

STATE AND NAVY Partnership in Diplomacy

By The Honorable Michael W. Coulter



Given the increased need for skills in diplomacy when dealing with volatile situations, especially in ungoverned areas of the world, the relationship between the State Department and the Navy is more important now than ever.



The U.S. Navy and the Department of State, as the government's forward-presence service and its lead foreign policy agency, have a historic and natural relationship. Since the days of John Paul Jones and Thomas Jefferson, Navy and State have worked in partnership beyond our borders, advancing our national interests and making America more secure. Owing to visionary leadership and remarkably similar views of the world, this partnership is now reaching new heights. From the planning tables of Washington conference rooms to security operations in the farthest reaches of the world, these two national security agencies are defining new and mutually supportive roles and establishing reinvigorated relevance in a chaotic and uncertain security environment.

As delineated in the *Quadrennial Defense Review* from the Department of Defense and the *Joint Strategic Plan* of the U.S. Department of State and Agency for International Development, since 9/11 the defense and foreign policy communities have reached a broad consensus on the changing nature of the threats to national and international security. Future challenges are likely to be unpredictable, asymmetric, and transnational.

An unstable security environment compels the international community to face some tough realities, especially the threat posed by ungoverned or poorly governed areas within states that cannot adequately control their own territory. Safe havens can transcend state, national, and even regional boundaries—the African Trans-Sahel, the islands of Southeast Asia, and areas in Central and South America and the Caribbean, to name just a few. The number of safe havens around the world is daunting, even to a nation with the military range and capability of the United States.

The most important task in responding to the challenge of safe havens is not eliminating terrorists and their networks, although that remains a critical element, but the building of legitimacy, good governance, trust, prosperity, rule of law, and hope. Such constructive missions are not inherently military. A stable and secure world will require the synchronization of all elements of national power—military, political, diplomatic, social, economic, and informational. This is the jointness of the new century.

This environment also requires greater collaboration among traditional allies and the creation of non-traditional alliances and partnerships—helping our friends and allies around the world deploy with U.S. forces or instead of U.S. forces, or to govern and secure their own territory.

The implications of this vision in the naval domain are noteworthy. For thousands of years navy men have been consumed with defeating other fleets at sea, most often in blue water. Now, the U.S. Navy, the most powerful Fleet in the world, is adding more layers of capability and re-

U.S. AIR FORCE (BRIAN FERGUSON)

DIPLOMATIC MILITARY INTERACTION Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has made it clear that diplomatic and political efforts should be under way in the field—now. Here, she greets Marines at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut.

sponsibility. In addition to lethal, deep-water warfighting capabilities, sea power must be manifest through global cooperation, building partnership capacity, interoperability, and a close relationship with the other elements of national power, both among other agencies and with the private sector.

Plotting a Fix

Thus, Navy and State have set out to work cooperatively and effectively at the critical intersection of diplomacy and military action. The duty Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has conveyed, and that others at State and I have accepted, is to make sure our diplomatic and political instruments show up now—in the field—to shape a more secure and stable world. Very often, this partnership is with the U.S. Navy.

Two means by which State is getting into the fight are the Foreign Policy Advisor (POLAD) and State-Defense Exchange Officer programs, both of which provide diplomatic and bureaucratic expertise, advice, resources, and real-time assistance for military commanders. The POLAD program is being expanded to ensure that strong support is available to military forces at all levels—especially in the field or afloat where it counts most. State now provides POLADs to all combatant commands, service chiefs, many Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs), and operational military units on the front lines of the war on terrorism.

As a former POLAD to CJTF-76 in Afghanistan, I'm pleased to say that within Afghanistan alone, State officers are currently deployed to the International Security Assistance Force headquarters, the task force, the regional commands, and the provincial reconstruction teams—a testament to the State Department's partnership with the military at all levels of command and on the front lines.

Surge POLADs

In 2006, in response to numerous requests from military commanders in the field for increased POLAD support, I introduced the "Surge POLAD" program, which deploys State advisors and subject matter experts to military units in the field for contingency operations, exercises, experi-

ments, and war games. Sharing State's vision of the threats and the tools required to meet them, the Navy has been one of the strongest advocates of these POLAD capabilities.

Surge POLADs deployed with the Navy afloat in Southeast Asia in the wake of the 2005 Southeast Asian tsunami, afloat off the Lebanese coast during last year's 33-day crisis, afloat for a Pacific Fleet exercise at the request of Commander Pacific Fleet Admiral Gary Roughead, to plan security cooperation strategies in Africa with Naval Forces Europe at the request of their commander, Admiral Henry Ulrich, and most recently afloat off Central America for a Southern Command security cooperation deployment at the request of Commander Southern Command Admiral James Stavridis.

State has also recently introduced the Virtual POLAD, a tremendous example of interagency collaboration. The Virtual POLAD is a designated Foreign Service Officer remotely available any time of day or night and who trains with and visits the command regularly. This person is also ready to deploy when requested in support of exercises and contingencies. Second Fleet's Virtual POLAD embarked and deployed during Joint Task Force Exercise-06 and continues to provide real-time support to Vice Admiral Evan Chanik Jr., Commander Second Fleet. Building on these numerous successes, State is in the process of

formally creating a State Department POLAD Reserve Corps that will be readily available to provide surge support for future opportunities or contingencies.

And From the Admirals' Nests

As important as the shoulder-to-shoulder cooperation in the field is the cooperation in Washington, D.C., where resourcing, planning, and training decisions are made. And the results of our recent cooperation efforts are groundbreaking.

The Navy found a welcoming partner in State for such initiatives and strategies as the Global Maritime Partnership (also known as the 1,000-ship navy), Global Fleet Stations, Operation Enduring Friendship, the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Security Initiative, and the Maritime Safety and Security Information System. All of these are



AT THE FRONT Deputy Assistant Secretary Coulter (left) served as a Foreign Policy Advisor (POLAD) in Afghanistan. Here, he stands with Colonel Frank McKenzie of the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit near the Taliban stronghold of Uruzgan.

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designed to increase partner capabilities while tackling transnational crime, weapons of mass destruction proliferation, and terrorism.

State has participated actively in planning, prioritizing, and implementing these and other key Navy initiatives. As an example, State recently surged a POLAD afloat off Central America in direct support of the first prototype deployment of the Global Fleet Station (GFS) *Swift* (HSV-2). This was a vision of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs nominee and current Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Mullen and SOUTHCOM Commander Admiral Stavridis.

State supported the *Swift's* maiden voyage by providing connections to key department personnel at home and at U.S. embassies abroad, on-board POLAD support, and co-developed the public diplomacy strategy for the deployment. The department has similar plans for the next three iterations of the GFS: the USNS *Comfort* (T-AH-20) in the Caribbean, the USS *Peleliu* (LHA-5) in the Pacific, and a planned NAVEUR station in the Gulf of Guinea.

Similarly, State has found a welcoming partner in the Navy for initiatives. Of note, under Rear Admiral Jacob Shuford's leadership, the Naval War College has been supporting the State Department's Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). By planning and running several multilateral war games with 20 international participant nations and supporting the High Level Political Meeting in Warsaw, Poland, Admiral Shuford has advanced PSI and helped galvanize international support.

State has embraced international outreach on behalf of these forward-leaning initiatives, and has further sought to align its security cooperation resources and efforts with the Navy's theater security programs and maritime security partnerships. Also of note, State has been intimately involved in the development of the Navy's new strategy documents, including the highly anticipated maritime strategy.

Focus on Training

Both Navy and State are focused on training the next generation of naval and foreign service national security professionals, promoting exchanges between service

schools, war colleges, and the Foreign Service Institute. We are also providing joint pre-deployment training so officers headed to the field can know and understand one another before they arrive in theater. And they are increasing opportunities for officers at junior levels to gain exposure to other agencies earlier in their careers.

In addition, State has offered to support the revitalization of the Navy's Foreign Area Officer program. Moreover, both organizations are cultivating our expertise and



STATE ON SHIPS Foreign Affairs Specialist Jane Bocklage boards the USS *Tortuga* (LSD-46). While the State and Navy departments have been partners for a long time, the relationship could not be more important than it is today.

resources abroad to build complementary capabilities in our partner nations. Working in tandem has an exponential effect that far exceeds the benefits achieved working separately.

State also works closely with the Navy globally to develop and maintain international maritime coalitions.

In close coordination with State, Vice Admiral Patrick Walsh and now Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command, Vice Admiral Kevin Cosgriff, have assembled an impressive series of coalitions from the Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, and North Arabian Sea (currently led by a French admiral) to the North Arabian Gulf (currently led by a British commodore in close partnership with the Iraqi and Kuwaiti navies).

These international coalitions set the conditions for security and stability in the maritime environment, as well as complement the counter-terrorism and security efforts of regional nations. Admiral Cosgriff has forged both bilateral relationships and multilateral coalitions of rare and disparate parties, with different national security strategies and in some cases historic animosities. Traditional allies like Great Britain and Australia are operating in the

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and management in an array of governmental sectors and as trained in language, culture, history, developmental economics, and anthropology as they are in combat tactics.

Tomorrow's foreign service officers must be as comfortable in Kevlar at a Shura meeting as they are in a suit at an embassy function. Similarly, Navy lieutenants (among which I count myself) must necessarily understand the languages and cultures of the international coalition members serving with them in a combined joint task force. Marine sergeants must understand how to work public diplomacy and reconstruction projects with embassies during humanitarian operations. There is a nexus between the objectives and the means of both the political officer and the naval professional.

Harnessing the power of the interagency and international community has never been easy. But the international community shares an interest in defeating terrorism and the destabilizing effects of piracy, transnational crime, and ungoverned areas. So we find ourselves in a moment of great opportunity, when we must break down interagency and international stove pipes that impede our collective abilities to organize and operate quickly and seamlessly. We

must be more agile and resourceful than our adversaries. We must integrate, through technology and deliberate cooperation, our different enterprises in our current activities and our future capabilities.

The leaders of the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Department of State are committed to working to align our strategies and policies, among ourselves and our international partners, to achieve our common goals. From the birth of our nation, U.S. Sailors and diplomats have deployed overseas to protect our liberty. Under the current leadership, through unity of effort, focus, and creativity, we are moving to meet the challenges of today's world on the front lines. ❄️



THE BIG SURGE Sarah Wolf (center), served as a surge POLAD with the crew of the high-speed vehicle *Swift* during the 2007 Global Fleet Station deployment to the Western Hemisphere, a vision of Admirals Mullen and Stavridis.

Northern Arabian Gulf, and France, Germany, and Italy are working together in the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea. New coalitions involve countries like Bahrain, Kenya, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. This is the real-life materialization of Admiral Mullen's vision for the 1,000-ship navy.

These programs are examples of what Secretary Rice refers to as transformational diplomacy, which requires taking on new tasks, breaking old habits, working with others who are also trying to transform themselves and their environments, and being partners with those around the world who share our values and want to improve their lives. If we are to succeed, we must transform faster than our adversaries, even as we plan strategically for threats and opportunities of the future.

A New Kind of Professional

When my grandfather served in the Navy, his training was meant to prepare him to decisively defeat a similarly

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