

Genuine Jointness:

Cross-Cultural Aspects of Airspace Management

Remarks by LTG Paul F. Gorman

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As a laborer in the Joint vineyard, I must tell you that it is most gratifying to be able to address an assemblage such as this dedicated to the resolution of those problems of war fighting which are shared among the Services. I resist, however, using the term "management" to describe any such problems, "management" being, these days, an approbrious antonym for words like "leadership" or "command." Instead, let me suggest that the thorny issues with which you wrestle under the appellation "airspace management" can be more precisely treated within the rubric "command, control, communication, and culture" or C4, for short. My message tonight is simply that while much attention, and, at least of late, much money has been directed at the first three -- the familiar C3 -- not nearly enough has been said or done about "culture."

By "culture" I mean those ideas, suppositions, traditions, customs, prejudices, and obstinacies which distinguish one of the uniformed Services from another. Over three decades ago, acting to eliminate the command frictions of World War II, George Marshall and Harry S. Truman set out to unify the Armed Services of the United States. Both of these redoubtable Americans, so successful in other endeavors, failed abjectly. Dwight David Eisenhower during his presidency expended significant political capital in yet another vain attempt to make it possible for the U.S. to organize, administer, and train its forces in peace as it would have to use them during war. John Fitzgerald Kennedy had strong ideas about the role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and about military affairs in general, and one might presume that, sooner or later during his presidency, he too would have turned his attention to those problems of unification which had frustrated his immediate two predecessors. Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon were, like other Presidents before them, overtaken by war, and required to wage it with the Service cultures extant ante bellum, with results which were, I think we can all agree, unhappy.

There were at least five air wars waged during the conflict in Southeast Asia: the Naval air war conducted from Yankee Station, the Air Force tactical air campaign conducted out of Thailand, the bombing by Strategic Air Command B-52s, and the nitty-gritty air effort mounted within the Republic of South Vietnam by the US Air Force and the US Marine Corps, respectively. It is unfair to state that there was never coordination among these five separate undertakings, but as a generalization, they remained quite distinct, or at least only rarely exhibited that degree of integration which is assumed in many of the presentations and discussions of this conference. Indeed, the fighting around Khe Sanh at the western end of the DMZ during the late winter and spring of 1968 occasioned such an intermix of Air Force and maritime fighters, Army and Marine Corps helicopters, and airlift from the several Services that the lack of a system for efficiently controlling the airspace, the absence of common IFF procedures, and the resultant insecurity for both ground and air elements, led to an attempt to reform MACV's command and control of air operations and to a much higher degree of centralization. Once more we had to learn from adversity.

Now the war in Vietnam can hardly be considered as a fore-runner of the intense air-land battles that are hypothesized in your discussions. Nonetheless, the failure of the American Armed Services during the war with Spain at the turn of the century and during the campaigns in the Philippines which followed signaled to President Theodore Roosevelt and the Congress a need for a thorough overhaul of those institutions which provided for the planning and conduct of military campaigns, and lent impetus to the ideas of Luce and Mahan and the reorganizations of Elihu Root. So, our Vietnam experience should have convinced our national leadership of a need to reconsider how we are configured for the business of waging war. It has not to date. But time is running out. We cannot afford to defer decisions any longer if we are to ensure a credible war-fighting capability, which is the stuff of deterrence, or if we are to avoid another very costly lesson under stress much more severe than Khe Sanh. Given the growing public criticism of national defense policies within this country and abroad, and the debate over defense spending within the Congress, it is not easy to take on so difficult an additional controversy. Service resistance to change will be very deep-seated indeed, and the time for easy or quick solutions is long past.

Apropos of this point is a possibly apocryphal description of the last hours of General Tasker Bliss, Chief of Staff of the United States Army from 22 September 1917 until 18 May 1918. The account has it that when the old soldier's military family was summoned to his bedside for their farewells, one of them had the temerity to ask the general, if looking back on his long and successful career, he had any regrets. At that the gray brows bent in frown, the gnarled fingers crumpled the counterpane, and with a rasping voice that bespoke the commander of yesteryear he barked out: "Damn right, I should never have let the bastards out of the Signal Corps."

The decision to establish a separate air arm is no more recallable for us than it was for General Bliss, no matter how attractive may be the prospect, thereby lending unity of command to the air-land battle of the future. The simple fact of the matter is that even were all our soldiers and airmen in the same color uniform, and all subordinated to a common chain of Service authority, control of airspace and related issues of the interface between land forces and aerospace forces would remain problematic. For instance, I think it probably helps that Marine and Navy aviation are responsive to a single military department, but for the purposes central to your considerations at this conference, it doesn't help very much.

Before I go any further, let me make the point that these are not abstract matters for me. I was strafed by Navy fighters during the Korean War, and in Vietnam I was hit by Air Force napalm, rode in a helicopter through a rain of bombs during a B-52 strike, and twice so narrowly avoided collision with Marine fighters that my

helicopter was alarmingly buffeted. I have personally directed air strikes of all Services, and practiced the art of delivering artillery fire and air strikes simultaneously on an enemy force. I have used beacon bombing, and I have employed radar control for the purposes not only of delivering ordnance, but also of controlling resupply and medevac. I suppose, like some other old soldiers here tonight, I wish we could, through colloquia like this, attack the cultural divisions among the Services so that we and our successors can look forward to departing this life with no Tasker Bliss-like regrets.

I would argue that these cultural differences among the Services will not be resolved until we face squarely the asymmetries which exist among their communications and control mechanisms, their distinctive command philosophies, and their very different attitudes toward time in planning and operations.

To illuminate those asymmetries, compare four three-star commanders, each from a different Service. Each will dispose of a quite different number -- an order of magnitude different number -- of moveable subordinate entities. This last term describes ships, planes, tank crews, platoons, squads, detachments, any grouping of people and things which moves responsive to a single human intelligence. Let me postulate a spectrum of Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Army flags. The Navy three-star would probably have at his disposal something on the order of  $10^1$  to  $10^2$  moveable subordinate entities. The comparable Air Force three-star would have perhaps  $10^2$  to  $10^3$  moveable subordinate entities, the Marine some  $10^3$  -  $10^4$ . Their Army counterpart, a corps commander, would have  $10^4$  through  $10^5$  moveable subordinate entities. These numbers are tyrannical, but probably less so than the  $C^3$  which would be available to these commanders. The Navy commander would have the most assured, the Army commander, the least. The Navy commander would be dealing on the average with relatively high ranking officers, and the average rank of subordinate leaders of the moveable subordinate entities would decline as one proceeded across the spectrum from Navy to Air Force to Marine to Army. The Navy commander's information concerning his subordinates would be quite precise, that of the Army leader vague. The Navy commander would have as a concomitant of all the foregoing the greatest tactical flexibility, the Army commander, the least. The Navy command principle would be centralization, while that of the Army commander would be, per force, decentralization. The Air Force would be much closer to the Navy in this respect, and the Marine much closer to the Army.

As far as planning is concerned, the Navy is mainly interested only to the point of deciding how to orchestrate deployment schedules, determine load out criteria, and maintain readiness for a surge to high operating tempo.

Once a ship is loaded for combat, in general, it doesn't much matter where it is then sent; one part of the hydro-sphere being like another. The Air Force tends to focus its planning on deployment and sustainment, but like the Navy, regards employment as a matter of make-it-up-as-you-go-along, since one segment of aerospace is like another, and a targeted Soviet column on a road presents about the same problems for suppression and strike whether in Central Europe or anywhere in Asia. The Marine Corps concentrates heavily on deployment planning, especially for amphibious assault. Both the Marines and the Army stress employment planning, since they have to fight amid all the clutter of the earth's land surface, and must cope with all the uncertainties of climate, terrain, or enemy in anticipating force mix and logistics. And the Army commander is beset with such uncertainties even more than the Marine, since he must prepare for sustained combat on land, and usually for most of the theater logistic infrastructure.

As far as time is concerned, the Navy and Air Force commanders would be generically, in a better position to be quicker, more adaptive, and more responsive to the threat, while the Marine and Army commanders would almost surely be slower to react, and more constrained by their planning.

If you here at this conference want to get at the nub issues, the genuine issues of airspace control, address organizations which can bridge all those differences. Tell us how better to reconcile notions like the Navy's desire to remain in support of forces fighting on land; with the Air Force's preference for centralizing and orchestrating all air assets for air superiority, interdiction, or close air support; with the Marines' need to husband its air, and its airspace, for exploitation of those organic air assets essential to its mission; with the Army's propensity to decentralize weapon control to brigade or battalion task force for the purposes of force security and tactical initiative. Test your concepts of say, IFF, SHORAD, command data exchange, or airspace control procedures against all these cultural realities.

I applaud the progress that has been made in eliminating cultural frictions between the Air Force and the Army within battlefield airspace. Together, the doctrinal communities of

those two Services have gone a long way toward agreements on many of the issues which apply to the Navy and the Marine Corps as well. Would it that those Services were party to those agreements. Unfortunately, such is not the case. Nor is the joint command responsible for the production of relevant doctrine, the U.S. Readiness Command, in a position to speak to or for the maritime services, there being no Navy or Marine forces assigned to REDCOM.

Even as your discussions at this conference got underway, one of the more imaginative and useful joint experiments with airspace control began at Fort Stewart, south of Savannah, Georgia. Lieutenant General Larry Welch of the 9th U.S. Air Force and Major General Jack Galvin of the Army's 24th Infantry Division have been cooperating in an air-land exercise, nominally part of the Operation QUICK THRUST series. Both these organizations are RDJTF affiliated, and like other undertakings of that command, their exercise augers well for genuine jointness.

The land battle pits the 2nd Brigade of the 24th Infantry Division against an OPFOR of about battalion size. The ground maneuvers exploit the east/west axis of Fort Stewart, providing a battlefield about 40 kilometers in depth, so that it has been possible to depict the second echelon of the OPFOR. The principal objective of the exercise will be improved coordination between the 24th Infantry Division and the 9th Air Force on how best to attack that second echelon. The 24th Infantry Division command post will be in the field, and the 9th Air Force will provide an air support operation center, an airborne command post and AWACS. The Army division will staff the battlefield control element at the Air Force headquarters and occupy two seats aboard the airborne command post for management of immediate close air support and battlefield air interdiction sorties.

Throughout five days of maneuvers on the ground, which portray a friendly attack, followed by OPFOR recourse to nuclear weapons and a counterattack, the Air Force plans to fly over 1,000 sorties. Joint operations with live ordnance will be extensive, since at the center of the maneuver area lies the large artillery impact area of Ft. Stewart, which permits offset use of live ordnance. Something in excess of 200 Mark 82 500 pound bombs will be delivered, and there will be some 16 Joint Air Attack operations by Air Force A-10s and the division's attack helicopters. The Air Force will fly multiple concurrent sorties of close air support, interdiction, reconnaissance and tactical air resupply. The maneuver is structured so that at times there will be three of these Air Force activities going on simultaneously in the

airspace over Fort Stewart in addition to Army aircraft flying missions, and live artillery and mortar firing. On several occasions during the exercise live indirect fire missions will be coordinated into the impact area at the same time the Joint Air Attack Team operations are in progress.

Air defense, which is being played on both sides, includes the 24th Division's air defense resources, a U.S. Marine Corps HAWK battery, Air Force air defense threat radar simulators, and Air Force SAM simulators positioned in depth throughout the battlefield. The Air Force will bring to the exercise its full package of resources, including combat air patrols, WILD WEASEL, tankers, and the rest. Force players will have to contend with airspace divided between friendlies and opponents, and have to come in squawking IFF depending on whether they are OPFOR or friendly. Obviously all of this will place great demands on proficiency in airspace control, and clearly those of you involved in the development of doctrine should analyze the results of this exercise carefully. I add, as a footnote, that Jack Galvin hopes to interest the Navy in conducting carrier-based operations in coordination with division training in the future.

The question now before us is how to get beyond where we are, with occasional exercises to stimulate progress. The war-readiness tasks ahead are so urgent and critical for deterrence, and the penalties for error so telling, that we cannot be so paced; hardline, mono-cultural Service doctrine must give way to "genuine jointness," -- and materiel development, doctrine, and future exercises must be thereby governed.

In this context, let me mention JCS Publication 8, Doctrine for Air Defense from Overseas Land Areas -- an overly general, not very helpful treatment of responsibilities which represents state-of-the-art in cross-cultural communication. Pub 8, dated May 1964, is now being updated. Differing positions, culturally dictated, are apparent already. Some argue that the new Pub 8 should provide the broadest possible guidance to the commanders-in-chiefs of the unified commands, allowing the CINCs to establish the arrangements and procedures they feel best serve air defense. But this has drawbacks in that CINCs depend heavily on Service component commanders whose frames of reference are culturally biased. Others working the revision favor some regime which abolishes these Service components in favor of functional components, such as the U.S. has insisted upon within NATO -- land, sea, and air commanders, each with full operational control of all functional contributors.

In my judgment, movement toward the latter, more functional arrangement, is long overdue. But I consider such a move a long shot, given the difficulty we encounter within the joint system as now constituted, in constraining service prerogatives.

Moreover, my guess is that we are quite unlikely to deal effectively with the problems this symposium is addressing by attack from the bottom up, such as REDCOM, the RDJTF or the Welch-Gavin team are laudibly attempting. Rather, this nation needs, and needs now, I believe, the sort of fundamental reorganization at the top proposed by General David Jones or General Shy Meyer, a clearcut decision to subordinate Service interests to joint war-waging capabilities. With a stronger JCS and Joint Staff driving the system, we can move to align our command structure not with culture, but with function. And so aligned, we can then proceed to develop genuine joint doctrine -- meaning what most of us believe and are prepared to act on in war or peace, whatever our Service, Army, Air Force, Navy, or Marine Corps.