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## **“Forward...from the start”: U.S. Navy Fleet Deployment Policy, 1775–1996**

Peter M. Swartz

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## **Abstract**

This report was part of a study CNA performed for the Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Fleet, on future options for the numbered fleets. CNA conducted this study in response to frequent requests for insights regarding future force deployment, force employment, and staff sizing for the Navy's operating forces. To better respond to these requests, the researchers compiled the Navy's operational and deployment fleet data into this document. They then used this data to illustrate the range of possible solutions to operational problems, provide lessons learned, and dispel myths and false claims allegedly based on history. This effort aimed to inform future CNA analyses in support of the US Pacific Fleet.

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# Introduction

## The questions

The Navy often asks CNA for insights regarding future force deployment, force employment, and staff sizing for the Navy's operating forces. Recent examples include CINCPACFLT's 1996 requests for analytical assistance in determining future numbered fleet staff requirements and the nature of naval componentcy.

One place to look to gain such insights is past experience; i.e., Where has the Fleet been in the past? How has it been organized? What has it done? Examining past experience cannot provide solutions to current and future problems by itself. It can, however, contribute to those solutions by:

- Illustrating the range of possible solutions
- Providing lessons learned
- Dispelling myths and false claims allegedly based on history

CNA therefore has sought to determine just what the past experience of the Navy has been, with regard to fleet deployments and operations, and to draw insights from the data assembled.

## Scoping the problem

This has not been as easy as CNA originally believed it would be. The *operational* and *deployment* record of the fleet has not been neatly compiled in one accessible data base. Rather, it is hidden within both primary sources (e.g., Reports of the Secretary of the Navy and official fleet histories) and secondary sources (e.g., official public histories and scholarly and popular histories of the Navy and its elements). Naval writers, both official and non-official, are normally interested in discerning and analyzing concepts, policy, plans, administration,

strategy, technology, or tactics – either alone or in combination. Actual deployments of the fleet and the *operational* level of naval warfare is either buried and inter-mixed with these other elements, or ignored.

What we are looking for here is the Navy's *operational* or *deployment* record – how the Navy has been used at the *operational level of war* – not the strategic or tactical levels. By *operational* level of war we mean – as does the Joint Staff:

The level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained to accomplish strategic objectives within theaters or areas of operations. Activities at this level link tactics and strategy by establishing operational objectives needed to accomplish the strategic objectives, sequencing events to achieve objectives, initiating actions, and applying resources to bring about and sustain these events. These activities imply a broader dimension of time or space than do tactics; they ensure the logistic and administrative support of tactical forces, and provide the means by which tactical successes are exploited to achieve strategic objectives.<sup>1</sup>

Typically, U.S. naval forces have operated at the level of operational art organized as *fleets, forces* or *squadrons*.

## Approach

We have adopted a four-step analytical process to answer the questions we want to answer:

- Gather the data
- Lay out the data
- Synthesize the data
- Analyze the data

This publication is the product of the *first three* steps.

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1. *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Joint Pub 1-02), (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, 23 March 1994), 275-6.

## Gathering the data

We went principally to secondary sources. This is because:

- There are lots of good, accessible secondary sources to go to. The Navy does not lack for good historical treatments. In fact, over the last dozen years or so alone, there have appeared at least a dozen high-quality, perceptive analyses of the entire history of the U.S. Navy, as well as numerous more specialized works. Often, the authors of these books and articles have been the leaders in their field, and their data and judgements can be considered authoritative.
- Time and resource constraints did not allow more than a cursory look at primary sources. Ideally, *at a minimum*, we would have looked at every *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (issued annually since early in the nineteenth century), and every annual history of every fleet, numbered fleet and force. We simply have not had the resources to do this.

### Accuracy of chronological details

Every attempt was made to ensure accuracy of the data entries. As secondary sources were the principle sources of the data, however, errors in those sources may well have been duplicated here. Such errors should be errors of detail, however, and should not have affected our analysis, which is conducted at a higher level of abstraction.

Accordingly, while the data presented provides a very useful guide to the nature of the operations that the Navy has conducted, it is not an infallible chronicle of dates and details. A reader should be able to review the data as presented and arrive at conclusions similar to those drawn here, despite occasional flaws in the detailed record. Of course, such flaws are hardly useful, and CNA would appreciate the reader bringing them to our attention, so we might correct our data base.

## Laying out the data

As good in quality as many histories of the Navy may be, none of them focuses on operational history in a way useful to us or to the Navy.

Consequently, we have had to extract data from them and organize that data systematically so that it can then be used.

We elected to initially organize the data through development of an *operational chronology*. This chronology forms the vast bulk of the material presented in this volume. Organizing the data in this fashion makes it:

- Easy to manipulate, add to and modify
- Possible to identify specific *operational eras* in the history of the Navy

### **Criteria**

We divided the chronology into discrete Operational Eras. We define an Operational Era as a period of time when the elements comprising the deployment pattern of the fleet remained pretty much constant, for example:

- The organization of the elements of the fleet
- The mix of forward deployed vs. "home" elements
- The mix of elements preparing for or fighting major wars, vs. elements conducting Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) or Major or Lesser Regional Contingencies (MRCs and LRCs)

### **Operational Eras**

We have identified 17 Operational Eras:

1. Revolutionary War ship and squadron operations and after: 1775-1798
2. Start of the nineteenth century ship and squadron operations: 1798-1815
3. Early nineteenth century squadron operations: 1815-1841
4. Mid-nineteenth century squadron operations: 1841-1860
5. Civil War squadron operations: 1861-1865

6. Late nineteenth century squadron operations: 1865-1889
7. Early Mahanian era squadron operations: 1889-1900
8. Early twentieth century squadron and fleet peacetime operations: 1901-1917
9. World War I fleet and force operations: 1917-1918
10. Interwar period fleet and force operations: 1919-1937
11. Pre-World War II fleet and force operations: 1937-1941
12. Early World War II fleet and force operations: 1941-1943
13. Late World War II fleet and numbered fleet operations: 1943-1945
14. Early Cold War fleet and numbered fleet operations: 1945-1950
15. Mid-Cold War fleet and numbered fleet operations: 1950-1973
16. Late Cold War fleet and numbered fleet operations: 1973-1989
17. Post-Cold War fleet and numbered fleet operations: 1989-1996.

## **Synthesizing the data**

Having displayed the data as a series of chronologies divided by Operational Eras, we then generalize as to the operational characteristics of each era. We chose these particular characteristics based on the tasking we received from the study sponsor, suggestions from other interested Navy organizations, and our own determination of important factors that influence naval operations.

We characterize each era 13 ways:

### **Fleet size and composition**

What was in the fleet?

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

**The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war

**The threat driving the operations**

What was the enemy?

**The strategy driving the operations**

What was the national military strategy that the fleet was implementing?

**Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

**The national and international context**

What was the background condition of the country and the world?

**The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

**The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

What was the nature of the relationship? What were the Marines doing, in general?

**The fleets and joint operational relationships**

What was the nature of the relationships? What were the Army and Air Force doing, in general?

**The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

What was the nature of the relationships? With which navies? Were they formal or informal?

**Fleet headquarters, flagships, and staffs**

From where were the fleets commanded? Were headquarters afloat or ashore, and forward or to the rear?

## **Lessons learned and operational readiness for the next era**

What was the nature of the transition from one era to the next?

### **Analyzing the data**

Analysis of the data can be found in Peter M. Swartz, *Numbered Fleet Operations in the Current and Future Environments: Analytical Insight from Past Fleet Operational Experience*.<sup>2</sup>

### **Further CNA research**

This study is complete in and of itself. It provides an adequate comprehensive data base on which analysis in support of CNA's study of Pacific Fleet numbered fleet options is based. It also provides brief summary judgments on selected aspects of the deployment and operational record over time of the U.S. Navy and its fleets and squadrons. Moreover, it provides graphic representation of that record through a series of original maps. It is based largely on a wide variety of secondary sources, as listed in the Bibliography.

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2. Peter M. Swartz, *Numbered Fleet Operations in the Current and Future Environments: Analytical Insight from Past Fleet Operational Experience* (written 1996), CNA, DIM-2020-U-027242, CNA, 2020.



# General overview

## Fleet size and composition

## Fleet deployment pattern

Table 1 summarizes the fleet deployment patterns over time.

The fleet was normally mostly *forward*. Major exceptions were the Civil War and the Interwar period.

The fleet was also normally *divided*, if not *dispersed*. Even during the Mahanian eras from the late nineteenth century through World War II, the fleet was never as concentrated as the theorists would have it.

## The operational missions

The Navy has carried out a wide variety of missions over time. These missions include:

- Deterring, preparing for, and waging war
- Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW)

Table 2 summarizes general changes in the operational missions of the Navy over time.

Table 3 lists those MOOTW missions still being carried out by the Navy today, and those that were once carried out but are not current Navy missions.

Table 1. U.S. Navy fleet composition and operations, 1775-1996

Operational Era	Organization	Operating areas	Concentration
Revolution & after 1775-1798	Ships & occasional squadrons	Lakes, E. Coast, & forward in N. Atlantic	Highly dispersed
Early Wars 1798-1815	Ships & squadrons	Lakes, E. Coast & forward in Caribbean, Med.	Highly dispersed
Early 19th cent. 1815-1841	Squadrons	6 global forward stations	Dispersed by & within squadrons
Mid 19th century 1841-1860	Squadrons	Forward stations, but also E.Coast	Dispersed by & within squadrons
Civil War 1861-1865	Squadrons	Home: Atlantic & Gulf Coasts, rivers; some forward	Concentrated, by squadrons
Late 19th century 1865-1889	Squadrons	5-6 global forward stations, & E. Coast	Dispersed in squadrons
Early Mahan era 1889-1900	Squadrons	Global forward stations, plus E. Coast	Dispersed by squadrons
Early 20th cent. 1901-1917	Squadrons, then fleets	Far less forward stations; more at home on E.Coast, N.Atlantic	Increasingly concentrated in fleets, especially in N. Atlantic
World War I 1917-1918	Fleets and forces	Most forward in Europe, some at home, in W. Pacific	Dispersed by squadrons throughout theater
Interwar Era 1919-1937	A fleet & forces	At home on W. Coast; some in W.Pac, Carib, Med	Highly concentrated in fleet, forces
Pre-World War II 1937-1941	Fleets & forces	At home on W. Coast, then Pearl; N. Atlantic; forward in W. Pac	Pac Flt concentrated; Asiatic Flt dispersed, LantFlt dispersed by TFs
Early World War II 1941-1943	Fleets & forces	Global forward, mostly Pacific	Dispersed by TFs. Some concentration
Late World War II 1943-1945	Fleets & numbered fleets	Global forward, mostly Pacific	Huge concentrated fleets
Early Cold War 1945-1950	Fleets, numbered task fleets, & forces	Home & forward, mostly N. Atlantic, Med, W. Pacific	Dispersed among fleets and forces
Cold War 1950-1989	Fleets, numbered fleets; few forces	Forward in W. Pac, Med; & home in N. Atlantic, E. Pacific.	Concentrated in 4 numbered fleets
Post-Cold War 1989-1996	Fleets, numbered fleets; few forces	Forward in Med, Indian O., W. Pac	Concentrated in 5 numbered fleets

Table 2. U.S. Navy fleet operational tasks & partners, 1775-1996

Operational Era	Operational Task
American Revolution & after 1775-1798	War in North Atlantic
Early Wars 1798-1815	3 Wars in North Atlantic, Med, Caribbean; some anti-piracy MOOTW
Early 19th century 1815-1841	MOOTW (wide range of tasks-- especially commerce protection -- and regions)
Mid 19th century 1841-1860	MOOTW (wide range of tasks, regions), plus Mexican War
Civil War 1861-1865	Civil War (especially blockade, amphibious, riverine) but some MOOTW
Late 19th century 1865-1889	MOOTW (wide range of tasks and regions)
Early Mahan era 1889-1900	MOOTW, plus Spanish American War blockade and squadron battles
Early 20th century 1901-1917	Preparation for war, plus MOOTW in China, Caribbean; colonial wars
World War I 1917-1918	War, plus MOOTW in China
Interwar Era 1919-1937	Preparation for War, plus MOOTW in China, Caribbean; colonial wars
Pre-World War II 1937-1941	Preparation for War; War; & MOOTW in China, Caribbean, Mediterranean
Early World War II 1941-1943	World War, especially ASW, amphibious operations, carrier war at sea
Late World War II 1943-1945	World War, especially amphibious operations and carrier strikes
Early Cold War 1945-1950	MOOTW, preparation for war
Cold War 1950-1989	Preparation for global war, Korean and Vietnam Wars, MOOTW
Post-Cold War 1989-1996	MRC in Gulf; Preparation for MRCs, LRCs; MOOTW

## The threat driving the operations

What was the enemy?

Table 3. MOOTW Missions Now and Then

MOOTW Missions Still With Us <sup>a</sup>	MOOTW Missions No Longer With Us <sup>b</sup>
Foreign internal defense	Anti-slavery patrol
Peacekeeping surveillance and patrols	Anti-piracy patrol
Show of force	Symbolic transportation of dignitaries
Showing the flag	Indian wars and forced transportation
Freedom of Navigation Operations	Colonial punitive expeditions
Strikes and raids	Protection of businessmen
Maritime intercept operations	Troop transport
Domestic humanitarian assistance	Riverine patrol
Foreign humanitarian assistance	Colonial government
Non-combatant evacuation	Air transport ashore
Protection of shipping	Treaty negotiation
Migration interception	
Counter-smuggling	
Troop equipment transport	
Gesture of friendship	

- a. Adapted from Lester Gibson, CDR Paul Dunne II, with Peter Swartz, *Prolegomenon to any Future Naval OOTW Doctrine, Volume 1: Discussion*, CRM 95-205 (Alexandria VA: Center for Naval Analyses, March 1996), 42.
- b. Reflects the data compiled in this publication. Analysis and presentation is derived from Lester Gibson, LCDR Kevin Lynch, and Peter Swartz, *Incorporating Operations Other than War into Naval Doctrine: Baseline Report*, CRM 94-148 (Alexandria VA: Center for Naval Analyses, October 1995), 31.

## The strategy driving the operations

What was the national military strategy that the fleet was implementing?

## Technology and operations

How did technological change drive operations?

## The national and international context

What was the background condition of the country and the world?

## **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

See Table 3

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

See Table 3

## **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

See Table 3

As can be seen from Table 3, there is a strong contrast between the Navy experience in joint and multinational operations. The Navy often operated with other navies, especially in China and especially conducting MOOTW, even during long periods when the country itself was neutral or isolationist.

## **Fleet headquarters, flagships, and staffs**

## **Lessons learned and operational readiness for the next era**

Was the Navy ready? When?

Table 4. U.S. Navy fleet coordination and cooperation, 1775-1996

Operational Era	Operations with the Marines	Operations with Army & Air Force	Operations with foreign partners
Revolution & after 1775-1798	Naval infantry	Few	French fleet allied, no coordination
Early Wars 1798-1815	Naval infantry	Few	British ad hoc help vs. French
Early 19th cent. 1815-1841	Naval infantry	Few	Ad hoc MOOTW coalitions
Mid 19th century 1841-1860	Naval infantry	Few, but good joint amphib op	Ad hoc MOOTW coalitions
Civil War 1861-1865	Naval infantry	Numerous good amphibious & riverine operations.	Ad hoc naval coalition in Japan
Late 19th century 1865-1889	Naval infantry	Few	Ad hoc MOOTW coalitions
Early Mahan era 1889-1900	Naval infantry	Few except bad war experience	Ad hoc MOOTW coalitions
Early 20th cent. 1901-1917	Colonial infantry, prep. to seize advanced bases	Few	Ad hoc MOOTW coalitions
World War I 1917-1918	Ground army	Transport & protection of shipping	USN largely under RN OPCON
Interwar Era 1919-1937	Colonial infantry, prep. for amphib	Stormy, especially with Air Corps	Ad hoc MOOTW coalitions
Pre-World War II 1937-1941	Preparation for amphibious assault	Stormy, especially with Air Corps??	Ad hoc coalition with British
Early World War II 1941-1943	Amphibious assault	Joint ops the norm. JCS. Component relationships. Few integrated staffs	USN under British OPCON in Mediterranean.
Late World War II 1943-1945	Amphibious assault	Joint ops the norm. JCS. Component relationships. Few integrated staffs	USN under British OPCON in France
Early Cold War 1945-1950	Amphibious assault & MOOTW	JCS. Unified, specified commands established	Ad hoc western coalition
Cold War 1950-1989	Amphibious assault, ground army, MOOTW	Navy under Army in Europe; Korea & Vietnam air route packages	NATO and other formal alliances
Post-Cold War 1989-1996	MOOTW, ground army, amphibious assault	Goldwater-Nichols/CLPowell/PDMILLER/JFACC	Ad hoc MRC coalition, NATO, other alliances

# **The War for Independence and after (1775–1798): Scattered forward and home ship and squadron combat operations on the lakes, in the Caribbean and European waters, and in the North Atlantic by various entities**

## **Operational Overview**

### **Summary**

The Navy of this era was actually many navies: the Continental Navy, individual State navies, private privateers, etc. They deployed and fought mostly as single ships, but sometimes as squadrons. Operations were scattered throughout forward areas and at home, in the North Atlantic, in the Caribbean and European waters, and on Lake Champlain.

Following the Revolution, the Navy was dissolved. From 1783 to 1798 there was no U.S. navy.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

The Revolution was a period of naval organizational chaos. Besides the Continental Navy, the Americans deployed state navies, priva-teers, navies of various armies, and other forces.

The Continentals often chose to fight forward: John Paul Jones's fame rested on his raids in England and his battle off the French coast.

Despite the exploits of the Continental ships and squadrons, it was the French *fleet*, fighting a classic *fleet* action, that won the war at sea for them, off the Virginia Capes (the French were fighting forward, here).

## The operational missions

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war

Most of their operations were single ship actions, although there were a few squadron operations. As a metaphor for the future, the first naval operation run by the Americans was: *forward* (in the Bahamas), *power projection* (amphibious assault and shore bombardment/strike), *in support of – but not jointly integrated with – the Army* (to bring back cannons to the Continental Army), and *successful....* And the commanding officer got in trouble for not being aggressive enough. Except for this one operation, Continental vessels served mainly as commerce raiders until they were destroyed by the British.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Navy had a Marine Corps – it has always had a Marine Corps – to provide ships guards and secondarily to conduct landings and infantry for ship battles.

## **Lessons learned and operational readiness for the next era**

Was the Navy ready? When?

When the Revolution was over, in the ultimate example of post-war belt-tightening and down-sizing the Navy, the Navy was sold off and abolished. A desire to chastise the Barbary pirates stimulated the building of an American Navy at the end of this period.

## **Operational Chronology**

Text in all capital letters indicates major organizational and command and control changes.

**1775**

**April 19. American Revolution begins. Battle of Lexington and Concord**

June 12. **FIRST OPERATION BY A STATE NAVY.** Two armed vessels chartered by the government of Rhode Island, sailing under the command of CAPT Abraham Whipple, capture a tender belonging to a British frigate in Narragansett Bay.

September 2. **“WASHINGTON’S NAVY” CREATED.** General George Washington, as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, charters in Massachusetts ports the first of several armed vessels, commanded by army officers and manned by soldiers, to deploy under Continental pay and control, to attack British transports carrying supplies and troops into Boston. In the following months, other ships are similarly engaged in New York. Before the squadron is disbanded in 1777, it will have included 11 warships and taken 55 prizes.

1775. **“ARNOLD’S” NAVY CREATED.** Another “army fleet” is created on Lake Champlain under Brigadier General Benedict Arnold. It reaches its maximum size in October 1776, when it will consist of 15 small vessels. The engagement of Arnold’s fleet with that of the British was one of the most important naval battles of the Revolution, since it decided the military campaigns of 1776 and 1777.

October 13. **CONTINENTAL NAVY CREATED.** Congress authorizes outfitting of two warships for a cruise of three months against British supply ships. A **Naval Committee** of three members (later increased to seven) is appointed to supervise the work. This committee will be the first in a series of four regularly authorized naval executives of the federal Congress (also including, in sequence, the Marine Committee, the Board of Admiralty, and the Agent of Marine). The active life of this Committee will last until January 1776.

November 2. **Acquisition of a Continental Navy Fleet.** Congress purchases, arms and renames eight merchant vessels. *Alfred*, the largest, the size of a frigate, mounts 24 guns. These eight vessels become the nucleus of the Continental Navy.

November 5. **COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE FLEET APPOINTED.** The Naval Committee appoints Esek Hopkins of Rhode Island, a brother of the chairman of the Committee, to be commander-in-chief of the fleet. Other officers (captains and lieu-

tenants, including Lieutenant John Paul Jones) are subsequently appointed.

November 10. **Foundation of the Continental Marines.** Congress authorizes two battalions of "American Marines." The senior officer is Capt. Samuel Nicholson, now considered first commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps.

November 25. **PRIVATEERING AUTHORIZED.** Congress authorizes privateering against all vessels in British government service. In the course of the conflict, Congress will issue letters of marque to 1,697 vessels, which will take 600 prizes – triple the captures made by ships of the Continental Navy

December 11–14. **MARINE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS.** Committee consists of one member from each of the 13 colonies, to build and fit 13 frigates. This Marine Committee will absorb the earlier Naval Committee.

## 1776

January 5. **First Orders to the Continental Navy.** Congress orders COMO Esek Hopkins, Commander in Chief of the Fleet, to take the fleet to sea to clear the Chesapeake Bay and the coasts of Virginia and the Carolinas of British raiders.

January 25. **MARINE COMMITTEE ECLIPSES NAVAL COMMITTEE.** Congress places with the Marine Committee the direction of the fleet that the Naval Committee had prepared and sent to sea, along with the 13 frigates it was created to supervise. From this time until December 1779, it will be the recognized and responsible executive of the Continental Navy, directing the movements of the fleet.

February 17–April 8. **FIRST OPERATION OF THE CONTINENTAL NAVY.** Hopkins sails from the Delaware. Taking advantage of a discretionary clause in his orders, instead of operating off the American coast, he sets course for the Bahamas. Hopkins lands a force of 300 men under Captain Samuel Nicholas, Continental Marines, which, covered by the guns of his warships, bloodlessly captures two forts and New Providence Island. Captured cannon and munitions are loaded

aboard ship to be carried back to the Continental Army. On the voyage back from the Bahamas, one of Hopkins's ships, *Columbus*, 20, captures the British schooner *Hawk*, 6, off Rhode Island. Other engagements with British warships follow. This operation, in support of the Continental Army, is the first operation of the Continental Navy, the first amphibious operation involving American Marines, and the first operation at sea against enemy warships.

**April 8. Hopkins's squadron arrives at New London, Connecticut.** It never sails again as a unit, for the profits of privateering lure seamen from the Navy, and Hopkins is unable to keep his crews up to strength. All that he can do is send out single ships to attack enemy commerce.

**October 11-13. Battle of Valcour Island.** A Continental squadron of one sloop, three schooners, and 13 gundalows and galleys commanded by Brigadier General Benedict Arnold halts British advance on Lake Champlain, although it is destroyed in the process.

**October 16. Censure of Commodore Hopkins.** Hopkins is censured by Congress for having departed from his instructions in failing to clear the American coast of raiders during his cruise earlier in the year. Hopkins will be dismissed at the beginning of the following year.

**November 19. First Continental ship to deploy to European waters.** Benjamin Franklin and other diplomats arrive in France on board brig *Reprisal*, which goes on to take prizes off France and Spain.

1777

**May 28. Paris Commissioners squadron commerce raiding in British waters.** The American Commissioners in Paris set up their own navy to attack British shipping, using French ports and ships acquired in France. Two brigs and a cutter attack shipping in British waters. These operations will continue through 1779. This is the first American squadron to deploy in European waters.

## 1778

April 22–23. **Whitehaven amphibious raid.** John Paul Jones leads a landing party from the American Commissioners' sloop *Ranger* ashore to burn ships at Whitehaven, on the west coast of England. It is the first time since 1667 that an enemy landing party has set foot on English soil. Otherwise, Jones's ship engages in commerce raiding.

June 17. **France officially enters the war.** Henceforth, the French fleet will be a deciding factor in the war. American naval operations fall off and ship numbers dwindle.

## 1779

July 15. **Continental Navy Squadron North Atlantic commerce raid.** A Continental Navy squadron of two frigates and a sloop cut out 11 of 60 British merchantmen in an attack on a British West Indian convoy off Newfoundland.

July 1–August 17. **Massachusetts Navy Penobscot Expedition.** Under the Massachusetts state government, a force of Massachusetts state navy vessels, Continental Navy ships, privateers, and transports tries unsuccessfully to dislodge the British from their new base in Maine. Massachusetts loses its entire fleet. This is the largest American amphibious operation of the war.

August. **Paris Commissioners' navy North Sea battle.** While raiding British merchantmen, John Paul Jones's converted French merchantman *Bonhomme Richard* defeats the frigate HMS *Serapis* off Britain. This is the American navies' most celebrated victory. Following this victory, operations from France come to a halt.

October 28. **BOARD OF ADMIRALTY REPLACES MARINE COMMITTEE.** The board consists of two members of Congress and three commissioners. The Board of Admiralty will direct the movements of the Continental Navy then in commission until July 1781, during which time the number of vessels in commission will drop from nine to three.

## 1780

January–May. **Continental Navy Charleston expedition.** The Board of Admiralty orders a squadron of three frigates and a sloop to defend Charleston from British attack by sea. Neither the sea nor land defense is successful, Charleston falls, and the squadron is destroyed.

This is the greatest American defeat of the war. Henceforth, Continental Navy operations will be very small-scale.

## 1781

September 5. **The Battle of the Capes.** A French fleet tactically defeats a Royal Navy fleet off the Chesapeake and sends it back to New York. This action allows General Washington, who had coordinated his movements ashore with those of the French Fleet afloat as well as a French Army ashore, to force the surrender of British Army force at Yorktown on October 17, thereby capturing a quarter of the British forces in America and ensuring the fall of the current British government and eventual victory for the Americans.

September 7. **AGENT OF MARINE REPLACES BOARD OF ADMIRALTY.** Congress appoints Robert Morris as Agent of Marine, charged with, among other duties, direction of the movements of the Continental fleet (then numbering three ships in commission). (Congress had been unable to agree on appointment of a Secretary of Marine, authorized in February 1781). Morris will serve until November 1, 1784.

## 1783

March 24. **Recall of the Fleet.** Congress orders the Agent of Marine to recall all armed vessels cruising under American colors, following signing of provisional articles of peace with Britain the preceding November.

September 3. **Revolutionary War ends.** Treaty of Peace signed in Paris. America occupies a seacoast on the North Atlantic from Maine to Georgia, as well as coasts on the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain.

**1784**

**First American merchantman arrives in China.** American commerce with East Asia begins.

November 1. **Robert Morris resigns.** No successor as Agent of Marine is appointed by Congress.

**1785**

June 3. **END OF THE CONTINENTAL NAVY.** Congress authorizes sale of the one remaining American naval vessel. For the next nine years, the nation will have no navy.

July 25. **Algerians seize U.S. ship.** The Boston schooner *Maria* is the first American ship seized by Algerian warships in the Mediterranean, now that American shipping is no longer protected by the Royal Navy.

**1787**

September 17. **THE CONSTITUTION PROVIDES FOR A NAVY.** The Constitutional Convention approves the Constitution. Among the powers of the new Congress is "to provide and maintain a Navy". The new President is to be "commander-in-chief of the navy". The states are forbidden to own ships in time of peace

**1789**

August 7. **The War Department is established.** Its responsibilities include naval affairs, of which there are none initially.

**1790**

August 4. **Foundation of the U.S. Coast Guard.** Congress creates the Revenue Marine, which evolves into the Coast Guard.

**1794**

March 27. **Creation of a sea-going force.** President Washington signs an Act of Congress authorizing construction of six frigates, ostensibly to protect the commerce of the United States from the depredations

of Algerine corsairs, but also to enable the new republic to stand up to Britain and France at sea. Building, outfitting and manning were conducted by the War Department.

**1796**

Peace with Algiers.

**1798**

January. **Tribute Deployment.** The frigate *Crescent*, 36, built for the War Department, deploys for Algiers bearing naval stores in tribute for the Dey.

# **Beginning 19th century operations (1798–1815): Forward ship & squadron combat in the Caribbean & Mediterranean, and on the Lakes & in the North Atlantic**

## **Operational Overview**

### **Summary**

By 1798, world conditions had necessitated the re-creation of a navy. The reborn U.S. Navy engaged in combat operations in three wars: Against the Barbary States (1801-5 and 1814); France (1798-1801); and Britain (1812-1814). Single U.S. Navy ships and private privateers, as well as some U.S. Navy squadrons, fought in forward combat operations in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the North Atlantic, on the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain, and even in the Pacific. Operations in the Gulf and the Pacific were at the time “far forward” operations: The United States had a very small Gulf coastline – and that only since 1803 – and no Pacific coast yet at all.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

The early Navy was often at war and often at war *forward* with the French in the Caribbean (the United States had no Gulf Coast at the time; Florida and the Gulf Coast were Spanish), with the Barbary states in the Mediterranean, and with the British on the Great Lakes and in both the Atlantic and Pacific (although the U.S. would not become a Pacific nation until 1848). The Navy fought usually single ship actions, having had mixed success with squadron operations. Again, there were no American "fleets." In a harbinger of things to come, the Navy made its first intervention in somebody else's civil war – in Haiti – and picked up its first MOOTW mission – fighting pirates.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

The Navy had good ships. The frigates of 1797 were unique. As long as 74s, and with 24- instead of 18-lb. guns, they could outrun anything they could not outfight. They would establish an entirely new class of cruiser, one soon standard in all navies.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marine Corps continued to provide ships guards and secondarily to conduct landings and infantry for ship battles. Since the Navy had lots of ship battles in this period, so did the Marines. Marines also played small but glorious parts on the “shores of Tripoli.”

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

The Army and the Navy largely went their separate ways, but those ways were actually quite similar. Besides fighting the War of 1812, the Army of this period was a frontier constabulary force, performing such essentially MOOTW tasks as the extension of federal authority into the West, Native American control and removal, and the suppression of domestic disorders.

Between the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, the Army was usually scattered along the seaboard and the western and southern frontiers in small posts containing no more than three to four companies. Troops performed physical labor at the expense of military training, constructing posts, fortifications and military roads, and cultivating crops for their own subsistence. They suppressed the illegal liquor trade with the Indians, expelled white intruders from Indian lands, and generally kept the peace along the extended Indian frontier.

Their most important task during this period was Native American removal. In carrying out this duty, the Army faced its first prolonged encounter with guerrilla warfare – the Second Seminole War, from 1835 to 1842, in which the Navy and Marines also participated.

## Lessons learned and operational readiness for the next era

Was the Navy ready? When?

Each war prepared the little Navy for the next. The Quasi-War with France and the naval war with Tripoli forged the American Navy into a combat service and gave it the leaders, discipline and tradition which were to make it an effective fighting force in the War of 1812.

## Operational Chronology

### 1798 (continued)

April 30. **NAVY DEPARTMENT CREATED.** President Adams signs an Act of Congress creating a Department of the Navy and the office of Secretary of the Navy.

May 24. **FIRST U.S. NAVAL VESSEL TO DEPLOY.** The ship *Ganges*, 26, leaves Philadelphia to become the first ship in America's new navy to actually get underway.

May 28. **Quasi-War with France.** An undeclared naval war begins when Congress instructs U.S. warships "to capture any French vessel found near the coast preying upon American commerce." In the course of the conflict the number of American fighting ships in service, including revenue cutters, will reach a total of 54, including 3 frigates and most of the rest converted merchantmen.

They will operate chiefly in the West Indies, normally divided into four squadrons: The St. Kitts or Guadaloupe squadron (largest and most important), the Santo Domingo squadron, the Havana squadron, and the Surinam squadron.

As a de facto ad hoc coalition partner to the U.S. Navy, the Royal Navy acts almost as an ally to the American Navy during much of the war,

standardizing signals with the Americans, and providing mutual logistic support and mutual convoying.

June 18. **FIRST SECRETARY OF THE NAVY TAKES THE HELM.** Benjamin Stoddart begins work as Secretary of the Navy, having been confirmed by the Senate on May 21.

July 9. **PRIVATEERING AUTHORIZED.** Privateering against French vessels is authorized by Congress.

July 11. **Birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps.** President John Adams approves an act "for establishing and Organizing a Marine Corps."

## 1799

February 9. **First victory over an enemy warship.** US frigate *Constellation* under Captain Thomas Truxton defeats and captures a French frigate between the Caribbean Islands of Nevis and St. Kitts.

## 1800

**Haitian Intervention.** (*First USN intervention?*) U.S. Navy squadrons, carrying out national policy, assist Francois Toussaint's forces to consolidate power by blockading arms to Benoit Rigaud. USS *General Greene* bombards Jacmel assisting in the fall of the city to Toussaint.

January–November 1800. **First Southern Hemisphere deployment of the *Essex*.** The new frigate *Essex* deploys from New York to the East Indies and back, by way of the Cape of Good Hope, to escort American merchant ships returning from the Dutch East Indies. En route to the East Indies, the *Essex* becomes the first U.S. naval vessel to cross the equator. On July 1, *Essex* sails from the Sunda Strait, escorting 14 American merchantmen home.

## 1801

February 3. **End of the Quasi-War with France.** U.S. Senate ratifies Convention of 1800, signed in Paris.

May 14. **War with Tripoli.** Declaring that the amount of tribute being paid him by the United States is insufficient, the Pasha of Tripoli declares war.

May 20. **THE FIRST AMERICAN SQUADRON DEPLOYS TO THE MEDITERRANEAN.** The squadron, under Commodore Richard Dale, is to protect American commerce in the Mediterranean and comprises three frigates (including *President* as command ship, and *Essex*) and a schooner.

August 1. **First Action of the War with Tripoli.** Schooner *Enterprise*, under Lieutenant Andrew Sterrett, captures a Tripolitan ship.

## 1802

March 10. **SECOND MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON DEPLOYS.** A new squadron of four frigates and one schooner under Commodore Richard Morris relieves Dale.

## 1803

September 13. **THIRD SQUADRON REACHES THE MEDITERRANEAN.** Commodore Edward Preble's squadron includes two frigates (including his command ship *Constitution*), two brigs, and three schooners. Morris returns to the United States in disgrace.

December 20. **Louisiana Purchase.** America takes title from France to the Louisiana Territory, doubling the size of the United States and giving it a new Gulf of Mexico seacoast at the mouth of the Mississippi.

## 1804

January. **First Gunboats built.** Construction begins on the first two of 176 gunboats advocated by President Jefferson and built 180-1807 to defend the Atlantic Coast, lake ports, and New Orleans, and to combat the Barbary pirates.

July 25. **Eight Neapolitan gunboats and ketches join Preble's squadron.**

**August-September. Blockade and bombardments of Tripoli**

September 9. **Relief of Preble.** Commodore Samuel Barron, flying his pennant in the frigate *President*, relieves Preble as commander of the Mediterranean Squadron. Preble returns home a hero.

**1805**

April 27. **Capture of Derna.** Having marched 600 miles from Alexandria, Egypt, an Arab ground force organized by U.S. consul at Tunis William Eaton and seven U.S. Marines take the Tripolitan city of Derna, supported by fire from a U.S. Navy brig, schooner, and sloop.

June 10. **Peace treaty with Tripoli signed.** A U.S. Navy squadron is maintained in the Mediterranean, however.

**1807**

June 22. **Chesapeake-Leopard affair.** Frigate *Chesapeake*, carrying Commodore James Barron to assume command of the Mediterranean Squadron, is intercepted by British frigate *Leopard*, which fires on her, boards her and seizes alleged British deserters. This was the most conspicuous of several impressment incidents perpetrated by the Royal Navy through out the period of the Napoleonic wars, and leading to the War of 1812. As fallout from this incident, the Mediterranean Squadron will be recalled: For nearly eight years there will be almost no American warships in the Mediterranean.

**1810**

February. **Anti-piracy Actions.** A U.S. Navy ketch captures three small pirate ships off the mouth of the Mississippi. Similar actions will take place over the next several years.

**1812**

June 18. **War of 1812.** Congress votes for war. The U.S. fleet includes 9 frigates, 8 smaller vessels, and many gunboats, charged with defending the maritime frontier, maintaining naval superiority on the Lakes, and capturing enemy warships and

merchantmen at sea. (The Royal Navy includes 120 ships of the line, 116 frigates, and over 800 other vessels.) America also fields 526 privateers.

June 22. **CREATION OF SQUADRONS.** Secretary of the Navy Hamilton orders the fleet divided into squadrons and to cruise off the Atlantic coast to protect American commerce.

June 21-August 29. **CRUISE OF RODGERS'S SQUADRON.** Commodore John Rodgers, the senior-ranking American naval officer, deploys from Boston with a squadron including 3 frigates (*President* as flagship), one sloop and one brig, to raid British commerce in the North Atlantic.

September. **FORMATION OF THREE SQUADRONS.** The fleet is arranged in three squadrons of three vessels each. Given the meager results, however, squadron operations are abandoned, and American warships thereafter cruise singly or, infrequently, in groups of two or three, mostly in the North Atlantic and Caribbean.

October 28–February 28, 1814. **Second Southern Hemisphere deployment of the *Essex*.** The frigate *Essex*, under Captain David Porter, deploys from Chester, Pennsylvania to raid British commerce in the Pacific. *Essex* is the first American warship to round Cape Horn and penetrate the Pacific. *Essex* virtually destroys the British whaling fleet before finally being attacked and captured off Chile by a British frigate and sloop.

**1813**

September 10. **Battle of Lake Erie.** Victory over a British squadron by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, commanding a squadron of nine ships, including a brig (*Lawrence*, the flagship), and two schooners.

**1814**

September 11. **Battle of Lake Champlain.** Victory over a British squadron by Commodore Thomas Macdonough, commanding a squadron of one corvette (*Saratoga*, the flagship), a brig, a schooner, a sloop, and 10 gunboats. This victory saved the United States from British invasion from the north.

February 7. **CREATION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS.** President Madison signs an Act of Congress creating a Board of Commissioners, composed of three post-captains, to be appointed by the President and approved by the Senate to assist the Secretary of the Navy in his duties. After some initial dispute, however, all decisions on ship deployments were to continue to be made by the Secretary. The Board will continue to exist until 1842.

February 17. **Official end of the War of 1812.** Congress ratifies the treaty of Ghent. The Navy comprises about 75 armed vessels and about 240 gunboats and other craft.

March 2. **War with Algiers.** With the end of the War of 1812, Congress immediately declares war on Algiers, following Algerine attacks on U.S. shipping. The Mediterranean policy is revived in full force.

May 20. **SQUADRON DEPLOYS TO THE MEDITERRANEAN.** Commodore Stephen Decatur and three frigates leaves New York to prosecute the war with Algiers.

June 30. **Peace with Algiers.** Algiers relinquishes claims to tribute from the United States. U.S. Navy warships will remain in the Mediterranean, however.

June 30. ***Peacock vs. Nautilus.*** The final naval action of the War of 1812 is fought in the Sunda Strait. The U.S. Navy sloop *Peacock* defeated the British brig *Nautilus*, whose captain had been unable to convince his American counterpart that the war had ended.



# **Early 19th century squadron operations (1815–1841): Global squadron forward presence for MOOTW**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

This era saw the establishment of six squadrons, assigned to six forward stations, for global forward presence and the conduct of a wide variety of Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW), especially commerce protection and anti-piracy operations. Two of these stations were in the Pacific, despite the continuing lack of a U.S. Pacific coast. The U.S. merchant marine during these years was a dominant force in world trade and a major source of American economic strength. While steam propulsion was slowly introduced to the warships of the latter part of the period, sailing ships still predominated, given their great endurance and strategic mobility.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

The practice at first was to send out one or more ships to deal with particular situations as they arose. The recurrent or constant need for naval forces in certain localities, however, led gradually to the establishment of permanent "squadrons" on a number of "stations." Each station was simply a more or less well defined area within which several naval vessels cruised all the time. And the vessels assigned to each station at any given time comprised a squadron. Forward stations were established and maintained first in the Mediterranean, and then in the West Indies, Eastern Pacific, Western Pacific, South Atlantic, and off West Africa.

Operations were nominally by squadrons, but actually were mostly single-ship evolutions. Since the ships of the various squadrons operated singly or in small groups, no real squadron or fleet organization existed. The various squadrons never met for combined maneuvers. This was, in essence, a Navy composed of single ships.

Cruises were long: three-year cruises away from home port were not uncommon.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

The job of the Navy was principally protection of commerce, as this was an era – one of the few – when the American merchant marine was an important part of the U.S. and world economies.

The U.S. Navy was neither designed nor intended for the waging of a major maritime war.

The forward presence was small, but then, the Navy was small: in a 50-ship Navy, most of the fleet was normally forward deployed.

Most missions were MOOTW, and some are still with us: showing the flag, shows of force, port visits, oceanographic research, humanitarian assistance, NEOs, amphibious landings, assisting with diplomatic negotiations, observing foreign wars, and conducting punitive raids.

Others are no longer in the Navy Task List, e.g., asserting sovereignty over territory claimed by the United States, protecting American business people from discriminatory or other unjust treatment in foreign ports, anti-piracy operations, anti-slavery patrol, opening up new markets overseas, missionary protection, carrying diplomats abroad, exploration of unknown seas, and Indian fighting. The most important MOOTW mission of the early period – maintaining the immunity of American ships to search from British vessels – is also no more. MOOTW missions come and go.

And the Navy lost one of its major missions – sea control of and power projection from the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain – through a naval arms control agreement.

## **The threat driving the operations**

What was the enemy?

On the other hand, there was no immediate threat to American national existence that called for the presence of a consolidated fleet on the Atlantic Coast, and the only distant threat – Britain – had a fleet that could not be basted by such a consolidated fleet anyway.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

Commanders on forward stations had operational, tactical, and diplomatic responsibilities, 19th century communications being what they were. It took months for messages to be communicated from

Washington to commanders on distant station, using combinations of fast schooners and overland travel.

## **The national and international context**

What was the background condition of the country and the world?

The end of the war with Great Britain and the return of peace to Europe ushered in a golden era of American maritime expansion. Freed from the threat of capture, merchantmen carried American cargoes worldwide.

## **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

Command of the fleet was simple: the Secretary of the Navy controlled movements of the squadrons and the assignment of ships to them. Forward squadron commanders reported to SECNAV, and that was that.

Squadron commanders usually had fewer ships than they desired, especially ships of shallow draft for the numerous ports they had responsibility to visit. A squadron normally consisted of a ship of the line (or – more commonly – a frigate or two), a few sloops of war, and a schooner or two. (Ships of the line are roughly equivalent to modern battleships, frigates to cruisers, and sloops to destroyers).

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marine Corps continued to provide ships' guards and secondarily to conduct landings and prepare to act as infantry for ship battles. The Marines also fought ashore as a temporary part of the Army in the Seminole War. Since the Navy was forward deployed around the world doing MOOTW, the number of landings started to rise, especially in the new republics of South America.

## The fleets and joint operational relationships

Both the Navy and the Army were deployed as scattered police and patrol forces, the one afloat on distant stations and the other ashore on the frontiers. In addition to frontier constabulary functions and Native American fighting and removal, the Army becomes heavily involved in nation-building: harbor development, improvement of river navigation, and exploration.

## Operational Chronology

### 1815 (Continued)

July 3. **MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON/STATION ESTABLISHED.** Commodore Bainbridge deploys to the Mediterranean, flying his flag in *Independence*, 74, the first ship of the line to show American colors in European waters. In 1816 Commodore Chauncey will succeed to command of the Mediterranean Squadron, flagship ship of the line *Washington*, 74, establishing a permanent US Navy presence in the Mediterranean, based at Port Mahon on Minorca, in the Spanish Balearic Islands. This is the first of a series of a half-dozen overseas U.S. Navy squadrons that will be established during the early 19th century.

### 1816

**NEW ORLEANS STATION.** Commodore Charles Morris is placed in command of the naval force on the New Orleans station and ordered to protect American commerce in the Gulf of Mexico, especially from the depredations of pirates, whose operations are increasing. It will be superseded by the West India Station in 1822.

## 1817

April 28. **DEPLOYMENTS LIMITED ON THE LAKES.** In the Rush-Bagot Agreement, the United States and Great Britain agree to limit naval forces on the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain to four small vessels each – one on Lake Champlain, one on Lake Ontario, and two on the upper lakes. Deployments on the lakes cease to be a significant U.S. Navy concern.

## 1818

January 26. **U.S. PEACETIME PACIFIC NAVAL PRESENCE ESTABLISHED.** Sloop USS *Ontario*, under command of James Biddle, arrives in Valparaiso, Chile. *Ontario* is the first U.S. Navy ship to enter the Pacific in peacetime. (Some writers date the establishment of the Pacific Station from this date).

August 19. **Pacific Northwest sovereignty assertion operation.** Boat crews from *Ontario* proclaim U.S. sovereignty over both sides of the Columbia River, in what will become the Pacific Northwest.

**FIRST U.S. NAVY FOREIGN ASSISTANCE.** Between 1818 and 1820, three U.S. Navy officers are permitted to serve as advisors to the Navy of Uruguay, serving on the *General Artigas*. This marks the first instance of foreign assistance by the Navy.

## 1819

February 22. **Purchase of Florida.** The United States and Spain sign the Transcontinental (Adams-Onis) Treaty, ceding East and West Florida and southwestern Louisiana to the United States and greatly expanding America's Gulf coast.

March 3. **WAR AGAINST PIRATES.** President James Monroe signs into law an act "top protect the commerce of the United States, and to punish the crime of piracy." U.S. Navy vessels are authorized to convoy American merchant ships and to recapture those unlawfully seized at sea. This act will be subsequently cited as justification for Navy deployments to, and actions on, distant stations.

West Indian piracy, especially off Cuba, will be at its worst from 1818 to 1824, and cruises against West Indian pirates will be the chief naval activity of the fleet until 1826.

Summer. **Pacific Commerce protection operations begin.** The U.S. Navy frigate *Macedonian* rounds Cape Horn from the east. She is the first U.S. Navy warship specifically tasked with commerce protection in the Pacific.

## 1820

**AFRICAN SQUADRON/STATION TEMPORARILY ESTABLISHED.** A corvette sailed for Africa with a passenger ship carrying 89 colonists. From this time US naval vessels intermittently visit the African coast and engage in suppression of the slave trade by capturing slave ships. In 1843, following conclusion of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty with Britain in 1842, a permanent African Squadron is established.

May 16. **FIRST U.S. NAVAL VESSEL TO DEPLOY TO CHINA.** The frigate *Congress* deployed from Hampton Roads, Virginia, arriving in China in December.

November 8. **PERU NONCOMBATANT EVACUATION.** Pacific Squadron frigate USS *Macedonian* evacuates 91 U.S. and British citizens from Callao, Peru, during Chile's expedition to liberate Peru from the Spanish.

## 1821

**PACIFIC SQUADRON/STATION ESTABLISHED.** Commodore Charles Stewart is ordered to the west coast of South America to protect US commercial and whaling interests during the revolt of Spain's South American colonies. His flagship is the ship of the line *Franklin*. The station will include all the Pacific coast of the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific generally to the 180th meridian. Squadron operations will generally concentrate off Chile and Peru until after the Mexican War. A permanent presence, including a depot/store ship, will be maintained in South American ports until the end of the

nineteenth century. The squadron, occasionally redeployed and reorganized several times, will be disestablished in 1907.

## 1822

March 26. **WEST INDIA SQUADRON/STATION ESTABLISHED.** American naval vessels had operated in the Caribbean before the war of 1812. On this date, however, Commodore James Biddle is given command and charged with protecting American shipping and suppressing piracy off the coasts of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Central America, given the weakness – or reluctance – of the Spanish authorities in those areas. The force assigned to him consists of four frigates, two sloops, two brigs, five schooners, and a gunboat. The squadron will conduct numerous operations against pirates especially before 1828, during which 67 pirate vessels will be seized or destroyed. The squadron will disappear as a separate entity and merge with the newly established Home Squadron in 1841.

## 1823

**FLEET COMPOSITION.** The Fleet operates only three ships more than 36 guns, and 27 of 30 guns or less.

March. **PACIFIC SHORE FACILITY ESTABLISHED.** The Pacific Squadron constructs a supply storehouse at Valparaiso. First U.S. Navy presence ashore on the Pacific Coast and an indicator of the permanence of the U.S. Navy presence in the Southeast Pacific.

December 2. **Monroe Doctrine enunciated.** President Monroe declares the Americas closed to further European colonization. The principal current support for the Doctrine, however, will be the Royal Navy, since Britain does not want to see Spanish authority reasserted in Central or South America.

## 1826

April 5. **BRAZIL SQUADRON/STATION AUTHORIZED.** Congress authorizes the Squadron under an Appropriations Act, to protect U.S. interests in view of the conflicts among Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, and specifically in the wake of an illegal blockade of Rio de

la Plata ports by Brazil, then engaged in a war with Argentina. The squadron will normally consist of three to five ships, although it will expand occasionally during crises, with a permanent supply center at Rio de Janeiro. It will also have responsibilities in and off Africa except for years when an African Squadron is in operation. With a few interruptions, the squadron will remain in existence until December 1904.

April 11. **Ship deploys to Brazil Station.** USS *Boston* deploys to the South Atlantic, followed by USS *Macedonian* on June 13. They will join USS *Cayne*, which had been sent independently to the region in December 1825. Commodore James Biddle is the first commander of the Station, whose headquarters are established at Rio de Janeiro.

September 3. **FIRST U.S. NAVY CIRCUMNAVIGATION.** The new ship sloop *Vincennes* deploys for the Pacific to become the first U.S. naval vessel to deploy around the world. She returns home in June 1830.

## 1827

October-November. **Anti-piracy operations in the Mediterranean.** Mediterranean Squadron ships conduct operations in the Eastern Mediterranean against Greek pirates, during the war for Greek independence from Turkey.

## 1831

August 28. **EAST INDIES DEPLOYMENT.** The frigate *Potomac* deploys from Sandy Hook for the East Indies to protect American commerce from Sumatran pirates. *Potomac* will capture and burn the Sumatran pirate town of Kuala Batu in February 1832.

## 1832

**Brazil Station ad hoc coalition landing in Uruguay.** On the Brazil Station, USS *Enterprise* puts an armed landing party ashore at Montevideo to protect the customs house during a period of near anarchy. This landing was coordinated with a Royal Navy warship.

January 1. **Landing in the Falklands.** The Brazil Station sloop *Lexington* lands a party of sailors and marines to obtain redress for the seizure of two American whalers in the Falkland Islands, then nominally under Argentine administration. The Argentine presence in the Falklands is ejected, leading to a diplomatic crisis with Argentina and assumption of diplomatic duties vis-a-vis that country by Brazil Station naval officers until 1844.

March 20. **First U.S. Far Eastern Treaty.** A treaty of commerce between the United States and Siam is concluded by the captain of the U.S. sloop *Peacock*.

October 31. **Landing in Argentina.** A landing party from the Brazil Squadron sloop *Lexington* is sent ashore at Buenos Aires to protect the U.S. consulate and commercial interests.

## 1835

**EAST INDIA SQUADRON/STATION ESTABLISHED.** Commodore E. P. Kennedy commands two vessels, a sloop, and a schooner. While this is the sixth U.S. Navy cruise to the East Indies, it is the first in which the senior officer is authorized to fly the Commodore's pennant. Hong Kong will be its usual base because of its superior communications facilities.

December 17. **Pacific Squadron landing in Peru.** The marine detachment of the Pacific Squadron frigate *Brandywine* is landed to protect the U.S. consulate in Peru. The Marines are withdrawn on January 24, 1836.

December 28. **Second Seminole War begins.** The largest Indian war fought by the United States east of the Mississippi and the only one in which the U.S. Navy will play a significant role. Naval operations will include a blockade of southern Florida by the West India Squadron and patrols, raids and landings by sailors and marines, continuing until the lengthy war's end seven years later in 1842.

**1836**

**Mediterranean Squadron Naples show of force.** At President Jackson's direction, the Mediterranean Squadron applies pressure on the Neapolitans, who are stalling on a debt due to the United States. Five Mediterranean Squadron cruisers enter the Bay of Naples; with the arrival of the fifth, the Neapolitans decide to pay. This is to be one of the few occasions – Perry's Japan mission is another – when a whole Squadron will act in concert.

**1837**

December 13. **Steam warship joins the fleet.** The side-wheel steamer *Fulton II* begins to cruise along the Atlantic Coast. Under-powered, mechanically inefficient, and lightly armed, she nevertheless lays the foundation of the American naval steamship fleet. The vulnerability of her side wheels will be mitigated by the introduction of the screw propeller within a decade.

**1838**

August 19–July 6, 1842. **WILKES EXPEDITION.** A scientific expedition consisting of two sloops (command *ship Vincennes*), one brig and three other vessels to explore the Pacific. Officially designated the U.S. Exploring Expedition, it is the first large operation of its kind conducted by the Navy. Among other accomplishments, the expedition charts 280 islands and discovers Antarctica.



# **Mid-19th century squadron operations (1841–1860): Global squadron forward presence for MOOTW, a new Home Squadron for national defense off the coast, and joint expeditionary combat operations**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

In 1841 a Home Squadron for North Atlantic naval defense was created, due to a war scare with Britain. When the war scare subsided, however, the Home Squadron endured, and formed the nucleus of the force that conducted – with the Army – successful joint expeditionary operations during the Mexican War. Five squadrons remained forward stationed around the world, providing a continuing forward naval presence and conducting Military Operations other than War. Steam power continued to be slowly introduced into the fleet.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

Something new gets added in 1841 to the "distant stations." A war scare with Britain triggers establishment of a Home Squadron off the East Coast (there is no "west coast"... yet). The Home Squadron has no more than a tiny handful of ships, but does represent a departure from the deployment pattern of distant stations only, in effect since 1815. Now a dedicated force to defend the coast and its commerce co-exists with the distant stations.

The existence of the Home Squadron provides another operational benefit. It acts as a nucleus for the creation of larger forces as need for war in North America. Thus an augmented Home Squadron made the landings at Vera Cruz during the Mexican War. And it was the Home Squadron that would form the nucleus of the blockading squadrons at the start of the Civil War.

The period is also marked by a revitalization and expansion of the West African Squadron, and increased enforcement of anti-slavery policies, subsequent to the signing of the Webster-Ashburton treaty of 1842 with Britain.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

MOOTW overseas not only continues, but the pace quickens as America grows and expands its worldwide trade. When war broke out with Mexico, demonstrating its great flexibility, the Navy called in some of its distant ships, built and bought others, and conducted a blockade and a series of textbook-perfect joint amphibious operations with the Army.

Of course, it helped that Mexico had no Navy. For that matter, even the Latin American countries that had navies didn't send them very far afield. In naval matters, as in so much else, the U.S. was not much of a role model for the Latinos. The United States was different: a big

New World country that acted in naval matters like a medium-sized Old World country.

American operations overseas didn't end just because of the war with Mexico. As in all America's wars, the Navy had to continue to conduct MOOTW and other low-end operations in other theaters simultaneously with helping the Army to fight the big war of the moment (in this case, a diplomatic operation in Japan). "Multicrisis" are normal for the Navy.

The Home Squadron landed Marines in several small amphibious assaults on the Mexican Coast, although Marine participation in the big landing at Vera Cruz was minor. Pacific Squadron marines were landed during the operations in California. A Marine regiment also fought ashore in the campaign for Mexico City as a temporary part of the Army (fighting for the "halls of Montezuma").

After conclusion of the Mexican War, the deployment pattern of the prewar period holds, more or less. Despite acquisition of a Pacific coastline, the Pacific Squadron (ancestor of the Pacific Fleet and Third Fleet) remains a backwater force, a situation that will continue until 1923. The East India Squadron far forward (ancestor of the Seventh Fleet), however, stays very busy.

The big operation of the latter end of the period is the Expedition to Paraguay, with 19 ships (about the size of the Fifth, Sixth, or Seventh Fleets in 1996). It is a big success, but is unsung and unremembered – standard for overseas U.S. Navy expeditionary operations in peacetime.

The huge U.S. merchant marine begins to decline in the 1850s, a process that will be greatly accelerated during the Civil War. The merchant marine's great glory is its unsurpassed clipper ships, but these will be eclipsed during the replacement of sail by steam, and by the European lead in steamship design after the Civil War.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

A relatively large amount of new construction takes place during latter part of the period. Thirty steamers are added to the fleet between 1854 and 1859. Six of these are first-class steam frigates with screw propellers; twelve are steam sloops with propellers. This is essentially a deep-water Navy, unprepared for inshore, coastal, or riverine warfare.

## **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

Communications with the distant stations continue to be difficult, and commanders continue to exercise enormous latitude and autonomy. And Commanders could also screw up without severe penalty, e.g., the erroneous U.S. Navy seizure of Monterey when the U.S. was at peace with Mexico.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marine Corps continued to provide ships guards and conduct landings. Since the Navy stays forward deployed around the world doing MOOTW, the number of landings continues to rise, especially in South America and the Far East. In one decade American landing parties go ashore twice in Buenos Aires, twice in Montevideo, and five times in Nicaragua. They beat back an Indian attack at Seattle, landed twice to punish Fiji Islanders, and went ashore to protect American

lives and property in Portuguese Africa. The largest landings, however, were made in China by the East India Squadron.

### **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

Joint coordination in the field during the Mexican War was good: Relations between the naval and ground force commanders were generally excellent. The landing at Vera Cruz is generally considered one of the high-water marks of joint cooperation in American military history.

The Navy is principally in a supporting role to the Army in these joint operations. The War Department, in fact, bought, built, and leased most transports and other shipping to conduct these operations.

### **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

Squadron commanders can and do conclude local ad hoc naval alliances, especially with the Royal Navy.

## **Operational chronology**

### **1841**

August 1. **HOME SQUADRON/STATION ESTABLISHED.** In response to rising Anglo-American tensions, an Act of Congress mandates a home squadron of eight vessels to cruise along the coasts of the United States, although naval vessels have often done so earlier. The West India Squadron disbands and merges with the Home Squadron, which also provides naval presence in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico.

The Home Squadron will evolve into the North Atlantic Squadron of the 1890s and the Atlantic Fleet of the twentieth century.

**Deployment of the *Delaware*.** The Brazil Station is augmented by ship of the line USS *Delaware*, 74, apparently to force Brazilian settlement of American merchant claims. *Delaware* will be replaced by ship of the line *Columbus*, 74, in 1843.

**1842**

**August 9. Multi-national West African maritime interception operations called for in Webster-Ashburton Treaty.** A treaty between the United States and Great Britain settles the long-standing controversy over disputed territories on the American-Canadian frontier and provides that each country will maintain a naval squadron off the west coast of Africa to prevent the slave trade from being carried on under its flag. The treaty calls for joint cruising of U.S. and British warships off the coast of Africa. If a slaver hoists U.S. colors, she will be pursued by a U.S. ship; if she shows any other colors, she will be pursued by the British.

Article 8 of the treaty provides that both the United States and Great Britain should "maintain in service, on the coast of Africa, a sufficient and adequate squadron or naval force of vessels, of suitable numbers and descriptions, to carry in all not less than 80 guns, to enforce separately and respectively the laws, rights and obligations of each of the two countries for the suppression of the slave trade."

Until 1857, however, the U.S. squadron – based on the Cape Verde Islands – will never consist of more than seven ships, and the average will be less than five. The British squadron, on the other hand, never numbers less than 122 and averages 18. The U.S. Navy is as concerned with protecting the growing American-West African commercial trade and the sovereignty of the U.S. vessels from search by the British, as it is in suppressing the slave trade. Between 1837 and 1862, U.S. officers will have arrested only 106 vessels for violation of the slave trade acts, an average of four a year.

Despite the treaty, the U.S. Navy Home Squadron, created during the "war scare" with Britain of the preceding year, is retained.

August 31. **BUREAU OF NAVIGATION ESTABLISHED.** An Act of Congress repealed the law establishing the Board of Commissioners and in place of the board substituted five naval bureaus responsible to the Secretary. The chiefs of bureaus are not constituted into a corporate entity, and none has responsibility for operational matters. The Secretary, as always, continues to send orders to squadron commanders and ship captains.

The Bureau of Navigation, however, while focused on personnel administration, would also come to be used, for lack of any other agency for that purpose, as an office of naval operations. It would later come to receive and handle all records and reports of squadrons and ships, and prepare and issue all general and special orders and changes in Navy Regulations. It would lose these functions in 1909 to a new Aid for Operations and a new Division of Operations of the Fleet.

October 19-21. **Temporary Occupation of Monterey.** Mistakenly believing that the United States has gone to war with Mexico and that Britain or France were about to seize California, Commodore Thomas Catesby Jones, commander of the Pacific Squadron based at Callao, Peru, seizes Monterey, in the Mexican province of Upper California, with landing parties from one frigate and one sloop. Jones withdraws after discovering the U.S. is not at war with Mexico. As a consequence, he is relieved of command of the Pacific Squadron and ordered home, but then exonerated. He will return again to command the Squadron.

## 1843

**AFRICAN STATION REVIVED.** Following conclusion of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty with Britain in 1842, an African Squadron as re-established to suppress the slave trade and capture slave ships, although anti-slavery patrols had been conducted intermittently since 1820. The Squadron will not survive the American Civil War.

## 1844

September 29. **Argentina/Uruguay captures.** Brazil Squadron frigate USS *Congress* seizes Argentine and Uruguayan navy ships after a U.S.

merchant ship is fired upon by Uruguayans, during an Argentine blockade of Montevideo, Uruguay. The ships will later be released.

## 1845

**Screw steam warship joins Home Squadron.** USS *Princeton*, the world's first propeller-driven warship, joins the fleet. The screw propeller solves the problem of vulnerability of side wheel paddles on steamers. *Princeton* will stay with the Home Squadron through 1847, then deploy to the Mediterranean for a couple of years.

**May-October. Mexican War Scare fleet deployments.** In the wake of the American annexation of Texas, the Secretary of the Navy orders the Commander of the Home Squadron to Vera Cruz, diverts the Mediterranean Squadron to Texas, and directs the Pacific Squadron to concentrate in Mexican waters.

**October. Brazilian emperor cruises.** Brazilian Emperor Dom Pedro II and his empress cruise on USS *Constitution* from Rio de Janeiro to Florianopolis, Brazil.

## 1846

**April 23. Mexican War begins.** Mexico declares war on the United States.

**May 14. HOME SQUADRON BLOCKADE OF MEXICO.** Commodore David Connor, commanding the Home Squadron, proclaims a blockade of the Mexican Gulf ports of Matamoros, Tampico, Alvarado, and Veracruz. Not a single Mexican naval vessel will put to sea during the war. Besides the blockade, naval expeditions will also be launched up the Alvarado, Tabasco, Panuco, Tuxpan, and Coatzacoalcas Rivers.

**June 15. Oregon Country Cession.** The United States and Great Britain sign the Treaty of Washington dividing the Oregon Country between them. The United States becomes a Pacific power, obtaining an extensive Pacific coastline, including Puget Sound, up to the 49th parallel.

July 7. **Landing in California.** Commodore John D. Sloat, commander of the Pacific Squadron, lands seamen and marines from a sloop to occupy Monterey, California, beginning U.S. naval actions against Mexico on the Pacific Coast. An army unit under General Fremont also enters Monterey. Fremont and Sloat's successor, Commodore Stockton, agree that Fremont will retain operational control over the army contingent while Stockton exercises overall authority.

Landings will also be made at San Francisco, Yerba Buena, San Diego, Santa Barbara, San Pedro, and Los Angeles in July and August 1846.

July 20. **Visit to Japan.** Commodore James Biddle anchors in Edo (Tokyo) Bay with the ship of the line *Columbus* and the sloop *Vincennes*, in an unsuccessful attempt to open diplomatic relations with Japan. His vessels are the first American warships to visit that country.

## 1847

March 9. **Home Squadron Vera Cruz landing and bombardment.** Commodore Conner's Home Squadron bombards Veracruz, Mexico, then lands 8,600 of General Winfield Scott's men on Collado Beach at Veracruz in less than five hours, with no opposition and without the loss of a single life. Subsequently, naval cannon are brought ashore and naval crews help bombard Vera Cruz.

This is the first large-scale amphibious operation conducted by the U.S. Navy and a model of its kind. It is, in fact, the largest U.S. amphibious operation conducted until the landings in Morocco in 1942. And it is the first landing in American military history to use specially designed landing craft. While there were some problems in planning and in inter-service coordination of forces, and no unified command structure, personal rapport among Army and Navy commanders was good.

November 11. **Pacific Squadron capture of Mazatlan.** A landing party from two Pacific Squadron frigates and a sloop occupies and garrisons Mexico's most important Pacific port. Landings are also made at other Pacific locations.

## 1848

February 2. **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.** Mexico recognizes the American claim to Texas and also cedes what is now the southwestern United States. The United States acquires more Gulf and Pacific sea-coast.

April 8-May 10. **Sea of Galilee and Dead Sea Survey Expedition.**

## 1849

August 16. **U.S. ASTRONOMICAL EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE.** Deployment from New York will be completed at Santiago, Chile, in the summer of 1852, when the U.S. Navy will set up an observatory at Santiago for the study of Mars and Venus. Practical instruction will also be given to Chilean students, and the expedition's buildings and instruments sold at cost to the Chilean government, forming the basis of Chile's National Observatory. Strawberry seeds collected and sent to the U.S. form the basis of today's agricultural industry.

## 1850

May 26. **FIRST GRINNELL EXPEDITION DEPLOYS.** Two specially outfitted brigs deploy to the Arctic to search for the British Franklin Expedition, lost since 1847. They return empty-handed, after much hardship, in 1851.

## 1851

May 21. **Herndon Expedition.** U.S. Navy officers and men leave Lima, Peru to explore the Amazon Basin, to determine the navigability of the Amazon River. They will reach Para (now Belem) Brazil on April 11, 1852

August 6. **INDIAN OCEAN OPERATIONS.** A U.S. Navy sloop shells Johanna (now Grand Comoro) Island to obtain an indemnity from its king for the temporary imprisonment of a New England merchant skipper.

## 1852

February 3 and September 17. **Landings in Argentina.** Sloop USS *Jamestown* and frigate USS *Congress* of the Brazil Squadron land Marines at Buenos Aires, Argentina to protect American citizens during the fall of the Rosas government. British and French armed forces are also landed.

## 1853

January 19. **Deployment to South America.** The side-wheel gunboat *Water Witch* deploys from Baltimore to explore and survey the River Plate and its tributaries. She will return home on February 3, 1856, having explored the region, generally opening it to commerce, and becoming embroiled in several crises, precipitating the Punitive Expedition of 1859 to Paraguay.

March 11. **Landing in Nicaragua.** Marines land from a Home Squadron sloop at San Juan del Norte (Greytown) to protect American citizens and property. The Squadron will maintain a ship at Greytown through much of the year.

May 30. **SECOND GRINNELL EXPEDITION.** An unofficial deployment to the Arctic, ending in the loss of a brig but survival of the crew 1855.

June 11-October 19, 1855. **North Pacific Surveying and Exploring Expedition.** Charting of coasts and islands from the Aleutians to Japan and Hawaii.

June 21. **Kosztka incident.** Face-off at Smyrna, Turkey, between a Mediterranean Squadron sloop and an Austrian Navy brig over Austrian seizure of a naturalized Hungarian-American, who was eventually freed.

July 8. **East India Squadron expedition to Japan.** Commodore Matthew C. Perry and a squadron of two side-wheel steamers (one is his flagship), and two sloops enters Edo (Tokyo) Bay to establish relations with Japan. Perry had deployed from Norfolk on November 24, 1852. A week later he sails for China. As in Naples in 1836, this will be one

of the few times when the ships of an entire U.S. squadron will act in concert.

## 1854

**PACIFIC SQUADRON RE-DEPLOYS.** With establishment of a naval base at Mare Island, California becomes the primary base for the Pacific Squadron, although a subsidiary resupply depot will be maintained at Callao, Peru, until nearly the end of the century. The Squadron will be the only distant station not disestablished during the American Civil War.

January 19. **Cyane Expedition to Panama.** Officers and men from the sloop *Cyane* cross the Isthmus of Panama (with great hardship) to reconnoiter a route for an interoceanic canal.

February 13. **Perry returns to Japan.** With three steamers, four sloops, and a store ship, he negotiates the Treaty of Kanagawa, opening Japan to the western world.

April 4-5. **Landing in China.** An East India Squadron sloop lands a party at Shanghai and joins with a British naval detachment to protect foreign concessions.

June. **PACIFIC COAST NAVAL BASE CREATED.** The Mare Island Navy Yard is set up near San Francisco.

July 11. **Treaty of Naha.** Commodore Perry concludes a treaty of peace and amity with the regency of the Loo Choo (Ryukyu) Islands.

July 13. **Nicaragua landing and bombardment.** A Home Squadron sloop bombards Greytown and lands marines, who burn much of the town, to protest the arrest of the U.S. minister and enforce an indemnity to an American company for damages.

November 17. **Landing on Okinawa.** An East India Squadron sloop lands sailors and marines on Okinawa to enforce provisions of the Treaty of Naha.

## 1855

February 1. **Paraguay incident.** Paraguayan fort fires on USS *Water Witch*, killing the helmsman and triggering an American expedition against Paraguay in 1859.

May 19. **Landing in China.** An East India Squadron steamer lands Marines at Shanghai, China, to protect American interests.

August 4. **East India Squadron ad hoc coalition anti-piracy operations.** An East India Squadron sidewheel steamer and a Royal Navy sloop destroy pirate junks off Hong Kong and Macao.

August 28 and November 27. **Landings in Uruguay.** Marines from a Brazil Squadron sloop land at Montevideo, Uruguay, to safeguard Americans and, with landing parties from three other navies, guard foreign custom houses and consulates during an insurrection.

September 12 and 22, October 28-31. **Landings on Fiji.** Landing parties from a U.S. Navy sloop compel the King of Vitu Levu to sign a treaty promising to compensate American citizens for destruction of their property. They burn three villages when he does not honor the treaty.

## 1856

January 26. **Pacific Squadron anti-Indian operations.** Fire support and a landing party from a Pacific Squadron sloop help settlers of Seattle, Washington repel a Native American attack.

April 16. **Privateering abolished** In the Declaration of Paris, 51 nations, including all the major European maritime states but not the United States, agree to outlaw privateering. they also agree that naval blockades, to be binding, must be effective; i.e., maintained by a force sufficient really to prevent access to the coast of an enemy.

September 20. **Home Squadron Landing in Panama.** A Home Squadron frigate and a sloop land sailors and marines in Panama City to protect American citizens during disturbances in the Colombian province of Panama.

October 23. **East India Squadron landing in China.** Landing parties from two East India Squadron sloops go ashore at Canton, China, to protect American lives and property.

November 15-22. **East India Squadron China amphibious assault operation.** The Chinese Barrier Forts commanding the Pearl River below Canton fire on two East India Squadron sloops attempting to withdraw the detachment landed in October. American sailors and marines land, storm, and capture the Barrier Forts, supported by naval gunfire from the sloops.

## 1857

December 8. **Landing and evacuation in Nicaragua.** USS *Wabash* sends marines and sailors ashore at Greytown to force the surrender of William Walker and his filibusters. Earlier, on April 25, USS *St. Marys* had evacuated women and children from Walker's headquarters at Rivas. The continued threat of filibusters leads the Navy to station ships at Nicaragua through the rest of the 1850s.

## 1858

January 2. **Landing in Uruguay.** Brazil Squadron sloops land marines in Montevideo, Uruguay, to protect the consulate, in cooperation with British marines.

April. **Intervention in Nicaragua.** A sloop secures the release of the captured filibuster Henry Kinney and his band and transports them to Panama, after their failure to seize Greytown and the Mosquito Kingdom.

October 6. **Landing on Fiji.** A landing force from a U.S. Navy sloop destroys a village in retaliation for the murder of two American traders.

October 17. **PUNITIVE EXPEDITION TO PARAGUAY.** Commodore William Shubrick, commander of the Brazil Squadron assembles on the East Coast ships from the Home Squadron, to be augmented by Brazil Squadron, West African Squadron and Coast Guard warships – 11 war steamers and 7 fighting sail – plus hospital

and supply ships – the largest U.S. naval squadron assembled between the Navy's founding and the Civil War. They deploy to obtain satisfaction from Paraguay for firing on the survey vessel *Water Witch* in the Paraguay River in 1855. Entering Paraguay on January 21, 1859, after steaming up the La Plata, Flag Officer Shubrick and his force quickly secure an indemnity for the attack and conclude a new commercial treaty with Paraguay. The largest US military expedition on South American soil ends on February 17, when the force departs Corrientes, Argentina.

## 1859

April 21. **African squadron antislavery operations.** At the mouth of the Congo, an African Squadron sloop captures the first of five slavers that will be taken by U.S. naval vessels in the course of the year. A slaver is also captured off Cuba that year.

June 25. **East India Squadron China ad hoc coalition operations.** During the Second Opium War, Commodore Joseph Tattnall, commander of the East India Squadron, assists the Royal Navy in actions against the Taku forts, famously quoting Sir Walter Scott, "Blood is thicker than water."

July 31. **Landing in China.** An East India Squadron steamer lands a party at Shanghai, China, to protect American lives and property.

November. **Landing in Argentina.** A force of Brazil Station Marines from USS *Dolphin* and USS *Perry*, along with British marines, are landed at Buenos Aires to protect the customs house when Confederation forces threaten the city.

## 1860

February 6. **Antislavery operations.** Beginning on this date, in the course of the year African Squadron vessels capture 13 slave ships. Home Squadron ships also capture slavers off Cuba.

March 1-2,4. **Angola landings.** Seamen and marines from a U.S. Navy ship sloop land to protect American property at Kissebo, in present-day Angola.

**March 6. Intervention in Mexico.** A Home Squadron sloop engages two Mexican Clerical Faction ships south of Veracruz, driving one ashore and capturing the other. This is one of several interventions in Mexico's War of the Reform.

**September 27. Landing in Panama.** A Home Squadron sloop lands marines to help quell an insurrection in Panama City, Colombia, and protect the trans-isthmian railroad and commercial interests. A Royal Navy landing soon follows.

# **Civil War squadron operations (1861–1865):**

**Joint amphibious assault and riverine operations &  
blockade at home, & the occasional forward  
combat operation and MOOTW**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

Unlike during the brief Mexican War, conducted against a weak enemy with no navy, the long and bloody American Civil War saw drastic changes in the size, deployment, and composition of the fleet. The Navy grew from a 40-ship commissioned force to 700 ships. It also came home, mostly, denuding but not totally eliminating the forward stations. Two Atlantic and two Gulf coastal blockading squadrons were created, as well as a Mississippi Squadron of river gunboats. These conducted blockade, joint amphibious and joint riverine operations. There were occasional forward anti-raider operations and even some far forward actions against the Japanese. The fleet comprised a hodgepodge of ironclad and wood sailing vessels, steam vessels, and ships with both forms of propulsion.

### **Fleet size and composition**

The total number of vessels in commission in March 1861 is 42, of which 30 or so are deployed on distant station duty. The Home Squadron includes only 12 vessels, of which only four are in Northern ports.

By December 1861, there will be 264 ships in commission in the U.S. Navy. In 1865 the Navy comprised 700 ships.

## **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

In a superb – and typical – example of U.S. naval flexibility, the Secretary of the Navy quickly pulls in most of the forward squadrons, recommissions, charters, builds and buys other ships, and institutes an increasingly effective blockade around the South. The Secretary drops showing the flag as a naval mission for the duration of the war. He also refuses to be distracted by Confederate raiders far forward, however, who succeed in dealing a death blow to an already declining U.S. merchant marine, and in destroying the U.S. whaling fleet in the Pacific. He does keep the Pacific Squadron in existence, however.

The East India Squadron, reduced to a tiny force, shifts its base from Hong Kong to Macao during the Civil War, due to unfavorable relations with Great Britain.

### **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

Essentially the Navy had three main missions: coastal blockade, amphibious operations, and riverine operations. All take place in the American South. MOOTW overseas, however, do happen, America being America and American interests being American interests – global: The Navy does battle with Japanese warlords interfering with U.S. commerce, once by itself and once as part of an ad hoc naval coalition.

The Civil War, the first riverine war in the age of steam, sets an international pattern that will be frequently repeated – in Burma in the 1880s, in various parts of West Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, on the Nile in 1896, in Mesopotamia 1915-17, in the Russian Civil War, on the Black Sea littoral and rivers of Eastern Europe in World Wars I and II, in the First and Second Indochinese Wars, and in South America.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

Like other navies throughout the world, the U.S. Navy is in the midst of the transition from sail to steam power. Steam is generally an auxiliary to sail during the Civil War, for steam installations are inefficient, requiring heavy consumption of coal. The Navy emphasizes three types of combat vessels: steam-powered frigates and sloops-of-war with main batteries strong enough to reduce Confederate forts and cripple defending Confederate rams; shallow-draft, fully armored, turret-gunned steam-powered monitors to fight the forts and rams at closer ranges in shallow water; and armor-clad steam gunboats for riverine operations.

## **The national and international context**

What was the background condition of the country and the world?

The Civil War greatly accelerates the decline of the U.S. merchant marine, which had begun in the 1850s. The Confederate cruisers destroy only about 55 of the Union merchant fleet, but create such a panic that half of that fleet is transferred to foreign flags. Most of the remaining ships are laid up in Union ports.

## **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

High command of naval forces continues to reside with an able and powerful Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, supplemented by an

able Assistant Secretary, Gustavus Fox. They has no chief of naval operations or professional operating staff, and deal directly with the commanders afloat.

### **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marines continued to furnish ships guards for Navy vessels in order to enforce shipboard discipline, man guns, and join landing parties for very limited operations ashore. The principal amphibious assault ground force of the Civil War was the Army.

### **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

Although unprepared for coastal, inshore or riverine operations and with little experience in working with the Army, the Navy conducts numerous joint amphibious and riverine operations, in most of which Army-Navy cooperation is just fine. The capture of Hatteras Inlet in 1862, the second Fort Fisher campaign in 1864, and the cooperation on the western rivers were high water marks of American joint cooperation.

Joint operations were the most difficult aspect of nineteenth century warfare, but in the Civil War they become the norm on the coasts and rivers. Compared with the complex and precise amphibious operations of World War II, most of those of the Civil War are rather crudely planned and co-ordinated affairs. Most amphibious attacks were conducted at the instigation of the Navy, usually to secure a base for the blockade or to seal off a port to relieve the blockade. Command and control arrangements were normally ad hoc and based on the principle of mutual cooperation. Signal communications between Army and Navy forces are normally achieved by putting Army signalmen on board Navy vessels whenever such ship-to-shore coordination is required. Personal rapport between Army and Navy commanders in the field is usually good and sometimes excellent.

But the Army and Navy were separate institutions. Cooperation and coordination, not command and control, got things done. The major exception was the early campaigns on the western rivers, when naval vessels commanded by naval officers were placed under the operational command of Army senior officers.

To the extent that joint operations were aimed at maintaining the blockade and securing control of the rivers, the Army – in the view of naval officers – was in fact supporting the Navy.

To the extent that they were amphibious operations aimed at seizing control of Confederate territory from the sea or rivers, the Navy – in the view of Army officers – was in fact supporting the Army. As in the Mexican War, the War Department, in fact, bought, built, and leased most transports and other shipping to conduct these operations.

Despite these differences in viewpoint, joint operations during the Civil War were generally successful and largely – with some celebrated exceptions – unacrimonious.

During the Civil War, the Army begins its role of providing military government for occupied lands.

## Operational chronology

### 1861

**Naval communications with the Pacific improves.** The completion of the first transcontinental telegraph line facilitates considerably communication with the Pacific Squadron from Washington.

**April 12. First shots of the Civil War.** Confederate batteries open fire on Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor.

**April 19. THE U.S. NAVY BLOCKADE.** President Lincoln proclaims a blockade of the Confederate coast from Texas to South Carolina. In order for the blockade to be respected by foreign nations, it must be genuinely effective, not a “paper blockade.” Consequently, the Navy’s

first problem is to find, somewhere and somehow, at an expense but in a great hurry, enough ships to make the paper blockade a real one. This will result in the creation of one of the most heterogeneous fleets ever seen.

April. **RECALL OF THE DISTANT SQUADRONS.** The East Indian, Mediterranean, Brazilian, and African Squadrons are recalled, with the exception of one or two ships each. A Pacific Squadron of 5-8 ships is retained, to guard California against Confederate raiders, and to guard the Isthmus of Panama. By September 1862, only nine vessels will be left on remote stations instead of the usual 30 or so. The ships called in from the stations are largely absorbed into the blockading squadrons as they become established.

April 27. **Extension of the Blockade.** President Lincoln extends the blockade to include the coasts of North Carolina and Virginia. A total of 3,549 miles of coast are to be blockaded, a large part of which presented a double shore.

**CREATION OF THE BLOCKADING SQUADRONS.** An Atlantic Squadron and a Gulf Squadron are created, under the command of flag officers. Flag officer Stringham arrives at Hampton Roads with his flagship *Minnesota* on May 13, and Flag Officer Mervine reaches the Gulf on June 8.

May 9. **Bulloch to England.** Commander James D. Bulloch, CSN, is sent to England to purchase and outfit warships. The cruisers he commissions - the *Alabama*, the *Florida*, and the *Shenandoah* - will sweep the Northern merchant marine from the seas.

May 10. **Blockade of Charleston.** A U.S. Navy screw frigate establishes the blockade, to be followed by establishment of blockades of Pensacola (May 13), New Orleans and Mobile (May 26), Savannah (May 29), Galveston (July 2), and Wilmington (July 14).

June. **NAVAL ADVISORY BOARD CREATED.** Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles organizes this temporary board (with no formal name) of four civilian, military, and naval experts under CAPT Samuel Du Pont, to recommend, among other things, military and naval operations and force dispositions on the Atlantic and Gulf

Coasts and to devise methods for rendering the blockade effective. Its senior member is CAPT Samuel F. Dupont. It meets in July, August, and September.

Summer. **JOINT UNIFIED COMMAND CREATED IN THE WEST.** Secretary of the Navy Welles places all naval operations on the western rivers under U.S. Army control, thus creating what would later be regarded as a unified command. Naval officers on the Western rivers will operate under Army operational control until October 1, 1862.

August. **Beginnings of the river fleet.** Commander John Rodgers, sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the West, purchases three steamers on the Ohio River, converts them into protected gunboats, and assembles them at Cairo, Illinois. They begin operations patrolling the waters around Cairo, capturing or destroying Confederate vessels, and skirmishing with Confederate troops firing from river banks. They will form the nucleus of a rapidly growing fleet of new and converted river gunboats. Rodgers is relieved by Captain Andrew Hull Foote.

August 28-29. **FIRST JOINT COASTAL AMPHIBIOUS FORCE EXPEDITION.** Joint Army-Navy expedition consisting of 8 warships commanded by Flag Officer Silas H. Stringham and 2 transports carrying 900 troops under Major General Benjamin F. Butler occupy the first advanced base for blockaders at Hatteras Inlet, capturing Confederate forts. Naval gunfire does well against shore fortifications. This is the first of numerous amphibious operations against the batteries, forts, and fortified towns on the seacoast and rivers of the Confederacy. Army-Navy command relations are okay.

November 7. **Joint coastal amphibious force capture of Port Royal Sound for an advanced fleet base.** A much stronger expedition than that at Hatteras is mounted against Port Royal, South Carolina. The largest fleet yet assembled under the U.S. flag, 77 vessels, is put under the command of Flag Officer Samuel F. Du Pont to seize an advanced base for the Atlantic blockading squadrons at Port Royal Sound, South Carolina, midway between Charleston and Savannah. It is accompanied by an army expeditionary force of 16,000. The fire from Du Pont's ships forces the Confederates to evacuate their forts. The U.S. forces land unopposed.

Similar joint force coastal amphibious operations to acquire advanced fleet bases and block off Confederate ports will proceed throughout the war, ending with an operation to take Galveston in June 1865.

December 23. **GULF BLOCKADING SQUADRON DIVIDED.** Flag Officer David G. Farragut is assigned to command the West Gulf Blockading Squadron, with the more important collateral mission of taking New Orleans. The East Gulf Squadron will become a minor command in which no significant naval events will occur.

## 1862

February 4-6 **Joint riverine force capture of Fort Henry.** Flag officer Andrew H. Foote leads a naval gunfire attack by ironclads and wooden gunboats on Fort Henry, commanding the Tennessee River. The fire is so effective that all but four of the fort's guns are dismounted, and the fort surrenders. Foote turns the fort over to General U.S. Grant, the Union army commander, with whom he has worked closely and well.

February 7-8. **Joint coastal amphibious force capture of Roanoke Island.** An Army-Navy expedition under Brigadier General Ambrose Burnside and Flag Officer Louis Goldsborough overwhelms the Confederates on Roanoke Island, completing the Union hold on the Carolina sounds.

February 14-16. **Joint riverine force capture of Fort Donelson.** Gunboats of Flag Officer Foote's flotilla cooperate again with land forces under General U.S. Grant to take Fort Donelson, commanding the Cumberland River.

March 8-9. **Naval battles of Hampton Roads.** The Confederate iron-clad *Virginia* attacks the blockading Union squadron in Hampton Roads, but then is in turn fought to a draw by the Union ironclad *Monitor*.

*Monitor* is the U.S. Navy's first armored vessel, although it will be twenty more years before the design problems presented by an ocean-going armored ship will be gotten in hand.

March 16-April 7. **Joint riverine force struggle for Island No. 10.** Flag Officer Foote's gunboats and ironclads and Union Army troops cooperate to seize the Confederate strong point on the Mississippi River. Beginning of the Navy advance down the Mississippi River to Vicksburg.

April 6. **Naval riverine support at the Battle of Shiloh.** In the largest battle in the West, fire from Union gunboats are instrumental in preventing defeat of Grant's Army in Tennessee.

April 18-26. **West Gulf Blockading Squadron takes New Orleans.** Flag Officer Farragut first bombards Confederate forts, then safely runs between them to sink Confederate defending warships. The city of New Orleans surrenders to Farragut. An Army force under General Butler arrives to occupy the city on May 1. Farragut's squadron moves north; the first ship reaches the Confederate fortress at Vicksburg, Mississippi on May 18. Farragut will have to retire from Vicksburg in July, however.

June 6. **Joint riverine force takes Memphis.** Union riverine forces coming south on the Mississippi defeat a Confederate fleet and capture Memphis, Tennessee.

June 21. **EAST INDIA STATION REVIVED.** Secretary of the Navy Welles detaches the screw sloop *Wyoming* from the Pacific Squadron and sends it to the Far East, to counter Confederate raiders. *Wyoming* will participate a year later in operations against a Japanese warlord and in fruitless operations chasing the raider *Alabama*.

September. **DIVISION OF THE BLOCKADING SQUADRONS.** The original Atlantic Squadron is divided into a North Atlantic Squadron, blockading from the Potomac to the boundary between North and South Carolina, and a South Atlantic squadron, blockading from the Carolina boundary line to Cape Canaveral. The original Gulf Squadron is divided into an East Gulf Squadron, based in Key West, blockading from Cape Canaveral to Pensacola, and a West Gulf Squadron, blockading from Pensacola to the Rio Grande. In 1864 the limits of the East Gulf Squadron will be extended to include the waters off Cuba and the Bahamas. The two Atlantic and two Gulf squadrons will be recombined in 1865.

A West Indies Squadron is also created, with the special mission of destroying Confederate cruisers.

October 1. **MISSISSIPPI SQUADRON CREATED.** The Western Gunboat Fleet, under Army operational control since the summer of 1861, is transferred to the Navy Department and renamed the Mississippi Squadron. Acting Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter is placed in command on October 15.

December 20. **Mississippi Squadron begins joint Vicksburg campaign.** This will involve the greatest amphibious landing in American history before the Second World War. In May 1863 the Union fleet will transfer 23,000 of General Grant's troops from the western to the eastern shore of the river. An outstanding feature of this campaign will be the full and close co-operation that the Navy under Rear Admiral Porter will give to Generals Grant and Sherman and the Army. Porter begins the campaign with 11 ironclads and 38 wooden gunboats, rams and auxiliaries. Grant has 45,000 troops on 60 transports.

## 1863

**Intervention in Mexico.** A Pacific Squadron sidewheel steam sloop is present at Acapulco when a French squadron bombards the city. The sloop assists in restoring order after the bombardment.

April 7. **South Atlantic Blockading Squadron attack on Charleston.** Rear Admiral Samuel F. Du Pont, commanding the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, unsuccessfully attempts to take Charleston by ships (9 ironclads) alone. This is the one instance in the civil war in which Union naval forces are squandered for no real gain. The Secretary of the Navy does not accept the advice of his naval officers that Charleston cannot be taken by the Navy alone.

July 4. **Vicksburg surrenders.** Port Hudson, Louisiana follows on July 9. The Confederacy has been cut in two. The first steamer with cargo from St. Louis arrives in New Orleans on July 16. From now until the end of the war the Mississippi Squadron will keep the river open to Union traffic, block Confederate movements across the river, and support the Army in various operations on the Mississippi's tributaries; e.g., up the Red River (as a show of force against the French in

Mexico as well as the dying Confederacy) and on the Cumberland at Nashville.

July 16. **East India Squadron Japan assault.** The East India station screw sloop *Wyoming* sinks three Japanese warships and bombards forts ashore in retaliation for their firing on an American merchant steamer in Shimonoseki Strait, between Kyushu and Honshu. Later *Wyoming* will just miss the Confederate raider *Alabama* in the Straits of Sunda.

## 1864

1861–1870. **The War of the Triple Alliance.** Paraguay is defeated by Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.

June. **Pacific Squadron Mexico internal security operations.** USS *Saginaw* is present during the French occupation of Acapulco. Her landing party ensures civil order during the period between the Mexican evacuation and the French landing. USS *Saranac*'s presence helps prevent disorders in Acapulco when the French withdraw late in 1864.

August 28–September 10. **East India Squadron in ad hoc coalition Japan assault.** An ad hoc coalition of 10 British, 3 French, 4 Dutch, and 1 American warships (a chartered armed merchant steamer) bombard and land forces against the warlord controlling the Strait of Shimonoseki.

October 19. **Cruise of the *Shenandoah*.** In the Madieras a former English steamer is commissioned as the Confederate cruiser *Shenandoah*. She will take 38 prizes and virtually destroy the New England whaling fleet.

December 13–December 25. **Failed joint bombardment and amphibious assault on Fort Fisher.** On the Secretary of the Navy's initiative, a joint campaign is launched to take Fort Fisher, protecting the last remaining major Confederate port, at Wilmington, North Carolina. The assault fails due to the ineptitude of the Army commander, General Butler. Relations and coordination between Butler and the Navy

commander, Admiral Porter, are poor. Porter has 57 ironclads, frigates and gunboats – the largest naval expedition of the war.

## 1865

January 12-15. **Successful joint bombardment and amphibious assault on Fort Fisher.** In the Second Fort Fisher Expedition, Admiral Porter works well with General Terry, the army commander. Porter's fleet of 59 warships mounting 627 guns is the largest expedition ever to sail under the American flag to that time. Terry had nearly 9,000 men in 21 transports.



# **The late 19th century (1865-1889): Return to global sailing squadron forward presence for MOOTW**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

The end of the Civil War saw a drastic decline in the size of the fleet and a return to small forward squadrons overseas. These had, however, less to do than was true before the war. While America continued its Pacific expansion, annexing Alaska, the Aleutians and Midway, the American merchant marine had been all but wiped out by Confederate raiders, and world conditions had become more settled – occasioned by the growth of European colonial empires. Also, despite the rapid strides it had made during the war in developing a variety of new naval technologies, the U.S. Navy returned to primary reliance on wooden sailing ships, for reasons of both cost and forward strategic mobility.

### **Fleet size and composition**

Demobilization of what had become the world's largest navy was rapid, and began before the war ended on the ground. In 1865 the U.S. Navy comprised 700 ships displacing 500,000 tons and carrying 5,000 guns. In 1870 there were 200 ships displacing 200,000 tons and carrying 1,300 guns.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

As before the Civil War, the fleet is not only dispersed among a variety of overseas stations – plus a Home Station – but also within them. As a rule, each ship in a squadron cruised by itself. Even when in company, the ships rarely engaged in group maneuvers.

The Navy is still all ships and nominal squadrons. Occasional attempts to bring the fleet together during war scares are embarrassing. A navy neglected and optimized for MOOTW doesn't appear ready to do any serious warfighting, but there also doesn't appear to be any serious warfighting for it to do. Most ships on forward station operate alone, not together as a squadron. With ships scattered in small squadrons, fleet concentration is almost impossible and commanders cannot engage in tactical training by squadron.

At the end of the century, however, a wave of internationalism and navalism sweeps the country, and a newly bestirred Congress appropriates money for new, modern cruisers and battleships, capable of forming small modern squadrons.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

Forward presence resumes immediately after the war, but things are a little different now. Transoceanic cables bring forward naval commanders under a little closer scrutiny. There is much less U.S. commerce to protect as the U.S. merchant marine continues its tailspin dive. With diminished American shipping and greatly improved means of communication, the underpinnings of the previous rationale for the distant stations had almost disappeared.

The Navy stays very busy with global MOOTW, especially in the nominally independent regions of Latin America and the Far East, but the country turns inward and pays little attention. Even the Pacific Squadron is busy, given the purchase of Alaska and increasing involvement

in Hawaii. And the first U.S. Navy ship to do so stops in at a previously neglected body of water called the Persian Gulf.

The MOOTW changes in emphasis, however, with an increase in actions to protect missionaries, especially in the Mediterranean.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

Unlike in the first half of the century, U.S. naval warships are increasingly militarily and technologically obsolescent, even embarrassing. In essence, the main activity of the Navy in this period is the protection of a minuscule trade with areas of the world plagued by chronic instability and violence in an era in which a government's ability to protect the lives and property of citizens in obscure corners of the world is a measure of that government's authority.

The Navy continues its slow transition from sail to steam, lagging other navies. Those steam warships that are built during this period carry sails as well, steam being still considered an auxiliary mode of propulsion.

The mission of the fleet being principally to show the flag, sailing ships provide the greatest sea-keeping qualities at the lowest cost. The oceans of the world are increasingly free of pirates and local warlords, as the European powers gobble up long stretches of coastline in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, to swell their empires. Likewise, these new empires deny the United States the ability to establish coaling stations now necessary for steam warships. Without overseas colonies where coal can be stored, the United States can either abandon overseas presence, rely on expensive and uncertain foreign coal supplies, or

retain sail power but be technologically obsolete. The United States chose the third policy.

## **The national and international context**

What was the background condition of the country and the world?

This is an era marked by great national growth on land and by decline at sea.

## **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

During the Civil War there had been some employment of ships in tactical groups, but this was promptly changed at war's end. The practice was resumed of deploying ships singly all over the world under the administrative command of the station commanders. Not until 1874 was an attempt made to conduct tactical exercises, and this experiment was not repeated during the next 10 years.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marine Corps continues to provide ships guards (a function that becomes increasingly controversial) and conduct landings. Since the navy continues to be forward deployed around the world doing MOOTW, there are lots of landings, all over the world but especially in Latin America and the Pacific.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

As with the Navy, in the quarter century after the Civil War, the Army officer corps and the American people lost touch with each other. The Army was in about the same shape as the Navy, returning after the Civil War to MOOTW duties, principally suppression of the Indians, scattered across the frontiers of the Nation, and the suppression of domestic disorder.

In the first post-Civil War decade, however, the Army's chief assignment was occupying the South and implementing Reconstruction

The Army was the only national force capable of restoring and maintaining order in the South. In a backlash against Army use for law enforcement during Reconstruction, Congress passes the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, limiting and constraining – but not eliminating – the Army's role in domestic civil law enforcement.

The Army also returned to guarding the Mexican frontier. Immediately after the war, in June 1865, General Philip Sheridan assembled 52,000 men along the Rio Grande to contain the Mexican civil war and to demonstrate to the French that their continued presence in Mexico was not desired by the United States. This was principally an Army, not a Navy, function.

### **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

As Kenneth Hagen pointed out a quarter century ago, American MOOTW operations during this period were often conducted in cooperation with nearby European naval elements, especially in China.<sup>3</sup>

## **Operational chronology**

### **1865 (continued)**

March 9. **Landing in Panama.** Marines are landed in Columbia on the Isthmus of Panama.

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3. Kenneth J. Hagan, *American Gunboat Diplomacy and the Old Navy: 1877-1889* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1973), 8-9.

March 28. **SOUTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON ESTABLISHED.** Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles establishes a South Atlantic Squadron, reviving the old Brazil Station, while the War of the Triple Alliance continues between Paraguay and Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. The Squadron will continue to exist until 1904, except for a about a year during the Spanish American War period.

April 9. **Appomatox.** General Lee surrenders. The Civil War is effectively over.

May 1. **REDUCTION OF THE BLOCKADING AND RIVER SQUADRONS.** Naval Squadrons are ordered to be reduced by one-half. Subsequently in 1865 the blockading squadrons are further reduced, the Potomac and Mississippi Flotillas are discontinued, and the two Atlantic and two Gulf Squadrons are recombined.

June 3. **EUROPEAN SQUADRON CREATED.** The European Squadron is established, supplanting the pre-war Mediterranean and African Squadrons. Cruising grounds include the Mediterranean and the west coast of Africa. It will be based principally at Villefranche, on the French Riviera.

Spring. **OTHER FOREIGN SQUADRONS CREATED.** The cruising grounds of the Asiatic Squadron are expanded to include the waters off the East African coast; those of the former Home Squadron are divided between a North Atlantic Squadron and a Gulf Squadron.

November 5. **Return of the *Shenandoah*.** Lieutenant James I. Waddell brings the Confederate cruiser *Shenandoah* into Liverpool, England, after a deployment of 122 days entirely out of sight of land. The following day he hauls down the last Confederate flag still flying anywhere in the world.

## 1866

**Naval facility established in Mexico.** A U.S. Navy coaling station is established at Pinchinque near La Paz, in Lower California, Mexico. This station will operate until well into the 20th century.

June 20. **Asiatic Squadron landing in China.** A U.S. Navy Asiatic Squadron screw sloop lands 100 seamen and marines at New Chwang, China, to seize a bandit leader whose followers had assaulted the American consul.

July 1866. **First trans-oceanic cable laid.** A telegraph cable is successfully laid on the Atlantic Ocean floor between North American and Europe. Henceforth, communications between the United States and naval commanders of ships on distant station will be greatly speeded up.

**DIVISION OF THE PACIFIC SQUADRON.** South and North Pacific Stations are established. They will be re-organized as one Pacific Station with two squadrons on March 13, 1869, re-divided as two stations in 1872, and recombined into one Pacific Station again in 1878. They will remain as one station until the formation of the Pacific Fleet in 1907.

The North Pacific Station will encompass the area north of Panama and east of the international date line, including Hawaii. The South Pacific Station will run west from South America to Australia. Both squadrons will use Mare island as their main base, with the South Pacific Squadron keeping stores at Callao and Valparaiso as well.

## 1867

February-June. **Presence in Mexico.** USS *Tacony* is sent to Veracruz to safeguard American interests as the last French troops leave Mexico.

March 30. **Alaska Purchase.** U.S. and Russia sign a treaty ceding Alaska and the Aleutian Islands to the United States, greatly expanding America's North Pacific coastline.

Administration of Alaska will be entrusted to the Army until 1876. This will be the only time the Army will have deployed from the continental United States in peacetime until 1898.

June 13. **Formosan expedition.** Two Asiatic Squadron screw sloops land a naval brigade of 181 men under Commander George C.

Belknap to attack aborigines on Formosa (Taiwan) in retaliation for the massacre of the crew of an American merchant ship.

December 28. **Annexation of Midway.** U.S. takes possession of Midway Island in the central Pacific, America's first overseas territory, after the captain of a U.S. Navy screw sloop had raised the U.S. flag on it on August 28.

## 1868

**Landing in Panama.** Marines are landed at Aspinwall (Colon), Panama, Colombia.

February 4. **Landing in Japan.** An Asiatic Squadron screw sloop lands seamen and marines to protect American citizens and property at Hiogo, Japan.

February 7-26. **Landings in Uruguay.** Detachments from five ships of the South Atlantic Squadron are landed on two occasions as part of a five-nation multinational force under command of an Italian rear admiral, to protect foreign nationals during an insurrection at Montevideo, Uruguay.

February 8. **Landing in Japan.** A party from an Asiatic Squadron screw sloop lands to safeguard Americans at Nagasaki.

February 28. **Modern steam cruiser joins North Atlantic Squadron.** USS *Wampanoag* becomes the flagship of the North Atlantic Squadron, but her tenure will be brief. Of revolutionary design, the controversial warship has a tremendous steam power plant and armament powerful enough to overcome any enemy commerce destroyer. The Navy, however, re-emphasizing sail power, has little use for her.

April 4. **Landing in Japan.** An Asiatic Squadron steam sloop and sidewheel gunboat land 25 marines to protect American interests at Yokohama, Japan.

August-September. **Evacuation from Paraguay.** A South Atlantic Squadron sidewheel gunboat evacuates the U.S. minister from Asuncion, as the War of the Triple Alliance continues.

## 1869

1869-1870. **Deterrence off Haiti.** Fleet units assemble off Port au Prince to warn Haiti not to interfere in Dominican Republic affairs, in support of the Grant Administration abortive policies to annex the Dominican Republic.

March 13. **REUNIFICATION OF THE PACIFIC SQUADRON.** The South and North Pacific Stations, created from the Pacific Squadron in 1866, are re-organized as one Pacific Station with two squadrons. They will be re-divided temporarily as two stations from 1872 to 1878.

## 1870

January 22. **Panama Expedition.** Commander Thomas O. Selfridge, Jr., deploys in a gunboat on an expedition to ascertain the best location for an interoceanic canal across the Isthmus of Darien. His report, based on a survey of four possible routes, is completed in 1874.

June 17. **Mexican anti-piracy operations.** A screw sloop lands a party at the Teacapan River on the Pacific Coast of Mexico to attack a band of pirates and burn their vessel.

December. **Landing in Uruguay.** A South Atlantic station warship, USS *Lancaster*, lands a party at the U.S. legation in Montevideo during a siege of the city.

## 1871

May 30. **Korean expedition.** The Asiatic Squadron carries the U.S. minister to China to Korea in an attempt to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce. The squadron includes a screw frigate as flagship, a screw gunboat, a screw sloop, a side-wheel gunboat and a screw tug. They anchor near Chemulpo (Inchon) on May 30. The ships are fired upon by Korean forts, whereupon a naval brigade of 575 sailors and 109 marines successfully storm the forts, supported by naval gunfire from the gunboat and tug. The expedition sails, however, without negotiating a treaty.

## 1872

**PACIFIC STATION DIVIDED AGAIN.** The Pacific Station, united since 1869, is redivided again into North Pacific and South Pacific Squadrons. It will be reunited for the last time in 1878, and remain united until the formation of the Pacific Fleet in 1907.

## 1873

**Fleet strength.** The fleet, which ranks seventh in the world, musters 63 wooden steamers, 48 ironclad monitors, 29 sailing ships, and 25 tugs and yard craft. In commission is a 40-ship navy. Most ships on active commission are on distant stations: North Atlantic, 10; European, 5; Asiatic, 9; South Atlantic, 3; North Pacific, 4; South Pacific, 3; with 4 unassigned.

May 7-12. **Panama landing.** Two Pacific Squadron ships land 200 men on the Pacific Coast of Panama to protect the consulate and railroad during a revolution in the Colombian province of Panama.

September 23-October 9. **Panama landing.** Another revolutionary disturbance leads to the landing of 190 men from a Pacific Squadron screw steamer and a screw sloop.

October 31. **Virginus Affair.** A Spanish cruiser captures the American-manned *Virginus*, running guns to Cuban rebels. This triggers a war scare in the United States.

December. **FLEET CONCENTRATION AND EXERCISE OFF FLORIDA.** Twelve ships of various squadrons within reach rendezvous at Key West, in the wake of the *Virginus* Affair. This is the largest U.S. Navy fleet assemblage since the Civil War. Three weeks are spent in fleet maneuvers in the Bay of Florida before the vessels separate. Assemblage of the fleet reveals the weakness of the materiel condition of the Navy. The experiment will not be repeated for another 10 years.

## 1874

February 12. **North Pacific Squadron Hawaii ad hoc coalition intervention.** Joining forces with the Royal Navy, a sloop and a screw sloop

land 150 officers and men at Honolulu to protect Americans during the disturbances following the coronation of King Kalakaua.

## 1876

May 16. **Landing in Mexico.** A landing force of sailors and marines is put ashore at Matamoras to protect U.S. citizens and property.

## 1878

**PACIFIC STATION RE-UNITED.** The Pacific Station, divided again into North Pacific and South Pacific Squadrons since 1872 is again re-united. Its wooden vessels at the time possess no armor, modern rifled guns, efficient steam engines, or any of the various other improvements introduced elsewhere since the Civil War.

The re-united Pacific Squadron will endure until the formation of the Pacific Fleet in 1907.

December 7–November 9, 1880. **WORLD CRUISE OF THE *TICONDEROGA*.** Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt deploys from Hampton Roads on the screw sloop *Ticonderoga*, which will become the first steam-powered American naval vessel to circumnavigate the globe. The expedition is to support American business and open the world's ports to American commerce. During the deployment Shufeldt becomes the first U.S. naval commander to enter the Persian Gulf and lays the foundation for the first American treaty of commerce with Korea. *Ticonderoga* will visit West and East Africa, the Gulf, India, Southeast Asia, China, Korea, and Japan.

## 1879

1879–1883. **The War of the Pacific.** Chile fights – and eventually defeats – Peru and Bolivia. U.S. Navy Pacific squadron ship movements are made in parallel with those of European nations.

**Pacific Squadron technical intelligence gathering.** Pacific Squadron officers inspect damage sustained by the captured Peruvian turreted ram *Huascar* following *Huascar's* arrival in Chile. In November 1880, Pacific Squadron officers will be detailed to the headquarters of the Chilean and Peruvian armies respectively as observers.

August 7–March 23, 1882. **JEANNETTE EXPEDITION.** The steam bark *Jeannette* deploys from San Francisco in an ill-fated attempt to reach the North Pole through the Bering Strait.

December. **First Persian Gulf deployment.** Commodore Robert Shufeldt on USS *Ticonderoga*, en route to Korea, visits Muscat, then passes through the Straits of Hormuz and becomes the first American man-of-war to enter the Gulf. Shufeldt visits Bushire and Basra, steaming 70 miles up the Shatt-al-Arab.

**Pacific Squadron provides Alaska station ship.** Reacting to the lawlessness then prevalent in Alaska, a warship is stationed continuously at Sitka until the end of the century (the Revenue Cutter Service providing forces in western Alaskan and Aleutian waters). The commanding officer will report operationally directly to the Navy Department.

## 1880

October. **War of the Pacific mediation.** Representatives of Chile, Peru and Bolivia meet on board a Pacific Squadron sloop of war in an unsuccessful U.S. effort to mediate the conflict. During the war, the Pacific Squadron will be present at the Chilean blockade and bombardment of Callao, Peru, and will provide aid and assistance to refugees, along with European navies, during the capitulation of Lima.

## 1881

**Chilean goodwill visit.** A Pacific Squadron gunboat is dispatched to Chile to defuse a “war scare” between the United States and Chile derived from the actions of the U.S. consul in Peru, who actively sympathized with the Peruvians during the War of the Pacific (while the Pacific Squadron had maintained a scrupulous neutrality).

## 1882

May 22. **Korea treaty.** Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt completes the negotiation of a commercial treaty between the United States and the kingdom of Korea.

July 14. **Landing in Egypt.** A European Squadron gunboat, screw sloop and screw steamer land 73 marines and 60 seamen in Alexandria to guard the American consulate and assist British landing parties to maintain order, in the wake of the bombardment of Alexandria by the British Mediterranean Fleet.

## 1883

March 3. **Authorization of the "ABCDs" begins naval renaissance.** Congress authorizes the construction of four modern unarmored steel warships – the full-rigged steam and sail *Atlanta*, *Boston*, and *Chicago*, and the dispatch-vessel (unarmored cruiser) *Dolphin* – beginning an American naval renaissance. They will be commissioned in 1886–1889.

September 21. **Asiatic Squadron in ad hoc coalition China landing and show of force.** In response to anti-Western rioting in Canton, an Asiatic Squadron warship – later joined by another – coordinates with British, French and Portuguese gunboat commanders.

**EXPANSION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC STATION.** The Station is expanded from the Atlantic south of the Amazon River and the southwest corner of Africa to include the southeast corner of Africa and offshore islands as far north as the equator.

## 1884

April 25. **GREELY RELIEF EXPEDITION.** Three steamers deploy from New York for the Arctic to rescue the survivors of an expedition under First Lieutenant Adolphus W. Greely, which had set out for the North Pole in 1881. They are successful.

July–July 1885. **Asiatic Squadron in ad hoc coalition China shows of force.** During a war between China and France over Indochina, the Asiatic Squadron commander and European commanders in Chi-nese waters share responsibility for the protection of Western lives and property in China.

Summer. **NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON EXERCISES.** In the first fleet exercises in 10 years, Acting RADM Stephen Luce, on his com-

mand ship the wooden screw frigate *Tennessee*, conducts a week of tactical exercises in gunnery, steam tactics and torpedo tactics off Newport, the squadron consisting of five wooden screw steamers.

## 1885

January 18. **Landing in Panama.** A gunboat lands marines at Aspinwall (Colon) on the Atlantic coast of the Colombian province of Panama, where a revolution has broken out. They are to guard the terminal of the trans-isthmian railroad and protect American interests.

March 16-May 25. **North Atlantic Squadron Panama intervention.** The progress of the Panamanian revolution has blocked free transit of the isthmus, to which the United States is entitled by treaty with Colombia. The Secretary of the Navy rushes four North Atlantic Squadron warships under Squadron commander Rear Admiral James Jouett (command ship the wooden screw frigate *Tennessee*) with landing parties aboard, plus a Marine battalion rush from the United States, to re-open the railway from Aspinwall to the Pacific and protect American business interests. The Marine brigade occupies Panama City. Colombian troops suppress the insurrection.

This is the largest U.S. amphibious operation between the Civil War and the Spanish-American War.

July 29. **Naval influence in Ecuador.** USS *Iroquois* is sent to Guayaquil, Ecuador, to help secure the release of an imprisoned U.S. citizen.

## 1886

April 4. **North Atlantic Squadron tactical exercises in the Gulf.** In the first tactical exercises since RADM Luce's Newport exercises in 1884, six ships of the North Atlantic Squadron conduct day and night squadron drills, target practice, and landing operations as a tactical unit at Pensacola, Florida.

August 6. **First American armored battleships authorized.** Congress authorizes the construction of the *Maine* (originally an armored cruiser) and the *Texas* (an armored battleship), following Brazil's acquisition of a British-built armored cruiser considered capable of

defeating the entire U.S. fleet. They will not become operational, however, until 1895.

## **1888**

June 19. **Landing in Korea.** An Asiatic Squadron screw steamer lands 25 men at Chemulpo (Inchon) Korea to proceed to Seoul to protect American citizens.

## **1889**

March 15-16. **Samoa hurricane.** US, British and German warships asserting the prerogatives of their nations in the Samoan Islands are devastated by a hurricane that strikes them in Apia harbor. The following month a conference meets in Berlin, where the three powers agree to a tripartite protectorate over Samoa. This arrangement endures until 1899, when the islands are partitioned between Germany and the United States.



# **Early Mahanian Era (1889–1900): Continuing forward squadron & ship presence for MOOTW but new maneuvering by squadrons in combat**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

This is a transitional era when traditional desultory forward presence operations continue around the globe while the Navy also begins to form the nucleus of a modern warfighting fleet around its North Atlantic Squadron. The foreign stations are maintained and the usual round of landings, interventions and patrols, especially in Latin America and the Far East, continues.

The fleet begins to acquire modern steel warships, however, and the first battleships appear in 1895. Against Spain in 1898, the U.S. Navy fights its first fleet-on-fleet actions, using squadron maneuvers against similar rival tactical dispositions. Tactical maneuverability increases dramatically with the introduction of modern coal-fired steam engineering plants, but strategic mobility is likewise greatly reduced, given the limited range of steam warships and the lack of American distant coaling stations.

### **Fleet size and composition**

By the end of the period, the Navy was undergoing a major modernization and growth spurt. The ships that would fight at Santiago included four first-class and one second-class coastline battleship. The flagship would be the armored cruiser *New York*; the Flying Squadron flagship would be the armored cruiser *Brooklyn*. Aside from these the Navy would include protected cruisers and gunboats, some

small torpedo boats and dispatch boats, and miscellaneous lesser vessels.

The Navy would be listed as sixth among the navies in the world.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

Mahan publishes his famous book, zeal for colonial power escalates among the American citizenry, and the first generation of modern warships pours out of the shipyards and is formed into squadrons that practice for war.

Mahan argues for consolidation of the battle fleet at home and bringing home the forward deployers. The argument is powerful, but goes against the entire sweep of U.S. naval history (and American global interests). It therefore is no surprise that it will not be pulled off for another generation, and then imperfectly.

The Spanish American War is something new, the culmination of the preceding decade: A U.S. Navy that fights squadron actions at sea against enemy squadrons, off Cuba and in Manila Bay. Tactics and operational art now become important.

These are small squadron actions, however, not fleet operations. The entire battleship fleet available to fight the Spaniards consists of four good new ships and the already obsolescent *Texas*. ADM Dewey's five little cruisers and gunboats, while able to defeat the Spaniards, were inconsequential beside the three battleships and three armored cruisers Britain maintained on her China Station. Russia and Germany also had battleships in the East. A new MOOTW mission emerges: naval island civil government and administration.

The Pacific Squadron is drawn down to provide additional ships for the North Atlantic and Asiatic Squadrons. After the Spanish-American War, however, the large naval ships that had been concentrated in the North Atlantic were re-disbursed back to various stations around the world. As the fleet grows, the new ships are at first disbursed overseas, including deploying battleships forward to the Asiatic Squadron, now at Manila. It's business as usual, but with more and better ships.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

The belated but final triumph of steam power over sails in the U.S. Navy means, however, that naval warships are now greatly reduced in their flexibility, being tied to coastal coaling stations. (Even at cruising speed – typically around 10 knots – a large warship will burn three to four tons of coal an hour).

During the Spanish-American War, a new kind of naval command and control warfare is practiced for the first time: the Navy cuts the Spanish cables off Cuba and the Philippines, thereby severing the Spanish forward deployed forces from communication with their headquarters in the home country. Cables have become important to world communications; Guam will be specifically annexed – and Midway developed – as cable station sites en route to the Philippines.

## **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

Operated in squadrons during the Spanish-American War for combat purposes, the Navy was still looked upon in terms of ships, with their allegiance to geographical stations rather than to tactical organizations. Once the war was over, the ships were again dispersed.

### **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marine Corps continues to provide ships guards and conduct landings in the Western Hemisphere and the Western Pacific.

During the Spanish-American War, the Marines carry out their usual functions, in peace and war, but also land at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba during the war to seize a coaling station for the fleet blockading Santiago, Cuba. This marks the beginning of the advanced base concept, which will develop into the mission of amphibious assault. The Spanish American War also marks the beginning of Marine involvement in America's colonial and quasi-colonial wars, as the nation's colonial infantry.

### **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

During the 1890s the Army, like the Navy, began to focus more on its responsibilities for national defense, and less on MOOTW. With the closing of the frontier, the Army's primary mission of suppression of the Indians faded into history. The Army tried to consolidate the various units scattered throughout the West, and in 1889 held the first large-scale exercises in which different regiments came together to practice battlefield maneuvers. The Army also increased its attention to the nation's coastal fortifications, all part of a longstanding concern in the Army officer corps regarding continental defense in North America. The Army was not, however, focused on overseas expeditionary operations before the Spanish-American War.

Jointness during the Spanish-American War was in trouble. As in the Civil War, to the extent that joint operations were aimed at maintaining blockades and defeating the enemy fleet, the Army – in the view of naval officers – was in fact supporting the Navy. To the extent, however, that they were amphibious operations aimed at seizing control of Spanish colonial territory from the sea, the Navy – in the view of Army officers – was in fact supporting the Army.

Unlike during the Civil War, there was an additional factor: The Spanish-American War was an *overseas* war conducted in and around *islands*. Accordingly, the Navy was less acquiescent to what the Army saw as its prerogatives during joint campaigns. These differences in viewpoint were became quite acrimonious.

Relations with the Army were execrable, in Washington and operationally in Cuba. Divided command in the field is exacerbated by poor personal relations between the commanders. The Army and Navy commanders wrangle bitterly over how to jointly overcome the Spanish fleet at Santiago and reduce the garrison holding the town. The Navy is also riven by internal disputes between its own two top operational commanders. The Navy begins to resist strongly an Army embrace that naval officers see as misguided, since they do not believe the generals understand the proper strategic, operational, or tactical employment of ships at sea in war.

### **Fleet headquarters, flagships and staffs**

The flagship at Santiago would be the armored cruiser *New York*, the Flying Squadron flagship would be the armored cruiser *Brooklyn*. Five battleships also fought at Santiago.

## **Operational Chronology**

### **1889 (Continued)**

September 30. **A SQUADRON OF EVOLUTION IS ESTABLISHED.** The Secretary of the Navy directs the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation to form a "Squadron of Evolution" comprised of the three modern unarmored steel "ABC" cruisers and the new gunboat *Yorktown*. The mission of these sail-rigged ships, when designed, had been

to raid enemy commerce and provide protection to American flag carriers. The mission of the squadron, however, is to meld these individual ships into a tactical fighting unit. They are to test at sea the strategic and tactical principles being taught and studied at the new (1884) Naval War College and debated on the pages of the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* (1873), and to determine doctrine for the first modern American steel ships.

The Squadron is also to show both Americans and Europeans how well Americans can now build warships.

December 7 - July 29, 1990. **SQUADRON OF EVOLUTION MEDITERRANEAN DEPLOYMENT.** The Squadron deploys to the Mediterranean, via the Azores, with the protected cruiser *Chicago* as command ship, returning via Madeira, the Cape Verdes, Brazil, and the West Indies.

## 1890

January 27. **PACIFIC SQUADRON GETS MODERN FLAGSHIP.** The new protected cruiser *Charleston* (C 2) is the Squadron flagship. Built at San Francisco and commissioned December 26, 1889, she is the first modern warship to serve in the Pacific Squadron.

May. **Publication of Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*.** Mahan argues that the traditional French (and American) wartime strategy of commerce raiding is a recipe for defeat. Victory in war comes only when a navy concentrates its operations on vanquishing the opposing fleet to win command of the sea. His book begins: "The history of Sea Power is largely, though by no means solely, a narrative of contests between nations, of mutual rivalries, of violence frequently culminating in war".

Peacetime forward naval presence and crisis response get barely a glance.

July 28-30. **Intervention and landing in Argentina.** U.S., British, and Spanish warships force a halt in the bombardment of Buenos Aires by rebellious naval units. A detachment of South Atlantic Station

marines is landed at Buenos Aires from a side-wheel steamer to guard the U.S. legation during the Argentine naval rebellion.

## 1891

June 2. **Landing on Navassa.** A screw sloop lands marines to protect an American claim to the island, near Haiti.

August 28–30. **Landing in Chile.** Two cruisers, including the new cruiser *San Francisco*, land a party to guard the U.S. Consulate at Valparaiso during the Chilean civil war. British and German landing parties also go ashore.

October 16. **Valparaiso Incident.** Two U.S. sailors are killed and sixteen injured when a liberty party from a U.S. Navy cruiser becomes embroiled with a mob of Chileans at the True Blue Saloon. Offensive remarks by the Chilean foreign minister aggravate the ensuing crisis so that by December war between the United States and Chile appears quite possible. Americans are chagrined to note that materially the Chilean fleet is superior to their own.

## 1892

January. **FLEET CONCENTRATION AT MONTEVIDEO.** In a rare instance of assembling a large, effective naval force on the South Atlantic Station, a battle force is concentrated at Montevideo, Uruguay, preparatory to using the station as a base of operations against Chile.

January 27. **Chilean "war scare" defused.** Chile apologizes to the United States for her foreign minister's remarks and pays an indemnity of \$75,000 to the families of the two dead sailors.

June 17–1900. **Pacific Squadron Bering Sea sealing regime enforcement operation.** Every summer until the end of the century Squadron and Revenue Service ships cruise in the Bering Sea to help enforce a sealing convention with Great Britain. After 1900, the Revenue Cutter Service will take over the operation almost entirely.

## 1893

January 16. **Hawaiian intervention.** New cruiser *Boston* lands 150 sailors and marines at Honolulu in support of American settlers in revolt against Queen Liliukalani.

December. **FLEET CONCENTRATION IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC.** In another rare instance of assembling a large, effective naval force on the South Atlantic Station, the North Atlantic Squadron deploys to Rio de Janeiro and combines with South Atlantic Squadron ships, incident to protection of US interests during the Brazilian Naval Revolt that had begun on September 6. U.S. squadron actions undermine the rebels, whose revolt fails in 1894.

## 1894

July 6. **Landing in Nicaragua.** The new cruiser *Columbia* lands sailors and marines to safeguard American lives and property at Bluefields, Nicaragua.

July 24. **Landing in Korea.** Asiatic Squadron cruiser *Baltimore* lands 50 sailors and marines to guard the American legation at Seoul, Korea, during the Sino-Japanese War. The Japanese had landed troops in Korea.

## 1895

January. **Intervention in Brazil.** South Atlantic Squadron ships intervene during the Brazilian Navy mutiny, which eventually fizzles.

March 6. **Trinidad Humanitarian Assistance.** Sailors and marines from six American warships land to assist local British authorities in fighting a major fire at Port of Spain, Trinidad.

March 8. **Landing in Colombia.** The cruiser *Atlanta* lands a party at Bocas del Toro, Colombia, to protect American lives and property threatened by a Liberal party revolt and activity of filibusters.

August 15. **First battleship commissioned and to sea.** USS *Texas* – a “second-class” battleship – is the first American battleship to be commissioned, followed shortly by USS *Maine*. They will join the North

Atlantic Squadron before the end of the year. Four more battleships follow within the next two years.

## 1896

Winter. **North Atlantic Squadron exercises.** Out of deference to Spanish sensibilities, the North Atlantic Squadron holds its winter exercises off Newport rather than in the Bay of Florida.

May 2-4. **Landing in Nicaragua.** An American gunboat lands sailors and marines at Corinto to protect the U.S. Consulate during revolutionary disturbances at San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua.

## 1897

Winter. **North Atlantic Squadron exercises.** Once again, out of deference to Spanish sensibilities, the North Atlantic Squadron holds its winter exercises off Newport rather than in the Bay of Florida.

## 1898

January 25–February 15. **Cuba port visit of the *Maine*.** (“Remember the Maine”). The 2 1/2-year-old battleship *Maine*, which had entered Havana harbor in Spanish Cuba for a goodwill visit on January 25, is destroyed by an explosion of undetermined origin, on February 15, killing 253 of a crew of 358. A furious country concludes that Spain is to blame.

February 7. **Landing in Nicaragua.** An American gunboat lands a landing party to safeguard American interests at San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua.

March 15. **SOUTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON REDEPLOYMENT.** South Atlantic Squadron warships are ordered deployed from Brazil to the Caribbean, to participate in the pending war with Spain.

March 18. **FLYING SQUADRON CREATED.** A Flying Squadron is formed for the defense of the eastern seaboard, consisting of an armored cruiser (flag), two battleships, and two cruisers, held at Hampton Roads. The bulk of the North Atlantic Squadron is kept at Key West.

March 19–May 24. **OREGON'S FIRST INTER-OCEAN DEPLOYMENT.** The two-year-old battleship *Oregon*, the first battleship built and stationed on the West Coast, deploys 14,700 miles from San Francisco around Cape Horn to join the fleet at Key West at an average speed of 12 knots. No other warship had ever approached this achievement. *Oregon* coals at Callao, Punta Arenas, Rio de Janeiro, and Barbados. She will prove important at the Battle of Santiago two months later, and will return to the Pacific in the fall.

April 20. **War with Spain.** President McKinley signs an act of Congress authorizing him to use force to expel the Spanish from Cuba, but prohibiting American annexation of the island.

April 20. **NORTHERN PATROL SQUADRON CREATED.** Reacting to public and political pressure, the Secretary of the Navy creates a new force of several cruisers, distributed along the coast from Maine to Virginia. Like the Flying Squadron created the preceding month, this force will initially take away still more ships from the North Atlantic Squadron.

April 22. **Blockade of Cuba.** President McKinley proclaims a blockade of the north coast of Cuba.

April 22. **NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON DEPLOYMENT.** Acting Rear Admiral William T. Sampson's North Atlantic Squadron (flag in armored cruiser *New York*) deploys from Key West, Florida, for Cuba.

April 22. **First commerce raid of the war.** En route to join the North Atlantic Squadron off Cuba, a U.S. Navy gunboat captures a Spanish freighter, firing the first shots of the Spanish-American War. Dozens of other Spanish merchantmen will be taken in the brief course of the conflict.

April 23. **Establishment of the blockade.** The North Atlantic Squadron establishes a blockade of five Cuban ports.

April 25. **Cable communications used.** Commodore George Dewey, Commander of the Asiatic Squadron, receives a cable notifying him of war with Spain and ordering him to capture or destroy the Spanish fleet. Dewey's communications with Washington are by British cables

across the Atlantic, then through the Mediterranean and Red Sea, and on to the Far East. The Spanish in Manila use the same cables, with an extension from Hong Kong to Manila.

April 27. **ASIATIC SQUADRON DEPLOYMENT.** The U.S. Asiatic Squadron, four cruisers (flag on the protected cruiser *Olympia*), two gunboats, and a revenue cutter under Commodore George Dewey, deploys from Mirs Bay, near Hong Kong, for Manila, seat of the Spanish government in the Philippines.

April 27. **North Atlantic Squadron bombardment of Matanzas batteries.** A North Atlantic Squadron armored cruiser, a cruiser and a gunboat silence two Spanish batteries at Matanzas, Cuba.

May 1. **Asiatic Squadron in Battle of Manila Bay.** The Asiatic Squadron defeats a small Spanish fleet and silences the guns of Spanish shore fortifications in Manila Bay, the Philippines.

May 12. **North Atlantic Squadron Caribbean operations.** Admiral Sampson and the North Atlantic Squadron begin to search for a Spanish Squadron under Rear Admiral Cervera, which had left the Cape Verde islands for the Caribbean on April 29. Sampson deploys from Cuba to Puerto Rico to the northern coast of Cuba

May. **DEPLOYMENT OF THE FLYING SQUADRON.** Upon news that Cervera has appeared in the Caribbean, Commodore Schley's Flying Squadron deploys to Key West, then to the Cienfuegos, Cuba. Meanwhile, the Spaniards slip into Santiago, Cuba.

May 2. **Occupation of Cavite.** The Spanish naval arsenal at Cavite, near Manila, is occupied by an Asiatic Squadron detachment. This is the first of several landings to neutralize Spanish fortifications around Manila.

May 2. **Asiatic Squadron Command and Control Warfare: Cable-cutting at Manila.** Commodore Dewey has the Spanish Manila-Madrid cable cut, after the Spanish Governor General in Manila refuses him access to it. Thereafter his only fast link with Washington is through the British Hong Kong cable office via dispatch boat to and from Manila Bay. The Spanish, however, are now totally isolated.

This is the first time cables have been cut at sea as an act of belligerency. International law will subsequently be changed to protect cable installations.

**May 11. Command and Control Warfare: Cable-cutting operation at Cienfuegos.** To sever communications between the Spanish colonial administration in Cuba and the government in Madrid, U.S. Navy volunteer boat parties, under fire, cut two of three cables leading from Cienfuegos and thence to Jamaica.

**May 29–July 31. North Atlantic Squadron blockade of the Spanish Fleet at Santiago.** Informed that the Spanish squadron is at Santiago, Admiral Sampson arrives to assume command of U.S. naval forces there. Naval operations commence, including sinking of blockship and naval bombardment of shore fortifications. These operations continue until the Spanish fleet sorties from Santiago on July 3.

**June 10. Marine amphibious landing at Guantanamo.** To provide a coaling station (a nascent advanced base) for the U.S. fleet at Santiago, a Marine battalion lands at Guantanamo, supported by naval gunfire from a cruiser and covered by the battleship *Oregon*. This is the first serious American fighting on Cuban soil, and this is the first Navy-Marine Corps amphibious operation to implement the emerging Advanced Base concept.

**June 21. Pacific Squadron in Guam un-opposed landing.** The protected cruiser *Charleston* captures the island of Guam from Spanish colonial authorities unaware of the war.

**June 25. Army Landing at Daiquiri.** The U.S. Army's 17,000-man V Corps, under Major General William T. Shafter, lands at Daiquiri, east of Santiago, following a planning meeting between Admiral Sampson and General Shafter on June 20.

A not-very-well-coordinated joint Army-Navy operation begins. Shafter wants Sampson to force his way into the harbor to distract the Spaniards. Sampson wants Shafter to seize the forts threatening his ships. The controversy will mushroom even after peace is achieved.

June 28. **Blockade is extended.** President McKinley proclaims a block-ade of the southern coast of Cuba.

July 3. **Battle of Santiago.** Cervera sorties from Santiago, Cuba and his fleet is destroyed by the U.S. North Atlantic Squadron.

July 12 -26. **Joint expedition to Puerto Rico.** 3,400 Army troops in eight transports, escorted by a Navy battleship, a cruiser and three auxiliary cruisers, deploy from Guantanamo Bay and land at Guanica, Puerto Rico.

August 12. **Armistice with Spain.**

August 12. **Annexation of Hawaii.** In a formal transfer ceremony, the United States annexes the Hawaiian Islands in the Central Pacific. The Commander of the Pacific Squadron and a cruiser are present.

October 12. **OREGON'S SECOND INTEROCEANIC DEPLOYMENT.** A task force including the battleships *Oregon* and *Iowa* deploys from New York for the Pacific, where they will reinforce the Asiatic Squadron.

December 10. **Peace with Spain.** Spain cedes Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the United States. These far-distant territories can be defended only by a battle fleet implementing the Mahanian concept of command of the sea.

Following the peace with Spain, the fleet is once again divided among the overseas cruising stations.

December 23. **Naval administration of Guam.** The Navy Department is assigned responsibility of administering the island of Guam. It will retain this responsibility until 1950.

## 1899

January 17. **Claim to Wake Island.** A U.S. Navy gunboat claims Wake Island in the mid-Pacific for the United States.

February 4–1902. **Philippine insurrection.** Filipino nationalists attack the American lines around Manila. In the ensuing conflict, which will last through 1902, the Navy plays an active role as a transport, patrol, bombardment, interception, and landing force throughout the archipelago, supporting the U.S. Army.

February 7. **Battleship deployed in the Pacific.** USS *Iowa* (BB 4) arrives at San Francisco to serve with the Pacific Squadron. It will be joined by the San Francisco-built *Wisconsin* (BB 9) from 1901 to 1903, when *Wisconsin* will join the Asiatic Squadron. *Iowa* will serve in the Pacific only until February 1902, when it will deploy to the South Atlantic.

February 24. **Landing in Nicaragua.** A gunboat lands a detachment to protect American interests at Bluefields, Nicaragua.

March. **First battleship forward deployed in Asia.** *Oregon* arrives in Manila from the East Coast of the U.S. Between one and three battleships will remain forward deployed with the Asiatic Squadron until 1906.

April 1. **Samoa uprising and landing.** Intertribal warfare breaks out in the Samoan Islands, jointly administered by the United States, Great Britain, and Germany. American and British landing parties, the former from a protected cruiser, are put ashore to guard their consulates. On April 1, an Anglo-American patrol is ambushed. The uprising is suppressed by April 25 by a combination of shore bombardments and punitive expeditions into the interior.

April 27. **Cuba landing.** A transport lands 80 Marines to preserve order in Havana, Cuba.

November 2. **First Navy radio message sent at sea.** Guglielmo Marconi sends the first official radio message from a ship of the U.S. Navy, from the cruiser *New York*.

1900

**Turkey show of force.** The *Kentucky* is sent to Turkey to intimidate the Sultan into settling American claims against Turkey.

February 19. **Naval government of Samoa.** President McKinley places the Navy Department in charge of administration of the American portion of the Samoan Islands, which were divided between the United States and Germany in 1899.

March 13. **GENERAL BOARD OF THE NAVY ESTABLISHED.** A permanent board of senior officers is established under the presidency of Admiral Dewey to provide the Secretary of the Navy with professional advice on naval operations, fleet distribution, and war planning. The board has no executive power, but will not disappear until the 1950s.

May 18. **Initial Asiatic Squadron Boxer Rebellion operations.** The U.S. minister to China requests the Asiatic Squadron guard the American legation in Peking, threatened by the Boxers. On May 28, other diplomats send similar appeals to their navies.

May 31–August 14. **Asiatic Squadron in ad hoc coalition China Boxer Rebellion combat operations.** 36 ships assemble from 8 nations, under the operational control of a Royal Navy admiral. U.S. sailors and marines, landed and supported by Asiatic Squadron ships, participate in multinational expeditions to reinforce Peking, defend the legations at Peking, capture Tientsin, and relieve the legations at Peking. On October 11, U.S. marines are withdrawn from China.

This is the last high point of a policy of Treaty Power multinational ad hoc coalition cooperation in China, and a model-like effort to suppress, with an escalating armed intervention, a xenophobic movement supported by the government of a sovereign state.

On June 10, the multi-national fleet included 36 ships from 8 nations: from Britain: 2 battleships, 4 cruisers, and 1 gunboat; from Russia: 3 battleships, 4 cruisers, and 3 gunboats; from Germany: 5 cruisers and 1 gunboat; from France; 4 cruisers and 1 gunboat; from Japan: 5

cruisers and 1 gunboat; from the United States: 1 cruiser and 1 gunboat; from Italy: 2 cruisers; from Austria-Hungary: 1 cruiser.

American rules of engagement were more restrictive from those of the other nations, precluding strong American participation.



# **The early 20th century (1901–1917): Creating – and surging forward – a big combat-ready battle fleet in the Atlantic, while continuing MOOTW forward as well**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

This era saw the fleet grow to 340 ships, including 37 battleships. Most – but not all – forward squadrons were consolidated at home into a big battle fleet in the North Atlantic (postured chiefly against Germany) and a much smaller fleet in the Pacific. The battle fleet was often surge-deployed forward – to the Mediterranean, to the Azores, and even around the world (the famous Great White Fleet). The interests of the nation and the demands of Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW), however, supplemented now by new colonial wars, prevented the fleets from consolidating entirely. Two critical technological advances were introduced at this time with far-reaching implications for the employment of naval forces as squadrons and fleets – radio ship-to-shore communications and oil-fired steam propulsion.

### **Fleet size and composition**

At the end of the Spanish-American War, the Navy has a dozen battleships built, building or authorized. Congress will authorize three more battleships and three big armored cruisers in 1899, and two more battleships and three armored cruisers in 1900. Theodore Roosevelt will secure authorization for 10 more battleships and four more armored cruisers.

Thus, whereas the U.S. Navy fought the Spanish-American War with five battleships and two armored cruisers, it ended the Roosevelt era

with 25 battleships and 10 heavy cruisers in commission. Ironically, all of them will be obsolete by that time, due to the construction of all big gun dreadnoughts and battle cruisers.

The building program becomes unbalanced – too many high-end battleships and not enough smaller cruisers and low-end destroyers.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

This is a period of explosive growth of the U.S. Navy and creation of something very new – a large, first-class American battle fleet. Mahan, Theodore Roosevelt, Dewey, and others preached consolidation of the fleet in the Atlantic, and foreign navies, especially the Royal Navy, begin to concentrate theirs at home, but the very real economic and political interests of the country keep demanding intensified MOOTW operations, especially in China and Latin America.

Pressed by the President, Mahan, and others, most of the forward squadrons get called home, but not the one in East Asia (it loses its battleships, though). A consolidated battle fleet is built in the Atlantic. The Pacific is generally neglected, except when the Battle Fleet cruises its waters during its one around-the-world deployment.

Once the fleet concentrates, it doesn't stay put. Several long deployments in force are made to Europe and the Western Pacific, and the fleet even deploys around the world. No other navy of the period conducts as extensive a deployment program of forward operations as the U.S. Navy.

The close of the period finds the fleet concentrated again in Eastern Atlantic and Caribbean waters, for both defense of the United States upon the outbreak of World War I and for MOOTW against Mexico. With a few exceptions, it will not deploy forward in strength until the Cold War.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

The tension between war preparation and MOOTW was keenly felt by the naval officers of the period, as they juggled the conflicting requirements of, for example, the State Department in the Caribbean and their own war plans.

Roosevelt's fleet deployments are a combination of fleet training and preparation for possible war with other naval powers, as well as opportunities for gunboat diplomacy varieties of MOOTW. (This is similar – to a point – to the Cold War roles of the Sixth and Seventh Fleets).

MOOTW kept the Navy busy: For example, on more than 20 occasions from 1900 to 1913, the State Department called on the Navy to send vessels into the territorial waters of Caribbean republics in the throes of political turmoil. Honduras, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Cuba were the most unstable nations, each witnessing multiple naval visitations. In most instances the Navy detailed single ships of the gunboat or light cruiser types, although occasionally, numerous warships, including battleships, are sent.

The varieties of MOOTW conducted by the U.S. Navy expand yet again with the addition of two new significant types of operations (which are, however, no longer with us): support for the army and employment of the marines in colonial wars (in the Philippines); and military government of island possessions.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

It is also a period of what Bernard Brodie has termed the "regionalization of sea power": The now-universal use of steam propulsion has introduced the factor of fuel into naval logistics, drastically reducing the cruising radius of fleets, and greatly increasing their dependence on nearby coaling stations. Among other things, this would yield a requirement to occupy and defend advance naval bases, a problem the Marines begin to try to solve during this period.

Radio is rapidly instituted and revolutionizes naval command and control. The fabled autonomy of the captain at sea is now dead. Fleet command is now achieved in fact as well as in name. Large operational naval formations mean that a measure of tactical initiative has now been taken away from the individual ship captain and given to the fleet commander.

On the other hand, oil fuel begins to be introduced into the fleet. As oil is far easier to handle for refueling and as it weighs half as much as coal for the same amount of propulsive power, oil fuel restores some of the flexibility and mobility the fleet had lost when it switched from sails to steam.

### **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

The first major change in the naval chain of command takes place. The influence in deploying their own ships of naval officers at the national echelon of command grows, as a powerful new layer – the CNO and OPNAV – is inserted in Washington between the Secretary of the Navy and his squadrons – now fleets.

### **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

For the Marines, this era is marked by continued battles over their ship guard functions, but by the development of Marine roles in landing to take advanced bases for the fleet as well as their use in acting as the nation's colonial infantry in the Caribbean and the Far East, not just to make initial small-scale landings by ships' guards forces. Starting in the Philippines, Marine interventions became larger and larger, the Marines stayed ashore longer and longer, and their military functions while ashore became more demanding and complex.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

The Army, like the Marines, was preoccupied during this period with its new MOOTW missions overseas. 20,000 American troops were stationed in the Philippines during the Philippine Insurrection from 1899 to 1901. The Army, again like the Marines, also fought in China during the Boxer Rebellion. In addition to its MOOTW combat duties, the Army also performed a variety of non-combat MOOTW functions overseas in the realms of civil engineering, administration, and government, including a two-year occupation of Cuba.

Following the Mexican Revolution in 1910, there were border clashes between American soldiers and various Mexican factions, eventually culminating in the 1914 joint Veracruz Expedition and the 1911-1917 Mexican Punitive Expedition.

## **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

Multi-national Western ad hoc naval coalitions continue to be a feature of Far Eastern international affairs, but they taper off in Latin America as President Roosevelt's "Roosevelt Corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine and other activist and unilateralist policies in the Western Hemisphere lead the United States to resent rather than selectively join foreign naval interventions in Central and South American naval waters.

The other world navies, like that of the United States, consolidate their battlefleets and deploy them abroad occasionally, although with far less frequency and geographic extent than the United States.

## Operational chronology

1901

March 23. **End of the Philippine insurrection; Moro insurrection.** The Philippine general Emilio Aguinaldo is captured and the Philippine insurrection is extinguished. A new insurrection, however, has broken out among the Muslim Moros of the southern Philippines.

Summer. **NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON MANEUVERS.** Moving toward consolidation of the fleet, the Navy's scattered armored ships concentrate in the North Atlantic and the North Atlantic Station conducts exercises off Nantucket Sound.

September 16–March 1909. **Theodore Roosevelt Presidency.** A practicing naval historian and Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1897–1898, Roosevelt accedes to the Presidency upon the assassination of President McKinley. He takes a keen personal interest in the Navy and its uses as a tool of American policy and strategy. His presidency will see an enormous naval building program, especially of battleships; the consolidation of most of the forward squadrons into one concentrated fighting fleet in the Atlantic; and the extensive forward deployment of that fleet for diplomatic purposes. His focus on battleships will leave the fleet in great need of a variety of smaller warships and support craft.

When Roosevelt takes office, the United States has nine armored ships in active service: three in the North Atlantic Squadron, one fitting out for the European Squadron, three in the Asiatic Squadron, and two in the Pacific Squadron, one of which is soon to leave for the South Atlantic Station.

November 24–December 4. **Pacific Squadron Panamanian intervention.** A Pacific Squadron battleship and three gunboats land marines at Panama City to protect American interests – most particularly the trans-isthmian railway – during a Panamanian revolt against Colombian rule.

1902

**Royal Navy battleships leave East Asia.** The Royal Navy returns its ships in the Far East home, in the wake of Britain's concluding an alliance with Japan.

April 16—22. **North Atlantic and Pacific Squadron Panama landings.** A North Atlantic Squadron gunboat lands sailors and marines at Bocas del Toro in the Colombian province of Panama. This is the first of several landings that will be made in the course of the year to protect American lives and property during the revolution in Panama. Pacific Squadron forces land at Panama City.

Summer. **Asiatic Squadron maneuvers.** The ships of the Asiatic Station maneuver as a squadron.

October 4. **CARIBBEAN DIVISION DESIGNATED.** The Second Division of the North Atlantic Squadron is re-designated the Caribbean Division, with four cruisers and two gunboats. *USS Olympia* is the first flagship.

November 5—January 1903. **FIRST MULTI-SQUADRON CONCENTRATION IN THE CARIBBEAN.** In the next step toward consolidating the fleet, President Roosevelt deploys 50 ships from the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, European Squadrons, and the Caribbean Division into the Caribbean for winter maneuvers. The fleet concentrates at Culebra Island. Admiral of the Navy George Dewey commands the force, with the head of the Bureau of Navigation, Admiral Taylor, as his chief of staff. The maneuvers include a search problem, tactical exercises, and ship training ashore.

This marks the first time the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, and European Squadrons have operated together. These are the first large-scale fleet exercises the U.S. Navy has ever held in time of peace. They occur coincidentally with a crisis with Germany over Venezuela.

The first rudimentary Marine advanced base force exercises are held on Culebra Island, Puerto Rico at this time.

December 29. **FURTHER CONSOLIDATION OF THE FLEET.** The Caribbean and Coast Squadrons, together with the European and

North and South Atlantic Squadrons, are organized into a single command for the purpose of annual maneuvers. This combined organization is placed under the Commander-in-Chief, North Atlantic Squadron, as Commander of the Combined Force.

The title of Commander of the Combined Force is then changed to that of Commander-in-Chief, North Atlantic Fleet, and its mission is changed. Hereafter, the mission of protecting American interests on various stations is made incidental. As a primary mission, the newly born fleet is charged with training as a tactical unit.

## 1903

**JOINT ARMY-NAVY BOARD CREATED.** In the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, a joint board is created by order of the two service secretaries to confer on matters calling for the cooperation of the two services. It has no command responsibility. It will be used sporadically and intermittently from 1903 through World War I.

**ASIATIC FLEET CHINA RIVER PATROLS.** Patrols on the Yangtse begin. Based at Shanghai, Asiatic Fleet gunboats will patrol the river through the large cities of Nanking, Hankow, and Chungking. They will be reinforced periodically by destroyers and cruisers, and will be formalized as the Yangtse Patrol in 1919.

January 31. **MAJOR FLEET REORGANIZATION.** A new Caribbean Squadron (the old Caribbean Division) and a new Coast Squadron are formed. The Caribbean Squadron is to be under North Atlantic Fleet operational control in time of war or during fleet exercises. Otherwise, it does MOOTW in the Caribbean at the behest of the State Department.

February 23. **Guantanamo Bay lease.** The United States leases Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where it will establish a major naval base.

March 21-April 16. **Honduran Expeditionary Service.** A Caribbean Squadron peace-keeping force consisting of three cruisers, a gunboat and a transport deploys off the coast of Honduras during a revolution there. Marines are landed to protect the U.S. embassy at Puerto Cortez.

April 1-19. **Dominican Republic landing.** A Caribbean squadron cruiser lands Marines to guard the U.S. consulate at Santo Domingo during an insurrection in the Dominican Republic.

Spring. **North Atlantic Fleet exercises off Azores.** The North Atlantic Fleet conducts an extensive program of spring maneuvers, involving the descent of the main battle fleet on the Azores (the occupation of which upon the outbreak of a war was deemed essential to forestall a German attack on South America).

April 30-August. **European Squadron Shows of Force in Europe.** RADM Cotton, and the four cruisers of his European Squadron visit Marseilles in a major naval diplomatic demonstration of amity with and support for France. Cotton visits Paris and consorts with the President of France and the King of England.

The cruisers meet join the U.S. Navy's newest and most modern battleship and visit Kiel for Regatta Week (for a correct but cool visit with the Kaiser) and a naval review at Portsmouth at Southampton (and dinners with the King in London). No other American admiral had yet represented America at functions of such diplomatic significance.

Spring. **Fleet radio communications begins.** The establishment of shore stations and the installation of wireless apparatus on shipboard is begun. By 1905 48 vessels and 36 shore stations on both coasts and in the Caribbean are either equipped or being equipped. By 1908 radio will be installed in all surface vessels of the U.S. fleet, including torpedo craft.

Wireless gives ships a communications range of 50 to 75 miles from shore stations or other elements of the fleet. Scouting cruisers can now operate beyond the visual range of the rest of the fleet.

August. **Radio first used successfully in fleet exercise.** Five east coast shore stations and five ships are equipped with wireless sets for summer maneuvers, in which radio is used to report enemy positions and bring forces to bear on them.

October 10-17. **European Squadron Beirut landing.** A European Squadron cruiser lands sailors and marines at Beirut, in the Ottoman

province of Syria, to protect U.S. citizens and the American University during a period of political disturbances.

November 5. **Caribbean Squadron intervention in Panama.** A Caribbean Squadron gunboat and a transport land marines at Colon, in Panama, to block Colombian soldiers from entraining for Panama City to put down a rebellion instigated by the promoter of a trans-isthmian canal. Within a week, six Caribbean Squadron warships are stationed off Colon and one Pacific Squadron warship off Panama City to deter Colombian troop movements.

November 18. **Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty signed.** A newly independent Panama, recognized as such by the United States on November 6, grants the United States sovereign rights in perpetuity to a 10-mile-wide canal zone across the country. U.S. marines are landed in Panama in December and in January 1904. A marine force of varying size will remain in Panama until 1914.

December. **Panama global fleet positioning and shows of force.** Pres-ident Roosevelt orders all squadrons in the Atlantic to the Caribbean, all Pacific Squadron ships to Magdalena Bay, Lower California, and the major portion of the Asiatic Squadron to Honolulu, to ensure no European interference in Panama. (This presages Cold War global fleet movements; e.g., during the Suez Crisis of 1956 and the Cuban Missile crisis of 1962).

## 1904

**LAST YEAR OF THE FULL DISTANT STATION PATTERN.** There are 28 ships this year in the North Atlantic Fleet, of which 10 are in the subordinate Caribbean Squadron. There are also 29 in the Asiatic Squadron; 7 in the Pacific Squadron; and 3 in the European Squadron.

**The Royal Navy returns more Squadrons home.** The small squadron of six unarmored cruisers in the West Indies Squadron, as well as the Pacific and South Atlantic Squadrons, are disbanded. The Caribbean is now an American lake, except for one British third-class cruiser.

January–April. **Dominican Republic Intervention.** A half-dozen Caribbean Squadron warships operate off the Dominican coast to protect American interests during an insurrection. Sailors and marines are landed at various times throughout the first part of the year. On February 11, two cruisers provide covering fire for a landing in Santo Domingo to expel rebels from the city. In June, the commanding officer of USS *Detroit* negotiates a peace accord signed on *Detroit* by Dominican President Morales and the insurgents.

This is the only U.S. Navy shore bombardment during this period.

January 5–April 23. **Korea landing.** An Asiatic Squadron transport lands 103 seamen and marines to guard the U.S. legation at Seoul, Korea.

March 12. **Korea Evacuation operation.** The marine detachment of an Asiatic Squadron cruiser evacuates American citizens, caught up in the Russo-Japanese war, from Seoul and Chemulpo (Inchon).

30 May–13 August. **MULTI-SQUADRON MEDITERRANEAN SHOW OF FORCE OPERATIONS.** In the largest display of American naval power ever seen outside American home waters, President Roosevelt deploys to Gibraltar six first-class battleships and eight cruisers of the North Atlantic Fleet's Battleship Squadron, plus both the three-cruiser European Squadron and the two-cruiser, two-gunboat South Atlantic Squadron, to cruise in the Mediterranean to show the flag and impress the Europeans and others with the new strength of the American Navy.

The warships which are to take part in the deployment have come together in the Caribbean during the winter months of 1903–1904.

Upon reaching Europe, the European and South Atlantic Squadrons put in at Tangier, in the disintegrating state of Morocco; the Atlantic Squadron goes to Lisbon. The forces are at Tangier to save a Greek-American, Perdicaris, captured by the Moroccan bandit Raisuli. Roosevelt's orders, "Perdicaris alive, or Raisuli dead" are well timed to impress a Republican convention, which renominates him for President. Raisouli releases Perdicaris.

With Perdecaris released, in June, the South Atlantic squadron deploys along the West African coast, the European squadron deploys to the Austrian Adriatic, and the North Atlantic Squadron battleship force transits the Mediterranean to Athens, to unsuccessfully coerce the Sultan to give American missionary schools certain rights granted to the missionary schools of other countries in the Ottoman Empire, whereupon the battleships withdraw to the Adriatic and the European Squadron deploys to Smyrna, Turkey, whereupon the Sultan capitulates.

December. **DISSOLUTION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON.** The last U.S. Navy warships depart from Bahia and Pernambuco, Brazil for other duties. The Squadron had been in existence, with a few interruptions, since 1826. Under the influence of Mahan and others, the Navy now focuses on the practical advantages of fleet concentration and a policy of response to specific crises. In addition, there is now little threat to U.S. commercial interests in lower South America.

December 6. **Roosevelt Corollary announced.** President Roosevelt declares the United States intend to exercise international police power in the Western Hemisphere. This proposition will lead to American occupation of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua, and the employment of the U.S. marines as colonial infantry in a series of so-called "Banana Wars" in Central America and the Caribbean.

## 1905

January 20. **Dominican customs agreement.** U.S. Navy and Marine Corps officers assume control of the customs service of the debt-ridden Dominican Republic. Two Panama marine battalions are held offshore on board USS *Yankee*, March 21–April 21.

**DISSOLUTION OF THE EUROPEAN SQUADRON.** Periodic fleet deployments to the Mediterranean will be made, however, including the 1906 deployment to Gibraltar and the 1909 deployment of the Great White Fleet.

1906

**Presidential deployment to Panama.** President Theodore Roosevelt visits Panama to inspect construction of the canal on board USS *Louisiana*. First time a sitting President leaves the United States and first use of a U.S. Navy warship to transport him.

January 1. **CONSOLIDATION OF THE ATLANTIC FLEET.** The North Atlantic Fleet and South Atlantic and European Squadrons are consolidated into an Atlantic Fleet, divided into four squadrons – a battleship squadron, two cruiser squadrons, and a coast squadron of an old battleship and monitors. The South Atlantic Squadron – actually dissolved in December 1904 – is formally dis-established.

January. **Atlantic Fleet Gibraltar show of force.** Coincident with the international Algeciras Conference dealing with German aspirations for a naval coaling station in Morocco, necessary for naval operations off South America, the U.S. Atlantic Fleet's Third Division deploys to Gibraltar, in a show of support for the British. The Fleet will return to the Mediterranean in force in 1909, on the last leg of the world cruise of the Great White Fleet.

April 18–May 10. **Pacific Squadron California domestic humanitarian assistance operation.** In the wake of the San Francisco earthquake, Pacific Squadron personnel fight fires and patrol the waterfront.

July 20. **Central American peace-making site.** El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala sign Convention of Peace on board U.S. Navy cruiser.

Summer. **ASIATIC SQUADRON LOSES BATTLESHIPS.** The battleships, present in East Asia since 1899, are replaced by a squadron of four homogeneous armored heavy cruisers, considered large enough to impress the Chinese but fast enough to escape destruction by Japanese battleships, should war occur. These remain in the Far East until August 1907.

There are now 15 American battleships in the Atlantic, all assembled in a single fighting unit – the Atlantic Fleet.

In 1908, the Great White Fleet will deploy across the Pacific for eight months with 16 battleships, but the U.S. Navy will not again station

capital ships in Far Eastern waters as a matter of routine until late 1945, when the Seventh Fleet will acquire a fast carrier force and begin operations in Korea and China.

**September 13. Second Cuban Intervention.** A Caribbean Squadron cruiser lands 120 sailors and marines to separate belligerents in Havana during a civil war; a transport lands a battalion of marines to protect American interests at Cienfuegos, and five more Marine regiments are rushed to Cuba. These unauthorized landings initiate a chain of events which pushes the Roosevelt Administration into a two-year occupation of Cuba, with a force that peaks at 2,892 marines. The last marines leave in January 1909.

## 1907

**January 17-19. Atlantic Fleet disaster aid in Jamaica.** Sailors and marines from two battleships and a destroyer from the First Squadron of the Atlantic Fleet, under the division commander, RADM Charles H. Davis, aid survivors of an earthquake and fire at Kingston, Jamaica. Tasks include medical aid, clearing wreckage, distribution of provisions, security and prison riot control. Rejection of needed U.S. Navy assistance after the first day by the British Governor General of Jamaica will lead to a diplomatic incident with Great Britain that will last through August.

**February 27. CONSOLIDATION OF THE PACIFIC FLEET.** Following the consolidation of the Atlantic Fleet, the Pacific and Asiatic Squadrons are now brought together under one command, divided into three squadrons.

With the transfer of two cruisers from the Atlantic, the main battle formation of the Pacific Fleet, the First Squadron, now consists of two divisions of modern armored cruisers. Four armored cruisers and four protected cruisers will be brought from Asia to the West Coast. The incumbent Asiatic Squadron commander is now in command of the entire force. The new Fleet holds tactical drills to become molded into a modern fighting force.

The Navy's operating forces now achieve a reasonable degree of centralized control. Two fleet commanders in chief, Atlantic and Pacific,

exercise direct command of all major seagoing forces, and the major combatants of both of these forces are now organized into reasonably homogeneous formations capable of maneuvering as tactical entities.

The former Asiatic Squadron, now the Third Squadron of the Pacific Fleet, will continue to be under the operational control of Washington, however, and will be re-established as a separate command in 1910.

May–September. **Atlantic Fleet maneuvers.** A variety of maneuvers are conducted in the North Atlantic.

April 28–May 23. **Honduras landing.** A Caribbean Squadron gunboat lands marines to safeguard American interests at Laguna, Honduras, during a war between Honduras and Nicaragua. The marines subsequently move inland to protect Americans at Choloma, Honduras. The defeated Honduran president is granted refuge on board a U.S. Navy cruiser.

August 22. **Asiatic Fleet cruisers deploy back to Hawaii.** The cruisers had been in the Far east about a year.

December 16–February 22, 1909. **DEPLOYMENT OF THE ATLANTIC “GREAT WHITE” FLEET.** Sixteen American battleships, with colliers and auxiliaries, deploy from Hampton Roads on an unprecedented round-the-world cruise, dramatically demonstrating America’s newly established naval power. No cruise approaching this length has ever been attempted by steam-powered, steel battleships. Proceeding around Cape Horn to the West Coast of the United States, the fleet crosses the Pacific to visit Australia and New Zealand, steams north to the Philippines and Japan, turns south through the China Sea to enter the Indian Ocean, and returns to Hampton Roads via the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, the Mediterranean, and the North Atlantic to complete a deployment of 46,000 miles without a single serious breakdown.

The Fleet deploys in large part to demonstrate a major Pacific presence despite concentration of the Fleet in the Atlantic. Upon its return, the Fleet remains on the East Coast as the Atlantic Fleet.

December–April 1908. **Latin America cruise of the Atlantic “Great White” Fleet**

## 1908

April–December. **Pacific Cruise of the Atlantic “Great White” Fleet.** U.S. Navy battleships return to the Pacific, having been absent since 1906.

June 26–July 1. **Landing in Panama.** A Marine expeditionary force is put ashore from two Atlantic “Great White” Fleet battleships to augment forces in place and ensure peaceful elections.

August–September. **Pacific Fleet deploys to Samoa.** The First Squadron of the Pacific Fleet cruises from California via Hawaii to Samoa and back, in an operation not coordinated with the movements of the Atlantic Fleet’s “Great White Fleet” of battleships then also in the Pacific.

Station ship assigned at Constantinople. The steel steam yacht *Scorpion* arrives at Constantinople to take up duties as station ship until 1927.

## 1909

**Change to oil fuel begins.** An experimental oil-burning installation on the steam monitor *Cheyenne* is successful.

**Pacific Fleet armored cruisers deploy to Western Pacific.** They call on Japan nearly a year after the Great White Fleet.

January–February. **Mediterranean cruise of the Atlantic “Great White” Fleet**

January–February. **Presidential diplomacy support.** President-elect Taft visits Panama on a U.S. Navy cruiser.

January 23. **Marines leave Cuba.** The last marines leave Cuba, ending the Second Cuban Intervention that had begun in 1906.

February–March. **Nicaragua interventions.** Marines are landed at San Juan del Norte and Bluefields in February and March. Gunboats are stationed off the coast following the execution of Americans in November. In December, a cruiser prevents fighting between rebel groups, and Marines are landed at Corinto on the Pacific coast to restore order.

February 22. **THE ATLANTIC “GREAT WHITE” FLEET RETURNS TO NORFOLK.** It is met off Cape Hatteras by the Third Squadron, Atlantic Fleet, one old and three new battleships that had not participated in the cruise. The battle fleet will remain concentrated in the western Atlantic until World War I, when two battleship squadrons will be forward deployed to Scotland and Ireland in 1914. In 1919, the fleet will begin a shift to the Pacific.

December 1. **AID FOR OPERATIONS ESTABLISHED.** Congress having rebuffed several attempts since 1900 to establish a naval general staff, the Secretary of the Navy divides his department into four divisions, each headed by an “Aid” who reports directly to him. The post of Aid for Operations foreshadows that of the Chief of Naval Operations, which will be created six years later. His Division of Operations of the Fleet is the progenitor of OPNAV. RADM Richard Wainwright is designated the first Aid for Operations.

The Division would inherit from the Bureau of Navigation the office that receives and handles all records and reports of squadrons and ships, and that prepares and issues all general and special orders and changes in Navy Regulations.

## 1910

The Joint Board decides that, in joint amphibious operations, the Navy will command up to the high water mark, and the Army will command ashore.

May 19 and 30. **Landings in Nicaragua.** Caribbean Squadron gunboats land seamen and marines at Bluefields, Nicaragua, to protect American lives and property during fighting between government and rebel forces. A gunboat commander forbids a Nicaraguan gunboat from shelling Bluefields.

January 28. **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ASIATIC FLEET.** The Third Squadron of the Pacific Fleet is designated the Asiatic Fleet, re-establishing and upgrading the old Asiatic Squadron, abolished three years earlier. It will comprise a few old cruisers and gunboats. The Pacific Fleet will retain the bulk of U.S. naval forces in the Pacific.

**INTERNAL REORGANIZATION OF THE FLEETS.** The Secretary of the Navy reorganizes the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets into divisions and institutes an Atlantic Reserve Fleet.

December. **Atlantic Fleet Western Europe show of force.** All four divisions of the Atlantic Fleet deploy for extended visits to British and French Channel ports.

This is a far more powerful force than had deployed around the world as the Great White Fleet.

## 1911

**Foreign military sales deployment.** The U.S. Navy's latest dreadnought, USS *Delaware*, deploys to Brazil and Chile in an attempt to interest their navies in "buying American". The effort is unsuccessful, but Chile will purchase submarines from the Electric Boat Company.

February 1. **Honduras landing.** A Caribbean Squadron cruiser lands a party to protect American interests at Puerto Cortez, Honduras.

March 13. **Cuba landing.** A provisional marine battalion is landed at Guantanamo Bay to defend American interests during a period of political tension.

June–July. **Atlantic Fleet Baltic Show of Force.** The Second Division (four pre-dreadnoughts) of the Atlantic Fleet visits ports in Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and Germany.

July. **Show of force off Haiti.** USS *Des Moines* is stationed off Haiti to protect U.S. interests.

November 4–14. **China landing.** An Asiatic Fleet cruiser and a transport land marines to guard the cable station at Shanghai, China.

November 24. **China landing.** An Asiatic Fleet armored cruiser carries marines from Shanghai to protect American missionaries at Taku, China.

December 14. **Base at Pearl Harbor.** A fleet base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, is ceremonially opened.

December. **MOBILIZATIONS OF THE FLEETS.** The Atlantic and Pacific Fleets concentrate. In New York, seven miles of Navy warships anchor in the North River for three days, to be reviewed by the President.

## 1912

January 9. **Unauthorized landing in Honduras.** Marines land to prevent seizure of U.S.-owned railroad. They withdraw when the U.S. government disapproves.

May 19. **ICE PATROL DEPLOYMENT.** A cruiser begins the first American ice patrol in the North Atlantic, in the wake of the sinking of the liner *Titanic* the previous month. An International Ice Patrol is established in 1914 and the responsibility of the United States assumed by the Coast Guard.

May 28. **Peace-keeping in Cuba.** A transport lands a marine provisional brigade at Daiquiri in the wake of an attempted revolution in Cuba. Other marines go ashore at Guantanamo and Havana. The marines garrison 26 towns in the vicinity of Guantanamo and Santiago and serve as railway guards. The marines relieve Cuban troops of guard duties in eastern Cuba, freeing the Cuban Army to defeat the uprising. The marines withdraw in July and August, but in August, a permanent marine garrison is established to provide security for the naval base at Guantanamo Bay.

August 4. **Intervention in Nicaragua.** During a revolution in Nicaragua, a gunboat lands sailors and marines at Corinto, on the Pacific coast of Nicaragua. They proceed inland to guard the American legation in Managua. Subsequent landings occur at Corinto on August 14, at Bluefields on the Atlantic coast on August 17, at Corinto on August 28, at San Juan del Sur, on the Pacific coast, on August 30, and

at Corinto again on September 4. The Marines having defeated the Nicaraguan rebels in several battles ashore, the revolution fails and the Marines re-embark from Bluefields on November 21. A battalion remains at Leon until January 17, 1913, and a legation guard remains at Managua until August 1925.

August 24 and 26. **Landings in China.** An Asiatic Fleet transport lands marines near Shanghai, China, to protect American lives and property during a period of revolutionary disturbances.

November—May 1913. **Balkan Wars Mediterranean cruiser deployment.** The armored cruiser *Tennessee* deploys to Smyrna and the Eastern Mediterranean to protect U.S. citizens during the Balkan Wars.

## 1913

**Terms defined.** *Navy Regulations* now states: "The word 'Fleet' shall denote the aggregation of forces of various classes of vessels in one organization under one commander"; and "A Force is the major subdivision of a fleet. It is composed of all the vessels of the fleet that are of the same type or class or that are assigned to the same duty". These definitions mark the beginning of the direct line of descent that culminated in the fleet organization with which the Navy entered World War II.

March. **President Wilson inaugurated.** Wilson's interventionist foreign policy in the Caribbean will result in the greatest number of U.S. Navy MOOTW operations there in the entire 20th century.

July 7. **Landing in China.** An Asiatic Fleet protected cruiser lands marines at Shanghai, China to protect American interests.

September 5-7. **Evacuation from Mexico.** Marines from a transport evacuate American citizens from Ciaris Estero, Mexico, during a period of revolutionary disturbances. Fleet units, including three to four battleships, are stationed off Mexico's east coast to protect U.S. lives and property throughout the year and into 1914.

1914

January. **FIRST ATLANTIC FLEET MARINE ADVANCE BASE FORCE EXERCISE** ("The Culebra Maneuver"). Part of the fleet's annual winter maneuvers, this is the first major exercise by the Navy and Marine Corps of the new Marine mission of occupying and defending advance naval bases, although some more rudimentary exercises had taken place at Culebra and in the Philippines during the previous decade.

**August-Summer 1915. American Relief Expedition support deployment and Turkey evacuation operations.** The cruiser USS *Tennessee* carries Jews and others from Turkey to places of safety.

January 21. **Marines re-deploy from Panama.** They have been stationed there, in a force of varying size, since 1903.

January 28–February 9. **Landing in Haiti.** A battleship lands marines in coordination with British, French and German landing parties to maintain order in Port-au-Prince during a Haitian revolution.

April 9. **Tampico incident.** Sailors from an Atlantic Fleet squadron boat party are detained by Mexican authorities. Although the Mexicans release the men and apologize, President Wilson uses the incident to try to pressure Mexico's dictatorial president from office. On April 14 the Atlantic Fleet is ordered to concentrate off the east coast of Mexico.

April 21. **Intervention in Mexico.** To block the unloading of a German arms shipment, an Atlantic Fleet transport and a battleship land marines and sailors to seize Vera Cruz, where they meet with resistance. Five battleships and two cruisers subsequently land detachments. On April 22 the 4,000-strong naval brigade, supported by naval gunfire from an Atlantic Fleet cruiser, defeats Vera Cruz's defenders and take the city. On April 24 another battleship and another cruiser arrive, with the Navy's Aero Sections – the first time U.S. naval aviation is committed to support combat operations. On the Pacific coast, USS *West Virginia*, with the Fourth Marine Regiment embarked, stands off Mazatlan from April to June.

April 25. **First operational use of naval aviation.** Naval aircraft on *Mississippi* and *Birmingham* observe Mexican positions.

April. **Operational use of radio.** A light cruiser is stationed at sea to relay messages between Washington and the flagship *Wyoming* off Mexico.

April 30. **U.S. Army at Veracruz.** The naval forces occupying Veracruz are relieved by an Army brigade. The marines and the Navy's Aero Section stay on. In May the German ship unloads her arms at another Mexican port. Mexico's dictator resigns on July 15, however, and American forces withdraw from Veracruz by November 23, after an occupation of seven months.

July 28. **Outbreak of World War I in Europe.** Austria declares war on Serbia, beginning a chain reaction that will lead the world to war.

August 14. **Landing in Nicaragua.** Marines land at Bluefields to protect U.S. interests.

August 15. **The Panama Canal is opened.** A collier becomes the first naval vessel to transit the canal, October 10—12, followed by three battleships. The opening of the canal enables a convenient transfer of fleet units between the Atlantic and the Pacific for the first time.

December 17. **Landing in Haiti.** A gunboat lands marines in Port-au-Prince to secure part of the Haitian gold reserve, threatened by a new revolutionary government.

## 1915

January. **ATLANTIC CRUISER SQUADRON DESIGNATED.** RADM William B. Caperton takes command of a new Atlantic Cruiser Squadron of 14 ships, flagship the armored cruiser *Washington*, to guard American interests in both the Caribbean and Mediterranean, and safeguard American lives and property in these regions.

January 28. **Sinking of an American schooner.** A German auxiliary cruiser sinks an American schooner carrying wheat consigned to an English firm. She is the first American merchantman to be lost in World War I.

March 3. **FIRST CNO.** The Office of Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) is established by Congress. The CNO "shall under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy be charged with the operations of the Fleet, and with the preparation and readiness of plans for its use in war..." As its first holder, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels (who opposed creation of the office) appoints Rear Admiral William S. Benson on May 11. Benson takes over the duties of Admiral Fiske, the Aide for Operations.

His job is to be in charge of all operations and war planning, under the direction of the Secretary, but he has a meager staff and no authority over the Navy's Bureaus, including the Bureau of Navigation, which assigns commanders to ships. The Secretary still communicates directly with the fleet commanders, as does Benson. Nevertheless, for the first time at the outbreak of a war involving the United States, there will now exist in the Navy Department an office specifically charged with general planning for, and to some extent, the naval conduct of the war.

May 7. **The *Lusitania* is sunk.** The German government eventually admits liability.

June 15. **First oiler commissioned.** As the changeover from coal to oil fuel progresses, the first fleet oiler USS *Kanawha* is commissioned.

July 1. **Cruiser Squadron Peacekeeping in Haiti.** An Atlantic Cruiser Squadron armored cruiser carrying Rear Admiral William B. Caperton arrives at Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second-largest city, to prevent fighting in and near the city during a revolution, and to preclude similar French naval actions. Marines land to establish radio communications between the American consulate and the cruiser.

July. **Intervention in Haiti.** Rear Admiral Caperton lands marines and sailors to seize control of Port-au-Prince in the wake of massacres, murder of the president, rioting, and governmental dissolution in the Haitian capital. A gunboat lands a party at Cap-Haitien to protect the French consulate. On July 29, a collier brings more marines to Port-au-Prince from Guantanamo Bay, and on August 1, a gunboat lands marines who occupy Cap-Haitien. On August 4, a battleship lands more marines at Port-au-Prince, and on August 15, an armored

cruiser lands more marines. The marines, who number over 2,000 by the end of August, launch a vigorous campaign to suppress bandits. On September 18, combat operations begin.

November 11. **Occupation of Haiti.** Under pressure from Admiral Caperton, the Haitian Senate reluctantly ratifies a treaty, signed by the Haitian President on September 16, formalizing the American occupation of Haiti, including replacement of the Haitian army by a U.S. marine-led gendarmerie. The U.S. Senate will ratify the treaty on February 23, 1916, the treaty to remain in force for 10 years and to be renewable at the desire of either country. Meanwhile, marine combat operations in the interior continue. Marines will remain in Haiti until 1934.

Atlantic Cruiser Squadron patrols will continue around Haiti through 1917, in support of marines ashore.

Late 1915. **TRANSFER OF SHIPS FROM THE PACIFIC FLEET TO THE ATLANTIC.** Given the war in Europe, the Pacific Fleet is reduced to one armored cruiser and smaller warships.

## 1916

May 5. **Dominican intervention.** In the midst of a civil war, a transport lands marines at Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, to protect the American legation and consulate, and to support the incumbent president. A gunboat subsequently lands more marines and sailors. On May 12, Admiral Caperton, commander of the Cruiser Squadron of the Atlantic Fleet, arrives at Santo Domingo in a dispatch vessel, and a store ship lands yet more marines. The marines complete the occupation of Santo Domingo by May 15. Other ships land marines at Monte Cristi, and marines converge on Santiago, which they occupy on May 5 after several small battles.

June 12. **FLEET FLAGSHIP COMMISSIONED.** USS *Pennsylvania* (BB-38) is commissioned. An oil-burning battleship, he will be a fleet flagship for most of her long and useful service, first for the Atlantic Fleet during World War I, the Battle Fleet between the wars, and the Pacific Fleet in 1941. At Pearl Harbor she will sustain minor damage while in dry dock.

August. **CNO an Admiral.** Congress authorizes the rank and title of "Admiral" for the CNO, and strengthens his authority.

August. **War Games of 1916.** The Atlantic Fleet deploys to attack the Reserve fleet off the northeast Atlantic coast.

November 29. **Dominican occupation.** Captain Harry S. Knapp is appointed military governor of the Dominican Republic, which is declared to be under the military jurisdiction of the United States. Fighting continues, however, between marines and Dominican rebels. On April 7, 1917, Knapp (now an admiral) disbands the remnants of the Dominican army and orders creation of a gendarmerie officered by U.S. marines. The country will remain occupied until 1926. Unlike Haiti where the U.S. military administrator is operating through a Haitian client government, the occupation of the Dominican republic will be characterized by direct rule by U.S. Navy and Marine Corps officers, who fill most government posts.

## 1917

January 17. **Purchase of the Virgin Islands.** The United States purchases the Virgin Islands from Denmark.

February 1. **German unrestricted submarine warfare.** Accepting the risk of American intervention in the world war, the Imperial German government announces the initiation of a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare around the British Isles.

February 25. **Cuban intervention.** Atlantic Fleet vessels land marines in eastern Cuba to guard American property, mainly sugar plantations, during a revolution, and freeing up government troops to fight the rebels. Withdrawn late in May, the marines return in August and remain in regimental strength until August 1919. Two companies continue to garrison Camaguey until February 6, 1922.

April 3. **Navy takes possession of Virgin Islands.** The commander of the Third Squadron of the Atlantic Fleet, on the unarmored cruiser *Dolphin*, takes possession of the islands for the United States. On April 9, he will become Governor of the Virgin Islands. The Navy will administer the islands until 1931.

# **World War I fleet & squadron operations (1917-1918): Sending pieces of the battle fleet to Europe for combat under Royal Navy control**

## **Operational overview**

World War I for the U.S. Navy doesn't go as the Mahanists had planned. The Navy grows to 775 ships with 39 battleships, the second largest in the world, and finally goes to war against another world-class naval power. It does not fight alone, however, but in its first coalition war. It continues its shift from the Pacific to the Atlantic, but the ships in the Atlantic do not wind up in one concentrated battle fleet, but rather are dispersed all over the Atlantic and Mediterranean. Moreover, they are normally placed under the operational control of Royal Navy admirals.

There is no need for a consolidated U.S. Battle Fleet. The British, Japanese, and most other naval powers are U.S. allies. And the German High Seas Fleet would have had great difficulty – as Jutland showed – getting past the British Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow to do battle with the Americans in the Caribbean, as the U.S. Navy's War Plan Black would have had it.

An unanticipated form of naval warfare becomes a central pre-occupation of the fleet – anti-submarine warfare.

## **Fleet size and composition**

When America entered World War I she had a 342-ship Navy: 37 battleships, 7 coastal monitors, 33 cruisers, 66 destroyers, 17 frigates, 44 submarines, 42 patrol ships, and 96 auxiliaries. She finished the war with 774 active ships, including two more battleships, 44 more

destroyers, 36 more submarines, 53 new mine warfare ships and over 300 more patrol ships.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

Instead the Americans wind up deploying a squadron of their scarce destroyers to bases in Ireland, to fight German submarines. These aren't enough and more destroyers have to be built, fast. New squadrons are deployed to Brest, in France, and to the Mediterranean. Cruisers go to the South Atlantic and to France. The Pacific Fleet comes through the new Panama Canal, but is deployed in the South Atlantic, off Brazil, not with the battleships. A battleship squadron is broken off the battle fleet and sent to Scapa Flow to supplement the British. Later, a few more battleships go to Ireland. The rump of the battle fleet remains in U.S. home waters. A consolidated fleet looked fine in theory, but was unusable in practice.



## **The fleets and marine operational relationships**

The marines fight as part of the allied ground forces in northern France, covering themselves with glory at Belleau-Wood, but not doing anything particularly maritime.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

Jointness is rudimentary but not much needed. The war at sea of the U.S. Navy and the war in Northern France of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps are complementary but more or less separate.

## **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

A famous controversy raged throughout World War I on the extent to which U.S. Navy units should submit to Royal Navy operational control. U.S. Commander in European Waters VADM Sims was for it; CNO ADM Benson against it. The destroyers in Ireland and the battleships at Scapa Flow and Bantry Bay all came under British control. The forces working out of Brest, however, remained an independent U.S. command, coordinating and cooperating with the French Navy.

## Operational chronology

### 1917 (continued)

April 6. **War with Germany.** Congress approves President Wilson's request for a declaration of war on Germany. Secretary Daniels will leave naval operations almost wholly to the CNO.

The United States Navy has 300 combatant ships, including 70 destroyers. By the end of the war, there will be 248 destroyers.

April 9. **NAVAL FORCES OPERATING IN EUROPEAN WATERS CREATED.** Rear Admiral William S. Sims arrives in London to establish high-level contact with British naval authorities. The admiral remains in London, as Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Operating in European Waters, throughout the war, his staff peaking at 200 officers. Sims remains nominally under the direction of the Atlantic Fleet commander, but acts as an independent commander communicating directly at times with the President, the Secretary of the Navy, and the CNO. Sims will place all U.S. Navy vessels dispatched to British waters under Royal Navy operational control.

U.S. Naval Forces in Europe will continue as a separate command until 1929.

April-July. **ATLANTIC FLEET PATROL FORCE ESTABLISHED.** Seventy or so cruisers, destroyers, and gunboats immediately assume responsibility for anti-submarine and anti-surface raider patrols from Canada to South America, including the Caribbean Sea. The Patrol Force is subdivided into six sectors; seventeen warships are assigned to the Caribbean and Gulf patrols. It will be whittled down to just one patrol squadron by July, succeeded by the American Patrol detachment of eight ships in the Gulf and Caribbean. It will be succeeded by the Special Service Squadron in 1920.

April 24-May 4. **DESTROYERS DEPLOY TO IRELAND.** The 6 vessels of Destroyer Squadron 8 deploy from Boston to the British naval base of Queenstown, Ireland, for convoy escort and patrol duty under Royal Navy operational control. Sims asks for all available U.S. Navy destroyers to follow them quickly.

May 9. **PACIFIC FLEET CRUISER DIVISION DEPLOYS TO SOUTH ATLANTIC.** ADM William Caperton, Commander of the Pacific Fleet, is ordered to take Division Two (a cruiser scouting force, flagship USS *Pittsburgh*) to establish a patrol in the South Atlantic, to defend South Atlantic sea lanes and assist in getting South American governments to support the United States. The cruisers will arrive at Bahia, Brazil on June 14, and base at Bahia and Montevideo, Uruguay. Division Two will conduct naval presence as well as patrol operations, and operate with and assist the Brazilian Navy, which will deploy for Eastern Atlantic operations in the Mediterranean approaches. Force levels will fluctuate, and the squadron will be dissolved in 1920.

**Marine Transport commissioned.** USS *Henderson* (AP-1), the first transport designed from the keel up to transport Marines, is commissioned. Setting a precedent all too familiar to generations of future sailors and marines, it is immediately pressed into service for non-Marine Corps duties and assigned to Rear Admiral Gleaves's new Cruiser and Transport force, where it will transport thousands of troops to Europe, and then back home again.

Following the war, it is used both to transport marines, their dependents and their equipment to foreign MOOTW stations, especially in the Caribbean, but also to help practice and refine advanced base seizures and amphibious assaults. It will do the former far more frequently than the latter. (In World War II it will act first as a transport and later be converted into a hospital ship, evolving amphibious assault ship requirements having passed it by).

May 29. **CRUISER AND TRANSPORT FORCE CREATED.** Rear Admiral Albert Gleaves is made commander of the force, eventually numbering 45 transports and 24 cruisers, organized to carry troops of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) to Europe. His flagship is the armored cruiser *Seattle*, plus he has a headquarters building in Hoboken, New Jersey. It will move almost half the AEF to France and England, the other troops being carried in British transports.

June. **Allies pool hydrophone development efforts.** The British, Americans and French begin to pool their ideas and research, but by

the end of the war hydrophones will have made little contribution to the fight against submarines.

**June 5-6. NAVAL AVIATION DEPLOYS TO FRANCE.** The first naval aviation unit to reach France, the 1st Aeronautical Detachment, arrives at Bordeaux and St. Nazaire aboard two colliers. By the war's end the strength of Navy air in Europe will have grown to 500 aircraft, plus kite balloons and dirigibles, at 26 naval air stations in France, Ireland, England, and Italy.

**June 9. U.S. PATROL SQUADRON DEPLOYS TO FRANCE.** Six armed yachts deploy from New York for Brest, France, to form the nucleus of the U.S. Patrol Squadron. This force will relieve the escort vessels of the Cruiser-Transport Force of the responsibility for the security of American convoys upon the latter's entry into French coastal waters. Commanded after November 1, 1917, by Rear Admiral Henry B. Wilson, the patrol force will reach a strength of 38 destroyers and 16 armed yachts, plus minesweepers, tenders, and tugs.

Unlike the U.S. Navy forces based in Britain, the forces at Brest will remain under U.S. Navy operational control, coordinating with the French Navy as appropriate.

**July. First underway oil refueling.** USS *Maumee* (LT Chester Nimitz commanding, stationed in mid-Atlantic, refuels short-legged destroyers heading to Europe. This is the first underway oil refueling during war and the first underway oil refueling in anything but a flat calm.

**July. AMERICAN PATROL DETACHMENT ESTABLISHED.** This is an eight-vessel force, the rump of the Atlantic Fleet Patrol Force, kept in the Caribbean to guard American and allied interests there. They will face little hostile activity, however, as the Germans will not deploy submarines south of Cape Hatteras. It will be succeeded by the Special Service Squadron in 1920.

**Summer. U.S. Navy destroyers first equipped with shipboard radio direction finders.** This technological innovation obtains bearings on transmitting German submarines and helps convoys and escorts check relative positions. U.S. Navy direction finding equipment is

also set up in France for use against U-boats, and on the American coast to help convoys make a landfall in thick weather.

November 25-December 19. **ATLANTIC FLEET BATTLESHIP DIVISION DEPLOYMENT TO BRITAIN.** Four coal-burning battleships of Battleship Division 9, Rear Admiral Hugh Rodman, commanding, deploy to Scapa Flow in the Orkneys to reinforce the British Grand Fleet, in which they become the Sixth Battle Squadron. A fifth will arrive on February 6, 1918, and one of the original four will be replaced: A total of six battleships will serve at Scapa. They are all coal burners; there is little fuel oil available for them in Britain, and the importation of oil for them there would simply strain allied and U.S. shipping resources.

1918

As the U.S. Navy lags the Royal Navy in communications organization and radio security, Rodman's battleships are refitted completely with British wireless equipment and will follow British procedures entirely.

January 18. **N.O.T.S. CREATED.** The CNO establishes the Naval Overseas Transportation Service, to transport the Army and Marines and their supplies and equipment to Europe. Seventy-four ships are assigned. More than 450 ships will eventually belong to the service.

January 18. **NAVAL FORCES IN FRANCE CREATED.** RADM Wilson, commander of the patrol squadron at Brest, is in command, subordinate to VADM Sims, Commander U.S. Navy Forces in European Waters, in London. Wilson's flagship is the destroyer tender *Prometheus*.

January. **SUBMARINES DEPLOY TO IRELAND.** A flotilla of four submarines arrives at Bantry Bay, Ireland, having previously operated in the Azores. They will begin patrolling on March 6, under Royal Navy operational control.

Spring. **Battle fleet exercise.** The remaining battleships in U.S. waters deploy for exercises in the Caribbean.

May 24. **Intervention in Northern Russia.** A cruiser lands a detachment to cooperate with British forces in the unopposed seizure of Murmansk, Russia, to protect allied stores during the Russian Civil War. In June, 55 of the cruiser's men participate in the advance on and occupation of Archangel. Independent Royal Navy and French Navy interventions are also made at Murmansk. The cruiser will be reinforced by others the following year.

June 8. **North Sea mine barrage begins to be laid.** U.S. naval forces under the command of Rear Admiral Joseph Strauss begin the enormous task of laying a minefield across 240 miles of open sea from Scotland to Norway with the object of penning Germany's U-Boats inside the North Sea. The belt is completed on September 20, and operations to increase its density and width continue until the Armistice. 70,263 mines are laid, including 13,652 by cooperating British forces.

June 29–August 28. **Asiatic Fleet intervention in Russian Far East.** A cruiser, flagship of the Asiatic Fleet, lands its Marine detachment to safeguard the American consulate at Vladivostok during the Russian Civil War. The marines remain ashore until relieved by an Army brigade.

July 19. **U.S. Navy cruiser sunk.** The cruiser *San Diego* is torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine off the East Coast while on convoy duty. This is the only major warship lost by the U.S. Navy in World War I.

August 23. **SECOND ATLANTIC FLEET BATTLESHIP DIVISION DEPLOYMENT TO BRITAIN.** Two battleships under the command of Rear Admiral T. S. Rodgers arrive at Bantry Bay, Ireland, to serve as a force in readiness, under Royal Navy operational control, in the event a German battlecruiser should break out as a raider to attack the North Atlantic convoys. A third battleship joins the force on September 10.

September. **Atlantic Fleet battleships in convoy escort.** Seven East Coast-based battleships will be assigned this duty between September and the end of the war.

November 11. **Armistice.** The cease-fire ending World War I on the Western Front goes into effect.

The U.S. Navy in European Waters at the time of the Armistice includes 6 battleships at Scapa Flow, Scotland; 3 battleships and 7 submarines at Bantry Bay, Ireland; 24 destroyers at Queenstown, Ireland; 38 destroyers at Brest; 2 cruisers and 6 destroyers at Gibraltar; 1 cruiser at Murmansk; and 5 submarines in the Azores.

November–December. **Battleship Presidential diplomatic support.** Battleship Division Six escorts President Wilson and the CNO ADM Benson on the transport *George Washington* to Europe. Admiral Mayo, commander in chief of the North Atlantic Fleet, rides his flagship *Pennsylvania*.

# **The interwar period (1919–1937): Maintaining a big non-forward deploying battle fleet at home in the Eastern Pacific, with some forward MOOTW elsewhere**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

The World War I Navy, swollen by wartime construction, especially of destroyers, was cut in half. Arms control treaties limited various aspects of the Navy's size and structure, especially battleship numbers. Most of the fleet was consolidated into one large battle fleet homeported in Southern California. This fleet almost never deployed any great distance, constrained by cost, foreign policy, and the capabilities of the Imperial Japanese Navy. It did, however, come together once a year in a large fleet exercise off Hawaii or Panama encompassing practically every ship in commission not otherwise engaged. These other engagements principally included almost conducting continuous Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) in China, the Caribbean, and – sporadically – in Southern Europe.

### **Fleet size and composition**

From July 1919 to September 1937 the Navy went from 752 ships to 335, and from 36 battleships to 15 – a number that remained fairly constant throughout the period as a result of the various naval arms control agreements concluded then. The cruiser force went from 28 ships in 1919 to 10 in 1921 back up to 27 by 1937. Destroyer and submarine numbers fluctuated but were normally around 100 and 50, respectively. The first carrier entered the fleet in 1922, and the number had grown to four by the end of the period. Also, from 1924 to 1934 the Navy deployed one or two dirigibles.

## **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

Mahanian theory (the world of War Plan Orange) and the demands of MOOTW in Latin America and China (the "real world") co-exist in the inter-war period. The emergence of a true maritime threat – Imperial Japan – ensures the relevance of a Mahanian battle fleet, now deployed principally in the Eastern Pacific and with its treaty-limited battleships and cruisers supplemented by aircraft carriers and submarines.

The fleet expects to mostly fight all together, as a "total force." Accordingly, it becomes essentially organized by type commands, although with some exceptions. Under prevailing warfighting concepts, battleships – but increasingly carriers – would ultimately decide naval engagements. Every other class of warship had a specific function to perform in relation to the battleships but not often in close conjunction with them. Exercises – which is almost all the interwar fleet actually did – were therefore ordinarily conducted within the type-command structure.

Annual fleet exercises in the Caribbean or the Eastern Pacific become the norm, when the Pacific battleship force is joined by the Atlantic cruiser force, and tactical fleet evolutions become the centerpiece of a U.S. naval officer's professional knowledge.

The fleet will not exercise exactly where it plans to fight, however, as diplomatic and fiscal constraints dictate no exercises west of Hawaii. Thus there is only one counterpart to the major fleet forward deployments of the pre-World War I period – a 1925 cruise by the Battle Fleet and part of the Scouting Fleet to Australia and New Zealand. The fleet by and large stays home. Training Force units do conduct mid-shipman and reservist cruises, though. Thus main battle fleet battleships like *Pennsylvania* and *California* deploy forward hardly at all, while aged battleships used for training, like *Arkansas*, spend summers in the Mediterranean.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

The fleet practices for the coming war with Japan. It does not exercise exactly how it will fight, although it does not know this yet. Fleet exercises center around maneuvers between similarly configured battlegroups of carriers and battleships, which attack each other or in which one unit attacks and the other defends the Panama Canal or Oahu. Seaplanes serve only as scouts for the battlegroups, submarines for reconnaissance and secondarily as weapons against enemy fleets. Amphibious warfare is exercised, although without the needed equipment, but anti-submarine warfare is neglected.

But MOOTW responsibilities, initially in Turkey and continuing in Asia and the Caribbean intensify, and the need for a senior few sailor-diplomats continues. Fortunately, there are enough older and smaller ships in the aging fleet to pull this duty, and enough competent officers to conduct these MOOTW missions.

This is also the heyday of domestic humanitarian operations. As the fleet spends much of its time tethered to West Coast ports, it is often available for domestic MOOTW; e.g., at Tacoma in 1929 and at San Pedro in 1933, much as garrison forces of the Army are often available for such operations.

The function of the Asiatic Fleet is to move up and down the China coast showing the flag, visiting ports and exchanging calls. The flagship, a heavy cruiser, will operate out of Shanghai in the spring and autumn, out of Manila in the winter, and out of Tsingtao in the summer.

## **Technology and operations**

How did technological change drive operations?

Oil replaces coal as the fuel of choice, and combat logistics ships are planned if not built: the fleet is theoretically regaining her mobility, but U.S. foreign policy considerations and fuel shortages driven by budget constraints keep the fleet tethered to the California coast.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marine Corps, rather than the Army provides most of the small foreign garrisons and expeditionary forces required by the United States after World War I, especially in the Caribbean area.

The Marines continue to act as colonial infantry in the Caribbean and China – it is the heyday of that mission, but also begin to exercise seriously the tactics needed to conduct amphibious assaults. The Navy does almost nothing, however, to provide them with specialized ships or craft.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

Jointness with the Army is dealt with uneasily in joint planning bodies, and only occasionally in the field. The war plans of the period pointed to a glorious Navy attack across the Pacific aimed at Japan, twinned with either an ignominious initial Army defeat by the Japanese in the Philippines, or a pre-war retreat by the Army back to the West Coast. A series of formal documents laying out operational responsibilities were also published. The Joint Board promulgated a joint publication on coastal defense in 1920. Formal agreements were signed by the Secretaries of War and the Navy in 1927 and 1935

endeavoring to codify joint relationships, explicitly defining service roles, missions, tasks and functions for the first time.

Jointness with the nascent Army Air Forces is "spirited", given the attacks by General Billy Mitchell on the role of naval power in wars of the future. Agreements between the Army and the Navy, notably the Pratt-MacArthur Agreement of 1931, sought to delineate the division of labor between the aviation arms of the two services, something they never did satisfactorily or conclusively.

The Army is busy initially participating in the occupation of Germany, from 1918 through January 1923. Army and Navy units serve together throughout the interwar period in Hawaii, the Canal Zone, the Philippines, and China, and in Murmansk in 1918-19 and Vladivostok in 1918-1920. During most of the interwar period, the Army sees itself - like the Marines - as a force to be kept in readiness for "small wars" of maneuver and mobility in the colonies, the border, and the western hemisphere, not for large wars of power and attrition. While it is increasingly focused on events in Europe and the possibilities of a major war there, it remains organized and equipped for small wars.

## **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

Very few. This is an age of national fleets, operating alone, except in China where multinational MOOTW continued to be the rule. The American and Japanese fleets stayed almost exclusively in home waters, honing their warfighting skills in large periodic pan-fleet exercises. The Royal Navy, however, was deployed worldwide, especially in the Mediterranean and the Far East, and seldom could consolidate its forces in one place and one time.

## **Fleet headquarters, flagships and staffs**

In keeping with the extraordinary stability of the fleet during this period, the flagships are extraordinarily stable too. *Pennsylvania* is the flagship for the Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, throughout this period. *California* is the flagship first of the Pacific Fleet, then of the Battle Fleet, and then of the Battle Force of the U.S. Fleet.

## Operational chronology

### 1918 (continued)

**Immediate post-war operations.** Between the Armistice and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, the U.S. Navy intervenes at Archangel and Vladivostok, returns home most of the AEF in nine and a half months, removes the North Sea Mine Barrage, provides humanitarian assistance in Europe, and protects American lives in various European trouble-spots, especially Turkey and the Adriatic.

**American Naval Mission in the Adriatic coalition operations.** As part of a larger Allied Naval Mission set up under the Armistice, an American Naval Mission to the Adriatic is formed under a Rear Admiral, flagship the venerable *Olympia*, reporting to the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, European Waters. With headquarters in Split, the American zone of responsibility to preserve order stretches some 300 miles along the Croatian Dalmatian coast.

### 1919

January 1. **Strength of the Fleet.** the United States has 16 dreadnought-type battleships afloat (the British have 33). But the United States has 13 battleships building or authorized. The U.S. Navy is rich in battleships, destroyers and submarines, but woefully weak in cruisers.

January 28. **U.S. NAVAL DETACHMENT IN TURKISH WATERS CREATED.** As Commander, RADM Mark Bristol raises his flag on board the steel steam yacht *Scorpion* at Constantinople, reporting to the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Operating in European Waters. His responsibilities encompass Greek, Turkish, Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea waters. Named U.S. High Commissioner to Turkey (i.e., the senior United States diplomatic as well as military

representative, in August, Bristol's primary initial missions are humanitarian assistance operations and the distribution of relief supplies, as well as assisting American businessmen and missionaries in the area, reporting on conditions, and caring for refugees.

In May 1919, the first four destroyers will report to his command. By 1922, at its peak, the command will have 20 warships. From 1919 through 1924, Bristol's destroyers will patrol the coasts of Syria, Palestine, South Russia, Georgia, Asia Minor and the Sea of Marmora. A destroyer will be assigned to Varna, Bulgaria or Constanta, Romania to act as a radio relay ship.

Bristol will continue to serve as the head military and diplomatic representative in Turkey until 1927, serving longer in a diplomatic capacity than any other naval officer in American history.

**March. Sims relieved by Knapp in London.** ADM Sims is relieved by VADM Harry Knapp. Sims returns to the United States, but – despite the end of the war – his command will continue on in Europe until 1929.

**April–August. Northern Russia deployments.** *Galveston* and *Chester* arrive at Archangel, followed by *Des Moines*, *Yankton*, *Sacramento*, and smaller warships. *Des Moines* will be the last to withdraw, in August.

**April–June. U.S. Navy European contingency battleship forward presence.** *Arizona* deploys to Brest, France, to be prepositioned in case of emergency. The emergency that emerges is multinational protection of the Greek occupation of Smyrna, Turkey. *Arizona* and her two destroyers also visit Constantinople.

**May 14–18. U.S. Navy ad hoc coalition show of force in Turkey.** Under the cover of *Arizona*, her five destroyers, and British and French warships, the Greek Army lands troops to occupy Smyrna, Turkey.

**June 28. Treaty of Versailles.** War with Germany officially ends.

**June 25. PACIFIC FLEET STRENGTHENED.** Secretary Daniels announces a division of the battleships, up to now concentrated in the Atlantic, more or less equally between the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. Each fleet receives half the battleships and destroyers, with

supporting ships and craft. The lack of modern cruisers is glaring. The old obsolescent armored cruisers in the fleet are forward deployed to European and Asian waters.

Operationally, half the Atlantic forces begin to be detached to make up a new 200-ship Pacific Fleet; the latter receives the more modern oil-burning vessels, as oil fuel is readily available in California. The battleships will use San Pedro and Long Beach as home ports. San Pedro will remain the major base for the battleships of the U.S. Fleet for over 20 years.

They will later be joined by most of the rest of the battleships, then by cruisers and carriers in the 1930s. The pendulum of fleet balance is swinging toward the Pacific.

July 30–August 1. **Asiatic Fleet landing in Russia.** An Asiatic Fleet cruiser lands Marines to protect American interests at Tyutuke Bay, near Vladivostok, Russia.

August. **Battleships arrive in the Pacific.** The first increment of battleships transferred from the Atlantic Fleet reaches the Pacific, and a new Pacific Fleet is constituted under ADM Hugh Rodman. It will consist of eight dreadnoughts and six older battleships, supported by 54 active destroyers, 14 submarines, a mine force, and a fleet train. There will be no cruisers – the Navy had very few.

September 6. **Landing in Honduras.** A landing party from the USS *Cleveland* lands at Puerto Cortez to protect U.S. interests during a revolution. A cruiser force has been stationed off the Pacific Coast of Honduras during the summer.

November. **North Sea minesweeping operations end.**

December 25. **ASIATIC FLEET YANGTZE PATROL CREATED.** The Asiatic Fleet shallow-draft gunboats that have been operating on China's Yangtse River since 1903 are formally organized into the Yangtse Patrol, to protect U.S. interests.

1920

**ARMY-NAVY COASTAL DEFENSE OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES DELINEATED.** The Joint Army-Navy Board delineates service responsibilities in coastal defense in *Joint Army and Navy Action in Coastal Defense*. The War and Navy Departments agree that naval aircraft bear responsibility for all over-water reconnaissance and aerial attacks at sea. Debate however, between the services on the role of naval aviation will continue, however. *Joint Action of the Army and the Navy* (1927) and the MacArthur-Pratt Agreement of 1931 will supersede the agreement of 1920.

**DIS-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON.**

**Peruvian Navy assistance.** A U.S. Naval Commission is established at the request of Peru. Until 1930 Commission members will exercise executive authority in the Peruvian Navy, holding positions of Chief of the Naval General Staff, Squadron Commander, Director of Aviation, etc.

March 15-27. **Turkish Detachment Black Sea ad hoc coalition evacuation operation.** Following a Royal Navy lead, U.S., French, Italian and Greek warships assist in evacuating their nationals and refugees from Novorossisk, as Red Army elements enter the city.

RADM Bristol also sends destroyers to assist in evacuations from Odessa and Sebastopol, during the same period.

April 9-27. **Landings in Guatemala.** Marines are landed.

May. **Naval Forces, Europe Black Sea evacuation operation.** USS *Pittsburgh*, flagship of the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, European Waters, evacuates personnel from the Allied High Commission to Armenia and Near East Relief, from ports in Georgia and eastern Turkey.

May 14. **Intervention in Mexico.** A destroyer, stationed off the Mexican west coast to protect American interests, takes on bandits in Manzanillo.

July 12. **THE FLEET FORMALLY RE-DIVIDED.** Naval forces afloat are reorganized into the Atlantic, Pacific, and Asiatic Fleets.

July 29. **Turkish intervention.** A cruiser and six destroyers are dispatched to Turkish waters to protect American citizens during the disturbances resulting from the Graeco-Turkish War.

September 25. **SPECIAL SERVICE SQUADRON ESTABLISHED.** The CNO, ADM Coontz, establishes a Special Service Squadron ("Banana Fleet") for showing the flag, intelligence gathering, shows of force, amphibious landings, and other MOOTW missions in waters adjacent to Mexico, Central and South America, and the West Indies. The Squadron is initially assigned nine ships, including six old cruisers, based at Balboa in Panama, and is under the immediate direction of the Navy Department.

It succeeds the Atlantic Fleet Cruiser Squadron, designated in 1914, and the Atlantic Patrol Squadron established in 1917. Unlike these units, it is a separate entity, not subordinate to the Atlantic Fleet or its successors. It also succeeds the Central American intervention duties of the old Pacific Squadrons and Pacific Fleet, freeing the latter up henceforth for war preparation.

Inter-Departmental wrangling between the State Department and the Navy Department over control of Squadron activities will result in virtual control of those activities by the State Department until 1934. Crisis response will take precedence over goodwill visits, at least until the early 1930s and the institution of the "Good Neighbor" policy. On fifty-one occasions during the peak period of gunboat diplomacy MOOTW, between 1920 and 1934, the State Department will request that Squadron warships respond to political unrest and revolutionary violence in the Caribbean. Its general pattern of low-level naval diplomacy and MOOTW will be broken twice by major interventions: Nicaragua, 192-33 and Cuba, 193-1935. The "State Department's Navy" will be dis-established in 1940.

## 1921

January 5. **COMMAND OF THE FLEET DESIGNATED.** The Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet is designated the commander of any and all combinations of the three U.S. fleets.

January-February. **Combined Fleets exercise.** The Atlantic and Pacific Fleets conducts joint exercises in the Pacific off Panama and the South American east coast, under command of Admiral H. B. Wilson, Commander-in Chief, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. This is the largest assemblage of ships ever to operate in the Southeast Pacific. Upon conclusion of the exercise the fleets separate. The exercise is followed by extensive port call programs by the Pacific Fleet in Chile and by the Atlantic Fleet in Peru.

June 21. **Army Air Service sinks ships at sea.** In what is at best an unscientific military maneuver and at worst a propaganda stunt, former German warships are sunk off the Virginia Capes by aerial bombing supervised by Brigadier General Billy Mitchell, chief of the Army Air Service. Mitchell claims the sinking signals the end of the surface warship.

August 13-September 3. **Show of force off Panama.** Demonstration by the U.S. Fleet flagship battleship USS *Pennsylvania* with an embarked marine battalion, to pressure the Panamanian government to accept Costa Rican border arbitration.

November 11. **Washington Conference convenes.** Delegates of nine countries meet in the first International Conference on Limitation of Naval Armaments.

## 1922

**Marine advanced base landing problems at Culebra and Guantanamo.** Marine landing problems resume. A landing problem similar to the pre-war advanced base problems is conducted. Subsequent problems will test the new doctrine of amphibious assault.

January 25. **Landing in Nicaragua.** Cruisers land Marines at Corinto, Nicaragua to reinforce the Managua legation guard during a period of political tension.

February 6. **Washington Naval Treaty signed.** The United States, Great Britain, Japan, France and Italy conclude the Five-Power Treaty on naval arms limitation, establishing a ratio of battleships and aircraft carriers, limiting other aspects of naval armament, and agreeing to no further fortification of the Philippines and Guam (as well as various British and Japanese Pacific possessions). The treaty will come into force on August 17, 1923, and will be renounced by Japan in December 1934.

Spring. **Fleet Exercise.**

March 20. **First carrier.** The U.S. Navy's first aircraft carrier, the *Langley*, is commissioned at Norfolk, converted from a collier.

April 28. **Asiatic Fleet landing in China.** An Asiatic Fleet cruiser lands marines to reinforce the legation guard at Peking amid the disorders of the Chinese civil war.

May 5. **Asiatic Fleet landing in China.** Asiatic Fleet ships land a provisional battalion of marines at Taku, China, ready to advance to Peking should the need arise.

August 20. **Central American peace-making site.** El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua sign a peace agreement on board USS *Tacoma* in the Gulf of Fonseca, on the Pacific coast of Central America.

September 6–16. **Turkish Waters Detachment Smyrna ad hoc coalition evacuation operations.** American destroyers protect Americans and assist in the movement to Greece of 250,000 Greeks living in Asia Minor from Smyrna and other ports. British, French, Italian, and Greek warships coordinate with each other in the evacuation.

December 6. **RE-CONSOLIDATION OF THE FLEET.** Following almost three years of planning and controversy, CNO ADM Robert Coontz abolishes the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets and combines their ships to form the United States Fleet. Coontz is concerned at the different practices in the two fleets in such matters as the interpretation of standing orders and the use of signals.

Defined as "the principal naval force of the United States", the new fleet is composed of four elements: (a) the Battle *Fleet* (the major task

force to fight fleet engagements, with most of the best battleships – and eventually – the aircraft carriers), (b) the Scouting *Fleet* (the reconnaissance force, strong in cruisers, but with six battleships), (c) the Control *Force* (light forces, mostly older cruisers, destroyers and minesweepers, needed to defend advanced bases and SLOCs against raiders), and (d) the Fleet Base *Force* (for training and logistics).

Forces not assigned to the United States Fleet include (a) the Asiatic *Fleet*, (b) Naval Forces, Europe, (c) Special Service Squadrons, (d) Submarine Divisions, Atlantic, (e) Submarine Divisions, Pacific, and (f) Naval District Forces.

This basic fleet organization will endure, although with several modifications, especially in 1931, until February 1941. (Naval Forces Europe will be dissolved in 1927. In 1931 the Battle and Scouting *Fleets*, U.S. Fleet will become Battle and Scouting *Forces*, U.S. Fleet. The Control force will be abolished.)

The Battle Fleet and the Fleet Base Force will normally be based in the Pacific, and the Scouting Fleet and the Control Force in the Atlantic. The Special Service Squadron for the Caribbean continues to be headquartered in the Panama Canal Zone.

Above the Fleet and Force commanders is the Commander in Chief, United States Fleet (CINCUS), nominally in command of the Fleet. In practice he will share command with the commanders of the Battle Fleet and the Scouting Fleet, as well as the CNO, and the job will be largely ceremonial and administrative. The flagship will spend most of its time tied to a pier at a Navy Yard. Only when the Fleet is concentrated for a Fleet Problem will CINCUS actively command. The rest of the year the commanders of the Battle Fleet and the Scouting Fleet will manage their own affairs, on separate coasts. Thus in practice the fleet remains largely de-centralized.

## 1923

February 14. **Asiatic Fleet Landing in China.** An Asiatic Fleet gunboat lands Marines to protect American citizens on Matsu Island, China.

**March. U.S. Fleet Problem I.** The first Fleet Problem under the new fleet organization is held in the Bay of Panama. The Scouting Force and Control Force defend the Panama Canal from a surprise attack from the Pacific by the Battle Force, including two carriers, and the Fleet Base Force.

This is the first in a formal series of elaborate Fleet Problems in the Caribbean or the Eastern Pacific that will run through the spring of 1940.

Upon conclusion of the exercise, the eleven superdreadnoughts all deploy to Los Angeles, where they will remain for the interwar period, while the five oldest dreadnoughts and one new battleship return to Atlantic ports. The former Atlantic Fleet Commander, ADM Hilary P. Jones, will now fly his flag in the Pacific (on *Pennsylvania*) as Commander in Chief, United States Fleet. The former Pacific Fleet Commander, ADM Edward Eberle, will now fly his flag also in the Pacific, on *California*, but as Jones's subordinate, Commander, Battle Fleet, U.S. Fleet.

**July 21. A CNO becomes a CINCUS.** ADM Robert Coontz is relieved as CNO by ADM Edward Eberle and becomes Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, a post he considers an honor, as he is tired of Washington and ready to go to sea. He is the only CNO to return to an operational billet in the fleet following his tour as head of the Navy (Four will, however, remain in uniform: ADM Stark will go to London as Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe in 1942; ADM Fechteler will go to Naples as NATO Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe in 1953; ADM Leahy will become de facto Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Moorer will become Chairman).

**August 17. Washington Treaty comes into force.**

**September 5. Asiatic Fleet Japanese disaster relief.** The U.S. Asiatic Fleet anchors off Yokohama, Japan, to assist in disaster relief following the great Kondo Plain earthquake that nearly leveled both Yokohama and Tokyo.

**October 4. U.S. Navy Constantinople presence ends.** In the wake of the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in July between Turkey and her

World War I foes, the last U.S. Navy warships leave Constantinople, including the station ship *Scorpion*, which will relocate to Phaleron Bay, Greece, near Athens, until June 1927. Rear Admiral Bristol will remain as U.S. High Commissioner to Turkey, however, until 1927.

November 6. **U.S. Naval Detachment, Eastern Mediterranean created.** The U.S. Naval Detachment, Turkish Waters becomes the U.S. Naval Detachment, Eastern Mediterranean. The last U.S. Navy warships will leave the detachment in May 1924, leaving only the station ship.

November 15. **Asiatic Fleet Landing in China.** A detachment of Asiatic Fleet Marines is landed to protect American missionaries at Tungshan, China.

December 6. **Asiatic Fleet ad hoc coalition China intervention.** Destroyers from the Asiatic Fleet are ordered to join units of the navies of Britain, France, Italy, Portugal, and Japan off Canton to protect the Canton Customs House (then under foreign control for recovery of debt) against seizure by the Chinese government, and to assist in safeguarding foreign lives and property during the Chinese civil wars.

## 1924

January-February. **Fleet Problem III.** The combined Battle and Scouting Fleets again practice defense of the Panama Canal, this time jointly with the Army, and from the Atlantic side.

The Marine East Coast Expeditionary Force practices amphibious assault operations at Culebra and Panama in the first true exercises of their emerging doctrine. USS *Henderson*, the first purpose-built Marine transport, participates.

January 23. **Philippine Landing.** An Asiatic Fleet gunboat lands marines to occupy Socorro, on Boca Grande Island in the Philippines, where the Moros have rebelled. The insurrection is suppressed by mid-February.

February 27–April 6. **Mexican evacuations.** A gunboat evacuates American and foreign nationals caught up in Mexico's civil war from Tuxpan, Puerto Mexico, Frontera, and Progreso. Cruisers are stationed at Progreso, Frontera, Tampico during the year, and a cruiser and five destroyers are stationed at Vera Cruz.

February 28–September. **Honduras Intervention.** On February 28–March 2, a Special Service Squadron cruiser lands sailors and Marines at La Ceiba, Honduras, to protect American interests during a revolution in that country. On March 3, a destroyer lands sailors and marines to safeguard American property at Tela, Honduras. On March 4 the cruiser lands a detachment to defend Americans at Puerto Cortez, and on March 9 does the same again at La Ceiba. On March 17–19, a detachment goes ashore to establish a neutral zone around Tegucigalpa. Another landing is made at La Ceiba from a cruiser on September 10. A cruiser hosts a conference of Honduran warring parties convened by State Department trouble-shooter Sumner Welles.

April 1. **FLEET BASE FORCE EXPANDS.** The Fleet Base Force, United States Fleet, established in 1922 from the Base Force, Pacific Fleet, gains control over the Train, Scouting Force.

September 18. **Withdrawal from the Dominican Republic.** The last elements of a marine brigade board ship at Santo Domingo, ending an occupation of eight years. A treaty signed on December 24 formally terminates the American protectorate over the Dominican Republic.

October 6. **Asiatic Fleet landing in China.** Ships of the Asiatic Fleet land detachments to cooperate with other foreign navies in protecting the International Settlement at Shanghai, as the Chinese civil war approaches that city.

October 24. **Last battleship joins fleet.** USS *West Virginia* becomes flagship of Commander, Battleship Divisions, Battle Fleet, U.S. Fleet. She is the last battleship to enter the fleet until *Washington* begins to operate as part of the Atlantic Fleet in 1942.

## 1925

1925-1926. **Special Service Squadron Chile-Peru Peace-making.** A Special Service Squadron ship is stationed at Arica, Chile, throughout the unsuccessful U.S. attempt to arbitrate a plebiscite over the disputed former Peruvian provinces of Tacna and Arica.

January 15. **Asiatic Fleet landing in China.** An Asiatic Fleet gunboat lands marines to reinforce defenders of the International Settlement at Shanghai during the tumults of the Chinese civil war. Several other marine units will land to serve briefly in the city in the course of the year.

April 20. **Special Service Squadron landing In Honduras.** A Special Service Squadron cruiser lands marines to protect American interests at La Ceiba, Honduras.

April. **U.S. Fleet Problem** The combined U.S. Fleet carries out maneuvers designed to test the defenses of the Hawaiian Islands. These are the largest held heretofore in the history of the U.S. Navy, involving 145 ships.

The Marines again test amphibious assault doctrine, landing against the Army on Oahu. besides a small exercise the following year at Quantico, the Marines will not conduct another amphibious assault exercise until 1934.

July-September. **Battle Fleet Australia-New Zealand show the flag deployment.** Following the exercises off Hawaii, the Commander in Chief U.S. Fleet, in his flagship *Pennsylvania*, takes the Battle Fleet (flagship *California*) and a cruiser division from the Scouting Fleet on a practice and good-will cruise via Samoa to Australia, New Zealand, returning to the United States in the latter part of August.

This is the only major out-of-area deployment of the fleet between World War I and World War II, and even then it is essentially a cruise of the Battle Fleet, not the U.S. Fleet.

August 1. **Withdrawal from Nicaragua.** The 100-man Marine legation guard is recalled from Managua, Nicaragua, where it had been established in January 1913.

September 13. **Intervention in Nicaragua.** Special Service Force warships are sent to Bluefields and Corinto to unsuccessfully block a Nicaraguan coup d'etat.

October 12-23. **Landing in Panama.** Marines are landed at the request of the President of Panama to restore order following rioting, and to protect U.S. interests and property.

November 5. **Lebanon show of force.** Two U.S. Navy destroyers are sent to Beirut, in French-mandated Lebanon to reassure U.S. nationals endangered by local disturbances.

## 1926

Spring. **U.S. Fleet Problem.**

May-October. **Special Service Squadron landings in Nicaragua.** On May 7-June 5, a Special Service Squadron cruiser lands marines to protect American and other foreign interests at Bluefields, Nicaragua, when civil war breaks out between the Liberals and the Conservatives. On August 27, another cruiser lands sailors and marines to maintain a neutral zone around Bluefields. This force is subsequently relieved by detachments from two other cruisers. On October 10, a cruiser lands seamen and marines at Corinto, to preserve order during an unproductive conference between warring Liberal and Conservative leaders. The Special Service Squadron will be especially active in Nicaragua from 1926 through 1933.

November 12. **China landing.** An Asiatic Fleet transport lands marines to protect American interests at Chingwangtao, China.

## 1927

**First U.S. experimental sonar sets go to sea.** Development progresses, and by September 1939, 60 sonar sets will have been installed in U.S. Navy destroyers.

January. **Asiatic Fleet reinforcement.** In view of the rise in disturbances and threats to foreigners in China, the Asiatic Fleet is reinforced with three light cruisers. In February a Marine regiment also

deploys from San Diego to Shanghai. Much of the Asiatic Fleet moves to Chinese waters.

January 6 and 10. **Special Service Squadron landings in Nicaragua.** A Special Service Squadron cruiser lands marines to reestablish the U.S. Legation Guard at Managua, Nicaragua, and Marines are landed to preserve order in Bluefields.

February 9 . **Asiatic Fleet China ad hoc coalition landing in China.** Asiatic Fleet Marines are landed alongside a British expeditionary force to protect the International Settlement at Shanghai, China, from Chinese attack, following the seizure by the Chinese of the British international concession at Hankow. Warships of Britain, France, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, and Japan also are present and coordinate with each other to protect their nationals and treaty rights in China. The Asiatic Fleet has one cruiser, two destroyers, and two gunboats off Shanghai.

February–March. **Nicaragua intervention.** On February 9, Rear Admiral Julian L. Latimer, commander of the Special Service Squadron operating off the coast of Nicaragua, orders three cruisers to land marines to take control of the Corinto-Managua railway to prevent it from being disrupted by the civil war. On February 21, a cruiser lands marines to guard the railway towns of Chinandega and Leon. On March 7, more marines are landed at Corinto. During the Nicaraguan operations of 1927, the Special Service Squadron will have expanded to 54 ships.

March. **U.S. Fleet Problem VII.** The combined Battle Fleet, Base Force and fleet submarines are pitted against the combined Scouting Fleet, Control Force and Train Squadron 1.

March 16. **Marine intervention in China.** The Fourth Marine Regiment lands at Shanghai, China, to reinforce the battalion garrisoning the International Settlement. The regiment will remain there until 1941. The Sixth Marine Regiment lands on May 2, and is combined with the forces already present to form the 3rd Marine Brigade.

March 24. **Asiatic Fleet China ad hoc coalition bombardment and evacuation.** British and U.S. warships bombard Nanking to cover the

evacuation of foreign nationals after attacks by Chinese troops on foreign consulates and nationals.

April 1. **Ad hoc coalition naval presence in China.** There are 171 foreign warships in Chinese waters: 76 British, 48 Japanese, 30 American, 10 French, 4 Italian, and 1 each from Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands. 44 are at Shanghai.

April 23. **ARMY AND NAVY OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS AND TASKS DELINEATED.** *Joint Action of the Army and the Navy*, drafted in the Joint Army-Navy Board, is signed by the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. This is the first time that the roles and missions of the services will be laid out in an authoritative document other than legislation. It is much broader than (and supersedes) *Joint Army and Navy Action in Coast Defense*, agreed to by the two services in 1920. It will be revised in 1935, and much of its format and terms will appear in succeeding documents such as the National Security Act of 1947 and the Key West and Newport Agreements of 1948.

May 4. **Treaty in Nicaragua.** Former secretary of state (and future secretary of war) Henry L. Stimson negotiates the Peace of Tipitapa between the Nicaraguan Liberal and Conservative parties. Under its terms, both sides are to lay down their arms, and the existing Conservative government will remain in office until American-supervised elections in 1928 (which the Liberals will win). Meanwhile, U.S. marines will maintain order and train a national gendarmerie.

May 24. **Admiral relieved as high commissioner to Turkey.** RADM Mark Bristol is relieved as U.S. High Commissioner to Turkey by a civilian, having successfully served eight years in the job.

June. **Station Ship leaves Greece.** The U.S. Navy station ship *Scorpion*, in Turkish and Greek waters since 1908, leaves Phaleron Bay, near Athens, where she has been stationed since 1923.

July 16. **Second Nicaraguan Campaign.** Augusto C. Sandino, a minor Nicaraguan Liberal leader, refuses to accept the Treaty of Tipitapa and begins attacks on U.S. marine detachments. The marines respond in a campaign to defeat and capture Sandino and his forces, using marine air and ground forces, that will last through 1930.

September–October. **Nicaraguan election supervision.** 432 sailors and marines serve as chairmen of local election boards during Nicaraguan national elections.

## 1928

April. **Fleet Problem VIII.** Constrained by a tight budget, the U.S. Fleet drills separately: the Scouting Fleet in the Atlantic, off Guantanamo Bay; the Battle Fleet in the Pacific, off Hawaii. In the Pacific exercise, light cruisers and a detachment of ships from Pearl Harbor are pitted against the Battle Fleet and the Train.

## 1929

**U.S. NAVAL FORCES IN EUROPE DISESTABLISHED.** The command had originated with Admiral Sims in 1917, during World War I.

January–March. **U.S. Fleet Problem IX.** The annual U.S. Fleet concentration and exercise tests the defense of the Panama Canal against an attack from the Pacific, concentrating on the Pacific side of the isthmus. The Battle Fleet and Train Squadron Two are pitted against the Scouting Fleet, the Control Force and the defense forces of the 15th Naval District and army units.

Included in the Battle Fleet for the first time are the new large carriers *Lexington* and *Saratoga*. *Saratoga* conducts the first independent surprise carrier strike operations, presaging the fast carrier operations of World War II. The fleet enters the aviation age.

January 19. **Draw-down in China.** The 3rd Marine Brigade is disbanded at Tientsin, China, and all units except the Fourth Marines in Shanghai and the Peking legation guard are withdrawn from the country.

March–April. **Mexican shows of force.** A destroyer is at Mazatlan, on the Mexican Pacific coast, in March. In April a destroyer backs up diplomatic negotiations preventing bombardment of rebels at Guaymas, also on the Pacific, by the Mexican Navy. Later, two other destroyers are sent to Mexican ports.

August 20. **Draw-down in Nicaragua.** Marine troop strength in Nicaragua is reduced to 2000, although Sandinista-marine combat continues.

December 17– January 1930. **Battle Fleet domestic humanitarian assistance operation at Tacoma.** *Lexington* (CV-2), with her sister carrier *Saratoga* one of the two largest mobile power plants in the world, uses her four giant turbine generators to provide electric power to Tacoma, Washington, in the wake of a severe drought that dried up the hydro-electric power normally available to the city.

## 1930

February–April. **U.S. Fleet Problems X and XI.** The Battle Fleet is pitted against the Scouting Fleet off Panama.

April 22. **London Naval Treaty.** New limits are placed on battleships, cruisers, carriers, submarines and destroyers The treaty will enter into force on December 31, 1930.

July 27–August 2. **Asiatic Fleet China ad hoc coalition evacuation operation.** Asiatic Fleet gunboats evacuate foreign nationals from Chang-sha, along with Italian, British, and Japanese forces.

## 1931

January. **ARMY-NAVY AGREEMENT ON COASTAL LONG-RANGE AVIATION.** Updating Joint Board actions of 1920, CNO Admiral William V. Pratt and Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur sign an agreement giving the Army Air Corps the mission of defending U.S. coasts and overseas possessions with bombers. The Army Air Corps will bear the primary responsibility for land-based attacks on an enemy invasion fleet. The Navy retains sea-based maritime patrol aviation (seaplanes and their tenders), carrier air, and surface combatant catapulted floatplanes. The Navy at the time has only three aircraft carriers, with one building.

This agreement will keep the Navy from operating its own long-range land-planes until 1941.

February–March. **U.S. Fleet Problem XII.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted in the Gulf of Panama, off the Pacific coast of Panama. The Battle Fleet is opposed to the Scouting Fleet, the latter augmented by the rigid airship *Los Angeles*.

March 31–April. **Nicaraguan humanitarian assistance.** Marines conduct search and rescue, fire fighting, looting prevention, first aid and food and shelter distribution operations after a severe earthquake heavily damages Managua, Nicaragua. The carrier *Lexington* (CAPT Ernest King commanding) and the hospital ship *Relief* deploy to assist. *Lexington* and marine aircraft conduct air evacuation and relief supply flights in what is one of the first large scale airlifts.

April 1. **RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE FLEET.** New CNO ADM William V. Pratt renames and re-organizes the constituent parts of the U.S. Fleet, last reorganized in 1922. His major innovation is creation of type commands, to enhance training. The Battle *Fleet* is now the Battle *Force* in the Pacific, with subordinate battleship, cruiser, destroyer, mine, and air fleet-wide type commands (who would become operational force commanders during exercises or war). The Scouting *Fleet* is now the Scouting *Force* in the Atlantic with similar subdivisions, and also a Training Squadron (to become the Training Detachment of the U.S. Fleet in 1937). There is also a Submarine *Force*, with submarines at New London, Pearl Harbor, and Coco Solo; and a Base Logistics *Force*.

The Control Force is abolished; only the Scouting Force, with its Training Squadron, remains in the Atlantic.

Commander, Battle Force, United States Fleet is second in command of the fleet; and Commander, Scouting Force, United States Fleet, is third in command. Transport forces are organized as the Naval Transportation Service under the Chief of Naval Operations.

April 11. **Nicaragua show of force.** USS *Asheville* is sent to Puerto Cabezas to successfully protect US (and British) nationals endangered by local disturbances that had arisen after the reduction of the U.S. Marine occupying force.

September 18. **Japanese invade Manchuria.**

October. **Army-Navy agreement on joint radio communications.** The CNO and Army Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur agree to rationalize service radio-communication networks, and to jointly operate message centers in Oahu, Manila Bay, and Panama.

## 1932

February 3. **Asiatic Fleet China ad hoc coalition show of force and landing.** An Asiatic Fleet cruiser lands marines to reinforce the Fourth Marines in protecting American interests at Shanghai, China, following a major Japanese attack on the city. A British cruiser squadron also intervenes, and a cease-fire is obtained.

January-February. **U.S. Fleet Battle Force maneuvers in Hawaii.** The Battle Force in the Pacific is reinforced by a cruiser squadron from the Scouting Force, from the Atlantic. The aviation squadrons successfully attack Oahu from the carriers, anticipating the Japanese by almost a decade.

February. **U.S. Fleet Problem XIII.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted between Hawaii and the mainland, with the Battle Force opposing the Scouting Force, augmented by the rest of the Scouting Force, which moves from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific, via the Panama Canal.

February. **ATLANTIC UNITS RE-DEPLOY TO THE PACIFIC.** In the wake of the new Japanese aggression in Shanghai, the CNO announces that the Scouting Force will remain in the Pacific after the close of maneuvers in March and that it will be augmented by battleships and destroyers from the Training Squadron and some Special Service Squadron vessels. What began as Fleet Problem XIII for the Scouting Force turns into a stay of indeterminate length in the Pacific.

All the battleships, cruisers and destroyers of the United States Fleet will now be based at San Pedro, Long Beach and San Diego. (In 1934, San Pedro and Long Beach will have 14 battleships, 2 carriers, 14 cruisers, and 16 support ships homeported there, despite the lack of a naval base, a naval shipyard, or a naval supply center there). Less than a score of ships, most of them old, remain in the Atlantic, con-

stituting the Training Squadron, with their major duty the training of midshipmen and reservists – centering on two old battleships and nine old destroyers. The pendulum of fleet balance has swung now far to the Pacific. It will begin to swing back to the Atlantic again in 1937.

## 1933

January 2. **Withdrawal from Nicaragua.** The last elements of the 2nd Marine Brigade leave Nicaragua, following inauguration of a new president.

February–March. **Fleet Problem XIV.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted in the Eastern Pacific, between Hawaii and the West Coast. The Battle Force protects the West Coast from invasion by the Scouting Force and the aircraft carriers.

March. **Battle Force domestic humanitarian assistance operation.** The Battle Force, at San Pedro, provides security, feeding stations and firefighting assistance ashore in the wake of a devastating earthquake in Los Angeles and Long Beach.

March. **President Roosevelt inaugurated.** Roosevelt institutes a policy of withdrawal from intervention in Caribbean affairs, and starts a naval building program that increases yearly as the decade progresses. A former assistant Secretary of the Navy, he watches the navy keenly and provides direction personally and often.

April 1. **MARITIME PATROL AVIATION TO THE BASE FORCE.** CNO Pratt moves the VPRONs and their tenders from the Battle and Scouting Forces to a new command, Aircraft, Base Force, to patrol around and defend bases. Performance, range and slow tender speed dictate this “demotion”, as well as the emergence of carrier aviation. The seaplanes will stay as part of the Base Force until 1937.

April 12. **Good Neighbor Policy announced.** Newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurates the “Good Neighbor Policy.” The United States formally renounces the right of intervention. This ends the occupations in the Caribbean and

terminates the marines' role as colonial infantry there, supported by the Navy.

August 13-January 23, 1934. **Cuban Crises shows of force.** Despite the "Good Neighbor Policy" just enunciated, two warships are sent to Havana, with others, marines embarked, hovering offshore, to influence political developments. Another show of force will occur in September, including the battleship *Missouri*, when a coup topples the pro-US government. U.S. Navy warships remain concentrated off Cuba for more than a year, following the U.S.-instigated overthrow of the Machado government. During the Cuban crisis of 1933-34, the Special Service Squadron will have expanded to 44 ships, and will station ships in all major Cuban ports. A naval withdrawal begins in January 1934. This will be the last major operation of the Squadron.

November 1. **New Scouting Force command ship assigned.** The cruiser USS *Indianapolis*, built as a command ship, becomes command ship of the Scouting Force. She will continue as Scouting Force command ship, including participation in Fleet and Force exercises, until after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. In 1943 she will become command ship for Admiral Spruance's Fifth Fleet.

December 7. **FLEET MARINE FORCE ESTABLISHED.** A Fleet Marine Force is established for amphibious exercises and operations with the Fleet, to be integrated with the Fleet as a complete combat force.

1934

January. **Asiatic Fleet landing in China.** An Asiatic Fleet gunboat lands Marines to protect the American consulate at Foochow, China, until Nationalist troops can restore order.

April-May. **Fleet Problem XV.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted in the Caribbean off Guantanamo Bay. The entire U.S. Fleet is brought east through the Panama Canal to participate - the first time the United States Fleet transits the canal as a unit. Following the exercise, the Fleet visits the East Coast for the first time in three years.

The Marines resume testing of amphibious assault doctrine. As part of the exercises, the first comprehensive U.S. Navy fleet landing problem takes place at Culebra Island east of Puerto Rico. Similar exercises will be held at Culebra almost every year thereafter until World War II.

Summer. **Presidential diplomacy support in Latin America.** President Roosevelt visits Colombia, Haiti and Panama, along with Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, on board the cruiser USS *Houston*. The visit to Cartagena, Colombia, in July is the first by a U.S. President to a South American country.

August 15. **Withdrawal from Haiti.** The last elements of the 1st Marine Brigade withdraw from Haiti, ending an occupation of 19 years.

December 29. **Japan renounces its commitments to limit her navy under the Washington Treaty of 1922.** This is to become effective on December 31, 1936.

## 1935

January 19–March 13. **Fleet landing Exercise No. 1.** Special Service Squadron and Training Squadron units support Fleet Landing Exercise No. 1 at Culebra Island, Puerto Rico. These exercises will continue annually through 1941, all but one in the Caribbean.

March 16. **Germany denounces the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles**

April–June. **U.S. Fleet Problem XVI.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem, are conducted in the Northeast Pacific, between Puget Sound, Hawaii, and the Aleutians. Fleet Marine Force units practice landing operations and establishing a base on Midway Island.

September 11. **ARMY-NAVY JOINT OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES UPDATED.** *Joint Action of the Army and the Navy*, promulgated in 1927, is revised by the Joint Board and signed by the Secretaries of War and the Navy. Army aviation has as one of its primary functions the conduct of air operations over the sea in direct

defense of the coast. Navy aviation has as a secondary function the patrol of coastal zones and the protection of shipping therein.

## 1936

January 12–February 17. **Fleet Landing Exercise No. 2.** Fleet Landing Exercise No. 2 is conducted at Culebra Island, Puerto Rico, supported by the Training Squadron.

March. **German troops re-occupy the German Rhineland.**

April–June. **U.S. Fleet Problem XVII.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted in the Panama-Pacific area.

August. **A MEDITERRANEAN EVACUATION SQUADRON IS CREATED.** A small Navy squadron of one cruiser and two destroyers – SQUADRON FORTY (T) – is constituted off Spain. Commanded by Rear Admiral Arthur P. Fairfield, it has been sent to evacuate American citizens from Spain, at the time convulsed by an exceptionally ferocious civil war. It will cooperate with British, French, German and Italian warships also operating off Spain. It will remain in European waters until October 1940, evacuating Americans and others, showing the flag, on call for crises.

September. **Civil War in Spain.** Spanish right-wing generals revolt against the Spanish Republic and begin a savage civil war that they will win by 1939, aided by Germany and Italy.

November 30–December 3. **Argentina presidential diplomatic support.** President Roosevelt sails on USS *Indianapolis*, escorted by USS *Chester*, to Buenos Aires for the Pan American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace. He also visits Montevideo and Rio de Janeiro.



# **Pre-World War II fleet operations (1937–1941): Re-dividing the battle fleet into a Pacific Fleet home main fleet and Atlantic Fleet home task forces, & winding down forward MOOTW**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

As world conditions worsen, the Navy doubles in size, although the growth in number of battleships is small. The carrier force, while small, is rapidly expanding. A significant chunk of the fleet in the Pacific is moved to the Atlantic, where a new Atlantic Fleet is re-born. This fleet, however, operates as separate task forces, not as a unified main battle fleet. Its chief enemy appears to be the submarine and the surface raider, not an enemy fleet, whereas in the Pacific the potential foe is clearly a powerful opposing fleet – that of Japan. Forward Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) are scaled far back or terminated in the Caribbean, China, and the Mediterranean.

### **Fleet size and composition**

The fleet began to grow during this period, slowly at the beginning and rapidly toward the end. By the time the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the 335-ship navy of 1937 had doubled to 790 ships, including 17 battleships, 7 fleet carriers, 37 cruisers, 171 destroyers, and 112 submarines.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.



The "Real World" and the world of the war plans increasingly converge. Events in Europe prevent a single focus on Japan, and the fleet gets re-divided into Atlantic and Pacific fleets, with the Atlantic portion growing inexorably. The Navy and the nation responded to what was now a probable two-ocean threat by accelerating the naval building program and dividing the fleet.

To ensure that this does not prevent a dangerous fall-off in U.S. naval power in the Pacific, Congress and the Administration finally agree on the ultimate solution: build a two-ocean navy capable of achieving maritime superiority in each ocean. This (expensive) decision comes too late to avert the Pearl Harbor attack, but will ensure the arrival of enormous numbers of warships in the Pacific after 1943 to defeat Japan, and the existence of a large store of almost new warships to deploy at sea against the Soviet Union during the first half of the Cold War.

Squadron 40-T and the rump of the Special Service Squadron are maintained for a while, and the Asiatic Fleet continues its operations, but in general U.S. Navy MOOTW falls way off and preparation for war becomes its sole *raison d'être*. At the end of the period, the re-constituted Atlantic Fleet is fighting a shooting war in an ad hoc naval coalition with the Royal Navy in the Atlantic, and plans for a similar multi-national effort are being made for the Western Pacific.

## **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

The fleet remains organized in what are essentially type commands, but increasing use is now being made of task forces, i.e., putting groups of often unlike ships together for specific jobs or to cover particular geographic areas. The ultimate expression of the task force concept becomes the reconstitution of the Atlantic Fleet itself.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marines close out their use as the nation's colonial infantry, capped by their withdrawal from Shanghai in 1941. Their exercising of amphibious warfare techniques continues apace, however, and they deploy to Iceland as an occupation force in 1941.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

The Army began to prepare for large-scale war, but it was much less pre-occupied than the Navy with the danger of a war with Japan. Rather, it saw the nation and itself facing the prospect of a second war with Germany. August 1939 saw the most ambitious effort towards large-scale maneuvers in the Army since the first World War, engaging an army with a small corps. In the summer and fall of 1941, the Army conducted its GHQ Maneuvers in Louisiana and North Carolina, involving almost a half-million troops and eight Navy and Marine Corps aviation squadrons for ground support, provided due to the neglect of close air support capabilities by the Army Air Corps during the interwar period .

## Operational chronology

Text in all capital letters indicates major organizational and command and control changes.

### 1937

January 27, March 10. **Fleet Landing Exercise No. 3.** Fleet Landing Exercise No. 3 is conducted on the West Coast at San Clemente island and at San Pedro. It includes San Diego and Quantico elements of the Fleet Marine Force as well as Army units. It is the only fleet landing exercise to take place on the West Coast

April, June. **Fleet Problem XVIII.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted off Hawaii.

July. **TRAINING DETACHMENT ESTABLISHED AND EXPANDED IN THE ATLANTIC.** The Scouting Force's Training Squadron on the East Coast becomes the Training Detachment, U.S. Fleet. The Detachment is reinforced to include four old battleships and 17 old destroyers.

This will form the nucleus in 1938 of a re-constituted Atlantic Squadron. The pendulum of fleet balance, which had swung far to the Pacific by 1932, begins to swing back to the Atlantic.

July 7. **War in China.** Japan invades China proper, beginning large-scale military operations in China and a conflict that will flow into World War II.

December 12. **Sinking of the *Panay*.** Japanese bombers attack and sink the U.S. Asiatic Fleet gunboat *Panay* on the Yangtse.

## 1938

January 13–March 15. **Fleet Landing Exercise No. 4.** Fleet Landing Exercise No. 4 is conducted back again at Culebra Island, Puerto Rico, supported by the Training Detachment. It is the most comprehensive such exercise to date.

March. **Germany annexes Austria.**

March–April. **Fleet Problem XIX.** The Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted in the Hawaii-Pacific area. The Battle Force's carriers, under RADM Ernest King, operate independently from the battleships, and launch a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.

September. **Munich Agreement.** Germany is allowed to dismember Czechoslovakia.

September 6. **ATLANTIC SQUADRON CREATED.** An Atlantic Squadron is “temporarily” established by the President as a result of the increased tension in Europe. It consists of 7 new cruisers and 6 new destroyers. This is the first assignment of new-construction ships to the Atlantic since 1932.

October 10. **ATLANTIC SQUADRON COMBINES WITH TRAINING DETACHMENT.** The training Detachment becomes part of the Atlantic Squadron. The Squadron begins to grow, beginning a partial re-deployment of the fleet back toward the Atlantic. It will be renamed the Patrol Force, United States Fleet in November 1940 and become the Atlantic Fleet in February 1941.

## 1939

January–April. **Fleet Problem XX.** Responding to events in Europe, the Fleet Concentration and Fleet Problem are conducted in the Caribbean and off the northeast coast of South America for the first time in five years (and for last time too), with the President observing from *Houston*. Four carriers operate together in a group for the first time, under RADM Ernest King. The Pacific coast Battle Force and Scout-

ing Force ships are scheduled to remain on the East Coast for a while, including a fleet review in New York during the World's Fair.

January. **First U.S. Navy use of radar at sea.** During Fleet Problem XX, the radar-equipped battleship *Texas* uses her equipment to detect aircraft and ships as well as for navigation and spotting the fall of shot. As a result, six more sets are ordered for the fleet in October. They will be fitted in 1940 in a carrier, the fleet flagship (battleship *California*) and three cruisers. Fourteen more sets will be ordered for fleet installation in 1940.

January 13–March 19. **Fleet Landing Exercise No. 5.** Fleet Landing Exercise No. 5 is conducted in the Caribbean, supported by the Atlantic Squadron's battleships and destroyers.

February 3. **Japan occupies Hainan Island.** This Chinese island is off the south coast of China. The threat to the Philippines grows.

March 30. **Japan annexes Spratley Islands.** These French-claimed islands in the South China Sea are just to the west of the Philippines.

April 17. **Diplomatic support in Japan.** The heavy cruiser *Astoria* delivers at Yokohama the ashes of the recently deceased Japanese ambassador to Washington.

April. **EARLY FLEET RETURN TO THE PACIFIC.** Post-Fleet Problem liberty and attendance at the New York fleet review is cancelled abruptly, in the wake of recent Japanese moves in the Pacific. Most of the Battle Force and the Scouting Force return early to California through the Panama Canal

April. **RETENTION OF SOME U.S. FLEET FORCES IN THE ATLANTIC.** The carrier *Ranger* (one of five Navy carriers), a heavy cruiser division, destroyers, and two maritime patrol air squadrons remain in the Atlantic following Fleet Problem XX and do not return to the Pacific.

May 17–October 18. **Asiatic Fleet China ad hoc coalition landings.** British, French and U.S. warships land sailors at Kulangsu to protect international settlements against incursions by Japanese forces. Although British and French contingents are withdrawn on the out-

break of the war in Europe, US sailors do not leave until the Japanese do so simultaneously in October.

August. **ADM Stark is CNO.** ADM Harold R. Stark relieves ADM William Leahy as Chief of Naval Operations.

September 1. **Beginning of World War II.** Germany invades Poland. Two days later, Britain and France declare war on Germany.

September 5. **Neutrality Patrol Ordered.** President Roosevelt proclaims American neutrality and directs the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Harold R. Stark, to establish a Neutrality Patrol of sea and air units to prevent belligerent acts in American waters, two or three hundred miles out.

September 6. **NEUTRALITY PATROL CREATED.** The Atlantic Squadron begins the formation of a Neutrality Patrol. 77 old destroyers and light minesweepers will be put back into commission, from both the east and west coast reserve fleets, to add to the Atlantic Squadron forces available.

While technically under the orders of Commander Atlantic Squadron, RADM A.W. Johnson, the Neutrality Patrol is operated in large part under orders from the White House. Its announced function is to observe, report and track the movements of ships of belligerents approaching the coasts of the United States or the West Indies. But its fundamental purpose is to emphasize the readiness of the U.S. Navy to defend the Western Hemisphere from German submarines and surface raiders.

It will endure through March 1941, when the focus of Atlantic Fleet operational activity will shift to convoy protection.

September 12. **NEUTRALITY PATROLS ESTABLISHED.** Nine patrols of cruisers, destroyers and maritime patrol aircraft are set up in the Western Atlantic, from Nova Scotia to the Guianas. They are backed up by a reserve force of old Atlantic Squadron battleships and the small carrier *Ranger*. The Caribbean patrol includes two cruisers, four destroyers, and three seaplane tenders operating out of San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

September. **SQUADRON FORTY (T) SHIFTS BASES.** With the outbreak of World War II and the belligerency of France, Squadron FORTY (T) – in Europe since 1936 – moves from French ports to Lisbon, in neutral Portugal. The squadron will play a minor role in evacuating Americans from Europe – most will come home on merchant ships and U.S. Army transports – until it is disestablished in October 1940.

October 2. **PAN-AMERICAN SECURITY ZONE ESTABLISHED.** The Congress of American States, meeting at Panama, in the Act of Panama establishes a “neutral zone” extending 300 miles from the coast of the Americas, in which belligerent forces are not to conduct hostilities. The United States – the only American state capable of enforcing such a zone – accepts enforcement responsibilities in the area from Maine to Trinidad.

October 5. **FLEET ELEMENTS DEPLOY FORWARD TO HAWAII.** A U.S. Fleet Hawaiian Detachment of two heavy cruiser divisions, two destroyer squadrons, a carrier and other forces deploys to Honolulu from the West Coast, commanded by the Commander, Scouting Force. This marks the beginning of the shift of fleet forces from California to Hawaii.

**OPNAV size.** In 1939 there are about 125 officers working in OPNAV (By 1973 there will be at least 1,000).

## 1940

January 6. **ADM Richardson is CinCUS.** ADM J.O. Richardson becomes Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet, flagship *Pennsylvania* (BB-38). His staff numbers 21 officers, of whom five are communications watch officers.

January 11–March 13. **Fleet Landing Exercise No. 6.** Fleet Landing Exercise No. 6 is conducted in the Caribbean.

April 2–May 9. **FLEET PROBLEM XXI: THE FLEET DEPLOYS TO HAWAII.** The United States Fleet moves from the West Coast to Hawaii for the annual Fleet Problem. It is scheduled to remain in the Hawaiian area until May 9, and return to the West Coast by May 17.

This will prove to be the last Fleet Problem in the series that began in 1923.

**May. Greenland Patrol established.** Atlantic Squadron patrol operations in the waters surrounding Greenland begin.

**May 7. FLEET TO REMAIN IN HAWAII.** The President orders the Fleet to stay in Hawaii until further notice, to act as a deterrent to further Japanese aggression in the Pacific, despite incessant protestations by ADM Richardson that logistic support of the fleet in Hawaii is inadequate. The fleet will return briefly and temporarily to California in the fall of 1940 to tie up loose ends.

**May 10. Germany invades the Netherlands.** Fall of the mother country of the Netherlands East and West Indies is imminent.

**June. Atlantic Squadron South America showing the flag deployment.** Two heavy cruisers visit Brazilian, Uruguayan, and Argentine ports to help build hemispheric solidarity.

**June 22. Fall of France.** France and Germany sign an armistice.

**June 24–30. Fleet deployment towards Panama.** 5 battleships, 7 cruisers and 17 destroyers deploy from Pearl Harbor toward Panama, then return, in the wake of the Fall of France.

**July 5. First U.S. economic sanctions placed on Japan.** These will become progressively more onerous over the next year and a half.

**July. Atlantic Squadron French Caribbean observation patrols.** A cruiser and six destroyers replace a British force watching the Vichy French Caribbean islands and the French Navy forces there.

**July 19. 70% Naval Expansion Act signed.** The President signs the Naval Expansion Act, known as the "Two-Ocean Navy" Act, providing funds for 257 additional ships – a 70% increase in U.S. naval tonnage. This legislation will put 7 new battleships, 18 new carriers, 27 new cruisers, 115 new destroyers and 43 new submarines into the fleet.

Autumn. **ASIATIC FLEET RE-DEPLOYS TO PHILIPPINES.** ADM Hart re-deploys his flagship *Houston* and most of his other ships from Shanghai to Manila.

September–September 21. **A CARRIER IS FLEET FLAGSHIP.** The U.S. Fleet flag shifts from *Pennsylvania* to *Enterprise*, to test tactical command of the fleet from a carrier, at the urging of some members of the Fleet staff. *Enterprise* lacks communication equipment, both radio and visual, for handling expeditiously the heavy Fleet traffic. Spaces for Fleet staff functions are cramped. The flag shifts to the battleship *New Mexico* on September 21.

September 2. **“Destroyers for bases” agreement.** In return for 50 World War I destroyers, the United States acquires basing rights in the West Indies, Bermuda, and Newfoundland.

September 3–November 26. **ATLANTIC SQUADRON TRANSFERS DESTROYERS TO BRITAIN.** The Atlantic Squadron begins to transfer 50 of its old destroyers, recently re-commissioned, to Britain, in accordance with the Destroyers-Bases Agreement.

September. **SUBMARINE FORCE DIVIDED.** The Submarine Force Command, established in 1931, is abolished. The submarines in the Pacific and Atlantic are assigned to the Scouting Force and the Patrol Force respectively.

September 17. **SPECIAL SERVICE SQUADRON DISESTABLISHED.** Established as the “State Department’s Navy in the Caribbean in 1920, by the end of its life it includes two destroyers and two gunboats. Its meager forces are dissolved and used to augment the Fifteenth Naval District forces defending the Panama Canal.

A Caribbean Patrol will be created in January 1941 to patrol the Caribbean and points south. It will, however, be much different in mission and composition from the Special Service Squadron.

September–November. **Temporary return of the Fleet to California.** The Fleet returns from Hawaii to the West Coast briefly in three separate contingents of approximately the same size each, for leaves, docking and the taking on of ammunition and stores.

October 22. **SQUADRON FORTY-T DISESTABLISHED.** To avoid Axis attack on Squadron ships mistaken for former U.S. destroyers now in Royal Navy service, the United States recalls its ships (a light cruiser and two destroyers) from Lisbon, from which they have operated for over a year (the squadron having been established in September 1936). There will also be the composition of the residual U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters, at the end of World War II in 1945.

November 1. **PATROL FORCE DESIGNATED.** The Atlantic Squadron, re-established in late 1938, is renamed the Patrol Force, United States Fleet, a designation more in keeping with its employment. Type commands are established within the Patrol Force. The new name will not last long: It will become the Atlantic Fleet in February 1941.

December 20. **VADM King is Commander, Patrol Force.** VADM Ernest J. King is named Commander, Patrol Force, United States Fleet, formerly the Atlantic Squadron.

## 1941

January. **CARIBBEAN PATROL CREATED.** Commander, Patrol Force institutes a Caribbean Patrol, consisting of three cruisers and maritime patrol aircraft, responsible for general patrol duty and for keeping a special watch on Vichy French Navy units at Martinique. This new force in the Caribbean is a war-fighting force very different from the Special Service Squadron dissolved the previous year.

February 1. **ADM Kimmel is CincUS.** ADM Husband E. Kimmel relieves ADM J.O. Richardson as Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet, given ADM Richardson's opposition to stationing the fleet in Hawaii.

February 3. **RE-DIVISION OF THE U.S. FLEET.** In the most sweeping changes since 1922, the United States Fleet is re-divided into an Atlantic Fleet (ADM E. J. King) (formerly the Patrol Force, U.S. Fleet), a Pacific Fleet (ADM H. E. Kimmel) and a small Asiatic Fleet (ADM T.C. Hart), each reporting to the Navy Department. Other naval forces afloat include (a) Naval Coastal Frontier Forces, (b) Special Task Forces, (c) Special Duty Ships, (d) The Naval Transportation Service, and (e) Naval District Craft. The Asiatic Fleet's area of

responsibility includes the Indian Ocean and the Pacific west of the 180th meridian; i.e., west of Midway Island.

The United States Fleet is an administrative organization for training purposes only, and is to become a task organization only if two or more fleets are concentrated. The Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet is to be appointed from among the fleet commanders. ADM Kimmel is so appointed. This arrangement will endure less than a year, when the positions of Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Commander in Chief, United States Fleet will be divided again in the wake of the Japanese attack on the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor.

**Spring. No Spring Fleet Problem.** Fleet Problem XXII, scheduled for the Spring of 1941, had been cancelled earlier due to the world situation. It is replaced by smaller-scale operations.

**Spring. Fleet Landing Exercise No. 7.** The Marines and the Atlantic Fleet continue the Fleet Landing Exercises, testing amphibious assault doctrine. FLEX No. 7 is conducted in the Caribbean. This will be the last Fleet Landing Exercise before the war.

**March 1. ATLANTIC FLEET REORGANIZATION.** Anticipating the end of the widely dispersed Neutrality Patrol and the beginning of convoy escort, anti-submarine warfare, and other wartime activities in the Atlantic, ten concentrated task forces commanded by flag officers are created out of the forces at ADM King's disposal.

The most important include: TF 1, the Ocean Escort Force (old bat-tleships, heavy cruisers and destroyers to support amphibious operations, operating out of Narragansett Bay and Boston); TF 2, the Striking Force (carriers, heavy cruisers and destroyers, for offensive operations; TF 3, the Scouting Force (four light cruisers and four destroyers, for Caribbean and South Atlantic patrol, operating out of San Juan and Guantanamo Bay - a redesignation of the Caribbean Patrol); and TF4, the Support Force of destroyers and maritime patrol aircraft, (working out of Narragansett Bay initially, intending to operate from the UK, but winding up operating out of Argentia, Newfoundland, starting in September 1941).

Also created are TF5, the Submarine Force; TF6, the Naval Coastal Frontier Forces; TF7, the Bermuda Force; TF8, the Patrol Wings; TF9, the Service Force; and TF10, the First Marine Division.

March-April. **Pacific Fleet South Pacific show the flag deployment.** Four cruisers and a destroyer squadron from the Pacific Fleet visit New Zealand, Australia, Fiji and Tahiti. The President and State Department had directed the cruise, to demonstrate American solidarity with the British Commonwealth. The Navy had opposed the cruise as degrading fleet readiness.

April 9. **New battleship commissioned.** USS *North Carolina* (BB-55) is commissioned in New York. She is the first new battleship since USS *West Virginia* joined the fleet in October 1924. A sister ship, *Washington*, will commission on May 15. These fast new ships will stay in the Atlantic working up until after America enters the war, and will not participate in operations until the spring of 1942.

No further new fast battleships will enter the fleet, however, for another year. A total of ten new fast battleships will join the fleet between 1941 and 1944.

April 18. **Atlantic Fleet Neutrality Patrol formally terminated.** The CNO directs the Atlantic Fleet to end the Neutrality Patrol, except for the watch on the Vichy French islands and the Caribbean Patrol. The focus of Atlantic Fleet operational activity will now shift to getting ready to conduct convoy protection, and preparation for war. Patrols will continue, however, in an ever-expanding portion of the Atlantic, until a wartime convoy escort regime is instituted in September.

April 18. **ATLANTIC FLEET OP-AREA EXPANDED.** ADM King, Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, issues an Operation Plan defining his operational area – “The Western Hemisphere” – as including the entire Atlantic west of a line between the Azores and Iceland.

April. **SCOUTING FORCE SOUTH ATLANTIC DESIGNATED AND EXPANDED.** The Caribbean Patrol’s name is changed to Task Force 3 – the Scouting Force, and it is reinforced by another cruiser, four destroyers and a minesweeper division. Its operating area is

expanded to include the entire area between Trinidad, Brazil, and the Cape Verde Islands off Africa.

June. **TASK FORCE 3 FOCUSES SOUTH.** RADM Jonas Ingram's Task Force 3 becomes the Southern Patrol, with responsibility for the waters off Trinidad and Brazil. Its earlier Caribbean Patrol responsibilities are given to a new Caribbean Patrol of destroyers and PBVs under RADM Raymond Spruance, the Commandant of the newly created Tenth Naval District in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Ingram begins cruiser and destroyer patrols in the South Atlantic, using Recife and other Brazilian facilities for replenishment. Additional surface ships and patrol aircraft will be assigned. This force will be renamed Task Force 23 in February 1942, in September 1942 be designated the South Atlantic Force, and in March 1943 become the Fourth Fleet, all under the Atlantic Fleet commander.

April-May. **MORE PACIFIC FLEET SHIPS RE-DEPLOY TO THE ATLANTIC.** One new aircraft carrier (*Yorktown*), three old battleships, four new light cruisers, and eighteen destroyers are transferred from the Pacific Fleet to the Atlantic Fleet, giving the Atlantic Fleet two active carriers (*Yorktown* and *Ranger*) and one new carrier working up (*Wasp*, commissioned March 7, 1941). The carrier, battleships and cruisers will be deployed to block sorties into the North Atlantic by the German surface fleet. Occasionally, they will operate with the British Fleet. (They will re-deploy back again to the Pacific after Pearl Harbor).

By midsummer 1941, three oilers, three transports and a few other auxiliaries will also transfer to the Atlantic, reducing the strength of the Pacific Fleet (with the earlier transfers) by about 25 percent and leaving it inferior to the Japanese Navy in every category of combatant ship.

Meanwhile, with ship transfers from the Pacific and the addition of new construction, the Atlantic Fleet grows from 159 ships to 355 ships from April to October 1941. By the time of Pearl Harbor, the Pacific Fleet will have only two-thirds as many ships as the Atlantic Fleet, and little new construction.

**June 13. ATLANTIC FLEET JOINT AMPHIBIOUS FORCE FORMED.** The Marine 1st Division (less units in Iceland) and the Army 1st Infantry Division form the Emergency Striking Force, commanded by MGEN Holland Smith USMC. After sundry renamings and reorganizations, during which both the Marines and the 1st Division will be released for other duties, this force will become the Amphibious Force Atlantic Fleet in March 1942, with the Army as its landing force component.

**June 29. The Army Air Corps becomes the Army Air Forces, an autonomous agency within the War Department.**

**June 25. U.S. Army troops land in Greenland.** Escorted by Navy units, they build an air base. The Coast Guard also operates in Greenland, although not the Navy yet.

**July. Japanese occupy French Indochina.**

**July 1. NAVAL COASTAL FRONTIERS CREATED.** The American coastline is divided into six "frontiers" whose commanders will be responsible for convoy escort, antisubmarine warfare and patrols in their designated areas: North Atlantic, Southern, Caribbean, Panama, Pacific Southern, and Pacific Northern. They will be assigned forces on September 9. Two additional frontiers will be established for Hawaii and the Philippines.

**July 1-19. FIRST WORLD WAR II OVERSEAS U.S. NAVY TASK FORCE DEPLOYS.** Atlantic Fleet Task Force 19 lands a 4,000-man Marine brigade at Reykjavik to assume responsibility for the defense of Danish Iceland from the British. Formed up at and deploying from Argentia, Newfoundland, the 26-ship Task Force includes two old battleships, two cruisers, 13 destroyers, and 6 transports.

This is the first U.S. Naval Task Force to be assembled for foreign service in World War II, and the first to carry men and equipment into the war zone. It will be followed by several reinforcement and resupply deployments to Greenland and Iceland.

**July 15. Forward naval base set up in Newfoundland.** A United States Naval Air Station and Naval Operating Base, under construction

since December 1940, is commissioned at Argentia, Newfoundland. On September 19 it will become the headquarters for the Support Force of the Atlantic Fleet, which will work there through April 1942, when the support force will be terminated.

July 15. **ATLANTIC FLEET OP-AREA EXPANDS AGAIN.** ADM King redefines the Western Hemisphere as including Iceland.

July 19. **Atlantic Fleet Iceland convoys begin.** The Atlantic Fleet forms TF 1 for the defense of Iceland and to conduct convoys of any nationality to and from Iceland. A carrier task group ferries aircraft to Iceland.

August 6. **Atlantic Fleet Iceland air patrols begin.** USN maritime patrol aircraft begin flying out of Reykjavik and Hvalfjord, Iceland.

Summer. **PACIFIC FLEET COMMAND MOVES ASHORE.** ADM H.E. Kimmel, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet and Commander in Chief of the United States Fleet, moves his flag and staff ashore at Pearl Harbor. His thinking: "to successfully prosecute a campaign in the Pacific, ashore headquarters at the principal base must be available." *Pennsylvania* remains the flagship of the Pacific Fleet, however.

September 17. **ATLANTIC FLEET CONVOY ESCORT OPERATIONS BEGIN.** In the wake of combat between a German submarine and the Support Force Iceland convoy escort destroyer *Greer*, wartime North Atlantic convoy escort operations begin. The first convoy for Britain is picked up from Canadian escorts 150 miles south of Argentia by Atlantic Fleet Support Force ships, who in turn it over to Royal Navy destroyers south of Iceland. Between mid-September and the end of October, Support Force destroyers will bring fourteen convoys across the North Atlantic, escorting approximately 675 ships.

September 25. **Navy requisitions land-based patrol aircraft.** Marking the demise of the 1931 Pratt-MacArthur Agreement, the Navy requisitions 20 Lockheed Hudsons then in production for Britain's Royal Air Force. They will operate from the Support Force's new base at Argentia, Newfoundland.

September 28. **DENMARK STRAIT PATROL ESTABLISHED.** Moving its operations ever eastward, the Atlantic Fleet sets up a Denmark Strait Patrol based at Hvalfjord, Iceland, to cruise north of Iceland to block German surface raiders coming into the North Atlantic west of Iceland. The Royal Navy, by informal agreement, will block raiders coming east of Iceland. The Task Group (known as the "White" Patrol) includes two battleships, two heavy cruisers and two destroyer divisions, and will remain until well into 1942.

September 14–November 30. **Naval aviation support for Army exercise.** ("GHQ Maneuvers"). Four Navy carrier squadrons and four Marine squadrons (3 fighter squadrons, 4 dive-bomber squadrons, and 1 torpedo squadron) participate in the U.S. Army GHQ Maneuvers ("Louisiana and Carolina Maneuvers"). The Army requested them due to the Army Air Forces' long neglect of aviation support for ground troops. The GHQ Maneuvers, which pitted entire field armies against each other (472,000 troops – nearly half the Army's total man-power), are the largest ever conducted by the U.S. Army in its history, before or since, and will exercise great influence on the development of Army force structure for World War II.

October 10. **NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY ESCORT ARRANGEMENTS STABILIZED.** U.S. Atlantic Fleet Task Force 4 (formerly also the Support Force) escorts fast convoys from Newfoundland to "mid-ocean" (actually south of Iceland); the Royal Canadian Navy escorts slow convoys to mid-ocean; the Royal Navy escorts convoys from mid-ocean to Britain. Task Force 4 will be renamed Task Force 24 in March 1942.

October 20. **Fourth Atlantic Fleet carrier commissioned.** *Hornet* is commissioned and begins working up. With *Ranger*, *Yorktown* and *Wasp* (commissioned in April 1940), there are now four carriers in the Atlantic Fleet (and three in the Pacific).

No new carriers will join the fleet until the *Essex*-class carriers and *Independence*-class light carriers start to deploy to the Pacific in 1943, although some escort carriers will begin appearing in 1942.

October 31. **U.S. Destroyer sunk.** The first American destroyer, *Reuben James*, is torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic while on escort duty.

November. **Atlantic Fleet submarine North Atlantic combat patrols begin.** Admiral King directs submarines to patrol stations in the Atlantic.

November 6. **Naval Operating Base commissioned on Iceland.** The U.S. Navy presence in the northeast Atlantic grows.

November 24. **REDEPLOYMENT OF THE ASIATIC FLEET.** ADM Thomas C. Hart, Commander in Chief of the Asiatic Fleet., sends his cruisers, most of his destroyers, and a destroyer tender south to Borneo, in the Netherlands East Indies. The Asiatic Fleet consists of one heavy and two light cruiser, 13 overage destroyers, 29 submarines, two maritime patrol aircraft squadrons, and some gunboats and auxiliaries.

November 25–December 2. **Sealift to Dutch Guiana.** U.S. Navy trans-ports carry occupation troops to Dutch Guiana.

November 27–28. **Withdrawal from Shanghai.** The Fourth Marine Regiment is withdrawn by civilian liners from Shanghai after 14 years' service in China. RADM Glassford, commanding the Yangtse Patrol, and two U.S. Asiatic Fleet gunboats withdraw to Luzon. Glassford will take command of the Asiatic Fleet Task Force in the Netherlands Indies (Task Force 5), leaving Manila in the cruiser *Houston* on December 8.



# **Early World War II fleet operations (1941-1943): Two-ocean forward & home task force combat operations: Navy, joint, & combined. Numbered fleets created**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

The Navy quadruples in size and conducts forward combat operations, by task forces, on a global scale. Many of these operations, especially in North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Northeast Atlantic, are not only conducted jointly, with the Army, but also within a coalition framework, with the Royal Navy. Overall fleet command is retained by the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet, now in Washington, also double-hatted as the Chief of Naval Operations. On March 15, 1943, certain naval forces are designated as numbered fleets – the first such designation in U.S. naval history. Submarine forces, however, remain separate, as do some small naval surface forces.

### **Fleet size and composition**

A year after Pearl Harbor, the fleet had 3 fewer carriers and about the same number of battleships and cruisers she had then. The number of destroyers and submarines had grown, however, and the number of mine warfare and patrol ships had more than doubled. By the end of 1943, the fruits of the major building programs initiated before Pearl Harbor began to enter the fleet in large numbers. In December 1943 the fleet had 3699 ships, including 21 battleships, 19 carriers, 35 escort carriers, 48 cruisers, 332 destroyers, 234 frigate-equivalents, 172 submarines, 551 mine warfare ships, and 1,050 patrol vessels. There were also now 673 of a new type of ship – the amphibious ship.

## **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

The first half of World War II was largely a period of U.S. Navy global task force operations, while the vast fleets that dominate the second half are being built and fielded. At the end of this period, the various new organizational and technical building blocks are in place for the great fleet actions of late 1943, 1944, and 1945.

For the U.S. Navy, World War II was many wars, fought by many fleets. (As the size of the U.S. fleet grew, a new organizational entity, the numbered fleet, was inserted in 1943 between the theater fleet commanders and their task forces).

Command areas were carved and recarved in 1942 and 1943, especially in the Pacific. The Navy, which had planned a go-it-alone naval campaign against Japan in the interwar period, instead had to share that ocean and its islands with Army and other forces under General MacArthur, in the Solomons, New Guinea and the Philippines – places that, in any event, the Navy had not contemplated fighting in anyway.

Initially in the Pacific, American naval forces fought in task forces beside Dutch, British and Australian warships. But after a series of naval defeats in the Dutch East Indies, the Americans, aided by the Australians, essentially had the naval war to themselves. A U.S. Navy Southwest Pacific Force was created, as was a South Pacific Force. The former became “MacArthur’s Navy”, bereft of carriers. The latter fought the various battles on and around Guadalcanal, under the full control of ADM Nimitz, and later in the Solomons under the strategic direction of MacArthur.

In Europe, a complex, integrated US-British allied command structure was created. There, what became the U.S. Eighth Fleet in the Mediterranean and other U.S. naval forces were operationally assigned to Royal Navy naval component commanders of the Supreme Allied Commander, normally General Eisenhower. The U.S. Navy provided amphibious ships and occasional carriers and bat-

attleships in Europe and the Atlantic, but the Royal Navy had almost its entire fleet there.

In the North Atlantic, convoy, routing, and hunter-killer operations against German submarines were divided and re-divided into American, Canadian, and British responsibilities, culminating in an agreement in 1943 that stabilized responsibilities. Eventually, ADM King personally took over direction of the U.S. Navy effort through his command of a shipless Tenth Fleet staff organization in Washington.

And then there were a variety of other fleets and forces, e.g., A doomed and short-lived Australian-British-Dutch-American ABDA command in Southeast Asia, a task force that became the Fourth Fleet in the South Atlantic, a North Pacific Force, a Southeast Pacific Force, and a large training fleet in the Western Atlantic.

A new command echelon, a series of "numbered fleets," were created in 1943 to manage the large numbers of new ships starting to flow into the task forces of the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. The numbered fleets in turn were organized by task forces. The task force is a unit consisting of a variety of ships assembled into one command for a particular purpose. Type commands generally exist as training and administration entities only. Indeed, the numbered fleets themselves originated as Task Forces, and some – like the Eighth and Fourth Fleets, will return to task force echelon at the war's end.

The war began with the fleet divided between the Atlantic and the Pacific: Four of the fleet's seven carriers were in the Atlantic, and eight of her 17 battleships. By late 1943, almost all of what had been in the Atlantic had already moved to the Pacific.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marines shift their Atlantic forces west and focus exclusively on the Pacific and almost exclusively on amphibious assault operations.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

At the outset of the war, there were no joint commands or theaters. In the Pacific, United States had four major commands – one each for the Army and the Navy in the Philippines and Hawaii. In both places the Army and navy commanders were independent, with different missions. After Pearl Harbor was attacked, there was, however, an increase in centralized and joint direction and control over U.S. forces. The Army now took overall command in Panama; the Navy in Hawaii.

Achieving the proper degree of jointness was a major issue throughout the war at the strategic and operational levels, with a new institution – the Joint Chiefs of Staff – created to manage it. Two out of its four members were naval officers: ADM Leahy, the chief of staff to the President and *de facto* Chairman, and ADM King, wearing the hats of both CNO and Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet (COMINCH). King

guarded the prerogatives of the Navy and of the Pacific Theater jealously, if sometimes with only mixed success.

In the field, jointness was achieved, although the road was not always smooth. Personal rapport was a major ingredient. The Navy went through two other commanders before it found a naval component commander who could work well with MacArthur – Kinkaid. (Kinkaid had earlier been sent to the North Pacific to replace another admiral who had difficulty working with the Army.) In Europe, Hewitt and Stark worked well with Army commanders and with the British. Halsey dealt well with MacArthur when he was subject to the general's strategic direction in the South Pacific. On the other hand, the irascible Pacific amphibious admiral Richmond K. Turner offended the Army and Marines with regularity.

The Army during the first years of the war was pulled three ways, between its own desire for a build-up in Britain, the British insistence on pursuing operations in the Mediterranean, and the pressing demands of the Pacific theater. By the end of 1942, of seventeen Army divisions overseas, nine were in the Pacific, three had gone to North Africa, one to Iceland, and only four to the United Kingdom.

## **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

World War II was the second coalition war for the United States Navy. The Navy supplied amphibious and support forces for all the major amphibious landings in the Mediterranean and European theaters, and provided occasional small carrier and fast battleship support in North Africa and the Norwegian Sea in 1942-3, as well as submarine patrols in the Bay of Biscay. In all of these operations, U.S. Navy ships were under the operational command of Royal Navy commanders.

In the South and Southwest Pacific, except at the very beginning with the constitution of the doomed ABDA force, U.S. Navy Fleet commanders reported to U.S. Navy or Army operational commanders, often with Royal Australian Navy cruisers and Australian and Dutch destroyers under American operational control. Also, a Royal Navy carrier was under American operational control in the South Pacific during the summer of 1943.

In the North Atlantic, the water was divided into occasionally changing zones of British, American and Canadian responsibility. In the South Atlantic, the Brazilian Navy was under American operational control throughout the war.

Despite FADM King's inveighing since the ABDA debacle against "mixed groups" from different navies in the same task groups, the phenomenon occurred often and seemed to work well, especially in the Seventh Fleet's relationships with the Royal Australian Navy.

## **Operational data**

### **1941 (continued)**

**December 7. U.S. Pacific Fleet attacked at Pearl Harbor by the Japanese.** Wake Island and Guam are also attacked. A British and a remaining U.S. Asiatic Fleet gunboat are attacked at Shanghai.

Eight of the nine Pacific Fleet old battleships are sunk or damaged (one old battleship is in overhaul in California). Only two, however, are damaged beyond repair.

Seven old battleships and two new fast battleships are in the Atlantic, as are four of the fleet's seven carriers (There had been no carriers there before 1939). Two of the three Pacific Fleet carriers are at sea off Hawaii with a dozen cruisers, plus destroyers; the third Pacific Fleet carrier is in San Diego. The Atlantic Fleet also includes 13 cruisers, 90 destroyers, and 60 submarines. There are 29 submarines with the Asiatic Fleet based at Manila, and 22 operating with the Pacific Fleet out of Pearl Harbor.

December 8. **RE-DEPLOYMENT BEGINS TO THE PACIFIC.** CNO ADM Stark orders Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet ADM King to send one of his four carriers, three battleships, a destroyer squadron, and three squadrons of maritime patrol aircraft to the Pacific Fleet.

The carrier, *Yorktown*, will leave Norfolk December 16 and arrive in the Pacific in January. (She had been transferred from the Pacific to the Atlantic in April 1941). She will be followed by the new *Hornet* in March and by *Wasp* in June, leaving only *Ranger* in the Atlantic.

By the end of December there will be only 76 destroyers in the Atlantic Fleet Support Force.

December 8. **Japanese attack in the Philippines.** Formosa-based bombers catch the bulk of the Far East Air Force lined up on the ground on Clark and Iba fields in central Luzon and virtually destroy it.

December 8. **Asiatic Fleet submarines deploy.** The submarines (and PT boats) take offensive and defensive positions off the Philippines, Formosa, Hainan and Palau, but fail to achieve significant results due to torpedo failures. The Japanese begin bombing of the Philippines, destroying General MacArthur's aircraft.

December 8. **SOUTHEAST PACIFIC AREA ESTABLISHED.** Out of concern for the defense of the Panama Canal, a force normally comprising two old cruisers and two destroyers is constituted for operations off the west coast of South America, under COMINCH. RADM A. T. Bidwell, Commander Cruiser Division 3, is appointed its first Commander, an assignment that will become a collateral responsibility of the Commander, Panama Sea Frontier in October 1943. Convoy and presence operations will be conducted until 1945. In September-October 1942, an advanced supply base for the Force will be established at Callao, Peru.

December 11. **Germany declares war on the United States.** Between the time of Pearl Harbor and mid-February 1942, the Atlantic Fleet Support Force will escort twenty-four convoys across the North Atlantic.

**December 12. NAVAL AIR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE CREATED.** By the end of 1944 it will have 700 transport aircraft (the Army Air Force's Air Transport Service will have 1,700). NATS will be consolidated into the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), under the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, in 1948.

**December 17. PANAMA AND HAWAII JOINT UNIFIED COMMANDS CREATED.** Prodded by the President, the Joint Board of Army and Navy leaders directs establishment of joint Army-Navy commands to protect the Panama Canal (to be under Army command) and Hawaii (to be under Navy command).

These are the first American joint unified commands to be set up.

**December 17-24. Asiatic Fleet submarine deployments.** Most attacks by the Asiatic Fleet Submarine Force in Manila against Japanese forces landing in the Philippines fail due to faulty torpedoes.

**December 18. NEW COMINCH AND CNO DUTIES DEFINED.** The organization of the fleet promulgated in February 1941 is now changed. An executive order describes new duties of the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet and the CNO. The fleet commander – directly responsible to the President, under the general direction of the Secretary of the Navy, is given “supreme command” of the operating forces of the several fleets of the Navy, and is to have his headquarters in Washington, not forward with the Fleet, as previously. As such the job encompasses very different responsibilities from those of the CinCUS command that the fleet commanders had rotated among themselves in peacetime, and is more powerful than the previous CINCUS command that ended with ADM Richardson. The CNO is to be responsible for long-range war planning.

**December 20. NAVAL COASTAL FRONTIERS UNDER COMINCH.** The operating forces of the Naval Coastal Frontiers are placed under the command of the Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet. Previously they had reported to the Navy Department for administrative purposes and to the CNO for task purposes.

**December 25. ASIATIC FLEET MOVES HEADQUARTERS BACK.** ADM Hart departs the Philippines by submarine for Surabaya, Java.

December 31. **Admiral King is COMINCH.** Admiral Ernest J. King formally assumes the duties of Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet (he had been working as such de facto in Washington since December 20).

King will shift more carriers to the Pacific: *Hornet* in March 1942 and by *Wasp* in June, leaving only *Ranger* in the Atlantic, giving the Pacific Fleet six carriers against Japan's six.

December 31. **Admiral Nimitz is CinCPac.** ADM Chester W. Nimitz assumes command of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, relieving VADM Pye, who had been acting in command following the relief of ADM Kimmel on December 17.

Nimitz will divide the remnants of the battle fleet into carrier task forces, sending the battleships back to the West Coast for repair and refit.

December. **Battleships deploy back to the West Coast.** Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, those Pacific Fleet old battleships not irreparably damaged re-deploy back to the West Coast. Of little utility in the first year of the war, they will escort convoys to the South Pacific in late 1942 and early 1943, and then provide fire support to the landings in Attu, Kiska, and Tarawa in 1943.

## 1942

January 1. **SUBMARINES, PACIFIC FLEET ESTABLISHED.** At Pearl Harbor, Submarines, Scouting Force, Pacific Fleet becomes Submarines, Pacific Fleet. As such, it now reports directly to the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, instead of through an intervening echelon. It will become Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet on 20 September, 1942.

January? **PACIFIC FLEET TYPE COMMANDERS MOVE ASHORE.** Admiral Nimitz sets up the Commander Battleship Force, Commander Scouting Force, and each type commander with ships in the Pearl Harbor area in administrative offices ashore.

January 7. **COMSUBSASIATIC FALLS BACK.** RADM Wilkes goes by submarine from Manila to Surabaya, Java, where he sets up headquarters ashore for Asiatic Fleet Task Force 3 submarines. CAPT Fife sets up a support base at Darwin. These bases will become the origins of the Southwest Pacific Force and Seventh Fleet submarine squadrons at Fremantle and Brisbane.

January 16. **ALLIED ABDA COMMAND CREATED.** Consolidating a confusing group of national and service commands which had fallen back on Java, including the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, the Combined Chiefs of Staff activate a unified American-British-Dutch-Australian Supreme Command under supreme allied commander British Field Marshal Sir Archibald P. Wavell (Abdacom) for the defense of an area encompassing the Philippines, Netherlands East Indies, Malaya, Burma, and adjacent waters.

Admiral Thomas C. Hart, commander of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, is made allied naval commander (Abdafloat). (An ANZAC Area and Force will be set up to the east for Papua-New Guinea, the Solomons and other adjacent areas and waters). His force initially comprises three U.S. Navy cruisers and 13 destroyers; three Dutch light cruisers and six destroyers; a British heavy cruiser; two Australian light cruisers; seven British and Australian destroyers; and 28 American, 3 British and 9 Dutch submarines. Hart will remain in command for a month. The ABDA naval command will be dissolved two weeks after that.

January 23. **COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF MEET.** First formal meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff established by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill at Washington conferences December 1941–January 1942. ADM Stark and ADM King participate.

January 24. **ABDA Naval Force battle in the Makassar Strait.** An ABDA cruiser-destroyer force attempting to break up Japanese landings without air cover is attacked, damaged, and turned back by Japanese aircraft.

February 1. **Pacific Fleet carrier task force raids.** Two carrier task forces (VADM W.F. Halsey and RADM F.J. Fletcher) and a cruiser

bombardment group (RADM R. A. Spruance) attack targets in the Marshalls and Gilberts.

February 4. **U.S. NAVAL FORCES, SOUTHWEST PACIFIC CREATED.** Commanded by VADM W. A. Glassford, U.S. Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific succeeds the Asiatic Fleet, which ceases to exist organizationally although never formally abolished. Headquarters are established on Java, at Surabaya, with a service base for the former Asiatic Fleet tenders and tankers at Port Darwin, Australia, far to the southeast. Operations will be as part of the allied ABDA naval force. It will be absorbed in the Southwest Pacific force in April.

February 4. **ANZAC AREA/FORCE CREATED.** Under the immediate strategic direction of COMINCH Admiral King (not CINCPAC, as King regarded Nimitz as unproven as a fleet commander), a nominally Australian-New Zealand naval command southeast of the ABDA Command is created under VADM H. F. Leary, U.S. Navy. The command's ANZAC Squadron Afloat is built around the Australian Squadron and consisting of three Australian cruisers and one U.S. Navy cruiser, plus Australian and American destroyers. These operating forces are commanded by RADM Sir John Crace, a Royal Navy officer who is Rear Admiral Commanding Australian Squadron. Its area of responsibility includes the Coral and Solomon Seas and the waters off Eastern Australia, as well as Papua New Guinea, the Solomons, Loyalties, Fiji, and New Zealand.

Initially responsible for protecting the eastern approaches to Australia and New Zealand, it will provide the command structure for the first U.S. Navy carrier task group operations in the South Pacific. It will be dissolved in April 1942, and its forces absorbed into General MacArthur's naval component, the Southwest Pacific Force, whose commander VADM Leary will become.

February 6. **SEA FRONTIER FORCES ESTABLISHED.** Eight Sea Frontiers are set up, succeeding the Naval Coastal Frontiers: The Caribbean, Eastern, Gulf, Hawaiian, Northwest, Panama, Philippine, and Western. They are responsible to COMINCH for their Sea Frontier ships and aircraft, and to the CNO for their local defense forces.

In the Atlantic and Gulf, they will provide escorts for Atlantic coast-wise and Caribbean shipping, and prosecute U-Boats in those areas. Possessing small ships (e.g., patrol craft (PCs)), they will have a negligible role in sinking U-boats, but will perform an important training function. Later, Sea Frontiers will be set up off Morocco, in November 1942, and off Alaska, in 1944. The Northwest Sea Frontier will be dis-established in April 1944 and the Moroccan Sea Frontier in August 1945.

The sea frontiers will direct ASW operations in their areas until May 1943, when they will be placed under the operational control of the Commander, Tenth Fleet, in Washington, along with the anti-submarine activities of the Atlantic Fleet.

February 9. **FIRST FORMAL MEETING OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF.** The Joint Chiefs of Staff will be responsible for strategic plans to guide the conduct of the war and for coordinating the operations of the armed services. They will report directly to the President.

February 10. **TASK FORCE 23 DESIGNATED.** Atlantic Fleet Task Force 3 operating out of Brazil is re-designated Task Force 23, Atlantic Fleet. RADM Ingram is promoted to Vice Admiral. Task Force 23 will become the South Atlantic Force in September 1942, and the Fourth Fleet in March 1943.

February 11. **ANZAC AREA/ FORCE HEADQUARTERS ESTABLISHED AT MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.**

February 12. **German submarine offensive in the Western Atlantic.** (Operation "Paukenschlag"). Six German long-range submarines reach U.S. East Coast stations and begin to sink large numbers of allied merchantships off New York, Cape Hatteras and Florida. In February, the allies will lose 85 ships, more than 90% off North America.

February 14. **ABDA Naval Force multinational command change.** After many U.S. Navy-Netherlands Navy disagreements, Admiral Hart is replaced as Commander-in-Chief, Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific by Vice Admiral C. E. L. Helfrich, Royal Netherlands Navy. Helfrich will remain in command for two weeks.

February 19. **ASIATIC FLEET HEADQUARTERS FALLS BACK ON JAVA.** In the face of Japanese attacks on Surabaya, Java, the headquarters of the Asiatic Fleet is moved from Surabaya, on the northeast coast of Java, to Tjilatjap on the south central coast of Java. It will move again from Tjilatjap on March 1 to Exmouth Gulf, in northwest Australia, and then to Brisbane.

February 20 -March 7. **COMSUBSASIATIC FALLS BACK TO AUSTRALIA.** RADM Wilkes and his force fall back from Surabaya, Java to Western Australia. The submarine force at Fremantle (near Perth), set up on March 3, will become the Seventh Fleet's submarine force, operating in the Southwest Pacific Area. By May 1944, 30 fleet submarines will be deploying from Fremantle. The headquarters for the Seventh Fleet submarine force will move forward again to Subic Bay, in the Philippines, in March 1945.

The SoWestPac submarines at Brisbane, set up on April 15, will operate in the South Pacific Area, supporting South Pacific Force – later Third Fleet – operations the Solomons and the Bismarcks.

February 20. **AMPHIBIOUS FORCES RE-ORGANIZED.** The Amphibious Forces in the Pacific and Atlantic Fleets are re-organized to consist of three groups each: (a) Transports and Amphibious Forces, (b) an Amphibious Corps, and (c) Supporting Units. The Amphibious Forces remain as part of the Fleets, their Commanders reporting to the Fleet Commanders. The Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet will be deleted from the Atlantic Fleet organization on October 18, 1943.

The old Battle Force and Scouting Force are abolished. In the Pacific, they are replaced by the carrier task forces, the Amphibious Force and a Covering Force, comprising the old battleships and lighter surface combatants.

February 20. **ANZAC naval force action off Rabaul.** The ANZAC Force, under the direct operational control of COMINCH and temporarily augmented by the *Lexington* carrier task force, engages Japanese land-based tactical aircraft 300 miles east of Rabaul.

February 24. **Pacific Fleet carrier task force raid on Wake island.** RADM Halsey commands from *Enterprise*.

February 27-28. **ABDA naval force battle in the Java Sea.** ABDA naval forces (including U.S. Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific) attempting to intercept Japanese convoys are defeated and sunk by the Japanese. The battle is followed by the Battle of the Sunda Strait on March 1 and the loss of more ABDA naval forces, including the cruiser *Houston*.

March 1. **ABDA COMMAND DISSOLVED.** Vice Admiral Helfrich RNLN dissolves the ABDA naval command. The U.S. Navy has lost 13 warships helping to unsuccessfully defend the Netherlands Indies.

March. **ARMY AIR FORCE BEGINS TO ALLOCATE LAND-BASED AIRCRAFT TO WESTERN ATLANTIC ANTI-SUBMARINE OPERATIONS.** These remain Army Air Force aircraft, for the time being, but will be placed under the operational control of Navy Sea Frontier commanders. They will be consolidated into an Anti-Submarine Army Air Command in October 1942.

March 1. **U.S. NAVAL FORCES, SOUTHWEST PACIFIC HEAD-QUARTERS FALLS BACK YET AGAIN.** Admiral Glassford and the remnant of U.S. Naval Forces Southwest Pacific abandon Tjilatjap, on the south coast of Java, and move temporarily to Exmouth Gulf, in northwest Australia, and thence to Brisbane by July.

March 1 & 15. **First U.S. Navy U-boat kills.** Atlantic Fleet PBO Hudson land-based patrol bombers flying out of Argentia, Newfoundland, attack and sink the first two U-boats destroyed by the Navy in World War II.

March 8. **Japanese land in New Guinea.**

March 10. **ANZAC naval forces raid Japanese ships off New Guinea.** The ANZAC Force, under the direct operational control of COMINCH and augmented by two U.S. Navy carrier task forces, attacks Japanese shipping in the Solomon Sea at Lae and Salamaua, from the Gulf of Papua in the Coral Sea across New Guinea.

March 12. **COMINCH COMBINED WITH CNO.** An executive order combines the duties of Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations under Admiral Ernest J. King, "who shall be principal Naval Advisor to the President on the conduct of the war." The order specifies that "duties as Chief of Naval Operations shall be contributory to the discharge of the paramount duties of Commander in Chief, United States Fleet." King is now the most powerful naval officer in the history of the United States. He will officially relieve Admiral Stark as CNO on March 26, and will spend 90% of his time as COMINCH – the supreme American fleet commander – and only 10% of his time as CNO.

March 13. **Japanese invade Solomon Islands.**

March 13. **NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOY ESCORT UNIT RE-DESIGNATED.** The Atlantic Fleet's Task Force 4 becomes Task Force 24.

March 14. **Support Force escorts last Marines from Iceland.** Replaced by Army troops, the Marines will redeploy to the Pacific.

March 17. **U.S. NAVAL FORCES, EUROPE ESTABLISHED.** VADM Robert Ghormley, who has been negotiating and liaising with the British in London since 1940, is named Commander. He will be relieved a month later by ADM Harold Stark, the former CNO. VADM Ghormley will move to the South Pacific.

March 20. **Second Atlantic Fleet carrier deploys to Pacific.** *Hornet* arrives in the Pacific. Commissioned in October 1941, she had been shaking down in the Atlantic.

March 25–August. **Atlantic Fleet Task Force Northern Europe deployment.** Task Force 39, consisting of the carrier *Wasp*, the new fast battleship *Washington*, two heavy cruisers and a destroyer squadron, deploys to reinforce the Royal Navy in European waters, initially freeing up Royal Navy ships for an operation on Madagascar.

This is *Washington's* first operational deployment and the first operational deployment of a new U.S. battleship since *West Virginia* joined the fleet in 1924.

Redesignated as Task Force 99, in April and May this force (less *Wasp*, which will deploy twice to Malta) will join the British Home Fleet in escorting convoys to Russia. In July *Washington* and the cruisers will participate as Task Force 99 in covering the ill-fated Convoy PQ17 to Russia, after which they will return to the United States, in July and August.

This is the first time substantial U.S. Navy forces are placed under Royal Navy operational control; it's lack of success leaves a bitter taste in COMINCH's mouth for such operations. There will be, however, a similar but somewhat more successful deployment the following year by two fast battleships and the carrier *Ranger*.

March 30. **PACIFIC THEATER AREAS CREATED.** To clarify command relations, the Joint Chiefs of Staff divide the Pacific theater into two joint U.S. area commands: the Pacific Ocean Areas (POA) and the Southwest Pacific Area. These supersede the allied ABDA and ANZAC areas, with the ANZAC area divided between the two. The Philippines, New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and adjacent waters all fall within the Southwest Pacific Area, which extends as far north as Luzon Strait between the Philippines and Formosa. The Joint Chiefs retain strategic direction of the Pacific Theater as a whole.

April 3. **PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS ESTABLISHED.** ADM Chester Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet (CinCPac), becomes additionally the joint Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas (Cincpoa). Nimitz thereby assumes command of all allied armed forces in the Pacific Ocean Area of all services, except the land defenses of New Zealand. ADM Nimitz reports to the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, through the Chief of Naval Operations as Executive Agent.

This unified joint command will be further sub-divided into joint North, Central, and South Pacific Areas. The joint North Pacific Area will be set up under VADM Theobald in May. The joint South Pacific Area will be set up under VADM Ghormley in June. Nimitz will retain personal control over the joint Central Pacific Area himself until May 1943, when VADM Raymond P. Spruance will be given the command. The joint Central Pacific Force designation will be dropped in 1944, in favor of "Fifth Fleet".

ADM Nimitz, unlike GEN MacArthur, will set up a joint staff (CinCPoa) in Hawaii with Army, Navy and Marine Corps officers in every section. This will be activated in September 1943.

ADM Nimitz, however, also unlike Generals MacArthur and Eisenhower, who do not exercise direct command of army troops in their theaters, exercises direct control of the Pacific Fleet, his own naval component. Also, as Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, Nimitz reports directly to King, not the JCS.

**April 10. STANDARDIZATION OF THE FLEET TYPE COMMAND ORGANIZATIONS.** The Pacific Fleet's administrative organization is brought in line with that of the Atlantic Fleet, eliminating separate type commands for Pacific Fleet and Battle Force surface combatants. The following type commanders are now established in each fleet: Battleships, Carriers, Cruisers, Destroyers, Service Force, Amphibious Force, Submarine Force, Patrol Wings. Carriers and Patrol Wing type commands will combine in an Air Force in the Pacific on 1 September, 1942, and in the Atlantic on 1 January, 1943. Motor Torpedo Boat Squadrons, Pacific Fleet will be established on 1 February, 1944, and Minecraft Pacific Fleet will be established on 15 October, 1944.

**April 14. Atlantic Fleet destroyer anti-submarine kill.** The destroyer *Roper* sinks a submarine in the North Atlantic, the first such sinking of the war by an American fighting ship.

**April 14-May 15. Atlantic Fleet carrier in allied ferry operations to Malta.** The Atlantic Fleet carrier *Wasp*, deployed under the Royal Navy's CinC Home Fleet since March, twice ferries and flies off Spit-fire aircraft to the beleaguered British Mediterranean fortress island of Malta. *Wasp* transfers to the Pacific in June, the third and last Atlantic Fleet fighting carrier to do so.

**April 18. SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA ESTABLISHED.** General Douglas MacArthur, now in Australia, is named Commander in Chief of this unified joint command, which he sets up in Brisbane. He will retain this position until the end of the war. He reports to the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff through the Chief of Staff of the Army, as executive agent. General MacArthur will inherit U.S. Naval Forces, South-

west Pacific as his naval component, absorbing the ANZAC force as well.

Unlike ADM Nimitz's joint CINCPAC-CINCPOA staff in Hawaii, and despite the heavily joint and allied nature of the command, General MacArthur's CinCSoWest staff is a modified U.S. Army staff: Of its 11 senior positions, all will be filled by U.S. Army officers, and of those, eight will have come out of the Philippines with General MacArthur.

**April 18. Pacific Fleet carrier task force raid on Tokyo.** Under the operational control of COMINCH, RADM Halsey and a 2-carrier task force (Task Force 16) approach Japan and launch 16 Army Air Force B-25 bombers on a joint raid against Tokyo.

**April 20. SOUTHWEST PACIFIC FORCE ESTABLISHED.** The Southwest Pacific Force, the new name for the naval operational component of General MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area unified joint command, absorbs the remnants of U.S. Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific (which in turn had succeeded the Asiatic Fleet in February 1942), almost completely destroyed by the Battles of the Java Sea and the Sunda Strait), and the ANZAC Force.

Southwest Pacific Force submarine task forces are based at Brisbane and Fremantle, and fight in essence separate wars against shipping, since the New Guinea campaign will offer no opportunities for submarine action.

Vice Admiral H. F. Leary, who had commanded the ANZAC Force and Area – now dissolved– is in command, with headquarters established in Brisbane, Australia in July, to be succeeded by VADM A. S. Carpender on September 11. Under Carpender, the Southwest Pacific Force will be re-designated the U.S. Seventh Fleet in February 1943, when the numbered fleet system is introduced.

The ANZAC Squadron Afloat, commanded by RADM Crace RN, Rear Admiral Commanding Australian Squadron, forms the initial nucleus for the force.

April 20. **Atlantic Fleet Support Force terminates, leaves Argentina.** It has been in Argentina, afloat on the tender *Prairie*, since September 1941.

May 4-8. **Pacific Fleet Task Force battle in the Coral Sea.** Under CinC- Pac, Rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher in tactical command of Task Force 17 (command ship *Yorktown*) suffers a tactical loss but achieve a strategic victory by stopping the Japanese advance in the Southwest Pacific. Two U.S. carriers participate; one is lost. Also 8 cruisers and 18 destroyers take part, but no battleships.

Task Force 44, comprised of U.S. Navy and Australian cruisers under RADM Crace RN loaned to CincPac from the Southwest Pacific Force, also participates, under the operational control of RADM Fletcher. The battle takes place within General MacArthur's South-west Pacific Area, but the command chain for the U.S. naval forces engaged runs through ADM Nimitz at Pearl Harbor.

The Battle of the Coral Sea is the first major engagement in naval history in which surface ships do not exchange a single shot. Submarine forces present are Southwest Pacific Forces submarines (not under Fletcher's tactical command) based at Brisbane, patrolling adjacent coastal waters

May 6. **Surrender of the Philippines.** Corregidor falls. The Philippine Sea Frontier becomes "inactive" until 13 November, 1944.

May (mid). **East Coast coastal convoy system instituted.** It is managed by the Sea Frontier Commanders, reporting to COMINCH. Sinkings by submarines in the traffic lanes of the Eastern Sea Frontier begin to fall. By September, ADM Doenitz will withdraw his boats from the East Coast and the Caribbean back to the North Atlantic.

May 14. **Submarine Force, Pacific fleet Midway support operations.** 25 Pacific Fleet submarines are assigned stations in the Midway area. This is the first time in the war that the submarines interrupt their free-lancing patrols to support a fleet operation as a combat arm of a battle fleet.

**May 17. NORTH PACIFIC AREA/FORCE ESTABLISHED.** Rear Admiral R.A. Theobald deploys with Task Force 8 to the Alaskan coast and becomes a subordinate unified joint area commander under ADM Nimitz as CINCPOA. His forces, including all American and Canadian Army units in the North Pacific, including Sea Frontier forces, constitute the North Pacific Force (Task Force 8). His headquarters will be ashore on Kodiak Island from August, although he will deploy for operations. He will be succeeded by RADM Kinkaid in January 1943, and VADM Frank Jack Fletcher in October 1943.

**June 3-6. Pacific Fleet Task Forces and Joint Air battle at Midway.** Admiral Nimitz sends Pacific Fleet Task Force 16, under Rear Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, and Pacific Fleet Task Force 17, under Rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher to meet and defeat a major Japanese carrier and amphibious force. Fletcher is both a Task Force commander and in tactical command of both forces, responsible for coordinating combined task force operations.

U.S. forces include three carriers; one is lost. Also cruisers, destroyers and submarines, but no battleships. Three patrol groups of participating submarines are under the operational control of Commander Submarine Force Pacific at Pearl Harbor, RADM English.

The Battle of Midway is the first major joint combat air operation conducted by the forces of the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Army Air Force. Shore-based Air, Midway, including Army, Navy, and Marine aircraft, is a separate command participating in the battle, reporting to ADM Nimitz. Coordination between the sea-based and land-based forces is minimal, due to the short preparation time available and disparities among the forces.

The turning point of the Pacific War, Midway ends the period of Japanese offensive action and removes the threat to Hawaii and the west coast.

**June. SubPac Submarine refits begin at Midway.** Immediately after the battle of Midway, the first submarine begins her refit there. Midway begins to support submarine operations, especially with fuel, 1,100 miles farther west than Pearl Harbor.

June 7. **COMMAND ROLE OF THE VCNO.** Command of the United States Naval forces is reallocated to remove noncombatant forces from the immediate concern of COMINCH to leave him freer to concentrate on the shooting war. He retains direct command of the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets, the Sea Frontier Forces, and the Special Task Forces. The Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO) is given command of the Naval Local Defense Forces, the Naval Transportation Service, Special Duty Ships, and Naval District Craft.

June 10. **FURTHER REDEPLOYMENT TO THE PACIFIC.** Carrier *Wasp*, new fast battleship *North Carolina*, two cruisers and seven destroyers pass through the Panama Canal. This is the first substantial reinforcement in 1942 to the Pacific Fleet, which now has four carriers again. Of the U.S. Navy carriers, only *Ranger* is now left in the Atlantic Fleet.

*North Carolina* is the first of 10 new fast battleships to deploy to the Pacific.

June 12. **Japanese land in the Aleutians.**

June 15. **PACIFIC FLEET RE-ORGANIZED.** Task Force 1 comprises the old battleships, which are on the west coast. TF 8 is a cruiser-destroyer force in the Aleutians. Task Forces 11, 16, 17, and 18 are the carrier task forces.

June 18. **CINCPAC-CINCPOA STAFF SIZE.** RADM Spruance reports aboard CINCPAC headquarters as Chief of Staff. the staff consists of 45-75 officers (depending on who you read). By mid-1944, it will have grown to about 250 officers, to plan and supply the Central Pacific drive.

June 19. **SOUTH PACIFIC AREA/FORCE ESTABLISHED.** Succeeding a portion of the ANZAC Area and Force, dissolved on April 22, these new joint area and naval operational commands are established under ADM Nimitz, Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas and Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

VADM Robert Ghormley takes command on 19 June, in Auckland Harbor, New Zealand. His first command ship is *Rigel* (AD 13), which

also operates as a repair ship, store ship, and receiving ship for the force. He will shift his flag to Argonne (AG 4) at Noumea, New Caledonia, in August.

The area of the command will be extended to the west so as to include Guadalcanal and the Eastern Solomons in August. VADM Ghormley will be relieved by ADM William Halsey on 18 October. The South Pacific Force will be re-designated the U.S. Third Fleet in March 1943, when the numbered fleet system is introduced.

June 27-July. **Norwegian Sea battle for PQ 17.** Task Force 99, comprising the new fast battleship *Washington*, two cruisers, and three destroyers, deploys from Iceland under the Royal Navy's CinC Home Fleet, as part of the initial close and distant covering forces for the ill-fated Convoy PQ 17 to Murmansk. After CinC Home Fleet withdraws the U.S. warships early from the covering force and the convoy is destroyed by the Germans off Bear Island, *Washington*, is withdrawn in July, and the cruisers in August.

July. **HEADQUARTERS, SOUTHWEST PACIFIC FORCE, RE-CONSTITUTED AT BRISBANE.** VADM Leary is now co-located with General MacArthur, his joint unified commander, and his minuscule force and headquarters begins slowly to grow. It will eventually evolve into the Seventh Fleet, and move forward with General MacArthur in 1944 to Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, and then to the Philippines.

July 2. **Pacific Theater Area boundaries adjusted.** The line dividing General MacArthur's joint Southwest Pacific Area from ADM Nimitz's joint Pacific Ocean Areas is moved west so as to place Guadalcanal, Tulagi and the Eastern Solomons in ADM Nimitz's area, and therefore in VADM Ghormley's joint South Pacific Area.

July 7. **Navy receives a share of land-based bomber production.** Despite the pressing need by the Army Air Force for heavy bombers, the Navy is allocated a share of production of land-based bombers, which the Navy terms patrol bomber and patrol aircraft, for long-range over-water patrols against German submarines. These include B-24 Liberators (Navy PB4Ys), B-25 Mitchells (Navy PBJs), and B-34 Venturas (Navy PVs). The first aircraft will reach Navy units in August; the first U. S. Navy success with them against a U-boat will occur in

November. These aircraft will serve in the Pacific as well as the Atlantic, taking over the duties of slower and more lightly armed seaplanes and flying boats, which will disappear from the Navy inventory in 1968.

July 20. **Chief of Staff to the President appointed.** Admiral William D. Leahy, former Chief of Naval Operations, is appointed chief of staff to President Roosevelt. He also acts as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

August 1. **SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE COMMANDER MOVES FORWARD.** VADM Ghormley moves from Wellington, New Zealand to Noumea, New Caledonia and breaks his flag on *Argonne* (AG 4), a miscellaneous auxiliary ship and former submarine tender. *Argonne* is configured to act as a command ship, having served as command ship for the Base Force since 1931. She will remain as force command ship until Admiral Halsey moves ashore in October.

August 3. **NORTH PACIFIC FORCE COMMANDER MOVES ASHORE.** Rear Admiral Theobald moves ashore from his flagship to Kodiak Island. His successor, RADM Kinkaid, will move the headquarters forward to Adak in March 1943.

August 7. **South Pacific Force landing on Guadalcanal.** (Operation "Watchtower.") In the first amphibious assault undertaken by the United States since 1898, the South Pacific Naval Force lands the 1st Marine Division ashore in the Solomons. Supporting naval forces include three carriers, a new fast battleship, cruisers and destroyers. They also include Task Force 44, the Southwest Pacific Force American and Australian cruiser-destroyer force on loan from General MacArthur and VADM Leary and under the command of RADM V. A. C. Crutchley RN, who had succeeded RADM Grace in June as RADM Commanding Australian Squadron.

Commander, South Pacific Force, Pacific Fleet, (and Commander, joint South Pacific Area) VADM Ghormley (flagship *Argonne*, back at Noumea, New Caledonia) is in overall command. VADM Frank Jack Fletcher (flagship *Saratoga*), the officer in tactical command, responsible for coordinating the combined task force operations, is also the

commander of the carrier task force, and limits his command in practice to the three carrier groups providing air support for the landings.

RADM Richmond K. Turner, Commander of the South Pacific Amphibious Force (flagship *McCawley*) has command of the transports and naval gunfire support cruisers and destroyers, including the Australian-American Task force 44. He is in the command echelon below Fletcher, but actually has complete autonomy from the moment of sailing. Marine General Vandegrift's landing force will remain subordinate to Turner long after it has been engaged in battle ashore. Shore-based and tender-based aircraft (including Army Air Corps bombers) are under the command of RADM John S. McCain, Commander, Air, South Pacific (COMAIRSOPAC), at the same echelon as Turner. Submarine Force Pacific submarines, not under Ghormley, patrol off Truk; Southwest Pacific Force submarines patrol off the Solomons.

This begins the offensive against the Japanese in the Pacific. A long series of fierce naval battles in the British Solomon Islands now ensues. In six major engagements with the Japanese Navy, the Navy will lose 24 ships. The Japanese will not be on the defensive on Guadalcanal until November, and will not evacuate Guadalcanal until February 1943.

**August 8. South Pacific Force carrier task force withdraws from Guadalcanal area.** The amphibious landing and support forces and the Marines ashore are left without air support until August 20, when the first Marine aircraft fly into Henderson Field. Additional Army and Marine aircraft will then continue to reinforce Guadalcanal.

**August 9. South Pacific Amphibious Force battle at Savo Island.** In one night, the Japanese Navy sinks three US and one Australian South Pacific Amphibious Force Task Force 44 cruisers, under the immediate tactical control of RADM Crutchley RN, who in turn is under the operational control of RADM Turner, Commander Amphibious Force.

This is the first large surface action since Santiago to be fought by a predominantly United States force, although it is highly multinational in character.

August 9. **South Pacific Force Amphibious Force withdraws from Guadalcanal area.** The Marines remain ashore unsupported from the sea for two weeks, although Army, Navy, and Marine Corps reinforcing land-based aircraft are flown in to Henderson Field, and Seabees, heavy guns and other reinforcements are landed by fast destroyer-transport within a week.

The three SOPAC carriers will be held south of the combat zone, out of the range of Japanese search planes, awaiting any major Japanese moves on the forces on Guadalcanal.

The first two squadrons of Marine aircraft will not be flown in from a Navy escort carrier to operate from newly completed Henderson Field on Guadalcanal until August 20, followed by additional Army and Marine aircraft.

14 August. **ALLIED EUROPEAN THEATER COMMANDERS APPOINTED.** General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commanding General, U.S. European Theater of Operations, is appointed Commander in Chief Allied Expeditionary Force. ADM Sir Andrew Cunningham, Royal Navy, is appointed allied naval commander.

August 20–October. **Royal Canadian Navy operates as part of North Pacific Force.** A small RCN surface task force operates under U.S. Navy operational control between Kodiak Island and Dutch Harbor, Alaska. Similar operations will also take place in the spring of 1943. RCN ships will not, however, participate in the landings on Attu and Kiska later in 1943.

August 22. **USN-BRAZILIAN NAVY OPERATIONS BEGIN.** Brazil declares war on the Axis. Integrated operations begin between the Brazilian Navy and the Atlantic Fleet's Task Force 23. On September 12 the Brazilian Navy will be placed under the operational control of Task Force 23; on September 30 all Brazilian forces will be so assigned.

August 23–25. **South Pacific Force carrier task force battle in the Eastern Solomons.** Two carriers, a new battleship, cruisers and destroyers, under VADM F. J. Fletcher and supported by Marine and Army air-

craft from Guadalcanal, move forward and turn back a major Japanese naval attempt to reinforce and recapture Guadalcanal.

There will not be another major action at sea in the South Pacific for six weeks.

**August 24. ARMY ATLANTIC FLEET AMPHIBIOUS COMMAND.** The U.S. Army assumes command of the Amphibious Corps, Atlantic Fleet, from the Marine Corps. For the remainder of the war, the Marines will focus solely on amphibious operations in the Pacific.

**September. German submarines shift from North America and the Caribbean to mid-ocean North Atlantic convoy lanes.** Convoying, air cover and other Allied anti-submarine operations along the East Coast and in the Caribbean finally push German submarine activity back to the North Atlantic, an area lacking in air cover and closer to the submarine bases. From now until March 1943 the U-boats will steadily increase their tactical ascendancy in the Atlantic.

**September. ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS FOR NORTH AFRICA ESTABLISHED.** The United States and British planning staffs under General Eisenhower in London are designated the Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ). Before the invasion of North Africa, the AFHQ command post will be moved to Gibraltar; on November 9, the day after the initial assault, the advance Echelon of Headquarters will be set up in Algiers; and on November 25, the whole AFHQ will be transferred to Algiers.

**September 3. JOINT LAND-BASED AIR COMMAND ESTABLISHED ON GUADALCANAL.** Brig. Gen. Roy Geiger USMC becomes the first Commander, Air Forces, Solomons (COMAIRSOLS, also known as "COMAIRCACTUS"), on Guadalcanal. He reports operationally to the Maj Gen Vandegrift, the Marine ground commander on Guadalcanal, but relies on the Navy Commander, Land Based Air, South Pacific Force, RADM McCain, for his forces and support. The command will acquire a joint and combined staff of Navy, Army, Marine and Air Force officers, and rotate the Commander position among all three U.S. services every month or two until mid-1944.

September 11. **Southwest Naval Forces Change of Command.** VADM Arthur S. Carpender relieves VADM Leary as allied and U.S. naval forces commander. Allied Naval Forces Southwest Pacific ("MacArthur's Navy") at the time consists of 5 cruisers, 8 destroyers, 20 submarines, and 7 small craft, mostly U.S. Navy and Royal Australian Navy forces under RADM Crutchley RN. It is headquartered in Brisbane; near General MacArthur's headquarters.

September 15. **TASK FORCE 23 ALSO DESIGNATED SOUTH ATLANTIC FORCE.** Vice Admiral Jonas Ingram remains in command, under the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. It will become the Fourth Fleet when the numbered fleet system is introduced in March 1943.

This fleet will normally include five old light cruisers, eight destroyers, and several small craft, but it will also possess by the end of 1943 12 squadrons of land-based and sea-based maritime patrol aircraft operating from six different bases on the Brazilian coast and on Ascension Island.

September 20. **SUBMARINE FORCE, PACIFIC FLEET RE-DESIGNATED.** Submarines, Pacific Fleet is redesignated Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet.

October. **Atlantic Fleet submarine squadron deploys forward.** A Submarine Squadron 50 tender deploys to Rosneath, Scotland, in October. Five of the six boats will support the landings in Morocco in October and November, then deploy to Scotland under the operational control of the Royal Navy's Flag Officer (Submarines) for patrols in the Bay of Biscay. They will re-deploy to the Pacific in June 1943, considered by ADM King to have been underutilized by the Royal Navy.

October. **1ST ANTI-SUBMARINE ARMY AIR COMMAND ESTABLISHED.** Given Army responsibility for long-range over-water maritime patrol aviation since the 1931 Pratt-MacArthur Agreement, a special group under the operational control of the Atlantic and Gulf Sea Frontier Commanders is set up, formalizing Army land-based aircraft participation in anti-submarine warfare (under way since early in 1942) and enabling the War Department to exercise more central-

ized control over the allocation of aircraft to the Sea Frontier Commanders). It will have two subordinate wings, in New York and Miami for each Sea Frontier, and detachments in England, Morocco, Bermuda, Trinidad, Cuba, and Ascension Island.

It will become the Army Anti-Submarine Air Command, and be disestablished in September 1943, turning its responsibilities and aircraft over to the Navy's Sea Frontiers. Its brief existence will be marked by incessant Army-Navy arguments regarding command and control of the aircraft and their optimal tactical employment.

October 18. **Halsey becomes South Pacific Force/Area commander.** Dissatisfied with Admiral R.L. Ghormley's conduct of the Solomons campaign, Admiral Nimitz replaces him as commander of the joint South Pacific Area and the South Pacific Force, Pacific Fleet with Vice Admiral William F. Halsey. Halsey's staff, at Noumea, New Caledonia, includes 15 officers and 50 sailors. His naval forces include two carriers, two new battleships, cruisers and destroyers. He will lose one of the carriers on 26 October, in the Battle of Santa Cruz Island.

Halsey will move from the over-crowded and un-air-conditioned confines of *Argonne* into the city of Noumea, despite protests from local French authorities.

In March 1943, ADM Halsey's South Pacific Force operations in the Solomons will come under the general direction of General MacArthur, as they will have crossed the line separating Halsey's joint South Pacific Area from the MacArthur's joint Southwest Pacific Area.

October 24-November 10. **Western Naval Task Force amphibious assault on Morocco.** (Operation "Torch"). An only partially trained allied and joint force deploying from the United States (October 24) and the United Kingdom under General Dwight D. Eisenhower enters combat in the European theater with a series of forcible entries on November 8 on the coast of French North Africa. This is the first major combined Anglo-American offensive of World War II.

The U.S. Navy's landing of U.S. Army forces in Morocco, having deployed directly from the East Coast to the objective area in

Morocco (the transports and combatants linking up with each other in mid-ocean), will be one of history's longest (and longest *undetected*) sea voyages preceding an amphibious assault. It is also the largest U.S. amphibious operation undertaken to date (the previous record-holder being the landing at Veracruz in 1848) and the first joint U.S. Army-Navy amphibious operation since the fiascoes of the Spanish American War.

Admiral Sir Andrew B. Cunningham, commander of the British Mediterranean Fleet, commands allied naval forces, which are divided into three components: the Western Naval Task Force, under Rear Admiral H. Kent Hewitt U.S.N. (also, Commander, Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet), which engages French ground, naval, and air forces and lands three divisions of American troops under Major General George S. Patton at three locations in French Morocco; and the Center and Eastern Task Forces, under Royal Navy admirals, which land 49,000 American and 23,000 British troops in French Algeria.

Hewitt is given a very free hand by Eisenhower and Cunningham. Hewitt's 102-ship task force includes the new fast battleship *Massachusetts*, the old battleship *Texas*, the carrier *Ranger*, 4 CVEs, heavy cruisers and other Atlantic Fleet warships. His flagship is the heavy cruiser *Augusta*, a former Atlantic Fleet flagship with adequate space and communication facilities, which also embarks General Patton.

In conformity with late-1930s Navy-Marine Corps amphibious doctrine, Admiral Hewitt remains in command of the operation from the time of embarkation until General Patton establishes his headquarters ashore on November 9. At this time Hewitt becomes a supporting commander. Following the assault phase, certain Navy forces are released from the Western Task Force and revert to control of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet; other ships remain off North Africa to support Army operations ashore.

The Army has little amphibious doctrine or tactics, techniques, and procedures of its own, and therefore adapts those developed by the Marine Corps in the 1930s. Nevertheless, attempting in vain to avoid Vichy French armed resistance to the assault, the allies conduct no preassault bombing or naval bombardment. Also, the initial assault

takes place in the dark, just before dawn. Meeting with French resistance, however, the assault forces call in naval gunfire and air support.

Hewitt initially controls virtually all air assets, but provisions had been made to rapidly transition the preponderance of air operations to land-based Army air power. In addition to landing troops, Hewitt also flies 76 Army Air Forces P-40s to airfields ashore from an escort carrier. Air action, in any event, is light. Morocco and Algeria have been chosen for these initial landings in part because they are out of range of German military aviation.

November 13–15. **South Pacific Force in Naval Battle of Guadalcanal.** With one carrier, two new battleships, cruisers and destroyers, the South Pacific Force defeats the Japanese at sea in a series of violent engagements. This is the first night action between battleships in the history of modern naval warfare; the U.S. battleships' use of radar for warning and for fire control is decisive. Control of the sea and air in the southern Solomons passes to the United States, which henceforth seizes the initiative in the Solomons.

November 18. **COMMANDER, SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE BECOMES A FOUR STAR COMMAND.** President Roosevelt promotes VADM Halsey to full admiral, in the wake of the naval battle of Guadalcanal. Thus when the South Pacific Force will be designated the Third Fleet in March 1943, with Halsey in command, the third Fleet will be a four-star command from its inception.

November 19. **SEA FRONTIER FORCES, WESTERN TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED.** This will become the Moroccan Sea Frontier on February 17, 1943, reporting to the Commander, U.S. Eighth Fleet. It will be disestablished in August 1945. Nevertheless, a U.S. Navy presence, centering on a naval air station, will continue in Morocco until 1978.

December. **German *Enigma* code cracked.** British cryptologists at Bletchley Park break the four-wheel *Enigma* code, *Triton*. With earlier cryptological breakthroughs, this will slowly give the allies a clear picture of U-boat operations, helping them to defeat the German submarine offensive.

December 28. **Naval Air station established in Morocco.** A naval air station is commissioned at Port Lyautey (Kenitra) Morocco, initially chiefly for anti-submarine patrols. U.S. naval aircraft will operate out of this facility for the remainder of World War II and well into the Cold War until it is finally turned over to the Moroccans in September 1978. It will assume a pivotal role in the early Cold War as the staging point for the Sixth Fleet nuclear capability in the Mediterranean.

**Amphibious assault command and control doctrine changes.** FTP-167, the doctrinal manual for amphibious operations, is changed. Henceforth, Navy and Marine commanders will be co-equal during planning stages and the land campaign of an amphibious operation. The Marine landing force commander will only be subordinate to the Navy amphibious force commander during the actual movement to the objective area and the initial landings.

## 1943

Early. **New Pacific amphibious ships.** Arrival in the Pacific of several new forms of amphibious assault ships and craft, including Landing Ship Tanks (LST) and Landing Ship Docks (LSD).

January. **Commander, South Atlantic Force moves ashore.** The Force headquarters is transferred from the flagship to Recife, Brazil, where it will remain for the rest of the war.

January 4. **North Pacific Area/Force change of command.** Driven in large part by VADM R.A. Theobald's inability to get along with the Army, VADM T. C. Kinkaid relieves Theobald as Commander, North Pacific Area and Commander, North Pacific Force (Task Force 8), with headquarters initially on Kodiak Island.

January 8. **VII AMPHIBIOUS FORCE ESTABLISHED.** RADM Daniel Barbey arrives in Brisbane to begin training of Southwest Pacific Force amphibious forces. Seventh Fleet is the last fleet to get beaching and landing craft and other instruments of amphibious warfare.

February 3-4. **DIVISION OF THE EUROPEAN THEATER.** The Combined Chiefs of Staff detach the Mediterranean from the European Theater of Operations and set up a new allied theater, the North African Theater of Operations, and a new allied command, with a headquarters (AFHQ) in Algiers. ADM Hewitt remains as U.S. naval commander in the Mediterranean under Eisenhower, reporting to him through the Royal Navy's ADM Cunningham.

General Eisenhower and his subordinates thus lose responsibility for European operations, and focus on the Mediterranean. Eisenhower himself will leave the Mediterranean and return to London in January 1944, however, to plan and lead the Normandy invasion and the drive into Germany.

The Theater includes Northwest Africa, Libya, Italy and the Mediterranean as far east as the Adriatic (the Eastern Mediterranean remains a separate, British, theater). It will be renamed the Mediterranean Theater of Operations in November, 1944, and be expanded to include the entire Mediterranean Sea, Greece, and the Balkans, after most U.S. naval forces have left the theater. The AFHQ headquarters will move to Caserta, Italy, in July 1944

February 3-4. **US NAVAL FORCES NORTHWEST AFRICAN WATERS ESTABLISHED.** A US Navy command is re-established in the Mediterranean. VADM H. Kent Herwitt will take command in Algiers in March, when it will also be designated the U.S. Eighth Fleet. Operationally, the command will be a Task Force subordinate to the Royal Navy's Commander in Chief Mediterranean, as allied naval commander, under General Eisenhower and a succession of British generals as Supreme Commander, for the rest of the war.

February 7-8. **Japanese complete evacuation of Guadalcanal.** ADM Halsey's South Pacific Force now includes two carriers, three escort carriers, three new battleships, four old battleships, cruisers and destroyers - a force considerably stronger than any the U.S. has had in the area.

March 5. **First Atlantic Fleet escort carrier ASW group.** The pioneer United States Navy escort carrier group - *Bogue* and four World War I destroyers - deploys in support of its initial North Atlantic convoy.

CVEs will become the cores of hunter-killer groups, not tethered to specific convoys but reacting to HF/DF fixes and other intelligence to search out and kill submarines.

**March 14. FLEET OPERATIONAL TRAINING COMMAND, ATLANTIC FLEET, ESTABLISHED.** RADM D. B. Beary is the commander. This Atlantic Fleet command will take over all new U.S. warships as soon as they are ready for sea, and conduct such operational training as is necessary for them to report for duty to the Fleet they are assigned to, usually the Pacific Fleet.

**March 15. NUMBERED FLEETS SYSTEM INSTITUTED.** COMINCH institutes the system – still followed over 50 years later – of numbering all fleets, assigning the even numbers to the Atlantic and the odd to the Pacific. This results in adding fleet designations to the titles of the various forces in each theater. Naval Forces, Europe becomes the Twelfth Fleet; South Atlantic Force, the Fourth Fleet; and Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters, the Eighth Fleet. The Atlantic Fleet itself is designated the Second Fleet, with anti-submarine, anti-surface raider or naval protection of shipping (NPS) task forces numbered 20 through 29 operating in the Atlantic theater and along the Atlantic Coast.

The Eighth Fleet, always deploying operationally as part of a combined force with elements of the Royal Navy's Mediterranean Fleet, will – except for the landings in the South of France in August 1944 – include neither battleships, carriers, heavy cruisers, nor maritime patrol aircraft, and will have no air arm except the cruisers' own scouting and observation aircraft. (In contrast, its predecessor, the Western Task Force that landed in Morocco, outside the Mediterranean, had included battleships, carriers and heavy cruisers; and the Moroccan Sea Frontier would deploy maritime patrol aviation in the Atlantic throughout the war). The Eighth Fleet's main mission is amphibious landings, including naval gunfire support.

The Twelfth Fleet is an administrative, maintenance, and training command headquartered in London, assigning forces to the Royal Navy and U.S. Navy allied operational naval commanders under General Eisenhower, who will assault Normandy in June 1944.

In the Pacific, the First, Third, and Fifth Fleets come into being. The Third Fleet had been the South Pacific Force; the Fifth Fleet the Central Pacific Force. Like the Atlantic's Second and Twelfth Fleets, the First and Ninth Fleets, as aggregations of ships, will not exist. They will be administrative groupings under CinCPac's direct command, used in extension of the task force principle to facilitate organization and communications. Task Forces numbered 10 through 19 will operate in the Northern, Eastern, and Central Pacific as required.

The Third Fleet will remain a separate entity in the Solomon Islands under the operational control of ADM Halsey as Third Fleet commander but the strategic joint supervision of General MacArthur as Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, until June 1944, when it will become the designation for what is otherwise the Fifth Fleet in the Central Pacific, whenever ADM Halsey, not ADM Spruance, is in command. Third Fleet from the start is a four-star command, like the Tenth and Twelfth Fleets.

The Fifth Fleet comprises the naval forces assigned to the Central Pacific Force, which also includes Army and Army Air Force forces. In 1944 the title Central Pacific Force will be dropped, and the command called simply the Fifth Fleet.

The Seventh Fleet is an operating force composed largely of United States ships, but as Allied Naval Forces Southwest Pacific Area it includes Australian cruisers and destroyers (and a few small Dutch and French vessels) elements assigned to it by allied agreement when it was the Southwest Pacific Force. While assigned to the Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area (General MacArthur) for both administration and operations, until April 1945, in internal administration the Seventh Fleet conforms with the fleets under CinCPac. It reports up the Navy chain directly to COMINCH, however, not through Cincpac, and it is COMINCH who will allocate the Seventh Fleet its ships, personnel and material. All land and tender-based maritime patrol aircraft (Liberators and Catalinas) assigned to the Seventh Fleet are under the operational control of General MacArthur's air component commander, Allied Air Forces, Southwest Pacific.

Certain naval forces will never achieved numbered fleet designation; e.g., the Southeast Pacific Force.

The Ninth Fleet will sometimes be used to designate the North Pacific Force after October 1943.

The standardization of U.S. Navy fleet designations leads to a definite system in task force designation. A *Task Force* is numbered with two digits – the first being that of the fleet from which the force was taken and the second indicating the sequence in that fleet. *Task Groups* within a force are numbered by an additional digit separated from the TF number by a decimal point. To indicate a *Task Unit* within a group, another decimal point and digit are added. (E.g., the third task unit of the fifth task group of the second task force of the Sixth Fleet is numbered TU62.5.3).

While there is neither a First or Second Fleet per se, two-digit Task forces beginning with a “1” or a “2” will be constituted and re-constituted throughout the war. These will include independent carrier and battleship task force raiders in the Pacific. Out of this arrangement will emerge the First and Second Fleets (briefly Task Fleets) of the Cold War era.

The Third Fleet will be dissolved in 1946, but will be re-constituted in 1973 out of the First Fleet and the ASW Force Pacific. The Fifth Fleet will likewise be dissolved in 1946, but the name will be revived and used to designate the post-Cold War numbered fleet established in the Indian Ocean - Red Sea - Persian Gulf area in 1995.

The Seventh Fleet will continue on as the U.S. Navy fleet in the western Pacific, except for the period 1947-1950, when it will be designated U.S. Naval Forces, Western Pacific and, briefly, the Seventh Task Fleet.

The Eighth Fleet, to be abolished in 1945, will re-emerge in 1950 as the Cold War and post-Cold War era Sixth Fleet (having become, successively, in the interim: U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters, U.S. Naval Forces Mediterranean, and the Sixth Task Fleet).

March 17. **EIGHTH FLEET HQ AT ALGIERS.** VADM H. Kent Hewitt sets up his headquarters ashore at Algiers, where the allied naval forces commander for the Mediterranean (his operational superior) Royal Navy ADM B.C. Cunningham and joint and combined theater staff (AFHQ) are also located, to plan for the invasion of Sicily.

March 21. **NORTH PACIFIC FORCE/AREA HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** RADM Kinkaid moves his headquarters from Kodiak Island, where it has been since August 1942, 1,000 miles west to Adak, to be farther forward and close to Army headquarters.

March 29. **NEW COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC.** For a two-pronged campaign to build a "ring around Rabaul" (Operation "Cartwheel"), the JCS give General MacArthur and the Southwest Pacific Forces strategic command of joint operations in the Northern Solomons, Bismarcks, and New Guinea, which fall within MacArthur's joint Southwest Pacific Area.

ADM Halsey and the South Pacific Forces (largely the Third Fleet), however, remain in the Solomons, where Halsey will have direct tactical control, operating under general strategic directives from General MacArthur. Halsey continues to receive his troops, ships, aircraft and supplies from ADM Nimitz, however. ADM Nimitz and the Pacific Command will continue to control ships and aircraft not assigned by the JCS to these operations, and exercise administrative control over Halsey's Third Fleet.

ADM Halsey can therefore continue his naval campaign "up the Slot" in the Solomons from Guadalcanal to Bougainville. This arrangement will endure through June 1944, when ADM Halsey will cease working operationally for Gen MacArthur and begin alternating command of the Fifth/Third Fleet in the Central Pacific with ADM Spruance, under ADM Nimitz as Cincpoa-Cincpac.

April 1. **North Atlantic shipping losses peak.** Merchant ship losses to German submarines reach their peak, as an allied counter-attack begins to kick in.

April 30. **ATLANTIC COMBINED CONVOY ESCORT REGIME REORGANIZED.** As fallout from the Atlantic Convoy Conference con-

vened in Washington in March 1943, new allied convoy "route packages" are assigned. The Atlantic Fleet turns over responsibility for northern trans-Atlantic convoys between Canada and the United Kingdom to British and Canadian naval forces. This gives the Canadian Navy greater responsibility and releases Atlantic Fleet escorts for duty in the Central Atlantic and Caribbean.

**May-August. Atlantic Fleet Northern Europe Task Force deployment.** New fast battleships *South Dakota* and *Alabama* and five destroyers deploy from Argentia to Scapa Flow. This is the only such deployment since the cruises of *Washington* and *Wasp* in mid-1942. They too will operate under the Royal Navy's CinC Home Fleet, reinforcing the Home Fleet in its attempts to attack the German battleship *Tirpitz* in Norway, and freeing up Home Fleet battleships to deploy to the Mediterranean to cover the assault on Sicily. They will leave Scapa in August for the Pacific, to be replaced by a Task Force centered on the carrier *Ranger* and two cruisers.

**May 4-June 2. North Pacific Force amphibious assault on Attu.** (Operation "Landcrab"). Rear Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid's North Pacific Force, including one escort carrier, three old battleships, cruisers, destroyers and transports, lands the Army's 7th Infantry Division to re-take Attu in the Aleutians from the Japanese. Naval units provide air cover and naval gunfire support to the Army troops ashore, engaged in bitter fighting. Kinkaid remains ashore at his headquarters in Adak.

**May 17- July 31. Royal Navy South Pacific carrier reinforcement for Third Fleet.** HMS *Victorious* operates with *Saratoga* in the Solomons campaign, providing cover for General MacArthur's landings on New Georgia (part of Operation "Toenails"). She returns to the Atlantic with the arrival of the new U.S. Navy fast carriers in the Pacific. While in the South Pacific she operated both Royal Navy and U.S. Navy aircraft, as did *Saratoga*.

**May 20. TENTH FLEET CREATED.** COMINCH establishes the Tenth Fleet, with headquarters in the Navy Department, under his direct command, to exercise unity of control over United States anti-submarine operations and convoys in that part of the Atlantic Ocean under United States strategic controls. There is no new fleet, how-

ever. The new organization is strictly an operational headquarters, allocating all Atlantic anti-submarine forces –including maritime patrol aircraft, escort carriers, surface escorts and submarines – based on centralized intelligence and centralized doctrine.

The Commander Tenth Fleet exercises direct control over all Atlantic Sea Frontiers, using the Sea Frontier Commanders as task group commanders. He also controls the allocation of anti-submarine forces to the Atlantic Fleet. Details of actual operations are left to the CinCLant and the Atlantic Sea Frontier commanders.

The Tenth Fleet will be disestablished in June 1945.

**May 24. German submarines withdraw from the North Atlantic.** ADM Doenitz orders the withdrawal of German submarines from the North Atlantic in the face of allied code decryption, the institution of escort groups, continuous air cover and improved radar, sonar, and depth charges. The submarines move to the South Atlantic and the waters off Gibraltar.

Henceforth, each German technical improvement to its submarine operations will be quickly countered by allied improvements in anti-submarine warfare. German submarines will return to the North Atlantic in September, in a counter-attack that will fail by November.

**May 30. First fast carrier arrives in the Pacific.** *Essex* arrives at Pearl Harbor to join the Pacific Fleet, the first of a new class of fast fleet carriers. The following month, two other fast carriers and three light carriers will arrive, followed by two fast battleships in August. The rapid build-up of U.S. naval power in the Pacific begins. The Royal Navy carrier *Victorious* can return to Royal Navy operations.

**June. Eastern Atlantic Submarines redeploy to Pacific.** The 6-boat Submarine Squadron 50 detachment based at Rosneath, Scotland for Bay of Biscay patrols under British operational control since November 1942 is transferred to the Pacific Fleet.

**June. Pacific Fleet submarine offensive intensifies.** Commander, Submarine Force, Pacific publishes his first operations plan, focusing on inflicting maximum damage to enemy ships and supply by offensive

patrol at focal points, and on offensive mining. The thrust of the Pacific submarine campaign has changed direction from defensive use of submarines to now aiming directly at Japan's overextended strategic lines of communications, supported by new equipment and newly developed offensive tactics.

**June 22. First amphibious command ship in a war theater.** USS *Ancon* (AGC-4) arrives at Algiers. *Ancon* will participate in the invasion of Sicily in July, carrying RADM Kirk and LTG Omar Bradley – the first employment of a U.S. amphibious command ship in war. By the end of the year, others will have deployed to the Pacific to participate in the campaigns there, starting with the landings in the Marshalls and New Guinea.

**June 30. First Seventh Fleet amphibious assault in New Guinea.** (Operation "Cartwheel.") General MacArthur's joint Southwest Pacific Area forces, including the Allied Naval Forces/U.S. Seventh Fleet and the Seventh Fleet's new VII Amphibious Force, begin their advance along the northern coast of New Guinea at Nassau Bay, making the first of what will be about 50 amphibious assaults.

This is the southern pincer of Operation "Cartwheel", under General MacArthur's direct command. The northern pincer is Admiral Halsey's advance up the Solomons chain. "Cartwheel" will culminate in the encirclement of Rabaul by the end of 1943.

Seventh Fleet now joins Third Fleet, the North Pacific Force and Eighth Fleet as an operational amphibious fleet.

The Seventh Fleet's combined USN-RAN naval gunfire support force will normally be commanded by RADM Crutchley RN, Rear Admiral Commanding Australian Squadron, as CTF 74, through March 1944, when the U.S. Navy forces available will be so large that RADM Crutchley and his successors will be pushed steadily lower in the command chain.

**July. First new fast light carrier arrives in the Pacific.** USS *Independence* (CV 22, later CVL 22) arrives in the Pacific. She is the first of a new class of light carriers built on cruiser hulls. The light carriers will oper-

ate with the new *Essex*-class fast carriers for the rest of the war, and into the Cold War period.

July 5-6. **Third Fleet in Battle of Kula Gulf.** (Operation "Cartwheel"). This is the opening battle in Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet drive up "The Slot" in the Solomons toward Rabaul. Halsey is under the general strategic direction of General MacArthur, Commander, Southwest Pacific Area. Other battles in the Solomons in 1943 will include Kolombangara, Vella Gulf, Vella Lavella, and Empress Augusta Bay, this last in November. Landings will be made at Rendova, New Georgia, Vella Lavella, and, finally, Bougainville. The Japanese will be cleared from the Solomons by October.

July 10. **Eighth Fleet amphibious Assault on Sicily.** (Operation "Husky"). The naval forces involved are commanded by British Admiral Sir Andrew B. Cunningham, Commander in Chief, Allied Naval Forces, under General Eisenhower as overall allied Commander in Chief. A Western Naval Task Force sailing from Algerian and Tunisian ports, under U.S. Vice Admiral H. Kent Hewitt (also Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters and Commander, U.S. Eighth Fleet), lands the U.S. Seventh Army (three divisions) under Lieutenant General George S. Patton in southern Sicily.

A larger, largely Royal Navy (but also Greek, Dutch, and Polish navies), Eastern Task Force under VADM Sir Bertram Ramsay sailing from Egypt, Palestine and Libya lands five British divisions on their right under Lieutenant General Montgomery. A Royal Navy covering force including 6 battleships and 2 carriers under the direct command of Cunningham is also deployed.

Hewitt's command ship is the attack transport *Monrovia* (AP-64), hurriedly converted at Mers-el-Kebir, Algeria, to accommodate equipment needed by a command ship. The Commanding General, Seventh Army, General Patton, is also embarked. One of his task group commanders, however, is on *Ancon*, the first U.S. Navy amphibious flagship (AGC) to serve in war.

The 580-ship, largely U.S., Western Naval Task Force includes, besides amphibious ships, 5 light cruisers and 38 destroyers for escort and naval gunfire support. Over Navy objections, there is no pre-landing

naval bombardment, as the Army believes it will compromise tactical surprise and not prove effective in any event. Also, beach defenses in Sicily are weak. Naval gunfire will support the ground forces once they are ashore, however, and throughout the Sicilian campaign.

Moreover, although Hewitt wishes to attack in daylight so that gunners and coxswains can see the beaches they are assaulting, the Army still insists on an attack while it is still dark.

The operation is characterized by less-than-optimal cooperation by the allied air forces.

**July 11-12. Eighth Fleet naval gunfire support in Sicily.** Eighth Fleet light cruisers provide accurate naval gunfire support to U.S. Army troops ashore, as previously planned. With the exception of a few shoots at Guadalcanal, this is the first time the Navy will give prompt and effective gunfire support to troops engaged in a purely land battle ashore against tanks and other troops.

**July 12. Atlantic Fleet carrier escort group independent offensive operations begin.** A group centered on USS *Santee* leaves its convoy and independently begins attacking a German submarine "wolf pack" south of the Azores. Henceforth, Atlantic Fleet carrier escort groups will increasingly operate independently and offensively, against submarine groups and especially against their refuelers, cued by cryptological intelligence and using new types of torpedoes and bombs.

**August-November. Atlantic Fleet Northern Europe carrier task force deployment.** The carrier *Ranger* and two heavy cruisers replace a U.S. fast battleship task force serving under the Royal Navy's CinC Home Fleet at Scapa Flow. *Ranger* will participate in an attack on the Germans at Bodo, Norway, in October, the first U.S. Navy carrier operation in the Norwegian Sea. In November they return to the United States. There will be no replacement for them until the three old battleships deploy to support the landings in Normandy and the South of France in 1944.

**August 5. CENTRAL PACIFIC FORCE/FIFTH FLEET ESTABLISHED.** ADM Nimitz formally establishes the Central Pacific Force,

or Fifth Fleet, and names VADM Spruance to command it. RADM Pownall will command the new fast carrier force.

August 15. **North Pacific Force landing on Kiska.** Rear Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid's North Pacific Force, including three old battleships, bombards and lands 34,000 U.S. and Canadian troops on Kiska, in the Aleutians, which the Japanese had secretly evacuated May 26-June 21. This is the first significant use of the old battleships in the war.

August 31-September 1. **First Pacific Fleet "Fast Carrier Task Force" strike operation.** Pacific Fleet TF 15, Rear Admiral Pownall, including two new *Essex*-class carriers and a new light carrier, raids Marcus Island. This force will form the nucleus of the Fifth Fleet's fast carrier force.

September. **German submarines return to the North Atlantic.** Reacting to the increasing effectiveness of allied carrier escort groups and other antisubmarine operations off the Azores and in the Bay of Biscay, ADM Doenitz sends the U-boats back to the North Atlantic convoy lanes. By November, this new onslaught will have failed, and he will again pull the submarines away from convoy lanes.

September 1. **NAVY TAKES OVER LAND-BASED LONG-RANGE OVER-WATER MARITIME PATROL AVIATION.** The Army Air Forces turn over their responsibility for anti-submarine warfare land-based air operations in the Western Atlantic, exercised since early 1942, to the Navy and the Tenth Fleet. At the time it consists of 266 planes, 187 of which are B-24 Liberators modified with special anti-submarine warfare equipment, many of which are turned over to the Navy in exchange for un-modified aircraft.

September 9-16. **Eighth Fleet combined amphibious assault at Salerno.** (Operation "Avalanche"). Under the overall direction of General Eisenhower and ADM Cunningham RN, Vice Admiral H. Kent Hewitt now on the AGC *Ancon* (with the Commanding General, Fifth Army), as Commander, Western Naval Task Force, commands the entire British-American amphibious component of the operation, which deploys from North Africa and Sicily and lands Lieutenant General Mark Clark's Allied Fifth Army in the Bay of Salerno, Italy.

The Western Naval Task Force also provides naval gunfire support (and air support from one Royal Navy light carrier and four Royal Navy escort carriers) to the troops once ashore.

ADM Cunningham also commands a separate Royal Navy covering force including 4 battleships and 2 fleet carriers. A British army had landed in Calabria August 31–September 3, with air and Royal Navy naval support, and a British airborne division lands at Taranto September 9–11.

Again, as in Sicily, Army commanders, trying to preserve tactical surprise, veto Navy desires for pre-landing shore bombardment by naval gunfire. Air coordination is improved over Sicily, however, and a US Army fighter director team rides VADM Hewitt's flagship.

**September 11. Italian fleet surrenders to Allies.**

**October. U.S. Army European emphasis on the ground begins.** For the first time, U.S. Army divisions in Europe exceed those in the Pacific.

**October 2–6. Atlantic Fleet task force raid on Norway.** (Operation "Leader"). An American naval task force consisting of the carrier *Ranger*, a heavy cruiser and a destroyer division participates in a raid by the British Home Fleet on German shipping at Bodo, Norway. This is the first U.S. Navy carrier operation in the Norwegian Sea. *Ranger* will return to the United States to become a training and ferry carrier in November.

**October 3. Japanese complete evacuation of Solomons.**

**October 14. SOUTHEAST PACIFIC AREA DOUBLE HAT CREATED.** Command of the Southeast Pacific Force becomes a collateral responsibility of the Commander, Panama Sea Frontier, vice Commander Cruiser Division Three. Convoy and presence operations will be conducted until 1945.

**November. German submarines again leave the North Atlantic.** ADM Doenitz's September submarine offensive in the North Atlantic convoy lanes has failed, in the face of allied carrier escort groups,

cryptology, and air patrols, and he again pulls the submarines away from convoy lanes.



# **Late World War II operations (1943-1945): Mega-fleet & joint combat operations forward in the Western Pacific**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

An enormous fleet becomes even larger, doubling in size yet again. Embedded within it is the gigantic Third/Fifth Fleet and its huge Fast Carrier Force (Task Force 38/58). The fleet is divided into an asymmetrical group of fleets, numbered fleets, forces, and task forces. The Western Pacific is the primary locus of combat, the naval battles in Europe and the Atlantic being all but won. By now most operations have a heavy joint flavor, especially at the higher levels of command.

### **Fleet size and composition**

The fleet was now swollen beyond all previous (and subsequent) recognition. On August 14, 1945, when Japan surrendered to the allies, the U.S. Navy numbered 6,768 ships: 23 battleships, 28 carriers, 71 escort carriers, 72 cruisers, 377 destroyers, 361 frigate-equivalents, 232 submarines, 586 mine warfare ships, 1,204 patrol vessels, 2,547 amphibious ships, and 1,267 auxiliaries.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

With the creation of the Fifth Fleet in the Pacific, swollen with a torrent of new ships and aircraft now pouring from America's shipyards and factories, the Navy now deploys at sea in the Pacific fleets that stagger the imagination in their size. No period in history before or since has ever seen anything like this.

Fleet size and composition was generally driven by national and JCS policy, but specifically implemented by the U.S. Fleet commander-in-chief, ADM Ernest King. King's hold on the allocation of the torrent of new construction that American industry was producing shaped the Navy's deployment posture.

Pride of place now goes to a fleet and an operation that barely existed during the earlier half of the war: the November 1943 Central Pacific drive by the amphibious force and fast carriers of the Fifth Fleet, culminating in the poisoning of the Third and Fifth Fleets for an assault on Japan itself in mid-1945. These fleets worked directly for CINCPAC, Admiral Nimitz, who answered directly to ADM King, COMINCH, who answered to the President.

But there was also the Southwest Pacific drive by General MacArthur, also culminating in the planned assault on Japan. MacArthur, who reported to the President through the Army Chief of Staff, General Marshall, still had the Seventh Fleet as a naval component.

In the South Atlantic, as the submarine threat waned, the Fourth Fleet wound down and eventually disestablished, as did the Eighth Fleet in the Mediterranean after the last French landings. The North Pacific Force, a Southeast Pacific Force, and a large training fleet in the Western Atlantic continued as side shows.

The last part of the war saw the shift of almost all the Navy's assets to the Pacific. Gone are the ad hoc North Atlantic battleship and carrier task groups occasionally reinforcing the Royal Navy. Indeed, except for the Normandy and south of France landings, gone is operational control by Royal navy admirals of significant U.S. Navy forces. And

even those landings had no U.S. Navy fast carriers or battleships assigned. (An American carrier was, however, under British Eastern Fleet operational control off Sumatra and Java in the spring of 1944.)

The war ended with 90% of the fleet in the Pacific, most of it in the Third and Fifth Fleets.

### **The fleets in the chain of command**

Who did the fleets work for? How were the fleets organized internally?

The operational Fleets continue to be organized by Task Forces, the most celebrated of which is the Fast Carrier Force, TF 38/58 in the Central Pacific, and the Amphibious Forces, which include amphibious, escort carrier, and fire support ships. The task force is a unit consisting of a variety of ships assembled into one command for a particular purpose. Type commands generally exist as training and administration entities only. Indeed, the numbered fleets themselves originated as Task Forces, and some – like the Eighth and Fourth

Fleets, will return organizationally to the task force echelon at the war's end.

### **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marines continue to focus exclusively on the Pacific and almost exclusively on amphibious assault operations, which are enormously enhanced by the introduction into the fleet for the first time of large numbers of ships purpose-built for amphibious warfare tasks.

### **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

MacArthur's Seventh Fleet would never be allocated any fast carriers or battleships, but often could count on the fast carriers of the Third and Fifth Fleets for support, especially in the Philippines campaigns.

The last year of the war saw the arrival in the Pacific of Army Air Force bombers specifically designed for the Pacific distances, which laid waste Japanese cities with intensive, low-level incendiary raids, culminating in the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

### **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

In the Pacific, American forces remained overwhelmingly predominant. Australian naval forces, so critical in the earlier years, are now barely visible as part of the Seventh Fleet. A newly constituted British Pacific Fleet joins the Americans in 1945, but it barely constitutes a Task Group within the gigantic U.S. Third and Fifth Fleets.

In Europe, however, the complex, integrated US-British allied command structures continued. There, the U.S. Eighth Fleet in the Mediterranean and the forces of the Twelfth Fleet used at Normandy were still operationally assigned to Royal Navy naval component commanders of the Supreme Allied Commander, normally General Eisenhower. The naval war in Europe now consisted essentially of amphibious landings in France, the German and Italian fleets having been neutralized, sunk or surrendered – except for the submarines. The Battle of the Atlantic continued to be pursued, but the allies clearly now had the upper hand. The U.S. Navy's major contribution

in the Atlantic now were land-based maritime patrol aircraft and the new escort carrier groups.

In the North Atlantic, convoy, routing and hunter-killer operations against German submarines had been finally divided into American, Canadian, and British "route packages," with ADM King personally directing the U.S. Navy effort through his command of a shipless Tenth Fleet staff organization in Washington. And the Army Air Force was finally out of the land-based maritime patrol business.

## Operational chronology

### 1943 (continued)

November 13. **THIRD FLEET FORCES TO FIFTH FLEET.** With the end of Operation "Cartwheel" in the Solomons and the landings on Bougainville, five carriers, five cruisers and three destroyer divisions transferred earlier from Spruance's Fifth Fleet to Halsey's Third Fleet to support the Southwest Pacific Area Bougainville campaign are returned to Spruance for the Central Pacific Area Tarawa operation.

November 20-23. **Fifth Fleet Amphibious Assaults on Tarawa and Makin.** (Operation "Galvanic"). Admiral Nimitz launches his Central Pacific drive with landings on Tarawa and Makin in the British Gilbert Islands, against bitter resistance on Tarawa. The operation is executed by Vice Admiral Raymond Spruance's joint Central Pacific Force centered on the 200-ship Fifth Fleet, including four fast new carriers, five light carriers, seven escort carriers, two old carriers, six fast new battleships and seven old battleships. The Carrier Force is commanded by RADM C. A. Pownall in the new fast carrier *Yorktown*. RADM R. K. Turner is the Amphibious Force commander, putting one

Marine division ashore on Tarawa and one Army division ashore on Makin. Land-based air – Army, Navy and Marine, including 90 Army bombers – is under RADM Hoover. No amphibious command ships are available yet.

The Pacific Fleet is now in a new force posture, capable of fielding huge and powerful fleets of new ships. Fifth Fleet now joins Third, Seventh and Eighth Fleets as an operational amphibious fleet.

Spruance's carriers raid Japanese bases before the assault, but once the landings begin they return and provide a barrier around the gilberts in order to intercept Japanese counterattacks. His carrier commanders would have preferred to roam free, using their mobile power to destroy Japanese air power at its source. Turner, burned at Guadalcanal, had wanted the carriers to provide a protective umbrella near the landing beaches.

Spruance's flagship is the twelve-year old heavy cruiser *Indianapolis*, designed as a cruiser division flagship and chosen instead of a fast battleship so as not to unduly weaken his force while he, as commander, was either taking his flagship afield while roaming his battle space or hazarding it while close to shore observing a landing. The size of *Indianapolis* will keep Spruance's staff small – 32 officers come on board with him for the invasion of Tarawa.

The Amphibious Force Commander (also in command of one of the amphibious task groups) and his subordinate amphibious force task group commander both use old flag-equipped battleships as flagships (including *Pennsylvania*, the old U.S. Fleet flagship). After this assault, however, they will command from new amphibious command ships (AGCs).

November 26. **Seventh Fleet change of command.** Driven in large part by VADM A. S. Carpender's inability to get along with General MacArthur and the Army, VADM T. C. Kinkaid relieves Carpender as MacArthur's joint Southwest Pacific Area's naval component commander, Commander, Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific, and Commander Seventh Fleet, at Brisbane, where MacArthur also has his headquarters.

December 15. **SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS TRANSFER OF COMMAND ARRANGEMENTS STABILIZE.** Beginning with the landings on Arawe, New Guinea, General MacArthur accedes to VADM Kinkaid's concept that a naval commander stays in sole command of an operation until the troops are ashore and a ground command established, at which time sole command shifts to the ground commander.

1943, end. **Navy-Marine South Pacific losses.** At the end of 1943, the Navy has suffered 10,195 casualties in the South Pacific, the Marines 8,485.

1943, end. **German U-Boat losses.** The Germans lose 287 U-boats in 1943, compared with only 85 in 1942, 35 in 1941, 22 in 1940, and 9 in 1939. (They will lose 241 in 1944 and 153 in 1945.)

## 1944

January. **WARFARE SPECIALTY FLEET ASSIGNMENT POLICY IMPLEMENTED.** Henceforth, if a fleet or task force commander is an aviator, his chief of staff must be a surface officer, and vice versa.

January. **Europe and Mediterranean Theater command changes.** General Eisenhower leaves the Algiers for London to plan the invasion of France. The new allied Mediterranean Theater expands to take in much of the British Middle East Theater, and its commanders are a succession of British generals, under whom the British Mediterranean fleet commander remains the naval component commander, with operational control over the U.S. Eighth Fleet.

January 21-29. **Eighth Fleet amphibious assault at Anzio.** (Operation "Shingle"). Under the new British Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, and a new allied naval commander, Admiral Sir John Cunningham, Rear Admiral Frank J. Lowry's Anglo-American Task Force 81 embarks one British and one American division in Naples. Lowry's flagship is *Biscayne*, on which MG Lucas, Commanding General of VI Corps, U.S. Army is also embarked. He puts them ashore at night, and provides naval gunfire support from 4 British and American cruisers and 24 destroyers.

The Germans succeed in containing the beachhead, and naval gunfire continues to support the troops ashore during the three-month struggle for the beachhead, although it is not as important to this operation as it was to the landings on Sicily and at Salerno. The beachhead is finally secured when it is reached by the U.S. Fifth Army pushing up from the south on May 25.

January 31-February 5. **Fifth Fleet Marshalls amphibious assault campaign.** (Operations "Flintlock" and "Catchpole"). Vice Admiral Raymond Spruance's joint Central Pacific Force, centered on the 375-ship Fifth Fleet, advances in the Central Pacific through a series of landings by one Marine division and one Army division at Majuro, Kwajalein, Roi, and Namurin the Marshall Islands. VADM Spruance rides the cruiser *Indianapolis* as flagship. RADM Richmond K. Turner (Commander, V Amphibious Force) commands the Joint Expeditionary Force for the first time from a new command ship, *Rocky Mount* (AGC) Task Force 58, the Fast Carrier Force now includes four new fast carriers, two old carriers, six light carriers, eight new fast battleships, and 700 carrier aircraft. (RADM Marc Mitscher has now relieved RADM Pownall as the carrier task force commander, due to Pownall's perceived excessive caution). 475 land-based Marine and Air Force aircraft based largely in the Gilberts under RADM John Hoover supplement Mitscher's air power.

February 4. **North Pacific Force bombardment of Kuriles.** With the Japanese gone from the Aleutians, the North Pacific Force goes on the offensive. A surface task group of old cruisers and destroyers bombards Paramushiro, in the Kurile Islands, starting large fires. This is the first of several such surface bombardment attacks on the Northern and Central Kuriles that will take place until the Russians assault them at the end of the war.

February 10. **FIFTH FLEET BECOMES A FOUR-STAR COMMAND.** VADM Raymond Spruance is promoted. Fifth Fleet becomes the next numbered fleet to be commanded by a full admiral, along with the Third, Tenth, and Twelfth Fleets (to be followed by the Seventh in April 1945). This situation will last over a year, until Spruance's successor ADM Towers is relieved by VADM Frederick Sherman in January 1946.

February 10. **FIFTH FLEET FLAGSHIP CHANGES.** Spruance, now a four-star admiral, shifts from *Indianapolis* to the new fast battleship *New Jersey* (BB 62). Spruance hopes to use *New Jersey* to destroy Japanese ships fleeing Fast Carrier Force strikes on Truk Lagoon, but the Japanese Fleet escapes. Spruance will shift back to *Indianapolis* in April, and deploy with her back to Hawaii to plan the Marianas campaign while the fast carriers support General MacArthur.

March 27–May 18. **British Eastern Fleet strike operations using U.S. Fifth Fleet carrier.** (Operation “Cockpit”). The carrier *Saratoga* and three escorts are placed under the operational control of the Com-mander in Chief of the British Eastern Fleet. They participate in strikes on Sabang, Sumatra, and Surabaya, Java, in part to distract the Japanese from General MacArthur’s Southwest Pacific Forces assaults around Hollandia, New Guinea. This operation, involving 27 warships from 6 allied navies, is among the most multinational of the war.

April 13–May 4. **Fifth Fleet strike support for General MacArthur.** Rear Admiral Mitscher’s Fifth Fleet Fast Carrier Force (TF 58) deploys from Majuro in the Marshalls in support of General MacArthur and his Southwest Pacific Forces, to strike airfields in New Guinea and support the landings, and then neutralize enemy positions on Truk and in the Western Carolines from which attacks might be launched against the landing forces or against General MacArthur’s new bases in the Admiralties.

Fifth Fleet also loans the Seventh Fleet eight escort carriers for direct support operations, as well as having loaned *Saratoga* to the British Eastern Fleet.

April 15. **PACIFIC SEA FRONTIERS RE-ORGANIZED.** The North-western Sea Frontier is abolished. Part becomes a new Alaskan Sea Frontier (a collateral duty of the Commander, North Pacific Force) and part is added to the Western Sea Frontier.

April 21–June 6. **Seventh Fleet amphibious assault at Hollandia.** (Operations “Reckless” and “Persecution”). The Seventh Fleet’s Seventh Amphibious Force lands two army divisions in three separate landings in New Guinea 300 miles behind the Japanese front line, in the largest joint Southwest Pacific Area amphibious operation to

date. The Fifth Fleet provides distant air cover and support, and loans the Seventh Fleet eight escort carriers for close support operations.

The Seventh Fleet includes as part of its Covering Force Task Force 74, the Australia Squadron with some U.S. Navy destroyers added, under RADM Crutchley RN. Seventh Fleet covering forces are now of sufficient size that they can no longer all be under the operational control of RADM Crutchley or his successors as commanders of the Australian Squadron.

General MacArthur, the Supreme Commander, rides the cruiser *Nashville*. Commander, Seventh Fleet VADM Kinkaid, MacArthur's naval component commander, moves forward from Brisbane but remains ashore at Port Moresby, New Guinea. RADM Barbey, the amphibious attack force commander, and the army component commander ride destroyers.

April 26. **CENTRAL PACIFIC FORCE DESIGNATION DROPPED.** From now on the command will be known simply as the Fifth (or Third) Fleet.

May 19. **Forrestal is Secretary.** Following the death of Secretary Frank Knox, James Forrestal (Undersecretary since 1940) is named Secretary of the Navy.

June 6. **Western Naval Task Force amphibious assault on Normandy.** (Operation "Neptune"). Five army divisions are landed in the first wave of the assault. The naval forces are commanded by Allied Naval Commander in Chief Admiral Sir Bertram H. Ramsey RN, under General Eisenhower as Supreme Commander. They include the 1,796-ship (British) Eastern Naval Task Force, under a British admiral, and the 911-ship (American) Western Naval Task Force, under RADM Alan G. Kirk USN, flag in the heavy cruiser *Augusta*, which lands LTG Omar Bradley's U.S. First Army on "Omaha" and "Utah" beaches.

The United States naval contingent had been assembled and trained under Commander, Twelfth Fleet, Admiral Stark, who at the appropriate time had turned it over to the operational control of Admiral Ramsey.

LTG Bradley embarks with RADM Kirk on *Augusta*. By mutual agreement, RADM Kirk commands both Army and Navy in the Western Task Force between embarkation and LTG Bradley's establishing his command ashore. This agreement does not include the air cover to the task force, however, which is independent of both.

Naval gunfire support, especially from three old US Navy battleships, effectively prevents the Germans from moving up reinforcements and covers the U.S. troops advancing inland. After the beachheads are established, the primary naval responsibility will be the landing of men and supplies. The battleships will then participate in the bombardment of Cherbourg and redeploy south to support the landing in the south of France in August.

**June 6. Fast carrier force deployment from the Marshalls.** On the same day as the landings on Normandy, Task Force 58 deploys from the Marshalls for the Marianas. This simultaneous involvement of American forces in the invasions of France and the Marianas constitutes the most titanic military effort put forth by any nation at any one time in history (so claims E. B. Potter in *Nimitz*).

**June 15. SOUTH PACIFIC CHANGE OF COMMAND.** VADM J. H. Newton relieves ADM William Halsey as Commander, South Pacific Area in Noumea, a subordinate joint unified area command under CINCPAC, which has become a backwater. ADM Halsey, however, retains his title as Commander, U.S. Third Fleet and moves Third Fleet operations to the Central Pacific Area, in which he will share operations with ADM Spruance as alternating Commanders of the U.S. Third and Fifth Fleets. ADM Halsey also pulls out from under GEN MacArthur's operational control.

Halsey returns to Hawaii to begin planning for Third Fleet operations in the Western Carolines, once the Fifth Fleet campaign in the Marianas concludes.

**June 15. Fifth Fleet amphibious assault on Saipan.** (Operation "Forager"). Admiral Raymond P. Spruance's Fifth Fleet puts one army and two marine divisions ashore on Saipan, in the Marianas in the Central Pacific Area, under cover of intensive naval gunfire and carrier-based aircraft. Fighting continues until July 9. Assaults will also be made on

Guam (July 21) and Tinian (July 24). Spruance's flagship is again *Indianapolis*.

June 19-20. **Fifth Fleet battle in the Philippine Sea.** Admiral Spruance's Fifth Fleet – including 7 fleet carriers, 8 light carriers, 7 battle-ships, 21 cruisers and 69 destroyers – defeats the Japanese fleet, which has come out in strength for the first time since October 1942 in an attempt to break up the invasion of Saipan. Spruance's flagship is *Indianapolis*.

While two Japanese carriers are sunk by submarines and 92% of the Japanese fleet's carrier aircraft are downed, the bulk of the Japanese fleet escapes, as Spruance fears leaving the Saipan landings uncovered. Spruance and Fifth Fleet's strategic philosophy during amphibious operations is to give precedence to the mission of protecting the landing, vice destruction of the enemy's battle fleet. This contrasts with Halsey and Third Fleet's philosophy, exemplified later at Leyte Gulf.

June 25-26. **Allied naval surface bombardment of Cherbourg.** Three old US Navy battleships and a mix of U.S. and Royal Navy cruisers and destroyers under RADM Deyo USN bombard the shore batteries commanding Cherbourg Harbor, prior to VII Corps occupation of Cherbourg two days later.

Mid-1944. **CINCPAC-CINCPOA STAFF GROWTH.** The staff has grown to about 250 officers, to plan and supply the Central Pacific drive. This is up from 45-75 officers in mid-1942.

July 8. **EIGHTH FLEET SHORE HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** Eighth Fleet (and Seventh Army) headquarters, including flagship *Catoctin*, moves from Algiers to Naples, following a move by allied SACMED headquarters (AFHQ) to Caserta earlier in the month.

August. **FIFTH FLEET BECOMES THIRD FLEET (1st 3rd/5th Fleet Swap).** Admiral William F. Halsey, flagship *New Jersey*, relieves Admiral Raymond A. Spruance in command of the Fifth Fleet, which is redesignated the Third Fleet. Halsey has selected *New Jersey* because of its near invulnerability and ability to keep pace with the fast carriers.

Also, Halsey's Third Fleet staff is larger than Spruance's Fifth Fleet staff.

ADM Spruance and his Fifth Fleet staff return to Pearl Harbor on *Indianapolis* to plan the assaults on Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Halsey will retain command of the fleet for five months, during which he will support the Southwest Pacific Command's assaults on the Philippines. This is the first of three such command swaps that will occur over the next year.

Unlike Spruance, Halsey will often take tactical command of the Fast Carrier Force from the Task Force commander, VADM Mitscher or VADM McCain, during operations.

**August 15. Eighth Fleet amphibious assault on Southern France.** (Operation "Dragoon"). Under the over-all command of the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, British General Sir Henry Maitland-Wilson, and as assigned by Cinccmed, Admiral Sir John Cunningham, U.S. Eighth Fleet commander Vice Admiral H. Kent Hewitt's Western Naval Task Force lands three American Army divisions under Lieutenant General Patch on the Mediterranean coast of France between Cannes and Toulon. VADM Hewitt's flagship is *Catoclin*. 515 United States, 283 British, 12 French, and 7 Greek ships participate. Two French divisions follow.

The fire support force includes – for the first time in the Mediterranean – three old U.S. battleships, and one French and one British battleship. Three U.S. Navy heavy cruisers and five British and four American escort carriers also participate. For the first time in the Mediterranean, the Army allows the Navy to lay on an extended pre-landing bombardment, and to land assault waves in daylight. The assault is preceded by heavy naval gunfire and aircraft attack. After the landing, allied naval gunfire engages German coast defense batteries, and continues to support the troops ashore.

Command of the Army and Navy forces after embarkation is vested in VADM Hewitt, until the Commanding General lands and assumes command of the Army forces ashore. Commanding Generals of the Seventh Army, VI Corps, and French II Corps all ride *Catoclin* with Hewitt. Army Air Force cooperation is excellent.

This is the last major amphibious assault of the war in the European Theater, and— enemy resistance being light — it sustains the lightest allied casualties of any large-scale World War II amphibious assault.

Afterwards, most Atlantic Fleet battleships and cruisers shift to the Pacific. On September 26, Admiral Hewitt's Western Naval Task force is dissolved and the Admiral sails for Naples on *Catoctin*, leaving behind a largely French Navy task force to engage remaining German forces on the Mediterranean coast.

September. **SEVENTH FLEET SHORE HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** VADM Kinkaid moves from Brisbane and sets up Seventh Fleet headquarters adjacent to General MacArthur's, 25 miles inland from Hollandia, New Guinea. Here planning is conducted for Philippine landings.

September 9. **CINCPOA JOINT STAFF ACTIVATED.** ADM Nimitz, unlike GEN MacArthur and GEN Eisenhower, sets up a joint staff (CincPac-CinCPOA) in Hawaii with Army, Navy, and Marine Corps officers in every section. The operations, plans and administration officers (J-3, J-1 and J-5) are normally naval officers, the intelligence and logistics officers (J-2 and J-4) from the Army.

September 15–October 23. **Third Fleet amphibious assault on the Palaus.** (Operation "Stalemate II"). The Third Fleet central Pacific drive leaps 600 miles to the southwest to land in the Palaus. The 1st Marine Division lands on Peleliu, followed by an Army division; another Army division lands on Angaur. The landings are preceded by several days of intensive carrier-based aircraft bombing and ship gunfire bombardment. On 23 September Army troops land on Ulithi, which, while not an ideal anchorage, is the best available shelter for large surface forces in the Western Carolines. Steps are taken at once to develop it and it will become a major base for the rest of the war: In March 1945 there will be 617 ships in the lagoon.

September 21–24, October 9–20. **Third Fleet Philippine strike operations in support of Southwest Pacific Command.** In distant cover and support of the upcoming Seventh Fleet landings in the Philippines, Third Fleet carrier planes attack targets throughout the islands and in Formosa and Okinawa.

October 20. **Seventh Fleet amphibious Assault on Leyte.** Protected from the Japanese Fleet and air forces by the fast carriers and battleships of the Pacific Fleet's Third Fleet under Admiral Halsey to the north, and by the by the Air Force, the Southwest Pacific Area's Seventh Fleet under General MacArthur and VADM Kinkaid embarks four army divisions at Hollandia, Manus and other points in New Guinea and lands them abreast on the island of Leyte, in the Philippines, in the largest amphibious operation yet conducted in the Pacific.

The Seventh Fleet has been greatly augmented by the temporary transfer of many transports, fire support ships, 5 old battleships and 18 escort carriers from the Third Fleet. With 738 ships, it is the largest fleet in the world at that moment. Two Amphibious Forces – The Seventh, under Rear Admiral Barbey, and the Third, under Vice Admiral Wilkinson – conduct the landings. Kinkaid rides his command ship the AGC *Wasatch* with the Commanding General Sixth Army. General MacArthur again rides the cruiser *Nashville*. Australian Navy forces also participate as part of the support force, although no longer organized as a separate task force.

The Third Fleet has been stripped down to Task Force 38, the Fast Carrier Force – 17 fast carriers, 6 fast battleships, 17 cruisers, and 58 destroyers. Some of the fast carriers furnish direct support to the Leyte landing.

Organized resistance ashore on Leyte will not end until December 20.

October 23–26. **Third and Seventh Fleets battle in Leyte Gulf.** The American Third and Seventh Fleets, coordinating only loosely, engage the Japanese fleet in four interlocking actions jointly comprising the largest naval battle ever fought. As a result, the Japanese Navy ceases to exist as an effective fighting force and retreats without molesting the landing operations, despite misunderstandings in communications between the U.S. fleet commanders arguably due to their divided command structure.

These misunderstandings almost lead to disaster and cause considerable damage to Seventh Fleet escort carrier and destroyer forces, left unprotected from the Japanese fleet by the Third Fleet fast carriers

during the third of the four battles, the Battle off Samar, in the San Bernardino Strait. Kinkaid and Seventh Fleet believe Halsey has formed a new task force – TF 34 – to guard San Bernardino Strait. In fact, Halsey has not; the ships that were to form TF 34 are part of his striking force moving north against the Japanese carriers. Halsey eventually turns back, and heroic fighting on the part of the unprotected Seventh Fleet units and bad judgement on the part of the Japanese avert disaster for the Americans.

Halsey and Third Fleet's strategic philosophy during amphibious operations is to give precedence to the mission of destruction of the enemy's battle fleet, vice protecting the landing. This contrasts with Spruance and Fifth Fleet's philosophy, exemplified earlier in the Philippine Sea.

October 27–November 27. **Third Fleet Philippine strike operations in direct support of Southwest Pacific Command.** The Third Fleet's TF 38 (VADM Mitscher until October 30, then VADM McCain) continues to directly support the Army troops fighting ashore on Leyte, as the Army Air Force is insufficient to the task. Carrier strikes are also made on Luzon and other Philippine islands. The Third fleet then retires to Ulithi.

November 1. **MEDITERRANEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS DESIGNATED.** The Combined Chiefs of Staff re-designate the North African Theater of Operations and expand it to now include the entire Mediterranean, Greece, and the Balkans. This is after, however, most U.S. Navy Eighth Fleet units have left the theater.

November 8. **WESTERN SEA FRONTIER GETS LOGISTICS FUNCTIONS.** The necessity for coastal defense having been reduced to minor proportions, the functions of Commander, Western Sea Frontier are expanded to include coordination of all movement of ships, aircraft and logistic support from the west coast of the United States and the eastern Pacific to the western Pacific, to eliminate bottlenecks. He is also given the status of a Deputy Commander in Chief, United States Fleet and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, and control of the Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Naval Districts.

On November 17, Admiral R.E. Ingersoll will become Commander, relieved as Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet by ADM Jonas Ingram, the Fourth Fleet commander.

**November 13. PHILIPPINE SEA FRONTIER RE-ACTIVATED UNDER COMMANDER, SEVENTH FLEET**

**December 11-22. Third Fleet Philippine strike operations in support of Southwest Pacific Command.** The Third Fleet's Task Force 38 under VADM McCain deploys from Ulithi and attacks Philippine targets, especially Manila Bay, preparatory to the Seventh Fleet landing on Luzon. Strikes south of Manila Bay are the province of General Kenney's Army Air forces, under General MacArthur.

Task Force 38 now includes eight carriers, six light carriers, and eight fast battleships, organized into three or four task groups.

**December 30-January 9. Third Fleet Formosa strike operations in support of Southwest Pacific Command.** The Third Fleet's Task Force 38 deploys again from Ulithi under VADM McCain to carry out direct cover and protection missions for the Seventh Fleet landings and follow-on operations on Luzon, operating against Japanese air-fields on Formosa, the Ryukyus, and the Pescadores. Finally released from direct support of General MacArthur in January, Halsey will then continue the fast carrier deployment with strikes in the South China Sea.

**1945**

**January. CINCPAC HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** To keep in close contact with events as the war moves farther into the western Pacific, CinCPac establishes an Advance Headquarters on Guam. This is primarily an operational headquarters; many administrative functions, including logistics, remain at Pearl Harbor.

**January 1. SOUTHEAST PACIFIC FORCE MERGED.** The Southeast Pacific Force is merged with the Panama Sea Frontier, although the title is retained to facilitate relationships with Peru and Chile.

January 9. **Seventh Fleet amphibious assault on Luzon.** The Seventh Fleet, Vice Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, under the overall command of General MacArthur, lands four army divisions at Lingayen Gulf, on the main Philippine island of Luzon, under cover of naval gunfire and carrier-based aircraft, including six old battleships and 18 escort carriers. Kinkaid's flagship is again *Wasatch*, with the commanding army general embarked. General MacArthur is on the light cruiser *Boise*. Australian navy units participate. Meanwhile, the Third Fleet is providing support by strikes on Formosa, to pin down and destroy Japanese forces north of Luzon.

The Seventh Fleet will retain several old battleships for naval gunfire support on Luzon, diverting them from the Iwo Jima operation. Later, the Seventh Fleet will continue to operate and conduct landings in Philippine and Netherlands East Indies waters until the end of the war, but shorn of carriers, battleships and U.S. Navy heavy cruisers. Australian Navy ships, and some Netherlands Navy ships, will be heavily engaged as part of the Seventh Fleet.

January 9–January 27. **Third Fleet strikes on Indochina and China.** (Operation "Plan Gratitude"). Finally released from support of the Southwest Pacific Command's landings on Luzon, Halsey and the Third Fleet continue their deployment, sailing into the South China Sea and striking Hong Kong, Hainan Island, and Cam Ranh Bay, before striking Formosa again and retiring to Ulithi to replenish.

January 26. **THIRD FLEET BECOMES FIFTH FLEET. (Second 3rd/5th Fleet Swap).** Admiral Raymond A. Spruance (flagship *Indianapolis*) relieves Admiral William F. Halsey (flagship *New Jersey*) in command of the Third Fleet, which is redesignated the Fifth Fleet. ADM Spruance will retain command of the fleet for four months, during the landings on Iwo Jima and Okinawa. This is the second of three such command swaps made between Spruance and Halsey in 1944-5. ADM Halsey and his staff return to Hawaii to plan for assaults on the Japanese home islands (that will never occur). At the same time, VADM Mitscher relieves VADM McCain as Commander Fast Carrier Force (TF 38, now TF 58). The carriers will deploy from Ulithi in support of the Iwo Jima landings on February 10.

February. **COMSUBPAC HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** Commander, U.S. Submarine Force Pacific moves his operational headquarters forward to Guam, where he reconstitutes it on board the tender *Holland*.

February 5. **SEVENTH FLEET SHORE HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** ADM Kinkaid moves his headquarters ashore from *Wasatch* to Tolosa on the Gulf shore of Leyte, where he supervises subsequent Seventh Fleet covering operations and landings in the Southern Philippines (14 major and 24 minor landings in 44 days) and Borneo. His command is now shorn of carriers, battleships, and U.S. Navy heavy cruisers.

February 10–March 4. **Fifth Fleet strike warfare on Japan.** In support of the landing on Iwo Jima, carrier aircraft of Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's Task Force 58 – consisting of 11 fleet carriers, 4 escort carriers, 8 fast battleships, 18 cruisers, and 75 destroyers – deploy from Ulithi to strike Japanese factories, installations and shipping around Tokyo, at Iwo Jima, Tokyo again, and the Ryukyu Islands. This is the first major carrier raid on Tokyo. With the demise of the Japanese Fleet at Leyte Gulf, the principal mission of the Fifth Fleet has now become power projection – amphibious warfare against the Japanese outer islands and strike warfare against the Home Islands.

February 19. **Fifth Fleet amphibious assault on Iwo Jima.** (Operation "Detachment"). ADM Spruance, on *Indianapolis*, commands the 900-ship operation, which is preceded by Seventh Air Force bombing as well as seven months of intermittent naval surface bombardment and fast carrier air attack. VADM R.K. Turner commands the Joint Expeditionary Force under Spruance; VADM Mitscher commands the Fast Carrier Force in support. A corps of three Marine divisions is landed.

March 14–June 13. **Fifth Fleet strike warfare on Japan.** In support of the landing on Okinawa, Task Force 58 (VADM Mitscher) deploys from Ulithi on March 14 for three continuous months of at sea operations against Japanese airfields, bases, and remaining fleet units in and around Japan, and for fighter and attack operations over Okinawa. From now on, Task Force 58 will be larger enough to remain continuously at sea, with its individual component task groups rotating back to Ulithi for replenishment and repair (Task Force 57, the

British Pacific Fleet, will replenish at Manus): Constant at-sea replenishment is made from RADM Beary's combat logistics support force. TF 58 will have become TF 38 on May 28, and will finally retire to Leyte Gulf on June 13 for a two week replenishment and repair period, its last until the end of the war.

March 20. **SEVENTH FLEET SUBMARINE FORCE HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** The headquarters shifts from Fremantle, Western Australia, where it has been located since 1942, to Subic Bay, in the Philippines.

March 31. **FIFTH FLEET FLAGSHIP CHANGES.** *Indianapolis* having been hit by a kamikaze, ADM Spruance transfers his flag to the old battleship *New Mexico*, off Okinawa.

March 26. **Arrival of the British Pacific Fleet.** The newly reconstituted British Pacific Fleet begins combat operations against ground targets and aircraft in the Southern Ryukyus between Okinawa and Formosa as Task Force 57/37 of the U.S. Fifth Fleet in the Western Pacific. Although designated a task force, the British Pacific Fleet with its four carriers, two battleships, five cruisers and 15 destroyers is equivalent to no more than one U.S. Task Force 58/38 task group.

April 1. **Fifth Fleet amphibious assault on Okinawa.** (Operation "Iceberg"). The invasion, the largest and most complex of the Pacific War, is conducted by Admiral Raymond A. Spruance's 1,500-ship Fifth Fleet (flagship *Indianapolis*), the largest and most powerful fleet in the history of the world. VADM R. K. Turner commands the Joint Expeditionary Force. The Expeditionary Troops, designated the Tenth Army, are commanded by Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner USA and consists of both a 5-division Army corps and a 3-division Marine corps. TF 51, the landing forces, totals 1,213 ships (including 10 old battleships), including 603 landing ships. There are also 88 ships in support in the Fast Carrier Force, including 16 carriers, 22 Royal Navy ships, and 95 logistics ships from both navies. Okinawa will not be secured (and gunfire support and escort carrier operations will not cease) until June 21.

April 3. **JOINT COMMAND CHANGES IN THE PACIFIC.** The Joint Chiefs of Staff issue directives to MacArthur, Nimitz, and the com-

manding General, Twentieth air Force, on command arrangements and planning for the invasion of Japan. The JCS retain strategic direction of the Pacific Theater as a whole. FADM Nimitz continues as Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC) and CinCPoa, and General of the Army MacArthur is designated Commander, US Army Forces, Pacific (AFPAC) as well as Supreme Commander, Southwest Pacific Area. Nimitz is now to command all naval forces in the Pacific, in preparation for the invasion of Japan. MacArthur is now to command all Army forces. The Joint Chiefs of Staff themselves will direct the strategic bombing campaign, although General MacArthur will maintain an air component also.

General MacArthur is ordered to begin planning and preparations for the invasion of Japan. ADM Nimitz is ordered to make plans and preparations for the naval and amphibious phases of the invasion.

**April 6. Fifth Fleet naval battle off Okinawa.** The Japanese respond to the invasion of Okinawa with Operation TEN-GO, a massed air attack, including kamikazes, on the American amphibious force afloat and ashore, defended by the remainder of the Fifth Fleet. Nine more mass kamikaze attacks will follow in the course of the Okinawan campaign.

**April 6. SEVENTH FLEET BECOMES A FOUR-STAR COMMAND.** VADM William Kinkaid is promoted. Seventh Fleet becomes the last numbered fleet is commanded by a full admiral, along with the Third, Fifth, Tenth and Twelfth Fleets, a situation that will last less than a year, until Kinkaid is relieved by VADM Barbey in November 1945.

**April 8– July 27. Royal Canadian Navy cruiser joins British Pacific Fleet.** HMCS *Uganda* joins the British Pacific Fleet, and therefore the U.S. Fifth Fleet. She will operate off Formosa, Okinawa, and Truk.

She will leave for the Canadian Pacific Coast base of Esquimaux in July after her crew votes to leave the war (Canadian policy at the time requiring only volunteers to fight the Japanese). Two other RCN warships, however, will be en route to combat operations in the Pacific when the war ends in August.

**April 12. Death of President Roosevelt.**

April 15. **FOURTH FLEET DISESTABLISHED.** VADM W. R. Munroe, who had relieved VADM Ingram on November 11, 1944, is re-designated Commander Atlantic Fleet Task Force Twenty Seven and Commander, South Atlantic Force. All US naval facilities in Brazil will close by November, however.

April 15. **EIGHTH FLEET DIS-ESTABLISHED.** The forces of the U.S. Eighth Fleet in the Mediterranean, under VADM William Glassford, headquartered in Naples, are subordinated administratively to US Naval Forces Europe/Twelfth Fleet, under ADM Harold Stark in London. As such they are re-designated Task Force 125/ US Naval Forces Northwest African Waters. Operational control remains with the allied SACMED and his subordinate CinCMed, the former a British Army Field Marshal and the latter a Royal Navy admiral, and this will arrangement endure even after the war is over. Another Eighth Fleet will be re-activated, this time in the United States, in March 1946; it will last only a brief period.

April 15. **Naval Forces France amphibious assault in the Bay of Biscay.** VADM Alan Kirk, former commander of the Western Naval Task Force at Normandy and now commander, U.S. Naval Forces, France, is in operational command of a French naval task force (one battleship, one cruiser, and eighteen smaller warships) that, after deploying from Plymouth, bombards and lands troops at Ile d'Orleron and the mouth of the Gironde River.

May 1. **Seventh Fleet Borneo campaign begins.** With the landing of Australian troops at Tarakan Island, the Seventh Fleet begins its final campaign of the war.

May 8. **V-E Day.** Germany having surrendered unconditionally the previous day, President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill proclaim the end of the war in Europe.

May 27. **FIFTH FLEET BECOMES THIRD FLEET (Third 3rd/5th Fleet Swap).** In the midst of the Okinawa campaign, Admiral William F. Halsey on *Missouri* (*New Jersey* being in overhaul) relieves Admiral Raymond A. Spruance on *New Mexico* at sea in command of the Fifth Fleet, which is now redesignated the Third Fleet again. Spruance sails for Guam, the Cincpac forward headquarters, to begin planning for

the invasion of Japan. The next day, Vice Admiral J.S. McCain on *Shangri-la* relieves Vice Admiral Mitscher in command of Task Force 58, now Task Force 38 again. ADM Hill relieves ADM Turner as Amphibious Force commander as well.

A new Fifth Fleet, originally planned as an invasion force for Japan, will be constituted separately under ADM Spruance in August and September 1945 as an occupation force, separate from the Third Fleet.

**June 6. Departure from Europe.** The last US Navy Twelfth Fleet warships depart northwestern Europe. The Twelfth Fleet headquarters, however, remains, and will stay in London throughout the postwar period.

**June 15. THE TENTH FLEET IS DISSOLVED.** It had been created in May 1943 under the direct command of COMINCH, with headquarters at the Navy Department, to exercise unity of control over United States anti-submarine operations in that part of the Atlantic Ocean under United States strategic control.

**June 28. Designation of CGUSFET.** The JCS designate General Eisenhower as Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater (CGUSFET), to include operational control of US Naval Forces Germany. This is the beginning of what will become the US European Command during the Cold War.

**July 1–August 15. Third Fleet strike warfare on Japan.** Task Force 38, Vice Admiral John S. McCain on *Shangri La*, deploys from Leyte Gulf after two weeks of replenishment to begin attacks on the remnants of the Japanese Fleet and industrial and military installations in the Japanese Home Islands, in preparation for Operation "Olympic," the planned amphibious assault on Kyushu. The Task Force – the greatest mass of sea power ever assembled – is organized into three carrier task groups centered on three carriers, two light carriers and two or three fast battleships *each* (later joined by the three-carrier British Pacific Fleet Task Force 37). It will operate in Japanese waters until the close of the war.

July-August. **PLANNED FLEET ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE ASSAULT ON JAPAN.** ("Plan Downfall" for Operations "Olympic" and "Coronet"). The Third and Fifth Fleets are to separate.

In "Olympic," a November 1945 landing on southern Kyushu, Spruance's Fifth Fleet, with the amphibious and support force and its own fast carrier force of four carrier task groups, is to land 9 Army and 3 Marine divisions of the Sixth Army. Halsey's Third Fleet, with the rest of the fast carriers (two task groups) and the British task force, is to hit Japanese targets throughout the Home Islands, then move away from the Kyushu area and continue against other Japanese targets. Areas of responsibility are delineated between Air Force and Navy air operations.

The Third Fleet would take command of supporting "Coronet," a March 1946 landing of 28 allied divisions against the Tokyo Plain in southern Honshu.

July. **SEVENTH FLEET HEADQUARTERS MOVES FORWARD.** ADM Kinkaid moves his headquarters from Tolosa to Manila, to be co-located with General MacArthur.

July 1. **Seventh Fleet amphibious assault in Borneo.** (Operation "Oboe II"). The Seventh Fleet lands Australian troops at Balikpapan, Borneo, in the last major amphibious assault of the war, providing support by U.S. Navy, RAN and RNLN cruisers and destroyers.

July 14. **Third Fleet surface bombardment of Home Islands.** A Third Fleet surface task group of battleships, cruisers and destroyers (RADM J. F. Shafroth) bombards the coastal city of Kamishi, Honshu, Japan; this is the first naval gunfire bombardment of the Japanese homeland. The Third Fleet now has five task groups – three U.S. Navy fast carrier task groups, the British Pacific Fleet carrier task group, and this surface task group – to conduct strike operations.

August. **Hewitt relieves Stark as Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe.** The Mediterranean commander fleets up to the London job. What is significant here is that, with the end of the war in Europe, the London job does not go away. Rather, it continues through the immediate post-war era, despite the lack of a formal alliance with the Brit-

ish. This was also true after World War I, but the U.S. Naval Forces Europe of that era finally terminated in 1929. The post-World War II command will continue through the early Cold War, the entire Cold War and the post-Cold War eras. As of 1996, it has not been terminated.

**August 2. SOUTHEAST ASIA COMMAND BOUNDARY EXPANDED.** The Combined Chiefs of Staff transfer operational responsibility for the Netherlands East Indies, formerly under General MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Command (and therefore a Seventh Fleet responsibility) to Admiral Lord Mountbatten's Southeast Asia Command.

This will contribute to orienting the Seventh Fleet away from Southeast Asia (and toward China) in the immediate postwar period.

**August 6. Atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima.**

**August 9. Soviets declare war on Japan.** Attacks begin on Manchuria, Korea, Sakhalin, and the Kurile Islands.

**August 11. Northern Pacific Force surface bombardment of the Kuriles.** Task Force 92, a cruiser-destroyer force (RADM Brown), shells Japanese installations in the Kuriles for the last time. The Soviets begin amphibious assaults on the Kuriles on 18 August. Bombardment of the Kuriles had begun in February 1944.

**August 14. PLANNED FLEET ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN.** CINCPAC correlates the Japan occupational assignments of the fleets and their amphibious forces with the AFPAC units and zones they are to support: Initially, Third Fleet and Third Amphibious Force supporting Eighth Army in Eastern Honshu, including Tokyo, Yokohama and Yokosuka; then Fifth Fleet and Fifth Amphibious Force supporting Sixth Army in Western Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu); Seventh Fleet and Seventh Amphibious Force supporting XXIV Corps in Korea south of the 38th parallel, and any operations in Chinese waters; and then Commander, North Pacific supporting elements of Eighth Army in Northern Honshu and Hokkaido.

This division of labor will endure until September 20, when Commander, Fifth Fleet will take over the entire Navy responsibility.

August 15. **V-J Day.** Japan having surrendered unconditionally the previous day, President Truman announces the end of the war in the Pacific. 100% of the Marine Corps's combat strength, 90% of the Navy's combatant vessels of submarine size or larger, and 42% of the Navy's combatant aircraft are in the Pacific, including 6 Marine divisions, 26 carriers, 64 escort carriers, and all 23 battleships.

# **Early Cold War fleet operations (1945-1950): Jointness, global forward squadron MOOTW presence, & short-lived home battle fleets for surges**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

The transitional era at the start of the Cold War was characterized by a plethora of forward deployments around the world, a scarcity of resources and ships due to budget cuts, and the creation and continual modification of a number of joint and naval organizational entities.

Related to these changes were significant changes in U.S. naval deployment policy. Numbered fleets were abolished and then returned, but these "fleets" were the size of squadrons or task forces, not the swollen fleets of World War II, or even the smaller fleets of the Cold War period.

The initial post-war force posture of the Navy included several forward squadrons and one forward fleet (off China), with two large home fleets on each coast for combat surges. This transitioned to four task fleets: two forward - in the Mediterranean and the western Pacific - and two at home - one on each coast (plus some smaller forces). While these fleets and forces worked for naval commanders, these commanders in turn worked for new joint unified and specified commanders, a re-vamped Joint Chiefs of Staff, and a newly-created Secretary of Defense.

## **Fleet size and composition**

From the heights of V-J Day, the fleet shrank rapidly to a low of 634 ships at the start of the Korean War— one-tenth its 1945 size. Carrier numbers dropped from 28 to 11, battleships from 23 to 1, and escort carriers from 71 to 4. Cruisers fell from 72 to 13, destroyers from 377 to 137, frigate-equivalents from 361 to 10, and submarines from 232 to 72. The 2,547-ship amphibious force was reduced to only 79 ships.

## **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

The main theaters of forward fleet operations were the Mediterranean and the China Coast. The Navy re-created, in effect, the Mediterranean and East India Stations, but now these stations often included carrier and amphibious forces, the new hallmarks of a main battle fleet.

The initial post-World War II Navy deployment concept involved the retention of the Atlantic Fleet and Pacific Fleet structures, the rebalancing of the fleet with immediate re-deployments back toward the Atlantic, the retention of a small forward deployed force in the Mediterranean and a large forward deployed numbered fleet in the Far East, and the creation of numbered striking fleets on each coast capable of surging quickly across their respective oceans.

Accordingly, the World War II Third Fleet came home to the west coast and was eventually disestablished. The Fifth Fleet came home too (leaving some of its forces behind in Japan as Naval Forces Japan, later Naval Forces, Far East) but was retained as the eastern and central Pacific striking fleet. The Seventh Fleet stayed in the western Pacific, although in decreasing strength, and U.S. Naval Forces, Japan—later Naval Forces, Far East—also continued, as a separate entity, headquartered in Tokyo and later at Yokosuka.

In the Atlantic, an Eighth Fleet was created in 1945 and 1946 as a striking fleet to deploy to the Mediterranean, analogous to the Fifth Fleet on the West Coast, but this initiative collapsed—like that on the West Coast—as the fleet reduced in size and as a permanent forward U.S. naval presence in the Mediterranean was established. That presence—Naval Forces, Mediterranean for much of the period—eventually became the Sixth Task Fleet and later the Sixth Fleet. Meanwhile, the First and Second Task Fleets—later the First and Second Fleets—rose from the ashes of the Fifth and Eighth Fleets.

Thus the two striking fleets were designated as the Fifth and Eighth Fleets, retaining (or resurrecting, in the case of the Eighth Fleet) the

names of the premier forward deployed numbered fleets in each ocean during World War II. Although based on the east and west coasts, they were focused on the far sides of their respective oceans. Continuing World War II practice, Atlantic and Pacific Fleet task forces on the coasts which were not part of these striking fleets were given 10-19 and 20-29 series task force designations.

By the end of this period, however, the Navy's deployment pattern was quite different: The striking fleets had been dissolved, replaced by numbered home fleets (the First and Second Fleets, created out of the 10-19 and 21-29 series task forces and the remains of the striking fleets.) Two ready and growing numbered fleet striking forces – the Sixth and Seventh – were forward deployed in the Mediterranean and the China Seas, along with much smaller forces forward deployed in Northern Europe, the Persian Gulf, and Japanese waters. The numbered fleets on the east and west coasts conducted exercises in task force strength and maintained ships in readiness for deployment to reinforce the forward deployed forces. Out of this pattern was to grow the deployment pattern of the Cold War Navy.

The tiny Naval Forces Europe task force established in the Persian Gulf in 1949 would eventually grow into the Fifth Fleet of the 1990s. The Caribbean and Latin America reverted to backwater status.

The naval headquarters in London was maintained after the war, despite any formal alliance with the United Kingdom until 1949, although it lost its Twelfth Fleet designation. A naval base for the Seventh Fleet in China was also retained, until it had to be abandoned, and one for the Naval Forces Mediterranean in Morocco. Base support for the Seventh Fleet was slowly built up in the Philippines, and for Naval Forces Far East in Japan.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

A new threat rapidly emerged – the Soviet Union – so, like the period before the war, there was a real enemy to plan against– but like the

period after World War I, there were also lots of real MOOTW to conduct every day. Given the nature of the emerging Soviet threat, the fleet, in its operations and tactics, stressed carrier strike and amphibious power projection, and anti-submarine warfare to maintain sea control. Meanwhile, the whole gamut of MOOTW missions continued.

### **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marines spend much of the period as an occupation force in China, retaining, however, their core amphibious assault mission, increasingly under attack in Washington.

### **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

The Navy clashed repeatedly with the Army for control of naval operations around Japan and Korea and with the Army, the Air Force, and the civilian political leadership for strategic and operational autonomy in Washington. Largely as a result of Navy pressure, the defense

structure that emerged in the late 1940s was far more “coordinated” than “unified”. The next thirty years would see numerous – and usually successful in the long run – attempts to build unity at the expense of operation coordination and service operational autonomy.

### **The fleets and multinational operational relationships**

Operationally, the Navy reverted to being a single-nation force. While close contact and planning and research and development cooperation continued with the Royal Navy, and while the resources of the defeated German Navy were extensively exploited, there was little operational cooperation or coordination, except with the British off Trieste and in China. Royal Navy base facilities helped support U.S. Navy forward deployed forces in the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, and the Persian Gulf, and there was some French Navy support at the base in Morocco. Also, U.S. Naval Forces Far East worked with former Imperial Japanese Navy forces to clear mines in the Pacific. At the end of the period, the NATO alliance was created, but as yet it had no military or naval command structure or operational arms.

## **Operational chronology**

### **1945 (continued)**

August 15. **SUPREME COMMANDER APPOINTED FOR JAPAN.** President Truman appoints General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, already Commander, U.S. Army Forces, Pacific, as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) in Japan. MacArthur is directed to “exercise supreme command over all land, sea and air forces which may be allocated for enforcement in Japan of the surrender terms.”

General MacArthur will later interpret this as giving him command of the Seventh Fleet. The Navy will interpret this as command only over naval activities inside Japan.

August 16. **Fifth Fleet commander embarks for Japan.** ADM Spruance leaves Guam on his flagship *New Jersey* for Japan, via Manila, where he will confer with General MacArthur and the Sixth Army commander, and Okinawa. He will set foot on Japanese soil on September 15.

August 19. **Surrender assignments promulgated.** General of the Army MacArthur, as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, presents the instrument of surrender to the Japanese at Manila. Commander in Chief, Army Forces Pacific will take the Japanese surrender in Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines. FADM Nimitz, CINCPAC, will take the surrender in the Ryukyus, Bonins, Japanese mandated islands, including the large base at Truk, and other Pacific islands.

August 26. **COMSEVENTH FLEET MOVES AFLOAT.** ADM Kinkaid moves onto *Minneapolis* from ashore in Manila, in preparation for upcoming operations in China and Korea. He will transfer to *Rocky Mount* (AGC 3) in September.

August 27. **Third Fleet Japan landing and occupation operations.** Commander, Third Fleet (ADM W. F. Halsey, flagship *Missouri*) stands into Sagami Bay, the outer bay to Tokyo, Japan. The Third Fleet comprises four fast carrier task groups, the British Pacific Fleet carrier task group, a task group of old battleships, and a combat logistics support task group. Pacific Fleet submarines also arrive. On August 29, Admiral Halsey's flagship will anchor off the Yokosuka naval base.

August 28. **SEVENTH FLEET UNDER CINCPAC.** Operational control of the Seventh Fleet (ADM Kinkaid) passes from Commander in Chief Southwest Pacific Area (General of the Army MacArthur) to Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet (FADM Nimitz). The Seventh Fleet had passed from COMINCH's direct administrative command to CINCPAC's a few months earlier. Kinkaid will continue as Commander Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific until surrender documents are signed on September 2.

The Commander Seventh Fleet is then relieved of all responsibilities as senior naval officer in the Southwest Pacific area and with a reconstituted fleet is assigned the tasks of occupying and controlling the waters of the Yellow Sea, Gulf of Pohai, the coastal waters of China south to twenty degrees north and the navigable portion of the Yangtse River; the landing and establishing of United States Army troops in Korea, and the U.S. Marines in North China; and several other missions.

The Seventh Fleet is now assigned a Fast Carrier Force, in addition to an Amphibious Force, a North China Force, a South China Force, and a reconstituted Yangtse Patrol.

With assignment of the fast carriers, U.S. Navy capital ships now routinely operate forward in the Pacific again for the first time since 1899-1906, when 1-3 battleships were stationed in China as part of the Asiatic Squadron.

August 28–September 13. **ASSEMBLY OF FIFTH FLEET AT OKINAWA.** A Fifth Fleet is re-constituted at Okinawa while the Third Fleet prepares to occupy its sector of Japan and host the surrender ceremony.

August 30. **THIRD FLEET HEADQUARTERS MOVES ASHORE.** Headquarters of Commander Third Fleet is established at Yokosuka Naval Base.

August 30. **North Pacific Force off Japan.** Task Force 92 (RADM Brown), the Northern Pacific Force of cruisers, destroyers, and escort carriers, arrives off Ominato, on the northern tip of Honshu, to accept the Japanese surrender in northern Japan.

September. **Naval Forces Northwest African Waters Mediterranean presence nadir.** USN presence in the Mediterranean drops to one cruiser and two destroyers.

September. **Pacific ship redeployment to Atlantic begins.** 99 Pacific Fleet ships report to the Atlantic Fleet. 23 are retained in active service.

September 1-2. **Seventh Fleet China shows of force.** The Seventh Fleet demonstrates off Tsingtao, North China. Carrier aircraft overfly Shanghai.

September 2. **Japan surrender ceremony.** Japanese Surrender document is formally signed on board USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. FADM Nimitz signs for the United States, ADM Fraser for the United Kingdom, ADM Helfrich for the Netherlands.

September 4. **Fifth Fleet Japan landings and occupation.** Fifth Fleet LSTs land Sixth Army advance parties on Kyushu, to begin the occupation of western Honshu, Kyushu, and Shikoku.

September 6. **North Pacific Force North Japan landing and occupation operations.** Task Force 92 (RADM Brown), the Northern Pacific Force of cruisers, destroyers, and escort carriers, begins a token occupation of Northern Honshu and Hokkaido. Eighth Army occupation troops will arrive beginning September 25.

September 8. **Seventh Fleet Korea landing and occupation.** The Seventh Fleet's 7th Amphibious Force (VADM Barbey on the AGC *Catoc-tin*) begins landing the US Army XXIV Corps to occupy South Korea and take the Japanese surrender there. Air escort for this operation and subsequent Seventh Fleet landings in northern China is provided by TF 72, comprising two fleet carriers, a light carrier, cruisers, and destroyers.

September 9-September 1, 1946. **Pacific Fleet troop repatriation operations.** "Operation Magic Carpet." The U.S. Navy uses warships to return troops to the United States in the Pacific.

September 10. **Seventh Fleet command ship is amphibious force command ship.** ADM Kinkaid transfers his flag from a cruiser to *Rocky Mount* (AGC 3). *Rocky Mount* will be relieved November 9 by *Estes* (AGC 12), which will remain as Seventh Fleet command ship and Naval Forces Western Pacific command ship until 29 January, 1948, when she will depart Tsingtao for San Francisco.

September 15. **Commander, Fifth Fleet arrives in Japan.** Spruance lands from his new flagship *New Jersey* at Wakayama, at the eastern end of the Inland Sea, on Honshu.

September 19. **FIFTH FLEET ASSUMES ALL NAVY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN.** ADM Raymond P. Spruance, Commander Fifth Fleet, enters Yokosuka on flagship *New Jersey* and relieves ADM Halsey of his occupation duties, although not of command of the Third Fleet. Spruance retains his headquarters on board *New Jersey*, instead of moving into Halsey's recently vacated quarters at Yokosuka. Fifth Fleet absorbs Third Fleet occupation duties, and those of Commander, North Pacific Force as well.

Command responsibilities include landing and supporting the occupation army, the disposal of Japanese chemical warfare weapons, and the sweeping of thousands of American and Japanese mines in the waters surrounding Japan. Spruance will be relieved in November.

September 18. **THIRD FLEET RETURNS TO THE UNITED STATES.** ADM Halsey flies to Pearl Harbor, then sails to California, bringing with him the Third Fleet command.

September 19. **Seventh Fleet China port visit.** A Seventh Fleet Task Force under RADM Jerrauld Wright and a Royal Navy Pacific Fleet force arrive at Shanghai, China. ADM Kinkaid, the Seventh Fleet commander, establishes Seventh Fleet headquarters at Shanghai. Port Director RADM Miles USN assigns the #1 buoy, opposite the Bund, to RADM Wright's flagship, and later to ADM Kinkaid's (*Rocky Mount, an AGC*) instead of to the British flagship as pre-war custom would have dictated.

September 29. **NAVY DEPARTMENT RE-ORGANIZED.** By Executive Order, President Truman revokes the orders establishing the headquarters of the Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, in the Navy Department and outlines the principal duties of the CNO, strengthening the position of the Secretary of the Navy.

September 30. **Seventh Fleet China landings and occupation.** (Operation "Beleager"). The Seventh Fleet's Seventh Amphibious Force

lands the First Marine Division near Tientsin, China. The Marines entrain for Tientsin.

October. **Atlantic Fleet Latin America naval presence.** Commander Atlantic Fleet replaces the old South Atlantic Force cruiser USS *Omaha* with new *Cleveland* class cruiser *Little Rock*. *Little Rock* twice circumnavigates South America between November 1945 and March 1946.

October 10. **COMINCH DIS-ESTABLISHED.** Headquarters in Washington of the Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet (FADM E. J. King) is disestablished. Command of the operating forces is passed to the CNO.

October 12. **Seventh Fleet China landing and occupation.** The Seventh Fleet lands the Sixth Marine Division at Tsingtao, North China

October-February 1946. **Atlantic Fleet troop repatriation operations.** "Operation Magic Carpet." The US Navy uses warships to return troops to the United States in the Atlantic.

October 15. **MEDITERRANEAN HEADQUARTERS SHIFT.** VADM Glassford transfers the administrative headquarters of U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters, to Palermo, Sicily, from Naples.

October 17. **THIRD FLEET RE-DESIGNATED.** The Third Fleet, now at San Pedro, California, is redesignated a reserve fleet.

October 18. **COMMANDER EASTERN SEA FRONTIER DUTIES EXPAND.** CNO places the Commander Eastern Sea Frontier and Commander Sixteenth Fleet, now ADM Kinkaid, in command of all East Coast naval districts, and designates him an Atlantic Fleet task Force commander, CTF 20.

October 27-December. **Seventh Fleet China sealift operation.** The Seventh Fleet re-deploys Chinese Nationalist occupation forces from North Vietnam to China.

November. **NEW MEDITERRANEAN FLAGSHIP.** The brand-new cruiser *Providence* replaces the obsolescent *Memphis*.

November 19. **SEVENTH FLEET REVERTS TO THREE-STAR COMMAND.** VADM Daniel Barbey relieves ADM William Kinkaid as Commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet. Kinkaid has been a full admiral since April.

November 22. **THIRD FLEET BECOMES A TWO-STAR COMMAND.** Admiral Halsey is relieved as Commander Third Fleet by Rear Admiral H. F. Kingman on the battleship *South Dakota* at Long Beach. ADM William Halsey, having been a full admiral since November 1942, and therefore for the entire time he was in command of the Third Fleet, will receive a fifth star in December for his accomplishments. He will not exercise any command authority, making public appearances until his retirement in April, 1947.

December 6. **Naval Forces North West African Waters Greece port visit.** A U.S. Navy Mediterranean task force visits Athens for the first time since before the war. This begins postwar U.S. Navy operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. U.S. naval activity during World War II had largely been confined to the Western Mediterranean.

December 15. **FADM Nimitz to CNO.** FADM Chester Nimitz relieves FADM King as Chief of Naval Operations.

December 23. **MEDITERRANEAN HEADQUARTERS SHIFT.** RADM James transfers the administrative headquarters of U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African Waters, from Palermo, Sicily back to Naples.

## 1946

January 12-13. **Atlantic Fleet Haiti show of force.** A task force of four destroyers is positioned off Haiti during a coup against the president.

January 18. **FIFTH FLEET REVERTS TO THREE STAR COMMAND.** VADM Frederick Sherman relieves ADM John Towers as Commander, U.S. Fifth Fleet. The Fifth Fleet had been a four-star command since the promotion of Spruance to full admiral in March 1944.

January 19. **NAVAL FORCES JAPAN ESTABLISHED.** Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Japan, headquartered in Tokyo, assumes overall control of naval responsibilities in Japan. He will change his title to Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Far East a year later, and move his headquarters to Yokosuka in 1952.

January 28. **FIFTH FLEET FLAGSHIP CHANGES.** *Iowa* relieves *New Jersey*.

February 1. **MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND REDESIGNATION.** U.S. Naval Forces North African Waters is re-designated U.S. Naval Forces Mediterranean (NavMed), remaining a Twelfth Fleet task force. Its area of operations is expanded to include the Eastern Mediterranean. It continues under allied operational control by SACMED for operations relating to the occupation of Italy and the various Trieste crises. It will be redesignated the Sixth Task Fleet in June 1948 and the Sixth Fleet in February 1950.

February 20. **New large carrier *Midway* joins Atlantic Fleet.** The first of three large carriers built during World War II but not entering service until the Cold War, *Midway* begins fleet operations as the flagship of Carrier Division 1 in the North Atlantic. No *Midway*-class carrier will operate in the Pacific, however, until 1955.

February 20. **NORTHERN EUROPEAN FORCE ESTABLISHED.** The new heavy cruiser *Helena* and two new destroyers arrive in the United Kingdom and begin visiting British ports, under the operational control of Commander Twelfth Fleet, who retains his headquarters in London and flies his flag at sea on the cruiser. This is the first postwar re-enforcement of US forces in Europe and the beginning of a permanent naval presence in British waters that will last until 1956.

March 1. **EIGHTH FLEET RE-ESTABLISHED.** The Eighth Fleet is established again, under VADM Marc Mitscher, as an Atlantic Fleet striking fleet for Atlantic and Mediterranean operations, based on the east coast of the United States.

March 1. **TENTH FLEET RE-ESTABLISHED.** VADM Bernard Bieri is assigned as Commander, with responsibilities for the Caribbean

and South Atlantic. The Tenth Fleet will be dis-established the following June.

March 6-22. **Atlantic Fleet Task Force Arctic deployment.** (Operation "Frostbite"). The new large carrier *Midway* and other Atlantic Fleet warships deploy to the Labrador Sea and the Davis Strait. This begins a series of post-war Atlantic and Pacific Fleet cold weather operations.

March 23. **COMNAVFORJAP Japan minesweeping operations.** Commander, Naval Forces Japan assumes control of minesweeping tasks from Commander Fifth Fleet and COMINPAC.

March 25. **FIFTH FLEET RETURNS TO THE UNITED STATES.** Commander, Fifth Fleet and flagship *Iowa* sail for California from Japan, leaving Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Japan and Commander, Seventh Fleet as the two U.S. Navy operational commanders in the western Pacific.

March 31-May 1. **NavMed Mediterranean deployment.** A task force including the NavEu and NavMed cruisers and destroyers and centered on the battleship *Missouri* (flagship of Commander Twelfth Fleet) calls at Istanbul, Turkey, and Athens, Greece, in a powerful re-assertion of American interest in the Eastern Mediterranean. Throughout the war and for some time before, such American naval activity as there was in the Mediterranean had been largely confined to the west and center. It calls also at Gibraltar, Naples, Algiers and Tangier.

ComNavEu/ComTwelfthFleet, ADM Hewitt, the Navy theater and numbered fleet commander, deployed forward on *Missouri* as his flagship from London for her Mediterranean cruise, April 1-24.

April 18-May 17. **Eighth Fleet exercises.** ADM Mitscher on the carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt* conducts an Eighth Fleet exercise, the first post-war fleet exercise. President Truman attends. Ships include three carriers and a battleship.

May 30. **Naval administration returns to Guam.** The military government of Guam is abolished.

June 29-July. **Twelfth Fleet Northern Europe deployment.** Six Twelfth Fleet cruisers and destroyers visit Scandinavian, Low Country, and British ports, with ADM Hewitt, ComNavEu, on board. This is the first postwar U.S. Navy presence in northern European waters, and the first into the Baltic, where visits are made to Stockholm, Sweden.

A cruiser will remain in northern European waters through 1951, homeported at Plymouth, UK, as the flagship for ComNavEu. This arrangement will end when CINCNELM – successor to ComNavEu – moves temporarily to Naples in 1951. His successors, following the return of CINCNELM to London, will not have dedicated flagships permanently assigned.

July. **NavMed Trieste show of force.** The NavMed light cruiser *Fargo*, with ComNavMed embarked, is dispatched to Trieste, in the wake of Yugoslav obstructions of the allied military government. This is the first postwar port visit at Trieste by a major U.S. combatant and the beginning of a continuous U.S. Navy cruiser-destroyer presence (the Adriatic Task Group or Northern Adriatic Group) off Trieste till the 1950s. These operations are under the allied operational control of the SACMED.

July. **Seventh Fleet Korea interdiction operation.** Two Seventh Fleet destroyers begin operations to interdict the movement of Communist personnel and supplies by sea into the zone of American occupation in southern Korea. Commander, Naval Forces, Far East will assume responsibility for the patrols in 1947.

July 1-25. **Pacific Fleet Joint Task Force nuclear test operations.** (Operation "Crossroads"). Joint Task Force One under ADM Blandy conducts nuclear effects tests on warships at Bikini in the Marshall Islands.

August 8-October 4. **Eighth Fleet carrier deployment to the Mediterranean.** The new large carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt* deploys to the Mediterranean, including a call at Athens. This is the beginning of the US Navy carrier presence and operations in the Mediterranean.

October. **COMNAVMEDEVOPS MOVES AFLOAT.** The new tender *Grand Canyon* arrives at Naples to be the ComNavMed flagship and station ship. Minimum U.S. naval facilities are to remain ashore in Naples. This begins afloat command of U.S. naval forces in the Mediterranean.

November 1-6. **South America showing of the flag.** A five-ship task group, including the battleship *Wisconsin*, visits Chile for inauguration of the president following a disputed election. It also makes stops in Peru, Panama, and Venezuela.

December 10. **Naval Forces Europe United Kingdom station ship assigned.** The first NavEu station ship in the United Kingdom, *Mercury*, arrives on station at Plymouth, to support ComNavEu. A U.S. Navy station ship will remain in the United Kingdom till the end of the decade.

December 14. **UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN APPROVED.** President Truman approves the first Unified Command Plan, setting up as unified commands the Far East Command, Pacific Command, Alaskan Command, Northeast Command, Atlantic Fleet, Caribbean Command, and European Command.

The Far East Command, under General of the Army MacArthur, will include all U.S. forces in and around Japan, Korea, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, the Marianas, and the Bonins. The Navy had opposed such an expansive area, and it will be progressively reduced in subsequent years, to the benefit of the Pacific Command, until the command is abolished in 1957.

The Pacific Command is made responsible for the central and eastern Pacific only. Naval Forces Western Pacific (the Seventh Fleet before January 1, 1947) is subordinate to CINCPAC as well as a sector commander of all military activities within and surrounding China, reporting to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When operating in Japanese waters or in the event of an emergency in Northeast Asia, however Naval Forces Western Pacific will report to General MacArthur, CINCPAC. No responsibility is assigned for Pacific areas south of Hong Kong. Naval Forces Western Pacific normally will include one cruiser division, three destroyer divisions, a small amphibious task group,

and logistic support ships, including station ships at Tsingtao and Shanghai.

The Northeast Command will include US forces assigned to Newfoundland, Labrador, and Greenland. The Caribbean Command will include US forces in Panama and the Antilles (less certain fleet units and facilities).

Each unified commander will be supported by a joint staff and his command organized into service components. Most unified commanders are also the commanders of a service component, e.g., the Pacific and Atlantic fleet commanders (until 1958 and 1985 respectively). All commands are to be under the operational control of the JCS, through designated service chiefs as executive agents. (The CNO will act as if he were designated executive agent for Seventh Fleet activities regarding China, which he never formally will be.)

## 1947

January 1. **UNIFIED COMMANDS ACTIVATED.** The Far East Command, Pacific Command and Alaskan Command are activated, with the Chief of Staff of the Army, the CNO, and the Commanding General of the Army Air Force, respectively, as executive agents.

In the Far East, General MacArthur is now Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), responsible for the occupation of Japan; Commander in Chief, Far East Command (CINCFE, unified commander of all U.S. armed forces in the Far East theater; and Commander in Chief, Army Forces Far East, the Far East Command's subordinate army component commander.

January 1. **NUMBERED FLEETS ABOLISHED.** All numbered fleets except two "task fleets", one in each ocean, are abolished, incident to the continuing downizing of the Navy. The Seventh Fleet becomes Naval Forces Western Pacific. The Eighth Fleet becomes the U.S. Second Task Fleet. U.S. Naval Forces Europe/Twelfth Fleet is re-designated simply U.S. Naval Forces, Europe (ComNavEu).

January 1. **COMNAVFE ESTABLISHED.** Commander U.S. Naval Activities, Japan, established in January 1946, becomes Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Far East (ComNavFE), the naval component commander of the unified Far East Command, with headquarters in Tokyo. The title will change again to Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Japan in July 1957. Naval Forces, Far East, will normally be assigned a cruiser, four destroyers and support ships and craft, and be responsible for conducting patrols off Korea initiated in July 1946 and previously the responsibility of the Seventh Fleet. Headquarters will shift to Yokosuka in 1952.

January (late)-Spring. **BATTLESHIP IS SECOND TASKFLT FLAGSHIP.** *Missouri* is Second Task Fleet flagship for fleet exercises.

March. **Atlantic Fleet Uruguay port visit.** A cruiser and four destroyers visit Montevideo to express support for the new government during inauguration celebrations.

March 1. **NAVAL FORCES EUROPE RE-DESIGNATION.** The Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe (ComNavEu) is redesignated Commander, Naval Forces Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (ComNavEastLant).

March 6. **NavForWestPac Southeast Asia Presence Begins.** CNO Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz orders Commander, U.S. Forces, Western Pacific to begin "showing his flag at Singapore and other points in that direction."

March 15. **EUROPEAN COMMAND RE-DESIGNATED.** The U.S. Forces European Theater (USFET) is re-designated the European Command (EUCOM)

July 26. **ALLIED MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND TERMINATED.** The Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean (SACMED) appointment is terminated. U.S. naval forces in the Mediterranean are no longer under Royal Navy operational control when supporting allied commitments in Italy.

July 28-September 28. **Atlantic Fleet Cuban interdiction operations.** U.S. Navy ships conduct interdiction operations aimed at intercept-

ing Cuban-sponsored anti-Trujillo forces. Operations increase in the Caribbean to influence the Cuban government: U.S. Navy aircraft keep the revolutionary force under air surveillance and destroyer Division 167 established a picket line off eastern Cuba. Cuba disbands the revolutionary forces on September 28.

August 7. **NAVMED FLAGSHIP SHIFT.** The Commander, Naval Forces Mediterranean flagship is changed from a tender to a light cruiser. The flagship now operates with the fleet at sea.

August 30–September 28. **Atlantic Fleet Brazil port visit and presidential diplomatic support.** The battleship USS *Missouri*, two destroyers and a transport visit Rio de Janeiro in connection with President Truman's participation in an Inter-American Conference which will yield the Rio Treaty on hemispheric peace and security. *Missouri* transports the President and his family back to the United States.

September. **Chile port visit.** Three U.S. Navy submarines visit Valparaiso for Independence Day.

September 18. **ARMED FORCES UNIFIED.** The National Security Act of 1947 becomes effective, unifying Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force under the aegis of a single National Military Establishment.

November 1. **MORE UNIFIED COMMANDS ACTIVATED.** CINCARIB and CINCLANTFLT are activated, and the *Commander*, U.S. Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (COMNAVEASTLANT) is designated *Commander-in-Chief*, US Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (CINCNAVEASTLANT) and is placed under the direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This first is under the Chief of Staff of the Army as executive agent, the other two under the CNO. On December 1 the Atlantic Fleet becomes the Atlantic Command, as a unified command.

## 1948

January. **Aviator commands NAVMED.** VADM Forrest Sherman relieves VADM Bernard Bieri as Commander of U.S. Naval Forces, Mediterranean (later the Sixth Task Fleet and Sixth Fleet).  
Sherman

is the first in a series of 16 naval aviators who will command the Sixth Fleet until 1970, when a surface warfare officer, VADM Isaac Kidd, will replace him.

January 5-March 12. **NavMed amphibious deployment.** The 2nd Marines (Rein) deploys from North Carolina on an APA and an AKA for further assignment to NavMed ships in the Mediterranean. This is the first assignment of Marine air/ground forces in the Mediterranean.

January 20. **U.S. NAVAL FORCE PERSIAN GULF ESTABLISHED.** CINCNAVEASTLANTMED ADM Richard Conolly establishes Task Force 126, U.S. Naval Force, Persian Gulf, formalizing and improving the Navy's postwar command structure in the Gulf. The command initially consists solely of Navy tankers in the Gulf loading oil for US Navy ships in the Mediterranean and the Pacific, and is commanded by the Senior Officer Present Afloat (SOPA). From this command, in stages, will grow the Fifth Fleet of 1995.

The Task Force will receive a permanent commander in October 1948, be re-designated the Persian Gulf Forces in June 1949, and become the Middle East Force in August 1949. Shore support will be provided by the British base, HMS *Jufair*, augmented by a U.S. Navy shore element of increasing size, until the British leave the Gulf in 1971.

February 2. **OPNAV SHIFTS HEADQUARTERS.** CNO Denfeld and VCNO Radford decide to move OPNAV from the Main Navy building in Washington to the Pentagon.

March. **Persian Gulf carrier deployments.** The fleet carrier *Valley Forge*, on a round-the-world cruise with two destroyers, is the first large Navy carrier to enter the Persian Gulf, visiting Ras Tanura, Saudi Arabia. Another task force, including a CVE and a submarine, visits the Gulf in August 1948, and the fleet carrier *Tarawa* (CV-40) and two destroyers call at Bahrain and Jidda in January 1949.

Thus three *Essex*-class carriers and an escort carrier all deployed in the Gulf in 1948-9, in an extraordinary demonstration of U.S. interest in

the region. No large carrier will enter the Gulf again, however, until *Constellation* in 1974.

**March. NAVY AND OTHER SERVICES DELINEATE FUNCTIONS.**

The Key West Agreement is concluded among the Joint Chiefs of Staff, providing a detailed statement of primary and secondary service missions. The Navy is assigned primary combat at sea, the Marines amphibious warfare. The Navy in carrying out its function has the right to strike inland targets and atomic weapons, but not develop a strategic air force. Secondary missions, such as strategic bombing by naval aviation, will not be able to be used to justify the existence of naval aviation in the first place. Only its primary mission, support of operations at sea, can do that.

This Agreement is the result of acrimonious inter-service debate, and will be modified shortly by the Newport Agreement of August 1948.

**April. Eritrea Naval Communications Station established.** (Eritrea is occupied by the British at the time, but will become federated with Ethiopia in 1952). This facility, at Asmara, will provide high-frequency ship-to-shore communications for U.S. naval vessels in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, North Arabian Sea, and Eastern Mediterranean until the end of 1973, when it will be replaced by a station on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia.

**April 29. NAVEASTLANTMED Norway carrier deployment.** The fleet carrier *Valley Forge*, a cruiser and five other US Navy warships visit Oslo and Bergen, Norway. *Valley Forge*, on a round the world cruise, is the first US Navy carrier visit to Norway.

**May. Marine Experimental Helicopter Squadron helicopters operate from an Atlantic Fleet ship.** For the first time, five U.S. Marine Corps helicopters lift 66 Marines from the deck of the escort carrier *Palau* at sea to Camp Lejeune

**May 1. "CINCNELM" BECOMES SHORT TITLE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, U.S. NAVAL FORCES EASTERN ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN.** It replaces "CINCNAVEASTLANTMED".

June 1. **NAVAL AIR TRANSPORT SERVICE NOW PART OF AIR FORCE COMMAND.** The Military Air Transport Service (MATS) is created out of the Air Force Air Transport Service and the Navy Naval Air Transport Service (the latter created in 1941). U.S. military air transport is now consolidated under the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. MATS will become the Military Airlift Command in 1966, which will be designated a joint Specified Command from 1977 to 1988.

June 1. **SIXTH TASK FLEET DESIGNATED.** U.S. Naval Forces, Mediterranean/Task Force 125 is re-designated the Sixth Task Fleet. This changes the nomenclature in use since February 1946.

June 19–April 1949. **Sixth Task Fleet Mediterranean peace-making support operation.** Three U.S. Sixth Task Fleet destroyers and one French Navy patrol ship are assigned to the United Nations mediator for the Palestine truce, in and off Haifa, Israel. They are designated Task Force 167.

August. **Navy and other service missions clarified.** Modifying the Key West Agreement of March 1948, the Navy and the other services agree that the Navy will not be precluded from pursuing a mission as an appropriate adjunct to its own missions even if another service is assigned the same task as a primary mission. This confirms Navy access to atomic weapons and strategic bombing planning.

October. **CINCNELM Indian sub-continent showing the flag.** A NELM surface task force of a cruiser and two destroyers visits Indian and Pakistani ports with CINCNELM embarked. This is the first visit by U.S. Navy warships to the sub-continent since the independence of India and Pakistan in August 1947.

October 29. **PERSIAN GULF FORCE GETS PERMANENT COMMANDER.** U.S. Naval Force Persian Gulf (TF 126) is reorganized and a permanent commander appointed. The first incumbent holds the rank of commander, but will be relieved by a captain in December 1948. From October 1948 to April 1949, a hydrographic survey group will operate in the Gulf as part of Task Force 126, with *Mauzy* (AGS-16), a survey ship, serving as Force flagship.

November. **Naval Forces Western Pacific China landing.** Naval Forces, Western Pacific lands 1,500 Marines to reinforce the U.S. naval base at Tsingtao, China.

November. **Naval Forces Western Pacific China ad hoc coalition show of force.** Naval Forces Western Pacific and Royal Navy cruisers are jointly sent to Shanghai to protect U.S. and UK nationals.

## 1949

**SHIPS DEPART PANAMA.** Submarine Squadron Six is transferred from Coco Solo, Panama, to Norfolk, Virginia, ending U.S. permanently based combatant ship presence in Latin America.

January 3–March 3. **Sixth Task Fleet Mediterranean submarine deployment.** USS *Spinax* deploys to the Mediterranean. This is the first submarine to deploy with the Sixth Task Fleet.

February. **Naval Forces Western Pacific China base withdrawal.** Naval Forces Western Pacific abandons its naval base at Tsingtao, China, and the Marines withdraw from Tientsin. Some U.S. warships remain, however.

March 28. **Secretary Forrestal resigns.** Secretary of Defense Forrestal leaves office, to be replaced by Louis A. Johnson. This marks the beginning of a series of events leading to the “Revolt of the Admirals”.

April. **SEAPLANE TENDERS BEGIN DUTY AS PERSIAN GULF COMMAND SHIPS.** *Duxbury Bay* (AVP-38) relieves *Maury* (AGS-16), as flagship of the Persian Gulf Force. This begins a rotation of three new seaplane tenders to the Gulf as command ships for four-month periods that will continue until 1966. *Greenwich Bay* (AVP 41), which will relieve *Duxbury Bay* in March 1949, will be specially modified for hot-weather operations, as will be her successors. The solitary flagships – seaplane tenders without seaplanes – will be augmented by destroyers beginning in 1956.

April 4. **North Atlantic Treaty signed.** The United States joins a defensive alliance with Canada and 10 West European countries. This is the

first peacetime military alliance into which the United States has entered.

**Late April. Naval Forces Western Pacific China ad hoc coalition show of force.** Additional Naval Forces Western Pacific and Royal Navy cruisers are sent to Shanghai, China, to protect American and British nationals.

**April 25. Naval Forces Western Pacific China casualty evacuation.** The U.S. Navy hospital ship *Repose* leaves Shanghai for Hong Kong, carrying Royal Navy seamen wounded in a Chinese Communist attack on a British Yangtse gunboat.

**May 25. Naval Forces Western Pacific China naval presence ends.** Naval Forces, Western Pacific cruisers leave Shanghai and Tsingtao. Commander, Naval Forces Western Pacific repositions his forces off Okinawa, then in the Philippines. No U.S. Navy ships will operate from a Chinese Nationalist port again until the Formosa Patrol is based at Keelung, Taiwan in August 1950. No U.S. Navy ships will visit the Chinese mainland again until 1986.

**June 26. PERSIAN GULF FORCES DESIGNATED.** Task Force 126/ U.S. Naval Force Persian Gulf, established in January 1948, is renamed Persian Gulf Forces, with operational command of American naval forces in the Persian Gulf, under CINCNELM. Still commanded by a captain, it will be renamed the Middle East Force in August 1949.

**July 18. Atlantic Fleet Norwegian Sea submarine deployment.** Four SUBDEVGRU TWO submarines deploy for the first US Navy submarine-on-submarine exercise, in the Norwegian and Barents Seas. A fire will destroy *Cochino* during this cruise, off Norway's North Cape.

**August 1. SEVENTH TASK FLEET DESIGNATED.** Assigned operational responsibilities in Western Pacific and Southeast Asian waters by the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, the Seventh Task Fleet replaces Naval Forces Western Pacific, created 1 January, 1947.

There are now four numbered task fleets, a pattern that will continue until 1995, when the Fifth Fleet is created.

The word "Task" will be dropped from the title in February 1950.

.August 16. **MIDDLE EAST FORCE DESIGNATED.** The Persian Gulf Forces is re-designated the Middle East Force, still commanded by a captain and still normally consisting of a lone seaplane tender. It will become a flag officer command in April 1951. The Middle East Force designation will continue through 1995 and the creation of the Fifth Fleet. After that it will be used as the designation for the Fifth Fleet's permanent destroyer task force.

September 3. **NELM Spain port visits.** Two NELM cruisers and two destroyers visit El Ferrol, Spain, the first U.S. Navy visits there since the Spanish Civil War. CINCNELM is on board and confers with General Franco.

October 1. **MSTS CREATED.** The army and navy transportation services are combined to form the Military Sea Transportation Service, which will operate under the control of the Secretary of the Navy. The formal transfer of Army ships will take place in March 1950.

October 28. **CNO dismissed.** ADM Denfeld's resignation as CNO is announced. This marks the denouement of the "Revolt of the Admirals". Denfeld will be relieved by the Sixth Task Fleet Commander, ADM Forrest Sherman, the first of only two instances when a numbered fleet commander will fleet up directly to become CNO. (Anderson will be the second, in 1961).

Late 1949. **Seventh Task Fleet Pacific forward presence nadir.** The Seventh Task Fleet consists of five small combatants (down from two carriers and 34 combatants in 1947). NavFE is similarly constituted.



# **Mid-Cold War fleet operations (1950-1973): Two forward battle fleets, ready & used for peacetime presence & MOOTW, crisis response, & wars<sup>4</sup>**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

The Navy deployment pattern stabilized at two forward fleets and two home fleets, with separate anti-submarine warfare forces in each ocean and occasional smaller forces elsewhere, like the Middle East Force. The fleets in the Atlantic and Mediterranean acquired roles within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization command structure as well. Culminating a lengthy process, the U.S. Army European commander finally gained operational control over the Sixth Fleet. Both the Korean and Vietnam Wars were fought during this period, largely with World War II-era ships. While they caused numbers of Atlantic Fleet ships to occasionally operate forward in the Pacific, they did not fundamentally affect the command structure or general disposition of the fleets.

### **Fleet size and composition**

Fleet size fluctuated between 630 and 930 ships over this period, rising from a low of 634 ships at the start of the Korean War to a new high of 1,122 at the end of the war in 1953, back down to 812 ships by

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4. No attempt has been made to chronicle every operation short of war conducted by U.S. naval forces during this period, especially after 1950. For details of such operations, see Adam Siegel, *The Use of Naval Forces in the Post-War era: U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps Crisis Response Activity, 1946-1990*, CRM 90-246, (Alexandria VA: Center for Naval Analyses, February 1991)

1960, then up to 900 in 1962, then down to 857 in 1963, and finally up to 932 ships by the end of U.S. direct involvement in the Vietnam War in 1973.

Carrier force levels, however, reflected first growth and then decline, going from 11 in 1950 to a peak of 26 by 1962, and then down to 16 by 1973. Submarine force levels echoed the carrier numbers, but peaked earlier, going from a low of 72 in 1950 to a high of 113 in 1957, then down to 84 in 1973.

Qualitatively, however, the fleet was greatly improved, as a new generation of warships entered the inventory, including super-carriers with jet aircraft, nuclear submarines, guided missile destroyers and cruisers, new minesweepers and new-design 20-knot amphibious ships.

In 1960 a new ship type – the ballistic missile submarine – enters the fleet. By 1967, 41 will be in service.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

The Korean War and its aftermath set the template for the Cold War navy: The centerpiece was the maintenance of two full-up main battle fleets in the Mediterranean and the Western Pacific for the entire spectrum of warfare: peacetime MOOTW, crisis, and wartime operations. There was a main battle fleet on the East Coast too, with operational responsibilities in the Caribbean, as a NATO striking force, and as a training fleet for the fleet in the Mediterranean. It normally deployed once a year in a major NATO exercise off Norway. And there was a fleet in the eastern Pacific, which focused on its training role for deployers to the Western Pacific. ASW forces in each ocean became organized separately from the numbered fleets during this period, centering on a fleet of World War II-era carriers converted to ASW work.

A small force was maintained forward in the Persian Gulf and, for a time, in Northern Europe. Naval Forces Far East became Naval Forces Japan, and dwindled, but did not disappear (*Pueblo* was a NAVFORJ asset in 1968).

The maintenance of multi-carrier battle fleets in the Mediterranean and western Pacific mark a return to fleet peacetime forward operations that characterized the deployment posture of the fleet in the period before World War I. Those deployments, however, except for the battleships in the Far East during the first decade of the twentieth century, were intermittent. The Cold War Sixth and Seventh Fleets became permanent.

This permanence continues in the post-Cold War environment. The Sixth and Seventh Fleets, older than almost two-thirds of the independent countries in existence as of 1996, appear as permanent elements of the international landscape.

Permanence has not meant rigidity, however. Atlantic Fleet ships have often conducted deployments to the Pacific when required, especially

during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Pacific Fleet ships were transferred temporarily to the Atlantic.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war

There were two fundamental missions: Prepare for and deter a major global war with the Soviets; and conduct a wide range of MOOTW, crises interventions and at least one limited war, in Vietnam. The geographical scope for U.S. Navy MOOTW expanded from its focus in the first half of the twentieth century on the Caribbean and China, to now encompass almost the entire globe. This was due to the globalization of American security interests and the demise of the colonial powers' navies and empires.

As the Cold War wore on, the fleets maintained routine deployment schedules, broken constantly by crises and occasionally – in Korea and Vietnam – by wars in Asia. In the last decade of the period, despite the war in Vietnam, the fleet dwindled in size, as World War II-era ships were forced to retire.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

Throughout the period, the Marines sought and achieved more and more autonomy from the Navy. The Commandant, a four-star officer only since World War II, became first a partial and then a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Within the Department of the Navy he became a true equal to the CNO, not a subordinate. In Vietnam, the Marines fought as a separate component under the sub-theater commander, not as subordinates to the Navy component.

Without surrendering its claim to the amphibious assault mission, the role of the Marines in the Cold War drew upon all the Corps's earlier missions. The Marines developed a role as the nation's "Force in Readiness", using the amphibious warfare mission as the foundation (but not the limit) for this function.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

Joint organizational structures increased inexorably throughout the Cold War era, and the ability of naval officers to operationally command and control their forces declined. Army control of warships in Northeast Asia ended in the late 1950s, but the overall commander of the Sixth Fleet became the army officer who was USCINCEUR. The service chiefs, including the CNO, were taken out of the operational chain of command in 1958. Creating the biennial revisions to the Unified Command Plan (which divided up the world among the unified - and for a time, specified - CINCs) became an often ferocious locus of inter-service rivalry.

While deployment posture of the numbered fleets and smaller independent forces stayed fairly constant throughout the Cold War, this was not true at the next higher echelon of command. While CINCLANTFLT and CINCPACFLT retained and even expanded their authority over the Second and First Fleets, COMNAVFE lost its operational control of the Seventh Fleet to CINCPACFLT, and CINC-

NELM (later CINCUSNAVEUR) lost its authority as an independent specified commander reporting directly back to Washington, becoming – with the Sixth Fleet – unequivocally subordinate to USCINCEUR.

The numbered fleets operated as distinct entities, and thought of themselves principally as operating *in support of* (or being supported by) comparable ground and air force entities, not integrated with them. In the hot wars of Korea and Vietnam, naval aviators and Air Force officers co-existed uneasily, devising “route packages” to divide targets up geographically into zones.

### **Fleet headquarters, flagships and staffs**

The four numbered fleets generally had late-World War II-era cruisers as flagships, from their post-war establishment until the late 1970s. The Middle East Force flagships rotated among a pool of modified seaplane tenders, also until the 1970s. *Iowa*-class battleships were often used as numbered flagships before their second retirement in the 1950s, (especially by COMSEVENTHFLT during the Korean War) but were not fitted for flagship duty when reactivated during the Vietnam War or in the 1980s.

## **Operational chronology**

### **1950**

**Navy ends its government of Guam.** The Organic Act of 1950 transfers jurisdiction for the Territory of Guam from the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Interior.

January 29. **Seventh Task Fleet Western Pacific carrier deployment.** The carrier *Boxer* joins the Seventh Task Fleet in the Western Pacific, resuming a U.S. carrier presence in the Western Pacific gapped since 1947.

She will operate principally in Southeast Asia, out of Subic Bay, Philippines, visiting Saigon with two destroyers in March. Carrier aircraft will overfly the city, showing support for the Bao Dai government but triggering rioting. Other visits will quickly follow to Indonesia, French Cambodia, Thailand, and British Singapore and Hong Kong. An amphibious task group is also deployed to ComNavFE in Japan to conduct a program of amphibious training with the Eighth Army.

February 12. **SIXTH AND SEVENTH FLEETS DESIGNATED.** The Sixth and Seventh Task Fleets are re-designated the Sixth and Seventh Fleets.

March 1. **Military Sea Transportation Service gets Army vessels.** MSTS, created in October 1949 to be the Defense Department's sole sealift agency, formally takes over the 71 ocean-going vessels of the Army and the Water Transport Service division of the Army's Transportation Corps. Army ships owned by the Maritime Commission are transferred on a loan basis. Ninety other ships serving Army commands overseas will transfer by June 1, 1950.

June 25. **Korean War begins.** North Korean troops invade the Republic of Korea. At the time, ComNavFE VADM C. Turner Joy, under CINCFE, has in Japan a 5-ship amphibious task force (Amphibious Forces, Far East) and Task Force 96, Naval Forces, Japan, including a cruiser, four destroyers, a Seventh Fleet submarine on loan, 10 minesweepers, and some support ships. They operate out of Yokosuka and Sasebo.

Also, COMSEVENTHFLT VADM Arthur D. Struble, under CINCPAC, has, in the South China Sea, one fleet carrier, one cruiser, eight destroyers, four submarines, two maritime patrol aircraft squadrons, and various support ships. They operate out of Subic Bay and Sangley Point, with the patrol aircraft at Sangley Point and on Guam.

In addition to *Valley Forge*, there are only two other active carriers in the Pacific Fleet.

June 26. **NavFE Korea evacuation operations.** Two NavFE destroyers evacuate 700 American and foreign citizens from Inchon, South Korea.

June 27. **SEVENTH FLEET OPCON SHIFTED.** Operational control of the Seventh Fleet, commanded by VADM Struble (who is, however, not present in the theater), is transferred from CINCPAC/CINCPACFLT, ADM Radford, to CINCFE/CINCAFFE, General MacArthur and ComNavFE, VADM Joy. For the first time, General of the Army MacArthur now has operational control over large carriers, exercised through ComNavFE and COMSEVENTHFLT.

The JCS will not give operational control of the Seventh Fleet back to CINCPACFLT until December 1954.

June 27. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan Straits interposition.** The Seventh Fleet is ordered to take station to prevent the invasion of Formosa and to ensure that Formosa is not used as a base of operations against the Chinese mainland.

June 28. **COMNAVFE MULTI-NATIONAL NAVAL RESPONSIBILITIES BEGIN.** The British government puts naval forces in the Far East at the disposal of the United States, in support of South Korea. They are placed under the operational control of ComNavFE.

By the time the war ends, warships from 11 nations – the United States, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Thailand, Colombia, Denmark, the Netherlands and France – will have participated. The largest contingent by far is American, but the Royal Navy will field two dozen ships, and Australia and Canada will contribute 3 or 4 ships each.

June 28. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan naval presence resumes.** A Seventh Fleet destroyer pays a port visit to Keelung, Taiwan, the first American naval vessel to visit in six months.

June 29. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan Strait interposition operations.** A carrier task force centering on *Valley Forge* conspicuously conducts the

first flight operations over the Strait and the city of Taipei, Taiwan, while steaming north through the Strait from Subic Bay to Okinawa, from which it can deploy to either Korea or Taiwan as necessary. There will not be a similar carrier sweep of the Strait until April 1951.

June 29–July 11. **NavFE/Seventh Fleet naval combat operations off Korea.** On June 29 the NavFE cruiser delivers the first naval gunfire support of the war, and on July 2 a surface engagement is fought between four North Korean torpedo boats and a U.S. cruiser and two British warships. On July 3–4, Seventh Fleet carrier *Valley Forge* and a British Pacific Fleet light carrier deliver the first naval air strikes of the war, attacking military installations in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang. On July 11, a cruiser lands sailors and marines in the first amphibious raid of the war.

July. **SECOND SIXTH FLEET CARRIER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.** *Midway* augments the Sixth Fleet. This is the beginning of a permanent two-carrier presence in the Mediterranean that will last until the end of the Cold War.

July 10. **UNITED NATIONS COMMAND ESTABLISHED.** At the request of the United Nations, President Truman directs General MacArthur to establish a United Nations Command (UNC) for operations against the North Korean invaders. From now on, General MacArthur, as CINCFE, will support the operations of the UNC, which he will command as CINCUNC. His primary responsibility as CINCFE remains defense of Japan, however.

July 16. **Seventh Fleet North Taiwan Strait air patrol.** Seventh Fleet maritime patrol aircraft flying from Okinawa begin daily surveillance flights of the northern Taiwan Strait and the nearby Chinese coast.

July 17. **Seventh Fleet South Taiwan Strait air patrol.** Seventh Fleet maritime patrol seaplanes based on a seaplane tender anchored off the Pescadores Islands begin patrols of the southern portion of the Strait. During heavy weather, the tender will shift to Okinawa and flights will be conducted from Sangley Point, Philippines.

July 18-19. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan Strait submarine surveillance.** *Catfish* and *Pickarel* deploy from Yokosuka on the first submarine surveillance patrol of the Taiwan Strait.

July 18. **CINCLANT GIVEN CARIBBEAN MISSIONS.** In changes to the Unified Command Plan suggested by the CNO and approved by the JCS, CINCLANT is given missions of protecting Caribbean sea communications, including anti-submarine warfare. Commander, Caribbean Sea Frontier at San Juan, Puerto Rico, will perform these missions for CINCLANT.

July 25. **NavFE Korea blockade.** An allied naval blockade of the Korean coast begins. ComNavFE Task Force 96.5 is organized to conduct the blockade. U.S. Navy ships covers the east coast; the west coast is assigned to British Commonwealth forces, to avoid U.S.-Chinese clashes, given U.S. non-recognition of Communist China and British recognition. The Royal Navy commander is given responsibility to supervise all non-American United Nations naval forces.

July 25. **NavFE/Seventh Fleet Korea close air support operations.** In response to an urgent request from Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker, commanding the U.S. Eighth Army, and at the direction of CINCFE, the Seventh Fleet carriers of Task Force 77 begin the unaccustomed task of providing tactical air support for the army forces holding the hard-pressed Pusan Perimeter.

Naval close air support is provided within an exclusive delineated sub-region, as most naval close air support and interdiction operations will be throughout the Korean war, at Navy insistence and over Air Force objections.

July 26. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan Strait surface patrols.** A task group from Japan, centering on the cruiser *Helena* and eventually destined for Korea, begins a sweep through the Taiwan Strait, the first such surface sweep.

August 3. **NavFE Korea escort carrier close air support operations.** In the initial operation, Marine air squadrons operate off *Sicily*.

August 4. **Seventh Fleet Formosa Patrol established.** A task group of one cruiser, two destroyers and an oiler, is based at Keelung, Taiwan. This is the first U.S. Navy force based at a Nationalist Chinese port since the evacuation of Tsingtao in May 1949.

September 12. **TASK FORCE 95 CREATED.** ComNavFE reorganizes and consolidates the units conducting the blockade of Korea into Task Force 95, the United Nations Blockading and Escort Force, under a U.S. Navy rear admiral. Subordinate to him, the blockade of the west coast remains a British Commonwealth responsibility, under a Royal Navy rear admiral, as it will throughout the war.

September 15. **NavFE/Seventh Fleet Korea amphibious assault.** (Operation "Chromite"). Joint Task Force 7, commanded by the Seventh Fleet Commander, makes an unrehearsed amphibious assault by Army and Marine Corps troops at Inchon. Air support is provided by naval forces only, from three carriers and two CVEs. The Joint Task Force is dissolved on September 21, when the Commanding General of X Corps assumes command ashore.

September 29. **NavFE ship mining.** The first of 10 U.S. Navy ships are mined off Korea, of which 5 will be sunk.

October. **Wonsan amphibious assault.** Joint Task Force 7 is held up by mines at sea from landing Marines at Wonsan, on the Korean east coast, until Korean troops capture the city from the landward side. Again, air support for the joint operation is provided by naval aviation only.

October. **NavFE/Seventh Fleet Western Pacific naval force growth.** Between NavFE and the Seventh Fleet, there are now 274 U.S. warships in the western Pacific (including Japanese-manned LSTs and merchant ships), up from 86 in June. These include four carriers, four escort and light carriers, one battleship, and 105 amphibious ships.

October 1. **U.S. NORTHEAST COMMAND CREATED.** Over Navy objections, the U.S. Northeast Command is established as a unified command, with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force as executive agent.

October 7. **COMSEVENTH FLEET FLAGSHIP CHANGES TO BATTLESHIP.** *Missouri* becomes the Seventh Fleet flagship. *Iowa*-class battleships will continue to act as Seventh Fleet flagships. Hurricanes had delayed *Missouri's* arrival in Korea until after the Inchon landing.

November 25. **Korea Chinese intervention.** A major Chinese attack commences on US and allied forces in Korea.

December 10. **NavFE/Seventh Fleet Korea amphibious evacuation.** Four Seventh Fleet Task Force 77 carriers support an amphibious evacuation operation to take Marines, Army troops, and ROK regiments out of Hungnam, North Korea, following an epic retrograde movement from Chosin.

## 1951

Early. **PANAMA CANAL APPROACHES DEFENSE ASSIGNMENT.** Protection of the Pacific approaches to the Panama Canal is reassigned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff from CINCLANT to CINCPAC.

February 5. **Sixth Fleet Mediterranean nuclear-capable strike deployment.** 6 AJ-1 Savage and 3 P2V-3C Neptune nuclear-capable strike aircraft deploy to U.S. Naval Air Station, Port Lyautey, Morocco, for Sixth Fleet carrier operations off *Franklin D. Roosevelt*. This is the first overseas deployment of a U.S. Navy heavy attack squadron.

February 12–April 3. **ROYAL NAVY COMMANDS KOREA BLOCKADE.** Royal Navy Vice Admiral Andrewes, just promoted, takes command temporarily of all Task Force 95 off Korea. This will be the only instance when U.S. Navy units will have served under non-U.S., UN-flagged command.

March 15. **Sixth Fleet Mediterranean amphibious deployment.** A USMC reinforced marine battalion on a 5-ship amphibious task force arrives in the Mediterranean. This is the beginning of a permanent deployment of a 5-6-ship U.S. Navy amphibious task force with the Sixth Fleet.

**April 2. NATO ALLIED COMMAND EUROPE ESTABLISHED.** NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Eisenhower activates Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) and takes command of NATO's new Allied Command Europe (ACE). Eisenhower is designated to take command of the Sixth Fleet in time of war, through a subordinate American southern European allied commander to be designated the following year.

**April 3. COMSEVENTHFLT MANDATE ENLARGED.** Commander, Seventh Fleet gains operational control over Task Force 92 (the Service Force), Task Force 95 (the Blockading Force) and all U.S. Navy destroyers in the Far East, as well as the carriers. Maritime patrol aviation, submarines, the Hunter-Killer Group, and the Amphibious Force remain under the direct operational control of ComNavFE, although these too will on occasion be assigned to the Seventh Fleet as need arises.

The Seventh Fleet remains under the operational control of CINCFE, however.

**April 9. EXPANSION OF CINCPAC AREA.** Over the strong objections of CINCFE, the President approves a JCS decision to transfer the Mariana, Bonin, and Volcano Islands from FECOM to PACOM.

**April 11. Relief of General MacArthur as CINCFE.** President Truman relieves General of the Army MacArthur of command of the U.S. Far East Command and his other commands. MacArthur will be replaced by General Matthew Ridgway, the Eighth Army commander in Korea.

**April 11-16. Seventh Fleet Taiwan Strait joint show of force.** A two-carrier Seventh Fleet task force conducts a sweep from Korean waters of the Taiwan Straits and the Chinese and Taiwan coasts, including air operations. A coordinated fly-in of aircraft to Taiwan is made by the 13th Air Force. This is the first such carrier sweep since June 1950; there will not be another until July 1952.

**April 21. MIDEASTFOR COMMAND UPGRADED.** RADM Harry D. Felt relieves CAPT Ernest M. Eller as Commander, Middle East Force, in the Persian Gulf. Henceforth the Middle East Force will be com-

manded by a flag officer, although he will not have much more than his lone converted seaplane tender flagship to command until 1956.

**June 1. FORMOSA PATROL FORCE RESTRUCTURED.** The destroyers out of Taiwan and the maritime patrol aircraft out of Okinawa and the Philippines are brought together in Task Force 72, the Formosa Patrol Force.

**June 18. CINCNELM BECOMES NATO CINCAFSOUTH AS WELL.** ADM Robert Carney, Commander in Chief, US Naval Forces Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (CINCNELM) is appointed, by SACEUR, NATO Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe (CINCAFSOUTH) and NATO Commander, Naval Forces Southern Europe (COMNAVSOUTH). This arrangement will last less than a year, however.

**June 20. CINCNELM/CINCAFSOUTH MOVES TO NAPLES, AFLOAT.** ADM Robert Carney, CINCNELM and (since June 18) NATO CINCAFSOUTH/COMNAVSOUTH under SACEUR, establishes his headquarters in Naples on an amphibious command ship.

**June-July. Ground lines stabilize in Korea.** The war of movement and the dynamic application of naval amphibious striking power is over. The war will continue until an armistice is concluded in July 1953. Naval contributions will center on air interdiction and naval gunfire operations.

**December 17-21. Sixth Fleet Yugoslavia naval presence.** COMSIXTH-FLT visits Rijeka on his cruiser flagship, then flies to Belgrade to meet with Marshal Tito. This is the first post-war U.S. Navy ship visit to Yugoslavia.

## 1952

**Siberian submarine surveillance operations.** U.S. Navy submarine intelligence surveillance operations against the Soviet Navy begin off the Siberian coast. Similar operations in the Barents Sea will begin in February 1957.

**Naval administration of Samoa terminated.** Administrative authority over American Samoa is transferred from the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Interior.

February–March. **Sixth Fleet in allied Mediterranean exercise.** (Exercise “Grand Slam”). Under the direction of CINCNELM in his NATO hat as COMNAVSOUTH, 200 warships from the Sixth Fleet and the British, French, and Italian navies participate in the first large allied exercise in the Mediterranean.

March 15. **FURTHER EXPANSION OF CINCPAC AREA.** The JCS make CINCPAC responsible for U.S. security interests in the Philippines, Taiwan, and the Pescadores, relieving CINCFE, who is fully committed to fighting the Korean War and continuing responsibilities in Japan. The Seventh Fleet’s Formosa Patrol operations are now under CINCPAC; its Korean War responsibilities remain under CINCFE.

April. **Japanese Peace Treaty signed.** U.S. Naval Forces, Far East is no longer part of an occupying force, but a guest in Japan.

April 10. **NATO ATLANTIC COMMAND ESTABLISHED.** ADM Lynde McCormick, CINCLANT and CINCLANTFLT, becomes the first NATO Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, with headquarters ashore in Norfolk, Virginia.

June 14. **CINCNELM and NATO CINCAFSOUTH SPLIT.** After less than a year as both CINCNELM and NATO CINCAFSOUTH, ADM Robert Carney relinquishes the US Navy position of CINCNELM to ADM Jerauld Wright. CINCNELM retains peacetime command of the Sixth Fleet. Carney remains in Naples as NATO CINCAFSOUTH/COMNAVSOUTH, under SACEUR. The positions will remain divided until combined again under ADM William Crowe in January 1983.

Carney retains the flagship, an amphibious command ship, at Naples, through 1953, whereupon it will not be relieved. CINCNELM also ceases to have a flagship permanent deployed in the theater, although he will often fly his flag on a variety of ships at sea over the coming years.

July 18–27. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan Strait show of force.** A Seventh Fleet two-carrier sweep and air reconnaissance operation from Subic Bay is made of the Strait and the Chinese coast, the first since April 1951. Navy aircraft draw small arms and anti-aircraft fire, and trigger Chinese Communist fighter sorties.

August 1. **CINCNELM BECOMES EUCOM COMPONENT.** Along with U.S. Air Forces in Europe, NELM is designated a subordinate component command of the U.S. European Command. NELM remains, however, a specified command under the JCS for missions outside USCINCEUR's area of responsibility, chiefly in the Middle East and South Asia. Thus the Sixth Fleet now reports for European missions through CINCNELM to USCINCEUR and then to the Chief of Staff of the Army as Executive Agent of the JCS; and for Middle Eastern missions to CINCNELM and then to the CNO as Executive Agent of the JCS.

September 12. **Sixth Fleet Yugoslavia diplomatic support and show of force.** Yugoslav leader Marshal Tito embarks on a carrier for operations off Split, with a cruiser and four destroyers.

September 13–27. **Second Fleet in Norwegian Sea allied exercise.** (Exercise "Mainbrace"). The first major NATO North Atlantic exercise is conducted by SACLANT and SACEUR, emphasizing strike and amphibious warfare off north Norway, and including UK-Norway convoys. Four U.S. carriers and a U.S. battleship participate, along with 200 other U.S. and allied warships.

Late. **SECOND FLEET GETS NATO STRIKEFLTLANT HAT.** A Striking Fleet, Atlantic is established directly under SACLANT. It will be commanded by the Commander of the Second Fleet and the bulk of its forces will come from the U.S. Second Fleet.

November. **Sixth Fleet in allied Mediterranean exercise.** (Exercise "Long Step"). 170 warships from the Sixth Fleet and the British, French, Italian, Greek and Turkish navies participate in the second large allied exercise in the Mediterranean.

December. **Naval Forces Far East headquarters shifts.** Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Far East, headquartered in Tokyo near the CINC since 1946, moves to Yokosuka and proximity to the fleet.

## 1953

**FORMOSA PATROL FORCE DESIGNATED.** Task Force 72 becomes the Formosa Patrol Force. It will be renamed the Taiwan Patrol Force in 1957.

January 18. **Formosa Patrol aircraft search and rescue.** A Seventh Fleet land-based maritime patrol aircraft is shot down by Communist anti-aircraft fire. U.S. Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Royal Navy ships and aircraft conduct joint and combined search and rescue operations.

February 2. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan Straits mission modified.** Newly elected President Eisenhower declares the Seventh Fleet is no longer tasked with restraining the Chinese Nationalists on Formosa.

March 15. **NATO ALLIED FORCES MEDITERRANEAN ESTABLISHED.** ADM Lord Mountbatten activates AFMED Headquarters at Malta. He will have NATO command under SACEUR of British, French, Italian, Greek, Turkish, and some American naval forces in the Mediterranean. He will not have NATO command of the Sixth Fleet, which will remain as a NATO Command under ADM Carney in Naples as NATO CINCSOUTH. ADM Carney's position as NATO COMNAVSOUTH is abolished.

March. **SIXTH FLEET GETS NATO STRIKFORSOUTH HAT.** Naval Striking and Support Forces Southern Europe is activated at Naples. It will essentially consist of the U.S. Sixth Fleet, and will report directly to NATO CINCSOUTH and then to SACEUR.

July 27. **Korean Armistice.** A cease-fire agreement is signed by U.N. and Communist negotiators at Panmunjon, Korea.

August 23. **CINCNELM STATUS ADJUSTED.** CINCNELM also becomes Commander, Subordinate Command, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (COMSUCOMLANTFLEET). The boundary between LANTFLT and

NELM is shifted east to the West European Atlantic coast, to conform with the SACEUR-SACLANT boundary.

September 16–October 5. **Second Fleet in North Atlantic allied exercise.** (Exercise “Mariner”). This is the second major NATO exercise in the Northeast Atlantic, sponsored by SACLANT, SACEUR, and CINCCHAN and involving 300 ships. The exercise tests a wide range of allied naval capabilities, rather than a particular strategic concept. The U.S. Second Fleet/NATO Striking Fleet, Atlantic commander flies his flag from the battleship *Iowa*.

## 1954

January 15. **CNO NO LONGER DIRECT JCS EXECUTIVE AGENT.** In accordance with the policy of President Eisenhower to strengthen civilian control of the military and free service chiefs from operational responsibilities, the Secretary of the Navy and the other Service Secretaries are now Executive Agents for Unified Commands, and therefore to the operating forces, including the numbered fleets. They can, however, delegate this responsibility to their service chiefs if desired. This arrangement, which in practice adds another layer to the operational chain of command, will endure until 1958.

February 15. **CINCPAC GETS WESTPAC CARRIERS.** Operational control of two attack carriers and a squadron of destroyers is transferred from Commander in Chief, Far East to Commander in Chief, Pacific, to become the “Fair Weather Training Force” in the South China Sea. Two Seventh Fleet carriers remain under the operational control of CINCFE and COMNAVFORFE.

February–August. **COMFIRSTFLT DEPLOYS TO WESTPAC.** CINC-PAC orders the commander, First Fleet, VADM William K. Phillips, to assume command of the “Fair Weather Training Force,” a deployed task force under CINCPAC/CINCPACFLT, consisting of two carriers, eight surface combatants, submarines and logistics support ships, for training operations in the South China Sea and possible support of the French in Indochina. VADM Phillips will return to his First Fleet command on 21 August.

March 13–May 7. **Battle of Dien Bien Phu begins.** After five months of preparation, the Viet Minh launch major assaults on the French garrison. The “Fair Weather Training Force” deploys to the Gulf of Tonkin, prepared to launch aircraft to help defend the base should Washington so decide. Carrier aircraft overfly the Dien Bien Phu area to gather intelligence. Dien Bien Phu will capitulate to the Viet Minh on May 7, without American intervention having been ordered.

May 20–June 30. **Atlantic Fleet Guatemala interdiction and evacuation operation** (Operations “Caribbean Incident” and “Hardrock Baker,” and “Honduras Patrol”). Air and sea patrols are established to control Soviet arms shipments to the Arbenz regime in Guatemala and to protect Honduras. A contingency evacuation force, including an ASW carrier and an amphibious group, stands by in the Gulf of Honduras during the U.S.-supported overthrow of Arbenz.

July 26. **Commander, First Fleet South China Sea air operations.** After six U.S. nationals are killed on a British airliner are shot down by Chinese fighters southeast of Hainan Island, two carriers under the operational control of Commander, First Fleet deploy and two Chinese aircraft are shot down.

August 8. **WESTPAC AMPHIBS TO PACFLT.** Operational control of the Amphibious Force, Western Pacific is transferred from the Commander in Chief, Far East Command to the Commander in Chief, Pacific Command.

August 16–May 18, 1955. **Pacific Fleet Vietnam non-combatant evacuation operation.** (Operation “Passage to Freedom”). The Amphibious Force, Western Pacific (Task Force 90) under CINCPAC/CINCPACFLT evacuates 293,002 civilians and 127,846 military personnel from North Vietnam to the south.

September 3. **New Taiwan Straits crisis begins.** Chinese Communists begin artillery bombardment of the Nationalist-held offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu. The Seventh Fleet deploys off Taiwan.

December. **SEVENTH FLEET OPERATIONAL CONTROL SHIFTS TO PACIFIC FLEET.** CINCPAC's peacetime control of the Seventh Fleet is abolished.

## 1955

February 6. **Seventh Fleet Western Pacific large carrier deployment.** *Midway* arrives in the Western Pacific. This is the first deployment of a *Midway*-class carrier to the Pacific since the class entered the fleet in 1946.

February 15-17. **Seventh Fleet in Southeast Asia multi-national exercise.** (Exercise "Firm Link"). This is the first combined Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) exercise to be scheduled in Southeast Asia. Warships from the United States, Britain, and Australia and American, Thai, and Filipino troops participate. The forces are not formed into a combined command but operate on a basis of mutual cooperation and coordination.

February 6-13. **Seventh Fleet Tachen Islands Evacuation.** The Seventh Fleet, under CINCPAC/CINCPACFLT, evacuates 29,000 Nationalist Chinese civilians and troops from the Tachen Islands, off the coast of China. The operation is covered by a 5-carrier task force.

May. **Sixth Fleet logistics ships Spain homeporting.** A supply ship and two oilers are permanently assigned to homeport in Barcelona, Spain.

## 1956

**PACIFIC BARRIER COMMAND ESTABLISHED.** This command creates a seaward extension of the Air Force's DEW Line running from Greenland through the Aleutians. The Navy barrier will include long-range land-based aircraft and radar picket destroyers on ocean stations deployed between Midway Island and the Aleutians. It will not become fully operational until July 1958.

February 13. **NORTHERN EUROPEAN FORCE DISESTABLISHED.** Due to rising tensions in the Mediterranean over Suez, in-chopping Atlantic Fleet destroyers are assigned to the Sixth Fleet instead of duty in the United Kingdom. The Force will never be reconstituted.

April 16. **MIDEASTFOR AUGMENTED BY DESTROYERS.** A four-ship destroyer division is assigned to the Middle East Force, to aug-

ment the lone seaplane tender flagship stationed in the Gulf since 1949. This begins an era of 2-5 (normally 2) destroyers attached to the Middle East Force for 30-60-day periods that will endure until 1979, when the norm will become four, and then five destroyers. One destroyer will be permanently on station in the Red Sea and one in the Gulf from 1956 to 1958. From now on, the U.S. Navy destroyer presence in the two bodies of water will be extensive (although not continuous).

**May. SIXTH FLEET FLAGSHIP BEGINS FRANCE FORWARD HOMEPORTING.** The Sixth Fleet cruiser flagship begins to be homeported in the Mediterranean, at Villefranche, France – a port often used as a base by U.S. Navy ships sailing in the Mediterranean in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It will leave Ville-franche for Gaeta Italy in 1967, when French President DeGaulle terminates all U.S. basing in France.

The Seventh Fleet cruiser flagship will be homeported forward in Japan in 1959.

**August 23-October 3. BATTLESHIP IS SECOND FLEET FLAGSHIP.** *New Jersey* is the Second Fleet flagship for a Northern Europe deployment and NATO exercises.

**September 1. NORTHEAST COMMAND DISESTABLISHED.**

**October 29–November 3. U.S. Navy global fleet crisis deployments.** As the Suez Crisis begins, three Sixth Fleet carriers move into the eastern Mediterranean. A Seventh Fleet amphibious task force is dispatched to the Persian Gulf from the South China Sea via the Indian Ocean. A U.S. ASW hunter-killer carrier task force deploys from Northern Europe to the Mediterranean.

**CINCNELM MOVES FORWARD AFLOAT.** To better direct the Sixth Fleet during the Suez Crisis, ADM Boone – as CINC-NELM, the specified theater commander – flies to Iskenderun, Turkey from London and hoists his flag on the command ship *Pocono*, to take direct command of American operations.

November 1-3. **Sixth Fleet Middle East noncombatant evacuation operations.** Ships of the U.S. Sixth Fleet join U.S. military aircraft in evacuating American citizens from Egypt, Israel, and Syria when war breaks out in the Middle East.

November 6. **Atlantic Fleet North Atlantic ASW barrier deployment.** An Atlantic Fleet anti-submarine surveillance barrier is established in the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom (GIUK) Gap in the North Atlantic, including seven submarines and maritime patrol aircraft.

This marks the first time the new underwater Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) is used in time of crisis to detect Soviet submarines.

November 7. **Additional U.S. Navy fleet global crisis deployments.** As the Suez Crisis continues, a Second Fleet task force deploys to the Eastern Atlantic, including the new attack carrier *Forrestal* and the newly-modernized carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt*, a cruiser and two squadrons of destroyers. Carriers and an ARG reposition in the Western Pacific, and a destroyer tender deploys into the Indian Ocean.

The *Forrestal* deployment is the first operational employment of the new class of post-war super-carriers, of which *Forrestal* is the lead ship. This is the first new class of carriers to operate in the fleet since the *Midway*-class carriers entered the fleet in 1945. While *Forrestal* begins to serve in the Atlantic in 1956, no ship of her class will deploy in the Pacific until *Ranger* does so in August 1958.

November 23. **First guided missile cruiser deploys.** *Boston*, recommissioned in November 1955 as an Atlantic Fleet asset, deploys to the Mediterranean. No ship of the class will deploy to the Pacific until *Canberra's* round-the-world cruise in 1960.

December 6. **Middle East Force Persian Gulf amphibious deployment.** A two-ship amphibious force with embarked Marines arrives in the Persian Gulf from the western Pacific. It will remain in the Gulf for one month.

December 18-February 1, 1957. **MSTS Hungarian refugee transportation operation.** Operation "Safe Haven." The Military Sea Transpor-

tation Service (MSTS) transports 8,944 refugees from the Hungarian Revolution from Bremerhaven, Germany, to New York.

## 1957

January. **CINCNELM naval base in Spain.** A naval base is commissioned at Rota, Spain, largely to support Sixth Fleet deployments in the Mediterranean. A long process is initiated to shift U.S. naval facilities from Morocco to Spain. The base will endure well past the end of the Cold War.

February. **SUBMARINE FORCE, ATLANTIC BARENTS SEA SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS.** USS *Tirante* institutes a program of reconnaissance patrols covering the Soviet Northern Fleet, supplementing patrols previously the domain of the Royal Navy and complementing patrols off Siberia to the east going on since 1952.

March 14–20. **Presidential diplomacy support operation.** President Eisenhower deploys from Norfolk to Bermuda for six days on USS *Canberra*, en route to a meeting with British Prime Minister MacMillan. The cruiser is accompanied by two destroyers, carrying 24 reporters.

April 20. **Sixth Fleet Jordan show of force.** To support Jordan's King Hussein, in danger from threatened Nasserite subversion, the Sixth Fleet maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean and its amphibious force with 1,800 Marines embarked anchors in readiness off Beirut.

July. **ANTI-SUBMARINE DEFENSE FORCE, ATLANTIC CREATED.** The first commander, Admiral Frank Watkins, is given centralized authority for all U.S. Navy anti-submarine efforts in the Atlantic, with special responsibility for coordinating the operations of three Anti-submarine Defense Groups established in 1957 and 1958. The first, designated Task Force Alpha under Admiral John Thach, is established in 1957 to develop hunter-killer force doctrine. Group Bravo will be set up in the fall of 1958, specializing in ASW protection of carrier striking forces. Group Charlie will be set up to develop amphibious force and convoy protection doctrine.

July 1. **FAR EAST COMMAND DIS-ESTABLISHED.** In accordance with a Secretary of Defense decision approving a JCS recommendation (over the objections of the Chief of Staff of the Army), CINCFE is disestablished and a subordinate unified command under CINCPAC is created in Japan: Commander, U.S. Forces Japan.

At the same time, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Far East – created in 1947 – becomes Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Japan (COMNAVFORJ). COMNAVFORJ will retain certain operational responsibilities, separate from Seventh Fleet (also under CINCPAC, reporting through CINCPACFLT), including operational control of intelligence-gathering ships such as *Pueblo*, to be seized by the North Koreans in 1968.

**TAIWAN PATROL FORCE DESIGNATED.** The Seventh Fleet's Formosa Patrol Force is redesignated the Taiwan Patrol Force, consisting of surface combatants and maritime patrol aircraft.

## 1958

January 12–17. **Seventh Fleet Indonesia Freedom of Navigation assertion.** Destroyer Division 31 asserts the right of innocent passage through Lombok and Mahassai Straits after these had been claimed as territorial waters by Indonesia.

January 13. **CINCPAC AND CINCPACFLT SPLIT.** Over the objections of the CNO, a separate Commander-in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) is appointed as the naval component commander of PACOM. A new command layer is thus inserted between the First and Seventh Fleets and CINCPAC. This will be paralleled in the Atlantic in 1985. A little earlier, CINCPAC headquarters is physically transferred from Makalapa to Camp H. M. Smith.

March 9–April. **Seventh Fleet Indonesian covert intervention support.** A Seventh Fleet Task Force, including an anti-submarine warfare carrier, is formed for the protection of American citizens and such other actions as might be required in the Philippines-Indonesia area.

May. **Sixth Fleet amphibious reinforcement.** In response to a building crisis in Lebanon, the current Sixth Fleet amphibious group remains

in the Mediterranean with the group sent to relieve it from the Atlantic Fleet, doubling the size of the force. A third group will arrive in July.

June 1. **SOUTH ATLANTIC FORCE RE-ESTABLISHED.** The Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet creates a new subordinate command. The U.S. South Atlantic Force is re-established at Naval Station Trinidad with RADM E. C. Stephans as its commander. It had been disestablished in 1946. It will move to Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico in 1966.

It is intended to conduct operations around South America and Africa, the initial African cruises being styled "Solant Amity".

July 16. **CINCNELM MOVES FORWARD AFLOAT.** To better direct the Sixth Fleet during the Lebanon Crisis, CINCNELM ADM James L. Holloway, Jr. flies into Beirut airport and takes command on scene, as Commander in Chief, Specified Command, Middle East, first in a destroyer and later in *Taconic* (AGC-17). He will not return to London until 22 October.

July. **Pacific early warning barrier becomes operational.** Thirteen DERs on ocean station and two squadrons of land-based long-range aircraft flesh out the ocean extension of the DEW line across Canada, between Midway island and Alaska, directed against Soviet bombers. Obsolete before it is operational, the system in the Pacific and the Atlantic will be dismantled by 1965.

July 15. **Sixth Fleet Landing in Lebanon.** The Sixth Fleet lands three Marine battalion landing teams from three amphibious groups at Beirut, Lebanon, covered by three carriers. In related deployments, Middle East Force ships take positions near Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Straits of Tiran, and an amphibious force deploys from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean, where it remains 1-5 August.

ADM Burke, as CNO, acts as JCS Executive Agent. Within a few days the Marines in Lebanon are joined by a reinforced army airborne brigade flown in from Germany and a USAF composite strike group from the United States. The last American troops are withdrawn on October 25.

Summer. **GIUK GAP BARRIER PATROLS.** U.S. Navy submarine/barrier patrols between Greenland and the Faroes are instituted, using submarines and aircraft based in Keflavik in Iceland.

August 20. **First super-carrier in Pacific.** *Ranger* reports to the Pacific Fleet, the first *Forrestal*-class carrier to operate in the Pacific since the class was introduced in late 1956. *Ranger* will deploy to the Seventh Fleet in February 1959.

August 23. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan crisis intervention.** The Seventh Fleet deploys a carrier task force around Formosa to support Nationalist Chinese troops on the offshore islands of Matsu and Quemoy, as intensive Communist artillery bombardment of Quemoy begins the crisis and intensive U.S. naval operations in the area will continue through October. The carrier task force will grow from two to six carriers during the crisis.

September 4–October 8. **Seventh Fleet Taiwan Straits convoy escort operations.** Taiwan Patrol Force ships escort Nationalist Chinese convoys from Taiwan to Quemoy, preventing the Chinese Communist navy from establishing an effective blockade of the island. A joint U.S.-Nationalist Chinese amphibious landing exercise is conducted also.

September 11. **TAIWAN DEFENSE COMMAND GETS OPCON.** The Taiwan Defense Command receives operational control of army and air force units on Taiwan and of the Commander Taiwan Patrol Force and his forces (Task Force 72).

**CNO OUT OF OPERATIONAL CHAIN OF COMMAND.** Despite Navy opposition, under the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958, the CNO and the other uniformed service chiefs (and also the service secretaries, placed in the operational chain in 1954) are removed from the operational chain of command. Henceforth, the operational chain of command will run from the President and the Secretary of Defense through the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the commanders of the joint unified and specified commands in the field. The CNO loses his command relationship to the numbered fleets.

There will be no other significant changes to the national military command structure affecting the numbered fleets until the Goldwater-Nichols act of 1986 routes the chain of command through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who is made the principal military (and naval) advisor to the President and Secretary.

## 1959

### **SIXTH FLEET BLACK SEA OPERATIONS BEGIN.**

April 2–May 4, August–November. **Multinational Panama surveillance operations.** In response to a request from the Organization of American States, a U.S. Navy destroyer escort, minesweeper, and maritime patrol aircraft, as well as a Colombian Navy destroyer and an Ecuadorian warship, conduct surveillance patrols to deter additional landings by insurgents following an insurgent landing in Panama on April 25.

May 4. **SEVENTH FLEET FLAGSHIP JAPAN FORWARD HOME-PORTING BEGINS.** The all-gun cruiser USS *St. Paul* (CA 73) sails from Long Beach for her new forward homeport in Yokosuka, Japan. She becomes the first major U.S. Navy warship to be home-ported in the Far East since pre-World War II days. Based at Yokosuka, she will not return to Long Beach until more than three years later.

The cruiser flagship of the Sixth Fleet has been forward homeported in the Mediterranean since 1956.

September. **Seventh Fleet Laos show of force.** Seventh Fleet carriers deploy to the South China Sea as a deterrent to further communist guerrilla attacks on pro-American forces in Laos and as reassurance to friendly governments of U.S. resolve to stand by them.

## 1960

**JOINT STRATEGIC TARGET PLANNING STAFF CREATED.** A compromise among the services results in the designation of the Strategic Air Command as a specified command, with the Atlantic and Pacific Commands retaining control of the strategic submarine

forces. A Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS) is set up under the SAC commander, as Director, at SAC headquarters

March 3. **First guided missile cruiser Pacific deployment.** *Canberra* leaves Norfolk on a round-the-world cruise, including service with the Sixth and Seventh Fleets. She will become the first ship of her class to operate in the Pacific since the class was introduced into the fleet in late 1956.

May 10. **Submarine submerged circumnavigation deployment.** The nuclear-powered submarine *Triton* becomes the first vessel to circumnavigate the earth submerged.

July. **Evacuation preparation and United Nations support operation.** The carrier *Wasp* is stationed off the mouth of the Congo River to evacuate U.S. nationals from the Congo and, while there, delivers fuel to UN forces.

August 28. **FIRST ATLANTIC FLEET UNITAS TASK GROUP DEPLOYS.** U.S. naval forces arrive in Venezuelan waters to begin the first annual 6-month UNITAS deployment, to operate with Latin American navies, under Commander, South Atlantic Force. The exercise, principally stressing anti-submarine warfare, will become the largest post-World War II continuing military presence operation in South America and the longest continuing exercise the U.S. Navy will conduct.

Autumn. **Seventh Fleet Laos show of force.** Seventh Fleet carriers again deploy to the South China Sea as a deterrent to further communist guerrilla attacks on pro-American forces in Laos and as reassurance to friendly governments of U.S. resolve to stand by them.

November 15. **FIRST SUBMARINE FORCE, ATLANTIC BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE DEPLOYMENT.** The *George Washington* deploys from Charleston, South Carolina, on the first operational Atlantic Fleet Polaris submarine deterrent patrol. She carries 16 Polaris A-1 1200 nm. range nuclear ballistic missiles. Pacific Fleet patrols will not begin until December 1964, with Polaris A-3 2,500-nm.-range missiles.

November 17-December 10. **Central America show of force and interposition.** After armed uprisings inspired by Cuba against the governments of Guatemala and Nicaragua, a carrier task force patrols the Caribbean coasts of these countries, to block Cuban intervention.

## 1961

**Anti-submarine carrier group to northern Europe.** This force is deployed during the Berlin Crisis.

January. **Seventh Fleet Laos show of force.** Seventh Fleet carriers once again deploy to the South China Sea as a deterrent to further communist guerrilla attacks on pro-American forces in Laos and as reassurance to friendly governments of U.S. resolve to stand by them.

January-February. **Caribbean Sea Frontier South Atlantic anti-high-jacking operation.** U.S. Navy Caribbean Sea Frontier/ Antilles Defense Command forces locate and trail the Portuguese liner SS *Santa Maria* after her seizure by high-jackers. Boxed in by U.S. Navy forces at Recife, Brazil, RADM Allen Smith, Jr. – Commander of the Caribbean Sea Frontier and Antilles Defense Command – negotiates the high-jackers' surrender to Brazilian authorities.

March 8. **ATLANTIC FLEET BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE BEGINS FORWARD REFITS.** USS *Patrick Henry* returns from patrol and comes alongside the tender *Proteus* in Holy Loch, Scotland, to become the first SSBN to use Holy Loch as a forward refit and upkeep anchorage. Commander, Submarine Squadron 14 and a submarine tender will remain at Holy Loch until 1992.

April. **Seventh Fleet Laos multi-carrier show of force.** Seventh Fleet carriers once again deploy to the South China Sea, as an offensive by communist forces in Laos appears on the verge of overwhelming the pro-American Laotian Army. The force includes of two carrier battle groups, one ant-submarine warfare carrier group, three amphibious groups, two submarines, and other forces. A cease-fire concluded on May 8 will hold for almost a year.

April 17-20. **Atlantic Fleet Cuba covert action show of force.** In visible support of the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion by U.S. supported

Cuban exiles, a U.S. Navy task force, including the carrier *Essex*, is stationed offshore. It provides no actual support, though, and the attack fails.

May 30–Jun 10. **Atlantic Fleet Dominican Republic show of force.** Three carriers and an amphibious force are deployed off the Dominican Republic following the assassination of Dominican strong-man Rafael Trujillo. Two destroyers are sent to Haiti as well. In November and December there will be another show of force by a carrier task force and amphibious units.

December-August 1, 1962. **Seventh Fleet in multinational patrols off Vietnam.** (“Desoto Patrol”). The Seventh Fleet and Vietnamese Navy units conduct combined surface combatant, minesweeper and sea-plane patrol, reconnaissance, surveillance, and interception operations off the North Vietnam-South Vietnam border.

## 1962

February 27–May 21. **Seventh Fleet surface combatants in combined Gulf of Thailand maritime intercept patrols.** Destroyer escorts vector South Vietnamese ships to suspicious contacts for boarding and searching, in the face of North Vietnamese infiltration of South Vietnam.

May. **Seventh Fleet Laos multi-carrier show of force.** Seventh Fleet carriers once again deploy to the South China Sea, off Danang, as a new offensive by communist forces in Laos again appears on the verge of overwhelming the pro-American Laotian Army. The force this time includes of one carrier battle groups, an anti-submarine warfare carrier group, and an amphibious group.

May 17. **Seventh Fleet Landing in Thailand.** Three Seventh Fleet amphibious ships, supported by carrier aviation, land marines in Thailand to help support the independence of that country.

June 26. **Atlantic Fleet first Polaris A-2 missile deployment.** USS *Ethan Allen* departs Charleston to go on operational patrol with 16 Polaris A-2 missiles, each with a range of 1,500 nm. The earlier A-1 missile,

first deployed in 1960, has a range of 1,200 nm. The later A-3 missile, to be deployed in 1964, will have a range of 2,500 nm.

**July 11-12. First carrier flight operations in the Bering Sea since the end of World War II.** A carrier will not conduct flight operations in the Bering Sea again until 1986.

**October 24-November 21. Second Fleet / ASW Force Atlantic Cuba quarantine operations.** ("Cuban Missile Crisis"). The quarantine on shipments of offensive Soviet missiles to Cuba is the most impignorate and visible naval operation. Other operations include anti-submarine warfare, the Marine reinforcement and defense of Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, evacuation of non-combatants from Guantanamo Bay, low-altitude photo-reconnaissance, patrols around Cuba, preparations for air strikes against and an invasion of Cuba, air defense of the United States, and special operations against Cuba. The quarantine operation includes Argentine, Venezuelan, Dominican, and Uru-guayan warships, as well as a major Canadian contribution of RCN warships and RCAF maritime patrol aircraft.

Second Fleet ships are organized into several task forces responsible to CINCLANT. The Second Fleet commander, Vice Admiral Alfred G. Ward, operates as Commander, Task Force 136, the Blockade Force. The Commander, Anti-Submarine Warfare Force, Atlantic, Vice Admiral Edmund Taylor, acts a s Commander, Task Forces 81/83, the Anti-Submarine Force.

This marks the first major employment of U.S. forces under the command structure established by the 1958 defense re-organization, but the command procedures actually used are as before, with the CNO acting as executive agent for the JCS and in the chain of command between the Secretary of Defense and the Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Command.

## 1963

**February 26. Dominican diplomatic support and potential rescue.** A carrier anchors off Santo Domingo in support of Vice President Johnson's visit.

March 9–April 5. **Middle East Force Red Sea show of force.** During Egypt's intervention in the civil war in Yemen, Middle East Force destroyers, augmented by Sixth Fleet destroyers, deploy to the Red Sea off Jidda, Saudi Arabia, to show support for the Saudis. USS *Essex* (CV-9) visits Jidda in October.

April 1. **First Sixth Fleet NATO SSBN deployments.** USS *Sam Houston* (SSBN 609) commences patrol in the Mediterranean, providing the first target coverage to SACEUR, the United States having committed to assign three SSBN's to SACEUR.

April 14. **Sixth Fleet nuclear ballistic missile submarine Turkey port visit.** USS *Sam Houston*, the first Polaris submarine assigned to Mediterranean patrol, visits Izmir, Turkey. This is the first foreign port visit, other than to Holy Loch, by an SSBN.

April 27. **Multinational Haiti evacuation operation.** An amphibious force cruises off Haiti to protect U.S. nationals in case of conflict between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and perhaps to intervene if the Haitian government is overthrown. The crisis blows over, however. A British destroyer and frigate also stand by. U.S. nationals are subsequently evacuated.

August. **Seventh Fleet amphibious presence.** The Seventh Fleet deploys an amphibious force off Vung Tau, South Vietnam, as domestic unrest increases in that country. They disperse once the crisis abates, only to return in November, when the Diem government is toppled.

August 13. **Military Sea Transport Service ship in Congo multinational UN sealift operation.** The MSTS transport *USNS General R. M. Blatchford* (T-AP-153) returns to New York after two and one-half years overseas serving with the United Nations and the United States-Congo sealift. While steaming for the U.N., *Blatchford* has carried 36,809 troops to and from Morocco, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

December 1. **NELM DIS-ESTABLISHED.** Over the CNO's objections, the Secretary of Defense approves a JCS recommendation to abolish Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean as a specified com-

mand with Middle East responsibilities. The command will thenceforth revert to being U.S. Naval Forces Europe, a component commander of the Commander in Chief, US European Command. The Sixth Fleet is now completely responsible to USCINCEUR, through CINCUSNAVEUR, for all its missions.

The Red Sea and Persian Gulf are re-assigned to the U.S. Strike Command, created in 1962, under an added designation as Commander in Chief, US Forces, Middle East, Africa South of the Sahara, and South Asia (USCINCMEAFSA). This will continue until 1971, when the Strike Command is disestablished, and EUCOM and NAVEUR (the successor to NELM) become responsible for the Middle East.

December 1. **USSOUTHCOM REDESIGNATED.** The Caribbean Command is re-designated the U.S. Southern Command, reflecting its actual Central and South American geographic responsibilities.

December 30. **Atlantic Fleet seaplane operations end.** An SP-5B Marlin flying boat of Patrol Squadron 45, flying from Bermuda to Norfolk, makes the last operational seaplane flight of the squadron, marking the end of seaplane operations in the Atlantic Fleet.

**1964**

**Second Fleet amphibious exercise to Spain.** (Operation "Steel Pike I"). An amphibious force of 60 vessels lands the Second Marine Expeditionary Force (IIMEF) in Spain.

January 13. **Middle East Force Zanzibar multinational evacuation.** A MIDEASTFOR destroyer and three British warships evacuate British and American citizens and other persons from Zanzibar, on the east coast of Africa, after the island's government is overthrown by an armed revolt.

March 7. **First major communications relay ship commissioned.** To enhance fleet communications, USS *Annapolis* (AGMR 1) is commissioned. It is the former escort carrier *Gilbert Islands*. It will be joined by USS *Arlington* two years later. Both ships will provide fleet communications relay services for the Seventh Fleet during the Viet-

nam War until their decommissionings in 1970s, after satellites have replaced many of their planned functions.

**Seventh Fleet Indian Ocean carrier deployment.** The Concord Squadron – the carrier USS *Bon Homme Richard*, three destroyers, and an oiler - enters the Indian Ocean from the Pacific to begin a six-week goodwill tour of African and Middle Eastern ports.

**May 25. ATLANTIC FLEET BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE FORWARD BASING IN SPAIN BEGINS.** USS *Lafayette* (SSBN 616) comes alongside the tender USS *Proteus* at Rota, Spain. (*Proteus* arrived at Rota on February 24). Rota is now the second advanced FBM refit and upkeep anchorage site, after Holy Loch in 1961, and the headquarters of Submarine Squadron Sixteen. The forward basing of SSBNs at Rota will continue until 1979.

**May. Seventh Fleet permanent carrier presence off Vietnam.** The Seventh Fleet begins a permanent carrier presence off the coast of Vietnam, also conducting reconnaissance flights over Laos along with the Air Force (Operation "Yankee Team").

**July 31–October 3. Nuclear-powered task force unreplenished circum-navigation.** (Operation "Sea Orbit"). All-nuclear Task Force One, consisting of a carrier, guided-missile cruiser and guided-missile frigate, departs Gibraltar for an unreplenished circumnavigation of the globe, cruising 30,216 nautical miles without taking on food or provisions, and concluding in Charleston, South Carolina.

**August 2. Seventh Fleet Tonkin Gulf surface action.** ("Tonkin Gulf Incident"). A Seventh Fleet destroyer on intelligence-gathering patrol off north Vietnam ("Desoto Patrol") reports an attack by three North Vietnamese torpedo boats. A second incident is reported the following day.

**August 5. Seventh Fleet North Vietnam carrier strike operations.** In retaliation for the "Tonkin Gulf Incident", aircraft from two Seventh Fleet Task Force 77 carriers are ordered to strike naval bases, patrol boats, and oil depots along the North Vietnamese coast, beginning the naval air war in Vietnam.

The area they will operate from in the Gulf of Tonkin is known as "Yankee Station." Generally, before August 1966, two or three carriers will operate in Task Force 77; after that date the number will often be three or four.

Navy-Air Force command and control relationships regarding air power in Vietnam will be similar to those often maintained in Korea: geographic demarcation of respective target areas ("route packages") as advocated by the Navy.

**Mid-September. Last Seventh Fleet Vietnam intelligence patrols.** The last "Desoto Patrol" off North Vietnam is conducted. Two more destroyers claim attacks by North Vietnamese patrol boats.

**September 1964. Atlantic Fleet deploys first Polaris A-3 strategic nuclear missile submarine patrol.** USS *Daniel Webster* begins the first operational strategic deterrent patrol to carry the Polaris A-3 2,500-nm strategic nuclear ballistic missile. Previous patrols carried only Polaris A-1 (1,200 nm) and A-2 (1,500nm) missiles. The Poseidon C-3 2,500-nm range multiple warhead missile will deploy in 1971.

**December 17. Seventh Fleet in joint Laos "armed reconnaissance" operations.** (Operation "Barrel Roll"). Seventh Fleet and Air Force aircraft conduct armed reconnaissance operations over eastern Laos, striking targets of opportunity. These operations will continue for years.

**December 26. SUBMARINE FORCE, PACIFIC BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE DEPLOYMENT FROM FORWARD BASE.** The first fleet ballistic-missile submarine patrol made in the Pacific begins when the *Daniel Boone* departs an advanced anchorage and refit site and tender at Apra Harbor, Guam, armed with the Polaris A-3. The first Atlantic Fleet patrol had been made in 1960.

**Late 1964-early 1965. Seventh Fleet force augmentation.** The Seventh Fleet is augmented by 15 ships, including a third carrier.

1965

February. **Seventh Fleet North Vietnam carrier air strikes** (Operations "Flaming Dart" I and II). These strikes hit military targets in North Vietnam in "tit-for-tat" retaliation for Viet Cong attacks on American forces in South Vietnam.

February 15–July 12. **MULTINATIONAL MIXED-MANNED SHIP DEPLOYMENT.** As a demonstration of the capabilities of a warship manned by personnel drawn from many nations, the USS *Claude V. Ricketts* (DDG-5) deploys from Norfolk to the Mediterranean. The captain and executive officer are both Americans. Other billets are filled by officers and enlisted personnel from seven NATO navies (six after the Turkish contingent withdraws). Half are Americans. Germany provides the largest foreign group. The ship remains a U.S. Navy warship and Navy regulations are in force.

March 8. **Seventh Fleet Landing in Vietnam.** Seventh Fleet Amphibious Task Force ships lands a Marine battalion at Da Nang, South Vietnam. This is the first commitment of American ground combat troops in the Vietnam War. Their first combat action occurs on April 22, and the first U.S. Army combat unit arrives in Vietnam on May 3.

March 11. **VIETNAM COASTAL PATROL FORCE CREATED.** What will soon become Operation "Market Time" begins when Seventh Fleet destroyers are ordered to the coastal zone of Vietnam to help South Vietnamese vessels inspect junk traffic in order to prevent the infiltration of men and arms to the South. Many more Seventh Fleet vessels as well as patrol planes are soon assigned to this mission, Task Force 71, the Vietnam Patrol Force, being created to conduct it. Command of the operation will be transferred to the Naval Advisory Group, the naval component of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, in Saigon, in July. The organization will be disestablished in September 1970, when its boats and facilities will have been turned over to the Vietnamese Navy.

March 15. **Seventh Fleet in major joint and combined North Vietnam strike offensive.** (Operation "Rolling Thunder"). Aircraft from two carriers begin Navy participation in a U.S. and South Vietnamese Air Force campaign launched on March 2 on North Vietnamese targets.

This campaign will continue until November 1968, broken by three "Christmas Truce" cease-fires and various other perturbations.

**April 26. Atlantic Fleet Dominican intervention.** 2,700 civilians are evacuated and a 400-man expeditionary force of marines is airlifted into Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, where a revolution that began on April 25 is believed to endanger American citizens. Reinforcements on April 29 raise the strength of Marine forces in the country to 1,600. With the arrival of elements of the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division on April 30, the number of U.S. troops in the Dominican Republic rises, and by May 11 will reach 11,000, including 6,000 marines. The last marines are withdrawn by June 6, but airborne troops remain as part of an Inter-American peacekeeping force until September 1966. Forty ships are involved in the operations.

**May 16. Seventh Fleet South China Sea carrier strike operations.** ("Dixie Station"). Using naval forces as an "enabling force", a single-carrier station is established approximately 100 miles southeast of Cam Ranh Bay, from which strikes can be launched in support of allied forces inside South Vietnam. It is discontinued 15 months later, following the build-up of air strength ashore.

**May 20. Seventh Fleet Vietnam shore bombardment.** Seventh Fleet ships begin to deliver the Navy's first fire-support missions since the Korean War.

**Summer. NAVY WARNING/BARRIER FORCES INACTIVATED.** Two open-ocean radar picket Squadrons of DERs and AGRs, the Atlantic Fleet Airborne Early Warning Wing and the Pacific Fleet's Barrier Squadron are dissolved. Improved shore-based radar now covers the bomber threat.

**July 31. VIETNAM COASTAL PATROL RESPONSIBILITY SHIFTED.** The responsibility for the conduct of Operation "Market Time" is transferred to Rear Admiral Norvell G. Ward, Naval Component Commander, Military Advisory Group, Vietnam, and the units involved are reorganized as Task Force 115, the Coastal Surveillance Force. On October 31, the first two Swift Boats to participate in

Market Time arrive in Vietnam. In July 1966, the headquarters for Commander, Task Force 115, will shift from Saigon to Cam Ranh Bay.

August 18. **Seventh Fleet first major Vietnam amphibious assault.** (Operation "Starlight"). In the first large-scale amphibious assault of the war in Vietnam, Seventh fleet amphibious forces land Marines from landing craft and helicopters south of Chu Lai and begin the biggest ground operation since the Korean War. Gunfire support is provided by a light guided missile cruiser and two destroyers.

August 26. **Last Atlantic barrier patrol flown.** Airborne Early Warning Squadron Eleven flies the last North Atlantic barrier patrol. The squadron will be decommissioned October 7, 1965.

September 15. **Communications relay ship joins Seventh Fleet.** USS *Annapolis* (AGMR 1), the Navy's first communications relay ship, arrives in the South China Sea. *Annapolis* is equipped to serve as a mobile, fully supported, seagoing communications station.

October 15. **VIETNAM NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY CREATED.** The U.S. Naval Support Activity, Da Nang, is organized under the Commander, Service Force, Pacific Fleet, to provide logistic support for the war effort in the I Corps area of South Vietnam. It will become, at its peak, the Navy's largest overseas logistic command.

December 1. **Multinational ship demonstration ends.** USS *Claude V. Ricketts* ends the one-year demonstration of a NATO multinationally-manned ship.

December 15. **PERMANENT MIDEASTFOR COMMAND SHIP DESIGNATED.** *Valcour* (AVP-55), one of three seaplane tenders rotating duty as Middle East Force Flagship since 1948, is reclassified as a miscellaneous command flagship (AGF-1). *Valcour* will depart for the Persian Gulf in April 1966. She will remain as the permanent MIDEASTFOR flagship until 1972, when she will be replaced by *LaSalle* (AGF 3, formerly LPD 3).

December 18. **VIETNAM RIVER PATROL FORCE CREATED.** Under the naval component commander in Vietnam, a River Patrol Force (Task Force 116) is activated in South Vietnam with the mission

of patrolling the Mekong Delta and the swampy area between Saigon and the sea designated the Rung Sat Special Zone. Initially its equipment consists of landing craft, but by May 1966 it is given specially designed river patrol boats and its activities are designated Operation "Game Warden". The command will be disestablished in December 1970, having existed for five years, its boats having been turned over to the Vietnamese Navy.

**December 24. Seventh Fleet temporary strike operations halt.** President Johnson orders a temporary halt in the bombing of North Vietnam. Bombing will resume on January 30, 1966. This is the first of three such "Christmas Truces", the last of which will be abruptly terminated by the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong attacks throughout South Vietnam during the Vietnamese holiday of Tet in January 1968

## 1966

**January 30. Seventh Fleet North Vietnam strike operations resume.**

**April 1. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM CREATED.** A new command, U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, is established to control the operations of U.S. naval forces inside South Vietnam and certain coastal units. Its first commander is Rear Admiral Norvell G. Ward, formerly Naval Component Commander, Military Advisory Command, Vietnam, and Chief, Naval Advisory Group, Vietnam. The Component Commander title is abolished. Ward will not, however, have control over Marine forces in Vietnam nor over Seventh Fleet warships engaged in bombing the North and support operations in the South. The command will be disestablished in 1973.

**April 1. SEVENTH FLEET IS ASSIGNED VIETNAM "ROUTE PACKAGES".** Vietnam is divided into geographical areas, with sole strike responsibility for each area assigned to the Seventh Fleet or to Air Force units in Thailand and to Military Assistance Command, Vietnam in South Vietnam. This has the virtue of enabling aviators to become thoroughly familiar with the special characteristics of their operating areas and preserves the institutional autonomy of the components involved. As in Korea, the Navy generally supports this approach to joint air strike operations; the Air Force decries it as preventing optimum effective use of the inherent flexibility of air power.

April 17. **Naval satellite communications instituted.** Off Vietnam, a Seventh Fleet cruiser becomes the first U.S. Navy vessel to relay an operational message via communications satellite, using the Syncom III to relay a message to the Naval Communications Station in Honolulu, 4,000 miles away.

June 2. **NAVAL AIR TRANSPORT SQUADRONS WITHDRAWN FROM MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND.** The last of four air transport squadrons in the Air Force Military Airlift Command is inactivated. The move has freed 3,000 officers and enlisted men for further assignment. The squadrons' 48 C-130E aircraft will pass to the Air Force. Naval airlift operations have proven detrimental to naval aviator fleet training and proficiency in principal warfare areas.

July. **VIETNAM COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE HEADQUARTERS SHIFTS.** Commander, Task Force 115, the Coastal Surveillance Force, moves his headquarters from Saigon to Cam Ranh Bay.

August 4. **Seventh Fleet carriers shift stations off Vietnam.** Prior to this time, Task Force 77 has two or three carriers on station off Vietnam; after this time the number is often three or four, all on "Yankee Station" off North Vietnam. The permanent presence of a carrier on "Dixie Station" off South Vietnam ends, given the build-up of U.S. air power ashore in South Vietnam.

August 18. **First permanent shipboard operational satellite link between operating forces afloat and a communications station ashore.** Using Syncom III, USS *Annapolis* (AGMR-1) communicated from the South China Sea to Pacific Fleet headquarters in Honolulu. The same day, *Annapolis* received the first broadcast of radio signals relayed from the Naval Communication Station, Philippines, by Syncom II over the Indian Ocean.

August 30. **NAVFORV Vietnam armed Navy helicopter operations.** Navy crews are placed in the armed UH-1B Seawolf helicopters being used in support of Operation Game Warden. Previously the Hueys had been flown by army personnel.

October. **Seventh Fleet North Vietnam surface bombardment operations begin.** (Operation "Sea Dragon"). Cruisers, destroyers, and for

one month the battleship *New Jersey* range the North Vietnamese littoral sinking communist supply craft, shelling coastal batteries and radar sites, and complementing aerial interdiction efforts by bombarding infiltration routes ashore. These operations will end in 1968, when American combat operations in North Vietnam will temporarily cease.

December. **IBERLANT ESTABLISHED.** A NATO Iberian-Atlantic Command is established under an American rear admiral, headquartered in Portugal and reporting to SACLANT. Setting up the command has been delayed since 1952 due to disagreements among the American, British, and French navies as to who should provide the flag officer and the extent of the command. The French pull out from the NATO military command structure occasions a solution of the problem, however. A Portuguese admiral will take command in 1982.

December-January. **Seventh Fleet temporarily halts Vietnam strike operations.** A second "Christmas Truce" is observed. Navy and Air Force bombing will resume after New Year's Day and the Vietnamese holiday of Tet in January 1967.

1967

January 20. **SIXTH FLEET COMMAND SHIP FORWARD HOME-PORT CHANGE.** As a result of the French government's decision to end American basing in France, the Sixth Fleet command ship *Springfield* (CLG 7) leaves Villefranche as a homeport. Villefranche has been the forward overseas homeport for the Sixth Fleet command ship since 1956. The new Sixth Fleet command ship home port will be Gaeta, Italy, where *Little Rock* (CLG 4), the new command ship, will arrive on February 3.

February. **Seventh Fleet strike minelaying begins in North Vietnamese waterways, choke points and river mouths.**

February 28. **JOINT VIETNAM RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE CREATED.** The Mekong Delta Mobile Riverine Force is established. As finally organized, it will consist of an Army element (one, later two brigades of the Ninth Infantry Division), and a Navy element (the Riverine Assault Force/Task Force 117) of specialized river assault craft,

including monitors, under the command of the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam and based afloat on amphibious and auxiliary ships anchored in the rivers of the Mekong Delta.

The last major Vietnam Task Force to be created, it will be the first to be disestablished, in August 1969, having been in existence 2 1/2 years.

**April. Seventh Fleet amphibious force enlarged.** A second Amphibious Ready Group and Marine Special Landing Force is deployed in the South China Sea. Both ARG/SLF teams will conduct a variety of amphibious operations in South Vietnam over the next few years.

**April 1. Seventh Fleet augmented by Australian warship off Vietnam.** Making its operations multinational, the Seventh Fleet welcomes the Australian cruiser *Hobart*, the first Australian warship to participate in the Vietnam conflict.

**June. MIDEASTFOR Red Sea surveillance operations.** Before and during the Arab-Israeli Six-Day war, COMIDEASTFOR stations his destroyers in the southern Red Sea to gather information regarding force movements and civilian merchant traffic.

**June. Six-Day War. The Suez Canal is blocked.** It will remain closed to shipping for eight years, until 1975.

**June. MIDEASTFOR destroyer deployments lengthen** Closure of the Suez Canal until 1974 necessitates six-month destroyer deployments to the Middle East Force from the U.S.

**June 8. Sixth Fleet ship attacked by Israelis.** USS *Liberty* (AGTR 5) is attacked by Israeli fighters and torpedo boats in the Mediterranean. Israel later apologizes, claiming the attack was a mistake.

**December-January. Seventh Fleet Vietnam strikes temporarily halted.** A third "Christmas Truce" is observed in Vietnam. This will be the last such truce, terminated abruptly by the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong "Tet Offensive" in January 1968. Bombing will resume during the Tet Offensive, but will be halted in November 1968.

1968

January 23. **NAVFORJ Sea of Japan intelligence ship seized.** The North Koreans seize the intelligence-gathering ship *Pueblo* operating off the North Korean coast. *Pueblo* is under the operational control of Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Japan (COMNAVFORJ). COMNAVFORJ requests assistance for *Pueblo* from Commander, 5th Air Force, in Japan, and assumes Washington has alerted the Seventh Fleet, which does in fact occur a few hours later, too late to save the *Pueblo*. The crew are incarcerated by the North Koreans for 11 months.

This is the first capture of a U.S. Navy sovereign ship on the high seas in over 160 years.

January 24–February 6. **Seventh Fleet Korea show of force.** A three-carrier Seventh Fleet task force assembles in the Sea of Japan in response to the North Korean seizure of the Naval Forces Japan intelligence ship USS *Pueblo* the previous day.

January 30. **Vietnam “Tet Offensive” begins.** Communist forces threaten most of South Vietnam’s major population centers and the isolated Marine outpost of Khe Sanh, near the North-South border. Seventh Fleet air operations over both North and South Vietnam resume (although they will be restricted in April and terminated in November). In Operation “Niagara”, the Seventh Fleet joins air elements of the other U.S. services in massive air strikes against North Vietnamese units besieging Khe Sanh.

April. **Seventh Fleet concentrates strikes on southern North Vietnam.** President Johnson halts bombing in the northern two-thirds of North Vietnam. He will end all bombing in November.

May-June. **Sixth Fleet Eastern Mediterranean show of force.** Before and during the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War in June, the U.S. Sixth Fleet is used to deter Soviet intervention in the conflict. During the crisis, Israeli forces attack USS *Liberty* (AGTR 5) on June 8.

July 12. **Last seaplane retires.** The Navy retires its last operational seaplane, a P-5 Marlin.

October 15. **NAVFORV Vietnam interdiction operation.** (Operation "SEALORDS"). With allied naval forces in Vietnam at peak strength, the previously independent efforts of Coastal Surveillance Force, the River Patrol Force, the Mobile Riverine Force, and the South Vietnamese Navy are concerted in a waterway interdiction and barrier operation all across the Mekong Delta devised by Vice Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., newly reporting Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam.

Beginning in March 1970, in accordance with President Nixon's "Vietnamization" policy, elements of the SEALORDS campaign will be progressively turned over to the Vietnamese Navy, who call the operation "Tran Hung Dao". Except for support by SEALs and aircraft, the U.S. Navy's role in SEALORDS will cease in April 1971.

November 1. **Seventh Fleet ceases air operations over North Vietnam.** Operation "Rolling Thunder", begun in March 1965, ends, as President Johnson orders all bombing of North Vietnam to cease. Bombing will resume, however, under President Nixon in May 1972, in retaliation for the North Vietnamese "Easter Offensive."

## 1969

1969-1971. **Seventh Fleet carrier force level declines.** With the end of "Rolling Thunder" operations, the monthly average of three attack carriers on "Yankee Station" drops to two. Operations continue against targets in Laos and South Vietnam.

January 1. **Amphibious command ships re-classified.** The classification of amphibious force flagships (AGCs) is changed to amphibious command ship (LCC).

January 13. **Seventh Fleet in joint and allied Vietnam amphibious assault.** (Operation "Bold Mariner"). In the largest amphibious assault of the Vietnam War and the largest such assault since the Korean War, Seventh Fleet amphibious ships, supported by naval gunfire from a battleship and two destroyers, land more than 2,500 marines on the Batangan Peninsula, in a joint operation with U.S. Army and South Vietnamese army blocking forces to trap the Viet Cong on the peninsula. This is the first time in the Vietnam War that

two Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs), with 11 ships, and their embarked Marine special landing forces (SLFs) are used simultaneously in a single operation.

**NATO STANDING NAVAL FORCE ATLANTIC DEPLOYS.** A NATO flotilla comprising six ships from five nations deploys from Den Helder, Netherlands for sea surveillance operations against Soviet Navy warships and submarines, under the command of SACLANT. This is the first international naval force ever to go to sea in peacetime. The initial deployment is commanded by a Royal Netherlands Navy commodore and includes one U.S. Navy destroyer escort. The United States Navy will routinely assign a destroyer-type ship to this multi-national destroyer squadron, and occasionally provide the flagship and the commander, which routinely rotates among the NATO nations.

**April 20-26. Seventh Fleet Korea show of force.** In response to the April 14 North Korean shoot-down of a Seventh Fleet EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft, Task Force 71 is organized to make a naval demonstration in the Sea of Japan, consisting of four carriers, and twenty five other warships.

**May 28. NATO MEDITERRANEAN ON-CALL FORCE CREATED.** The NATO Defense Planning Committee approves creation of a Naval On-Call Force in the Mediterranean (NAVOCFORMED). The United States will normally contribute a destroyer to this multinational squadron. It will become a Standing Naval Force in 1992.

**August 25. VIETNAM RIVER ASSAULT FORCE DISESTABLISHED.** This is the first major Naval Forces Vietnam task force to be disestablished, in accordance with president Nixon's policy of "Vietnamization" of the war. Its assault craft have been turned over to the Vietnamese Navy.

**December 20. Communications Major Relay ships de-commissioned.** USS *Annapolis* (AGMR 1) is decommissioned. She will be followed by *Arlington* (AGMR 2) on January 14, 1970. Rendered obsolete by communications relay satellites, they will have served in the fleet only five years, much of that time supporting the Seventh Fleet off Southeast Asia.

## 1970

May 9-June 29. **NAVFORV Cambodia invasion.** In support of American and South Vietnamese forces launching spoiling attacks into six Communist staging areas inside the Cambodian border, a combined Vietnamese-American naval task force moves up the Mekong into Cambodia. In the Gulf of Thailand, U.S. and South Vietnamese vessels establish a blockade of the Cambodian coastline west to Sihanoukville to prevent North Vietnamese and Viet Cong vessels from reaching Cambodia.

August. **MAJOR SURFACE COMBATANT INDIAN OCEAN DEPLOYMENT.** The nuclear-powered frigate (cruiser) *Bainbridge* makes a surveillance sweep into the Indian Ocean, beginning a program of occasional forays in these waters.

August 29. **Surface warfare officer commands Sixth Fleet.** VADM Isaac Kidd, Jr. takes command of the Sixth Fleet. He is the first surface warfare officer to command in the Mediterranean since VADM Sherman, an aviator, relieved VADM Bieri in 1948.

September. **VIETNAM COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE DIS-ESTABLISHED.** Its boats and surveillance centers ashore have been turned over to the Vietnamese Navy.

September 9. **Sixth Fleet Jordan show of force.** The Sixth Fleet is deployed in the eastern Mediterranean and subsequently reinforced in response to a revolt in Jordan and the invasion of that country by Syria.

December. **VIETNAM RIVER PATROL FORCE DISESTABLISHED.** Its boats have been turned over to the Vietnamese Navy.

## 1971

**First RIMPAC exercise held.** This exercise series involving allied navies from around the Pacific Rim will continue through the post-Cold War era, through 1996.

March 31. **First Poseidon strategic nuclear missile submarine patrol.** USS *James Madison* begins the first operational strategic deterrent

patrol to carry the Poseidon multiple warhead 2,500nm. C-3 strategic nuclear ballistic missile. Previous patrols carried only single-warhead Polaris missiles.

April. **Naval Forces Vietnam ends afloat participation in Operation SEALORDS.** The operation is now called "Tran Hung Dao", and is the responsibility of the Vietnamese Navy.

April 18-23. **ASW CARRIER TASK GROUP INDIAN OCEAN DEPLOYMENT.** Six U.S. Navy warships, including a carrier, four destroyers and a submarine, conduct a five-day anti-submarine warfare exercise in the Indian Ocean. This is the first appearance of a sizeable number of U.S. Navy ships in the Indian Ocean in nearly seven years.

December 14-January 7, 1972. **SEVENTH FLEET BAY OF BENGAL CARRIER TASK FORCE & ARG DEPLOYMENT.** Task Force 74, comprising the carrier USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) and four surface ships as well as an Amphibious Ready Group including USS *Tripoli* (LPH 10), steam through the Straits of Malacca for the Bay of Bengal, for possible rescue of American citizens from the East Pakistani capital of Dacca, following the outbreak of war between India and Pakistan on December 4. The carrier had been ordered off Yankee Station on December 10. The war ends with a cease-fire on December 16. The force will withdraw through the Straits on January 7, 1972. Soviet and British naval task forces are also operating in the Bay of Bengal during this period.

December 23. **MIDEASTFOR Bahrain base formalized.** The newly independent emirate of Bahrain signs a lease-basing agreement with the United States, allowing continued homeporting of the Middle East Force commander, his flagship, aircraft, and communications on Bahrain, following the withdrawal of the British military and naval presence.

## 1972

January 1. **CINCUSNAVEUR AGAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR MIDDLE EAST.** USCINCEUR, and therefore CINCUSNAVEUR, his naval component, are made responsible for the entire Mediterranean Sea and

littoral, the Middle East, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. This includes command of the Middle East Force. CINCUSNAVEUR thus resumes command of COMIDEASTFOR, lost in by its predecessor, CINCNELM, in 1963. CINCSTRIKE, created in 1962, is replaced by CINCREM, and his role as CINCEAFSA abolished.

January 1. **FURTHER EXPANSION OF PACOM.** CINCPAC, and CINCPACFLT, assume responsibility for Southern Asia, much of the Indian Ocean, the Aleutian Islands, and part of the Arctic Ocean.

March 30. **Communist "Easter Offensive" in Vietnam begins.** This is a massive, three-pronged attack across the Demilitarized Zone, through the Central Highlands, and toward Saigon. Seventh Fleet ships respond by bombarding shore targets in South Vietnam, landing Vietnamese marines in amphibious assaults, and conducting coastal surveillance with long-range maritime patrol aircraft flying from the Philippines.

April 2. **Seventh Fleet resume strikes on and bombardment of North Vietnam.** (Operation "Linebacker I"). The joint Air Force-Navy campaign ended in November 1968 resumes. It will continue with varying intensity and scope, through the "Christmas Bombing" of Operation Linebacker II, until January 1973.

May 9. **Seventh Fleet North Vietnam mining operation.** (Operation "Pocket Money"). Seventh Fleet carrier aircraft sow mines in North Vietnamese harbors.

May 18. **Seventh fleet has six carriers on station in the Tonkin Gulf.** This is the first time six carriers have been on station off Vietnam since the war began. Six carriers will not assemble again for combat operations until 1991.

May 25. **U.S.-Soviet "Incidents at Sea" Agreement signed.**

May 26. **Submarine-launched ballistic missiles limited.** The United States and the Soviet Union sign a new arms-limitation pact as a result of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks ("SALT I") – which *inter alia* limits the number of submarine-launched ballistic missile launchers each

country may have to 710 launchers on 44 submarines. The United States has 656 launchers on 41 ballistic missile submarines.

Summer. **SEVENTH FLEET DESTROYER SQUADRON JAPAN HOMEPORTING.** Destroyer Squadron 15 is homeported in Yokosuka. A destroyer squadron will continue to be homeported in Japan through the start of the post-Cold War period.

July 1. **LaSalle classified as command ship.** The classification of USS *LaSalle* is changed from amphibious transport dock (LPD) to miscellaneous command ship (AGF), preparatory to her relieving *Valcour* as Middle East Force command ship.

August 24. **COMIDEASTFOR FLAGSHIP UPGRADED.** *La Salle* (AGF-3), a converted LPD, replaces *Valcour* as permanently deployed flagship of the Middle East Force. *La Salle* will remain as flagship until 1993, except for maintenance and repair periods, when she is usually replaced by *Coronado* (AGF-11), another converted LPD. In 1993, COMNAVCENT will move ashore at Bahrain, and *LaSalle* will replace *Belknap* as the Sixth Fleet flagship.

September 2. **SIXTH FLEET DESTROYERS HOMEPORTED IN GREECE.** Eight destroyers begin U.S. homeporting in Phaleron Bay near Athens. They will leave Greece in 1975, after political changes in that country make U.S. homeporting there untenable.

September. **Second Fleet in NATO North Atlantic exercise.** (Exercise "Strong Express"). In the largest NATO naval exercise to date, over 300 ships and 700 aircraft from 12 nations practice amphibious assaults, strike operations, area anti-submarine warfare and convoy protection in the Norwegian Sea, North Sea and English Channel. That same year, NATO CINCSOUTH holds Exercise "Dawn Patrol" throughout the Mediterranean with 80 ships and 300 aircraft.

1973

January 15. **The United States halts all combat operations over North Vietnam.**

**January 27. Vietnam peace agreement signed. The Paris Accords are signed calling for a cease-fire in South Vietnam and ending direct American participation in the Vietnam War.**

# **Late Cold War fleet operations (1973-1989): Still two forward battle fleets, more home fleet focus northward, & increasing Indian Ocean & joint operations<sup>5</sup>**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

The principal characteristics of this era were a decline in total fleet numbers as the World- War II and immediate postwar Navy went away; an increase in naval operations in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf; the end of the Western Pacific wars and a growing friendship with China; an increasingly confrontational stance vis-a-vis the Soviet Union by all the fleets – followed by the sudden and total Soviet collapse; and a revamping of the national joint command structure leading to increasing joint operations and organizations in the field and at sea. The introduction of satellite communications continued the trend toward real-time command and control by Washington of distant operations that had been building since before World War I

### **Fleet size and composition**

This was another era of fluctuation in total naval force levels, although within tighter limits than was true during the mid-Cold War. World War II-era construction finally wore out and had to be retired, causing the fleet to drop in numbers from 752 ships at its Vietnam

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5. No attempt has been made to chronicle every operation short of war conducted by U.S. naval forces during this period, especially after 1950. For details of such operations, see Adam Siegel, *The Use of Naval Forces in the Post-War era: U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps Crisis Response Activity, 1946-1990*, CRM 90-246, (Alexandria VA: Center for Naval Analyses, February 1991)

War peak to 523 during the Carter presidency in 1977. The subsequent Reagan presidency defense build-up and its "600-ship Navy" goal got the fleet up to 594 active ships by 1987.

The number of ballistic missile submarines in the fleet falls from 41 after 1979 as a result of arms control agreements with the Soviets. A decade later there will be 36 in service.

More new kinds of ships, aircraft and systems enter the fleet during this period, especially amphibious assault ships (LHAs and LHDs), ocean surveillance ships, maritime prepositioning ships, and the Aegis air surveillance and anti-air warfare system on board cruisers and destroyers in the 1980s.

### **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

The late Cold War Navy was similar to the mid-Cold War Navy in key respects: The centerpiece was still the maintenance of two full-up main battle fleets in the Mediterranean and the Western Pacific for the entire spectrum of warfare: peacetime MOOTW, crisis, and war-time operations. There was still a main battle fleet on the East Coast too, with operational responsibilities in the Caribbean, as an ASW force, as a NATO striking force, and as a training fleet for the fleet in the Mediterranean. It still normally deployed once a year in a major NATO exercise off Norway. And there was still a fleet in the eastern Pacific, which focused on its training role for deployers to the Western Pacific.

The small force in the Persian Gulf had grown larger, however, and was now supplemented by carrier battle groups deploying into the Indian Ocean region from outside, especially from the Seventh Fleet. These deployments increased in frequency, in duration, and in size over the period, as the nation's attention slowly focused on the Persian Gulf as a central foreign policy arena. Persian Gulf and, for a time, in Northern Europe. By the end of the Cold War, the Gulf and Indian Ocean presence was more than equal in size and capability to the numbered fleets in the Mediterranean and in the Western Pacific.

The Sixth and Seventh Fleets reinforce their roles as permanent elements of the international landscape.

To maintain a forward presence in the Mediterranean and western Pacific in the face of drastically lower forces levels from the mid-Cold War period, there is an increase in the overseas homeporting of conventional naval forces, largely to cut down on deployment times and crew time away from home.

On the other hand, the overseas forward basing and refit of strategic missile submarines comes to an end. The deployment pattern of strategic submarines is driven by the range of their missiles. As this range increased over the period, culminating in the 4,200-nm range of the

Trident D 5 missile, the strategic submarines could operate far closer to the United States, obviating the necessity for forward basing at Rota, Holy Loch, and Guam.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war?

There continued to be two fundamental missions: Prepare for and deter a major global war with the Soviets; and conduct a wide range of MOOTW and crisis interventions. The geographical scope for U.S. Navy MOOTW continued to encompass almost the entire globe. This was due to the continued globalization of American security interests, as well as the worldwide scope of Soviet activity inimical to the United States, including the activity of its fleet.

The fleets tried to maintain routine deployment schedules, but these were broken not only by the usual demands of crises, but also by the dwindling number of fleet assets available and the increasing requirements for presence in the Indian Ocean. The pressure of smaller fleet size, more routinized forward deployments, broad global commitments, constant crisis interventions, and "real world" competition at sea with the Soviets caused the fleet to exercise far less, in the 1970s, in preparation for a major global war. This was reversed in the 1980s. Under the aggressive forward deployment concept known as the "Maritime Strategy" and the new flexible deployment schedules styled "FLEXOPS", the fleets exercised in multi-carrier battle forces off the Soviet coasts. These exercises fell off with the end of the Cold War in 1989.

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marines continued to seek and achieve more and more autonomy from the Navy. The Fleet Marine Force commanders subordinate to the naval component commanders at unified commands became component commanders as well, in their own right. Marine generals were occasionally appointed to head unified commands.

Without surrendering its claim to the amphibious assault mission, the role of the Marines in the late Cold War continued to draw upon all the Corps's earlier missions.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

Joint organizational structures accelerated their inexorable increase through the late Cold War era, and the ability of naval officers to operationally command and control their forces continued to decline. Creating the biennial revisions to the Unified Command Plan (which divided up the world among the unified - and for a time, specified - CINCs) continued to be an often ferocious locus of inter-service rivalry.

The numbered fleets continued to operate as distinct entities, and thought of themselves principally as operating *in support of* (or being supported by) comparable ground and air force entities, not integrated with them. Nevertheless, they became used to an increasing joint flavor to their operations: In Grenada in 1983, the Second fleet Commander was styled Commander, Joint Task Force, and worked

for CINCLANT/CINCLANTFLT in his CINCLANT hat. In the Persian Gulf in the late 1980s, the essentially naval force in that region was styled Joint Task Force Middle East, and reported to the unified Commander-in-Chief, USCINCCENT.

### **Fleet headquarters, flagships and staffs**

The four numbered fleets lost their late-World War II-era cruisers as flagships. Post-war-built cruisers lack flag spaces and accommodations, except for *Belknap*, partially converted in 1986 to accommodate a portion of the Sixth Fleet staff, which she served as flagship through 1993. Other flagships since the demise of the cruisers have been amphibious command ships (LCCs) (for the Second and Seventh Fleets) and converted amphibious transport docks (LPDs) taken from the amphibious force (for the Third Fleet, and for COMIDEASTFOR and COMUSNAVCENT).

## **Operational chronology**

### **1973 (continued)**

February 1. **THIRD FLEET RE-ACTIVATED ASHORE AT PEARL HARBOR.** Third Fleet is recommissioned in Hawaii as an active fleet, assuming the duties of the former First Fleet, based in San Diego, and the Anti-Submarine Warfare Force on Ford Island. Its missions include conducting and coordinating area anti-submarine warfare and surveillance in the Pacific Command, conducting naval control of shipping, and development of naval tactics, missions functionally different from those of other numbered fleet commanders.

In 1978, COMTHIRDFLT's warfighting role will be expanded to include defense of the western approaches of the United States.

COMTHIRDFLT will subsequently shed its area ASW and NCS missions and be included in planning for global war with the Soviet Union.

Third Fleet headquarters are ashore at Ford Island, not afloat. Commander, U.S. First Fleet had a cruiser command ship. Third Fleet will gain a command ship and go afloat most of the time starting in 1986 (command ship homeported in Pearl Harbor until 1991; in San Diego since then).

February 6–July 18. **Seventh Fleet North Vietnam minesweeping operation.** (Operation “Endsweep”). In conformity with the terms of the Paris Accords, a squadron of four Seventh Fleet ocean minesweepers and a helicopter mine countermeasures squadron, organized as Task Force 78, sweep North Vietnamese waters of the mines laid in May 1972.

March 20. **Naval Communications Station established on Diego Garcia.** This is the first of many naval activities to be set up on the British Indian Ocean Territory island in the 1970s and 1980s. It replaces a facility at Asmara, Eritrea, Ethiopia, in service since 1948, which is closed.

March 29. **NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM IS DISESTABLISHED.** Nine remaining Navy and Marine Corps officers are assigned to the U.S. Embassy’s Defense Attache Office. The command had been established in 1966.

April 6. **SIXTH FLEET SUBMARINE TENDER SARDINIA HOME-PORTING BEGINS.** A submarine tender arrives at La Maddalena, Sardinia to service Sixth Fleet Mediterranean submarines. A tender will remain homeported at La Maddalena through 1996.

May 11. **NATO STANDING MINESWEEPING FORCE ESTABLISHED.** A Standing Naval Force Channel (STANAVFORCHAN), a multinational minesweeping squadron, is inaugurated. A U.S. minesweeper will participate occasionally.

September 1. **Southeast Asia withdrawal.** The last American combat unit is withdrawn from the Southeast Asian mainland when a Marine F-4 squadron leaves Thailand.

October 5. **SEVENTH FLEET CARRIER HOMEPORTED IN JAPAN.** The carrier *Midway* joins DESRON 15 as a unit homeported in Japan. A conventionally-power carrier will continue to be homeported at Yokosuka, Japan, through 1996.

October 6. **Sixth Fleet Mediterranean show of force.** Following Egypt's surprise attack on Israel on October 6, the 48-ship Sixth Fleet deploys and concentrates south of Crete to deter Soviet interference in the conflict, in the face of an 80-ship Soviet Mediterranean Squadron. By the end of the month there will be 60 ships in the Sixth Fleet, including three attack carriers, and 95 Soviet naval vessels. This is the first Soviet-American confrontation in which the Soviet Navy will pose a significant immediate threat to the U.S. Navy.

October 13. **Sixth Fleet Mediterranean airlift support operation.** During the Arab-Israeli War, the Sixth Fleet places cruisers and destroyers in a chain of picket stations stretching across the Mediterranean, to support a U.S. airlift of arms to Israel. The Fleet provides navigation, surveillance, air defense, and standby search and rescue support for U.S. Air Force transport aircraft, and refuels jet aircraft being ferried to Israel. This dispersal renders the Fleet vulnerable to Soviet naval threats, however.

October 19. **Carrier employed as intermediate airfield.** (Operation "Nickel Grass"). USS *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVA 42) is used as an intermediate air field for the transatlantic flight of A-4 Skyhawk aircraft to Israel.

October 29-December 8. **Seventh Fleet Indian Ocean routine carrier deployments begin.** In the wake of the Yom Kippur War and the related imposition of an OPEC oil embargo, a Seventh Fleet carrier battle group comprising the attack carrier *Hancock*, three surface combatants and an oiler cruise the Indian Ocean for 41 days, beginning a decade of one or two annual 1-2 month routine Seventh Fleet carrier deployments into the Indian Ocean, supplemented by surface combatant task groups.

**OPNAV size.** In 1973 there are at least 1,000 officers working in OpNAV (In 1939 the number was 125).

## 1974

**April 24. Sixth Fleet Suez Canal mine-sweeping, explosive ordnance disposal, and salvage operations.** (Operations "Nimbus Star", "Nimbus Moon", and "Nimrod Spar", respectively). A Sixth Fleet task force begins clearing the Suez Canal of mines and vessels laid and sunk in it by Egypt since the 1967 Mideast War. The mine-sweeping is completed on June 3, and most major obstructions have been removed by mid-December. The Canal will re-open on June 5, 1975, and the last U.S. Navy salvage ship will leave the Canal area on July 23.

**November 24. Submarine-launched ballistic missiles limited.** President Ford and Soviet Communist Party Secretary Brezhnev sign an agreement at Vladivostok to put a ceiling on, *inter alia*, submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

**November 24-26. Persian Gulf carrier deployment.** The *Constellation*, accompanied by two destroyers, becomes the first American carrier to enter the Persian Gulf since *Tarawa* in 1949, to emphasize US objections to any interruption of oil supplies.

## 1975

**January 1. Fleet surface type commands combined.** Four individual type commands – the Cruiser-Destroyer Forces, Amphibious Forces, Service Forces and Mine Forces – in both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets are amalgamated into new consolidated Surface Forces type commands.

**March 10. Final Communist offensive begins in South Vietnam.** A chain reaction of military disasters and collapses ensues throughout the country, culminating in the fall of Saigon the following month.

**March 27-April 14. Military Sealift Command Evacuation operations.** Given the prohibition of U.S. military forces in Vietnam under the Paris Peace Accords of 1973, Military Sealift command ships conduct

a series of evacuations of Vietnamese from northern and central South Vietnamese coastal ports to the south.

April 12. **Seventh Fleet Cambodia evacuation operation.** (Operation "Eagle Pull"). Navy and Marine helicopters from Seventh Fleet carriers and amphibious ships evacuate 300 U.S., Cambodian, and third country citizens from Phnom Penh.

April 29. **Sixth Fleet destroyer homeporting in Greece termination announced.** Greece and the United States announce they have agreed to end the homeporting of a Sixth Fleet destroyer squadron near Athens, given recent radical changes in the Greek government and its policies. The destroyers had been homeported there since September 1972.

April 29-30. **Seventh Fleet Vietnam evacuation operation.** (Operation "Frequent Wind"). In 18 hours, Navy and Marine helicopters from Seventh Fleet carriers and amphibious ships evacuate 7,000 Americans and Vietnamese from Saigon. Aircraft from four carriers provide air support. 44,000 other refugees come out on Military Sealift Command ships, and 30,000 on Vietnamese navy vessels. All sail for refugee reception centers in the Philippines and Guam.

May 7. **First U.S. Navy-Soviet Navy port visit exchange.** Two U.S. Navy destroyers arrive at Leningrad while two Soviet destroyers arrive at Boston.

May 12-15. **Seventh Fleet in joint Gulf of Thailand ship crew rescue attempt.** A Seventh Fleet frigate carries Marines to board the abandoned U.S. container ship *Mayaguez*, seized with her crew by Cambodian communist forces. Planes from a Seventh Fleet carrier (and US Air Force aircraft from Thailand) hit Cambodian shore targets on Koh Tang Island and Marines are airlifted by Air Force helicopters to the island in an attempt to rescue the ship's crew. The crew, not on the island, are later returned to the *Mayaguez* unharmed, by Cambodian boats.

June 5. **Sixth Fleet flagship helps re-open Suez Canal.** The Sixth Fleet flagship USS *Little Rock* (CLG 4) is the only foreign warship in the official flotilla sailing down the canal toward Ismailia.

August 13–October 10. **Sixth Fleet clearance of the Egyptian Mediterranean minefield.** (Operation “Nimbus Stream”). In response to an Egyptian request, Task Force 65 makes airborne mine countermeasures sweeps of mine fields off the Egyptian cities of Port Said and Damietta.

December 31. **HEADQUARTERS, U.S. NAVAL FORCES SOUTHERN COMMAND DISESTABLISHED.** The SOUTHCOM naval component commander becomes the 450-man U.S. Naval Station, Panama Canal. The Air Force component commander is also disestablished. The Army had already closed its component command.

## 1976

March. **SECOND FLEET FLAGSHIP CHANGES.** COMSECONDFLT embarks on USS *Mount Whitney* (LCC 20) as his flagship, ending an era of using cruisers as flagships that dates back to the immediate postwar years. Except for brief periods, *Mount Whitney* will remain the Second Fleet flagship through 1996 in the post-Cold War era.

May 1. **FURTHER EXPANSION OF PACOM.** The LANTCOM/PACOM boundary is adjusted to give CINCPAC, and therefore CINCPACFLT and the Seventh Fleet, responsibility for the entire Indian Ocean to the east coast of Africa.

July 13. **Air Force conducts anti-ship operations.** The Defense Department announces that U.S. Air Force B-52 strategic bombers have begun long-range ocean patrols in the Atlantic, to supplement the Navy in its sea control mission.

August 6. **First amphibious assault ship joins Third Fleet.** *Tarawa* (LHA 1), lead ship of a new class of very large amphibious assault ships capable of launching vertical and short take off and landing (VSTOL) aircraft, helicopters and landing craft, arrives at San Diego to begin exercises off the California coast. The LHA one of very few new classes of ship to deploy in the Pacific before the Atlantic.

## 1978

February 9. **Naval satellite communications upgraded.** A new era in naval communications begins with the launching of the first satellite of the Navy's Fleet Satellite Communications system.

April. **MIDEASTFORCE combatant augmentation.** USS *Fox* (CG-33) acts as MIDEASTFOR flagship, followed by other Atlantic and Pacific Fleet cruisers and guided missile destroyers. This represents an increase in combat capability over the surface combatants previously deploying with the MIDEASTFOR.

September 30. **Naval Forces Europe naval air station closes in Morocco.** The naval air station established in December 1942 at Port Lyautey (now Kenitra) is finally closed down, having served for much of World War II and the Cold War.

## 1979

1979. **Seventh Fleet/MIDEASTFOR substantial increase in deployment presence in Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf.** Seventh Fleet carrier battle group and surface action group deployments begin to maintain an almost permanent presence in the Indian Ocean. Intermittent deployments of amphibious task forces also begin. Likewise, the normal MIDEASTFOR destroyer force level of two destroyers, maintained since 1958, is increased to four surface combatants, including cruisers, destroyers and frigates. It will increase to five in January 1986.

February 21-22. **MIDEASTFOR Iran evacuation operations.** MIDEASTFOR ships, reinforced by Seventh Fleet destroyers, help evacuate refugees from Iran.

March. **U.S. Freedom of Navigation program initiated.** The United States begins a systematic program asserting its freedom of navigation operationally at sea and in the air (as well as diplomatically), to protect U.S. and international navigation and overflight interests on and over the seas against excessive maritime claims by littoral nations. The

U.S. military will make between 30 and 40 operational challenges a year against objectionable claims by over 35 countries.

**June 10. Submarine Force, Atlantic forward missile submarine basing in Spain ends.** *Canopus* (AS 34), with Commander Submarine Squadron 16 embarked, departs Rota, Spain, completing the withdrawal of Submarine Squadron 16 from that country. Rota had been a forward anchorage and refit site for nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines since 1964. With the deployment of longer-range Trident I C-4 submarine-launched ballistic missiles, the need for forward basing of ballistic missile submarines at Rota ends. Submarine Squadron 16's new homeport is a new base at King's Bay, Georgia.

The base at Rota, however, will continue to support Sixth Fleet Mediterranean deployments and other U.S. naval activities, through 1996.

**June 18. Submarine-launched ballistic missiles limited.** The United States and the Soviet Union sign a strategic arms limitation treaty ("SALT II"). The agreement, adhered to but never ratified by the United States, limits the total number of strategic missiles each country may possess, including submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

**September 30. Canal Zone turned over to Panama.** The United States turns over control of the Panama Canal Zone to the Panama government, ending three quarters of a century of American control.

**October. SEVENTH FLEET FLAGSHIP CHANGES.** *Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) replaces *Oklahoma City* (CG 5) as flagship of the Seventh Fleet, bringing to a close the era of Seventh Fleet cruiser flagships.

**October 2. CCJTF ESTABLISHED.** In the wake of the discovery of a Soviet combat brigade stationed in Cuba, President Carter establishes a Caribbean Combined Joint Task Force (CCJTF) at Key West, under a Navy rear admiral, as a subordinate unified command of LANTCOM, to plan and conduct peacetime training and contingency operations in the Caribbean and Central America Region. LANTCOM's other subordinate organization, the Antilles Defense Command (ANTEDEFCON) performs a similar mission in the southern Caribbean.

Six new *Pegasus*-class hydrofoil missile boats are assigned to the task force.

October 20. **FIRST TRIDENT I MISSILE DEPLOYMENT.** *Francis Scott Key* (SSBN 657) departs Charleston, South Carolina, and becomes the first such submarine to go on patrol armed with 16 long-range (4,000 nm) C-4 Trident I missiles. She is a backfitted former Poseidon missile submarine. The increased range of the Trident I missile over its predecessor, Poseidon (2,500 nm), greatly alters the deployment patterns of SSBNs, which can now hit their targets in the Soviet Union without deploying forward. (Poseidon first deployed in 1971). Trident I's range will obviate the necessity of forward basing strategic nuclear submarines in Guam, Spain and Scotland.

The first deployment of a new *Ohio*-class Trident submarine will occur in 1982. The first Trident II (D-5) missile will deploy in 1990.

November. **Carrier augmentation in the Indian Ocean.** From now until October 1981, there will be two carrier battle groups continuously deployed in the Indian Ocean.

December. **APPOINTMENT OF COMRDJTF.** In the wake of the seizure of U.S. hostages and the U.S. embassy in Tehran by Iranian revolutionaries, the JCS appoint Major General P.X. Kelley, USMC as first commander of a new Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, at CNO and CMC urging (in lieu of enhancing the Readiness Command), to plan rapid deployment operations to the Middle East and Africa. The RDJTF will last only three years, when it will be superseded by the U.S. Central Command.

A naval component staff of the RDJTF will also be established, under Commander, Naval Rapid Deployment Forces, RADM Stanley Arthur, double-hatted as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans and Policy of the Pacific Fleet, in Pearl Harbor.

December 25. **Soviets invade Afghanistan.**

1980

**Tender moves forward in the Indian Ocean.** Tender support is now available at Diego Garcia.

**March 16. Indian Ocean amphibious deployment.** A Seventh Fleet amphibious task group arrives in the Indian Ocean, the first of four such groups that will maintain a continuous Navy-Marine team presence until March 1981.

**April 24. Seventh Fleet Joint Task Force Iran hostage rescue attempt.** (Operation "Eagle Claw"). In a complex series of ground and air movements to rescue American hostages in Iran, involving elements from all four services, eight RH-53D helicopters from the Seventh Fleet carrier *Nimitz* (with newly-trained Marine pilots) in the Arabian Sea and 6 Air Force C-130 transports carry a joint services rescue team to rendezvous at Desert One, a staging point in Iran 200 miles from Teheran. Helicopter failures cause the mission to abort.

**May 28. SIXTH FLEET FLAGSHIP SHIFTS.** The flag of Commander, Sixth Fleet shifts from the cruiser *Albany* (CG 10) to the destroyer tender *Puget Sound*, marking the end of the use of large World War II-era cruisers as flagships by U.S. Navy numbered fleet commanders. *Albany* will be decommissioned. *Puget Sound* will be relieved as flagship by *Coronado* (AGF 11) in October 1985, which in turn will be relieved as flagship by *Belknap* (CG 26) in 1986.

**June 3. Third Fleet diplomatic support event.** 24 officials from the People's Republic of China embark in a carrier off San Diego to observe a weapons demonstration. This is the first visit by PRC officials to a U.S. aircraft carrier, and it reciprocates a January 1980 visit by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to the Chinese Fleet headquarters in Shanghai.

**August 5. INDIAN OCEAN PRE-POSITIONING FORCE IN-PLACE.** All seven ships of the Near-term Prepositioning Force (NTPF) with equipment to sustain the 12,000-man Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force are on station at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. The composition and capability of the NTPF will undergo major changes from 1981 to 1983 and grow to 17 PREPO ships. By November 1985, five of

the 17 ships will be relieved by five newly converted Maritime Prepositioning Ships (MPS). At the end of 1985, both MPS and PREPO ships will be designated as part of the Afloat Prepositioning Force (APF).

September 22. **Iran-Iraq war begins.** It will drag on until a cease-fire is agreed to in 1988.

October 1. July 1. **Coronado classified as command ship.** The classification of USS *Coronado* is changed from amphibious transport dock (LPD) to miscellaneous command ship (AGF), preparatory to her relieving *La Salle* temporarily as Middle East Force command ship while *La Salle* undergoes overhaul. When *La Salle* returns to the Middle East in 1983, *Coronado* will undergo her own overhaul, then relieve *Puget Sound* as Sixth Fleet command ship in 1985 and become the first command ship of the Third Fleet in 1986.

October 30. **Fleet Satellite global communications network complete.** The fourth FLTSATCOM spacecraft is successfully placed in orbit, completing the network.

December 22. **Seventh Fleet Indian Ocean battlegroup longest deployment.** The Seventh Fleet nuclear-powered carrier *Eisenhower* and two nuclear-powered cruisers return from the Indian Ocean after the Navy's longest deployment since World War II – 251 days. At one point the *Eisenhower* was at sea for 152 consecutive days.

## 1981

February 5. **John Lehman is SECNAV.** John F. Lehman is sworn in as the 65th Secretary of the Navy, following the inauguration of President Ronald Reagan, who adopts a more confrontational stance with the Soviet Union, including at sea. Lehman will serve until April 1987. His term in office will be marked by the articulation and implementation of "The Maritime Strategy", including an increase in the extent and forward nature of major fleet exercises and a large number of international interventions using naval forces, fueled by increased Navy budgets and ship and aircraft force levels (the "600-ship Navy" goal).

August 1-October 15. **Second Fleet in major multi-national North Atlantic exercise.** (Exercise "Ocean Venture '81"). In the largest U.S. naval exercise in recent years, combining what had been previously a series of separate exercises, 250 ships and 1,000 aircraft from 14 countries conduct a six-phase multi-national exercise in the Atlantic, Caribbean and Baltic. The new Second Fleet commander is VADM J.A. "Ace" Lyons, Jr. This inaugurates an extensive and massive fleet exercise program in the 1980s to test the concepts of the forward, global "Maritime Strategy."

August 19. **Sixth Fleet Libya anti-air operation.** Two Sixth Fleet carrier aircraft shoot down two Libyan fighters off the coast of Libya. The Libyans had opened fire and were asserting a claim to the entire Gulf of Sidra as territorial waters, a claim rejected by the United States.

October 1. **Last Polaris patrol completed.** USS *Robert E. Lee* completes the last deterrent patrol of the intermediate-range *Polaris* strategic ballistic missile system.

October 21. **Carrier presence in Indian Ocean drops to one Carrier Battle Group.** Two groups had deployed there continuously since November 1979.

December 1. **USFORCARIB ESTABLISHED.** CINCLANT combines Commander, Caribbean Contingency Joint Task Force (CCJTF) and ANTEDEFCON into the United States Forces, Caribbean, reporting to CINCLANT, with headquarters in Puerto Rico. It will endure until 1989.

December-late 1980s. **Central American surveillance operations.** Surveillance operations are conducted throughout the period of insurgency in El Salvador and Marxist rule in Nicaragua. On December 23, 1981, USS *Deyo* begins a series of electronic surveillance operations off El Salvador. USS *Sphinx* will be eventually re-commissioned and based in Panama to conduct these operations from a dedicated warship.

1982

1982. **Navy FLEXOPS carrier deployment policy instituted.** Driven in part by fluctuating but escalating Indian Ocean requirements, the CNO coordinates a reordering by the Navy Component Commanders of their peacetime carrier deployment schedule. This also enables multi-carrier battle groups to exercise together more frequently and farther forward while maintaining deployment durations for crews. Transoceanic transits will be increasingly adjusted to include major forward tactical exercises in potential wartime environments.

June 24-25. **Sixth Fleet Lebanon evacuation.** Two Sixth Fleet amphibious ships evacuate nearly 600 American and foreign citizens from Juniyah, near Beirut, during fighting between the Israeli Army and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

June 24-28. **Sixth Fleet in NATO multicarrier battle force exercise.** (Exercise "Daily Double '82"). NATO CINCSOUTH conducts an ad hoc exercise demonstrating the ability to reinforce carrier battle groups in the Mediterranean. Two battle groups already in the Mediterranean are reinforced by two battle groups arriving from the United States.

August 25. **Sixth Fleet in ad hoc coalition Lebanon peacekeeping.** The Sixth Fleet lands marines at Beirut, Lebanon, to cooperate with French and Italian detachments in a Multinational Force to supervise the departure of the Palestine Liberation Organization from Lebanon. UN-flagged merchant ships carrying more than 10,000 Palestinians are convoyed by 11 Sixth Fleet cruisers, frigates and destroyers. The Marines withdraw on September 10.

September. **First Ohio-class ballistic submarine deployment with Tri-dent I missiles.** The 4,000-nm. strategic nuclear missile had been deploying in 1979, on back-fitted Poseidon submarines.

September 6-17. **Second Fleet in NATO North Atlantic Exercise.** (Exercise "Northern Wedding '82"). An Atlantic crossing by a U.S. Navy amphibious force and one carrier battle group is coordinated for the first time with a direct escort role for Military Sealift Command shipping moving "Reforger" equipment for Army and Air

Force augmentation of in-place European forces. Following the crossing, the Marines conduct an amphibious assault exercise in Denmark (Exercise "Bold Guard '82").

September 18. **PORTUGUESE ADMIRAL COMMANDS IBERLANT.** Vice Admiral Ilidio Elias da Costa, Portuguese Navy, becomes the first Portuguese Commander-in-Chief of NATO's Iberian Atlantic Area (Iberlant), under SACLANT. Since the command's inception in 1966, it has been commanded by U.S. Navy officers.

September 25–October. **Pacific Fleet North Pacific multi-carrier battle force exercise.** Two battle groups operate southeast of Kamchatka and the Kuriles, implementing the Flexops carrier deployment policy and illustrating Maritime Strategy forward operations. Soviet Naval Aviation conduct mock attacks on the carriers.

September 29. **Sixth Fleet in ad hoc coalition Lebanon landing.** The Sixth Fleet again lands marines at Beirut, Lebanon, to form a Multi-national Peace-Keeping Force with 2,200 French and Italian troops.

## 1983

January. **CINCUSNAVEUR AND NATO CINCSOUTH DOUBLE-HATTED AGAIN.** ADM William Crowe, Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe (CINCSOUTH), a NATO Principal Subordinate Commander (PSC), also assumes the position of Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe (CINCUSNAVEUR), the U.S. Navy component commander for the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM). The incumbent CINCUSNAVEUR becomes the Deputy CINCUSNAVEUR. This combines the two positions in one individual for the first time since ADM Carney wore both hats for less than a year in 1951–1952.

January 1. **CENTCOM ESTABLISHED.** Over CNO and CMC opposition, a new unified command, a new US Central Command is established out of the RDJTF, with responsibility for the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and the Red Sea, and augmented with the Middle East Force.

The Commander, Rapid Deployment Naval Forces at Pearl Harbor, RADM Stanley Arthur, now becomes the first Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command. While the position will soon be divorced from a double-hat as the Pacific Fleet Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans and Policy, the component commander will remain a one-star flag officer at Pearl Harbor until Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1991, when the incumbent will move to Saudi Arabia as Commander, Naval Logistics Supply Force (COMNAVLOGSUPFOR), and the Commander, Seventh Fleet will be named as COMUSNAVCENT.

May 25–June 17. **Second Fleet in U.S. and Allied North Atlantic exercises** (Exercises “United Effort ‘83” and “Ocean Safari ‘83”). “United Effort” is a U.S.-only all-warfare-areas prelude to “Ocean Safari”, a major NATO maritime exercise training joint national sea and air forces. During the exercises, testing tactics to implement the “Maritime Strategy”, the carrier *Kennedy* launches a surprise very long range 1,000-mile strike on the carrier *America*. In another such test, A-6 strike aircraft from *Kennedy* launch missions from the Bay of Biscay against simulated targets in Germany, in support of Allied Command Europe ground force exercises there.

June–May 1984. **Trans-oceanic battleship deployment.** In her third reactivation since World War II, the battleship *New Jersey* (recommissioned in December 1982) participates in fleet exercises and contingency operations off southern California, in the Western Pacific, off Central America, and in the Eastern Mediterranean, all on one deployment. She will steam 76,000 miles in 322 days, nearly half while serving in the Mediterranean. *New Jersey* will be joined in commission by the other three *Iowa*-class battleships over the next four years, but they will all be retired again at the end of the Cold War.

July 26. **Central America show of force.** A carrier battle group conducts a two-week demonstration off the west coast of Honduras, where the United States is trying to discourage a possible Nicaraguan invasion. Later in the summer, another carrier battle group exercises off the east coast and a battleship off the west. The following year, another battleship will deploy off the west coast.

September 1–November 5. **Seventh Fleet in multinational northwest Pacific search operation.** In response to the Soviet shoot-down of

South Korean civilian airliner, a Seventh Fleet Task Force attempts to locate wreckage, with Japanese and South Korean units participating as well. No significant wreckage is recovered, however, but the United States effort demonstrates American support for the South Koreans.

September 8–February 26, 1984. **Sixth Fleet in Lebanon ad hoc coalition fire support operations.** A Sixth Fleet frigate becomes the first vessel to fire in support of the Marines in Beirut, against a Syrian-supported Druze position that had shelled the Marines. Subsequently, other Sixth Fleet surface combatants follow suit, including a battleship. British and French warships also patrol the Lebanese coast. Surface bombardment operations will continue through February 1984.

October 1. **Air Force anti-ship missile capability begins.** The Strategic Air Command achieves limited initial operational capability with three B-52Gs at Loring Air Force Base, Maine, carrying Harpoon anti-ship missiles.

October 20–May 4, 1984. **Sixth Fleet initial Navy Aegis cruiser deployment.** *Ticonderoga*, (CG 47), lead ship of a new class of cruisers carrying the new Aegis fleet air combat system, assigned to the Atlantic Fleet, deploys overseas for the first time. She will assume primary surface air surveillance responsibility for U.S. forces off Beirut, in the eastern Mediterranean, and in mid-December conduct shore bombardment tasks.

October 23. **Beirut bombings.** A truck bomb penetrates Marine headquarters in Beirut, killing 241 Marines. Minutes later, 58 French troops are likewise killed by a truck bomb.

October 23–October 26. **Second Fleet commands joint Grenada intervention.** (Operation "Urgent Fury".) The Second Fleet commander leads a Joint Task Force (JTF 120) under USCINCLANT to occupy the Caribbean island nation of Grenada, where Cuban-backed Marxists have just seized power. The operation includes landings and helicopter assaults from a carrier battle group and an amphibious task group at sea by Marines and Navy SEALs, as well as non-combatant evacuation. The Second Fleet/JTF 120 commander directs the oper-

ation from his flagship, USS *Guam* (LPH-9). Carrier aviation flew close air support and reconnaissance support missions.

December 4. **Sixth Fleet in Lebanon ad hoc coalition naval bombardment.** Sixth Fleet carrier aircraft strike Syrian positions in the mountains overlooking the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon. On December 14, surface combatants shells positions inland of Beirut. Aircraft from a French carrier bomb shore targets as well.

## 1984

February 7– February 26. **Sixth Fleet in ad hoc coalition Lebanon withdrawal.** The Marines withdraw from Beirut to ships at sea. Heavy shore bombardment of Syrian positions continues from Sixth Fleet surface combatants. Italian, British, and French forces also withdraw between January and March 1984, the French last, after the Americans. On February 8, in the heaviest shore bombardment of the Lebanese operation, the battleship *New Jersey* will fire 288 16-inch rounds.

February 13–March 22. **Second Fleet in North Atlantic NATO exercises.** (Exercise “United Effort ‘84” and Exercise “TeamWork 84”). In “United Effort”, U.S., British and Canadian ships under Commander Second fleet move from the western to the northern Atlantic, where they join other NATO units for Exercise “Teamwork,” testing plans for the reinforcement of Norway. “Teamwork” will be the largest combined amphibious landing ever conducted above the Arctic Circle, with a Marine Amphibious Brigade going ashore from 15 amphibious ships, including two *Tarawa*-class amphibious assault ships.

June. **Middle East Force in Persian Gulf ad hoc multi-national operations.** Warships from the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union show their concern over the maritime repercussions of the Iran-Iraq war by keeping warships in the Persian Gulf.

August 17–September 28. **CENTCOM naval force in joint ad hoc coalition Red Sea mine hunting operation.** (Operation “Intense Look”). Under a Navy commodore acting as CINCCENT Forward in Cairo, three U.S. Navy ships and eight helicopters (some airlifted across the Atlantic by U.S. Air Force transports) participate in a multinational effort to locate mines which have mysteriously appeared in the Gulf

of Suez, probably dropped from a Libyan merchant ship. At the height of the effort there are 26 ships participating, from the United States, Britain, the Netherlands, France, Italy and the Soviet Union. On August 15 searches are also conducted off Saudi Red Sea ports.

September 21. **MIDEASTFOR Persian Gulf tanker escort operations.** COMIDEASTFOR begins escort of U.S. flagged vessels in the Gulf, as the Iran-Iraq war intensifies.

October 18–December 1. **Pacific Fleet multi-carrier trans-North Pacific exercise** (Exercise FleetEx 85-1). Both Third and Seventh Fleets participate in this trans-oceanic exercise involving a total of five carrier battlegroups, as well as numerous U.S. Air Force aircraft. Two battlegroups will operate in the Sea of Japan after conclusion of Fleet Ex, closing to within 50 nautical miles of Vladivostok and bringing over 100 Soviet aircraft to the area.

## 1985

Early. **Atlantic Fleet submarine surge exercise.** In a short (24-hour) warning readiness exercise, 44 nuclear-powered attack submarines surge deploy into the North Atlantic, with full weapons load.

March 11. **Mikhail Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.** By his resignation in December 1991, he will have ended the Cold War, the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union and the division of Germany.

April 1. **NAVAL FORCES SOUTH ESTABLISHED.** Commander, U.S. Naval Forces South is established as the naval component commander for the U.S. Southern Command at Panama. It will endure as a separate organization until 1991.

July 30–November 1986. **Maritime prepositioning instituted.** Maritime Prepositioning Squadron (MPS) 1 becomes operational, deployed to the eastern Atlantic with vehicles and supplies to provide sustainability to Marines ashore. MPS 2, operational on December 31, deploys to the Indian Ocean to support Army, Air Force, and Marine units on tap for deployment to the Middle East. MPS 3 will deploy to

Guam and Tinian in October and November 1986. An interim Near-Term Prepositioning Force had previously been deployed since 1980.

August 28–September 20. **Second Fleet in NATO North Atlantic Exercise.** (Exercise “Ocean Safari 85”). This exercise moves from the western Atlantic to the Norwegian Sea. VADM Henry Mustin, Commander Second Fleet, flies his NATO Striking Fleet Commander flag on *Nassau* (LHA 4). This exercise is the largest NATO sea lane defense exercise ever conducted (151 ships from ten NATO nations). While the exercise largely tests NATO convoy defense, it will terminate with the carrier *America* entering the Vestfjord, a large enclosed body of water on the Norwegian coast, thereby also testing the offensive maritime campaign embodied in the Navy’s “Maritime Strategy” concept.

This will be the first time a carrier will have conducted flight operations in Vestfjord.

October 10. **Sixth Fleet Mediterranean airliner interception operation.** Sixth Fleet carrier aircraft force diversion to Italy of an Egyptian airliner carrying Palestinian terrorists who had hijacked the *Achille Lauro* cruise ship at sea and murdered an American citizen. The hijackers are arrested.

November 1. **LANTCOM AND LANTFLT SPLIT.** An Atlantic Fleet commander-in-chief is established separate from the unified Atlantic Command commander-in-chief, who remains Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. This parallels the division in the Pacific effected in 1958.

## 1986

January. **MIDEASTFOR FORCE LEVEL INCREASES.** A fifth surface combatant is added to the normal complement, since 1979, of four cruisers, destroyers, and frigates. In June 1987 the force will be further augmented, then be reduced to six surface combatants in January 1989.

**Western Hemisphere drug surveillance-interdiction operations.** Although some counter-drug operations had been conducted earlier,

1986 marks the beginning of concentrated operations, including the stationing of Coast Guard law enforcement detachments on U.S. Navy warships. U.S. Navy ships and aircraft will conduct counter-drug operations in the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, and on the Pacific Coast as far south as Ecuador.

March 24–27. **Sixth Fleet Gulf of Sidra Freedom of Navigation assertion.** (Operation “Attain Document”). Three Sixth Fleet carrier battle groups support a surface action group challenging Libyan territorial waters claims to the Gulf of Sidra. Libyan surface combatants engage the U.S. forces and are destroyed or damaged.

April 15. **Sixth Fleet Libya air strikes.** (Operation “Eldorado Canyon”). In response to Libyan terrorist attacks in Europe against Americans, aircraft from two Sixth Fleet carriers and U.S. Air Force strike aircraft from Britain attack and destroy five separate military and terrorist targets in Tripoli and Benghazi, Libya. Each service’s attack is within a specific geographic area (“route packages”).

This is the most significant joint air operation between Vietnam and Desert Storm. In succeeding years, the incidence of Libyan-connected terrorist activities shows a drastic decline.

May 6. **Navy Arctic submarine deployments.** (Exercise “Icex 1-86”). Three nuclear-powered attack submarines surface together at the North Pole for the first time, as part of an exercise testing submarine Arctic operations readiness.

July 7. **SIXTH FLEET COMMAND SHIP CHANGES.** *Belknap* (CG 26), converted to a flagship, replaces *Coronado* (which in turn had replaced the destroyer tender *Puget Sound*, which had replaced *Albany*, the last World War II cruiser flagship, in 1980).

August 14–end September. **Second Fleet in NATO Norwegian Sea exercise.** (Exercise “Northern Wedding”). A multi-phase major NATO naval exercise involving one carrier battle group and one battleship battle group, with moving of the Striking Fleet from U.S. East Coast ports to Norway, and amphibious landings in Norway and Denmark

August (mid). **Third Fleet carrier deploys into Bering Sea.** While en route to the western Pacific, a carrier battle group makes the first such deployment since 1962, conducting tactical air operations for two days in the Bering Sea.

September 14–17. **Seventh Fleet carrier battle group Sea of Japan exercise.**

September 30–October 19. **Third Fleet North Pacific “Maritime Strategy” exercise.** (Exercise “FleetEx 86”, including “ReadiEx 87-1”). Commander Third Fleet conducts an exercise in the Northern Pacific and the Gulf of Alaska involving two carrier battlegroups and one battleship battle group.

October 1. **POWER OF THE CHAIRMAN AND THE UNIFIED CINCS STRENGTHENED.** The Goldwater-Nichols Act becomes law, increasing the authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the expense of the Chief of Naval Operations and other service chiefs, and increasing the authority of the combatant commanders over their component service commanders, including the Navy Fleet CINCs. This is the first significant change to the national military command of the numbered fleets since the Defense Reorganization Act of 1958.

November 5–11. **Seventh Fleet China port visit.** A Seventh Fleet surface combatant task group visits Tsingtao, the first U.S. Navy port visit to the Chinese mainland since 1949. A cruiser acts as flagship for the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, who is embarked for the visit.

November 26. **COMTHIRD FLEET GOES AFLOAT.** The Third Fleet, re-established in 1975, shifts its headquarters from Ford Island to the flagship USS *Coronado* (AGF-11), previously briefly the Sixth Fleet command ship and now homeported in Pearl Harbor. The move is made to allow COMTHIRDFLT the mobility necessary to command his forces on the scene in the event of war and to work more closely with his embarked commanders in peacetime training exercises. *Coronado* will change homeport to San Diego in August 1991.

1987

January 23-28. **Third Fleet Aleutian "Maritime Strategy" exercise.** (Exercise "Kernal Potlatch 87/1"). A carrier battle group and an amphibious force exercise in the Aleutian Islands, including amphibious assault exercises on Adak and Shemya. These were the first winter amphibious operations in the Aleutians since World War II and the first-ever winter deployment of a carrier battle group to the Bering Sea.

April 10. **Secretary of the Navy John Lehman leaves office.**

May 17. **MIDEASTFOR frigate attacked in Persian Gulf.** An Iraqi jet hits Stark with two exocet missiles, probably in error. 37 U.S. sailors are killed.

May 28. **Aegis cruiser operates in Pacific.** *Vincennes* is the first Aegis cruiser to operate in the Pacific, participating in a RIMPAC exercise. The two Aegis ships commissioned previously have been operating in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, since *Ticonderoga* first deployed to the Mediterranean in October 1983.

June. **MIDEASTFOR FORCE LEVEL AGAIN INCREASES.** As the conflict between Iran and Iraq intensifies at sea and the threats Gulf shipping increase, the MIDEASTFOR is further augmented, from the level of five surface combatants, including cruisers, destroyers and frigates, established in January 1986. The size of the force will peak at nine surface combatants in mid-1988, then drop to six in January 1989. The Soviet Union, France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy also send warships to the Gulf during the Tanker War, chiefly minesweepers.

July 21. **MIDEASTFOR Persian Gulf tanker convoy operations.** (Operation "Earnest Will"). U.S. naval convoy protection begins for reflagged Kuwaiti tankers passing through the Persian Gulf during the Iran-Iraq war, Kuwait having requested such protection in November 1986. COMIDEASTFOR, embarked on *LaSalle*, has tactical command of both the Middle East Force and the Seventh fleet carrier battle group in the Gulf of Oman while a convoy is actually being escorted in the Gulf, an arrangement to be superseded by creation of

Commander, Joint Task Force Middle East, in September 1987. The convoy escort operation will terminate in December 1988. At its peak, 42 ships from 5 nations will be present in the area conducted related operations, independent of but informally coordinating with CJTFME.

August 30–February 13, 1988. **Seventh Fleet battleship deployments to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf.** Battleship battle groups centering on *Missouri*, then *Iowa*, operate in the North Arabian Sea and escorting convoys through the Strait of Hormuz.

August 31. **MIDEASTFOR Persian Gulf minesweeping boat augmentation.** The tanker *Bridgeton* having hit a mine on July 24, four MSBs on board *Raleigh* arrive in the Persian Gulf to provide mine-clearing support prior to the arrival of ocean minesweepers in November 1987.

September 20. **JOINT TASK FORCE MIDDLE EAST CREATED.** RADM Dennis Brooks, the Seventh Fleet carrier battle group commander in the Indian Ocean and Commander, Carrier Forces, U.S. Seventh Fleet (CTF 70), becomes Commander, Joint Task Force Middle East (JTFME), under Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command, and assumes operational control of Operation "Earnest Will." This new layer of command essentially gives the commander of the Seventh Fleet task force, operating in the Indian Ocean outside the Gulf, tactical responsibility for all naval operations in the region, including convoy escort. RADM Harold Bernsen remains as Commander, Middle East Force, and, while subordinate to CJTFME, continues in tactical command within the Gulf itself. The two jobs will be combined in one commander in February 1988; CJTFME will be abolished at the start of Operation Desert Shield in 1990.

September 21. **MIDEASTFOR Army helicopter sinks Iranian vessel in Persian Gulf.** *Iran Ajr*, caught laying mines, is attacked by a U.S. Army helicopter operating from a frigate, and subsequently seized by SEALs.

October 19. **MIDEASTFOR Persian Gulf naval bombardment of oil platforms.** (Operation "Nimble Archer") In the Persian Gulf, four MIDEASTFOR destroyers respond to an Iranian ground-launched

missile attack on a reflagged tanker by destroying with naval gunfire two old Iranian oil platforms being used as military speedboat bases and communications and surveillance sites.

November. **MIDEASTFOR minesweeper further augmentation.** Six ocean minesweepers (MSO) arrive in the Persian Gulf. Supplemented by minesweeping helicopters operating off *Guadalcanal* from August 1987 to February 1988, they will operate in the Gulf through 1989. Nevertheless, on April 14, 1988, the MIDEASTFOR frigate *Samuel B. Roberts* is severely damaged by a contact mine in a previously swept area of the Gulf.

## 1988

February 10. **Sixth Fleet task group Black Sea Freedom of Navigation challenge incident.** Two Sixth Fleet surface combatants conducting Freedom of Navigation operations in the Black Sea are harassed and bumped by Soviet Navy warships. The Sixth Fleet has been conducting such operations since 1959; they had been subsumed into the formal U.S. government Freedom of Navigation Program since its establishment in 1979.

February 15. **COMJTFME AND COMIDEASTFOR COMBINE.** Commander, Joint Task Force Middle East (CJTFME), created in September 1987, assumes collateral duties as Commander Middle East Force, consolidating both staffs on the MIDEASTFOR flagship *LaSalle*, in the Persian Gulf. CJTFME will remain in control of these forces until August 1990, when it will be disestablished during the Desert Shield force build-up. CJTFME will have an Air Force brigadier general as a deputy, and a staff of 40 or so officers, three quarters of whom will be from the Navy.

April 18. **JTFME Persian Gulf air and surface strikes.** (Operation "Praying Mantis"). JTFME carrier air, surface combatants and navy-marine amphibious forces engage and destroy Iranian armed oil platforms and surface combatants, in retaliation for the April 14 mining of the frigate *Samuel B. Roberts*.

May 31. **Soviet missile-launch notification agreement signed.** The United States and the Soviet Union agree to provide each other with

24 hours notice of the practice launching of, *inter alia*, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, with details.

July 3. **JTFME Persian Gulf civilian airliner shoot-down.** The JTFME cruiser *Vincennes* erroneously shoots down an Iranian civilian airliner, immediately following an unrelated fire-fight with Iranian speedboats.

Fall. **Second Fleet Maritime strategy exercise against the Soviets.** (Exercise "Teamwork 88"). The last big maritime strategy naval exercise in the Atlantic, is held in the Norwegian Sea, including much of the Second Fleet and naval forces from seven countries. The carrier exercises operations from a fjord.

October 22. **Last battleship re-commissioned.** *Wisconsin* is the last *Iowa*-class battleship to be re-commissioned as part of the "600-ship Navy. She will be de-commissioned, however, in 1991.

September 28. **War on Drugs.** Passage of the 1989 Defense Authorization Act brings the Department of Defense more heavily into the war on drugs by designating it the lead agency for "detection and monitoring" of sea and air traffic bringing illegal drugs into the United States.

December. **JTFME Persian Gulf convoy operations end.** With the end of the Iran-Iraq war on August 20, U.S. naval forces in the Persian Gulf reduce their mission to one of monitoring US-flag vessels in the region. The JTFME continues, however.

## 1989

January. **MIDEASTFOR reduced.** The number of surface combatants—cruisers, destroyers and frigates—drops to six with the change in MIDEASTFOR's operations from accompanying tankers to monitoring their movements. A level of six to eight destroyers and frigates will be maintained through 1996, although it will be expanded greatly during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990 and 1991.

January 4. **Sixth Fleet Libyan anti-air action.** Two Sixth fleet carrier aircraft down two Libyan jets over the Central Mediterranean.

February. **JOINT TASK FORCE FOUR ESTABLISHED.** Joint Task Force Four is established to coordinate the conduct of detection and monitoring operations against aircraft and surface vessels engaged in suspected drug smuggling in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. With its headquarters in Key West, the Task Force draws on assets of the Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, Army and other agencies. Initially commanded by a Coast Guard vice admiral, it subsequently was commanded by Navy rear admirals. At times as many as ten Navy surface combatants will deploy as part of the Task Force, as well as maritime patrol aircraft, T-AGOS ships, and submarines conducting covert transit zone surveillance. It will be re-designated Joint-Inter-Agency Task Force-East in 1994.

February 15. **Soviet forces complete withdrawal from Afghanistan.**

June 26. **USCENTCOM WATERS EXPANDED.** Secretary of Defense Weinberger approves adding the Gulfs of Aden and Oman to USCINCCENT's area of responsibility.

June 30. **USFORCARIB DISESTABLISHED.** It had been established in 1981, combining earlier separate commands.

July & August. **Soviet Navy and reciprocal Sixth Fleet port visits.** Three Soviet Navy ships visit Norfolk, Virginia, initiating the first major military exchanges between the two nations. The following month a Sixth Fleet cruiser and frigate visit Sevastopol, home of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

September–October. **Pacific Fleet in last "Maritime Strategy" naval exercise.** (Exercise "PACEX 89"). More than 100 U.S. Pacific Fleet warships, including three carriers, two battleships, and three amphibious groups exercise the Navy's "Maritime Strategy" for the last time against the Soviet Union in the Northwest Pacific. Coordinated exercises are also held with the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force. This is the largest naval exercise ever held by the U.S. Pacific Command.

Not wishing to upset the now increasingly cordial relations between the Soviet Union and the United States by operating large naval forces near Soviet home waters, the Pacific Fleet duplicates condi-

tions in the West and Northwest Pacific by conducting the exercise in the East Pacific and around the Aleutian Islands.

November 9. **End of the Cold War.** The Berlin Wall is opened.

# **Post-Cold War fleet operations (1989-1996): Three small forward fleets for joint presence, MOOTW & crises operations, & to prepare for two Major Regional Contingencies**

## **Operational overview**

### **Summary**

Ship numbers plummeted, but numbered fleets increased from four to five, as the Navy formalized the importance of its Indian Ocean deployments by restyling its forces there the "Fifth Fleet". The Seventh Fleet underwent changes also, becoming a largely forward-based (in Japan) as well as a forward-deployed force. Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf in 1990 and 1991 illustrated and demonstrated the new importance of joint organization, joint doctrine and joint operations in determining the strategic, operational and tactical employment of American armed forces, including the Navy. The joint nature and frequency of American Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) also increased. Numbered fleet commanders began to think of themselves as joint task force commanders as well as commanders of exclusively naval forces.

### **Fleet size and composition**

Tightened defense budgets and the end of the Cold War saw the 600-ship Navy goal vanish, to be replaced by a 450-ship "Base Force" goal in 1990. That goal too vanished, and ship numbers continued to plummet to 392 by 1995. Carrier numbers fell from 14 to 12, amphibious ships from 61 to 39, and attack submarines from 99 to 83. The number of ballistic missile submarines in the fleet fell along with the others, from 33 in 1990 to only 16 in 1995.

## **Fleet deployment pattern**

Where was the fleet deployed around the world? There are two main dimensions of this: Forward vs. home; concentrated vs. divided.

Through the post-Cold war force-level decline the Navy not only maintained its Cold War numbered fleet organizational structure, but even added a new numbered fleet – the Fifth – created out of old the Middle East Force. Thus in 1995 there were 392 ships in the fleet assigned to five numbered fleets, in contrast to, say, 634 ships in four numbered fleets in 1950, or 523 in 1977 (two previous ship number low points).

The post-Cold War era differs from the Cold War era in several respects; the overall size of the fleet is smaller, and there are now three forward deployed numbered main battle fleets in operation. These fleets, although enormously capable across a wide spectrum of operations, are also fairly small; compared to the large fleets of World War II and even the Cold War, they are really Task Forces – “distant stations” in nineteenth century parlance.

Perhaps more importantly, naval forces are now integrated as never before into joint command structures.

## **The operational missions**

What did the fleets do? Specifically, what was the ebb and flow of MOOTW vs. War or preparation for war

With a clearly identifiable peer competitor threat gone, both the real and the planned operations of these new joint entities are weighted heavily toward MOOTW.

The margin for error by fleet commanders conducting MOOTW is probably now at an all-time low. The unauthorized but unpunished naval seizure of Monterey in the 1840s can have no counterpart in the 1990s. The media scrutiny that characterized the middle and late Cold War era has, if anything, intensified, and media communications have become "real time".

## **The fleets and Marine operational relationships**

The Marines continue to enlarge their repertoire and focus beyond amphibious assault, returning more and more to their past experience as colonial infantry and a MOOTW force. They changed the nomenclature of their operations and organizations from "amphibious" back to "expeditionary" in 1988.

## **The fleets and joint operational relationships**

The Navy's numbered fleets are being increasingly integrated in joint operations, as part of Joint Task Forces under the Unified Commanders.

## **Operational chronology**

### **1989 (continued)**

December 7-12. **Middle East Force Persian Gulf battleship deployment.** *New Jersey* becomes the first battleship in modern times to enter the Gulf, visiting ports in Bahrein and the United Arab Emirates.

December 20–January 31, 1990. **Panama intervention** (“Operation Just Cause”). SEALs and Marines participate in a 25,000-man predominantly U.S. Army operation led by the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Southern Command (USCINCSOUTH), an Army general, to apprehend Panamanian strongman and drug dealer General Manuel Noriega and protect American citizens. General Noriega is taken into custody on January 3, 1990, and is replaced by the popularly elected Endara government.

## 1990

US Navy **submarine deploys first Trident II missiles**. Entry of Trident II missiles into the fleet expands the range of fleet ballistic missile submarines to over 4,000 nm.

August 2. **U.S. naval movements to the Persian Gulf**. In the wake of Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, during a period of no carrier battle group presence in the NAVCENT region, a Sixth Fleet carrier battle group is directed to proceed from the Mediterranean into the Red Sea. A Seventh Fleet carrier battle group en route to Diego Garcia for training from the eastern Indian Ocean is ordered to bypass Diego and accelerate joining Joint Task Force, Middle East ships already on station ( eight Middle East Force ships in the Persian Gulf, including flagship *LaSalle*).

August 5. **Sixth Fleet Liberia Evacuation**. (Operation “Sharp Edge”). Sixth Fleet amphibious ships land marines at Monrovia to evacuate American and foreign non-combatants from Liberia as a civil war in that West African country intensifies. A Royal Navy frigate and tanker also are placed under US Navy tactical command. The last amphibious ship will not leave Liberian waters until January 9, 1991.

August 7. **NAVCENT Persian Gulf build-up begins**. (Operation “Desert Shield”). The U.S. armed forces begin what will be by far their largest overseas deployment since the Vietnam war and the greatest airlift in history. The carrier *Independence* arrives in the Gulf of Oman, the first carrier to enter the region following Iraq’s August 2 invasion of Kuwait (six will deploy there on station by January). Three MPS squadrons will deploy to the Gulf to support Marines who are arriving in Saudi Arabia.

August 10. **CENTCOM COMPONENT COMMANDERS AND MISSIONS DESIGNATED.** In his initial Operations Order USCINCENT assigns COMCENTAF responsibility to serve as Joint Force Air Component Commander (JFACC), Area Air Defense Coordinator, and Airspace Control Authority for the entire theater. As such, he will be responsible for control of all strike operations in the Kuwaiti theater, through the mechanism of an Air Tasking Order (ATO). The JFACC staff will be largely Air Force manned.

Commander, U.S. Marine Forces Central Command (COMARCENT) commands all Marines ashore. ComUSNavCent commands Navy forces afloat and ashore, and afloat Marines.

August 16. **PERSIAN GULF NAVAL COMMAND STRUCTURE REVAMPED.** The Joint Task Force Middle East (JTFME), since 1988 controlling both the MIDEASTFOR in the Persian Gulf and the Seventh Fleet carrier battle group in the North Arabian Sea, is disestablished. RADM William Fogarty had served as both COMIDEASTFOR and COMJTFME; his role as Commander, Middle East Force continues, enhanced by his being placed in operational control of all U.S. maritime interdiction operations against Iraq, in the Red Sea, North Arabian Sea, and Persian Gulf, under ComUSNavCent.

The Deputy Commander JTFME, Air Force Brigadier General Buster Glosson, moves to U.S. Air Force, Central Command (USCENTAF) to become Director of Campaign Planning. As such he will develop the Desert Storm air campaign plan, including Navy strikes.

Commander Seventh Fleet, VADM H. H. Mauz, Jr., assumes the position of Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command (COMUSNAVCENT), under the unified combatant commander, USCINCENT, General Norman Schwarzkopf. His forces include the Middle East Force.

COMUSNAVCENT had been a Rear Admiral headquartered in Hawaii since 1983. The last incumbent COMUSNAVCENT there and his staff shift from Hawaii to Bahrain to become Commander, Naval Logistics Supply Force (COMNAVLOGSUPFOR), with responsibilities for fleet logistics support, under COMUSNAVCENT.

Following the end of the war, COMNAVLOGSUPFOR and his staff will move from Bahrain to Tampa, to become COMNAVCENT REAR. In April 1991, command of U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command will shift from the Commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet to the Commander, Middle East Force, a rear admiral. He will remain forward in the Gulf. Later in 1994 the job will be up-graded to a vice admiral's, and in 1995 it will be redesignated the Fifth Fleet.

**August 25. United Nations authorizes national naval actions against Iraq.** The United Nations Security Council passes Resolution 665, authorizing countries deploying maritime forces in the Middle East to use appropriate measures to halt shipping to and from Iraq. This landmark resolution allowing individual navies to maintain their autonomy in enforcing the sanctions marks the first time the United Nations will have authorized military action without a United Nations flag or United Nations control.

**August 26. UNIFIED COMBATANT COMMANDER MOVES FORWARD IN THEATER.** General Norman Schwarzkopf, Commander, U.S. Central Command, sets up headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

**August 28. NAVCENT in Persian Gulf & Red Sea ad hoc coalition maritime interception operations.** U.S. naval forces begin to halt and board civilian merchant ships to enforce the United Nations economic embargo on Iraq, mandated on August 25. Warships from 13 other nations will also participate, coordinating with the Americans in monthly meetings.

The Maritime Interception Operation will continue after Iraq is defeated, and will still be in operation six years later, in 1996, coordinating with British, Australian, and French units.

**September 1. NAVCENT Persian Gulf flagship deployment.** *Blue Ridge* (LCC-19), flagship for Commander Seventh Fleet and now Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command, arrives in the Persian Gulf, having deployed from the western Pacific on August 13. COMUSNAVCENT will fight the war from his flagship, rather than be co-located with the unified commander-in-chief ashore in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

October 1. **NAVCENT Persian Gulf carrier deployment.** The *Independence* becomes the first U.S. carrier to actually enter the Persian Gulf since 1974. Only by operating inside the Gulf will carrier aircraft be able to reach Iraqi targets during Operation "Desert Storm" without unacceptable dependence on U.S. Air Force land-based tanker refueling aircraft.

The initial Desert Shield and Desert Storm carrier deployment posture will be three carriers each in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. As the Air Force will provide tanking for only two Red Sea carriers, VADM Arthur will swing one of the Red Sea carriers over to the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula in February 1991.

October 3. **Re-unification of Germany.**

## 1991

January 5. **NAVCENT Somalia evacuation operation.** (Operation "Eastern Exit"). Amphibious ships land marines by long-range helicopter at Mogadishu, Somalia, to evacuate American and foreign national non-combatants, including Soviet diplomats, over three days in the midst of a civil war in that East African country. Italian and French warships also evacuate non-combatants.

January 15. **Middle East U.S. naval force levels.** NAVCENT has 34 ships in the Persian Gulf, 35 in the North Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman, and 26 in the Red Sea. The Sixth Fleet has 13 ships in the Mediterranean.

January 16–February 28. **NAVCENT in the ad hoc coalition war with Iraq.** (Operation "Desert Storm"). Combat air operations begin. 175 U.S. naval vessels are in the theater of operations – including six carriers, two battleships, and 31 amphibious ships – along with almost 40 naval vessels from allied and coalition navies. Carrier aircraft and cruise missiles from surface combatants and submarines strike targets in Iraq, naval gunfire is directed at targets in occupied Kuwait, naval aviation and surface forces destroy the Iraqi navy, amphibious ships conduct assaults and feints, and the quarantine and minesweeping operations continue. Two U.S. warships are damaged by Iraqi mines,

although one remains fully-mission-capable. Iraq surrenders and quits Kuwait.

This is the first time the Navy has assembled six carriers for combat operations since the Vietnam War in 1972.

**January 23. NAVCENT Persian Gulf tanker sinking.** Two cluster bombs from an A-6 carrier attack aircraft sink the 159,000-ton Iraqi tanker *Amuiyah* in the northern Persian Gulf. This is the largest ship ever sunk by the U.S. Navy.

**January 24. NAVCENT Persian Gulf amphibious rehearsal.** (Exercise "Sea Soldier IV"). As part of the preparations for the ground offensive against Iraq, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command assembles and exercises the largest amphibious force since the Inchon landing in Korea in 1950.

**February 1. U.S. NAVAL FORCES SOUTH DIS-ESTABLISHED.** Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet assumes duties as Naval Component Commander for the U.S. Southern Command in Panama. Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Southern Command in Panama is dis-established and replaced by a staff detachment.

**February 7-14. NAVCENT carrier posture shifts.** VADM Stanley Arthur, COMUSNAVCENT, shifts one of his three carriers from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf. Given the paucity of U.S. Air Force tanker assets, only two carrier air wings can be utilized at a time from the Red Sea. Following February 14, NAVCENT will have four carriers on station in the Persian Gulf, and two in the Red Sea.

**February 24. Gulf War ground offensive begins.** A coalition ground offensive begins after five weeks of continuous air attack.

**February 28. Cease fire with Iraq**

**March 11. NAVCENT carriers redeploy to home ports.** *Saratoga* transits the Suez Canal en route Mayport Florida. *Midway* departs the Arabian Gulf for Yokosuka, Japan. A third carrier, *John F. Kennedy*, will transit the canal the following day, en route Norfolk, Virginia. A fourth carrier, *America*, will transit the Canal en route the East Coast on April 3.

**April 6. Sixth Fleet in Northern Iraq humanitarian assistance operation.** (Operation "Provide Comfort"). An Army-led Combined Joint Task Force under USCINCEUR command provides humanitarian assistance to Iraqi Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq. A Sixth Fleet amphibious force and two carrier battle groups in the Mediterranean participate, along with Army and Air Force units, military forces from 11 other countries, non-military government agencies from 30 countries, and 60 non-governmental organizations. The carrier battle group is not part of the Joint Task Force, however.

This operation will continue through 1996.

**April 24. COMIDEASTFOR DESIGNATED AS COMNAVCENT.** The Commander, Middle East Force, RADM R. A. K. Taylor, also becomes Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command. As COMNAVCENT he, unlike his pre-Desert Storm predecessors, remains forward in the Gulf. The two previous COMNAVCENTs, VADM Henry Mauz and Stanley Arthur, had also been Commanders, Seventh Fleet, a job VADM Arthur will retain.

**May 15–June 7. Seventh Fleet in Bangladesh humanitarian assistance operation (Operation "Sea Angel").** As part of a Marine-led Joint Task Force reporting directly to USCINCPAC and by-passing CINCPAC-FLT, providing aid to Bangladesh in the wake of a severe cyclone, an eight-ship Seventh Fleet amphibious task force conducts relief operations from the port of Chittagong.

**June. Seventh Fleet in joint Philippine evacuation operation (Operation "Fiery Vigil").** As part of an Air Force-led Joint Task Force under USCINCPAC, Seventh Fleet ships, including two carrier battle groups and an amphibious force, evacuate over 25,000 military dependents and base personnel from Clark Air Force Base on Luzon in the Philippines to the Philippine island of Cebu, in the wake of a volcanic eruption that rendered the base uninhabitable.

**June 25. Dissolution of Yugoslavia begins.** Slovenia and Croatia proclaim their independence. they will be followed by Bosnia and Macedonia.

**July 1. Dissolution of the Warsaw Pact.**

July 31. **Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) signed.** U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear offensive arms, including U.S. Navy submarine-launched ballistic missiles, are further reduced. The treaty will be approved by the U.S. Senate in October 1992. All Poseidon submarines carrying Poseidon C-3 and Trident I C-4 missiles are to be retired.

August. **COMTHIRDFLT FLAGSHIP SHIFTS HOMEPORT.** The Third Fleet staff and flagship *Coronado* shift to San Diego from Hawaii, where they have been since the Third Fleet was re-activated in 1973.

September 27. **Theater nuclear weapons to be removed from U.S. Navy ships.** President Bush announces a nuclear reduction plan that will remove all non-strategic theater nuclear weapons from Navy surface ships and attack submarines, as well as withdrawal of such weapons co-located with land-based naval aircraft.

November. **Sixth Fleet in first exercise with former Warsaw Pact navy.** An Aegis cruiser executes communication, navigation and seamanship drills with six Bulgarian ships in the Black Sea.

December 25. **Dissolution of the Soviet Union.**

## 1992

February 8. **Sixth Fleet exercise with Soviet ships.** A Sixth Fleet frigate conducts a routine communications exercise in the Mediterranean with a Russian cruiser and frigate.

March. **Last battleship decommissions.** USS *Missouri* decommissions again. *New Jersey* and *Wisconsin* had decommissioned in 1991. The four *Iowa*-class battleships had recommissioned beginning with *New Jersey* in 1982 and continuing through *Wisconsin* in October 1988. *Missouri* and *Wisconsin* fought in the Gulf War of 1991.

April 30. **STANAVFORMED ESTABLISHED.** The NATO Naval On-Call Force Mediterranean (NAVOCFORMED) created in 1969 is converted to a standing naval force.

May. **Atlantic Fleet carrier battle group in LANTCOM joint exercise off North Carolina coast.** (Exercise "Ocean Venture 92"). Commander, Carrier Group 8 acts as the Navy component commander, co-located ashore with the Joint Task Force Commander (CJTF 140) at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. The JTF commander, an Army general, has operational control of the battle group. Navy flag officers also serve as Deputy JFACC and Deputy Joint Task Force Commander.

This is the Atlantic Command's first major joint exercise since the Gulf War. Location of the battle group commander ashore is enabled by a new Fleet Mobile Operations Command Center, a mobile suite of shelters containing communications and display gear, which ensures the commander's connection with his forces afloat.

June 1. **STRATCOM ESTABLISHED.** A new unified U.S. Strategic Command supersedes the specified Strategic Air Command. Naval components include Atlantic and Pacific Fleet ballistic missile submarines. The first Commander in Chief is an Air Force general and former SAC commander. The second CINC will be a navy submariner.

June. **Third Fleet in afloat command of Southern California joint exercise.** (Exercise "Tandem Thrust '92"). The exercise is to demonstrate the ability to conduct Commander, Joint Task Force (CJTF) as well as Joint Force Air Component Commander (JFACC) functions afloat. The Commander, Third Fleet, serves as Commander, Joint Task Force in his flagship, and reports directly to USCINCPAC, bypassing CINCPACFLT. All services have forces under Commander, Third Fleet. Initially a JFACC is co-located at sea; but later it shifts ashore.

August. **JOINT TASK FORCE SOUTHWEST ASIA (JTF-SWA) FORMED.** USCINCCENT stands up a joint JTF-SWA staff in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to take tactical control of Southern Iraq joint surveillance operations (Operation "Southern Watch"), coordinating with similar operations by British and French aircraft, and employing forces made available by CENTCOM component commanders. The joint task force is commanded by an Air Force major general, with a Navy rear admiral as deputy (the Navy rotates Carrier Battle Group commanders through this position for 90-day periods). The Deputy J-2 and the Deputy J-3 are also naval officers. The 200-member staff is

largely Air Force. Assets assigned include a large CENTAF composite wing, an almost continuous NAVCENT carrier battle group, and ARCENT Patriot batteries. The staff issues a single Air Tasking Order (ATO) for every flying operation, and single Airspace Control Order (ACO).

August 27-present (1996). **NAVCENT in Southern Iraq joint surveillance operations.** (Operation "Southern Watch"). NAVCENT carrier aircraft begin participation in joint operations to enforce a no-fly zone south of the 32nd parallel, in the wake of Iraqi repression of minorities there and failure to cooperate with UN inspectors. This operation will continue through 1996.

October. **VICE ADMIRAL ASSIGNED AS COMNAVCENT/COMID-EASTFOR.** VADM Douglas Katz relieves RADM R. A. K. Taylor, who had relieved VADM Arthur of his COMNAVCENT hat in April. The Navy peacetime on-scene commander in the Persian Gulf area is now a three-star officer.

November 4. **NAVCENT Persian Gulf Nuclear submarine deployment.** *Topeka* (SSN-754) becomes the first U.S. nuclear-powered submarine to operate inside the Persian Gulf. She will be followed by several other SSNs conducting routine deployments.

December 9–May 4, 1993. **NAVCENT Somalia humanitarian security operation** (Operation "Restore Hope"). Two carrier battle groups, an amphibious force, and a maritime prepositioning squadron form part of a Marine-led Joint Task Force under USCINCCENT to create a secure environment for United Nations relief operations in Somalia, in the wake of the breakdown of civil government and severe drought there.

**PHILIPPINE BASES CLOSE.** At the behest of the Philippine government, the United States leaves all military and naval facilities in the Philippines, including Subic Bay. This significantly changes the logistic and training support and peacetime deployment patterns of the Seventh Fleet.

1993

**Second Fleet in Atlantic Command joint task force exercise.** (Exercise "Ocean Venture '93"). Commander, Second Fleet is the exercise Joint Task Force Commander, on board his flagship USS *Mount Whitney*.

**COMNAVCENT/COMIDEASTFOR MOVES ASHORE.** *LaSalle* departs as Naval Forces, Central Command flagship and replaces *Belknap* as the Sixth Fleet flagship. COMNAVCENT/COMIDEASTFOR moves ashore to Bahrein.

**January 3. Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START III) signed.** Submarine-launched ballistic missile warheads are to be further reduced.

**January 13 and 17. NAVCENT in joint Iraq aircraft and cruise missile strikes.** Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia (JTF-SWA) directs the launching of 35 carrier aircraft and 45 cruise missiles from three NAVCENT surface combatants in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf are launched against Iraqi missile sites and a nuclear fabrication facility.

**February 23–present(1996). Sixth Fleet in joint Yugoslavia humanitarian assistance operations.** (Operation "Provide Promise"). CINCUS-NAVEUR ADM Jeremy Boorda takes over a JTF established in July 1992 under USCINCEUR to provide a range of humanitarian assistance to civilians in the former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnia. With land-based Air Force units, Sixth Fleet carrier aviation participates in protecting humanitarian relief efforts in besieged cities, and in providing search and rescue services at sea.

**March-September. First CINCLANT "Adaptive Joint Force Package" deployment.** CINCLANT ADM Paul D. Miller deploys the carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) from the East coast to the Sixth Fleet with an air wing configured according to a new joint deployment concept of his invention: "adaptive joint force packaging". The air wing drops an F-14 and S-3 squadron, given the demise of the threat from Soviet and Russian long-range naval aviation and submarines. Instead, it includes a Special Maritime Air-Ground Task Force consisting of a Marine Corps fixed wing and helicopter squadron and a company of

Marines, designed to enable the carrier to project both air and ground striking power ashore from a single deck.

There will be three other "adaptive joint force package" deployments in 1993 and 1994, culminating in the October 1994 deployment of a Joint Task Force ("JTF-95") built around the carrier *George Washington* (CVN 73), embarking U.S. Army Rangers on board. The concept is opposed by the Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe, ADM Jeremy Boorda.

June 26. **NAVCENT Iraq cruise missile strike.** Two NAVCENT surface combatants launch 23 cruise missiles on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Baghdad from the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, following an Iraqi assassination attempt of former-President Bush in Kuwait.

April, December 1995. **Sixth Fleet Yugoslavia No-Fly Zone Enforcement (Operation Deny Flight).** Sixth Fleet carrier and maritime patrol aircraft participate in joint and combined surveillance and strike operations to enforce a UN-mandated no-fly zone in the airspace over Bosnia.

June, June 1996. **Sixth Fleet in ad hoc coalition and alliance Yugoslavia maritime intercept operation (Operation "Sharp Guard").** Sixth Fleet ships and aircraft participate in a combined NATO and WEU operation in the Adriatic Sea to block sea commerce to Serbia and enforce an arms embargo imposed on all the former Yugoslav republics during the Yugoslav civil wars. The operation will run for three years and be suspended on June 19, 1996.

October 1. **LANTCOM REDESIGNATED USACOM.** The U.S. Atlantic Command is transformed into the joint force integrator of most CONUS-based forces, as well as the Atlantic Fleet. It will retain its previous geographical responsibilities until the beginning of 1996, when its Latin American responsibilities will begin to shift to the Southern Command.

October 19. **Second Fleet units in Haitian joint task force and ad hoc coalition embargo operations.** (Operation "Support Democracy"). Operations commence to enforce an embargo of Haiti to force a junta from power and return duly elected President Aristide. CIN-

CUSACOM forms a joint task force, initially under Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group Eight. Seven U.S. warships are initially assigned, and ships are pledged from Canada, Argentina, Britain, France and the Netherlands. The joint task force, JTF-120, will have five commanders over the next year and headquarters on four ships.

## 1994

June–October. **Navy and Coast Guard Caribbean Haitian Migrant interception operation (Operation “Sea Signal”).**

July 1. **ACCHAN DIS-ESTABLISHED.** NATO Allied Command Channel is dis-established and its functions absorbed by Allied Command Europe. Allied Forces Northern Europe is also disestablished, and a new Allied Forces North West Europe command is created, encompassing the North Sea and the Channel as well as Norway and the United Kingdom.

August. **NAVCENT Red Sea maritime intercept operations end.** Others continue.

August 19, **Caribbean Cuban migrant interception operations.** (Operation “Able Vigil”). U.S. Navy ships join Coast Guard units in intercepting a massive exodus of Cuban migrants at sea in the Florida Straits. By August 25, ten Navy ships will be on station, with three more en route.

August 26. **JOINT INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE EAST DESIGNATED.** Joint Task Force Four is re-designated. Joint Inter-Agency Task Force East.

September. **NAVCENT forces cover Somalia withdrawal.** The U.S. Liaison Office is withdrawn from Mogadishu.

September 18. **Second Fleet units in joint Haiti show of force and planned amphibious and airborne assault (Operation “Uphold Democracy”).** The threat of an overwhelming *coup de main* by a joint USACOM force, commanded by an Army general, the commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps, forces the military government of Haiti to step down. This planned non-permissive forced-entry operation is

abruptly terminated and transformed into the semi-permissive administrative entry operation, Operation "Maintain Democracy".

September 19-20. **Second Fleet units in joint task force Haiti landings and occupation.** (Operation "Maintain Democracy"). Army and Marine troops land in Haiti to enforce agreements returning President Aristide to power. This unique and complex USACOM multi-joint task force operation is under the operational control of Army generals as joint task force commanders, including the commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps on board the Second Fleet flagship *Mount Whitney*. The entry includes Army and Special Forces heliborne landings from Navy carriers, as well as a Marine amphibious landing. Two Second Fleet carriers and a command ship join an amphibious group already stationed off Haiti. At the peak of the operation, 23 ships will be involved. Marines will withdraw in October, being replaced by Army troops.

October. **Marine general commands Atlantic Command.** General John J. Sheehan USMC relieves ADM Paul D. Miller. This is the first time a U.S. Navy officer will not be in command of the joint U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM).

October 9-December. **NAVCENT in Persian Gulf show of force.** (Operation "Vigilant Warrior"). NAVCENT contributes to joint force posturing by CENTCOM in the wake of Iraqi troop movements in the vicinity of Kuwait, possibly as a prelude to an attack. A carrier battle group, an amphibious task force, a submarine and a prepositioning ship squadron are moved into forward positions in the Central Command area. The operation will end in late 1994; the last prepositioning ship will leave NAVCENT waters on December 28.

November. **Third Fleet designated PACOM JTF commander.** CING-PAC designates Commander, Third Fleet as Commander, Joint Task Force for contingency operations in the Pacific. Commander, Third fleet on *Coronado* will move forward to the mid and western Pacific during certain contingencies.

December. **Pacific Fleet in joint task force exercise** (Exercise "Tandem Thrust '95"). The JFACC and the naval component commander are co-located on a carrier. The Joint Force Air Component Com-

mander is not a dual-hatted service component commander, but an independent organizational entity, releasing a 200-sortie per day Air Tasking Order. The JFACC is not collocated, however, with the Commander Joint Task Force or the Joint Targeting Coordination Board.

## 1995

February–March. **NAVCENT Somalia evacuation** (Operation “United Shield”). A NAVCENT amphibious force covers the withdrawal of United Nations forces from Somalia, as part of a joint/combined task force totaling 23 ships.

March 22–24. **Seventh Fleet cruiser visits China.** USS Bunker Hill calls at Qingdao (Tsingtao), in the first U.S. Navy port visit to China since the Tian’amen Square massacre of 1989.

May 20–July 18. **Seventh Fleet multinational Southeast Asia training cruises instituted.** (“CARAT 95”). Annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training Cruises (CARATs) begin. A dedicated 7-ship Seventh Fleet task group conducts sequential exercises with units of the navies of Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Brunei. Indonesia will participate in CARAT 96 the following year; the U.S. Coast Guard plans to participate in 1997.

June. **Seventh Fleet carrier battle group conducts multinational exercises with Indian Navy.**

July 1. **FIFTH FLEET DESIGNATED.** Naval ships and aircraft operating under the operational command of COMNAVCENT in the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf region, under USCINCCENT, are now designated the Fifth Fleet, vice the Middle East Force. COMNAVCENT is also designated Commander, U.S. Fifth Fleet. The Middle East Force designation is retained by the Fifth Fleet’s destroyer task force, whose commodore becomes Commander, Middle East Force, under Commander Fifth Fleet. Commander, Fifth Fleet has his headquarters ashore, in Bahrein, the first forward-deployed numbered fleet commander with a headquarters ashore since World War II.

(Halsey’s Third Fleet in the Solomons at Noumea; Ingram’s Fourth Fleet in the South Atlantic at Recife; Kinkaid’s Seventh Fleet in the

Southwest Pacific at Brisbane, Hollandia, Leyte and Manila; and Hewitt's Eighth Fleet in the Mediterranean, at Algiers and Naples, all had headquarters ashore, except during specific operations. In 1944-5, Halsey's Third Fleet and Spruance's Fifth Fleet staffs worked ashore to plan their alternating Central Pacific operations, and went afloat when in command of the fleets for the operations themselves).

August. **Third Fleet Hawaii exercise with Russian Pacific Fleet** (Exercise "Cooperation from the Sea"). Executing at-sea and amphibious evolutions, this is the first bi-lateral U.S.-Russian exercise conducted in U.S. waters.

August 30-September 21. **Sixth Fleet in joint air and cruise missile strikes in Bosnia.** (Operation "Deliberate Force"). In coordination with allied and U.S. Air Force units, Sixth Fleet carrier aviation and cruise missiles conduct strikes on Bosnian Serb targets in Bosnia.

August 17-December. **Fifth Fleet Persian Gulf show of force.** (Operation "Vigilant Sentinel"). To forestall Iraqi moves against Kuwait or Saudi Arabia in the wake of the defection of two senior Iraqi military officials, additional joint forces begin to move to the CENTCOM area, including three Fifth and Sixth Fleet carriers, an amphibious force, and prepositioning ships from Diego Garcia and Guam.

This operation is still in progress through 1996.

August 31. **WESTERN HEMISPHERE GROUP CREATED.** A sixteen-ship force of cruisers, destroyers and frigates is established under the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. The Group is to provide a new and greater presence in the Caribbean and in South America and pick up the counter-narcotics mission previously handled by ships attached to Atlantic Fleet Carrier Battle Groups (CVBGs).

1996

January 1. **EXPANSION OF USSOUTHCOM.** The boundaries of the U.S. Southern Command are expanded to include water areas adjoining Central and South America, at the expense of USACOM, which had become a joint force integrator command in 1993. The Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, and an additional portion of the Atlantic Ocean are scheduled to come under USSOUTHCOM responsibility not earlier than June 1, 1997.

As both CINCs use CINCLANTFLT as their naval component commander, this has little effect on naval operating forces at the operational level.

January 1. **EXPANSION OF CENTCOM/FIFTH FLEET OPERATING AREA.** The boundaries of the U.S. Central Command (and therefore the operating area of the Fifth Fleet) are expanded to include the Arabian Sea and a section of the Indian Ocean running south from Pakistan to near Diego Garcia to the coast of southern Kenya, at the expense of USPACOM (which, however, keeps Diego Garcia).

March 22. **Fifth Fleet mine countermeasures ships forward deployed**  
Two mine countermeasures ships reach the Persian Gulf, for permanent assignment to the Fifth Fleet.

May 7-24. **Sixth Fleet in first Mediterranean NATO Combined/Joint Task Force afloat.** (Exercise "Matador 96"). Spanish and U.S. forces, including Sixth Fleet units, train to improve interoperability of land, sea and air forces of both nations, especially during a non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO). The exercise is controlled from the Sixth Fleet command ship *LaSalle* (AGF 3) and marks the first time a combined/joint task force afloat has been stood up in the Mediterranean theater.



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