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Abstract of

Expeditionary Strike Group New Label, or New Concept – for Future Naval Warriors of America’s Small Wars?

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**Naval War College
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Expeditionary Strike Group

**New Label, or New Concept – for Future
Naval Warriors of America’s Small Wars?**

By

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College (College of Naval Warfare) in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

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

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16 May 2003

America is a maritime nation bounded by two vast oceans that ultimately connect and cover nearly three-quarters of the earth's surface with water that eventually combines into a single global source that touches the shores of every continent. Given these natural dynamics, it is therefore logical that this nation should rely heavily upon its naval forces as a valuable instrument of military power. Throughout American history, Sailors and Marines have answered their nation's call as expeditionary forces projecting power ashore and fighting America's limited wars, as well as, emergent contingency operations, and major theater wars. In the near future they will accomplish this mission while deployed around the globe within the new concept of Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESG).

This essay describes the ESG concept and argues that in the post-Cold War/September 11th security environment, the ESG concept is sound operational force employment for America's future limited wars, but the idea is not new. Through historical research of America's limited wars and analysis of the new ESG concept, this essay will attempt to prove the thesis by overlaying historical analysis of limited wars fought by US naval forces, with current visions of the proposed ESG concept. Then, the ESG concept will be viewed in the context of the newly declared (and exercised in Iraq) national security strategy, which includes preemption with military force.

Prelude to the Expeditionary Strike Group Notion

Until fairly recently in American history, the oceans that cover the earth provided both a real, and visibly tangible, defensive security barrier along America's borders. However, America's security environment changed drastically with the end of the Cold War, and even more dramatically following the terrorists attacks of September 11th 2001. Throughout this period, and before, the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team has been

called upon frequently. Rear Admiral Picotte and Commander Holmes call this team the “9-1-1” emergency force for the United States and point out that since the Vietnam War, these forces have “...been called upon to fulfill increased and more varied missions...[and] their use is not expected to diminish.”¹ Indeed, to name just a few instances since Vietnam, these forces have been called to action in Cambodia, Grenada, Lebanon, and Panama in the 1970-80’s, and in Haiti, Liberia, Bangladesh, and Somalia in the 1990’s.

Nevertheless since the Berlin Wall tumbled down the Department of the Navy has been searching for new operational strategies to this radically altered international security environment. With no peer competitor upon the high seas, the Navy and Marine Corps focused on projecting strike power ashore with strategic visions like “...From the Sea” and “Forward...from the Sea” and the Marine Corps concept paper “Operational Maneuver from the Sea”.² Then, following victory in the first battle of the Global War On Terror (GWOT) in Afghanistan, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Vern Clark, introduced Sea Power 21.

The CNO’s vision of future naval operations seeks to exploit the world’s oceans, no longer as a defensive security barrier, but as maneuver space for naval and joint forces to influence events ashore. Sea Power 21 hopes to leverage America’s substantial asymmetrical advantages in the sea maneuver space and exploit the unique characteristics and capabilities of our naval forces, such as global striking and defensive power, mobility, and sovereign basing-at sea. Sea Power 21 articulates this vision through three principal components: Sea Strike, Sea Shield, and Sea Basing.³

The Expeditionary Strike Group concept is an essential element of the Sea Power 21 vision. To support Sea Strike, the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team is developing the

ESG concept as a permanent departure from the Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG) operational deployment model that has dominated naval amphibious force employment for decades. Indeed, the ESG concept adds substantial independent striking power to the traditional ARG, with the addition of dedicated strike-capable surface warships and submarines to the battle force.⁴

Many commentators hail the ESG and believe it “...could emerge as ‘Sea Power 21’s’ most revolutionary vision.”⁵ Moreover, that the ESG will distribute the fleet’s firepower “...more widely to provide enhanced presence, greater operational flexibility, and [reduced] response time should there be simultaneous conflicts or contingencies.”⁶ For sure, these accolades attest to the broad excitement generated by the notion of linking the potent striking power of Tomahawk’s and Marines into a single battle group package.

The marriage of Marines to our Navy’s most potent surface strike power was consummated immediately subsequent to the birth of each service and continued through operational deployments throughout World War Two. Whether it takes the form of today’s Tomahawk cruise missiles, or Frigates from the age of sail, the notion of combining Navy striking power with Marine Corps ground assault power remained a happy union until the Iron Curtain fell. During the Cold War, the amphibious striking power of the Marine Corps was gradually migrated to the “Gator Navy” and deployed as a separate amphibious assault force made-up exclusively of amphibious ships. While the cruiser-destroyer (CRUDES) Navy undertook the role of air and submarine defense for the high-value carriers and battleships, the submarine force tackled the critical submarine launched ballistic missile offensive/defensive mission. But only rarely did the two naval task forces mingle.

The spoils of victory from the peace of the Spanish-American War (in 1898) brought expanded territorial responsibilities. During this period of radical change in America's interests and responsibilities, the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team was repeatedly employed to win limited, or small, wars by landing Marines and projecting power ashore with substantial strike power. These small wars are strikingly similar to the conflicts and missions assigned to today's military forces, and will be contrasted in this essay, along with the developing national security strategy of preemptive military force.

Is this ESG concept merely a shiny new bumper sticker for America's small warriors: past, present, & future? Or, is the ESG concept much more accurately associated with Navy/Marine Corps heritage, than future? Touted as visionary and transformational, the idea is certainly not distinct to the 21st century. That said, perhaps the degree of uniqueness of the ESG concept is irrelevant, as it may still prove to be tremendously imaginative employment of naval forces in a dynamic and challenging world security environment.

Expeditionary Strike Group Concept

The Sea Power 21 vision incorporates a variety of new concepts and, as stated above, one key tenet of Sea Strike is the ESG concept. Currently, the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team deploys as an ARG composed of an amphibious assault ship, a dock landing ship, an amphibious transport ship, and the embarked Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

In the early 1990's a concept similar to the ESG was introduced as the Expeditionary Task Force. Both concepts adopted the notion of linking amphibious strike forces (Marines of the MEU) with CRUDES Tomahawk shooters that could be grouped in varying task force combinations.⁷ Again, during OPERATION Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, operational

necessity demanded experimentation with the traditional ARG (USS Baatan ARG) by adding defensive, intelligence, and strike capabilities to the force. This successful combination evidently provided significant impetus to the fledgling ESG concept, which envisions coupling the standard ARG ships with surface combatants, submarines, and at times, even P-3C Orion land-based reconnaissance aircraft.⁸

The ARG is a capable military striking force in its own right. Centered on what other nations would consider an aircraft carrier, the amphibious assault ships (LHA and LHD classes), carry a mixed air wing of helicopters and vertical take-off Harriers tailored to support the MEU. Moreover, the amphibious assault ships are flagship-configured with significant command-and-control, communications, intelligence, cryptologic, and combat systems capabilities.⁹

However, a comparison of naval operational capabilities between the ARG of today and the ESG of the future reveals substantial task force enhancements organic only to the ESG concept. The augmentation of naval surface, subsurface, and increased air assets to the three-ship ARG force will result in a multi-mission expeditionary battle force able to provide theater combatant commanders with greater operational flexibility, enhanced naval presence, substantially increased striking power to shape events well inland, "...and [reduced] response time should there be simultaneous conflicts or contingencies."¹⁰

In the small wars of the future, the ESG will be much more flexible and mission capable military force than the traditional ARG. In these environments, in addition to the ARG mission of projecting Marine ground power ashore and sustaining them, an ESG will also be able to defend itself at sea, maintain sea control in the littoral, strike targets deep ashore in enemy territory, and conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) of

the Joint Operating Area. Furthermore, as part of a joint force, an ESG can serve theater Combatant Commanders as an enabling force capable of small war forced entry or punitive strike, then stabilizing the situation and preparing for follow on forces, as demonstrated with the enhanced Baatan ARG during OPERATION Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. The GWOT and the new national security strategy are clear indicators that the nation will have a need for expeditionary forces with these capabilities in a low-to-medium threat environment.¹¹

How will an ESG be employed? Captain King and Commander Holmes use the scenario of a multi-threat noncombatant evacuation operation to address this question. While the Marines are conducting crisis-action planning, the ESG Commander would position the CRUDES units and assigned submarine and P-3 assets to best support strike operations, while maintaining sea control, ESG defense, and ballistic missile defense. “The responsiveness of more than 2,000 Marines combined with Sea Strike and Sea Shield war fighting capabilities within the ESG will provide a new level of flexibility to US forces to conduct this kind of operation successfully – when traditional assets might be miles and days away.”¹²

Sea Power 21 seems to recognize that the Navy may be called upon to cover more parts of the globe simultaneously and that not every adversary in this new security environment with a GWOT requires, or is best suited, to tying up a carrier battle group. Therefore, the Global Concept of Operations for Sea Power 21 will employ a more flexible force structure that distributes surface combatants and submarines between Carrier Strike Groups (CSG), Missile-defense Surface Action Groups, and ESGs, or combined as Expeditionary Strike Forces.¹³ Replacing the ARG with the ESG concept enables the fleet to

cover additional world hot spots with more powerful and flexible naval strike forces positioned and scaled to carryout contingency operations across the entire spectrum of limited war possibilities. These flexibly deployed naval forces could then be massed to support major theater wars as was recently accomplished during OPERATION Iraqi Freedom.

The ESGs integration of naval strike and reconnaissance forces with the amphibious Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team would double the current number of deployable naval strike groups (12 CSGs + 12 ESGs), disperse naval surface and submarine striking power, and create more tailored and scaled naval forces for future contingencies. With the addition of the ESG, the naval “9-1-1” force of the future is positioned to become more numerous, capable, and responsive – able to react to contingencies, or project power preemptively if called upon. All in all, the successful integration of the ESG concept may prove to be the most transformational integration of military power within the Department of Defense.

Small Warriors & the Rise of a Great Power

Naval forces have always offered national leaders a flexible range of options in support of national aims, covering the full gamut of missions, from peacetime humanitarian, to crisis response, and preemptive warfare. From the early years of the US Navy, to current operations in support of the GWOT, America has employed the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team in support of a host of varied missions other than conventional warfare between uniformed adversaries. Or, as Colonel Callwell first defined “small wars” in 1899, as “...all campaigns other than those where both the opposing sides consist of regular

troops”¹⁴ and then refined further in 1940 by the Marine Corps as “[conflict] which does not involve a major effort in regular warfare against a first-rate power”.¹⁵

From an historical perspective, these missions have been lumped into catchy phrases coined by bureaucrats, such as: ‘Banana Wars’ throughout the Caribbean in 1930’s, ‘limited wars’ like Korea in the 1950’s, ‘insurgencies’ in Southeast Asia in the 1960’s, and more recently they have been dubbed ‘military operations other than war’, ‘low intensity conflict’, and even ‘non-traditional missions’. In reference to the current concept being considered, an ESG may be called to support one of the following mission areas: contingency/crisis response, noncombatant evacuation, hostage recovery, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, accident recovery support, peacekeeping and enforcement, coastal presence and surveillance, engagement in international exercises, or preemptive combat. It is worth noting that all the mission areas listed in this paragraph equally fit the definition of small wars offered by Colonel Callwell in 1899 and reiterated by the Marine Corps Small Wars Manual in 1940, and each could conceivably be tasked to a future ESG.

More often than not, an ESG will be called on to accomplish these lesser missions over major theater wars like OPERATION Desert Storm or Iraqi Freedom. Boot points out that before World War Two, these missions were called small wars, or as Rudyard Kipling said “the savage wars of peace.”¹⁶ The newspaper editorials of this historical period likely read much like a script for America’s current forays around the globe. The objectives of America’s small wars, or what Cable calls “gunboat diplomacy”¹⁷, during the first-half of the 20th century were sometimes political, and at others, punitive in nature. Many of these small-scale, half-forgotten military interventions were initiated preemptively by the United States for a variety of reasons: to protect American citizens, punish other governments, provide

humanitarian assistance, and sometimes, to pacify rogue/failed states and provide law and order.¹⁸ The Sailors and Marines faced similar physical, psychological, political, technological, and operational obstacles as those of today. And largely speaking, and also similar to today, the missions were generally successful.

A familiarity with the situational events and their lessons learned provide insightful study for today's small warriors. Naval history should be more than a phrase that describes past naval events and patterns. To be sure, many aspects of these events and patterns in naval history can, and should, be utilized as chart overlays for future operations and patterns when similar adversaries or operational conditions occur. Again, the question arises on the validity of the ESG concept for the 21st century. It would be a false assumption to suggest that the conditions affecting naval operations today bears little resemblance to past periods. Further examination of naval history is warranted.

Similar conditions and adversaries in the nation's security environment can be located in the pivotal decades following the Spanish-American War, and it is during this period where the roles of our expeditionary naval forces must be revisited to search for comparative insight and potential lessons learned. This era in naval history offers a discerning comparison with the current environment that gave birth to the ESG concept and likely, the future environment where ESG forces will operate.

Suddenly, with the end of the Spanish-American War the United States was thrust onto the world stage with far-flung responsibilities and new security interests. All of the sudden, it became undeniably clear that America had overseas security interests even beyond its new territorial possessions that had to be influenced. Boot points out that Sailors and Marines would no longer land on foreign soil for a few days to quell a riot, now they would

need to stay longer to manage or change the internal politics of nations. In this altered security environment, America's preference was to exercise power diplomatically and economically, but when this failed, the United States was not shy about applying "...the brass knuckles hidden beneath the velvet glove."¹⁹ This radical change to the security environment did not necessarily mean a new mission area for the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team of the era, but it did require that current mission areas be redefined into new chart overlays for future operations.

Almost overnight, America's security environment had expanded exponentially, in much the same way it did following the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001. Only months after the peace treaty was signed with Spain in December 1898, the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team began reacting to mission tasking from Washington. Over the next fifteen years alone, Marine and Bluejacket landing parties were engaged in small wars in the Philippines, Samoan Islands, China (Boxer Rebellion), Honduras, Dominican Republic, Korea, Lebanon, Morocco, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Panama.²⁰ A track record of limited wars that, to date, compares strikingly similar to the epoch period America finds itself in following the end of the Cold War era.

All too often during this time political and economic diplomacy failed and the "brass knuckles" were in fact applied. No doubt by 1914, it became clear to the Department of the Navy that naval forces had a pivotal role to play in America's rise to great power status. This became apparent most vividly in Central America and the Caribbean where the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team fought a series of "Banana Wars".²¹

In 1914, President Wilson ordered naval forces on a mission to Vera Cruz, to quell unrest and protect American interests in the revolutionary disorder of Mexico. Lieutenant

Colonels Linn and Neimeyer point out why the operation proved critical to the operational development of the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team. They argue that the lessons from Vera Cruz affected future landing operations on hostile shores, and became a lightning rod for naval strategists arguing that the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team should be equipped and trained for instant readiness to fight the nations small wars at the “...critical interstice between an intervention force and larger, more capable follow-on Army forces.”²² During the small war at Vera Cruz, naval forces engaged Mexican forces ashore with Marines and Bluejackets, and from the sea with the naval striking power of battleships and cruisers, and even the with the first naval combat air sorties. In the end, the greatest number of Medals of Honor for any single engagement was awarded (55) during the fighting²³, the Army was unable to arrive before the fighting concluded (even after preparing to deploy for a year)²⁴, and the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team emerged as America’s new “9-1-1” force of small warriors. This team deployed from a naval task force that was very similar in design and composition to that proposed in the ESG concept.

In the coming years before World War Two, this naval team of small warriors was repeatedly called into action. They were relied upon heavily in Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic to hone their new missions as America settled into the responsibilities of a great power. The Navy and Marine Corps learned countless lessons from these small war operations that were applied during World War Two operations and throughout the Cold War. They made a specialty out of fighting small wars verses elusive foes that utilized asymmetric tactics – and no military force ever did it better.²⁵ Maybe there are still lessons that can be extracted from this period for current and future naval operations. Additionally,

perhaps the concept they utilized of integrating the Navy's strike warships with Marine Corps strike power is a formula that makes operational wisdom today.

Will the ESG concept meet the needs of the nation in the 21st century security environment? A crucial question that appears to have been fully considered by the CNO while developing Sea Power 21 during the budding months of President Bush's national security strategy, or "Bush Doctrine."

Expeditionary Strike Group and the National Security Strategy

Given the myriad of capabilities organic to an ESG, finding a functional home for the concept in the Bush Doctrine should not be difficult. In his speech to the nation aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln (May 2003), the President made it clear to "...friend and foe alike, that our nation has a mission..." to confront terrorist groups and "any outlaw regime [with] ties to terrorist groups and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction...".²⁶ The President demonstrated the will to use military force to confront these threats in Afghanistan, and drove it home again in Iraq.

The rise of America during the 20th century to superpower status coincided with the nation's parallel ascendance as an expeditionary sea power. Events from this historical era show that preemptive military force is not a new notion. In fact, naval history is crammed with clear examples of preemptive force using the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team. However, during World War Two and the Cold War, American military leaders abandoned its small war imperial tradition and focused doctrine and procurement toward large-scale conventional warfare. Today, the security environment is much closer aligned with the pre-World War Two years of small wars, than anytime throughout the Cold War years. Nevertheless, in each period, the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team is being asked to

engage in small war operations armed in most instances with superior technology and striking power, against foes that possess superior numbers and better local knowledge of culture and terrain.

Following the end of the Cold War, many political analysts assert that the United States muddled through the 1990's with strategies that failed to fully address its new leadership role in the world, or the radically altered security environment. However, the 2002 National Security Strategy addresses America's position in the world and outlines a 'Bush Doctrine' to safeguard US national security. The Bush Doctrine calls for the US to identify and destroy the terrorist threat "before it reaches our borders," and if necessary, acting alone with preemptive force.²⁷

What is preemption? The Department of Defense defines preemptive attack as "An attack initiated on the basis of incontrovertible evidence that an enemy attack is imminent."²⁸ The President's 2002 National Security Strategy is clear that sometimes, preemptive action is necessary, because "...our security environment has undergone profound transformation." The document declares to the world that America reserves the right to act preemptively and plans to maintain unchallenged military superiority to win the GWOT and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that now pose the greatest threat to US national security.²⁹ Like it or not, Americans have become a de facto, or informal, imperial power and the military will be called upon to fill many of the missions associated with this responsibility. The Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team of the future will have to be flexible enough to conduct a wider array of missions, and perhaps, be prepared to remain on station longer to perform the constabulary duties required to preserve order and establish the conditions for

long-term success in a given region. It is unlikely that today's ARG will have this flexibility, but the proposed ESG concept may fulfill the requirement.

Like the CSGs, the ESG will provide the President with the same strategic advantages of forward deployed deep strike, independent sovereignty, self-sustainability, speed and mobility, but with the added bonus of "boots-on-the-ground" through embarked Marines – important attributes for a preemptive strategy. Fanning says the ESG "...will be even more effective tomorrow, particularly under the preemptive-action strategy so well articulated by President Bush."³⁰ Likewise, perhaps General James L. Jones, former Commandant of the Marine Corps and current Combatant Commander for European Command/NATO Supreme Allied Commander, summed up this point best when referring to the ESG concept: "Because sovereignty issues will dominate the globe in the 21st century, in my opinion, naval forces will be used often."³¹

The world today looks less like the World War Two and Cold War model, where America confronted only a few military juggernauts, and much more like the era of small wars, where America confronted despots, failed states, and rogue troublemakers. Perhaps then, the two most useful historical sources for understanding how the GWOT should be conducted in an international security environment that includes the Bush Doctrine of preemption, are Colonel Callwell's before referenced 1906 "Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice" and the 1940 US Marine Corps "Small Wars Manual". The analysis and observations in Colonel Callwell's chapters provides sort of a draft script for ESG planners in the GWOT.³² The Marine Corps "Small Wars Manual" focuses on the "Banana Wars" (primarily Nicaragua and Haiti) and dissects all aspects of these small wars, from strategy and phases, to psychology and civil relations.³³ Both books detail hard lessons won during a

host of missions that bear striking resemblance to those likely to be assigned to the proposed ESG.

Expeditionary Strike Group – Some Final Thoughts on Implementation

Sea Strike guidance for 2003 calls for experimental deployments from each coast to test the ESG concept.³⁴ The deploying Atlantic and Pacific Fleet ESGs are scheduled to have fundamental differences in place that will allow for a thorough comparison of various command-and-control relationships, as well as force composition and employment. For example, the Pacific Fleet ESG will deploy with a flag officer in command, whereas the Atlantic Fleet ESG plans to deploy with a senior Captain in command.³⁵

This example serves to illustrate one of many challenges that must be flushed out through concept experimentation and overcome. All new operational concepts require refinement, and the ESG is no exception. A host of developmental concerns will need to be addressed in the initial ESG deployments, training exercises, and Sea Trial experiments. In addition to the overarching command relationship concerns, issues pertaining to organic submarine control and employment, TTP (tactics, techniques, and procedures), and Inter-Deployment Training Cycle integration, are but a few of the many doctrinal issues that must be refined before the ESG is a fully integrated fleet concept.

Expeditionary Strike Group – New Label or New Concept?

The ESG concept of linking Navy strike warships with Marines Corps strike power ashore is not new. More to the point, it is the historical bread and butter of why our nation wants a Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team – to monitor and influence world events. This integration of naval striking power is a formula that makes operational wisdom today, just as it did during the era that defined small wars.

Furthermore, the ESG concept is needed because it is the military force best suited to take the pulse of the earth from the safe and sovereign environment of the world's oceans, and then, when required, to provide a shock to the soil in order to sync the rhythm with the desires of the United States. Potential enemies know America has taken an interest in regional events when American warships arrive in the waters nearest their borders. Further, they know America plans to shape events when joint air power and Tomahawks enter their airspace, but they truly understand that the United States means to make a lasting difference when the Marines come ashore from a powerful naval force afloat. The ESG concept is a marriage of this naval strike power that is timely for today's security environment.

This essay has clearly outlined the past and potential future utility and flexibility that a forward-deployed Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team offers. However, the question remains unanswered as to whether the ESG concept outlined in Sea Power 21 is a unique employment of naval forces, or merely a new label for the age-old linkage of naval strike power and Marines. Historical examples of similar linkages of forces during time periods when the nation faced comparable threats point to patterns and strategies of naval employment that indicate a natural reassessment through time, by naval leaders, to align task force composition to the mission and the threat. In which case, the ESG concept would not be "new", but a coherent argument can still be made that this reassessment and realignment is an imaginative transformation of the Navy to meet a new threat environment.

Can a century-old script be applied to a 21st century naval warfare concept? Regardless of whether the ESG concept is old or new, its basic tenants can still serve the nation and the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team as successfully today as it was during the small wars in naval history. Moreover, the lessons learned by naval forces during

this era indicate that the ESG operational concept will prove equally as sound and valid in today's security environment.

The ESG provides America with "small warriors" for future limited wars and contingencies, armed with tailored power projection that can strike from international waters (over-the-horizon) without infringing, or depending, upon the sovereignty of any other nation. What's more, the ESG concept exploits these unique characteristics of naval power and beefs them up further with the additional crisis flexibility provided by the MEU and deep inshore striking capabilities. Thus, it may prove to be an equally lethal partner to the CSG in the Sea Strike pillar of Sea Power 21.

It does not matter to Sailors, Marines, the nation, or even future adversaries whether the ESG concept is new in concept, or merely in label. Naval history is replete with good decisions and bad that lead to triumphs and blunders. It is the duty of naval professionals to extract the nuggets of gold (and the lumps of coal), and apply them to future naval and joint operations. The linkage of naval strike and reconnaissance assets to the Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team under the ESG concept is built upon a foundation of historical employment and the subsequent lessons learned. The Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Team forward-deployed as an Expeditionary Strike Group will serve as a powerful preemptive and reactive force to fight the dispersed and elusive terrorist threat in the coming small wars of the GWOT.

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ENDNOTES

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