

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING?

An Examination of Command Relations
and Major Contentious Issues in Amphibious Operations

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Elective Course on Expeditionary Warfare.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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27 April 2000

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Abstract of

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With the recent publication of Test Pub 3-02, Test Doctrine for Amphibious Operations, a test version of Joint Pub 3-02, Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations, much interest has focused on the appropriate command relationship between the Commander, Amphibious Task Force (CATF) and the Commander, Landing Force (CLF). An examination of historical evidence reveals that the command relationship between the two commanders had little real impact on the real issues that faced them. The allocation and control of air support, whether land-based or carrier-based, is shown to be the major contentious issue in most of the operations examined. A change of the command relations between CATF and CLF would not have made a difference in the outcome as in few cases was land or carrier-based air ever under the direct control of either CATF or CLF.

For the modern Joint Force Commander (JFC) to properly use amphibious forces, he will need to consider the following:

- CATF and CLF equal access to higher headquarters during the planning process.
- How air support will be commanded and controlled in support of the amphibious task force and landing force.
- Whether to use an intermediate echelon common superior (Naval Component Commander or Joint Force Maritime Component Commander) or retain JFC direct control of CATF and CLF.

The implications for the Joint Force Commander (JFC) revolve around clear definition of the type of air support required and who may require that air support from the JFACC, whether CATF, CLF or some other commander. The command relationship between CATF and CLF is not as important as ensuring that all commanders fully understand the priorities of the mission at hand.

Preface

For the past several years, the United States Marine Corps has been arguing that amphibious doctrine was not adequate to meet modern warfare requirements. Specifically at issue is the question of what is the best command relationship between the Commander, Amphibious Task Force (CATF) and the Commander, Landing Force (CLF). This single issue has been at the heart of United States Navy and Marine Corps disagreements since Rear Admiral Kelly Turner was given command of the Amphibious Task Force for Operation Watchtower, the landing on Guadalcanal. Charges by General Holland M. Smith, commander of the amphibious landing forces for most of the Central Pacific campaign, further inflamed the argument by insisting that it was "...the Admirals who wanted to be Generals who imperiled victory among the coral islands."¹

Recognizing this charged environment, an examination of the significant contentious issues that faced the CATF and CLF of past amphibious landings and determining a correlation with the type of command relation that existed between the two commanders, a better understanding of how to approach modern operations may appear.

¹ Holland M. Smith and Percy Finch, *Coral and Brass*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949, p.21.

Background

A long-standing issue for the United States Navy and Marine Corps has been to decide the best form of command relations between the Commander, Amphibious Task Force (CATF) and the Commander, Landing Force (CLF). The current arrangement, now codified in Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations (Joint Pub 3-02)² specifies that CATF and CLF are co-equal during the planning phase reporting to a common higher headquarters. Upon execution of the operation, normally with the embarkation of the landing force on the amphibious shipping, the CATF will assume operational control (OPCON) of the CLF and the landing force. (See Figure 1³) Normally, once CLF has established command ashore, CLF will report OPCON to the higher headquarters or other designated commander.

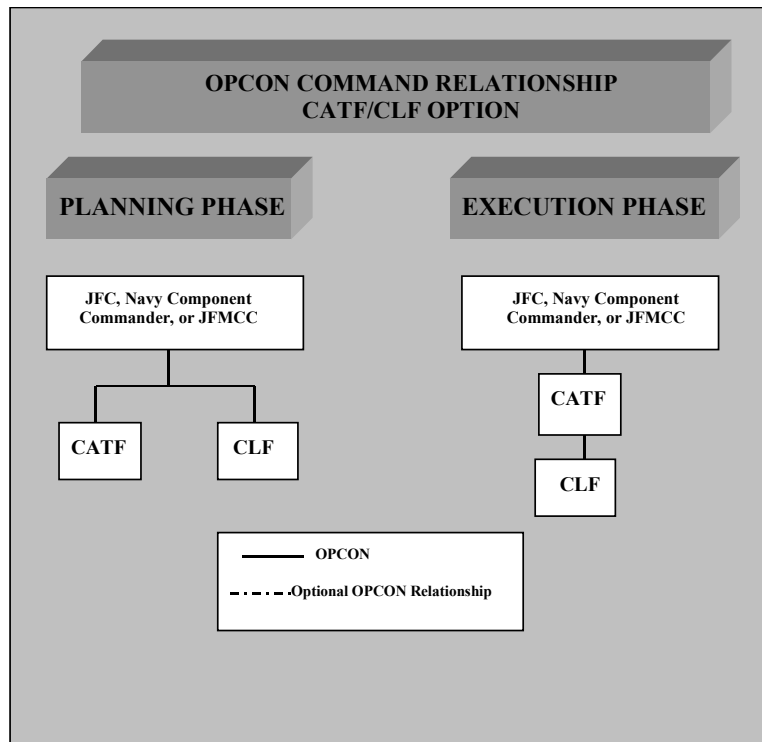


Figure 1

² Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations* (Joint Pub 3-02) (Washington, D. C.: October 8, 1992).

³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Test Doctrine for Amphibious Operations* (Test Pub 3-02) (Washington, D. C., April 2000), p. II-6.

With the release of Test Doctrine for Amphibious Operations (Test Pub 3-02)⁴, a second relationship is being considered. While keeping the original command relationship as an option it presents the Joint Force Commander (JFC) an alternative relationship of "Support Command". Under this arrangement, CATF and CLF remain co-equal throughout the entire operation. During various phases, one or the other will be designated as the "supported" commander with the other in a "supporting" role. (See Figure 2.⁵)

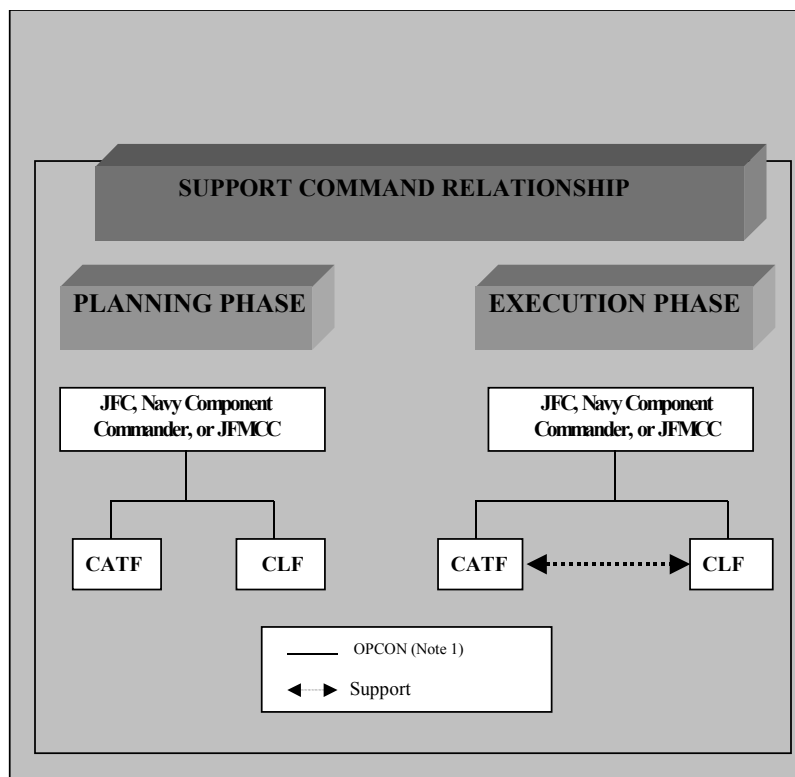


Figure 2

⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Test Doctrine for Amphibious Operations* (Test Pub 3-02) (Washington, D. C., April 2000).

⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Test Doctrine for Amphibious Operations* (Test Pub 3-02) (Washington, D. C., April 2000), II-13.

Methodology

Considering the energy being expended in determining the proper command relationship between CATF and CLF, historical cases were examined to determine what evidence existed to assist in the problem. If the specific regime in place between the navy and ground commander was critical, then examination should reveal any problems. By comparing those problems to the type of regime in place, conclusions should be evident.

To gather evidence, 33 separate amphibious operations were examined. (See Appendix A for complete listing.) The command relationship existing between CATF and CLF was examined and categorized. Then, a review of the major contentious issues was made. Concentration was at the operational level and dealt only with the issues that directly involved the major commanders, to include CATF, CLF, the higher headquarters, and other commands assigned in a supporting role. Throughout the paper, the terms CATF and CLF are used to designate the appropriate commander even in circumstances where the terms were not in use at the time.

During the review three distinct command relationships emerged:

- Cooperation
- CATF/CLF OPCON
- Expeditionary OPCON

Cooperation

Under a cooperative regime, the various commanders are required and expected by a common superior to provide support to each other in a cooperative manner. This method presumes a clear understanding of the mission at hand. It differs from the modern "Supported Command" regime in that the common superior has not granted any subordinate commander the authority to direct the actions of any other.

CATF/CLF OPCON

As described above, under the CATF/CLF OPCON regime, the CATF and CLF are co-equal under a common superior during the planning phase. Upon execution, normally upon embarkation of the landing force, CLF reports OPCON to CATF and remains so through the assault. After CLF has been established ashore, OPCON of the landing force will pass from CATF to the common superior for the remainder of the operation.

Expeditionary OPCON⁶

A special case regime that only occurred during the Guadalcanal campaign (OPERATION WATCHTOWER.) It differs from the CATF/CLF OPCON regime in that CATF was given command authority over the landing force during the entire operation retaining it even after the landing force was established ashore.⁷

Summary of Findings

The details of findings for the operations that were examined are listed in Appendix B. Of the 33 operations, 22 issues were identified. As shown in Table 1, they were spread across all three of the command relations in use during the period in questions.

⁶ The term "Expeditionary" is applied to this based on the research of Theodore Gatchel who coined it as one of a series of command models. See Theodore L. Gatchel, *Eagles and Alligators: An examination of the command relationships that have existed between aircraft carrier and amphibious forces during amphibious operations*. Research Memorandum 1-97. Newport, Rhode Island: Naval War College, 1997, p 3.

⁷ COMINCH, letter, FF1/A3-1/A16-3(5), Ser 00322 of 29 Apr. 1942, subj: LONE WOLF Plan. Quoted in Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, p. 218.

Summary of Findings

Command Relationship	Landings/Operations	Issues
Cooperation	8	7
Expeditionary OPCON	1	2
CATF/CLF OPCON	24	13
Total	33	22

Table 1

A closer look at the issues divides them into three general categories. (See Appendix C for detailed listing by category.) Most involve air support, either land-based or carrier-based. The rest are of a mixed character. In Table 2, the issues are summarized by these three categories showing that the majority of issues were centered on the availability or control of carrier-based air support. Land-based air support was also a problem in some cases, most notably the Sicily and Salerno cases as well as early in the New Guinea campaign, but in general was not as serious a problem as getting access to the naval aviation.

Summary of Issues

Command Relationship	Land Based Air Support	CV Air Support	Other
Cooperation	2	3	2
Expeditionary OPCON	0	1	1
CATF/CLF OPCON	1	10	3
Totals	3	14	6

Table 2

Most of the carrier-based air support issues were merely the lack of access (12 of 14 cases). However, the reason behind the lack of access to the carrier air support in eight of those 14 cases (New Guinea campaign) was the lack of trust, principally by Admiral Ernest King, in the ability of General MacArthur to properly utilize that specialized force. In some

cases, the problem was mitigated by access to small carriers. In two cases (Guadalcanal and Leyte), large aircraft carriers specifically assigned in support of the ATF and landing force did not provide the level of support desired by CATF or CLF.⁸

In the cases in which carrier-based air support was not a problem, a command structure was in place in which the ATF, landing force, and carrier-based air all reported to a common superior.⁹ This command regime, referred to by Gatchel as the "Fleet Commander Model"¹⁰, seemed to resolve most of the air support issues.

The "other" cases are a mixed group, which include a number of issues related to the learning process of how to conduct amphibious warfare. Many of them were resolved shortly after being identified, most notably the problems with CATF directing movements of the landing force (RADM Turner at Guadalcanal) and Corps control of separated landing forces (Major General H. M. Smith at the Gilberts). The issue of how many days of pre D-day naval gunfire preparation and carrier air strikes at Iwo Jima was not resolved to the Marine Corps' satisfaction principally due to other priorities (air strikes on the Japanese mainland) and shortage of assets, principally battleship ammunition, which was being saved for the anticipated landings on Okinawa. While the decision to provide four days of fires vice the originally requested ten was not what General H. M. Smith wanted, he at least had sufficient access to Admiral Nimitz, the commander whose final decision it was to make.

⁸ The terms "large carrier" and "small carrier" are borrowed from Gatchel's *Eagles and Alligators*. As used here large carriers includes CV and CVN type aircraft carriers. Small carriers include CVE, LHA and LHD type ships as well as VSTOL carriers such as Atlantic Conveyor during the Falklands/Malvinas War. See Theodore L. Gatchel, *Eagles and Alligators: An examination of the command relationships that have existed between aircraft carrier and amphibious forces during amphibious operations*. Research Memorandum 1-97. Newport, Rhode Island: Naval War College, 1997, 1.

⁹ In some cases, even some land-based air reported directly to the mutual superior. Most of these involved Fifth Fleet under the command of Admiral Raymond Spruance who commanded the Fifth Amphibious Force (VADM Kelly Turner), the Fifth Amphibious Corps (Lt Gen H. M. Smith), Task Force 58, the fast carrier force (VADM Mitscher) and other forces, to include various land based air forces.

¹⁰ Gatchel, *Eagles and Alligators*, 26.

Conclusions, Observations, and Implications for the Joint Force Commander

The critical issue that stands out is control and access to air support, particularly carrier-based air support. While other issues were found, they usually were corrected shortly after identification. Most can be ascribed to the learning process of amphibious warfare and are now imbedded in current amphibious doctrine.

The common factor revolved around who controlled the air support and who could designate how the air support was directed. In those examples where air support was not an issue, there was a common superior who was usually present and directly responsible for the success of the operation.

In the cases where air support was an issue, changing the command relations between CATF and CLF probably would not have made a difference. This is likely true because air support, whether land or carrier based, was rarely directly in the hands of either CATF or CLF, and then only from small carriers. In all cases where large carrier air was available, it was either under the direction of a common superior or in a "supporting" role.

It became clear by late 1943 that CLF must have the same access to higher headquarters, especially during the planning process, as did CATF. This gave CLF the opportunity to appeal operational issues with which he may not be satisfied. With the exception of Admiral Kelly Turner during 1942, the CATF was always very clear in his understanding that he was required to support CLF and make no decisions unilaterally that may negatively impact the landing force.

A strong and physically present superior could mitigate coordination issues. As with MacArthur, who essentially operated his theater in a service component joint model, he was

often present at the amphibious landing and was able to resolve any command relations problems, particularly concerning the use of air power. Admiral Spruance, as Commander Fifth Fleet (effectively the Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander), was in a position to direct the actions of carrier-based air support of the amphibious operation. It is apparent that a similar role was played by General Norman Schwarzkopf during OPERATION DESERT STORM in resolving differences of opinion between the Joint Forces Air Component Commander (JFACC) and the Army Component Commander.

The modern Joint Force Commander (JFC) will need to consider the following issues if amphibious forces are to be used effectively:

- CATF and CLF equal access to higher headquarters, regardless of command relationship.
- How air support will be commanded and controlled in support of the amphibious task force and landing force. Serious consideration should be given to providing CATF and/or CLF with their own air support or giving it to a common superior who has responsibility for the success of the mission.
- Whether to use an intermediate echelon common superior (Naval Component Commander or Joint Force Maritime Component Commander) or retain JFC direct control of CATF and CLF.

With respect to the issue of the proper command relationship between CATF and CLF, the historical evidence seems to indicate that the specific arrangement was never critical to the success or failure of the operation. In all cases examined, CATF and CLF were able to cooperate. With the single exception of Guadalcanal, where Turner was forced to

retire his ATF upon the withdrawal of Fletcher's aircraft carrier force, the ATF provided all the support required by the landing force.

Given the historical evidence, vice expending much energy on the command relations between CATF and CLF, the JFC must pay close attention to determining how the commander controlling air support, whether carrier-based or land-based, is involved. There is much evidence to suggest that a "Fleet Commander Model" (JFMCC or NCC) should be considered in which a single commander is in command of the ATF, the landing force, and the air support.

While efforts to determine the proper command relations between CATF and CLF are appropriate and do give the JFC more options in how to solve military problems, it should not be assumed that resolution of this matter will fix the air support issue. Deciding between "OPCON Command" and "Support Command" may indeed be a case of "much ado about nothing". The real issue is clearly how to properly use air power in support of amphibious operations.

We found the most important technique of amphibious warfare to be the willingness and ability to cooperate in spite of differences of opinion or viewpoint between individuals, between branches in each Service and between the different Services themselves, including Allied Services. Many different types of tactical elements are involved in amphibious operations. Each type has its own particular use. If they are any good, the men of all those elements believe *they* are the *particular* group who will most contribute to success. Their opinions and efforts must always be considered and appreciated. Conflicts between the different elements (which are inevitable) must be adjusted in order to produce a smooth working team.¹¹

¹¹ Richmond K. Turner, Presentation at the Navy General Line School, 5 December 1949, quoted in Dyer, 930.

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Appendix A

Amphibious Operations Examined

Operation/Landing	Date	CATF	CLF	Command Relations
Veracruz Expedition		MGen Scott	CAPT Connor	Cooperation
Civil War (West)	1862-1863	RADM Foote	MGen Grant	Cooperation
Gallipoli		ADM	Gen Hamilton	Cooperation
Guadalcanal	8/7/1942	RADM Turner	MGen Vandegrift	Expeditionary OPCON
North Africa		RADM Hewitt	MGen Patton	Cooperation
Sicily	7/10/1943	VADM Hewitt	LtGen Patton	Cooperation
Salerno	9/9/1943	VADM Hewitt	LtGen Clark	CATF/CLF OPCON
Woodlark/Kiriwina	6/30/1943	RADM Barbey	BGen Cunningham	Cooperation
Lae	9/16/1943	RADM Barbey	MGen Wooten, AIF	Cooperation
Finschhafen	9/22/1943	RADM Barbey	MGen Wooten, AIF	Cooperation
Arawe	12/15/1943	RADM Barbey	Bgen Cunningham	CATF/CLF OPCON
Cape Gloucester	12/26/1943	RADM Barbey	MGen Rupertus	CATF/CLF OPCON
Saidor	1/2/1944	RADM Barbey	BGen Martin	CATF/CLF OPCON
Admiralty Islands	4/1944	RADM Fechteler	BGen Chase	CATF/CLF OPCON
Aitape	4/22/1944	CAPT Noble	BGen Doe	CATF/CLF OPCON
Humboldt Bay	4/22/1944	RADM Fechteler	MGen Fuller	CATF/CLF OPCON
Tanahmerah Bay	4/22/1944	RADM Barbey	MGen Irving	CATF/CLF OPCON
Toem-Wadke	5/17/1944	CAPT Noble	BGen Doe	CATF/CLF OPCON
Biak	5/27/1944	RADM Fechteler	MGen Fuller	CATF/CLF OPCON
Noemfoor	7/8/1944	RADM Fechteler	BGen Patrick	CATF/CLF OPCON
Sansapor	7/30/1944	RADM Fechteler	MGen Siebert	CATF/CLF OPCON
Morotai	9/15/1944	RADM Barbey	MGen Hall	CATF/CLF OPCON
Gilberts-Tarawa	12/19/1943	RADM Turner	MGen H. M. Smith	CATF/CLF OPCON
Makin	12/19/1943	RADM Hill	MGen J. Smith	CATF/CLF OPCON
Marianas	6-7/1944	VADM Turner	LtGen H. M. Smith	CATF/CLF OPCON
Saipan	6/15/1944	VADM Turner	LtGen H. M. Smith	CATF/CLF OPCON
Tinian	7/24/1944	RADM Hill	MGen Schmidt	CATF/CLF OPCON
Guam	7/21/1944	RADM Conolly	MGen Geiger	CATF/CLF OPCON
Normandy (US Sector)	6/4/1944	RADM Kirk	LtGen Bradley	CATF/CLF OPCON
Southern France	8/15/1944	VADM Hewitt	LtGen Patch	CATF/CLF OPCON
Leyte	10/20/1944	VADM Kinkaid	LtGen Krueger	CATF/CLF OPCON
Northern Attack Force	10/20/1944	RADM Barbey	MGen Irving	CATF/CLF OPCON
Southern Attack Force	10/20/1944	VADM Wilkinson	MGen Hodge	CATF/CLF OPCON
Iwo Jima	2/19/1945	VADM Turner	MGen Schmidt	CATF/CLF OPCON
Okinawa	4/1/1945	VADM Turner	LtGen Buckner	CATF/CLF OPCON
Inchon	9/15/1950	RADM Doyle	MGen O. P. Smith	CATF/CLF OPCON

Appendix B

Historical Review and Findings

Gallipoli

Command relationship: Cooperation

Issue 1: Technical problems with landing.

Numerous problems developed with the techniques and procedures involved in placing a landing force on a hostile shore. These involved the proper construction of landing craft, the use of ramps, naval gunfire support and control of fires and a general inability to communicate between land and sea.

Issue 2: Technical problems with CLF command and control of forces ashore while afloat.

The CLF, General Ian Hamilton, chose to use the Royal Navy battleship, *HMS Queen Elizabeth* as his flagship. Once the landing began, he discovered that he was unable to effectively communicate with his forces ashore as the battleship was not fitted with appropriate signaling devices.

Guadalcanal

Command relationship: Expeditionary OPCON

Issue 1: Supporting carrier air provided insufficient support to ATF and Landing Force.

Vice Admiral Ghormley, Commander South Pacific assigned Rear Admiral Kelly Turner's Amphibious Task Force (TF 62) with Major General Vandegrift's landing force embarked TACON to Vice Admiral Fletcher, the commander of Naval Forces (TF 61) for the execution of OPERATION WATCHTOWER. The carrier-based air, part of TF 61, was to support the Amphibious Task Force enroute to Guadalcanal and

Tulagi.¹² Just prior to beginning the operation, Fletcher informed Turner and Vandegrift that he would only provide air support for two days vice the earlier agreed upon seven days.¹³ After losing a significant percentage of his fighter force and fearing further Japanese attacks that might endanger the carriers, then the only such force available in the Pacific, he chose to retire them from the area after only a day and a half on station.¹⁴ Rear Admiral Turner, after seeing some of his transports damaged severely in an air strike at the Guadalcanal roadstead, was forced to pull his ATF out, leaving Vandegrift and the landing force without navy support.

Issue 2: CATF directed movements of the landing force.

Rear Admiral Kelly Turner, having been assigned command of the landing force in his orders, took that responsibility seriously, directing the movements of various landing forces despite the counter-arguments of General Vandegrift. This issue was resolved in 1943 (in the favor of the Marine Corps) after General Vandegrift returned to Washington as the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Sicily

Command relationship: Cooperation

Issue 1: Air support insufficient to protect the ATF and Landing Force.

Despite assurances by the air component commander that the Air Force would "seal off the beachhead".¹⁵ Thus, no direct control of air support was given to either CATF or CLF for the landing. Requests for direct support "could be submitted with not less

¹² George C. Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer: The story of Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner*. Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972, 290-294.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 300 and Isely & Cowl, p. 116.

¹⁴ Dyer, p.p. 393-5.

than twelve hours notice to a target committee located in North Africa."¹⁶ Both the ATF and LF experienced numerous attacks by German air. No aircraft carriers were assigned in support.¹⁷

Issue 2: Air movements not coordinated with naval or landing force.

Command and control as well as coordination between naval, air and land forces broke down completely on the morning of 12 July 1943 when an airborne follow-on echelon (504th Airborne Regiment and 52nd Troop Carrier Wing) was fired upon by land and naval forces, resulting in 88 deaths, 162 wounded, and 69 missing.¹⁸

Salerno

Command relationship: CATF/CLF OPCON

Issue 1: Poor or insufficient air support for ATF and landing force.

While air support was better organized than for the Sicily operation (HUSKY), it was still unsatisfactory according to Lt. General Mark Clark, Commanding General of

¹⁵ Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II, vol. 9: Sicily - Salerno - Anzio, January 1943 - June 1944*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1954, p. 21.

¹⁶ Commander, Western Naval Task Force, (Vice Admiral H. K. Hewitt), *Action Report: The Sicilian Campaign, Operation Husky, July-August 1943*, p. 18, quoted in Morison, *Sicily - Salerno - Anzio*, p. 22.

¹⁷ Neither the Army nor the Navy were happy with the arrangement for air support. Remembering how effective escort carriers were in supporting his landing in Casablanca, Lt. General George Patton remarked to Vice Admiral Hewitt, "You can get your Navy planes to do anything you want, but we can't get the Air Force to do a goddam thing!" Admiral Lewis E. Denfeld in *Colliers* 25 Mar 1950, p. 46, quoted in Morison, *Sicily - Salerno - Anzio*, p. 22.

¹⁸ Report by General Ridgeway dated 19 May 1944. Quoted in Garland, Albert N. and Smyth, Howard McGraw, *United States Army in World War II. The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*. Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1965, p. 182.

Fifth Army.¹⁹ Vice Admiral Hewitt was concerned enough that he arranged to have some Royal Navy aircraft carriers assigned in support of the operation.

Issue 2: Potential withdrawal from beachhead under fire.

On 13 September 1943, Lieutenant General Mark Clark, Commanding General of Fifth Army, sent Vice Admiral Kent Hewitt, Commander of the ATF, a request to begin plans, as a precaution, to move the US VI Corps from the beachhead and land it to the north of the Sele River to assist the British X Corps. Alternate plans were to be prepared to move X Corps to the assistance of VI Corps.²⁰ Hewitt, now in a supporting role after Clark had established his headquarters ashore, undertook to begin planning for the two courses of action. His subordinates warned him against executing such a plan, as the difficulties were tremendous. Some of General Clark's subordinates, most especially Lieutenant General McCreery, Commanding General of the British X Corps, were also firmly opposed to the need of the operation as well as the difficulty of execution.²¹ Direct communication between Clark and Hewitt was difficult at the time due to Clark's headquarters being in a poor position. The move was never executed, the plan cancelled by General Alexander, the overall ground commander in the Mediterranean theater.²² The military situation ashore was stabilized by late on the 14th or early the 15th of September.

¹⁹ Mark Clark, Diary, 7 Sep 1943. Quoted in Martin Blumenson, *United States Army in World War II. The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Salerno to Cassino*. Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1969, p. 36.

²⁰ Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II, vol. 9: Sicily - Salerno - Anzio, January 1943 - June 1944*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1954, p. 290, 290n.

²¹ Martin Blumenson, *United States Army in World War II. The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Salerno to Cassino*. Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1969, pp. 124-5.

New Guinea Campaign

Command relationship: Cooperation (4), CATF/CLF OPCON (11)

Issue 1: Lack of carrier-based air support.

Only four of the 15 examined New Guinea landings had carrier-based air assigned.

For the Hollandia operation (Aitape, Humboldt Bay, Tanahmerah Bay) Task Force 78 provided eight escort carriers (CVE) on loan from Pacific Ocean Areas. Additionally, the large carriers of Task Force 58 under Vice Admiral Mitscher were assigned in a supporting role. For the landing at Morotai, Fifth Fleet carriers again provided supporting air strikes, but were not under the direct control of Seventh Fleet. In no case was air support ever under the direct control of either CATF or CLF, although General Kenny, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, did provide Air Corps fighter directors to ride ships to control land-based air over the landing areas.

Observation: Presence of strong Commander in Chief mitigated cooperative problems.

The physical presence of General MacArthur tended to mitigate cooperation problems between the ground, air, and naval commanders. Essentially operating his theater in a service component joint model, MacArthur expected his principal commanders, General Krueger, General Kenney, and Admiral Kinkaid to cooperate on the mission at hand. For the most part this was accomplished. During the early landings, CATF and CLF were expected to cooperate. By the Arawe landing a CATF/CLF OPCON arrangement was written into the operation order. Admiral Barbey, the commander of Amphibious Force, Seventh Fleet (TF 76) was of the opinion that, despite any

²² Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II, vol. 9: Sicily - Salerno - Anzio, January 1943 - June 1944*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1954, p. 294.

written order, that in 1943 and for most of the operations in 1944 were by "mutual cooperation" rather than by "unity of command".²³

Marianas

Command relationship: CATF/CLF OPCON

Issue 1: Corps control of separated landings

During the Gilbert Island operation (Betio, Tarawa) the landing force made simultaneous landings at separated sites. Both landing forces were under the command of General H. M. Smith, Commanding General of V Amphibious Corps. However, the ATF was divided into separate attack groups, each under a separate CATF with a landing force embarked. The separated CLFs each reported to their respective CATFs, thus placing General Smith in a position of not much more than an advisor to Admiral Turner, the overall commander. This pattern was repeated for the Marianas operation (Saipan, Tinian, Guam). General Smith wanted the issue of Corps command clarified as it appeared, on paper, that his command of the separated forces had a naval officer (CATF) interposed between him and his subordinate generals. After an exchange of letters between Nimitz and General Richardson, Commanding General, Army Forces, Pacific Ocean Area, the issue was resolved in General Smith's favor.²⁴

Leyte

²³ VADM Daniel E. Barbey to Philip A. Crowl, Olympia, WA 9 Nov 1943, Daniel Barbey papers. Quoted in Gerald E. Wheeler, *Kinkaid of the Seventh Fleet: A biography of Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, U. S. Navy*. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, Department of the Navy, 1995, pp. 347-8.

Command relationship: CATF/CLF OPCON (3rd Fleet supporting)

Issue 1: Supporting carrier-based air support leaving the objective area.

The aircraft carriers of Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet were assigned a supporting mission to the landings in Leyte. Among other missions, the carriers and battleships of Third Fleet were to cover the San Bernardino Strait, which opened onto the right flank of Seventh Fleet and the Amphibious Task Force. On 25 October 1944, Halsey fell for a Japanese ruse and pulled his carriers and battleships north to attack the Japanese aircraft carriers. With the strait unguarded, a Japanese surface force under the command of Admiral Kurita steamed through and attacked Admiral Thomas Sprague's task force of 16 escort carriers. After a desperate and one-sided battle in which two escort carriers, two destroyers and a destroyer escort were sunk, with seven escort carriers, a destroyer and two destroyer escorts damaged, Admiral Kurita, having been led to believe he was confronting the entire American Fleet, chose to reverse course and retreat. Disaster was narrowly avoided.²⁵

Iwo Jima

Command relationship: CATF/CLF OPCON

Issue 1: Pre D-day naval fire support (carrier-based air and naval gunfire)

During the planning process, General H. M. Smith had demanded ten days of pre D-day fires from carrier-based air and naval gunfire. Admiral Spruance had said he could provide three days. Nimitz knew that the ships that would provide the naval gunfire

²⁴ Henry Shaw and others, *Central Pacific Drive: History of the U. S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II, Vol. III*. Washington, D. C.: Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps, 1966, 34-35.

²⁵ Daniel E. Barbey, *MacArthur's Amphibious Navy: Seventh Fleet Amphibious Force Operations 1943-1945*. Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1969, pp. 264-270.

were not available, being tied up in other operations. After a second plea for at least eight days by General Schmidt, Nimitz directed that there would be four days of pre-invasion fires, half that desired by General Smith.²⁶

²⁶ Bill D. Ross, *Iwo Jima: Legacy of Valor*. New York: Vintage Book, 1986, p. 32. General H. M. Smith tells a slightly different story, but it essentially the same as stated above. See Smith and Finch, *Coral and Brass*, pp.

Appendix C

Summary of Issues

The following summarizes the findings in Appendix B and categorizes by command relation regime.²⁷

Cooperation Issues

Gallipoli

Technical problems with landing (O)

Technical problems with CLF C² of forces ashore while afloat (O)

New Guinea

Lack of carrier-based air support (three operations) (CV)

Sicily

Air support insufficient to protect the ATF and Landing Force (LBA) (CV)

Airborne movements not coordinated with naval or landing force (LBA)

CATF/CLF Expeditionary Issues

Guadalcanal

Carrier air provided insufficient support to ATF and Landing Force (CV)

CATF directed movements of the landing force (O)

CATF/CLF OPCON Issues

Salerno

Poor or insufficient air support for ATF and landing force (LBA)

Potential withdrawal from beachhead under fire (O)

New Guinea

Lack of carrier-based air support (eight operations) (CV)

Marianas

Corps control of separated landings (O)

Leyte

Supporting carrier-based air support leaving the objective area (CV)

Iwo Jima

Pre D-day naval fire support (carrier-based air and naval gunfire) (O)

²⁷ (CV) = carrier-based air; (LBA) = Land Based Air; (O) = Other. See Table 2 (page 6).