

The Evolution of the U.S. Military Strategic Concept

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Military strategy is a set of ideas implemented by military organizations to pursue desired strategic goals. It is used in war whereby a nation, often as a member of a group of nations, determines national or multinational (through alliance or coalition) strategic objectives and guidance and develops and uses national resources to achieve these objectives. Activities at this level establish national and multinational military objectives, sequence initiatives, define limits and assess risks for the use of military and other instruments of national power, develop operation plans (OPLANs) to achieve these objectives, and provide military forces and other capabilities in accordance with strategic plans. In the United States command structure, the strategic level of war involves the highest levels of individual and organizational participation, including the President, the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Combatant Commander (CCDRs)¹.

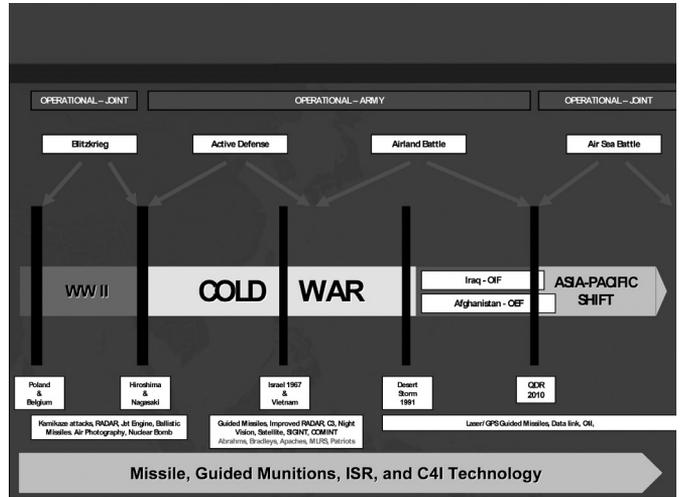
¹ Naval Doctrine Publication 1 Naval Warfare, March 2010



To accomplish an Operational Objective, the military strategic concept has to be clear to allow the lower level commanders to plan, conduct and execute it within theaters or other operational areas. This article intends to study the evolution of U.S. military strategy since it began to be used in conducting operations over sea. Most of the strategic concepts have been developed based on a plausible hypothetical, specific threat, and they are intended to guide military operations in the future to counter that threat.

Joint Publication 1-02, defines the Concept of Operation (CONOPs) as a verbal or graphic statement, in broad outline, of a commander's assumptions or intent in regard to an operation or series of operations². The CONOPs is frequently embodied in campaign plans and operation plans; in the latter case, particularly when the plans cover a series of connected operations to be carried out simultaneously or in succession. The CONOPs is designed to give an overall picture of the operation. It is included primarily for additional clarity of purpose.

Many military leaders have used military strategic concepts and CONOPs as a means to plan ahead in their future operations. What must their armed forces look like in order to achieve their national security strategy? How must they shape their forces and how should they conduct the war if war cannot be prevented? These kinds of questions have to



Revolution of military affairs

² Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, November 8, 2010 (As Amended Through 15 November 2012)



be in the minds of military leaders because it will also postulate the acquisition process.

The U.S. Armed Forces have long experience in developing national security strategy according to concepts. For example, as national security strategy entered the present age of modern warfare, U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt sought to demonstrate growing American military power with blue-water navy capability. Hoping to enforce treaties and protect overseas holdings, the U.S. Congress appropriated funds to build American sea power³. In conjunction, the U.S. Navy operational level began their CONOPs with just 90 small ships, and over one-third of them were wooden. After that, the navy quickly grew to include new modern steel fighting vessels. The hulls of these ships were painted a stark white, giving the armada the nickname “Great White Fleet”. In a

show of power, the fleet completed a circumnavigation of the globe from 16 December 1907 to 22 February 1909.

A more thorough example is the U.S Army’s evolution of operational concepts after the end of WWII, the first one being the “active defense” doctrine. This was a codification of what was the conventional thinking about the way a war in Western Europe might develop: the Warsaw Pact would attack and NATO forces

would hold their ground long enough to arrange for

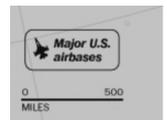
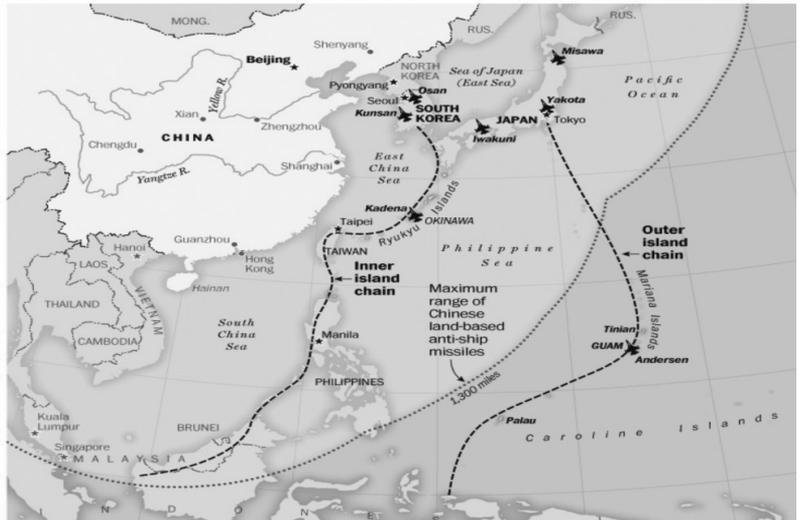


A new U.S. military strategy for fighting called “Air - Sea Battle”

³ John Mack Faragher, *Out of Many: a history of the American People*. Prentice Hall, 2012. p. 574



The two island chains and major US bases in the Western Pacific. (Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/what-is-air-sea-battle/2012/08/01/gJQAIGr7PX_graphic.html)



reinforcements, after which the Soviets could be turned back. But with the growing numerical superiority of the Warsaw Pact forces and the necessary assumption that the Soviets might use tactical nuclear weapons, a certain pessimism began to surround the idea of “active defense”. Some critics derisively called the plan “fall back by ranks.” Between 1976 and 1982, Army tacticians rediscovered the German blitzkrieg model. The blitzkrieg model not only carries the potential of a materially inferior force defeating an opponent, but it is also enhanced by technological superiority in three key areas: rapid mobility, communications and air support. In the early days of World War II, General Guderian demonstrated the German advantage in each of these three areas with the famous Panzer tanks, the first use of portable radios, and German air superiority through the use of the Stuka dive bombers. The United States has recently concentrated on these three areas by devoting a tremendous amount of development funding to projects like the Abrams M-1 tank, the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, battle management computer



systems and enhanced communications, and improved tactical air capabilities using F-16s, F-18s and advanced attack helicopters.⁴

The warfighting doctrine in Europe from 1982 to the late 1990s, called the “AirLand Battle concept”, was developed away from the “active defense” concepts of the use of nuclear weapons that had been prevalent for much of the 1950s and early 60s. In great part, the AirLand Battle concept sprang from the doctrinal perspective of General Donn A. Starry, the TRADOC commander (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command) at Fort Monroe, Virginia, in July 1977. It was the result of 86 major Army studies undertaken by Starry and his planners during 1978-80 to define new tactical field organization. This major project reflected the seriousness with which the Army, since the early 1970s, had regarded the technological edge that the Soviet Union was gaining in that decade in the tactical weaponry of its numerically stronger forces opposite NATO in Europe. In preliminary form, the new concept was first formally published in March 1981. After wide briefing throughout the defense establishment and to the highest levels of government, the AirLand Battle concept became official Army doctrine when further developed and infused into a revision of the key tactical manual, FM 100-5, Operations, published in August 1982.⁵

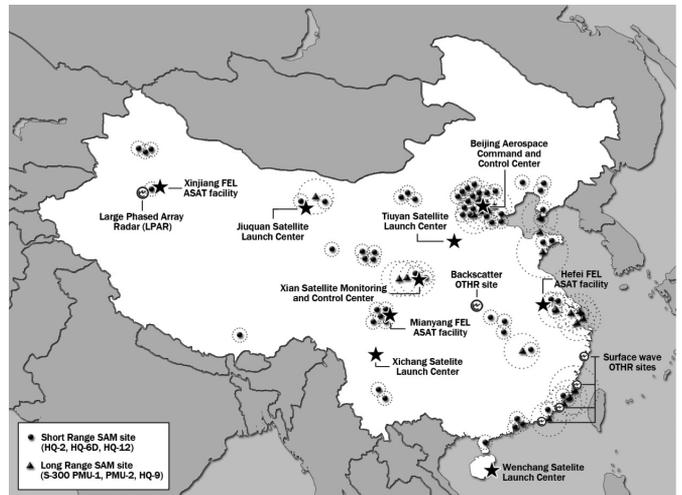
The concept called for early offensive action, by air and land, to the full depth of enemy formations to defeat an enemy attack. AirLand Battle emphasized close coordination between land forces acting as an aggressively maneuvering

⁴ Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege (Retired), U.S. Army, The Historical Development of Airland Battle Doctrine,

⁵ John L. Romjue, The Evolution of the Airland Battle Concept, Air University Review, May-June 1984



Chinese long-range radar and space facilities and air defenses (2010) (Source: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments; AirSea Battle A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept)



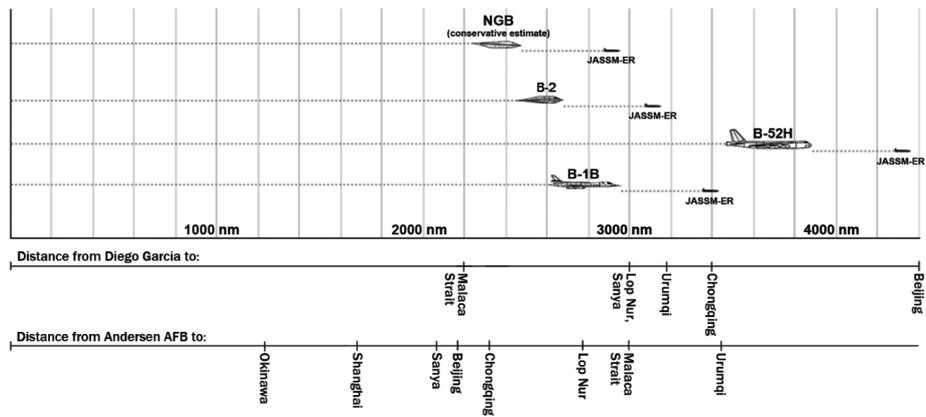
defense, and air forces attacking rear-echelon forces feeding those front line enemy forces. Mindful of the absence of clear and consistent American political aims in Vietnam and of the Clausewitzian maxim that “war is a continuation of policy by other means,” the AirLand Battle concept stated:

“ . . . once political authorities commit military forces in pursuit of political aims, military forces must win something -else there will be no basis from which political authorities can bargain to win politically. Therefore, the purpose of military operations cannot be simply to avert defeat-but rather it must be to win.” ⁶

These were forthright statements, clear in intent and disabusing the Soviet Union of any perception that shifting strategic power had opened for it a new freedom of action at theater levels. The AirLand Battle dealt with the Army’s major and most serious challenge—armored, mechanized, combined arms battle. The new concept projected an explicitly offensive emphasis and had as its distinguishing feature an

⁶ RRADOC Pamphlet 525-5, Military Operations: Operational Concepts for the AirLand Battle and Corps Operations—1986, 25 March 1981



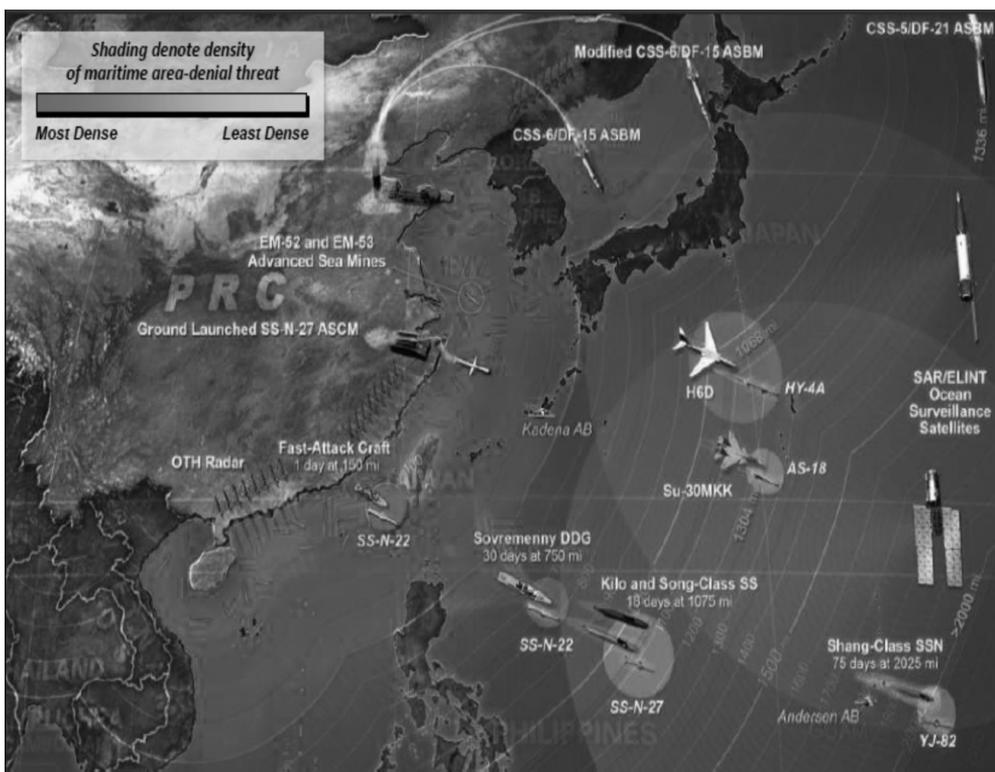


Current (and prospective) US long-range strike systems (combat radius, unrefueled)

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, followed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' (USSR) dissolution into 15 post-soviet states on 25 December 1991, brought the end of the Cold War epoch. The U.S. armed forces again moderated their doctrines to prepare for their new threats. In 1993, the U.S. navy established a unit that has a full responsibility to provide the doctrinal foundation for naval forces to contribute fully and effectively in joint and combined operations, the Naval Doctrine Command (NDC). The NDC worked very closely with the Joint Staff and other doctrine centers to ensure consistency between naval and joint doctrine. NDC also published a series of "capstone" Naval Doctrine Publications and other critical materials to increase fleet awareness and understanding and to standardize the Armed Services' thinking about naval operations. After the success of their works, the NDC was disbanded and incorporated as a part of the reorganization program of the Naval War College as a new Navy Warfare Development Command in 1999. It has responsibility for doctrine development, Fleet Battle Experiments, and concept development.

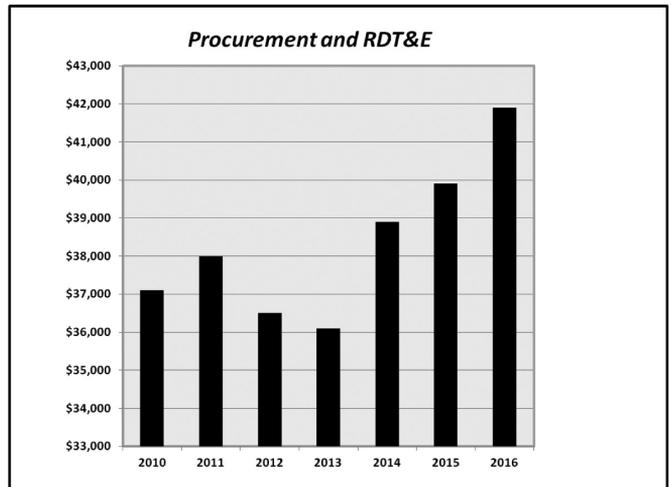


The end of the Cold War changed the way war is fought. Military leaders had to review and rewrite their military strategic concepts, doctrines, along with CONOPs. Conducting Operation Desert Storm in 1991 turned over the U.S. military strategic concepts that used to have an operational focus on land and shifted back into the sea business. In 1992 the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps developed a combined vision for the 21st century to conduct operations From the Sea, intended to carry the Naval Service-the Navy and Marine Corps-beyond the Cold War and into the 21st century. This concept signaled a change in focus and, therefore, in priorities for the Naval Service away from operations on the sea and toward power projection and the employment of naval forces from the sea to influence events in the littoral regions of the world-those areas adjacent to the oceans and seas that are within direct control of and vulnerable to the striking power of sea-based forces. The From the Sea-Class strategic concept was used for only 2 years, and again the U.S. Navy refined their direction in 1994 with “Forward ... From the Sea”. The concept was to drive the on-going process of innovation that is rapidly transforming the U.S. Navy into a 21st century force.



The A2/AD challenge Chinese weapons range.

Forward ... From the Sea provides the basis for a simple, yet powerful, operational concept of how the U.S. Navy will operate to carry out expeditionary operations. They are conducted by forward naval operations both to ensure unimpeded use of the seas and to project American influence and power into the littoral areas of the



world. Expeditionary operations achieve U.S. objectives across the spectrum of the National Military Strategy. They are a potent and cost-effective alternative to power projection from the continental United States and are suited ideally for the many contingencies that can be deterred or quickly handled by forward-deployed forces. Expeditionary operations complement, enable and dramatically enhance the effectiveness of continental power-projection forces when a larger military response is needed.

The U.S. Navy's attention and effort is focused on operating in and from the littorals. The landward side of the littoral can be supported and defended directly from the sea. It encompasses areas of strategic importance to the United States. For forward-deployed naval forces, the littorals were a starting point as well as a destination. Tactically, the distance that the U.S. Armed Forces reach inland from the sea depends on terrain and weather, the contributions of joint and coalition forces, the potential adversary's capabilities, and the nature of our mission. A mission may require them to exercise their considerable reach and operate far inland. They deploy carrier battle groups and amphibious ready



groups with embarked Marines to provide naval expeditionary forces for the Combatant Commanders. When required, they deployed separate units-such as for maritime interception force operations but each remains capable of being integrated into a larger naval expeditionary force.

The carrier battle groups and amphibious ready groups together have been trained to ensure immediate readiness for a wide range of contingencies. Once overseas, they dispersed the force and maintain a dynamic presence. Their forces are constantly in motion to make their capabilities visible throughout the theater while carrying out numerous simultaneous missions in support of U.S. interests. They operate as individual units such as submarines independently or completely integral to the force. For a specific crisis response operation, they could rapidly assemble elements of the force into a mission-tailored task group, such as a surface battle group. They rapidly converge from their forward deployment hubs to the scene of a potential conflict to deter aggression or to project power should deterrence fail. They take advantage of the reach of their sensors and weapons to project power over vast areas from a dispersed, networked force-concentrating combat power rather than merely their platforms and delivering firepower far inland when required by the mission. They are on-scene and ready for peacetime engagement, deterrence and conflict prevention, and fighting and winning.

On the other hand, the Forward ... From the Sea concept has also changed the needs of the U.S. Navy fleet. For example, the main acquisitions project is now the littoral combat ship (LCS) to replace the heavy frigates like the Oliver Hazard class that cannot sail closer to the shore. The Virginia Class



Submarine is being built with the inherent capability to deploy a mini-sub for the SEAL team. The navy has even improved the Ohio class Trident submarines to support Naval Special Warfare through removing the Trident missile and fitting it with Tomahawk cruise missiles which are much shorter and require less room, allowing for not only more weapons to be carried but also enough room to carry four platoons of up to 66 SEALs for extended periods of time, or up to 100 SEALs for shorter periods. Two of the missile tubes have been replaced not with Tomahawk VLSs but with diver lock-in/out chambers and mounts for the SEAL DDS (Dry Dock Shelter) and newer Advanced SEAL Delivery System (ASDS) vehicle. As maritime strategist Geoffrey Till has noted, during this period the US Navy has transformed itself into the biggest coastal navy in the world it just operates off other countries' coastlines. A fundamental element of this approach has been the concept of 'sea basing' of forces, along with the development of littoral combat ships and Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESG). These ESG's are built around the US Navy's large amphibious assault ships with an embarked US Marine Corps force, cementing the notion that maritime power, as opposed to naval power, is the critical factor in the littoral environment.⁸

However, the concept of Forward ... From the Sea itself has a weak point. It can be suitable only if the enemy, or those conflict nations that the U.S. has gotten involved in, for example Iraq or Yugoslavia, did not have the capability to attack such operating U.S. forces, especially the carrier battle groups. Over the past two decades, the development and proliferation of advanced weapons, targeting perceived U.S.

⁸ Peter J. Dean, ANU, Air-Sea Battle and the utility of land power in the Asia Pacific, 5 October 2012



Air Sea Battle: Projected Expenditures;

TOTAL EXPENDITURES (FY2010-FY2016) = \$268 BILLION



Aircraft to fulfill the ASB concept.



Air Sea Battle: Projected Expenditures;

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vulnerabilities, has the potential to create an Anti-Access/Area-Denial⁹ (A2/AD) environment that increasingly challenges U.S. military access to and freedom of action within potentially contested areas. These advanced systems encompass diverse capabilities that include ballistic and cruise missiles; sophisticated integrated air defense systems; anti-ship weapons ranging from high-tech missiles and submarines to low-tech mines and swarming boats; guided rockets, missiles, and artillery; an increasing number of 4th generation fighters; low-observable manned and unmanned combat aircraft; as well as space and cyber warfare capabilities specifically designed to disrupt U.S. communications and intelligence systems. In combination,

⁹ Anti Access: those actions and capabilities, usually long-range, designed to prevent and opposing force from entering an operational area.

Area Denial: those actions and capabilities, usually of shorter range, designed not to keep an opposing force out, but to limit its freedom of action within the operational area.



these advanced technologies have the potential to diminish the advantages the U.S. military enjoys in the air, maritime, land, space, and cyberspace domains today. If these advances continue and are not addressed effectively, U.S. forces could soon face increasing risk in deploying to and operating within previously secure forward areas-and over time in rear areas and sanctuaries-ultimately affecting their ability to respond effectively to coercion and crises that directly threaten the strategic interests of the U.S. and its allies.¹⁰

After the first Gulf War, the U.S. military was proven to have an undisputable technological advantage over any of its adversaries. However, the technologies used in Desert Storm and subsequent wars have been made available to other world powers. Some are not so friendly to the U.S., like China and Iran. Importantly, the reach of these technologies, and the range of the weapons systems these countries have acquired is increasingly rendering the U.S. presence more vulnerable to attacks from its adversaries. To enter and maintain military presence in a theater, the U.S. needs to have the capability to reach deep into the territory, in order to protect its own air and naval assets in order to ensure success in any campaign. But many countries have acquired technological capabilities and weapon systems that make it more difficult for the U.S. to have access to some theaters.

For example, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)'s 2010 report on the People's Liberation Army (PLA), China's Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM) has driven the U.S. military to develop its Operational Concept again. What is more alarming, though is that the PLA Chief of General Staff General Chen Bingde

¹⁰ http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=63730



has announced that China is on the stage of further developing the DF-21D ASBM, “it is still in the research-and-development process. It is not equipped yet”.¹¹ The Chinese ASBM is based on the D, or Delta, variant of the Dong Feng-21 medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM), known in the West as the CSS-5 Mod 5. “The missile has a range in excess of 1,500 km, is armed with a maneuverable warhead, and when integrated with appropriate command and control systems, is intended to provide the PLA the capability to attack ships, including aircraft carriers, in the western Pacific Ocean”.¹² In the adjacent ocean, the Iranian success on their anti-ship missile test in the Arabian Gulf which led them to claim it could sink a “big target” such as a warship in 50 seconds is also disturbing to the Air Craft Carrier Commanding Officer that sails along the Strait of Hormuz daily.

With those kinds of capabilities, it has been proven that China and Iran have already implemented some A2/AD assets. The possible threat to the U.S. forces is that China (or Iran) can use existing technologies, or further develop more capabilities, to prevent the U.S. from projecting its military power to the theater. This is consistent with the Anti-Access threat. And if they were not able to prevent U.S. forces from reaching the theater, they could attack the forces that are already close to its shores in order to reduce the U.S. freedom of action inside the theater. This is consistent with the Area Denial Threat. So in order to make sure that U.S. ability to

¹¹ Andrew Erickson, DF-21D ASBM Deployed, but China Daily Probably Incorrect in Claiming “2,700km Range”; Gen. Chen Bingde Never Said That, 11 January 2012

¹² Andrew Erickson and Gabe Collins, China Deploys World’s First Long-Range, Land-Based ‘Carrier Killer’: DF-21D Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM), 26 December 2010



access any theater is not challenged by any other military power in the world, the Air-Sea Battle (ASB) concept has been defined and is still under development.

“Air-Sea Battle” is the new U.S. military strategy and operational concept to fulfill the gaps observed above. It was originated during the first decade after the year 2000, but was first announced in the Quadrennial Defense Review of 2010. It has been directed by the DOD to the Department of the Air force and the Department of the Navy to address the growing challenge posed by the emerging A2/AD environment; in the other words, it was prepared and written for countering China’s A2/AD system. In response, the services designed an operational concept, focused on the ways and means necessary to neutralize current and anticipated A2/AD threats, to ensure its Joint Force maintains the ability to project power and protect U.S. national interests. The Air-Sea Battle concept centers on networked, integrated, attack-in-depth to disrupt, destroy and defeat (NIA-D3) A2/AD threats. This approach exploits and improves upon the advantage U.S. forces have across the air, maritime, land, space and cyberspace domains, and is essential to defeat increasingly capable intelligence gathering systems and sophisticated weapons systems used by adversaries employing A2/AD systems. Offensive and defensive tasks in Air-Sea Battle are tightly coordinated in real time by networks able to command and control air and naval forces in a contested environment. The air and naval forces are organized by mission and networked to conduct integrated operations across all domains.

The concept organizes these integrated tasks into three lines of effort, wherein air and naval forces attack-in-depth to disrupt the adversary’s intelligence collection and command



and control used to employ A2/AD weapons systems; destroy or neutralize A2/AD weapons systems within effective range of U.S. forces; and defeat an adversary's employed weapons to preserve essential U.S. Joint Forces and their enablers. Through NIA-D3, air and naval forces achieve integrated effects across multiple domains, using multiple paths to increase the resilience, agility, speed and effectiveness of the force.

But it is important to note that Air-Sea Battle is just one component of the US military's approach to countering A2/AD. The overarching framework for Air-Sea Battle is the US Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC). JOAC consists not only of Air-Sea Battle, which is in fact principally designed to deal with anti-access technologies and strategies which prevent forces from entering an operational area, but also the Gain and Maintain Access Concept (GMAC). In the littoral environment, the GMAC deals with area denial, or limiting freedom of action within an operational area once access has been achieved. The GMAC is aimed at 'the capability for decisive action on land and in the littorals' and is primarily the domain of the US Army and Marine Corps.

Although the Air-Sea Battle concept is fundamentally focused on the Air Force and Navy, discussing Air-Sea Battle in relation to US military concepts for A2/AD is like talking about only the back two wheels of a tricycle. The missing part is the front wheel-land power -an essential element for achieving a decisive effect.¹³ Most battles at sea, and in the air, take place close to or over land. As the great naval theorist Julian Corbett reminds us, there is a fundamental interdependence between naval and land warfare, and it is virtually impossible

¹³ Peter J. Dean, ANU, Air-Sea Battle and the utility of land power in the Asia Pacific, 5 October 2012



for naval power to win a war on its own. Nonetheless, in the currently projected scenario it is an intention of JOAC that the U.S. does not want to have a decisive battle which requires their land forces to be on the ground. They do not want to occupy China, to state it briefly, nor wish to attempt to do so. So the Air-Sea Battle is a limited operational concept designed to address an adversary's A2/AD capabilities, nothing more than that. It is not a concept aimed at any particular potential adversary, nor a campaign plan designed to accomplish a specific national objective. Instead, it is a concept that will spark innovation and development of the means to support future operations.

To make it clear how the U.S. going to conduct this battle concept, we need to rely on the following assumptions, under which the operational concept is based:

- The U.S. will not initiate armed hostilities
- Tactical warning will be limited (e.g., days)
- Chinese and U.S. territories will not be sanctuaries
- Space will be contested
- Mutual nuclear deterrence will hold
- Australia and Japan will remain active U.S. allies
- China will attempt to achieve a quick victory via:
 - Inflicting such damage to U.S. military capabilities that the U.S. would choose to discontinue the fight
 - Making the prospect of an eventual U.S. victory appear too prolonged or costly
 - Driving a major U.S. ally out of the war

One of the most important factors above is the fact that the U.S. will take the first blow. The other important assumption is that nuclear deterrence will hold and none of the powers will launch nuclear weapons-up to a certain and important point.



However, in response to the U.S. taking the first blows to its bases or territories in the theater, it will conduct a counter offensive that will seek to blind the enemy, destroying battle networks and ISR systems. It will then destroy their long range launching capabilities, and then seize initiative in all war domains. Second, the U.S. will sustain initiative, conducting “*distant blockade*” operations to cut off communications. finally, in order to sustain logistics, it would also have to ramp-up industrial production.

OTHER REASONING VIEWS

In the inner circle upon Capital Hill, the Air-Sea Battle concept has been widely criticized by many in the government, the academic environment, and even inside the military. It has been portrayed by its critics as a way to justify the services’ budgets, or even an analytical tool for the Air Force and the Navy to take the funding away from the Army. It has been explained to the American citizenry that the amount of money involved in technological developments is associated with the new Battle Concept. In favor, some argue that this is the only way that the U.S. Navy has in order to maintain some degree of control of the Sea Lines of Communications in the world. Also argued is that the concept is only the result of the evolution of a new doctrine that tries to incorporate new technologies. And finally, there is another argument against it, that the Air-Sea Battle concept is just a way for the Air Force and the Navy to justify their huge arms procurement projects, which involve hundreds of billions of dollars.

To achieve the goal of the Air-Sea Battle concept, the U.S. Air Force and Navy have to fill-in their assets procurement. For example, regarding the projection for their aircrafts, UAV and missiles assets must be as follows:



Aircraft

- USAF

- Next Generation Bomber (mid-2020s)
- KC-46A Next Generation Tanker (2017)
- B-2A Spirit stealth heavy bomber
- F-22 Raptor stealth fighter
- F-35C Lightning II stealth Joint Strike Fighter
- E-8C Joint STARS (J-STARS) airborne battle management/command/control

- USN

- P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft (2016) (also replace J-STARS?)
- E-2D Hawkeye carrier-capable, “mini-AWACS” aircraft
- EA-18G Growler carrier-based electronic warfare aircraft

UAV

- USAF

- Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle (X-45B technology demonstration)
- MQ-9 Reaper Block 5
- RQ-4 Global Hawk Block 40

- USN

- Unmanned Carrier Combat Aircraft (X-47B technology demonstration)
- MQ-4C Triton Broad Area Maritime Surveillance-Demonstrator (2019)

Missiles

- USAF

- Long-Range Standoff Weapon (LRSW-B) (2020s)
- AIM-9X Sidewinder air-to-air missile
- AIM-120D Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM)

- USN

- Long-Range Anti-Ship Cruise Missile (technology demonstration)
- RIM-174 Standard Extended Range Active Missile (ERAM) Block IV
- RIM-162 Evolved Seasparrow Missile (ESSM)



- RIM-116 Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM) Block 2
- AGM-154 Joint Standoff family of Weapons (JSOW)
- JSOW C-1 will be the first networked air-launched, anti-ship weapon in the U.S. inventory (flight testing)
- Joint Air-to-Ground Missile (JAGM) (technology demonstration)
- Replaces AGM-114 Hellfire, BGM-71 TOW, and AGM-65 Maverick

For many, a still unresolved question is, why Air Sea Battle? Is it the A2/AD Challenge? Are Iran and China really challenging U.S. access to SLoCs? Or is it just a domestic need to create an enemy and justify major U.S. arms procurement. Or is it about the DoD budget and U.S. economic strength?

Answering those questions is like trying to identify whether the chicken or the egg came first. The way the U.S. military normally does its business differs from such a first cause mentality. It normally develops a concept that requires a set of capabilities. This in turn will require specific technologies to achieve those capabilities. And then those technologies are developed. When the operational concept is approved, the funding will push the development of those needed technologies. When the AirLand Battle concept was released by the U.S. Army, it was criticized and portrayed as a platform to justify the Army's weapons systems, mainly the Apache helicopter, Bradley and Abrams tanks, Patriots and MLRS. It integrated the full range of technologies available at the time for the Army to fight its battles. Today, we see the same thing with the Air-Sea Battle concept. It is being criticized as being the platform to justify the Air Force and Navy's huge arms procurement programs. Ultimately, it is China and Iran who are striving to find out the weaknesses of our current strategy and concept, and it is paramount to take the initiative with steps toward strengthening those weaknesses before they are shown to us by an enemy.

