquaintance of Churchill and veteran of operations at Gallipoli (1915) and Zeebrugge (1918), was a retired admiral of the fleet and had been an outspoken critic of the Admiralty's conduct of the war to date. His appointment was not popular with the Chiefs of Staff; the First Sea Lord was particularly aggrieved. One of Keyes's first steps was to relocate his command out of the Admiralty and into a separate building in Whitehall, establishing Combined Operations Headquarters (COHQ) as an independent joint headquarters—a move that further alienated the navy, which viewed the new organization with suspicion.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, Keyes achieved rather little in his new role, lacking the tact, organizational skills, and intellect required for a position that naturally trespassed on ground that other, more-powerful groups considered to be their concern. He was replaced in October 1941 by the dynamic young naval officer Louis F. Mountbatten, who was promoted from captain to commodore and given the title of Adviser of Combined Operations.<sup>15</sup>

Mountbatten, like Keyes, had been chosen by Churchill rather than the Chiefs of Staff. He rapidly expanded the staff of COHQ, from twenty-three individuals under Keyes to around four hundred, drawn from all three services. He was at pains to emphasize the interservice nature of the organization, particularly to those within COHQ.<sup>16</sup> Reportedly, he succeeded to the point where his staff “almost forgot the colour of their uniform.”<sup>17</sup>

Like Keyes, Mountbatten sought to establish COHQ as an operational command independent of the services and, like Keyes, he failed. COHQ was responsible for planning minor raids employing special-service troops (i.e., commandos) but was not responsible for the conduct of major operations, responsibility for which remained with the army, navy, and air force. COHQ's key role remained the provision of technical advice on all aspects of opposed landings, coordination of training policy, command of training institutions, study of tactical and technical developments, and research and development (R&D) into new equipment and landing craft.<sup>18</sup>

The importance of amphibious warfare within British policy was reflected in the March 1942 decision to promote Mountbatten to the acting rank of vice admiral and the honorary ranks of air marshal and lieutenant general (to reflect the joint nature of his appointment). He was given the new title of Chief of Combined Operations (CCO), and as such sat as a full member of the Chiefs of Staff Committee when major issues were discussed or when amphibious matters were on the agenda—a major elevation in status. COHQ had a representative on the Joint Planning Staff and a representative on the British Joint Services Mission in Washington. Mountbatten remained in this position until August 1943, by which time COHQ had done much to develop British proficiency in amphibious operations. Departing to take up his new position as Supreme Allied Commander Southeast Asia, he was replaced as CCO by an army officer (and former commando leader), Major General Robert E. Laycock, who remained in the post until 1947.<sup>19</sup>

From humble origins the Combined Operations Organization grew into something that began to resemble a fourth service. At the top of the organization was CCO, who sat as a full member of the Chiefs of Staff Committee when relevant issues were discussed. He presided over an independent, interservice headquarters in London, and by 1942 was responsible for administering around a dozen training and experimental establishments in the United Kingdom and for providing advice to a similar number of training centers overseas.<sup>20</sup> COHQ issued advice on a vast range of topics relating to amphibious warfare and maintained liaison with the United States to keep abreast of developments there. The arrival of nine American officers in summer 1942 made COHQ one of the first joint interallied headquarters in London. Combined Operations was also responsible for training landing craft officers and crewmembers and for administering the growing amphibious fleet. The Admiralty viewed this with concern, and in late 1942 moved to regain control of something that was beginning to resemble a rival navy.<sup>21</sup>

Starting from a low base, British amphibious capabilities expanded dramatically, and amphibious operations evolved from a neglected art into a war-winning instrument. In 1939, the ISTDC had reported that a shortage of landing craft meant that Britain lacked the capacity to land even a brigade with less than six

months' notice.<sup>22</sup> By June 1944, the British were able to play the leading role in the largest and most complex amphibious operation of all time; 70 percent of the landing ships and craft employed during Operation NEPTUNE were RN vessels.<sup>23</sup>

Small-scale raids became the business of amphibious specialists (commandos) but—as anticipated before the war—major operations were conducted largely by conventional military forces, assisted by a joint organization created for this purpose. Combined Operations played an important part in this, promoting training, development, and the identification of new techniques and new equipment. It was aided, of course, by close collaboration with the United States.<sup>24</sup> The independent organization grew out of an immediate need—in an environment in which amphibious forces were accorded a significant priority—and resources, while never sufficient, were plentiful in comparison with the 1930s. The organization enjoyed the support and sponsorship of the prime minister, as evidenced by his appointment of Keyes and promotion of Mountbatten—rather against the wishes of the Admiralty.

#### COMBINED OPERATIONS AND AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE AFTER 1945

The British established the principles that would govern the postwar organization for amphibious warfare in 1944, at around the same time as the Normandy landings were taking place. It is not surprising, therefore, that they remained wedded to established ideas about combined operations being a joint responsibility. Despite this, the navy continued to advocate an approach that would put it in the driver's seat. The Admiralty never had been reconciled entirely to the establishment of COHQ as an independent headquarters, nor did it maintain an easy relationship with either Keyes or Mountbatten, both of whom owed their position to Churchill, not the sponsorship of the First Sea Lord. Laycock was a less divisive character than either of his predecessors, but he often found himself facing the Admiralty as an adversary rather than an ally.<sup>25</sup>

In May 1944, the First Sea Lord, Andrew B. Cunningham, advanced the notion that in the future the Royal Marines should become the main source of amphibious advice and expertise and that they should be given responsibility for the provision, training, and development of all special-assault forces. He accepted the requirement to retain an interservice aspect to combined operations but believed that in the future CCO should be an RM officer acting with a "divided responsibility."<sup>26</sup> In many respects, this was a return to the general idea the navy had advanced before the war; joint liaison would be maintained, but the Royal Marines (and therefore the navy) would take primary responsibility for amphibious warfare. An interservice committee was set up to investigate the matter, with Air Marshal Sir Norman H. Bottomley, the Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, as chairperson.<sup>27</sup>

The Bottomley Committee submitted its report to the Chiefs of Staff on 29 June 1944. The report emphasized that amphibious warfare had to be accepted as a permanent commitment for the whole armed forces. This, the members argued, would require maintenance of the existing system, whereby CCO acted as the central advisory body, while the individual services remained responsible for the provision of equipment and personnel, and force commanders were responsible for actual operations. They recommended the maintenance of a permanent, central, independent, interservice combined-operations organization, because amphibious warfare, "whilst involving all three services, is the exclusive province of no one of them."<sup>28</sup>

The possibility of creating a specialist amphibious corps along the lines of the USMC was investigated but was rejected as being uneconomical and ill suited to British requirements. The committee thought primarily in terms of major operations such as the one so recently undertaken at Normandy. Under this model, a specialist corps would not fit into the framework for postassault operations, which would call for conventional military forces. Nor would the British be able to afford to maintain a specialist force of the size required to conduct operations on the scale envisaged. The report concluded that "[t]here is no escaping the conclusion that the Army itself must be ready to find the assault force required in war."<sup>29</sup>

The committee did consider the possibility of maintaining in peacetime a permanent amphibious brigade of Royal Marines, available at short notice for emergencies short of war, but, mirroring prewar assessments, it rejected the idea as being of doubtful utility. However, it was proposed that the Royal Marines should provide most of the personnel for a Special Service Group of 1,094 men, consisting of a headquarters, two commando units, and a Small Operations Group. The main role of this group was to facilitate training and to act as a nucleus for expansion in war, but it was acknowledged that it also might provide a small and highly mobile unit for imperial defense, reflecting prewar ideas about the value of a Royal Marines Striking Force.<sup>30</sup>

To maintain proficiency in amphibious warfare, the committee argued for the retention of the post of CCO and of COHQ as the central advisory body. It also called for the establishment of a permanent training organization designed to keep the armed forces as a whole competent in the practice of amphibious warfare, and for the maintenance of a Naval Assault Force. The latter (consisting of sixty-four ships, 135 major craft, and 256 minor craft) would support training and act as the nucleus about which to expand in any future war. A portion of the force would need to be kept available permanently, but the majority would be manned only during the annual training season.<sup>31</sup>

Admiral Cunningham was not happy with these conclusions. He considered the Naval Assault Force to be too large, arguing that establishing a force of such



size would prejudice the maintenance of the postwar fleet. More fundamentally, the committee had rejected his proposal to make amphibious warfare the particular responsibility of the Royal Marines, thereby leaving responsibility in the hands of an independent interservice organization not subject to Admiralty control. In response, he revived proposals made in 1943 to replace COHQ with an interservice committee along the lines of the Joint Planning Staff.<sup>32</sup>

Cunningham was opposed on this point by the other chiefs and CCO. The “Report by Committee on Inter-service Responsibility for Amphibious Warfare” was approved by the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 29 July 1944.<sup>33</sup> The armed forces thus agreed to maintain after the war an independent joint organization with responsibility for amphibious warfare; to set up institutions able to train joint forces and to promote R&D; and, in principle, on the need to establish a Naval Assault Force.

These plans did not long survive postwar austerity. The divisional-size lift envisaged for the Naval Assault Force soon was downgraded to brigade group-size lift, and even then the Admiralty complained that it could not resource this without denuding the regular fleet of personnel. The Admiralty preferred something more modest: at most, sufficient lift for a commando brigade, smaller than its army equivalent and with fewer vehicles and supporting arms.<sup>34</sup> It argued with CCO and the army over the requirement, but the debate was largely academic. Whatever the headline policy, only a handful of vessels was maintained in commission after the war, making large-scale or widespread training impossible. The requirement eventually was reduced to the maintenance of sufficient lift for a battalion group, and this finally was achieved in 1951 with the establishment at Malta of the Amphibious Warfare Squadron (AWS).<sup>35</sup>

The failure to maintain a large training fleet undermined the aspiration to keep the army as a whole conversant with amphibious operations. Similarly, ambitious plans to maintain a major training establishment also failed. The large wartime training centers were closed and were not replaced. In the event, only a small Combined Operations School and a Combined Operations Signals School were retained to develop and teach the techniques of amphibious warfare, supported by the Combined Operations Experimental Establishment, which undertook R&D work. For reasons of efficiency and cost, these were brought together—in 1949, at Fremington in North Devon—to form the Combined Operations Centre (from 1951 known as the Amphibious Warfare Centre). The center did some useful work, despite Tompkins’s criticism that its approach confined amphibious warfare to an academic niche from which it was “removed annually, for a few days at a time, to satisfy a requirement in a staff college syllabus.”<sup>36</sup> The center at least did maintain a fruitful relationship with the USMC, hence Tompkins’s spell in North Devon.

Army interest in amphibious warfare was reflected in Exercise SPEARHEAD, a major joint exercise conducted at the Staff College at Camberley in May 1947. In addition, during the postwar years the army provided COHQ and CCO with much-needed support in the Chiefs of Staff Committee, frustrating numerous attempts by the Admiralty to downgrade or abolish the organization. In some respects, it was easy for the army to support COHQ—it cost it little to do so. However, the army's interest did not extend to maintaining the army commando units that were raised during the war, nor did it translate into regular or systematic training for army formations. Joint amphibious exercises did occur, but tended to be small-scale and rather ad hoc, much as they had been before the war.<sup>37</sup>

The Royal Marines retained three battalion-size commandos, organized into 3 Commando Brigade, and these undertook commando training at the Commando School, Royal Marines (based first at Towyn, then Bickleigh, later Lympstone). In 1948, the Amphibious School, Royal Marines was set up to train landing-craft crewmembers, and the school also absorbed several joint combined-operations units that were too small to administer themselves.<sup>38</sup>

Apart from a small number of combined-operations specialists, the Royal Marines were the only British troops to receive anything like regular amphibious training, although even they were unable to focus on this role as much as they might have wished. Commando units often were employed ashore in imperial policing or counterinsurgency duties, reducing their availability to perform their amphibious role. When the British agreed to send a commando unit to Korea to assist the United Nations in 1950, they had to raise a new unit, 41 (Independent) Commando, from volunteers and from a draft of reinforcements that had been due to be sent to Malaya, where 3 Commando Brigade was being employed ashore to chase Communist insurgents. The marines of 41 Commando undertook a number of successful raids behind North Korean lines and participated in the epic action with U.S. Marines around the Chosin Reservoir and in the retreat to Hungnam, earning a Presidential Unit Citation in the process. That they did so with American equipment; carrying American weapons; and landed from American ships, craft, and submarines may say something about the state of British preparedness for amphibious operations in 1950.<sup>39</sup>

Lack of priority was particularly apparent with reference to the amphibious fleet. Despite the return to the United States of Lend-Lease vessels and the scrapping of hundreds of worn-out craft, the British still had many amphibious ships and craft available at the end of the war. However, shortage of finance and manpower made the navy reluctant to keep many of these in commission, and most quietly rotted away in low-priority reserve. Vessels built to wartime standards and designed to meet wartime contingencies were beginning to show their design limitations by the 1950s, and many were becoming rather dilapidated.

COHQ pressed for new construction to replace these, and also for new ships to fill the gaps that existed within the fleet (particularly with respect to fire-support and infantry-assault vessels).<sup>40</sup> The Admiralty successfully resisted such pressure and, with the exception of a handful of minor craft, no new amphibious ships or craft were built before the 1960s.<sup>41</sup>

The key problem was that, while lip service was given to the notion that amphibious warfare was important, it was not as important as other, more-pressing concerns. The army was keen to retain expertise in amphibious operations, but the cost of doing this fell largely on the navy. The admirals had other things to worry about and preferred to prioritize more-traditional sea-control tasks. CCO could advance the cause of amphibious warfare in the Chiefs of Staff Committee, and did so, but he was not well placed to force any of the services to devote scarce resources to the matter. The prevailing concept remained for amphibious operations on a similar model to Normandy in 1944. It was clear that such operations could not occur in the early stages of any war against the Soviet Union, when once again survival might be the major issue. If they were required only in the later stages, then the immediate need was for developmental work to keep techniques up to date and for a small cadre to provide a basis on which to expand after mobilization. Raiding might be needed in the early stages of war, although even here lack of priority meant that equipment, training, and personnel were recognized to be inadequate to meet planned requirements.<sup>42</sup>

In some respects, the overall approach was logical enough, given the type of war that Britain expected to fight. Once again, however, the British armed forces neglected to recognize the potential for amphibious forces to provide the ability to deal with the unexpected. Failure to maintain in peacetime a credible amphibious force made it harder for Britain to respond effectively to several crises beyond Europe, as was evident in the case of Korea. A shortage of appropriate ships available at short notice undermined British planning during the Abadan crisis in 1951.<sup>43</sup> It complicated planning for reinforcement of the Suez Canal zone in the event of major trouble in the early 1950s. And, most seriously, it badly undermined the British response to Egyptian nationalization of the Suez Canal in July 1956.<sup>44</sup> Humiliation at Suez helped to illustrate the shortcomings in Britain's amphibious capability, notwithstanding the innovative use of helicopters to land marines on the beach at Port Said in November.

The navy's attitude to the independent Combined Operations Organization always had been, at best, ambivalent. Its leaders did not appreciate being harassed and held to account by CCO on matters relating to amphibious warfare when they lacked sufficient resources to support roles to which they accorded a much higher priority. In the period between 1944 and 1954, the Admiralty made repeated attempts to undermine COHQ's independence, reduce its staff, or have

it abolished entirely. The Chiefs of Staff discussed the matter numerous times. Army support for Combined Operations prevented the Admiralty from getting its way but could not stop a steady reduction in staff and resources; by 1949, there were just thirteen officers based at COHQ, and additional cuts followed.<sup>45</sup> The navy's preferred approach was to amalgamate the post of CCO with that of the Commandant General, Royal Marines (CGRM), but the prevailing concept of amphibious operations as a joint responsibility within the context of major war scenarios conspired to frustrate these plans.<sup>46</sup>

This all began to change in the 1950s as British military planning began to reflect the implications of the emerging nuclear stalemate. There was growing appreciation that a major war in Europe was now unlikely and, if it did occur, probably would be characterized by an early and devastating nuclear exchange. In such circumstances, the need for sustained, large-scale, conventional military operations appeared doubtful. This posed challenges for all the services, but especially the Royal Navy, whose primary role—sea control in a major European war—began to lose credibility. The wider availability of nuclear weapons certainly posed problems for a concept of amphibious operations rooted in the Normandy model. On the other hand, there was a growing understanding that there was an increased likelihood of crises and conflicts beyond Europe, and the navy began to explore the potential to use flexible maritime forces as a means of responding to these.<sup>47</sup>

In July 1954, the Chiefs of Staff endorsed the conclusions of a joint working party chaired by the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff. The joint working party argued that the advent of the hydrogen bomb meant that the requirement for amphibious operations in a major conflict now was limited to small-scale raids; operations on a larger scale would have to be sponsored by the United States. Given this, the requirement for training in peacetime could be limited to staff-level studies, with exercises up to the strength of a reinforced battalion group. There was no longer a requirement to keep the armed forces as a whole conversant with the principles of amphibious operations. Now, for the first time, such operations could become the primary responsibility of one group. The working party argued that the interservice nature of the amphibious warfare organization should be retained, but it concluded that the time was right for the Royal Marines to play the "predominant part." The members also recommended that the Amphibious Warfare Centre should move from Fremington to amalgamate with the Amphibious School, Royal Marines at Poole. The Chiefs of Staff endorsed this move and the conclusion that the Royal Marines should become the "parent body" for amphibious warfare. It was accepted that there was "no requirement for the Army as a whole to be trained in amphibious warfare."<sup>48</sup> As a result, Amphibious Warfare Headquarters (AWHQ), as COHQ had been renamed in 1951, continued

to represent amphibious needs in Whitehall (with a reduced staff), and a Joint Services Amphibious Warfare Centre (JSAWC) was created at Poole with the amalgamation of the Amphibious Warfare Centre and the Amphibious School, Royal Marines.<sup>49</sup> Amphibious warfare remained a joint responsibility, but for the first time the navy was in the driver's seat.

Ten years earlier this might have caused a problem; the Admiralty had been less than enthusiastic about amphibious operations. But by the mid-1950s things were beginning to change. In a context in which major war in Europe appeared unlikely, and any such war was expected to "go nuclear" in its early stages, the navy's focus on sea control in a third Battle of the Atlantic began to look less than credible; the service was preparing for the wrong war. As a result, the navy underwent a radical change in approach. Even before the 1956 Suez crisis, the Admiralty had begun to think about the provision of flexible options for limited war and crisis management beyond Europe, and the failure of Operation MUSKETEER reinforced the need for change. Within this context, amphibious forces gained a new relevance within a broader expeditionary approach.

#### A DIFFERENT TYPE OF JOINTERY

From the late 1950s, the Admiralty embraced amphibious forces as a key element within an expeditionary approach designed to provide Britain with flexible options for crisis management and limited-war contingencies beyond Europe. The inherent mobility of amphibious forces had the advantage of reducing reliance on a diminishing number of overseas bases and of providing access without the need to negotiate overflight or basing rights. The utility of this was demonstrated on numerous occasions, notably including the interventions in Kuwait (1961) and East Africa (1964). The role also gave the navy a means of justifying retention of a large, balanced fleet and could be mobilized to support the case for the next generation of large aircraft carriers. Thus—for the first time since the Second World War—amphibious warfare became a major priority for the navy, in support of an expeditionary strategy requiring balanced forces.<sup>50</sup>

To support its new expeditionary approach, the navy replaced the aging AWS with two new assault ships (LPDs), commissioned in 1965 and 1967, and converted two light aircraft carriers into landing platform helicopter (LPH)-style "commando carriers" in 1960 and 1962. Six new logistic landing ships (LSLs) were built to carry follow-on forces and provide logistic lift for the army in peacetime. Operated initially by the British India Steam Navigation Company on behalf of the Ministry of Transport, the LSLs transferred to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary in 1970. This new capability was designed to carry, land, and sustain in combat a balanced army brigade group; it was not intended only for marines. The commandos could provide a very useful light "fire brigade" designed to deal quickly

with minor conflagrations, but British policy was built on the idea that larger and more heavily equipped forces might be required in some circumstances. Thus, the LPDs and LSLs were designed specifically to carry and land the full range of army equipment, including tanks. They were to be part of a joint capability that the navy dubbed the Joint Services Seaborne Force.<sup>51</sup>

Nonetheless, this was all good for the Royal Marines. The Commando Brigade expanded from three to five active battalion-size commandos. (Plans to raise a sixth were dropped quietly owing to fear of opposition from the army.)<sup>52</sup> From 1962 the commandos were reinforced with 105 mm pack howitzers, provided by the Royal Artillery, further enhancing the offensive potential of the commando / commando carrier combination and reflecting the evolution toward an expeditionary role, as distinct from their previous rationale of wartime raiding.<sup>53</sup> It should be stressed that, despite these additions, 3 Commando Brigade was an RM unit with joint elements attached—it remained firmly within the naval service. The Admiralty rejected suggestions that the army routinely should contribute infantry battalions to the Commando Brigade, and that command of the brigade should rotate between the army and the marines, accurately surmising that these reflected gambits designed to protect army regiments from cuts rather than any serious or sustained interest in amphibious operations. It was not difficult to show that rotating line battalions through the brigade was a poor substitute for the employment of well-trained amphibious specialists, although this did not stop army battalions from working with the brigade, as they did during the 1982 Falklands War.<sup>54</sup>

The 1958 edition of the *Naval War Manual* noted only two forms of amphibious operations, *raids* and *invasions*, and both within a major war context.<sup>55</sup> But by the time the edition was published, it already was apparent that Britain required a new concept of operations, one that focused less on tip-and-run raids or ponderous, large-scale assaults against defended beaches, but instead promoted enhanced range and mobility and greater responsiveness within a limited war context. The matter was explored in detail by AWHQ and by the Land/Air Warfare Committee, the two bodies responsible for amphibious and for airborne techniques. This led to the development of the "seaborne/airborne concept," which was studied and refined in collaboration between these two organizations and the Staff Training Unit at the JSAWC and the School of Land/Air Warfare at Old Sarum (Wiltshire). The concept sought to exploit the complementary strengths of seaborne and airborne forces to enable a rapid and flexible approach to expeditionary operations overseas, with the idea that a light but adaptable force immediately available might be more effective than larger forces requiring a longer timescale. It represented a major departure from the traditional (1940s-style) amphibious operations envisaged to that point. Amphibious forces now

were to be viewed as being part of a single team that also included airborne and air-transported elements.<sup>56</sup>

Under this new concept, seaborne and airborne forces were to cooperate in a seamless manner. Given this, it made little sense to divide responsibility for developing the concept between separate amphibious and land/air organizations; a new institutional structure was needed. A new Joint Warfare Committee (JWC) was established in January 1962, replacing both AWHQ and the Land/Air Warfare Committee. It reflected the latter more than the former, as it was not an independent headquarters but rather an interservice committee responsible to the services via the chiefs. The JWC met ten times in its first year, chaired by the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, with individual representatives from each service and the Director of the Joint Warfare Staff (see below).<sup>57</sup> Additional members were co-opted as required.<sup>58</sup>

The JWC had three subcommittees, dealing with offensive support, air-transport support, and amphibious warfare. The first two reflected the focus of the two main wings of the old School of Land/Air Warfare.<sup>59</sup> The Amphibious Warfare Sub-Committee was responsible for providing advice and recommendations on policy, techniques, tactical developments, and training for amphibious operations. It also was to advise on the collection of intelligence required for amphibious operations and to ensure standardization and compatibility of equipment. Its remit was narrower than that of AWHQ, and responsibility for matters such as amphibious equipment and logistics was given to the services; for practical reasons, this fell largely on the navy.<sup>60</sup>

The JWC was supported by a small interservice secretariat, known as the Joint Warfare Staff (JWS). This consisted of a two-star director, a one-star deputy, and ten other officers drawn from the three services. The first director was Major General Robert D. “Titch” Houghton, RM, who had been the last Chief of Amphibious Warfare (the Chief of Combined Operations had adopted this new title in 1951). His new role lacked the direct access to the Chiefs of Staff that had been a feature of his previous post. Instead he was to submit an annual report to the JWC, which would forward it to the chiefs for consideration. The JWS inherited AWHQ’s location and its staff and adopted the old Combined Operations badge; it was, however, a very different type of organization. It had a much broader remit than had AWHQ, having also to address wider issues relating to joint warfare.<sup>61</sup> The inevitable result was that it could devote less time to consideration of amphibious warfare than had the previous organization.

An important role for the JWS and JWC was the production of doctrine, in the form of a *Manual of Joint Warfare*, building on the principles outlined in the seaborne/airborne concept. The first edition was issued in February 1964. It focused on all aspects of nonnuclear joint warfare beyond Europe. The topic

of amphibious operations was addressed in volume 4 of the manual, which emphasized that such operations were essentially joint in nature. The manual was revised three times in the 1960s, with updated versions released in 1965, 1967, and 1970. By the time the last version was issued it no longer focused on non-nuclear options beyond Europe but instead covered all aspects of joint warfare. It reflected the growing reemphasis within British defense policy on war fighting within the NATO region.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to the above, the Staff Training Unit of the JSAWC and the School of Land/Air Warfare were brought together to create a new Joint Warfare Establishment (JWE) at Old Sarum. This was responsible for formulating and teaching the tactical doctrine, procedures, and techniques required for joint warfare. The Royal Marines retained an Amphibious Training Unit and a Trials Section at Poole, where they continued to undertake amphibious training—a task more readily conducted there than at the JWE, which was situated thirty miles inland. The Chief of the Air Staff wanted the JWE always to have a Royal Air Force (RAF) officer as director, clearly believing that airpower issues predominated. However, neither the army nor the navy supported him in this matter, and the directorship rotated among the services.<sup>63</sup>

The JWE concentrated initially on training and the development of doctrine designed to support the type of expeditionary operations envisaged in the sea-borne/airborne concept. However, it later expanded its scope to all forms of joint warfare, particularly as, by the early 1970s, British defense policy once again was focused heavily on the NATO region and the conduct of expeditionary operations began to be regarded as an unlikely requirement. The bread and butter of the JWE was a two-week Joint Warfare Course that focused on the conduct of conventional joint operations.<sup>64</sup> The JWE ran a number of other courses, including an Amphibious Warfare Planning Course, but amphibious operations were never its primary focus.

Christian Liles has emphasized that these new structures reflected the long-established British preference for a joint approach to amphibious operations. He argues that attitudes toward amphibious warfare reflected those that had existed in the 1930s, when the approach had focused on combined operations more generally, not solely on amphibious warfare. Thus, he notes, the remit of the ISTDC was similar to that of the new JWE, with its focus on air, land, and maritime cooperation. The new *Manual of Joint Warfare* covered much more than just amphibious warfare, as had the 1938 *Manual of Combined Operations*.<sup>65</sup>

It is true that the British continued to identify amphibious operations as being a joint responsibility. There was no suggestion that amphibious operations were the sole preserve of the navy and the marines. This was evident in the institutional structure described above and in the new *Manual of Joint Warfare*. It was reflected



in the design of the new amphibious ships constructed during the 1960s, which were built to accommodate a balanced military force, including the full range of army equipment. The Commando Brigade—the unit most likely to be at the forefront of any amphibious operation—had joint forces attached. The joint approach also was apparent in the Admiralty’s vision for expeditionary operations in the early 1960s, the aptly named Joint Services Seaborne Force. However, the decision to make the naval service the “parent arm” for amphibious warfare represented an important change in policy and practice, with broadly positive consequences.

It became apparent to the Admiralty that the new joint institutions were neither staffed nor organized to do the work that AWHQ had done formerly, and that therefore, “in the absence of a joint organisation,” additional responsibilities relating to policy and development now would fall on the Admiralty itself.<sup>66</sup> The Director of Tactical and Weapons Policy, restyled the Director of Naval and Tactical Weapons Policy from 1965, became responsible for amphibious warfare and for the coordination of joint-warfare matters, and he sought additional staff to help carry the weight. He was advised by the CGRM on the military aspects of amphibious warfare and on all matters pertaining to the Royal Marines.<sup>67</sup>

In a practical sense, amphibious training and development centered on the navy’s amphibious ships and the Royal Marine commandos. In 1965, the AWS changed its base from Bahrain to Singapore, prompting the Commander-in-Chief, Far East Fleet to request that a commodore be appointed to command these ships, promote amphibious training and development, and work with the commander of 3 Commando Brigade. This resulted in the appointment of Hardress “Harpy” Lloyd as Commodore Amphibious Forces, Far East Fleet in May 1965.<sup>68</sup> The post was relocated to the United Kingdom in 1971, with the Commodore Amphibious Warfare (COMAW) now responsible to the two-star Flag Officer, Carriers and Amphibious Ships.<sup>69</sup> In the years ahead, COMAW and his staff would represent the main repository of expertise in amphibious operations within the Royal Navy. The only military force to undertake regular training and exercises in such operations, and to work closely with COMAW, was 3 Commando Brigade. The institutional structure and latest doctrine may have stressed the joint nature of amphibious operations, but in most practical senses expertise in amphibious warfare was limited to those wearing dark blue uniforms and those in green berets.<sup>70</sup>

The reorganization of the early 1960s was initiated at a time when expeditionary operations were emphasized within British defense policy and when there was interest in enhancing joint cooperation within the Ministry of Defence. This was evident in the reform of that ministry in 1964 and the adoption of unified (joint) commands in the Middle East (1959), Near East (1961), and Far East (1962).<sup>71</sup> By the end of the decade, things had begun to change. The refocus on

Europe that accompanied the British withdrawal from "East of Suez" was characterized by growing doubts about the need for expeditionary capabilities and by the services retreating toward what were seen as core roles. Those roles tended to revolve around single-service priorities. As Admiral Sir Jonathon Band recalled, "The 1970s heralded the start of a bleak period for jointery."<sup>72</sup> The unified commands were abandoned and command and control was subsumed within NATO structures. The JWE was disbanded in 1979 and incorporated (with reduced staff) into the National Defence College at Latimer, as the new Joint Warfare Wing. Two years later it was decided to close this wing entirely—a decision reversed only after the Falklands War demonstrated the value of joint operations.<sup>73</sup>

The change in policy meant that amphibious forces were confined, once again, to the periphery of British defense interest. In the 1970s, the Commando Brigade contracted back to three commando units, and the two commando carriers were decommissioned without replacement. In 1975, replacements for the LPDs were removed from the Ministry of Defence Long Term Costings, and by 1981 existing ships appeared under threat within the context of a defense review that sought to force the navy to focus ever more narrowly on sea control in the eastern Atlantic.<sup>74</sup> Perhaps typically, Major General Julian H. A. Thompson, RM, recalled that as a student at the joint Royal College of Defence Studies (1979–80) he submitted a paper on expeditionary warfare that was sent to the Ministry of Defence for comment. It was returned with the suggestion that he had wasted his time; such operations never would happen again.<sup>75</sup> Two years later, Thompson commanded 3 Commando Brigade during the Falklands War, in a campaign that included a brigade-level amphibious landing at San Carlos. Success there rested on the aging remains of the 1960s amphibious force and on the expertise possessed by the Royal Marines and by COMAW (Commodore Michael C. "Mike" Clapp) and his staff. This expertise was not evident in other elements of the joint force.<sup>76</sup>

The Falklands War did not lead to an immediate change in overall British defense policy. Joint warfare and expeditionary operations did not regain their prominence in British defense planning until the end of the Cold War brought yet another reversal of defense priorities. The ensuing decade brought the rejuvenation of Britain's aging amphibious fleet, and the navy once again emphasized the value of amphibious forces and aircraft carriers as a means of projecting power overseas. Joint warfare emerged from the shadows to become a key issue. The result was the formation of a joint operational command, joint logistics organization, joint doctrine and concepts center, and joint staff college to replace the single-service alternatives.<sup>77</sup> Amphibious warfare remained a joint concern and involved joint forces, but the Royal Navy and Royal Marines were clearly the parent arms. This was reflected in the confidential 1997 publication *The United Kingdom Approach to Amphibious Operations*, produced in collaboration between

the Headquarters Royal Marines and the Royal Navy's Maritime Warfare Centre.<sup>78</sup> The latter was responsible for delivering a short Amphibious Planning Course, once the responsibility of the JWE.<sup>79</sup> The only course at the new joint staff college that focused explicitly on amphibious operations, the Advanced Amphibious Warfare Course, was provided for Royal Marines officers.<sup>80</sup> Operational responsibility for amphibious forces was vested in Commander, Amphibious Task Group (a naval officer) and Commander, U.K. Amphibious Forces (a Royal Marine).

#### SUMMARY TO THE 1960s

Throughout the period covered by this article, the British viewed amphibious operations as an activity involving joint forces. However, what this meant in practice changed over time.

Immediately before the war, amphibious operations were considered within a concept of combined operations that encompassed all forms of interservice activity. Naval attempts to gain prime responsibility for amphibious warfare were not successful.

The events of 1940 gave amphibious operations a new priority, as complex, large-scale operations became a necessary precursor to eventual victory. To equip themselves for this unexpected task, the British created a new, thoroughly joint organization that developed a thoroughly joint approach. Amphibious operations were the business of all three services, and major operations were conducted by conventional forces, not a dedicated amphibious corps. Training and the development of equipment and doctrine were in the hands of an independent joint organization, which also administered a number of combined-operations units required for training, minor raids, or specialist tasks within major operations.

This model was retained at the end of the war, in the belief that the armed forces as a whole had to be able to undertake amphibious operations and that this was the best way to prepare to do so. Once again, attempts by the navy to take primary responsibility (via the Royal Marines) were rejected. However, while the joint model had worked well during the war—when amphibious warfare was a high-priority task and COHQ enjoyed the patronage of the prime minister—it was less successful after 1945. In the face of postwar austerity and ambivalence on the part of the navy, British capabilities atrophied. COHQ could study, teach, advise, and pressure, but it could not force the navy, or indeed the army and the air force, to devote scarce resources to something they did not consider a priority. Moreover, the very existence of this independent organization appeared to aggravate admirals, who did not appreciate being harassed by a junior partner over something they felt should be the business of the navy.

That situation did not change until the navy found a role for amphibious forces within an expeditionary strategy that could be used to justify the maintenance

of a balanced fleet. This was associated with the change in the accepted model for amphibious operations and an acceptance that, while amphibious operations would retain a joint element, the Royal Marines and the Royal Navy would play the predominant part. Fortuitously, this put the navy in control at the same time it discovered a new self-interest in developing this role. A joint-service element was retained, but amphibious warfare became what the admirals had argued consistently it should be: the primary concern of the navy and the marines, supported by joint forces as required.

It is important to note that the joint institutions created in the 1960s were very different from those that had gone before. In his semiofficial history of the Combined Operations Organization, Brigadier Bernard E. Fergusson, British army (Ret.), explained the difference as follows: "There is all the difference in the world between an inter-service meeting, however amiable and co-operative, from which all hands afterward return to their respective bases; and a combined [i.e., joint] headquarters, where all hands live together, use the same washbasins, and owe allegiance to a single chief."<sup>81</sup> The approach from 1940 forward was for a joint organization independent of the army, navy, and air force. In theory at least, those involved forgot the color of their uniforms and reflected the interests of "combined operations" above those of their parent services. All involved pulled in the same direction, under the authority of the Chief of Combined Operations. As Fergusson put it, "You cannot paddle your own canoe when you are all in the same boat."<sup>82</sup> It was a highly evolved form of jointery.

In the 1960s, this changed to an approach based on joint cooperation and collaboration, enabled by a joint committee, secretariat, and training establishment. The new structure, founded on consensus among service representatives, put control back in the hands of the army, navy, and air force. Members of the JWC were representatives of their own services; they were no longer in the same boat, and they paddled their own canoes. This was a less-evolved form of jointery, but it produced better results. The joint institutions promoted thinking about joint warfare and included within their remit the development and promulgation of doctrine for amphibious operations. By design, they devoted less time and attention specifically to this subject than had AWHQ. This did not matter, as the navy (and marines) had picked up the baton. From the mid-1950s onward, amphibious warfare was predominantly a naval-service responsibility, and the naval service—unlike AWHQ—had the power to turn interest into action.

#### MORE-RECENT APPLICATIONS

The historical case study illustrates the difficulty faced by a joint organization tasked with maintaining proficiency in a role to which the main provider (in this case, the navy) does not accord a high priority. It is not difficult to find other

examples of the same dynamic in action. Within the British context, the fate of fixed-wing naval aviation within Joint Force Harrier (JFH) offers a cautionary tale.

JFH (known initially as Joint Force 2000) was established in April 2000. It brought together the navy's Sea Harrier FA2 and the RAF's Harrier GR7/GR9 squadrons within a new joint structure, ultimately under the control of RAF Strike Command. The approach was designed to create synergies and savings in a situation in which both aircraft types operated from the navy's three *Invincible*-class aircraft carriers, the FA2s in an air-defense role and the GR7/GR9s for ground attack.<sup>83</sup> This case is not entirely analogous to the experience of the post-1945 amphibious forces, as the structures were different, but the history of JFH reveals the same central dynamic, in which joint approaches could not overcome the entrenched and self-interested attitudes of a dominant service.

Within just two years of the establishment of JFH a decision was taken to retire the navy's Sea Harriers to prioritize limited resources toward the RAF Harriers, which were considered more valuable for the operations then envisaged. The decision appears to have been taken against the wishes of the navy, whose carriers (and thus the fleet) were left without a fixed-wing air-defense capability. The decision was supported actively by the RAF and by the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Equipment), Air Vice-Marshal Sir Graham E. "Jock" Stirrup, who, unusually for an airman, seemed confident in the ability of the navy's surface-to-air missiles to provide an appropriate alternative to fighter cover.<sup>84</sup> Later, as (joint) Chief of the Defence Staff, Stirrup also seems to have been instrumental in a decision during the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review to retire the entire remaining Harrier force earlier than planned.<sup>85</sup> Here the Harriers were offered up as a cost-cutting sacrifice required to keep the RAF's fleet of aging land-based Tornado bombers in service for a few more years. The decision appears to have been taken against naval advice and at the last minute, upon the personal intervention of Stirrup—who seems not to have forgotten the color of his uniform. It left the navy with no fixed-wing aircraft able to fly from its carriers, contributing to the early retirement of those vessels.<sup>86</sup>

RAF reluctance to divert scarce resources to naval aviation reflected a long-standing preference for land-based, fast jets over anything that operates from the sea. The RAF desire to focus on established core roles, to the detriment of joint capabilities, may mirror the reluctance of the postwar Admiralty to divert resources to amphibious forces in the years after 1945; both organizations felt they should focus on other things, ones that reflected core service roles. It is not clear that any type of joint institution could have changed this; the key requirement would have been a parent organization able to recognize the importance of the joint capability.

The British currently are regenerating their fixed-wing carrier capability after an interregnum of almost ten years, with RAF and RN F-35B Lightning IIs

operating from the two new *Queen Elizabeth*-class ships. The aircraft fall under the control of a new joint organization, Lightning Force Headquarters, based at RAF Marham, commanded by an RAF officer and under the control of RAF No. 1 Group (the successor to Strike Command).<sup>87</sup> This appears to be jointery with one service in the ascendant. The analysis above suggests that this could be a positive thing, provided the RAF recognizes the importance of this role and identifies a self-interest in supporting it (as the Admiralty did with amphibious operations in the late 1950s). Ongoing debates over whether Britain will supplement the initial buy of forty-eight F-35Bs with more of the same or, as many in the RAF prefer, with F-35As unable to operate from British carriers may reveal the extent to which joint imperatives can prevail.<sup>88</sup> The history of RAF antipathy toward carrier-based aviation does not promote optimism.

The contemporary U.S. armed forces have not adopted jointery to the same degree as their British counterparts, although numerous joint initiatives have been pursued since passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986. The functional component commands (Cyber, Special Operations, Transportation, and Strategic Commands) provide an interesting example, as they came about because of the need to coordinate joint elements and a fear that the parent services otherwise would not devote enough attention to these areas. The similarity to COHQ is obvious; however, differences also are apparent, most notably in terms of resources, power, and status. The component commands are led by four-star officers—equal in rank to the service chiefs. They have sizable budgets and access to Congress. They more closely resemble the wartime COHQ at the height of its influence under Mountbatten than the neglected, truncated organization in existence after 1945.

Despite this, periodic conflict between these commands and the parent services is inevitable. Thus, for example, note the differences between U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) and the U.S. Air Force over planned reductions to the latter's tanker fleet, with the commander of TRANSCOM (General Stephen R. Lyons, USA) arguing against the Air Force position in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee in early 2020.<sup>89</sup> The established dynamic of a service seeking to reduce emphasis on a joint capability so as to prioritize something else is evident once again. Important differences here, compared with COHQ, are that TRANSCOM is in a stronger position institutionally to advance its case, and also, critically, that TRANSCOM provides a service that is recognized widely as important.<sup>90</sup> Within this context, the joint approach has some chance of success and may provide an important coordinating function akin to that of COHQ during the war.

This article has argued that joint imperatives prosper when they have the support of a powerful patron, or when key furnishers of support and material recognize the value of the service they provide and are willing to make sacrifices

to maintain them. The most effective way to encourage this has been to link the needs of the joint organization to the self-interest of the services.

The experience of COHQ shows that structures that work well in one context (during a major war) may prove less advantageous once conditions and priorities change (after the war). In the latter case, the situation for Combined Operations might not have been so bad had it enjoyed the support and protection of a powerful Ministry of Defence, but the weakness of Britain's central organization for defense at that time, allied to severe resource constraints, militated against this.

With regard to responsibility for amphibious warfare, the analysis above appears to validate Lieutenant Colonel Tompkins's assessment from the 1940s. Amphibious capabilities were served best by a structure in which they became the responsibility primarily of one service, and when that service recognized the value in maintaining such capabilities. The American experience in this field, both past and present, appears to reinforce that conclusion. In the United States, proficiency in amphibious operations has been supported by the existence of a powerful parent organization with a strong institutional imperative to focus on such operations. The U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy have an impressive track record in this respect—a case too well established to require further elaboration here.<sup>91</sup>

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#### NOTES

1. Prior to the Second World War the British used the term *combined operations* to refer to what are now known as *joint operations*—that is, those involving more than one service (army, navy, or air force). During the war the term became synonymous with amphibious operations, and that was reflected in the remit of the wartime Combined Operations Organization. The British did not adopt the term *amphibious operations* officially until February 1951, whereupon they renamed all relevant institutions, posts, doctrinal manuals, etc. For ease of reference, this article will employ the term *amphibious* throughout, except when referring to specific institutions or appointments prior to 1951.
2. Tompkins would be remembered later for his role in command of the 3rd Marine Division during the battle of Khe Sanh in Vietnam in 1968, for which he was awarded the Navy Distinguished Service Medal.
3. Rathvon M. Tompkins [Lt. Col., USMC], "British Combined Operations," *Marine Corps Gazette* (December 1948), pp. 10–21.
4. For different perspectives on this, see Ian Speller, *The Role of Amphibious Warfare in British Defence Policy, 1945–1956* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), and Christian F. M. Liles, "The Development of Amphibious/Expeditionary Warfare in the United States and United Kingdom, 1945–68: A Study in Comparison, Contrast and Compromise" (PhD thesis, King's College London, 2010).
5. David R. Massam, "British Maritime Strategy and Amphibious Capability, 1900–1940" (DPhil thesis, Oxford Univ., 1996); Richard Harding, "Learning from the War: The Development of British Amphibious Capability, 1919–29," *Mariner's Mirror* 86, no. 2 (May 2000), pp. 173–85; Richard Harding, "Amphibious Warfare, 1930–1939," in *The Royal Navy 1930–2000: Innovation and Defence*, ed. Richard Harding (London: Frank Cass, 2005). Also see Kenneth J. Clifford, *Amphibious Warfare Development in Britain and America from 1920–1940* (Laurens, NY: Edgewood, 1983).

6. The text of the original manual was 238 pages long, plus appendices. Of these, 128 pages related to landing craft, seaborne expeditions, or landing operations. War Office, *Manual of Combined Operations*, 1938, 1939, Admiralty: Navy Board: Publications: box ADM 186/117, United Kingdom National Archives, Kew, London [hereafter UKNA].
7. Speller, *The Role of Amphibious Warfare*, chap. 1.
8. Massam, "British Maritime Strategy and Amphibious Capability," pp. 141–42.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 139–55, 245–60.
10. War Office, *Manual of Combined Operations*, 1938, p. xiii.
11. L. E. H. Maund [Rear Adm., RN (Ret.)], *Assault from the Sea* (London: Methuen, 1949), esp. chaps. 1–3; Massam, "British Maritime Strategy and Amphibious Capability," pp. 147–51.
12. See Speller, *The Role of Amphibious Warfare*, chap. 1.
13. For example, see Bernard Fergusson, *Watery Maze: The Story of Combined Operations* (London: Collins, 1961), and Speller, *The Role of Amphibious Warfare*, chap. 1. For the "confidential" official history produced in the 1950s, see Defence Ministry, *History of the Combined Operations Organisation 1940–1945* (London: Amphibious Warfare Headquarters, 1956), available at Defence Ministry: Military Operations: Amphibious Warfare Headquarters: Miscellaneous Papers: box DEFE 2/1773, UKNA.
14. Phillip Ziegler, *Mountbatten: The Official Biography* (London: Collins, 1985), p. 154.
15. "Directive on the Role of Adviser of Combined Operations," COS (41) 629, 17 October 1941, Cabinet Office: Cabinet Committees: War Cabinet: Memoranda: box CAB 80/31, UKNA.
16. Defence Ministry, *History of the Combined Operations Organisation*, p. 18.
17. Joseph C. Haydon [Brigadier, British army], quoted in Fergusson, *Watery Maze*, p. 412. Haydon was Vice Chief of Combined Operations, 1942–43.
18. Defence Ministry, *History of the Combined Operations Organisation*. Also see Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, chaps. 11–12.
19. Laycock then was replaced by a Royal Marine, Maj. Gen. Godfrey E. Wildman-Lushington. All subsequent chiefs were Royal Marines officers. Speller, *The Role of Amphibious Warfare*, p. 217.
20. These included the ISTDC, which was divided into two parts in April 1942, with one section being brought to London to join COHQ under a Director of Experiments and Staff Requirements, while the other part remained at Portsmouth and became the Combined Operations Development Centre. Defence Ministry, *History of the Combined Operations Organisation*, pp. 94–95.
21. COHQ, briefing paper, "Early History and Events ISTDC and DCO," Defence Ministry: Military Operations: Amphibious Warfare Headquarters: Miscellaneous Papers: box DEFE 2/782A, UKNA; Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, p. 206.
22. Maund, *Assault from the Sea*, p. 19.
23. Stephen W. Roskill, *The War at Sea 1939–1945*, vol. 3, *The Offensive*, pt. 2, *1st June 1944–14th August 1945*, History of the Second World War (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1961), p. 19.
24. See Defence Ministry: Military Operations: Amphibious Warfare Headquarters, box DEFE 2, UKNA for the vast archive of material relating to the work of COHQ.
25. For example, see Director of Combined Operations (Air), memorandum, "Inter-Service Combined Organisation," 29 July 1946, Defence Ministry: Military Operations: Amphibious Warfare Headquarters: Combined Operations Papers: box DEFE 2/1647: folio 2, UKNA.
26. First Sea Lord, memorandum, "Responsibility for Amphibious Warfare," COS (44) 414(0), 11 May 1944, and Chiefs of Staff Meeting, COS (44) 161, 18 May 1944, Defence Ministry: Military Operations: Amphibious Warfare Headquarters: Miscellaneous Papers: box DEFE 2/1178, UKNA.
27. Chiefs of Staff Meeting, COS (44) 164, 19 May 1944, Cabinet Office: Cabinet Committees: War Cabinet: Minutes: box CAB 79/74, UKNA.
28. "Report by Committee on Inter-service Responsibility for Amphibious Warfare," COS (44) 116, 29 June 1944, Cabinet Office:



- Cabinet Committees: War Cabinet: Memoranda: box CAB 80/44, UKNA.
29. Ibid.
  30. See Donald F. Bittner, "Britannia's Sheathed Sword: The Royal Marines and Amphibious Warfare in the Inter-war Years; A Passive Response," *Journal of Military History* 55, no. 3 (July 1991), and Massam, "British Maritime Strategy and Amphibious Capability," pp. 245–60.
  31. "Report by Committee on Inter-service Responsibility for Amphibious Warfare."
  32. Admiralty, memorandum, COS (44) 132, 22 July 1944, Cabinet Office: Cabinet Committees: War Cabinet: Memoranda: box CAB 80/44, UKNA.
  33. Chiefs of Staff Meeting, COS (44) 252 mtg(o), 29 July 1944, Cabinet Office: Cabinet Committees: War Cabinet: Minutes: box CAB 79/78, UKNA.
  34. Chiefs of Staff Meeting, COS (46) 18 mtg, 1 February 1946, Cabinet Office: Cabinet Committees: War Cabinet: Minutes: box CAB 79/44, UKNA; Chiefs of Staff Meeting, COS (47) 3 mtg, 3 January 1947, Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Chiefs of Staff Committee: Memoranda: box DEFE 4/1, UKNA.
  35. "Report by Chief of Amphibious Warfare," COS (51) 601, 22 October 1951, Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Chiefs of Staff Committee: Memoranda: box DEFE 5/34, UKNA; Chiefs of Staff Meeting, COS (52) 45 mtg, 1 March 1952, Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Chiefs of Staff Committee: Memoranda: box DEFE 4/5, UKNA.
  36. Tompkins, "British Combined Operations."
  37. See Speller, *The Role of Amphibious Warfare*, chaps. 2–3, and Liles, "The Development of Amphibious/Expeditionary Warfare," pp. 73–108.
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52. See correspondence contained in the file "Expansion of Royal Marine Commandos," Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Prior to 1964: Registered Files: box DEFE 7/1681, UKNA.
53. Two units were created, one for each commando carrier: 29 Commando Light Regiment, Royal Artillery, and 95 Commando Light Regiment, Royal Artillery, both equipped with 105 mm pack howitzers.
54. Detailed correspondence relating to these matters is available in "RM Commandos: Role, Organisation, and Deployment," Admiralty: Navy Board: First Sea Lord: box ADM 205/185, UKNA, and "Future of RM Commandos," Admiralty: Navy Board: First Sea Lord: box ADM 205/191, UKNA. Also see "The Royal Marines and the Requirement for Royal Marine Commandos," COS 133/64, 15 April 1964, Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Chiefs of Staff Committee: Memoranda: box DEFE 5/150, UKNA.
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62. Defence Ministry, *Manual of Joint Warfare*, vol. 4, *Amphibious Operations* (London: Joint Warfare Committee, 1964), available in file LBY WO 166, Imperial War Museum, London. Other volumes focused as the following titles indicate: vol. 1, *Concepts, Planning, and Control of Limited War Operations*; vol. 2, *Joint Tactical Communications*; vol. 3, *Air Transport*; vol. 5, *Offensive Support Operations*; vol. 6, *Tactical Air Defence Operations*. Liles, "The Development of Amphibious/Expeditionary Warfare," pp. 259–61.
63. "Joint Warfare Training and Development," 31 October 1962, Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Chiefs of Staff Committee: Memoranda: box DEFE 5/136, UKNA; "Report by the Joint Warfare Committee," COS (62) 426, 15 October 1962, Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Chiefs of Staff Committee: Memoranda: box DEFE 5/131, UKNA; Chiefs of Staff Meeting, COS (62) 68 mtg, 30 October 1962, Defence Ministry: Chiefs of Staff: Chiefs of Staff Committee: Minutes: box DEFE 4/148, UKNA. The first director was Air Vice-Marshal Cecil T. Weir.
64. D. C. Brewster, "The Joint Warfare Wing," in "Latimer Remembered," ed. M. B. Thornton, special ed., *The Cormorant* 11, no. 1 (1983), pp. 155–56.
65. Liles, "The Development of Amphibious/Expeditionary Warfare," chap. 6.
66. "Co-ordination of Amphibious Warfare. Matters with the Admiralty," 1962–63, Admiralty: Navy Board: Correspondence and Papers: box ADM 1/28875, UKNA. Also see Liles, "The Development of Amphibious/Expeditionary Warfare," p. 243.
67. "Amphibious Warfare—Responsibilities within Naval Service," 29 September 1966, Admiralty: Navy Board: Correspondence and Papers: box ADM 1/29217, UKNA.
68. "Command of Amphibious Naval Forces East of Suez," 30 July 1962, Admiralty: Navy Board: Correspondence and Papers: box ADM 1/29217, UKNA; "Captain 'Harpy' Lloyd," *Daily Telegraph*, 8 March 2001.
69. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, p. 308.
70. The green beret was (and is) awarded to those who have completed the Royal Marines All Arms Commando Course. The course is completed by marines and by personnel from other services who are attached to the Commando Brigade.
71. These were British Forces Arabian Peninsula and then, from 1961, Middle East Command (Aden), Near East Command (Cyprus), and Far East Command (Singapore).
72. Sir Jonathon Band [Vice Adm., RN (Ret.)], "British High Command during and after the Falklands Campaign," in *The Falklands Conflict Twenty Years On: Lessons for the Future*, ed. Stephen Badsey, Rob Havers, and Mark Grove (London: Frank Cass, 2005), p. 30.
73. The Joint Warfare Wing was replaced by a new Joint Warfare Staff, located first at the Headquarters Land Forces, then in 1983 relocated alongside the Royal Marines at Poole.
74. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, chaps. 8–9.
75. "Julian Howard Atherden Thompson," sound archive, cat. 28361, reel 37, Imperial War Museum, London. Also see Julian Thompson, *The Royal Marines: From Sea Soldiers to a Special Force* (London: Pan, 2001).
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77. Trevor Taylor, *Jointery and the Emerging Defence Review*, Future Defence Review Working Paper 4 (London: Royal United Services Institute, November 2009), pp. 1, 4, available at [www.rusi.org/](http://www.rusi.org/).
78. Royal Navy, *The United Kingdom Approach to Amphibious Operations* (London: The Stationery Office, 1997).

79. The current Amphibious Warfare Course is provided by the relocated Maritime Warfare Centre at HMS *Collingwood*.
80. The Advanced Amphibious Warfare Course evolved from an earlier course (the Royal Marines International Maritime Strategy Course) that had been taught at the Royal Navy Staff College at Greenwich. The author was director of the course from 1997 to 2003.
81. Fergusson, *Watery Maze*, p. 412.
82. Ibid.
83. William M. Covington [Cdre., RN], "The Joint Force Harrier Concept," in Royal Air Force Historical Society, *The RAF Harrier Story* (Northmoor, U.K.: Royal Air Force Historical Society, 2006), pp. 101–106.
84. Defence Committee, *The Decommissioning of the Sea Harrier*, in Major Procurement Projects, 2001–2002, HC 779, available at [publications.parliament.uk/](http://publications.parliament.uk/); Andrew Sparrow and Benedict Brogan, "Military Chief to Retire Early as Hoon Denies Rift," *Daily Telegraph*, 6 July 2002, [www.telegraph.co.uk/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/); Michael Smith, "Policy Row Made Chief of Defence Quit Early," *Daily Telegraph*, 24 July 2002, [www.telegraph.co.uk/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/).
85. The U.K. Joint Strike Wing, previously known as Joint Force Harrier, was due to remain in service until the arrival of carrier-capable F-35B aircraft around 2018, but was disbanded early as a cost-cutting measure in the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review. HM Government, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, 2010, Cm. 7948.
86. Michael Smith, "Head of Royal Navy Threatens Resignation over Push to Scrap Harriers," *The Times*, 7 December 2008, [thetimes.co.uk/](http://thetimes.co.uk/); Michael Smith, "RAF Launches Dogfight for Control of Navy's Aircraft," *The Times* (London), 21 December 2008, [thetimes.co.uk/](http://thetimes.co.uk/); Rob Dover and Mark Phythian, "Lost over Libya: The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review—an Obituary," *Defence Studies Journal* 11, no. 3 (September 2011).
87. In February 2019, Air Cdre. David S. Arthur-ton replaced Air Cdre. David Bradshaw as Lightning Force commander. Bradshaw had replaced Air Cdre. Harvey Smyth in April 2017.
88. For example, see Deborah Haynes, "Royal Navy and RAF Locked in Dogfight over New Jets That Cannot Fly from Warships," *Sky News*, 1 December 2018, [news.sky.com/](http://news.sky.com/).
89. Joe Gould and Valerie Insinna, "TRANSCOM Head Pushes Back against Air Force Tanker Retirements," *Defense News*, 25 February 2020, [defensenews.com/](http://defensenews.com/).
90. Lynn Williams and Velma Gray, *Defense Primer: US Transportation Command (TRANSCOM)*, CRS Report (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 6 March 2018); Andrew Feickert, *The Unified Command Plan and Combatant Commands: Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 3 January 2013).
91. See Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: Free Press, 1991), esp. pts. 3–4.