

ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE

by

Luigi Caligaris
Maurizio Cremasco

PAPER IAI/02/85

ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE

by

Luigi Caligaris
Maurizio Cremasco

PAPER IAI/02/85

FOREWARD

This research was carried out thanks to funds made available by the Office for Cultural Relations and Liaison with Universities of NATO.

The research was encouraged by the IAI in the framework of the thoughts and discussions that have come to light on the subject in our country during the last few years. It in no way expresses the viewpoint either of the Institute or of the Office for Cultural Relations and Liaison with Universities of NATO. The opinions expressed are solely those of the authors.

Rome, 28 February 1985

INDEX

PART ONE: <u>ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE:</u> <u>GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT</u> by Maurizio Cremasco	Page 1
ITALY'S GEOSTRATEGIC POSITION	1
STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA	2
OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE	6
a. <u>US Policy</u>	6
b. <u>Soviet Policy</u>	7
c. <u>NATO Policy</u>	8
d. <u>Political-Military Developments in the Riparian Countries</u>	10
e. <u>Application of the Law of the Sea</u>	11
SIGNIFICANCE FOR ITALY. POLITICAL-MILITARY FRAMEWORK FOR AN ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE	11
a. <u>General framework</u>	12
b. <u>The European Framework</u>	13
c. <u>The National Framework</u>	15
d. <u>The NATO Framework</u>	16
AN ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE. MAIN FEATURES OF ITS STRUCTURE	17
a. <u>Basic considerations.</u>	17

DO NOT QUOTE WITHOUT PERMISSION

PAPER IAI/02/85

PART TWO: <u>POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR AN ITALIAN RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE</u> by Luigi Caligaris	21
a. <u>In a strictly national context</u>	21
b. <u>In a NATO context</u>	21
c. <u>In a national, regional, multinational or UN context</u>	22
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS	22
POLITICAL MANAGEMENT. REQUIREMENTS	24
MANAGEMENT ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL. SOLUTIONS	26
MILITARY COMMAND AND CONTROL	28
OPERATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS	29
OPERATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL. THE SITUATION IN ITALY	32
SELECTION AND TRAINING OF TRI-SERVICE PERSONNEL	35
OPERATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL. ONE POSSIBLE SOLUTION	37
COMMAND CONSIDERATIONS FOR MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONS	40
RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE STRUCTURE. GROUND FORCES	41
RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE STRUCTURE. NAVAL AND AIR FORCES	44
DRAFTEES OR VOLUNTEERS? GROUND FORCES	46
NAVAL AND AIR FORCES	49
OPERATIONAL READINESS	50
JOINT TRAINING EFFORTS	52
WEAPONS AND MATERIEL. GROUND FORCES	54
WEAPONS AND MATERIEL. NAVAL FORCES	56
WEAPONS AND MATERIEL. AIR FORCES	57
LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS	59
CONCLUSIONS	62
FOOTNOTES	68

PART ONE

ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE: GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

by Maurizio Cremasco

ITALY'S GEOSTRATEGIC POSITION

Italy occupies a unique geographical position in the Mediterranean region. Its long coastline, its protruding position in the central Mediterranean (accentuated by Sicily and the islands of Pantelleria and Lampedusa), its proximity to the Balkans and the North-African littoral, the narrowness of the Channel of Sicily, and the privileged location of Sardinia are characteristics which combine to give Italy a special strategical value. Some of these characteristics (e.g. extensive coastlines) are considered negative in that they could complicate the country's defense problems. Others are of a definitely positive nature: whether as factors favoring Italy's political and military role in the Mediterranean or as factors which highlight the importance of Italy's role in the security of NATO's southern theater.

Although the country's extensive coastlines do make surveillance more difficult, they offer at the same time a large number of gulfs, bays and ports suitable for military use. Furthermore, in view of the improbability of a sea-based invasion of the peninsula by means of a large-scale amphibious operation (1), the long coastline ultimately makes Italy particularly vulnerable only to possible commando operations, which can be countered by strengthening the active and passive defense of those military installations which, because of their geographic location and importance, might constitute enticing targets, and by setting up a rapid intervention force. As concerns the possibility of airborne operations, it should be kept in mind that these require more than just local air superiority, that they are normally used as support operations for the ground forces' main military advance, which they are meant to join, and that they must be able to be resupplied by land or sea (2).

The southern projection of the peninsula and its islands, including the smaller ones, allows greater air and sea coverage of the central Mediterranean, as well as more extensive radar control (even at low altitudes) of the airspace of NATO's southern front; a radar control complementary to that of the AWACS aircraft operating in Mediterranean airspace, utilizing the Trapani Birgi airstrip as a staying base.

The relative width of the Channel of Sicily, a natural division between the Mediterranean's central and western basins, allows for easy monitoring and control, and filtering, if necessary, of maritime traffic in case of crisis or conflict.

Sardinia's privileged location and the presence of large air and maritime military infrastructures on the island allow for air and sea

coverage of the western Mediterranean and increase the possibility of monitoring the sea lane between the two basins.

Hence, on the geostrategic level, Italy cannot, even if it wanted to, avoid the responsibility of a "Mediterranean" role. This responsibility was explicitly assumed in 1949 upon joining the Atlantic Alliance and by virtue of the related commitments for defending NATO's southern theater.

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

The Mediterranean area has become a determining factor in the equation for European security only in relatively recent times.

At the outset of the 1960's, the area merely represented NATO's "Southern Flank". On land, Yugoslavia's withdrawal from the Soviet sphere of influence freed Italy's northeastern border from any direct Warsaw Pact threat. The Soviet forces that were deployed in the three Military Districts of Odessa, North Caucasus and Trans-Caucasus along the Turkish border, with their reduced manning and low levels of armaments and equipment, could only pose a real threat after receiving sufficient reinforcements.

At sea, the US Sixth Fleet, with its nuclear armed aircraft capable of reaching Soviet territory, was undisputed. The United States was present in Libya (Wheeler airbase, since renamed Okba Ben Nafie, which served as the central base for gunnery training of the USAF pilots) and in Morocco where it operated a communications center in Kenitra, (3).

Algeria was still under French rule and France was still a member of the Atlantic Alliance's military organization. The Jupiter medium-range nuclear missiles were operational in Italy and Turkey. The Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), composed of Great Britain, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey, formed the east link of the "containment" chain.

The second half of the 1960's was the initial period of transformation in the Mediterranean strategic picture. This transformation can be broken down into three consecutive phases.

First, there was Israel's lightning 1967 victory in the Six Day War which led to Moscow's direct involvement in the Middle East issue and to the presence of Soviet ground forces in the Mediterranean area. The USSR organized and managed, using Soviet personnel (in 1970, the Soviet military contingent in Egypt reached its highest level at over 18 thousand men) (4), an air defense system on Egyptian territory that included radar posts, missile bases and MIG-25 interceptor aircraft. Four airports became exclusively Soviet airbases, and Egyptian Badger Tu-16 aircraft, with Soviet crews on board, were performing regular reconnaissance flights over the Mediterranean to monitor the movements of NATO's naval forces.

Two years later, Colonel Qadhafi took over in Libya, thereby completing the decolonization process that also included Great Britain's withdrawal from "East of the Suez" and Algeria's independence.

The Soviet Union also increased its presence at sea by quantitatively and qualitatively stepping up its naval force - deployments in the Mediterranean and by forming a fleet capable of realistically contending with US supremacy, thereby radically affecting the range of American political-military options theretofore available in the event of a crisis (5).

Politically, the US role in the Middle East was consolidated and strengthened by its clear choice of sides, just as the Soviet role was aligned and solidified in support of the "progressive" Arab regimes.

It was thus that a situation of potential involvement and confrontation arose between the two superpowers with regard to possible crises in the Mediterranean area, outside the traditional scenarios of a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict; and this situation, in turn, was bound to have obvious repercussions on East-West relations and, consequently, on the European security system.

The second phase of the transformation process of the Mediterranean strategic picture took place in 1973, due once again to an Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab nations' use of oil as a means of political blackmail, coupled with crude price increases and the possibility of a total embargo, which would have brought Western economies to their knees, added a new dimension to the picture. A further consideration - the vital need for an uninterrupted source of energy supply - assumed a fundamental role in the analysis of force relationships and in the formulation of crisis scenarios which are the basis for military planning as well as in the context of the European countries' foreign policies vis-a-vis Arab oil-producing countries.

This new element had no direct connection to NATO's or the Warsaw Pact's conventional and nuclear force levels, nor could it be dealt with by purely military measures. Furthermore, it intensified and complicated the typical Mediterranean characteristic intertwining of the global and regional dimensions and of superpower politics and foreign policies of the regional powers, which frequently play upon Washington-Moscow confrontation to achieve their own national objectives.

Lastly, due to its varying degrees of negative influence on the US and European economies and due to differing assessments of the role and "threat" of the Soviet Union, it also triggered differences of opinion and dissent in European-American relations, so that North-South relations had marked repercussions on West-West relations and, consequently on East-West relations as well.

The third phase of the transformation occurred at the close of the 1970's with the Islamic revolution in Iran, representing the loss of the Northern Tier's main bastion, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iran-Iraq conflict.

Of these, the USSR's military operation was the most worrying. It was viewed as further proof of the Soviet's expansionist thrust, following in the path of the events in South Yemen, Angola and the Horn of Africa aimed at filling the power vacuum left by Great Britain by means of encircling the Mediterranean from the south, and at creating the basis for political control and for further utilization of military force in a region of particular strategic importance, such as Southwest Asia. This expansion gave even more cause for concern in that it was carried out, no longer by the "Cuban Legion", but by regular forces of the Red Army, operating for the first time since the end of the Second World War outside the boundaries of the Warsaw Pact.

From a military point of view, the possibility of having armed forces stationed approximately 700 km (435 miles) from the Gulf of Oman and the possibility of using a series of airports within Afghan territory (some of which were specially constructed for this purpose), thereby extending air coverage of the Gulf region and of the Arabic Sea, represented for the Soviets an improvement in their own strategic position and also created new opportunities for military and political action.

With the invasion of Afghanistan and the show of its increased capacity of force projection, the Soviet Union transformed the Persian Gulf into a new and important element for European security.

The "oil" factor, essential to Western economies and, hence, to Western security, was removed from the North-South equation - as a variable of the oil-producing countries' political conduct in response to European conduct considered adverse to Arab interests - and was inserted in the East-West equation as a variable for possible Soviet action aimed at obtaining direct or indirect control over sources of supply. This perception of "threat" was and continues to be nurtured by those factors of instability which appear more credible than a new Soviet military intervention: the uncertainty of Iran's future, despite the settling-in of the regime; the repercussions on the region of the Iran-Iraq conflict, with no negotiable solution in sight; internal political problems in those conservative Gulf nations that are most vulnerable to revolutionary processes "a la Khomeini". These factors, due precisely to their susceptibility as catalysts for possible foreign intervention, tend to align regional problems along an East-West axis and make attempts at crisis management, even along a North-South or South-South axis more difficult.

As a result of the completion of these three phases, the Mediterranean has become much more important for European security than in the past, and to an extent that exceeds its natural geographical boundaries.

Security-wise, the Mediterranean area today is more than just an area of possible confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact - it is the stepping stone to a much broader area that encompasses the entire Middle East as well as the region of the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and North Africa, with the Sahel and the Sahara hinterlands. It

also represents the link between Northern and Central Europe and these regions, all of which are outside NATO's area of responsibility.

The gravitation of the two superpowers' military forces has also changed, showing a reduction or evening out of the traditional levels of presence. The United States cut the Sixth Fleet's carrier task group in the Mediterranean from two to one in order to guarantee greater and more continuous naval presence in the Indian Ocean. (This task group was rapidly restored to two during the crisis in Lebanon.) The Soviet Union has given the impression that it wants to reconsider its policy on deployment of the Fifth Naval Squadron in the Mediterranean: Soviet naval strength has, in fact, remained basically stable from 1977 through the present at an annual average of 16,500-17,000 ship/days. It has, however, increased naval operations in other areas, namely in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

Thus, the scenarios for possible East-West conflict in the Mediterranean seem, today more so than before, to be likely and credible only when considered in terms of fall-out from a crisis that does not initially involve NATO or the Warsaw Pact.

Furthermore, within this geostrategic transformation of the Mediterranean area, two other elements have also come into play which, on the one hand, have particular bearing on the military aspects of a conflict in the area, and, on the other, affect the "national" dimension of security requirements for all littoral countries.

The first concerns technological developments in weapons systems: oceanic reconnaissance satellites; AWACS and Hawkeye E-2C radar aircraft (6); anti-ship missiles (air-to-surface and sea-to-sea or land-to-sea), which are extremely accurate and difficult to neutralize; and fighter-bombers that have a broader radius of action, greater ordnance load and sophisticated navigation and firing systems. These have led to a "shrinking" of the Mediterranean area in terms of operational use of forces. Moreover, these systems tend to increase the vulnerability of surface naval forces (a tendency proven by the results of aeronaval combat in the Falkland Islands conflict) and the role of land-based air forces (7).

These advances will affect the military operations of any conflict in the Mediterranean, including those of a local or "national" nature.

In fact, and this is the second element mentioned above, almost all of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea have quantitatively and qualitatively increased their air and naval forces over the course of the last decade.

At present, these countries possess combat aircraft of the most recent generations (MIG-23 and MIG-25, F-15 and F-16, SU-20 and SU-22, Mirage F-1, in addition to the still effective F-4, F-104 and Mirage III and V) as well as naval forces equipped with submarines,

frigates and fast missile units, the latter representing one of the most significant developments, in terms of threat, for combat stands and commercial maritime traffic.

This increased military capacity implies possession of the instruments that would enable those countries, in the event of a crisis, to choose the path of force rather than that of negotiation. It also implies a broader preemptive strike capacity (as occurred in the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1967 with the destruction of Egypt's air force on the ground) and, as a result, helps spread the illusion that war can be used as a means of resolving political controversies at a relatively low cost. It also implies, considering the quantity and quality of weapons that could be used, higher levels of violence and destruction - the war between Iran and Iraq is a good example of this. Lastly, it also implies greater risks for those countries that might want to use the presence of their own military forces, (in particular naval forces) in a crisis area as a means of pressure and intimidation to "cool off" the situation or in an attempt to force a political solution.

This phenomenon, an evident sign of continued militarization of the Mediterranean area, is cause for growing concern as the numerous political problems that spur it become increasingly more difficult to solve. But it could become even more troublesome in the future when technological advances will make exploration and mining activities on the sea floor more worthwhile economically, and when full application of the Law of the Sea, could lead to controversies and conflicts, as appears plausible given the Mediterranean's geography.

OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

a. US Policy

Given the United States' involvement in the Middle East, the new strategic relevance of the Persian Gulf, the ongoing conflict between Iraq and Iran and the numerous situations of latent crisis (from the Balkans to the Maghreb), it is logical to presume that, for the foreseeable future, Washington will continue to consider the Mediterranean a privileged area as regards diplomatic initiative, political intervention and military presence.

Nevertheless, the US government will tend, as in the past, to consider the area first as a sector of prime interest within the framework of global competition with the Soviet Union and, secondly, as NATO's southern front.

Such a scale of priorities seems logical enough: the possible crisis areas in the Mediterranean, hence, areas of possible involvement and confrontation between the two superpowers, are all located outside NATO's area of responsibility.

It is precisely these areas that are most exposed to Soviet political-military penetration, owing their higher level of

vulnerability to factors of internal instability that are liable to be directly or indirectly manipulated or exploited.

It would then not be unreasonable to assume that US policy in the Mediterranean will continue along its traditional lines of the past: diplomatic action directed towards solving the Middle East issue and, within this area, a privileged relationship with Israel; preservation and strengthening of political, economic and military ties with pro-West countries in the region (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia); acting as a buffer against Soviet attempts at political-military penetration; an extremely firm stance to safeguard freedom of navigation beyond internationally recognized territorial waters; the commitment of the Sixth Fleet naval forces to NATO contingencies and military plans; and the search for agreements with allied countries as well as with North African or Middle East Arab nations for the utilization of those infrastructures required by the Rapid Intervention Force.

It is also possible that at some point in the future, and particularly in the context of US policy outside the Atlantic Alliance, differences might arise between Washington and European nations, especially if the United States continues to view every regional crisis in terms of an East-West confrontation or if it reacts unilaterally without proper coordination with its allies.

b. Soviet Policy

As mentioned above, the Soviet Union has become an important factor, in military terms as well, in the Mediterranean's political and strategic equation. In the future, Moscow will continue to seek all means and take advantage of every occasion possible to present itself as an essential partner for a solution to the Middle East problem, and to expand its own political influence in the region, strengthening and consolidating the ties that already unite it to various countries (Syria, Libya and Algeria).

This policy, as recent history has shown, is not without its risks and failures, but it nevertheless must be continued inasmuch as it represents the unrenounceable mark of its status as a superpower. The US also faces similar risks, but with the difference, to its advantage, that it can rely on relationships that are greatly diversified and do not depend, as is the case with the Soviets, basically on military aid alone.

Aside from the USSR's historical interest in the Mediterranean and the need to counterbalance US military presence, Soviet naval deployment is also a logical outgrowth of a foreign policy that, taking on global dimensions in the Mediterranean region as well, needed the appropriate military instruments to enable it to be put into practice.

It is not surprising that the Soviet Union should try to present itself as the only real "Mediterranean" superpower, and, based on

this premise, claim exclusive rights and responsibilities to military presence and a political role. Nor should it be surprising that Moscow should try - precisely by means of closer relations with North-African nations - to provide its naval forces in the Mediterranean with the technical-logistical support that they currently lack or possess in such a low degree as to be insufficient for the operational requirements in case of crisis or conflict. In either event, it is not difficult to imagine the significance for the USSR of having ports and airports along the North-African coast or the possibility, for example, of being able to use weapons systems (combat aircraft, Foxtrot class submarines, ships armed with surface-to-surface missiles) that have been sold in such large quantities to Libya over the past few years.

It should be noted, however, that like the United States, the Soviet Union has shifted its attention towards the Gulf region and towards the Indian Ocean (due in part to the greater proximity of these areas since the invasion of Afghanistan); it has also scaled down its priorities in the Mediterranean area, at least in terms of military presence. Nonetheless, the Middle East continues to serve as a catalyst for Soviet policy, as it was demonstrated by its open support of Syria and the deployment of thousands of military "advisers" and SA-5 missiles, in May 1983.

The Mediterranean will, in any event, continue to represent an area of prime interest for Moscow (more so perhaps than for the United States), even if the Middle East problem were finally resolved. In fact, the strategic significance of the Turkish Straits as the only sea-passage to the Mediterranean will not disappear. The prominence of this interest will not depend, nor has it ever depended, on the course of US policy, except to a relative extent, i.e. as a qualifier or stimulus, but not as a sole determining factor for Soviet military and political stances.

c. NATO Policy

NATO will probably continue to consider its southern front as a whole less important than its north-central front, and it will probably focus its attention more on internal factors (unstable relations between Greece and Turkey) and on external factors (i.e. those liable to lead to crisis situations in regions outside the Alliance's area of responsibility), than on elements of confrontation with the Warsaw Pact.

There is the perception that the real security problems of tomorrow, even in terms of "threat", will be centered elsewhere: either in North and Central Europe, which will continue to be a likely scenario for a surprise attack (8), or in those areas within as well as outside the Mediterranean region that are not covered by the Treaty and for which the Alliance has not institutionally any collective instruments for defending its interests (9).

In reality, it is unlikely that a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict could originate in the Mediterranean as the result of a confrontation between US and Soviet aeronaval forces in a strictly bilateral crisis, or as the result of a move by Soviet forces to control the Turkish straits within a scenario totally unrelated to a state of global confrontation between the two blocks, being in turn the culmination of a progressive process of deterioration in East-West relations in Europe (10). In other words, a conflict between the two alliances on the southern front is a plausible possibility only as the extension of military operations begun in other areas of Europe or as fall-out from a crisis that is initially external to the two alliances, such as, for example, a spiralling of the Middle East conflict.

The future outlook for NATO's concerns seems instead to be connected to the following points: the nuclear issue (further deployment of Euromissiles if the new round of talks in Geneva does not lead to a satisfactory agreement, and the strategic impact of the Soviets' decision to deploy new missiles in Europe); the problem of how and to what extent conventional forces should be strengthened according to the "Rogers plan"; the problem of a possible redefinition of NATO strategy, although it seems unlikely that there would be any significant change in the current doctrine of flexible and graduated response; and the matter of what policy to adopt in the event of an out-of-area crisis.

However, if the foregoing is true for NATO as an alliance, it is not so for the individual European members of NATO, in particular for the Mediterranean countries or those countries with a direct interest in the region's stability. These nations are tending to consider the region less and less in the limited sense of simply a potential front in case of East-West conflict, within which measures should be taken to counterbalance the Warsaw Pact's growing military capabilities, and more and more as a much broader area than that outlined in the North Atlantic Treaty; an area wherein they can act autonomously or in cooperation with other nations to defend their own interests or to "cool off" or stabilize local crises that could eventually affect larger areas or even East-West relations.

There has been an increasing awareness that the area's critical situations quite often require military forces capable of performing two almost contradictory roles: that of peace-maker or peace-keeper (patrolling specific zones of the territory, interposition between contending parties, setting up of a buffer zone, supervising and enforcing the observance of the terms of a truce, etc.) and, at the same time, a combat role, if necessary. This means not only defending themselves in a suitable military and political manner from possible attacks, but also taking offensive measures, such as protection and rescue of citizens, forceful occupation of designated sectors, preventive measures aimed at checking the materialization of specific threats, etc. These roles can only be carried out by special forces created for these purposes, specially trained, with high mobility, firing capacity and endurance, i.e. rapid intervention forces.

d. Political-Military Developments in the Riparian Countries

In the course of the past years, the policies of non-European nations bordering on the Mediterranean have drifted in the general direction of strengthening relations with one or the other of the two superpowers. This is the case with Syria, which signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with Moscow, has received considerable quantities of Soviet weapons, has participated in joint amphibious manoeuvres with Soviet forces, has consented to the presence of several thousand Soviet soldiers on its territory along with the deployment of SA-5 surface-to-air missiles. It is also the case with Libya, which has continued to arm itself with weapons, to a great extent of Soviet origin, in numbers and quality that greatly exceed its defense needs and exceed even the capabilities of its armed forces to use them; and which appears to be prepared to formalize these ties with Moscow by means of a treaty similar to the one drawn up by Syria.

The same has happened with Egypt, Marocco and Tunisia vis-a-vis the United States, not to mention Israel, which has strengthened its privileged relationship with Washington, especially on the military level.

Nevertheless, these nations, and this holds true in general for all third-world countries, no longer appear to be willing to acritically follow the foreign policy of their superpower "friend". The "client" relationship - a term that obviously does not do justice to the complexity of such a relationship - no longer seems to work with the same automatism, or frequency, as before. These countries have since become aware of their power to influence the decisions and choices of the superpowers. Overlaps of policy lines or willingness to back Soviet or US initiatives only occur when their national interests coincide with those pursued by Moscow or Washington. They have also become aware of their ability, given the right circumstances, to use leverage in relations with their superpower friend and even to play on the international rivalry between the US and the USSR in order to achieve their own regional goals.

For this reason, Syria cannot be defined as a Soviet satellite, nor can Libya. As a matter of fact, it is not at all sure that in the event of an East-West confrontation in the Mediterranean Libya would be willing to offer the use of its air or naval bases or open its weapons arsenals to the USSR.

The quantitative and qualitative build-up of air and naval forces in nations bordering on the Mediterranean was indicated above as a further factor of change in the Mediterranean strategic situation. This factor has a dual bearing: first, on the level of reducing the scope of applicability of what has come to be called "gunboat diplomacy", i.e. imposing foreign policy by using, inter alia, instruments of air-naval power as means of persuasion or coercion. Furthermore, the parallel, progressive build-up of ground forces has posed obstacles to any idea of increasing the pressure

exerted by air-naval presence by adding the possibility of an intervention by amphibian forces, even in cases of objectives that are limited in time and space. This does not mean that such diplomatic action is no longer possible, but it certainly has become more complex, less effective and more risky. The fact that today almost all Mediterranean nations possess air and naval forces capable of countering gunboat diplomacy actions by other powers is proof of a de facto redistribution of military and political power in the Mediterranean that should not be overlooked or underestimated.

This factor also has an influence on relationships between the non-European countries in the Mediterranean area. The increase in their military strength - especially the acquisition of technologically advanced air forces which enhances the pre-emptive attack capability - makes possible controversies potentially more dangerous in that it reinforces the view that they can be solved by using military force.

e. Application of the Law of the Sea

The possibility that full application of the Law of the Sea could lead to controversies or conflicts in the Mediterranean was also mentioned above. One needs only to consider the overlap areas created by the intersection of different exclusive economic interest zones (EEZ) or the impact that an extension of the territorial waters of Greece's islands in the Aegean from 6 to 12 miles would have on Turkey.

A further issue is that of sea floor exploration and mining. Fifteen percent of the Mediterranean Sea is less than 200 meters (650 feet) deep; seven percent is between 200 and 1000 meters (650 to 3300 feet) deep; and the remaining 78% is over 1000 meters (3300 feet) deep. Current technology permits mining activities up to a depth of 1000 meters. This means that, at least in the short run, oil exploration activities will be concentrated in areas of the Mediterranean Sea along the Medina Bank, the Gulf of Gabes and in the Aegean, i.e. zones where controversies have already erupted between countries of the region (Malta and Libya, Tunisia and Libya, Greece and Turkey).

With the advance of sea floor mining technology to include depths beyond 1000 meters, it is likely that other zones, possibly located within overlap areas of the EEZ's of two different countries, will become economically attractive and, hence, in the absence of an agreement, elements for controversy.

SIGNIFICANCE FOR ITALY. POLITICAL-MILITARY FRAMEWORK FOR AN ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE

Given its geographical position, Italy obviously cannot remain indifferent to events in the Mediterranean region. Up until the mid-1970's, the strategic transformation of this area received little attention within the country and had no effect on the structures and

development of the nation's military instrument. In recent years, however, there has been a noticeable change in Italy's foreign policy with the surfacing of a dynamic willingness to assume a more decisive role in the Mediterranean, along with the related responsibilities. In the military field, there has been an implicit acknowledgment that the northeastern front can no longer be considered the only determining factor of Italy's security equation. However, the awareness of the Mediterranean's newly-arisen significance and, more importantly, the realization of the need for a change in the structure of Italy's military instrument in order to enable it to deal with new requirements, have taken the form of concrete operative decisions to a limited extent only.

In its foreign policy, Italy has signed a treaty with Malta whereby it agrees to safeguard the Island's neutrality; it has participated in the Sinai peace-keeping force (three minesweepers to guarantee freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Aqaba); and it has participated with a contingent of over 2000 soldiers in the multinational force in Lebanon. In its military policy, Italy has also taken a few measures, such as the build-up of airports in Sicily and the radar net towards the south to increase coverage, especially at low altitudes, and the transfer of two engineering battalions to the island, etc., but there has been no effort to rethink and restructure the military instrument so as to enable the armed forces to confront the foreseeable tasks for the 1980's.

The creation of a Rapid Intervention Force (RIF) could serve as the catalyst for this rethinking as well as a step towards a different way of conceiving the armed forces' role in the context of current and future security problems for Italy, and, as a result, as a step towards different plans for the development of the military instrument in terms of structures and weapons procurement.

a. General framework

The general framework to rationalize and justify the formation of an Italian RIF is the current international situation and its most likely development trends, in addition to the individual features of the political and economic elements of the regional picture.

Nuclear weapons have radically changed the concept of war as the continuation of politics "by other means", depriving it of all meaning to the extent that war has come to represent the prospect of mutual suicide, at least as concerns relations between nuclear states and, in particular, between the two superpowers.

Nonetheless, this has not prevented the United States and the Soviet Union from continuing their political and ideological competition, beyond a mutual acknowledgment and basic respect of their zones of influence and those interests identified and understood as "vital".

Now that strategic parity has been attained, and the situation in Europe is frozen - notwithstanding the doubts raised by the

renewed medium and intermediate-range nuclear arms race and by the superiority of the Soviets' conventional forces - the competition has moved, in a more obvious manner than in the past, to the peripheral areas of the two blocks. This is due also to a more active Soviet foreign policy and its more marked tendency to expand its influence, even by the use of military force.

This has occurred and continues to occur in the ambiguous and complex framework of local crises, today very different from before. This could be due to a series of factors: the fact that their handling and control by the two superpowers has become more difficult; the fact that destruction levels of possible conflicts have become higher due to the quantity and level of sophistication of weapons that would be used; the renewed role of ideologies and the renaissance of an integralist movement in the Islamic world; or the fact that crisis situations are often triggered by internal political factors and are complicated by the widespread use of terrorist methods.

As mentioned above, the Mediterranean and the neighboring areas that are strategically linked to it are the scene of international relations and political-military situations characterized by elements of tension and instability, that could lead - as occurred in the case of Iran and Iraq or Lebanon - to a war.

b. The European Framework

Faced with the possibility of extra-NATO crises that might indirectly (in military terms) or directly (in economic and political terms) affect their security, the nations of Europe have taken on a rather ambiguous, and to a certain extent contradictory, stance, giving the impression that they are relying chiefly on the willingness of the Americans to intervene, militarily if necessary, in order to halt developments contrary to Western interests.

The suggested "division of labor" between the United States and Europe has been implemented only to a very modest and theoretical degree, as a matter of fact, exclusively in the framework of those agreements that would allow the use of European infrastructures for support requirements of the United States' RDF, there being, however, no guarantee of automatic availability. More importantly, no contingency plan have been drawn up to establish how the Alliance as a whole (or the individual European nations) react in a crisis situation, for example, in the Persian Gulf.

European countries (some more than others) have shown, however, that they are not totally insensitive to occurrences in areas of particular strategic importance, or to the surfacing of new and unfavorable force relationships, or to appeals from previous colonial ties, or to the defense of stability, although at times their reaction does not appear to support US decisions and underlines the Alliance's low degree of cohesion, as was the case with their refusal to participate in a multinational naval force intended to keep the Strait of Hormuz open (11).

As a matter of fact, some European nations have shown, - even though sometimes avoiding their policies being seen as a carbon copy of US policy - that they are capable of assuming autonomous or coordinated military and political responsibilities within a multinational framework.

Italy, as was pointed out above, has done its part, and the manner in which it conducted "Operation Lebanon" has shown a maturity of political conduct that was different from past international initiatives; it has also shown an equally mature ability to manage its military presence.

The crisis in Lebanon, however, has once again underlined to the fact that the future of security in the Mediterranean area cannot be faced and confronted solely on the basis of traditional NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation scenarios, but rather considering the more likely North-South and South-South crisis scenarios, where Europe would be called upon to participate (or forced to intervene) with forces and tasks quite different and more complex than those planned on for an East-West conflict. This emphasis has been growing over the course of the last ten years and has led France (12), the second European country after Great Britain, to create its own "Force d'Action Rapide".

This point deserves special attention, particularly in view of the fact that cases could arise wherein there would be the political willingness for coordinated intervention by European countries, even if the European Community, in the medium-run, were not able to achieve the much-desired and more solid forms of integration in the areas of foreign policy and security.

If, on the other hand, this integration process were to become a real prospect, then an Italian military instrument able to constitute a valid element of the overall European military instrument and that to join up operationally (on the level of rapid intervention forces) with other nations' forces, would be part of a logical and legitimate policy of taking on the new security responsibilities arising for all members from European unity.

In other words, the creation of an Italian RIF would have its "European" rationalization and justification as an instrument to use, within the context of a coordinated military policy of the Community, for the management of crises in the Mediterranean area touching European interests.

As mentioned before, the Mediterranean region poses situations that are potentially more suited to the use of intervention forces as a means of "crisis cooling" or peace-keeping. Nonetheless, France is currently the only European nation in the Mediterranean area that has a quasi-operational Rapid Intervention Force.

An Italian RIF could represent, then, a concrete and valuable part of a "European" capacity for political-military response outside the traditional scenario of confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw

Pact. Italy, due to its geostrategically "central" position in the Mediterranean, could not limit itself to participating in a European intervention force by merely offering the use of its air and naval bases and pledging its technical-logistical support.

A Mediterranean crisis involving European security interests could not help but involve in an even more direct way Italy's security. It would be politically difficult to justify, vis-a-vis the other members of the European Community, a limited level of involvement that did not include the use of Italian military contingents.

However, if this is a credible future hypothesis, it would be logical to prepare for it by taking concrete organizational, operational and logistical measures necessary to create an RIF capable of integrating with other European intervention forces.

c. The National Framework

The modified strategic picture in the Mediterranean has also caused new national requirements to emerge. A North-South confrontation could arise in a strictly bilateral context due to motives and circumstances that would make it politically very difficult for the other European countries to take attitudes of open military support.

Until such time as Europe is able to express a unified foreign and security policy wherein the interests of the individual countries are considered and protected as collective interests, there will continue to be a possibility that events might arise that can be adequately dealt with on the political-military level by means of a rapid intervention force. Theoretically speaking, the possible scenarios for using rapid intervention forces range from the protection and evacuation, if necessary, of communities of citizens abroad to operations to ensure the observance of the clauses of a peace treaty by the signatories, in a UN context or in the context of a multinational force; or they could range from mediatory tasks between two contending parties in conflict to support of countries with which military assistance agreements have been signed; or even from limited combat missions to defend a friendly country that has been attacked to missions of presence aimed at deterrence or applying pressure.

This series of scenarios is, as can be seen, valid also for Italy; some of them have already occurred and the Italian armed forces have played a very significant role. Others could arise in the future in connection with commitments assumed by virtue of participation in peace-keeping forces organized under the auspices of the United Nations or on a multinational level.

For Italy, an RIF could represent not only an effective instrument for deterrence against those "threats" arising in an extra-NATO context and whose magnitude would presumably not trigger - at least in their initial phase - the reciprocal assistance

mechanisms of the Alliance, but it could also represent a force capable of responding on short notice in the event that dissuasion efforts are not successful.

The possibility of a conflict in Europe seems today more than ever before highly unlikely, (even though not impossible). Moreover, nuclear deterrence seems to have lost part of its credibility, owing to the strategic parity of the superpowers and new doubts concerning the United States' willingness to defend Europe by nuclear means. Conventional deterrence has, therefore, assumed greater relevance in the context of an East-West confrontation as well as in the context of a bilateral or multilateral North-South confrontation.

In addition to the international motivations, the decision to create an RIF could also be justified by a political-military appraisal of the transformations that have taken place in the regional strategical picture and the new national security and defense requirements that have arisen.

d. The NATO Framework

Lastly, but of no lesser importance, the creation of rapid intervention forces would represent a definite strengthening of NATO's conventional defense capabilities against direct as well as indirect threats, and would contribute, therefore, to enhance the credibility of the Alliance's conventional deterrence.

Such forces could also be usefully employed on NATO's southern front to increase the capacity of the individual allied countries to retaliate against any kind of threat on any part of their territory. In fact, a Turkish rapid intervention force, by virtue of its mobility, could partially redimension the problems of the defense on two fronts (Thrace and the eastern border) that have a distance of over 1500 km (930 miles) between them.

An Italian RIF would also allow, in a NATO conflict context, for more effective defense of the southern front and the islands against limited threats that could not be handled by the territorial units.

Furthermore, it could serve as a component of a NATO mobile reserve unit on the southern front.

Finally, in very special cases, it could also be used on other Alliance fronts in the highly unlikely event that the southern region were not involved in the NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation.

In conclusion, the rationale behind the reasons for an Italian rapid intervention force rests on three interrelated elements: security and defense requirements of a strictly national nature; prospects of involvement in political-military activities for peace-keeping in a multinational context, and on a more long-term scale, the prospects for the creation of a "European" rapid intervention force which it would be a part of; and thirdly, the stepping up of conventional deterrence whether within NATO's strategy or on the regional level.

Obviously, the fine-tuning of the national military instrument is a direct function of the role that Italy intends to play in the Alliance and in the Mediterranean region. It follows, therefore, that it should be part of a foreign policy which, while keeping in mind Italy's limits as a medium-level power, is aimed at assuming a more active and responsible role and at serving as a central link and catalyst for solidifying a European "Mediterranean" policy, with a greater level of coordination in its formulation and implementation.

In this viewpoint, the creation of an RIF would also have a symbolic role showing that Italy, aside from any overambitious interventionary or neocolonial intentions, is prepared to assume its role in the task of stabilization and establishment of peace in the Mediterranean area.

AN ITALIAN RAPID INTERVENTION FORCE. MAIN FEATURES OF ITS STRUCTURE

a. Basic considerations.

Although an RIF could be used within and outside Italian territory, it would be designed and organized basically in terms of its mission abroad, which could present some particularly complex aspects. The following would be a few of the more limiting features:

- the fact that such military operations require a level of interforce cooperation which extends even to the smallest units;
- the fact that such operations are normally carried out in crisis situations that are subject to various political restrictions;
- the fact that they could take place far from Italian territory, implying a high air transport capacity;
- the fact that they could take place in areas wherein the available infrastructures are inadequate or totally nonexistent (13);
- the fact that they could be called upon to confront adversaries about whom little is known or to act in cooperation with local forces, within a possibly hostile population or with possibly unforeseeable reactions;
- climatic factors.

However, the typical features of an overseas mission should not give an incorrect impression of the dimensions and characteristics of an Italian RIF.

In determining the organizational, operational and technical-logistical parameters of the RIF, certain basic considerations must be kept in mind.

- The RIF must not be, must not become nor should be envisaged or conceived as an instrument for an Italian "nationalistic" policy in the Mediterranean.

Italy's Defense Minister Giovanni Spadolini was extremely clear on this point during a speech to the Chamber of Deputies on the

course of military policy (8 November 1983) wherein he stated: "Our starting point is that no political-military role may be realistically conceived for Italy except in the context of the Alliances or Treaties that bind us to the West, that is to say, in the context of NATO and the EEC... This does not necessarily entail the exclusion of those special roles and missions wherein Italy, due to historical and geographical reasons, has a comparative "advantage" vis-a-vis other Western nations. These stabilization roles, however, will have no meaning, nor will they be operationally realistic, if they are not organically interlinked with overall Western strategy in the context of the East-West confrontation. We must, therefore, resist temptations to theorize a "Mediterranean vocation" or East-West mediation roles outside the Western sphere, to which we are linked by intimate political, historical, social and economic ties. In the tense competition between East and West, which is becoming ever more polarized and is moving into areas of the Third World also, there is no room for spontaneous actions by medium powers which, such as our country, have their own serious internal economic problems. Any illusion of this nature would be tragically crushed by political-military requests beyond our capacity. Italy can and must provide its contribution of stability to international security only in strict coherence with a Western strategic design, which Italy should help to elaborate politically on a day by day basis".

An RIF would add very little to the deterrence presented by the Alliance as a whole in the case of a "threat" from the East. But it could strengthen the deterrence of the Italian military instrument in confrontations involving lesser "threats" in the context of a crisis between Italy and another nation of the Mediterranean area. In a bilateral confrontation scenario, an RIF could represent an effective instrument for defending national interests (including those related to commitments assumed by treaty with other countries of the area) and for joining up with those forces set up to defend territorial integrity.

The scope of the RIF would, then, not include offensive and neocolonial missions (which are contrary to Italy's constitutional precept of refusal to use force for the solution of international controversies and which are also entirely outside the lines of its military and foreign policy), nor would it include autonomous military intervention in crises in the Mediterranean region that involve, nonetheless, Italy's security.

- Even the RIF's possible role in stabilization or peace-keeping should be viewed, in accordance with the recent military policy lines, outside any deceptive and misleading "Mediterranean vocation": This role should be carried out in the wider context of a Western strategy and policy formulated and coordinated on the level of the European Community, the Atlantic Alliance or the United Nations. Hence, there does not seem to be any room for "national" initiatives outside a multinational framework.

- Use of the RIF for protecting, and evacuating if necessary, citizens abroad also appears very theoretical.

In Italy's case, the most frequently advanced scenario is that of a deterioration of relations with Libya to the point that intervention would become necessary to protect Italian citizens residing in that country.

However, their number (almost 15,000, between technicians and laborers), the fact that they are spread across the country, the particular difficulty in obtaining internal political consent to support such an undertaking, Libya's certain military reaction to any attempt at intervention by Italy and the extreme complexity and riskiness of the operation on the technical-military level are all factors which more or less preclude such a mission from the possible uses for an RIF.

- It seems logical, therefore, that, besides the significant stimulus that the creation of an RIF would provide towards a rethinking of the Italian military instrument in terms of broader interforce integration, the RIF itself would not and should not give rise to special military requirements above or with priority over those conceivable in the case of an East-West conflict.

The acquisition of new means and weapons is to be seen, within the limits imposed on the defense budget, primarily as a means of offsetting the most obvious deficiencies in the military instrument and modernizing the weapons systems of conventional forces, in such a way as to increase Italy's deterrence capacity and maintain those regional military balances essential to the nation's security.

The need for a strict acquisitions policy, which would favor an inter-services integration of the military instrument, should be given strong consideration. The cost-effectiveness criteria imposed by the objective impossibility of carrying military expenditures beyond a limit that is politically acceptable and socially fair must also be kept in mind. It would not be appropriate, therefore, to propose, as requirements for the RIF, actions such as the transformation of the Garibaldi helicopter-carrier into an aircraft-carrier or a large-scale future acquisition of transport aircraft, which would have scant operative justification in the framework of the country's defense requirements, or in terms of cost-effectiveness concerning other, more pressing, requirements.

Acquisition of any special weapons and means that are deemed necessary for the RIF should be evaluated in terms of those missions that would be politically and militarily feasible in the framework of Italy's traditional foreign and military policies.

- The RIF should have a minimal permanent staff for formulating training programs and contingency planning as well as for coordinating, following and evaluating inter-service exercises that the different units composing the RIF would be called upon to perform. In times of peace, those units would be earmarked for assignment to the RIF and called upon to join together only in case of emergency.

In case of an emergency, the staff structure, duly reinforced, would support the political decision-making leaders as the military element of the crisis management center.

An Italian RIF must be viewed, then, as a military instrument capable of being duly adapted in its composition and structure to the missions to be performed. A very flexible intervention instrument, equipped with high mobility and a sufficient level of self-support.

However, the RIF must not be viewed as an instrument liable to arouse overambitious policies in the Mediterranean. These policies would be beyond Italy's economic and political bounds, out of keeping with its traditional lines of foreign policy, without grounds in its political class and without justification within its social framework.

PART TWO

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR AN ITALIAN RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE

by Luigi Caligaris

The most difficult part of this entire project, arguably, is tracing sufficiently credible and complete scenarios for a force which in itself is controversial and unusual. In fact, any hypothesis of such a force necessarily implies a political-military framework different from the traditional one and is hence bound to provoke strong reactions inside and outside the country. But, at the same time, if no adequately realistic scenarios are outlined, we will be unable even to speak of suitable military structures, much less to define tasks and commitments. Considering, therefore, that this study allows for a reasonable amount of free thinking, we shall present what we feel are reasonable scenarios of an Italian political-military commitment.

a. In a strictly national context

a. Operations aimed at protecting sensitive positions and installations of considerable strategic importance and located in areas where direct defense possibilities are limited due to the low density of available forces. The maximum radius of action would be roughly 600 km for air-ground operations and 600 miles for air-naval operations.

b. Operations necessary for fulfilling national commitments (e.g. ensuring Malta's security) and/or protecting Italian interests and citizens abroad. The maximum radius of action would be 2500 km for air-ground operations and 1000 miles for air-naval operations.

b. In a NATO context

a. Operations similar to those indicated in Paragraph 1.a.

b. Operations on behalf of Greece or Turkey in the role of a rapidly deployable strategic reserve for NATO's Southern Region. The maximum radius of action would be 2500 km for air-land operations and 1000 miles for air-naval operations.

c. Operations in the Central Theater to establish a politico-military coupling between NATO's Southern Region and Central Europe, to be balanced by shifting a corresponding number of NATO units from the Central Theater to northeastern

Italy. This would be a symbolic, but effective means for NATO to avoid the political-military isolation of its Southern Region. Strategic liaison between the German theater and Italy would not be included under this kind of operation; upon closer examination, it is clear that any such action would not be assigned to a rapid deployment force, but rather to units of the IV Alpine Army Corps, given its operational contiguity. The radius of action would be approximately 600 km for air operations and approximately 1600 km for ground operations.

d. Operations aimed at weakening and slowing down the advance of an enemy offensive before it reaches Italy's most advanced defensive positions (FEBA - forward edge of battle area). These operations could be carried out to a maximum depth of 80 km in front of said position. Due to the political sensitivity of such a project, these operations will not be considered here; they therefore remain purely hypothetical. Still, it cannot be ruled out that if Yugoslavia were attacked, it might consent to operations by an Italian force in the rearward portion of Yugoslav territory. The radius of action for air-ground operations would be between 400 and 600 km, about 100 km for ground operations and relatively short-range for minor air-naval operations.

c. In a national, regional, multinational or UN context

a. Peacekeeping operations aimed chiefly at preserving the stability of the Mediterranean region and of those nations having special ties with Italy. The radii of action for air-naval and air-ground operations should not exceed those indicated above.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Any highly innovative changes in Italy's military structure would be unreasonable. Italy has neither the political or military desire for radical changes nor the necessary experience in tri-service programs, not to mention the insufficient levels of available resources. Moreover, it would be unadvisable to change abruptly the basic framework of a structure that already has a satisfactory internal equilibrium in the pursuit of new defense models so innovative that they would require a considerable amount of time for implementation and that they give rise to serious doubts about their advisability and feasibility. On the other hand, substantial modifications of the present organization could certainly be made without causing traumatic repercussions. A rapid deployment force would unquestionably be one such modification.

However, the creation of such a force, for which Italy already enjoys a number of favorable conditions, must not be viewed as a purely technical-operational measure. The flexibility, readiness and maneuverability of such a force must be backed by a highly reliable political-military management framework, which Italy now lacks but sorely needs, with or without a rapid deployment force. And the evolution of the required political-military management framework must necessarily precede rather than follow the creation of the rapid deployment force. The operation in Lebanon is a clear illustration of this: jointly conducted by the four nations of the Multinational Force, the operation was marked by a high level of political-military risk coupled with a very low coefficient of political productivity, due precisely to the manifest inability on all sides to handle all the different aspects of such an initiative at once. A rapid, but not overly demanding, process for changing the management structure would have to be carried out on three different levels: first, on the political level, with the backing of sufficient, reliable military counseling; secondly, on the political-military level, with special emphasis on tri-service integration in order to provide the government's decisions with concrete operational measures; and, thirdly, on the "technical-operational" level, which would be entirely tri-service in nature, and aimed at providing support and command and control activities from bases in Italy for all Italian commitments involving active presence or operations. A fourth level - mission command and control - should also be operational prior to the crisis so as to ensure efficient tri-service performance from the very beginning of operations among the detachments taken from the different branches of the armed forces and composing the task group in any given area. Within this fourth level, another decision would have to be made: whether to set up a permanent ad hoc structure to be adapted as necessary to respond to each individual case, or whether to establish a basic skeleton organization which could be rapidly fleshed out in an emergency. The need for tri-service command and control in operational theaters is strongly felt today owing to the country's limited experience in this area. With the creation of a rapid deployment force and, hence, the concomitant development of tri-service management capabilities on all levels, the need to develop a specialized tri-service command and control unit will presumably grow less pressing.

The troops to be used in forming the force would have to be drawn from existing sources, with preference being given to the more "mobile" units which already possess, to a great extent, the prerequisite operational readiness, mobility and self-sufficiency and which are particularly suited for action in one or more of the scenarios outlined above. In this manner, the organizational burden and the need for special technical-operational training would be greatly reduced. Nevertheless, an integrated tri-service organizational structure must be established, within which the units

chosen must be prepared to operate. In addition, currently available equipment would have to be upgraded in order to improve tactical-strategic mobility as well as the defensive and reaction capabilities of the various forces involved, both singly at all levels and collectively.

On the whole, feasibility, efficiency and versatility should be the basic criteria in a programmed effort aimed at solving, in a relatively short time and within the framework of a unified political and military plan, the problems involved in the setting-up of a rapid deployment force.

POLITICAL MANAGEMENT. REQUIREMENTS

The benefits of a rapid deployment force are only fully reaped when its innate versatility, strategic-tactical mobility and operational readiness are used appropriately. It is without doubt the most suitable conventional instrument for protecting against or for launching surprise attacks. It is less subject to the sluggishness that is characteristic of garrison units. And it is the most cost-effective, as it is designed to be used in a wide variety of scenarios and environments. It thus reduces the need for permanent troop deployment in defense of strategically sensitive points and districts, and consequently helps prevent the dispersion of forces. The rapid deployment force is the ultrasophisticated, present-day descendant of the "light infantry" and, as such, is the ideal force for promptly handling any and indeterminate contingencies where an immediate, decided commitment, even if of modest proportions, can reduce or eliminate the risk of the confrontation's spiralling or spreading.

The force's operational readiness is not, however, merely the result of a responsive military apparatus, i.e. one that can react quickly and effectively whenever its government requires. Rather, to a great extent, it depends on the credibility and the promptness of decision-making by the political authorities themselves. It would, in fact, be pointless to create units for rapid, effective intervention if precious time were wasted by delays in political decisions. By the same token, it would be dangerous to make a decision to commit the force without a complete understanding of the situation or without the secrecy that is so vital: the force would thus be exposed to the possibility of an unsuccessful mission as well as to great risk, due to the lack of clarity of the government's decision and the inadequacy of the military actions that inevitably results.

The rapid deployment force is also a first rate political-military instrument that is not bound by overly rigid organizational structures and the inflexibility of planning and deployment structures of other conventional forces. Its strategic mobility makes it the best tool cumbersome prior constraints on use, to provide a show of political solidarity and an operative presence in times of crisis in all those areas that are geographically

isolated from major allied or friendly troop formations. An obvious case of such isolation - which can be either geo-political or simply geographic - would be NATO's Southern Region where four nations (Spain, Italy, Greece and Turkey) are not only isolated from the Central European Theater, but from each other as well. The same is true for Norway on the northern flank. Precisely for this reason, the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (ACE Mobile Force - AMF) was created, able to intervene rapidly in NATO's northern or southern sector, but not to handle emergencies on both NATO fronts at the same time. An Italian rapid deployment force, in its role as a national instrument outside the NATO framework, would be able to cover a wider range of options than AMF. However, the important political-military role of a national rapid deployment force makes it much more dependent than other conventional forces on government control. The government must be able to determine its structure and its potential tasks, to make well-informed decisions on its commitments, and to monitor and correct operations without, however, interfering in the military command's conduct of operations throughout the mission. The government must also be able to support its decision to use the rapid deployment force with appropriate political action and initiatives, domestically and internationally, so as to reach the best possible solution to the political dispute that triggered the conflict.

With respect solely to the operational framework within which the rapid deployment force would be used, the force's relative degree of independence would give each and every one of its actions a decidedly disproportionate degree of political importance vis-a-vis the actual dimensions of the action. In the absence of proper, effective government handling, the rapid deployment force would inevitably be brought into action too late and in a role for which it would not be suited. The decision-making levels must have an understanding of a rapid deployment force's vulnerability as well as the tasks for which it is best suited so as to properly benefit from its use. Protracted engagements characterized by a high level of attrition would not be advisable for a rapid deployment force. On the other hand, such a force would be ideal for preventive occupation of key areas, thereby creating a fait accompli that would force the adversary either to accept the challenge or to back down so as to keep the confrontation from spreading. It would also be well suited for use in intractable terrains (high hills, zones in medium-sized or high mountains, etc.) where the use of armored or mechanized units is difficult if not impossible. Decision-makers must not give in to the temptation to take advantage of the readiness and versatility of the units forming the rapid development force as an on-hand reserve for dealing with unforeseen events. Or at any rate, when such a deployment is unavoidable, the government and military must be in a position to judge at what point the period of immediate emergency has passed so as to replace the mobile units with other less-specialized units or units that are possibly better suited to the particular operation in question.

For these and other reasons, it can be seen that the proper management of a rapid development force is not a duty to be entrusted to inexperienced and unprepared political and military bodies. It

requires, rather, in addition to a suitable political-military decision-making structure, vast experience in the area as well as experience working together between political and military officials and among military officials themselves, who would be called upon to work within a tri-service context.

MANAGEMENT ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL. SOLUTIONS

In Italy today, government handling of the national defense structure and, hence, of the armed forces, is totally unsatisfactory: legislation governing military operations is incomplete and inadequate, and there is a definite lack of support structure for assisting the government in fulfilling its decision-making duties. For example (14):

- The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces is the President of the Republic, who has, however, only a token authority over the armed forces and has no actual command or decision-making capacity.
- The Supreme Defense Council, presided over by the President of the Republic, has neither management nor decision-making functions in matters that are within the Executive's scope of power. Moreover, it meets once or twice a year, and then very briefly, and does not even have a full-time office for handling normal daily operations.
- Government's power is much too limited in matters concerning initiation and direction of operations. In addition, Italy's prime minister is not, as is the case with other Western nations, the Chief Executive, but merely the presiding officer of the Council of Ministers or Cabinet; he has no decision-making powers aside from his authority to mediate among the different parties forming the Cabinet. The recently-formed "Super-Council", which could be comparable to a Security Council like to those in other countries, is indeed a restricted, top-level body, but its powers are only advisory; it must have the approval of the full cabinet to decide on matters of major importance.

Plainly, such a system does not inspire a great deal of confidence regarding its capability to initiate or manage, on the political level, any operation involving rapid deployment forces. The situation is further complicated by virtue of the fact that the Executive must receive explicit authorization from Parliament to conduct military operations; and even in cases not involving immediate combat action, this requirement certainly applies to any engagement of the rapid deployment force.

In short, Italy now has no credible potential on the political level for handling military operations outside the NATO framework, where the collective political-military decision-making structure greatly mitigates Italy's shortcomings. Seemingly, these

difficulties might be overcome by means of two practical steps: first, by delegating the actual handling of operations to the military, limiting political involvement to the initial authorization and any individual operations of particular importance; and secondly, by establishing sufficiently clear and broad overall rules of engagement. In reality, it is doubtful whether such a solution would be either appropriate or feasible. It would be inappropriate in that it would be interpreted, and justly so, as a curtailment of political authority; furthermore, it would not be advisable for situations wherein political presence must be felt on the national and international levels as well as in relations with the potential or actual adversary. And it would not be feasible in that no government would ever conceivably refrain from participating in the actual conduct of operations; without proper preparation or authority, such interference would be dangerous, not to mention counterproductive to a favorable political-military outcome.

At the same time, however, it appears absolutely necessary that the present political decision-making structures be modified in order to enhance Parliament's and the Government's present capabilities as well as the activeness of the decision-making process. The benefits of such a reform would be felt far beyond the relatively modest scope of rapid deployment force administration; they would affect the entire decision-making process in the area of national defense. The following are a few of the possible modifications:

- update and streamline legislation related to military operations, so as to guarantee secrecy and promptness in the decision-making process;
- set up a permanent Council or Committee for Security/Defense Policy, where a restricted group of Cabinet ministers could meet in private and receive any assistance they require;
- establish an operative line of communication between said Council/Committee and Parliament to facilitate exchange of information, consultations and decision-making on matters under parliamentary jurisdiction;
- establish an effective link between the Council/Committee and the military tri-service command structure to allow for the ongoing exchange of information, requests and orders.

A tie-in with the Supreme Defense Council would not be necessary considering the fact that it is not active on a full-time basis and the fact that the members of the Council/Committee (Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Defense, etc.) would also be on the Supreme Defense Council. Besides which, the prime minister's normal duties already include reporting to hearing the opinion of the President of the Republic on all matters, and particularly in this one, given the President's function as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

(15)

MILITARY COMMAND AND CONTROL

Some rather serious shortcomings also exist on this level (16):

- Italy's Chief of the Central Defense Staff (CDS) (Capo di Stato Maggiore della Difesa) is not, either in effect or in writing, the chief commander of the armed forces. Consequently, he does not have the same authority in real terms as France's or Britain's Chief of Staff as concerns initiating and handling operations; nor is he included in the command chain as is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the United States. He is merely the highest ranking of the members of the Committee of the Chiefs of Staff. He represents the Staff at meetings of the Supreme Defense Council, but has no precise functions. More than anything else, he serves as mediator between divergent interests and requests;

- The tri-service management body which would assist the Chief of Staff (CDS) in carrying out his duties is totally inadequate and would become much more so if Italy's CDS were assigned, like the majority of his Western counterparts, full authority for all military decisions. The Tri-Service Operations Center (COPI - Centro Operativo Interforze), with its modest management capacity in terms of structures and human resources, has three separate counterparts at the service staff level, isolated from another, one for each service of the armed forces. It should also be kept in mind that each of Italy's Chiefs of Staff of the Army, Navy and Air Force hopes that the CDS should delegate the handling of individual operations to the Chief of Staff in question, based on the relative importance of the role played by each branch of the armed forces. Such a method should not be excluded, keeping in mind, however, that it should not be the only option, especially in operations where the tri-service aspect is of considerable importance. It would be even less advisable to assign the burden of directing an operation to one of the branches of the armed forces, while maintaining the COPI merely as a clearing house for messages between the executive-legislative branch and the actual military handling of the operation. Such an extra link would be superfluous; worse, it could actually complicate the political-military conduct of the operation.

Any solution, then, would have to be able to allow for the following, without creating excessive problems:

- assign to the Chief of Central Defense Staff (CDS) full authority over the armed forces as well as a direct, advisory role within the government;

- reduce the present decision-making role of the Committee of Chiefs of Staff to an advisory one in respect of the CDS;

- set up a single Tri-Service Operations Center embracing organs of the CDS and of the three Service staffs, reserving the other three Services' Centers for lesser contingencies;

- upgrade the Central Defense Staff as a whole, especially those sectors responsible for operational tasks (military policy, operations, intelligence and logistics).

OPERATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

One of the most complex problems regarding a multipurpose rapid deployment force is that of deciding what kind of operational command and control should be established in advance. Keeping in mind, first, that various contingency plans must be available for the variety of possible missions, areas, kinds of tasks, operational-logistical problems and kinds of forces and, secondly and more importantly, that other emergencies having little or nothing to do with these plans may also arise, it is not difficult to see that any previously existing, clearly defined operational command and control structure may prove inadequate in practice. The best solution, then, would be to plan several options for the chain of command, allowing for the possibility of implementing the one best suited to the circumstances, in conjunction with the decision on formations at the time of the first, perhaps not fully clear notice to move. This solution would have to be formulated on three different levels:

- first, on the level of Major Units Command (Army Corps or equivalent level), which would handle, from bases in Italian territory, all aspects of operations in its role as the main executive arm of the top political-military authority;
- secondly, with respect to the force as a whole and considering the fact that it comprises components from the various branches of the armed forces, it would be necessary to set up a Joint Tri-Service Staff capable of directing all military efforts in the zone of operations;
- and thirdly, on the level of troops in the field. In operations that are exclusively air or air-naval in nature, this level could coincide with the second level above. A problem would arise, however, in the event of a tri-service ground operation requiring air and naval support above and beyond the need for its own independent support on the battlefield.

For the first level, two basic solutions could be possible:

- First, an ad hoc organizational and administrative structure could be set up, its dimensions adapted to the most important or most burdensome of the force's potential tasks. Then all that need be done is to set up, within the overall structure, the right command and control model for each specific minor commitment. This would be the ideal solution for dealing with different kinds of emergencies. On the other hand, it is costly and difficult to keep operational. Also, in peacetime it would inevitably cause conflicts of authority with the other commands

on the same level, since the units of the other commands would be under the authority of the special command during operations but not during the time when they are stationed at their garrison. One possible solution would be to place all those units that would be included in the rapid deployment force under this special command, during peacetime as well. Unfortunately, this would also present problems, especially in the event of limited availability of mobile multi-purpose troops, where such an arrangement would restrict their versatility and flexibility.

- The second possibility would entail modest changes in the existing command and control structure by entrusting any new tasks to an already existing command. During peacetime, this command would only be responsible for planning potential operations, preparing and supervising their organization, organizing and managing joint tri-service training exercises among the various units, and testing potential commitments related to the crisis scenarios outlined above. This solution has the advantage of being considerably more streamlined and economical than the first, in addition to the fact that it would reduce the friction areas among the various commands and branches of the armed forces. Its major weakness would surface in time of emergency - the difficulty of quickly integrating staff, units and structures that have worked together only on a very occasional basis.

An example of the first solution would be the system adopted in the United States with the setting up of the US Central Command (USCENTCOM) in Florida for handling the Persian Gulf crisis. USCENTCOM, however, does not have at its disposal the independent forces that it would need in a crisis situation. As stated on page 211 of the "Annual Report to Congress - Fiscal Year 1985": "During peacetime, many of these combat units are assigned to the US Readiness Command for purposes of training. Since they represent some of our most mobile and ready forces, they are available on a priority basis to the Commander-in-Chief of USCENTCOM (USCINCENT) for his SWA mission. They are also available for rapid deployment missions in other regions." (17) France has found a similar solution. A four-star command for the Force d'Action Rapide is currently being organized, with approximately 3000 men for command and support requirements. The command is mainly within the Army's sphere, but it does have small teams to liaise with the Navy and the Air Force. These forces, however, are directly under the authority of the Command ("Commandement") for matters concerning the Army alone; the other two branches (Air Force and Navy) are assigned to tri-service task forces (détachements interarmes).

USCENTCOM is directly connected to the National Command Authority through the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Such an arrangement eliminates, in theory at least, the need for other intermediaries, such as commands or Service Staffs. In reality, however, the counterproductive interference among the different branches is only reduced, and not eliminated, due to the unsuitable organizational structure of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (18), wherein the top

decision-making authority exists more as written protocol than as an actual power; this power is still clearly collective in nature.

France appears to have found a better solution: its Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) is, for all intents and purposes the top level of authority for all matters concerning the Armed Forces, and his general staff is entirely responsible for directing operations. (19) "The Chief of Defense Staff transforms political decisions into operational orders, deciding on the overall mission to be adopted as well as the means, phases and commander for the operation. At that point, there are two alternative lines of operation: full command of the operation can be delegated to said Commander who is then assigned a "Department of Tri-Service Staff" for such operations, or the Central Defense Staff (Etat-Major Operationielle des Armees - EMA), under direct orders from its Chief of Defense Staff (CDS), takes charge of the preparation of the operation in cooperation with the previously-designated Commander. Given the urgent nature of a crisis, this second procedure appears to be the one most often followed."(19)

An example of the second solution can be found in Great Britain's system, where three national commands are chosen prior to the potential operation to handle rapid deployment force commitments. In Great Britain's case, such activities have always arisen in an "overseas" context, but they could conceivably take on different characteristics depending on the scope of their use, i.e. whether within a NATO or a strictly national framework, including operations involving joint multinational efforts.

Unlike France and the United States, Great Britain has no ad hoc command structure. Instead one of three four-star commands (one for each branch of the armed forces) stationed in different parts of the country will be appointed. These commands are, namely, the United Kingdom Land Forces (Army), CincFleet (Navy) and Strike Command (Air Force), respectively capable of assuming command of any operation depending on whether it is primarily ground, naval or air in nature. When a crisis situation arises, each command receives operational "cells" from the other two branches, thus giving it a tri-service aspect. A general tri-service command would only be set up in the event of a semi-permanent overseas operation, such as in the Falklands. The major problem lies, however, with the Army, which would probably be more likely than the other two branches of the armed forces to be chosen to manage the rapid deployment force, but which does not have the same operational flexibility and versatility as the other two branches. Furthermore, a primarily land-based operation of medium-to-long duration is more complex to manage, in terms of logistical-operational support to start with, not to mention other aspects. For this reason, Britain is now focusing its efforts on finding a suitable solution to the problem of command and control for primarily land-based overseas operations. At present, actual command duties would be entrusted to the Southwest District, a three-star command which is also responsible for defending Britain's southern sector. It should be pointed out that the mobile forces that have been designated for NATO tasks, all of which are

land-based, are also under this Command. There is, as well, a two-star cell of modest proportions that is permanently operational in the framework of that Command, as is the case with the Commands of the other branches of the armed forces. There is, therefore, no preestablished command and control structure. The staff of the planning cell responsible for organizing and carrying out exercises in peacetime is increased from 12 to 200 in times of crisis at which time it becomes an operational command. Britain too assigns the power to issue operational directives to the Central Defense Staff, which operates in much the same manner as France's EMA.

Unfortunately, this solution also has its drawbacks. Its low peacetime profile does, in fact, prevent high levels of interference among the three branches of the armed forces. At the same time, however, the question arises as to whether it would be able, in the very short periods characteristic of rapid deployment force missions, to bring together sufficiently knowledgeable personnel capable of working together. Great Britain, for one, already has considerable experience in tri-service overseas operations; this would undoubtedly prove to be an advantage in putting together the functional groups to be put into action. On the brigade level, there is a tendency to respect normal peacetime commands, such as the marine brigade, paratroop brigade, etc. As concerns mixed units, allowance has been made for integration of the various duties among the three different branches. For example, if the command of a mixed brigade were assigned to the commander of the paratroop brigade, his Chief of Staff could well be a Royal Marines officer.

OPERATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL. THE SITUATION IN ITALY

One of the first needs is to tailor operational command and control to the potential operations to be performed. Within the scenarios outlined above, the following operations would be possible:

- Medium-intensity air-ground or fully tri-service operations within Italian territory. Air-ground operations would be called for mostly in the northeastern region of Italy, whereas tri-service operations would be most likely in the central-southern zone.
- High-intensity operations beyond Italy's borders, such as delaying actions or counteroffensives in depth. These operations would be mostly of an air-ground nature.
- Operations in the role of a Southern Region strategic reserve to assist Greece or Turkey. These operations would be high-intensity in nature and could be fully tri-service, air-naval, air-ground or limited to any single branch of the armed forces with indirect participation, if and when necessary, of the other branches. The decision as to which alternative would be used depends not only on the availability of the forces best suited for the operation, but also on the overall situation, the arrangement agreed upon with the "host" country and the logistical support available on site. The range of options is rather wide and includes the possibility that more

than one could be implemented during any given emergency situation.

- Operations aimed at linking up the Italian Front with the Central European theater in the form of high-intensity ground or air-ground troop deployments in areas to be defined jointly with the allied forces responsible for that theater.
- Operations aimed at protecting Italian citizens abroad in the event of a serious crisis. Such operations would be of medium intensity and would be air-naval, air-ground or fully tri-services in nature, depending on the situation and the zone of activity.
- Peacekeeping operations, which would be low intensity and primarily ground-based with limited air or air-naval support, especially in the zone of operations.

Operations that would potentially involve the use of an Italian rapid deployment force could be broadly classified as follows:

- Geographically: "overseas" operations, which would refer to operations in the Mediterranean area or, in special cases, in areas outside the Mediterranean region; "domestic" operations, subdivided into northern and central-southern; and "continental" operations, referring to NATO defense of Central Europe in the zone connecting Central Europe and northern Italy.
- In terms of their intensity: "low-intensity" operations would be limited to peacekeeping activities; "medium intensity" would be required for defense operations involving the central-northern region of the peninsula and extra-NATO "overseas" operations; and "high intensity" would be reserved for all those operations performed within a NATO context.

Given the large distance between the northernmost and southernmost points of possible use (more than 3000 km), it would appear to be advisable to designate, whenever possible, as domestic commands those commands, already stationed in the northernmost and southernmost points of the peninsula, thus ensuring the necessary proximity to operations as well as shortening logistical lines.

The matter of the degree of geographic proximity to the zone of operations should not be interpreted, however, in an overly strict manner. Other, more important criteria must also be weighed, such as the nature of the operation, whether or not it is in a NATO context, and its level of intensity (low, medium or high). As a matter of fact, as concerns the first case, i.e. operations performed within a NATO framework, the only first-level commands (Army Corps or equivalent) capable of assuming command and control are those already part of the NATO chain of command. This rules out the possibility of using the ground commands in central-southern Italy (whose sphere of action is limited to defending Italian territory), even if primarily land-based operations should be needed in the Mediterranean area. In the second case, functional considerations would advise against

entrusting command and control of medium- or high-intensity operations to Commands that, though of suitable level (Army Corps or equivalent), are unable to perform those functions. Finally, it would be inappropriate to distribute the management of the rapid deployment force among too many commands. On the second level of command (division or equivalent) this problem would not exist; this new command level, for functional reasons, would be created within the top-level Command (Army Corps or equivalent) designated for such operations. With respect to the third level (brigade or equivalent), the location of command would be the same as during peacetime. For example, air-ground operations in Italy or abroad that are of short duration, great urgency and medium to low intensity would be jointly run by Pisa and Livorno, due to the presence of the 46th Air-borne Brigade and the Folgore Paratroop Brigade. Consequently, the first and second level command structures for the rapid deployment force must meet both NATO and non-NATO requirements and therefore should not be overly centralized. This means choosing between an ad hoc structure (either tri-service on the US model or single service on the French pattern) and the adaptation of duties within the commands most suited for managing rapid deployment force tasks. A tri-service command structure does not seem to be indicated: in addition to accentuating inter-service rivalry, it would create rivalry within the command itself, at all levels, for different duties and responsibilities. It would without a doubt be costly and greatly exceed Italy's needs, making it an even less attractive choice in view of the current tendency to reduce management overhead produced by the proliferation of administrative bodies, not to mention the desire to streamline the operational chain command. By the same token, the possibility of a single-force command created solely for handling rapid deployment force tasks should also be ruled out. It is true that it would not create inter-service rivalry, but all the other negative aspects would still be present.

It seems, then, that the choice would have to be made on the basis of economic considerations, with the following result: designate three commands (ground, naval and air), in advance, for the operational command of activities that would be entrusted in each case to the command whose forces are primarily involved in the operation. These three commands should be chosen from among those already existing and, whenever possible, should not include those commands directly involved in forward defense operations aimed at protecting Italian territory. As concerns the Army, for example, this responsibility would undoubtedly be entrusted to the Third Army Corps Command, stationed as a reserve in northwest Italy and not the Fifth Army Corps which is responsible for forward defense in northeastern Italy.

Within each Army Corps (or equivalent) command, there would be a tri-service cell, to serve as the command embryo for the Task Group that would be called into action in the zone of operations; it would also serve as a unit for planning, organization and management duties within the Army Corps (or equivalent) command on a permanent basis. Such a multi-faceted choice would encourage cooperation among the three branches and would also increase operational understanding of

tri-service problems within the armed forces themselves. This cell, which would be of modest proportions (12-16 officers chosen from the three different branches), should constitute a skeleton tri-service command structure at the division level and should be able to handle duties related to operational intelligence (G2), operations and training (G3) and logistics (G4) in a completely tri-service framework. Based on orders from the Central Defense Staff, this cell would be responsible for planning, organizing the assignments of each individual Command; it would also be responsible for organizing and directing tri-service training activities in CPX (command posts exercises) and in FTX (field troop exercises). In emergency situations, the cell would be filled out to its full complemented and form the Task Group command.

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF TRI-SERVICE PERSONNEL

Before addressing the question of assigning personnel to the three Commands (one for each branch of the Armed Forces) to form the tri-services cell and to set up a pool of trained personnel to be mobilized in an emergency, it is necessary to ascertain what trained management command officers and subordinates are available now. Also, we must adapt tri-service specialization training to upgrade it to the required level.

Italy's armed forces currently dispose of a large number of trained personnel, especially on the lower management and subordinate levels, with the training - acquired in courses abroad and in Italy as well as through experience - for inter-service operations. Well-prepared units include the Paratroop Brigade, whose officers and NCO's are experts in air-ground operations, the 46th Airborne Brigade, the San Marco battalion, and, on a lower level, the Marine (Lagunari) Regiment, specialized in amphibious operations. Under the present system, such personnel, when exceeding the needs of their units, are distributed among various commands, with no specific, principal functions of their own. The specific capabilities of these men could be put to better use if they were distributed among tri-service cells or used to create teams of experts for individual areas to be sent to work with those units chosen to be part of the rapid deployment force, following up tri-service training on site.

In this manner, the immediate problem would be solved on the middle and lower levels of the chain of command and execution. This alone would not be enough, however. An important first step would be the organizing of an efficient tri-service training program for the staff officers of the three Services. The current situation is totally unsatisfactory. The only body capable of providing this kind of training, the Institute for the Tri-Service Staffs (ISMI - Istituto Stati Maggiori Interforze), was dissolved in 1979. A common Staff School for the three branches of the armed forces, which would provide ample opportunity for tri-service training, is yet to come. The joint training period for officers in the three single service Staff Schools is insufficient. The Center for Advanced Defense Studies (CASD - Centro Alti Studi Difesa) deals mainly with theoretical analyses of defense problems and is not at all involved

with tri-service training of top-level officers (brigadier general or equivalent).

In a word, tri-service training is adequate today for the lower ranks but becomes progressively less adequate towards the higher levels of responsibility. This is a crucial limitation, not only for the rapid deployment force but also - indeed, particularly - with reference to national defense considerations overall.

It would not be impossible to set up a tri-services training structure in a relatively short time within the overall training procedure. On the level of specialization, three service schools could be asked to accept officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted men with a long-term commitment for tri-service training: the School for Aero-Cooperation in Guidonia, the Paratroop School in Pisa and the Center for Aero-Naval Training in Taranto. Other schools of this type could also be called upon to participate in the various aspects of tri-service training; each one would maintain, however, its original affiliation with the respective branch of the armed forces, to avoid exacerbating rivalry among the three branches and save these academies from the fate of most other tri-service institutes, which suffer from neglect and lack of resources.

Until such time as the matter of a joint service Staff School is resolved, it should not be hard to revive the ISMI as Italy's main tri-service training center. The CASD, meanwhile, could be entrusted with training top-level officers in the political-military management of operations. These measures, and others as well, are of prime importance, regardless of whether or not a rapid deployment force is created.

As concerns the personnel to be assigned to the different commands, the feasible solution for the present and the immediate future appears to form a nationwide pool of all personnel with specialized tri-service training to be mobilized in an emergency and, from time to time, for Command Post (CPX), Field Troop (FTX) or CPX + FTX exercises. Within the pool, priority destinations would be established on the basis of the zone where said personnel is stationed and on their individual preparation, thus ensuring that the best available manpower is assigned to the command, especially for relations not related to or coming at the same time as other national emergencies.

The development of this kind of tri-service rather than single-service operations and training activities would amount, in effect, to a revolution, given the current degree of separation among the three Services and the extremely limited powers of the Central Defense Staff. For this reason, these or other more suitable measures aimed toward improving tri-service integration would only be possible, if it were decided to modify the top-level military structure as described above in the section on Military Command and Control. If the need for a rapid deployment force had a catalytic effect on the armed forces as a whole, mobilizing them in this direction, the utility of the force would be unquestionable, regardless of its operational validity.

OPERATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL. ONE POSSIBLE SOLUTION

Given the current ground, naval and air command structures (20) and in accordance with the criteria mentioned above, the following solution would be a feasible possibility:

- With respect to ground command (on the Army Corps level), command and control of short-radius of linking operations with the Central Theater could be entrusted to the Fourth Alpine Army Corps Command; to avoid drawing on the rapid deployment force, it would use a rear-echelon brigade such as the "Orobica" Alpine Brigade. The Fifth Army Corps Command could be made responsible for all operations beyond Italy's border in the North-East Theater (Friuli-Venezia Giulia), to a depth not exceeding 15 km beyond the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA). The Third Army Corps Command, not directly involved in the initial phases of forward defense in the battle area, could be assigned responsibility for ground command of the rapid deployment force for all those medium- or high-intensity cases presented in the general scenario. As a matter of fact, it is the command best placed, geographically, to handle the more complex tasks within a NATO context, such as a possible deployment of a major formation (Brigade size) in the southern half of the Central Region; (21) and also for operations up to 80 km beyond the FEBA. Operations beyond this distance, such as intervention in Greece or Turkey (within a NATO context), should not present any major problems, given the limited dimensions of the major formations that would most likely be used (brigade). Such a solution would efficiently concentrate the command of all large-scale force projection operations involving mainly ground forces in a single Army Corps command, which would have a dual national/NATO role. The choice of the Third Army Corps Command, which as a major reserve formation has far more freedom of action than do the Army Corps of the first echelon and is capable of adequately managing and supporting operations on its own level, represents a suitable solution on various levels: geographical, functional, operational and organizational. During NATO operations in northern Italy, such a Command would be under Landsouth, which would assist it in conducting air-ground operations and serve as an operational liaison with the other NATO commands that would have forces detailed to them. Landsouth's command, control and coordination functions would also be called upon, if the rapid deployment force units were to be used beyond the 80-km-line in front of the FEBA. As a matter of fact, Landsouth alone is capable of coordinating air-ground maneuvers, such as a relatively deep interdiction in conjunction with ground operations that far forward, and only Landsouth has the capability to coordinate the complex tactical interface between forward defense and rapid deployment force units deployed in front of the FEBA, to act as a delaying force. Landsouth and the Central Defense Staff could assign the Third Army Corps Command the task of performing "pilot" and

"coordinator" duties in all operations involving rapid deployment forces, from the planning level through the organization of tactical-strategic and logistical assignments. One command, then, could respond to different needs and provide the rapid deployment force with the level of specialization required on the different levels of all its sectors of authority. This Command although smaller and less costly than the Command of France's Force d'Action Rapide, should be able to perform the same functions.

As concerns other operations on a lower level or those which would be carried out within broader operational tasks under other Army commands, the functions of the Third Army Corps Command would be limited to the initial setting-up and support activities so as to ensure that the rapid deployment force units reach the zone of operations with the necessary operational readiness.

This could occur in four situations:

- In the event assistance is needed to defend Italian territory, in which case the rapid deployment force units would be placed under the respective Regional Command as soon as they reached the area of operations.
- For "peacekeeping" operations which would undoubtedly be carried out in Italy's southern region and would be of long duration, with a relatively modest operational commitment, logistically and otherwise. In time, such operations would become routine and could easily be handled by territorial commands. If, on the other hand, they were entrusted to an operational command such as the Third Army Corps' Command, they would represent an unnecessary burden hindering overall operational readiness. It should be noted in this case, however, that a Regional Command, such as the one in Sicily, would be better suited. Alas, such a commitment would also bring with it valuable experience in handling medium-sized but nonetheless important operations by which its potential in terms of national defense could only gain.
- With respect to air-naval operations, which would be complex but presumably of short duration, there are a few minor problems that would arise. Such operations, in fact, would be implemented mostly in the southern part of the peninsula, i.e. in the Mediterranean area. An experienced naval command structure is already available within CINCPAC for handling these necessities, and it could delegate operations to the 3rd Naval Division as a command structure already in being capable of handling any amphibious operations that may be required.
- Air operations within a NATO structure would obviously be handled by AirSouth. Non-NATO operations involving areas to the south of the peninsula and the national security of air lanes in the Mediterranean, the best united Air Command seems to be the ROC located in Puglia.

At the present moment each of the regional commands is directly subordinate for national operations to its own Service Staff (Army or Navy or Air). This solution is clearly unsatisfactory as most national operations involve units of more than one Service. According to the recent Italian Defense White Book () "those three structures (i.e. the three Single Service Staffs) are under the command of the Chief of Central Defense Staff". However this statement is inaccurate both in formal and practical terms as no real line of command exists from the CDS down to the single Service Chiefs of Staff. It follows that the only solution for joint operations should be the subordination of joint task forces to the Central Defense Staff which would appoint the most appropriate command for any single emergency.

As concerns two-star or division levels, the problem would arise mainly for the Army, but only for operations in a NATO context beyond the FEBA. In other cases, the level of commitment should not exceed the brigade level; as a result, the prior establishment of a tri-service nucleus within the Third Army Corps Command, to be upgraded when necessary (vide the last section of Operational Command and Control. Italy's Situation.), and also within other commands (e.g. the 3rd Naval Division) should be sufficient for handling command requirements on the tri-service level in all situations outside the Northeastern Theater (Friuli-Venezia Giulia). If, however, operations beyond the FEBA were to become necessary on the division level, a fully structured command for planning such operations must be available beforehand, given the complexity and difficulty of the operation. Adhering again to the principle that the creation of new commands should be avoided, this function could be assigned either to the Ariete Armored Division Command or the Centauro Mechanized Division Command; Ariete is currently under the Fifth Army Corps Command and Centauro is under the Third Army Corps Command. Exchanges of formations, if necessary, should not cause any major problems. The Ariete Armored Division Command would have the advantage of being closer to the area of operation, thus increasing readiness and simplifying support of the force. The Centauro Division Command could take over from Ariete upon reaching the battle area. Whatever command is to be appointed should receive, in any case, personnel from the Air Force so as to increase its capacity for air-ground cooperation, a key element for the success of the operation; it would also require personnel from the airborne troops in order to provide coordinated, competent handling of its assignment within the overall plan of maneuvers.

There would be one command level, however, that would not present any major problems whatsoever: the brigade, which exists on a suitable operational level in all three branches of the armed forces. To the extent possible, organizational relationships should be respected; this would not exclude the possibility of major modifications within a brigade to adapt it to its specific task. The only command that does not exist on this level is the amphibious unit command. In this case, the Army Marine (Lagunari) Regiment Command could be raised to brigade level, and for amphibious operations of considerable importance it would also be assigned, in addition to its

own marine battalions, the San Marco Navy Marine Battalion, without affecting the latter's position within the Navy.

COMMAND CONSIDERATIONS FOR MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONS

There are two cases in which there would be no problems at all: NATO operations and UN operations. In these two cases, a clear joint command chain already exists for all participating forces, regardless of their country of origin.

The matter becomes more complex and takes on different dimensions when a rapid deployment force is brought in (whether for operational tasks or for "peacekeeping" duties) to act alongside forces from other countries. In these cases, the problem would not only involve the top military command, but more importantly, top-level political authority. Assuming that the countries involved manage to reach an agreement on the political directives for the military decision-making unit, the internal command structure of the force needs to be determined.

From a military point of view, the ideal solution would be a multinational chain of command from top to bottom, down to the brigade level. In any case battalions should remain under national leadership. Such a solution has been implemented numerous times in the past and has almost always provided excellent results. It is also the solution adopted within NATO for its own multinational rapid deployment force: Ace Mobile Force (AMF).

A less drastic solution would be operational cooperation among the units from the various nations. Such a solution would undoubtedly cause greater problems in implementation, but it may be the only feasible option where the individual nations are not willing to create an international Command. In this case, however, the nations would have to assign to a Commander chosen from among the forces to be used the task of devising, in concert with the others, the best manner for using the individual forces so as to avoid interference and duplication of efforts. Such coordination should also be extended to the operational execution level; this would be a less than satisfactory arrangement, but it would still be better than having each force independently conducting its own operations.

The latter method could obviously not be applied to actual combat operations; it could, however, have some merit in peacekeeping operations (as was seen in the 1982-84 Multinational Force in Lebanon). If no other alternative were available, well-defined individual tasks and, to the extent possible, distinct sectors of activity could be assigned to the individual forces, with each nation exercising overall operational command and control of its own force.

Another important measure would be to establish rules of engagement on the military-political level, as indicated in NATO document MC 192/1 on Rules of Engagement.

It goes without saying that the initiation of any multinational military operation without a preestablished common line of political-military management would considerably reduce the possibility of the operation's success.

RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE STRUCTURE. GROUND FORCES

A structure for Air Force and Navy participation in any particular rapid deployment force task would have to be established in advance only for the areas of planning, general measures and tri-service training integration. The flexibility of these two Services allows various kinds of units to be brought together rapidly to create the desired operational mix.

Army units present a different problem: advance guidelines for operating within a rapid deployment force must be very clear, because these units are less flexible and less versatile than Navy and Air Force units and because their preparation, which is primarily tailored to the particular type of operation to be performed, requires greater detail in the planning, training and organization phases.

An organizational structure must, therefore, be established in advance for the rapid deployment force, covering all ground units that might be called, so as to ensure common preparation, without however drastically modifying peacetime organization. This is the solution adopted by the United States' Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF). A solution that is less appropriate to operational requirements than France's Force d'Action Rapide, which is a Major Formation with all the required forces and support units. For Italy, however, the US model is the only possible option, at least for the immediate future; it would be too difficult to restructure the existing chain of commands so radically, not to mention creating a new Major Formation. Such a rapid deployment force should not, however, be considered as a force to be used according to traditional command schemes, but rather as a pool to be drawn upon in accordance with the kind of emergency to be dealt with. The Central Defense Staff would still be responsible for deciding which forces would be used in each case.

Based on these criteria and the potential tasks outlined for each individual scenario, the rapid deployment force should be subdivided into three slices ("A", "B" and "C"), distinguished by specialty and by function.

- Slice "A" would comprise the Centauro Mechanized Division and the Cremona Mechanized Brigade, stationed in northwestern Italy. These two Major Formations, which are already under the direct command of the Third Army Corps Command, could detach mechanized or armored forces to be deployed beyond the FEBA as well as a brigade (e.g. the Cremona) to be sent into Central Europe. The Cremona Brigade and the Alpine Taurinense Brigade, another Major Formation capable of performing such tasks, are

stationed near the French border and are, therefore, better placed for reaching the zone of operations by land. But the key task, a delaying action beyond the FEBA, should be performed by a divisional group composed of paratroop, alpine, mechanized and armored units. (T.N. Alpine units are specialized in combat in mountain areas.) The slice "A" would, therefore take part to such operations beyond the FEBA only with two brigades, as other Units would come from slices "B" or "C". In emergency situations, these two brigades could be taken from the Ariete Armored Division, located much closer to the FEBA, to be replaced by equivalent from the Centauro Mechanized Division. This is but one of the possible ways of maneuvering slice A to enable it to fulfill the requirements of such a complex task. Command and control of air-ground operations would be entrusted to the Third Army Corps Command as explained above. Defense of the rear could also be revised, being entrusted not so much to campaign units as to the territorial defense units, duly restructured and composed mainly of reservists, to be mobilized mostly on a local basis and called in for limited, well defined tasks similar to those being at present assigned to infantry garrisons manning permanent fortifications. This would imply a revision of the territorial defense structure to reduce the involvement of Major Formations, focusing their commitment, instead, on maneuvering capabilities.

- Slice "B" would be composed of units capable of operating in particularly difficult environments, and possessing a high degree of both tactical and strategic mobility. These units would be used in missions aimed at providing immediate deterrence. In combat situations, they would be deployed in areas where the terrain would impede the use of armored units by the enemy; consequently, they should be in a position to join up rapidly with friendly units. Slice B would be the main "rapid deployment" unit, and within Slice B, the most operationally ready units would be the airborne troops. This Slice would be the best suited for operations in the context of a major formation division-size to be deployed beyond the FEBA or as a component of the Southern Region's strategic reserve. It would also be the best suited force for all domestic and international tasks where operational readiness is a key to success. Slice B should comprise a paratroop brigade (Folgore), an amphibious brigade composed of the Marine Army Regiment and the Marine San Marco Battalion, and also an alpine brigade, preferably the Taurinense with its Susa combat group, which has been operating for decades in conjunction with ACE's Mobile Force. The availability of these three brigades would create a considerable intervention capability for widely varying environments, whether based on individual brigades alone, or as components of a single division-based complex composed of two or three brigades. Slice B would be particularly important in the Mediterranean area; it would be, for example, the best suited force for intervening in the event of a threat to Malta's security. Each brigade should rely on the Social Forces which are particularly well trained for these particular types of

operation. The Army Col Moschin battalion would support the Folgore Brigade, the Navy "Arditi Soccursori e Subacquei" would support the amphibious brigade, and the alpine paratroop company would support the alpine brigade. An airborne armoured reconnaissance unit of the brigade or division level would also be essential, composed of one of the existing division-level reconnaissance units, properly re-equipped for this type of operations.

- Slice C would include those units of the rapid deployment force that are less specialized but capable nonetheless of carrying out operations requiring a lower level of operational readiness and promising to be prolonged. They would be equipped with material similar to Slice B forces and could, therefore, serve as back-up to Slice B. All Slice C forces would have to be easily transportable by sea or by air. Two or three line infantry brigades would be the best instrument for "peacekeeping" operations; other forces, such as those under Slice B, would be used below capacity in this type of operations, and when tied up for long periods, they would lose their own operational capabilities. The availability of two or three brigades for this type of operations would also solve beforehand the problems of preparation for peacekeeping operations; In addition, it would guarantee a high level of effectiveness and a satisfactory level of rotation among units of these brigades.

As concerns material, however, all the units of the rapid deployment force suffer considerable shortcomings. In anti-tank defense, with the improved capabilities provided by the new Milan and Tow lines, the problem is now limited to individual LAW anti-tank weaponry, where the Folgore anti-tank weapon could provide a suitable answer. The central sectors are: air defense, battlefield surveillance, and tactical-strategic mobility. These problems could be solved by assigning maximum priority to Slice B forces which would have a greater need than forces in the other two slices to improve their equipments.

The following could serve as rough estimates for the manpower to be included in the rapid deployment force:

- Slice A: approximately 20,000 men
- Slice B: approximately 13,000 men
- Slice C: from 10,000 (for the two-brigade option) to 15,000 men.

The rapid deployment force then, would assemble up to approximately 40,000 men. Keeping in mind, however, that a third of the units in the Italian formations today are not fully operational (due to the fact that they are involved in lower 2nd level training), it seems absolutely essential, at least for Slice B and for Slice A, that an additional company be set up for each battalion, giving them a force level equivalent to 130%. Personnel engaged in second level

training, however, although not employable in military operations, could still be used in Slice C "peacekeeping" operations.

RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE STRUCTURE. NAVAL AND AIR FORCES

For the naval and air forces there is less need to designate units or formations to be engaged in each possible task. The flexibility characteristic of these two services would enable the most suitable formations to be called in rapidly at the time they are needed for the specific emergency in question.

It would therefore be more advisable to identify in broad terms the functions which would be performed by naval and air forces within each mission.

- Medium-intensity operations related to territorial defense of Italy. The naval and air forces called in should be able to perform all duties related to transport and landing activities as well as logistical and fire support for the ground forces.
- High-intensity operations beyond Italy's borders. Transport and air drop of some ground troops, interdiction, air-ground support, aerial reconnaissance. The involvement of naval forces would be limited to the possibility of supply and restocking activities, raids, etc.
- Operations on behalf of Greece or Turkey, in the form of a strategic reserve under Aifsouth. These operations would undoubtedly receive support from Allied naval and air units with their planes and ships, which would operate alongside Italian forces to ensure continuous operational and logistical support of the forces deployed. The involvement of Italian naval and air units should be greatest at the beginning of the operation, being subsequently replaced, when possible, by local structures.
- Operations aimed at linking up the Central and Southern NATO regions. Italy's air commitment would be greatest in the areas of reconnaissance, close interdiction and tactical air support, if the zone of activity is near Italian territory, in which case air transport would be used only when absolutely necessary. As concerns operations in the southern region of Central Europe, air transport would assume a more important role in the initial phases. Other missions aimed at supporting Italian ground units could be performed by other air forces or by a smaller detachment of the Italian Air Force backed up by local forces. The compromise represented by this latter solution should be more than satisfactory.
- Operations aimed at protecting Italian citizens abroad. In some cases, a limited air-ground operation may be sufficient; it would, however, have to be carried out in conditions of maximum security so as to defuse the threat of local reactions which, with the advanced weaponry now available everywhere, are always

possibile and almost always effective. For this reason, air convoys must have continuous protection while in flight as well as while on the ground during landing and loading operations. The same goes for operations launched from the sea. The size and composition of each task group will obviously vary in accordance with the dimensions and difficulty of each task.

- Peacekeeping operations. For obvious logistical considerations, deployments of Italian ground forces should be easily supportable by sea. These support activities would, however, be limited in their logistical as well as operational aspects. Air support should be conceived only as a complementary to naval support activities.

If the local situations rapidly deteriorates beyond the limits conceived for a peacekeeping operation, there should always be the possibility of mounting a tri-service operation capable of fully supporting Italian forces and, if necessary, ensuring their rapid and safe withdrawal and reembarkment.

In most cases, these activities could be carried out by the currently available air and naval forces. Significant shortcomings do exist, however, in various sectors; these would have to be remedied in advance in order to ensure that the task groups called into action would have the operational balance required for the success of their activities.

In the air-naval sector, air protection of Italy's coastline beyond a distance of 200-300 miles is inadequate, and is particularly lacking in the area of amphibious transport in the naval sector.

In the air sector, the introduction of Tornado will allow greater penetration levels and increased capabilities and radius of action for Italian barrage attacks. With the arrival of AMX, it can be expected that tactical air support will be upgraded to an acceptable level. Hawkeye or AWACS type airborne surveillance and control systems such as AWACS or Hawkeye for the zone of operations for ground and naval forces. In-flight refueling capabilities are totally nonexistent, thus seriously limiting the radius of action and the flight time of Italian aircraft (22). Air transport capacity is also insufficient, considering the modest number of C-130 aircraft, the inadequacy of the 6222 for medium range operations and the fact that quite often, a large share of the available planes for air transport missions are diverted to civilian use.

Consequently, the problem of structuring the task forces in a Joint-Services perspective should be dealt with by the Central Defense together with the three service staffs in order to identify an operationally and financially realistic level of optimum use, thereby guaranteeing the likelihood of success for each mission.

Such a procedure would offer a valuable new approach to national defense issues, in a tri-service framework, in terms of planning, programming, supplies and operations, a modus operandi practically unknown today.

DRAFTEES OR VOLUNTEERS? GROUND FORCES

The missions contemplated within the scenarios all require a high level of professional preparation on the part of the units chosen. This includes high maneuverability, experience in handling technologically sophisticated weapons and systems, cooperation among several branches of the army and with the other two services up to and including the lower technical-operational levels, versatility and flexibility of use, aptitude for strategic-tactical mobility, combat capability in situations requiring operational authority down to the lowest levels, etc.

It would be unrealistic to expect average army units to feasibly fulfill such requirements in view of current organizational and recruiting procedures.

Moreover, regular units probably could not do better, considering the limited duration of service (12 months) and the low percentage of volunteers (below 10%) present in the operational units.

On the political level, the use of draftees not recruited for special commitments (23) would present serious problems if they were to be used in missions such as those contemplated for the rapid deployment force which, in order to be successful, require readiness, a high level of reserve and full involvement of personnel in weapons handling in situations that frequently extend beyond the traditional role of defending national borders. The opposition of the soldiers' families, of the soldiers themselves, and of some political forces, which was overcome rather well during the Beirut crisis, could result in the failure of the operation and even jeopardize the safety of the units brought in.

This problem would not arise if the Italian army were to change its present organization-recruiting framework based almost entirely on drafted personnel (nearly 90%) to a system more nearly similar to the British or American forces, which are fully volunteer. However, Italy is presently not in a position, either in terms of political consensus or in terms of the "supply" of volunteers, to carry out such a radical change (24). Moreover, if the present recruiting system is maintained, it would not be advisable to assign the new enlistees expected in the coming years (assuming the bill under consideration in the Chamber of Deputies is passed) to rapid deployment force units. If this happened, not only full implementation of the measure be a lengthy process, but the Army would still lack the means of remedying, even minimally the very serious lack of long-term specialized personnel and officers in all its units today. As a matter of fact, in order to properly man all the rapid deployment force units that would potentially be needed, tens of thousands of volunteers would be necessary, equivalent to or near the level provided for by law. It would be counterproductive, furthermore, to create an "island" totally different from the essentially unchanged Army, around it; this could lay the basis for

further isolation that would seriously damage overall efficiency and cohesion. For this reason, it is absolutely essential that a solution be found that is capable of giving some guarantee of feasibility, without however bringing in models that are incompatible with the overall framework.

Three Slices ("A", "B" and "C") have been proposed for the rapid deployment force, each one associated with a different kind of activity. It would not be out of line, then, to adopt criteria in the domain of personnel selection as well that take into account the difficulties of each task on the political as well as on the military level. In other words:

- Slice A would be deployed in missions requiring a high level of professional preparation, but that do not present any particular problems on the political level, as they would be directly associated with NATO tasks or national territorial defense operations. In the training-operational aspect, technical-tactical requirements would be similar to those already possessed by the units. In terms of the level of professional preparation, however, these missions would require personnel that is more highly trained than what is presently available and would also require a better system of integration.
- Slice B, in view of its high degree of operational readiness, would also be used for "overseas" missions, wherein immediate political consensus is not always available and which are particularly complicated due to the unpredictability of operations and environment. Even acknowledging that these units now have a higher level of professional preparation than do average Army units, the increase in preparedness that would be necessary is still considerable. This would appear to indicate that preference in personnel assignment go to these units. The "Special forces", which would be part of the present slice already meet said special requirements.
- Slice C, on the other hand, presents fewer political and operational difficulties than the other two. It would require, however, a selected recruitment system as it would be used in "overseas" operations.

In summary, the components of the three Slices would have to be upgraded in personnel and officer staff; however, in order to reduce the organizational and financial burden, a "distinction" could be made on the basis of the difficulty of the missions contemplated for each slice. Other "distinctions" are already present within the Army's current structure and have not created any major organizational problems (25).

Slice B, which presents greater difficulties than the other two slices, is currently divided into two subcategories: one for "special" Navy and Army forces and one covering all other forces. The first subcategory does not present any problems in the area of personnel selection since it already includes fully volunteer personnel with an exceptional level of professional preparation and

selected according to strict mental, physical, and motivational criteria. The other subcategory has within its structure a prototype that could be copied: the alpine paratroop company, 40% volunteers and 60% draftees who are also "volunteers" as concerns their choice of assignment, but are no different from other draftees, aside from the fact that they passed the strict selection tests of mental and physical fitness and ability to operate in mountainous terrains. Applying this model to the other units in the Slice, the demand for "volunteer" personnel with long term commitment would increase by 30% with respect to current levels. At the same time, the system of free choice of assignment for draftees that is currently in force in paratroop units would have to be extended to all sections of this Slice. Considering the fact that requests to be assigned to the paratroop brigade are well over need, in the wake of the operation in Beirut, part of said personnel could be detailed to the other two equally prestigious units (amphibious and alpine), even in the likely event that both these units would be successful in attracting, by their own means and due to their better defined operational structure, an adequate number of applicants.

Even if these measures were adopted, the 12-month term of duty is still insufficient. It would be difficult, nevertheless, to propose mandatory service of 18 months as is the case with the San Marco Battalion, due to the political unpopularity of the measure. Compulsory service could, however, be increased from 12 to 15 months for the entire Slice. Longer mandatory service, more difficult tasks and increased risk should be appropriately compensated not only in pay, as is the case for Carabinieri (the national police force that is a branch of the Army) and to a lesser extent for paratroopers, but also in other areas.

The pay scale should be divided into two levels: one for non-crisis periods and the other for the actual duration of the crisis itself.

For Slice A, it would merely be a matter of assigning more officers and NCO's or long term volunteers (average 3 years of service) as well as specialized personnel with a long-term commitment, in order to approach the near-optimum ratio of 40% of the overall force. The free choice system mentioned above would not have to be implemented considering the fact that Slice A missions all fall within the traditional area of national territorial defense operations. It could nevertheless benefit the overall structure by creating from the very beginning an organization that would be easily adapted to a training target potentially superior to the average level of the other units outside the rapid deployment force. Duration of service could be set at 12 months.

Slice C, although to a much lesser degree, would be subject to the same constraints as Slice B. With respect to peacekeeping forces, free choice of assignment should be implemented and compulsory service should be lengthened, if possible, to 15 months, so as to ensure rotation of trained personnel at acceptable intervals (six months). Longer term service would also be essential for properly training these units in traditional tasks as well as in those tasks outlined for peacekeeping forces.

In summary, it should be possible to:

- increase the the percentage of career and specialized long-term personnel to 40% in all rapid deployment force units.
- increase the length of service to 15 months for all units, Slices B and C in particular. Length of service for short term officers for the three Slices, chosen with particular scrutiny, should be increased from 15 to 18 months.
- allow for a reasonable increase in military pay commensurate with the type of training and operational commitments, with the possibility of a different scale for actual active duty.
- allow free choice of assignment for all troops or at least for those of Slices B and C.
- establish a very thorough selection process, not only in the mental-physical aspect but also taking into account the candidates' athletic and professional background and tendencies in order to reduce the individual training effort. In all sectors, an effort should be made to choose personnel already qualified for their particular tasks through previous experience in related specialization or activities in their civilian lives. This guideline has already been applied, albeit imperfectly, in the Army, as a whole; it should be applied very strictly in these units.

All these measures would be pointless, however, if the well-selected, motivated and properly compensated personnel were to be tied down to garrison activities such as internal services, guard duty, various manual labor duties, etc. This kind of services already absorb, on a daily average, over 15% of all armed forces personnel. It should not be difficult to bring in extra personnel from outside to handle these duties within the units of the three slices. As a result, ; in addition to increasing the efficiency of services (a basic consideration), more time and effort could be dedicated to training activities.

An increase in actual manning levels would seem to be indispensable in order to have two thirds of the personnel each brigade in operational status.

NAVAL AND AIR FORCES

The problem arises in different terms for the Navy and the Air Force. Both have a much more favorable percentage (25%) (26) of career and long-term volunteer personnel than the Army. These forces have a wide radius of action and are normally associated with "force projection"; they are, hence, most likely to receive rapid political consensus for "overseas" tasks. In the Air Force in particular, all operational roles are occupied by career personnel, thus further

simplifying the problem of achieving political consensus for their use. For the Navy, the problem of overseas commitments is less serious from the psycho-political angle than for Army units, which are ordinarily deployed in specific areas in Italy. The Navy, furthermore, has a compulsory term of service of 18 months as compared to the Army's 12 months; this allows it to achieve more satisfactory training levels

In addition, the Navy units (except for its amphibious unit the San Marco Battalion (27)) and Air Force units which would be called upon to operate within a rapid deployment force would not require training very different from that needed for other missions. More attention would have to be given to the tri-service sector. The use of Navy and Air Force units in conjunction with the rapid deployment force would not entail, therefore, overly burdensome training considerations; rather, it would present considerable advantages in terms of greater operational cohesion of the tri-service instrument. This is apparent from the French and British examples where much attention is given to the preparation and organization of ground forces for these specialized missions, while air and naval forces with their greater flexibility and versatility, are considered to be in large measure ready for action as they stand.

In the area of personnel, there is no doubt that considerable improvements would be possible if the percentage of volunteer personnel rose above present levels. Such an increase would, however, have to be divided between these two branches as a whole rather than focus on any one rapid deployment slice.

OPERATIONAL READINESS

Maintaining a high level of operational readiness implies the continuous availability of very high levels of trained forces, several restraints on the freedom of personnel, standing procedures for loading onto air or naval transport these heavy vehicles and equipment needed to guarantee a suitable operative capability for the alerted unit and, lastly, stocks the heaviest and most cumbersome equipment located as close as possible to the likely area of operations. All these requirements entail high costs and a very high level of stress, both of which would be totally unjustified if not in preparation for a real, imminent crisis. It thus appears indispensable, for each type of scenario outlined above, to establish some standard indicators of the development of realistically assessing the phases and probable evolution. Such a process should include a reasonable allowance for the pre-crisis period, during which time the early warning stage could be used to plan the following stages until the notice to move is issued. Accurate projections regarding the path the crisis might follow, an intelligence network capable of rapidly perceiving indications and furnishing accurate evaluations as well as a political-strategical crisis management organization that would be capable of making prompt, well-informed decisions concerning the use of force would all be considerable contributions toward a balanced, rapid response. Operational readiness alone, regardless of how high a level is

achieved, cannot compensate for an inadequate intelligence network or an insufficient level of decision-making capacity within the political-strategic leadership command. The current situation, which is aggravated by the separation of the intelligence network from the military (28), makes the chances for truly effective crisis response uncertain at best.

The scenarios considered herein could require different phases and degrees of operational readiness. The greatest uncertainty in terms of promptness concerns the reaction to air- or sea-based raids for sabotage, terrorism or political retaliation by a smaller country. Such a contingency, however would entail a relatively low level of threat in terms of the level of forces engaged and would therefore only require this extremely high degree of operational readiness for relatively few units. By assigning support activities for backing up direct defense units in sensitive positions, whenever possible, to ground units close to the zone involved in the enemy attack, the operational requirements for units in Slice B, the most mobile and best suited of the forces, would be reduced to a small number of critical situations. Readiness to intervene is defined as the sum total of the period of preparation and the time necessary to reach the zone of operations. For this reason, of the units in Slice B, the airborne troops would be by far the best suited for performing this task because they combine operational units, air transport, and material. The amphibious unit would be the next most-ready unit; in some areas it would even be more ready, at least its embarked troops, even though they would require longer travel time to reach the zone of operations. Next, on the 2nd and 3rd echelons, would come the alpine units, if further support is needed for the operation. In situations where the zone of operations could be reached by land, it would be more suitable to follow up airborne troops with ground units, with emphasis being placed on armored units. The same sequence as used for Slice B operations could be followed in all other operations performed outside Italy (intervention on behalf of Malta, protection of Italian citizens abroad, etc.). The airborne component would always be, in any event, the most ready in operational terms. The other two components (amphibious and alpine) would be deployed subsequently.

From this, it can be seen that domestic as well as international requirements point towards maintaining a high level of readiness for Slice B, with special attention given to airborne troops. Under normal conditions, preparation times for paratroop and air transport and support units overall should require approximately 12 hours for a company and 36 hours for a battalion. Within 48 hours, the alpine units could also begin to operate. Approximately 48 hours would also be necessary to prepare an amphibious operation based on two task groups on the battalion level, provided that at least one of them is already shipboard and that the weapons and materiel for the other are located near the embarkation site. The other task group, at least if it were the "lagunasi" (stationed in Venice), could reach Brindisi, with its light equipment, within 24 to 36 hours, in time to embark along with the naval formation. The time required to reach the zone of operations is of critical importance in non-NATO crises, which are

for the most part unforeseeable. In NATO situations, it could be maintained that there would be sufficient time for gradual preparation during the early warning period until all the units are ready to move rapidly as of receipt of the notice to move. It would also be important for the political-military leadership to be thoroughly familiar with all possible contingencies, NATO as well as non-NATO, in order to modify warning periods on the basis of an objective assessment of the situation's criticality. Otherwise, a long drawn-out warning period could easily be followed by an abrupt, immediately effective notice to move, perhaps provoking a crisis that could easily have been avoided.

Operational readiness is still confused by some with readiness to move, which is in fact something entirely different. A unit that is operationally ready must be able, at the time it leaves its station, to perform its mission with reasonable likelihood of success. This implies having properly considered beforehand those operations to be performed and availability of all the troops and materiel deemed necessary for operating independently for a period of at least two to three days, in a tri-service framework covering, if possible, all important aspects from surveillance, to air-ground-naval fire support, to collective defense, etc., with air, ground and naval units able to operate in the framework of joint maneuvers. This goal could be attained by setting up an ad hoc rapid deployment force, composed of units having experience working together as well as with similar units from friendly or allied nations. It would, on the other hand, be very dangerous to hastily throw together troops from the services, even if they had had previous individual training, unless they had been trained to work together as a whole in the form of a tri-service unit.

The most pressing problem to be solved is that of air and naval transport of airborne and amphibious troops. Without adequate available transport, operational readiness would be an exercise in futility: no matter how ready the individual units would be for action, there would be no way to get them to the zone of operations. In terms of operational readiness, a minimum level of units should be established which would be transported all at once, thus postponing the problem of bringing in other forces for subsequent missions. This minimum could be comparable to paratroop task force battalion size with its fire and logistical support, plus two amphibious task forces. Lastly, with reference to the other cases outlined for the scenario, requirements for operational readiness would not be as high and would, therefore, be easier to meet.

JOINT TRAINING EFFORTS

The training issue must be dealt with on three different levels: tri-service operations, military tri-service command and control, and the political-military aspect.

There is only one area where training would require, as an exception, an ad hoc training procedure and that would be for "peacekeeping" forces. This specific training could be provided rapidly, if the units were already well trained in individual and

units aspects during normal infantry training activities. Other situations would require more intense and more developed training activities on the individual level for other units, but would not involve additional training efforts within their respective corps.

Tri-service training would, rather, call for an effort and a level of skill and preparedness that are not available today. Various sectors would have to be modified so as to allow for proper tri-service cooperation among the different armed forces thereby producing an appropriate level of operational capability.

Air-ground operations would require close cooperation between Air Force and Army units in tactical air support, intelligence, air transport, and control of air space. Air-naval operations would call for a greater level of cooperation between the Air Force and the Navy in surveillance of lines of communications, protection of convoys during landing and embarkation, etc.

As concerns naval-amphibious operations, Army units (Lagunari) would have to be able to engage in amphibious operations while stationed on board ships, and Navy units (San Marco) would have to be able to operate under typically land-based conditions within a Major Formation (brigade) (29).

The problem could be solved on various levels and in various ways. First and foremost, training and liaison terms could be assigned to the necessary units on a permanent or long-term basis so as to have knowledgeable personnel on site and increase the availability of a distinctly "expert" base for times of crisis. Air Force officers and NCO's could train with Army units; Lagunari officers could take courses in amphibious operations under the auspices of the Navy; San Marco officers and petty officers could be trained in Army tasks; and paratroop officers and NCO's could be assigned to airmobile units within a well-coordinated training program for tri-services integration. These measures would provide a significant improvement in tri-service familiarity in a relatively short period of time, thus paving the way for the next level: tri-service exercises.

The next level comes with step-by-step intensification and modification of existing joint service exercise opportunities, which are normally air-ground or air-naval in nature. This involves tri-service exercises within a task group structured like a rapid deployment force. Exercises of this nature on the ground brigade level with the necessary air-naval support should be conducted, at least during the initial phase, once a year and should be preceded by at least one other exercise at a lower level (task group with the necessary air and naval assistance) to experiment with modalities and procedures beforehand.

The active participation of officers, NCO's and some units would be extremely valuable in exercises or training activities carried out by US, French and British rapid deployment force units (30). This participation would ensure two goals: indirect acquisition of tri-service operational experience (which Italy currently lacks) and

operational familiarity in a difficult sector with friendly or allied nations with whom Italy could be called upon to operate. One possible model is the coordinated activities which have been carried out jointly by British and Dutch amphibious units.

After this broad description of the type of training effort that would be necessary for acquiring tri-service operational capabilities, we can proceed to discuss training for the superior levels (tri-service military command and control and political-military management on the national level). The solutions are simple: organize unit (FTX) and command post (CPX) training exercises in such a way as to include the military and political top command levels for a limited period of time. CPX exercises could easily be conducted on various levels or even separately from FTX exercises; they would be easier to prepare than FTX for properly handling the cases outlined in the scenario, through war gaming.

Such training activities would have a beneficial effect not only on the commands and units involved with the rapid deployment force but also on the overall political and military organization responsible for national defense. For the first time, as a matter of fact, top command levels would be directly involved in an independent, consulting/decision-making activity, albeit only on training level, with direct responsibilities that could not be delegated to NATO or other forces.

WEAPONS AND MATERIEL. GROUND FORCES

The Army's current operational structure is based on a centralized approach to ground combat, involving high density of deployments, relatively limited independence of maneuvering, and fire support, designed to cover all battlefield contingencies (air support, AA, and ground fire). The materiel generally favors overall potential and direct protection, to the detriment of mobility over long distances.

Obviously, the rapid deployment force type units that would be used outside this operational context and, hence, unable to rely on that kind of support, must be capable of solving any and all combat problems on their own. Today this problem could only be solved by taking a sizeable quantity of combat vehicles and weapons systems from other units and assigning them to the force; furthermore, this equipment is so heavy and bulky that transport by air or sea would be difficult if not impossible. Other systems are too slow and cumbersome to meet the needs of a force that must be able to count on prompt receipt of all its weapons and equipment.

Consideration should be given to the possibility of finding a different method for equipping rapid deployment force units with materiel, stressing vehicles and weapons systems able to supply high levels of firepower and mobility while economizing on bulk and weight. Rapid deployment force units, and those under Slice A in particular, should be equipped with the following:

- H24 surveillance equipment able to supplement in time and space? air reconnaissance intelligence from various sources (AWACS, satellite, photo reconnaissance missions, etc.). This equipment (drones, radar already in the CATRIN program), which current technology makes available at a relatively modest cost, should be handled in such a way as to provide continuous intelligence coverage in real time within the area of intelligence responsibility for the ground units deployed; this would normally extend up to a few dozen kilometers of depth.
- "Secure" command and control systems and equipment able to facilitate rapid data processing and exchange of intelligence and transmission of orders.
- Portable anti-air defense systems for low altitudes and rapid deployment field systems for low to medium altitudes.
- Individual and squad-served anti-tank systems equipped with night vision, in quantities and of type capable of creating an anti-tank density sufficient to offset the lack of armor.
- Semi-armored vehicles, wheeled or tracked, developed on the "family" plan (i.e. a single model with variants for transport, logistics, combat, ambulance, etc.) light (not over eight tons) and compact, so as to provide an adequate tactical mobility without creating too many problems for air and naval transport to the detriment of strategic mobility. The Soviet Airborne division is equipped with 300 units of this type.
- Fire support, with sufficient artillery and mortar, again provided by light and compact weapons. The 105/14 howitzer, which is small and light enough, no longer has the needed range or firepower. The Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) saturation weapon, when it becomes available, would be a viable alternative, but there could be others such as the A129 combat helicopter..
- Communication equipment for maintaining contact within the ground force as well as with the task group and air support.
- Transport and combat helicopters. There would be no major problem for operations near Italian territory where the rapid deployment force could rely on central transport resources (for example, 25 CH-47 CHINOOKs) which could easily arrive on its own. "Overseas" operations would be more difficult; they would have to rely strictly on helicopters stationed on ships or transported by sea to the zone of operations.
- Other materiel, such as forward or close-in defense mines.

An adequate level of this kind of materiel, which is in fact already available for the most part, intelligent decisions on new technologies, and a change in course that would increase strategical mobility could combine to give the rapid deployment force a high

level of reaction capability and tactical and strategic mobility, without overburdening it. Furthermore, some materials, such as wheeled or tracked light protected vehicles could be included in a viable solution for more than one unit, besides those of Slice B or C of the rapid deployment force. Their use for national defense, outside the northeast theater, could reduce requirements for cumbersome and costly tractor-drawn transport. They could make transportation of units by road faster and easier and reduce the overall logistics burden. Furthermore, at present transport of heavy equipment must rely mainly on the motorway network due to its high potentiality. But motorways are highly vulnerable and can be easily and rapidly cut, turning them into a trap for the equipment and units in that stretch of road. The use of light semi-armored vehicles not as an alternative but as a supplement to the vehicles now in service would not only increase the strategic mobility of the rapid deployment force but would also enhance the operational and tactical mobility of all forces outside the combat zone.

WEAPONS AND MATERIEL. NAVAL FORCES

Any naval force involved in a rapid deployment operation in a non-NATO context must have a level of self-sufficiency commensurate with the air-naval risk involved, the dimensions of operations to be performed, and the assistance it might receive from other naval units in the event of multilateral operations. In the latter case, however, the kind of assistance that could be relied upon does not depend so much on the composition of the multilateral force but as the level of political-military integration within the force itself: the sort of integration that is available for NATO operations but difficult to implement in other cases. An obvious example would be the Beirut operation where, if there had been a higher level of naval integration, the naval requirement could have been considerably reduced, thereby reducing risks, costs and the political-military exposure of the operation. Nevertheless, concerning the naval aspects of a "rapid deployment" force in operations conducted more than 200-300 miles from Italian territory, the naval component must be provided with the following elements, in addition to the ships indispensable (31) to "area" and "position" defense against surface ship, air and submarine attacks:

- Reconnaissance and fighter aircraft, capable also of providing limited but immediate air support to "rapid deployment force" ground units in ground attack and reconnaissance missions.
- Landing ships able to transport the two battalion-level task groups and with their equipment, plus groups a limited number of on-board combat and tactical transport helicopters. The number of ships may be limited to two in the first phase and subsequently raised to three in order to ensure availability during the entire year and maintain one task group permanently stationed on board ship..

- Equipment for the San Marco task force similar to those for lagunari units to satisfy the requirements indicated in the preceding section. LVPTs, MPTs, MTMs.
- Anti-submarine helicopters capable of intervening also as stand-off platforms against surface ships.
- Logistical support ships for the "naval" units. As concerns, on the other hand, logistical requirements for supporting ground forces brought in by air or by sea means, the logistical system should be based on a multifaceted solution including landing ships (available as soon as the combat units have disembarked or civilian roll-on/roll-off ships requisitioned under prior agreements. In the event of deployment of intermediate logistical bases near the zone of operations and conceded by a friendly country, some transport activities could be handled by container ships or other civilian ships which would not be exposed, as would those mentioned above, to risks of the operation.
- Limited capabilities for fire support to ground units, from naval gunnery. Such support, however, should be supplementary and may not, in any case, replace the ground units' own fire support and tactical air support. It should, therefore, be considered as a possible complement and limited mostly to the initial phases of the operation, so that the ships engaged need not remain in the combat area, which could entail considerable survival risks.
- Supply ships, if possible under leasing arrangements and for limited operations whenever available, along the lines of the US Multiproduct Station Ships, which transport fuel, ammunition and various equipment.
- Capacity in light (LVPT7), medium (MTM) and heavy (MTP) landing ships (32), able to transport two amphibious task groups (33) in one wave (three landing ships would be needed to keep at least two in continuous operation).

Most of the above is already available and of top quality. Still to be settled is the issue of what aircraft the flat-top cruiser will carry, and what landing ship to select.

WEAPONS AND MATERIEL. AIR FORCES

As is the case with naval forces, the dimension of the problem changes considerably depending on the nature of the operation and whether or not it would be within a NATO context. For sake of simplicity, the following considerations will be limited non-NATO operations, which would be of greater complexity given the absolute or relative independence that Italy's air forces would have to have in order to fully participate in an operation carried out by a rapid deployment force.

The requirements can be viewed in the following manner:

- Aircraft for tactical support whenever necessary and with substantial autonomy and payload. With the arrival of the AMX aircraft, it is hoped that this problem will be solved (34).
- Aircraft for interdiction and air defense. These tasks could be dealt with on an acceptable level at medium distances by Tornado aircraft which, in non-NATO missions, would be fully available for this type of duty, replacing or used in conjunction with F-104's in air defense missions (35).
- Tactical/strategic military transport aircraft capable of carrying out airdrops of a paratroop task group. This sector is very vulnerable at present due to the quantitative/qualitative inadequacy of the air flight and due to the negative role civilian emergency service would play during certain months of the year (i.e. from July through September or October); this would rule out the use of air transport units for training and operational purposes. A better and more balanced assessment of actual requirements could help reduce this work load, which is no longer supplementary, but has become primary over the last few years. Strategic/tactical transport could only be entrusted to aircraft of a class equal or superior to the C-130, of which Italy currently has 7 or 8 operational, on average. The G-222 would be inadequate based on its load capacity and flight autonomy; it would be excellent, however, for short-range and limited load operations. For the future, G-222 acquisitions should be halted, focusing acquisitions on more versatile aircraft, i.e. aircraft capable of performing tactical and strategic missions. These aircraft could include the tried and tested C-130, or other similar aircraft from other sources, or also a new model to be designed and built in cooperation with a friendly nation, preferably European.
- Airtankers for in-flight refueling. In order to ensure sufficient airborne time for air defense and escort of air or naval convoys and in order to enable flight units to engage in interdiction actions with sufficient fuel loads, duly equipped tanker are essential. These aircraft are normally derived from civilian airlines or C-130's converted for such use. The latter choice should, however, be excluded given the limited number of C-130's currently available.
- Aircraft for electronic measures and countermeasures.
- Remote surveillance aircraft for supporting specific reconnaissance activities. Their equipment would be similar to that of Nimrods, Hawkeyes, or AWACS. With an air-ground surveillance capability reaching up to 200 miles or more and with an air defense control capability, they would represent an essential contribution to air, ground and naval operations. AWACS that are acquired within a NATO context might not always be available for extra-NATO missions; if available, though, they would be the complement to domestic capabilities.

- Civilian transport aircraft suitable for military cargo transport. As was the case with naval transport, arrangements would have to be made in advance so as to ensure ready availability.
- Suitable equipment for guiding aircraft in tactical strikes against ground-based objectives. The current system, which depends on forward air controllers (FAC) and visual methods, is uneconomical because it ties up precious personnel; it is imprecise; and it exposes aircraft to an excessive degree during the identification of the target. With today's technology, target designation can be performed by non-flight personnel using available technology and with the assistance of equipment on the ground, on drones or on helicopters; or less economically, from other aircraft.
- Mobile logistical support equipment is essential, in the case of rapid redeployment of flight units to areas where, due to a different composition of flight lines or insufficient levels of assistance, the flight group must keep its aircraft operational by itself.

As was the case for weapons and materiel proposed for ground and naval forces, air force equipment is not such as to be considered the exclusive preserve of the air force in national missions. Still, this materiel would considerably increase and complement the effectiveness of Italy's Air Force, reducing its dependency on other countries. There is also the possibility, already considered in the section on naval transport, of assistance in the form of strategic aircraft and logistic support from a friendly country through leasing arrangements or in the form of active participation.

LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Logistical considerations are influenced mainly by the level of the operation's intensity (low, medium or high), which directly affects consumption and losses; by its distance from Italian bases; by the level of assistance that can be received from the host country near the area of operations; by the degree of standardization of materials among the friendly forces; by climate; and, finally, by the scale of the operation and, hence, of the forces engaged.

Logically, the primary factor to consider is this last, as it determines more than the others the logistical weight of the operation; in this manner, a decision can be made on the basic organization to be set up so as to ensure a satisfactory level of operational readiness.

Based on a comparison of the various deployment contingencies outlined for the scenario and the three Slices "A", "B" and "C" which should be established for use within the rapid deployment force, it follows that:

- Only operations beyond the northeastern borders (FEBA) would justify the use of approximately two-thirds of the rapid deployment force, drawn from Slice A and part of Slice B. The use of Slice C formations would be possible, given the back-up role assigned to it. On the whole, however, it would be a matter of a division-based effort that could be supplied over land for the most part and that could rely on support from the overall logistical structure of the combat zone.
- Other actions, within or beyond Italian territory, must be held to brigade level, the units drawn mostly from Slice B of the mobile forces. Having thus solved the logistical problem on the brigade level (paratroop, amphibious, or alpine brigades), it would be possible to respond rapidly to any emergency. This could also serve as a logistical prototype for events when, in other tasks, the other two brigades must be brought into action at the same time.

Considering the relatively limited distances (maximum of 2500 km) for air transport operations (approximately six or seven hours of flight with C-130 type strategic/tactical transport aircraft) and maritime transport operations (1000 miles) equal to approximately 60 hours of navigation, it would be advantageous, but not absolutely essential, to set up an intermediate base in friendly territory. The political problem of the availability of bases would not exist in NATO operations, as the nations involved would, themselves, have an interest in providing such a base. There would, however, be organizational problems, due not only to the difficulty of storing sufficient amounts of materiel on site, but also and more importantly, of transporting it to the zone of operations, i.e. getting it to the operational units by normal means, unless heavy use is made of air transport units, which could use the intermediate bases as stopover points.

There are hence two problems that must be solved:

- Stocking supplies for a division-based structure in an area near the FEBA; levels would have to be sufficient for five days of use at high-intensity levels.
- Stocking weapons and materiel for a Slice B type brigade in deposits located in the northern and southern regions of Italy. Arrangements would have to be made in advance for loading a suitable quantity of supplies by air or naval means. For the amphibious brigade, the problem could be simplified by keeping materiel for first-phase use on board one of the landing ships at all times.

Logistical measures for the Navy come under the standard guidelines for naval operations of the duration and intensity expected.

For air forces, redeployment of substantial part of the force, to airports nearer the combat zone, whether in Italy or in a host territory.

A plan for evacuating civilians, above all in terms of air and naval transport, must be available from the very outset of the operation.

An acceptable tri-service plan for logistical support must be drafted beforehand each of the contingencies outlined in the scenario. Furthermore, planning must be followed up by special measures designed to guarantee rapid response by the formations involved in time of emergency.

Given the insufficient level of tri-service experience in this area, the measures to be implemented should be drawn from the experience of countries that have been using rapid deployment forces for some time. Emphasis should be placed on European solutions, which are less effective but more economical, and which involve lower levels of stabilizing of materiel than the US solution.

In order to reduce the stockpiling of most types of materiel and supplies and at the same time ensure the ready availability of supplies and equipment that would be required by rapid deployment force units, deployment in the southern area of the country must be increased, associating it with training areas whenever possible. This measure would allow for continuous use and maintenance of the level of supplies and equipment, and would also start up a constant flow for restocking that could be stepped up in times of crisis. Along with the problem of materials, there is the problem of training tri-service logistical teams, from preparing loads for transport by sea or air to activities concerning the logistical deployment and functioning of the system at levels that are practically unknown today.

Personnel training could be provided by means of special courses or by temporarily stationing specialized teams to teach the loading of aircraft or ships in each of the units of the rapid deployment force, in particular those under Slice B. The terms could be taken from the paratroop brigade and the San Marco battalion, respectively for air and naval duties. The Susa task force could extend its own air task preparation to the entire Taurinense Brigade; at the same time, it should, along with the brigade, be trained in preparing loads for sea transport.

The entire flow of equipment and supplies, finally, should be set out in plans for movement that are carefully scaled to load priorities, with alternative supply routes available.

This rather complex tri-service logistical framework could, if taken seriously, extend its benefits to the entire military organization by contributing significantly to integrating and upgrading the effectiveness of the current logistical system (which is still based on a single-service approach). The results of these measures should be verified by special logistical exercises in

addition to appropriate logistical drills in the CPX and FTX exercises for the rapid deployment force.

CONCLUSIONS

A rapid deployment force appears to be indispensable for Italy's strategic structure, not only as the sole element capable of fulfilling national operational requirements outside the NATO framework, but also as a forward projection in a tri-service vein of a national defense formula that is still based today, as concerns tri-service cooperation, on pre-WWII approaches. Given modern thinking in both East and West, which is based above all else on strategic-tactical mobility and operational readiness, the use of outdated formulas as the basis for national defense doctrine will invalidate Italy's defense and security posture and increase the country's dependence on other nations, in addition to depriving its future course of an essential strategic point of reference as concerns supplies.

The rapid deployment force would not only be a modern response to national security requirements, but would also serve as a catalyst to stimulate interest and activism on defense issues among political and military policymakers.

Measures directly involving a rapid deployment force would be as follows:

- Restructuring the top level of political authority so as to link consultation and political decision-making in a much more effective manner than at present to military operational-strategic implementation. The creation of a Defense Committee or Council, with the proper support, is essential and should not be put off any longer, unless the military "body" is to be deprived of a political "head". This requirement exceeds the limits of a rapid deployment force and touches all sectors of defense activity (from nuclear to conventional), but is most immediately crucial for the rapid deployment force's characteristic tasks, due to the need for perfect liaison and correspondence between the political decision and its military implementation so as to ensure the success of the operation.
- Restructuring the top operational command of the armed forces in such a manner as to centralize decision-making activities; this could be achieved by means of two linked measures: first, by appointing the Chief of Defense Staff as a joint military Commander and military advisor to the government for tri-service matters; and secondly, by upgrading the Central Defense Staff in structural and functional terms.
- Forming a rapid deployment force on a flexible organizational and, to the extent possible, economic basis, entrusting command of the force to existing major Formation Commands, for which the handling of the force will be in addition to but not in conflict with their current duties. In crisis situations, the

command would be chosen on the basis of the operation's principal aspect (i.e. whether it is primarily ground, naval or air), its geographical location (North or South), and, lastly, the dimensions of the task (operational or peacekeeping).

- Reinforcing the designated commands on a continuous basis with modest-sized terms of "experts" from the other armed forces in sufficient number as to be able to conduct planning, logistical-operational organization and preparation of tri-service exercises. The designated command would be upgraded for the emergency by assigning it tri-service personnel mobilized from a single nationwide manpower pool.
- Operational command and control of the task group in the field should be established in advance, designating, on the division level, an existing divisional Command not involved in forward defense of national territory and designating a "tri-service" cell within the Command on the three-star level. The existing Brigade Commands capable of absorbing units from the other branches of the armed forces should be used to modify the operational make-up established in advance for each task. A Brigade Command should be set up for amphibious units, duly upgrading the present Lagunari Regiment Command.
- Concerning structure, the rapid deployment force should be subdivided according to the relative special duties of each unit within it. Slice A would be mechanized and armored, and would be designed for use in the context of defending the national territory even beyond the battle area. Slice B would be strategically and tactically mobile and flexible, also suited for operating in an airborne and/or amphibious troop framework; for this reason, it would also be able to assume duties in Italy or abroad. Slice C would be lightly mechanized or composed of line infantry, and would be designed for use in "peacekeeping" operations, but also available as a reinforcement the units in Slices "A" and "B".
- Assigning higher percentage of long-term volunteer enlisted men and officers and NCO's to the rapid deployment force units, with priority being given to Slice B. The regular personnel should be supplemented by drafted personnel on a "volunteer" basis for Slices B and C, including the possibility of "overseas" use but, preferably and within a realistic assessment of availability, also for Slice A. With reference to the possibility of lengthening compulsory service for rapid deployment force units, priority would again be given to Slice B, extending service to 15 months for enlisted men and to 18 months for short-service officers. This increased duty would be compensated by an increase in pay and other benefits commensurate with the increased risks and training burdens. Personnel selection should be more strict in this area.
- Setting realistic levels of operational readiness, fairly distributed among the various units included in each slice.

These levels should be maintained on a continuous basis, not only by respecting the basic manpower rates, but also by means of training activities and appropriate logistical and organizational measures. The problem of operational readiness must be faced primarily in a tri-service framework, with joint measures to ensure the constant readiness of the force for the task in question. (For example, units to be stationed on amphibious ships, stationing of amphibious ships, pre-commitment of military transport aircraft and paratroop units that are considered indispensable for the initial contact with hostile forces, training for all drops of air transport of essential supplies, other measures for securing sea supply routes, etc.).

- Training. This problem should be faced on various levels for rapidly acquiring the capability needed not only to operate but the rapid deployment force also to handle it politically and militarily. The scale of activities to be implemented is varied, ranging from exercises of interest to the political-military top level, mainly in the form of war gaming, to those with troops (FTX) or command posts (CPX) on different levels and with different degrees of complexity. The different kinds of exercises can be performed jointly, with a frequency not to exceed once every two years, in order to activate all levels at the same time, from the top level of political command to the last soldier. A series of measures should be implemented in order to ensure sufficient tri-service specialization within each unit of the rapid deployment force. It would be beneficial, in this context, to have Italian personnel or even units participate in training activities conducted by foreign units or institutes with strong experience in the sector.
- Weapons and materiel. The units of the rapid deployment force must have greater autonomy of action in all sectors. This can be obtained by assigning them specially designed materiel, preferably light and compact to ease transport and therefore provide greater strategical mobility, and/or by increasing the levels of weapons and supplies that they already have available. The problem of materiel for the rapid deployment force should also be faced on the tri-service level in order to find the most effective solution in terms of strategic mobility as well as the operational capability in the area of operations. A special need for the Navy is landing ships, and for the Air Force, acceptable tactical-strategic transport and surveillance aircraft. The rapid deployment force also touches on other areas that have so far been almost completely neglected by Italy's defense organization as concerns the tri-service defense effectiveness: surveillance; operational intelligence; command, control, and communications; overall air defense; electronic warfare; use of new technologies. Solving these problems for the rapid deployment force would lead to a level of maturity greatly superior to efforts made so far in the area of national defense.
- Logistics. Solutions must be found that would enable rapid availability of the materiel needed by the force as well as

regular use of the materiel whenever possible, so as to avoid costly immobilization of supplies. Using stocks propositioning, logistical bases could be moved towards the northern and southern extremities of the peninsula, limiting deployment in the central region to requirements of the airborne troops which would be called in during the very first phases of rapid deployment force operations and which, along with the airtransport brigade, are presently stationed in Central Italy.

- Financial aspects. It is difficult to establish an all-inclusive forecast in a field where many sectors are still poorly defined and where changes are needed in the areas of training, structures, and recruiting. As a point of reference, however, an overall budget of 1.5 billion dollars spread over a period of five years, should be sufficient to allow for a rapid deployment force of high credibility. A rough indication of the cost of materiel would be as follows. The Army would get some 250 million dollars to be spent on anti-air defense systems, helicopters, (i.e. for reconnaissance and medium range transport), equipment for battlefield surveillance, night vision and target location, logistic materiel, and vehicles and equipment for command posts and individual anti-air systems. Another 100 million dollars should be made available for supplies and miscellaneous materiel. The Navy, which appears to already have its own plan for acquiring 12 VSTOL aircraft for the Garibaldi aircraft carrier, would get appropriations of about 200 million dollars to increase the amphibious ships line to a total of three, 70 million dollars to increase the VSTOL line, 60 million dollars to purchase additional EH-101 helicopters for medium to heavy transport, and about 2 million dollars for the acquisition of additional MTM and MTP units. This would bring total naval spending to about 330 million dollars, leaving some 800 million for the Air Force, to be spent on upgrading the flight line of tactical-strategic transport aircraft, acquiring tankers, and, developing Hawkeye type aircraft, re-equipping G-222s. The end result is an overall budget of a billion dollars for materiel alone. Not only would this expenditure help create a coordinated tri-service mechanism, it would also upgrade the individual units for other potential missions. In short, this superfluous equipment but materiel needed to eliminate shortcoming that, even in the absence of a rapid deployment force, would have to be remedied. Such expense, furthermore, would be compensated by the marked increase in effectiveness of the current defense structure, which still includes too many nonproductive, costly sectors that are little more than charitable write-offs that waste resources.

Rather than costs, the main concern should be cost-benefit in order to judge whether a rapid deployment force is indispensable and, to achieve this, and the only valid measuring stick would be the strategical relevance and configuration of Italy. A rapid deployment force for a country such as Italy is essential in order to reduce dependence on other nations in terms of national defense as well as in terms of developing a role in an area of geo-strategic interest that falls, above all, to Italy: the Mediterranean.

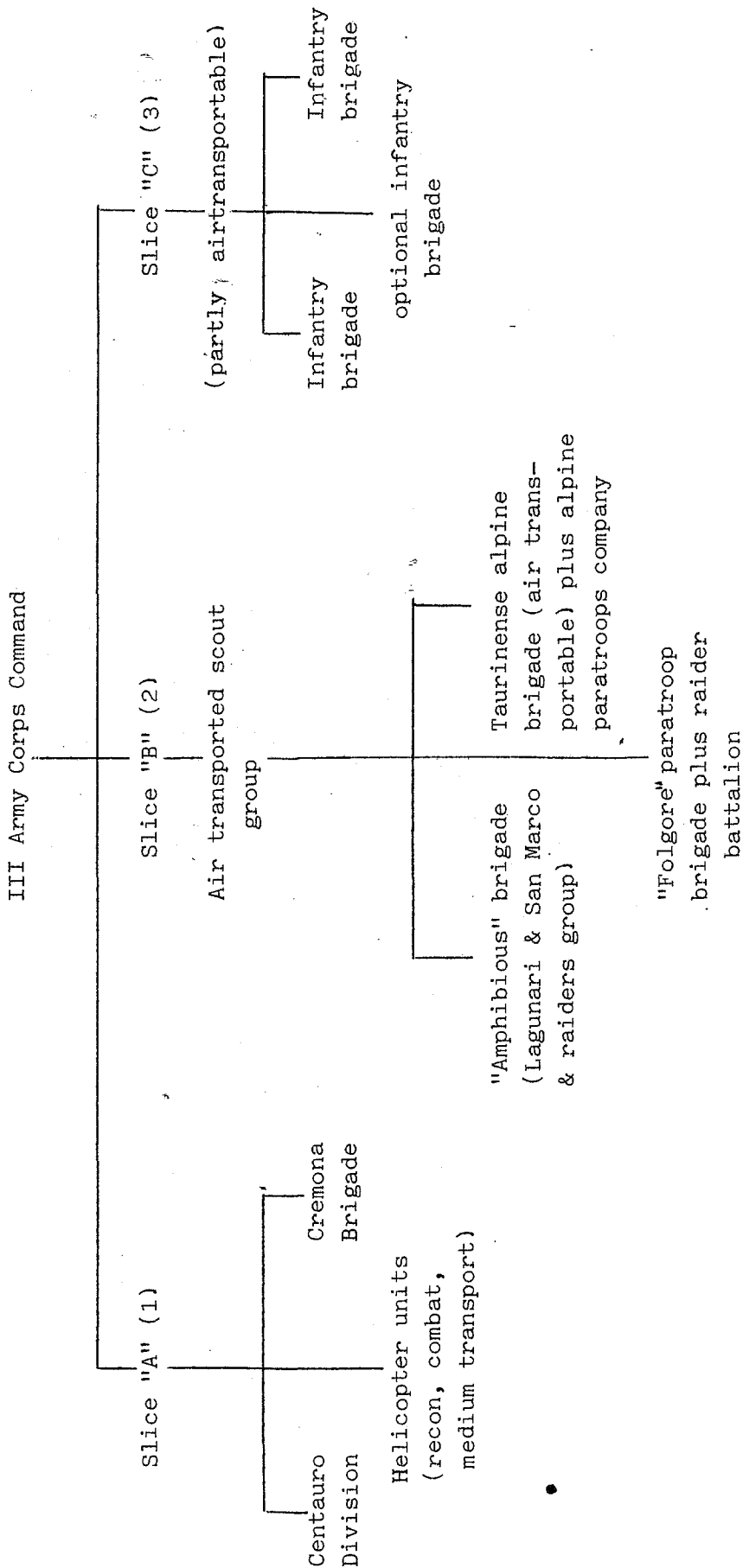
Furthermore, until now, Italy has had little to contribute to the continuing, ever more realistic and detailed discussion of European defense issues. Without a rapid deployment force, it would unavoidably remain on the sidelines of the European defense, with no possibility for political-military interface with Central Europe or with the other Mediterranean nations. It would also be unprepared to properly handle the roles that it has freely chosen to assume in the past such as guaranteeing Malta's security.

Responsible participation in European defense requires an effective readiness for concrete actions not a vague willingness to take part in debates. Each country should contribute according to the operational-strategic formula that is most suited to it. In this framework, there is no doubt that the availability of a rapid deployment force of moderate but credible proportions, would enhance Italy's role in the common defense at a relatively modest cost.

As concerns the choice of technology, only a strategic option like the rapid deployment force can compel policymakers and strategists to think systematically in terms of joint, tri-service operations. And in the absence of such thinking, as we have seen too often in the past, there is a great likelihood of acquiring a jumble of equipment offered by others.

As mentioned above, even if the creation of a rapid deployment force were to serve only to bring about greater coherence in national security, among politicians and military officers and within the armed forces, it surely would not be a high price to pay. Tri-service operational readiness is a very valuable commodity and requires mature political leadership and military command. In the absence of a rapid deployment force, the line still followed today would undoubtedly continue: separation of the political leadership from the top military command and lack of cooperation among the three branches of the armed forces, with a very high cost in terms of effectiveness of national security. In a word, the benefits of a rapid deployment force appear in every way to greatly exceed the costs.

RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE
(Ground component)



* General guidelines for engagement:

1. Slice "A" : Deep battle, linking with other theaters, etc.
2. Slice "B" : Prompt intervention in Italy and overseas, in national or NATO operations.
3. Slice "C" : Peacekeeping missions and reinforcement of Slices A and B.

FOOTNOTES

(1) As a matter of fact, concerning an invasion of the Italian peninsula from the sea, the Soviet Union would need not only a differently structured Navy - the USSR currently has only 5 naval infantry brigades/regiments with a total of 16,000 men, of which only one is assigned to the Black Sea fleet - but it would also need full air and naval control of the Mediterranean. It is difficult to imagine how it could achieve this. It should be kept in mind that the landing in Anzio during the Second World War (basically, a military operation with limited objectives) involved two naval formations with a total of 374 ships of various types (from cruisers to destroyers, to landing craft, to hospital ships), with other naval forces positioned off Terracina and Civitavecchia. Furthermore, as a back-up to the landing, the Allies had at least 3000 combat ready aircraft. For operation "Husky" (invasion of Sicily), the Allies used 2590 ships, including two aircraft carriers, 6 battleships, 15 cruisers and 1742 landing craft. The Soviet Navy has 82 amphibious ships (LPD and LST) and 105 amphibious craft (45 LCU and 60 hovercraft). For information on Soviet amphibious forces, see The Military Balance 1984-1985, IISS, London, 1984, p. 20-21. For information regarding landing operations during the Second World War, see G.A. Shepperd, La Campagna d'Italia 1943-1945, Milan, 1970, pp. 245-47 and p. 48.

(2) Again with respect to the 1944 landing in Sicily, along with their naval forces, the Allies used 144 gliders and 226 C-47 aircraft for paratrooper transport, see G.A. Shepperd, op. cit., p. 63.

(3) See "United States Military Installations and Objectives in the Mediterranean", a report prepared for the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on International Relations by the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 27 March 1977, USGPO, 1977, p. 14.

(4) Regarding Soviet military presence in Egypt, see Strategic Survey 1970, ISS, London, 1971, p. 46-50.

(5) This has changed from 1800 ship/days per year in 1964 with a daily average of 5 units to 17,725 ship/days in 1970, with a daily average of 49 units. Concerning Soviet naval build-up and its influence, see Maurizio Cremasco, "La Dimensione Militare", in M. Cremasco and S. Silvestri, Il Fianco Sud della NATO, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1980, pp. 79-100.

(6) Hawkeye E-2C radar aircraft were used with particular effectiveness by Israel during military combat in Lebanon with the destruction of Syrian missile bases in the Bekaa Valley. Egypt has ordered four Hawkeyes from the United States.

(7) A Tornado combat aircraft equipped with Kormoran air-to-surface missiles, taking off from bases in Sicily, is able to perform anti-ship missions in the entire Mediterranean basin. Its radius of action and endurance can be increased by in-flight refueling. However, the tendency to overevaluate the significance of the role of

air forces should be avoided. As it would be incorrect to maintain that the proven vulnerability of ships is such that it has negated the value of the employment of naval forces, it would be equally incorrect to assign an absolute value to the unquestionable effectiveness of air attacks. In fact, the vulnerability of aircraft has also increased: rapid-fire guns and machine-guns that are radar-guided and totally automatic; land-to-air or sea-to-air missiles and infrared or radar-guided air-to-air missiles today represent a threat that cannot be easily escaped.

Concerning the events of the Falklands campaign, potentials of anti-ship air-to-surface missiles and the lethality of sea-to-air missiles, see The Falklands Campaign: The Lessons, HMSO, December 1982.

(8) The Soviet and East block forces that would presumably be used against Italian, Greek and Turkish territory are not capable of launching surprise or minimum-warning attacks, based on their deployment, posture and operational readiness. Nevertheless, despite increased Soviet capacity, the aero-naval balance still seems to favor NATO forces.

(9) NATO's area of responsibility in the Mediterranean region stops at the outer limits of the territorial waters of the littoral countries.

(10) Unless the view is taken that strong Soviet pressure on Turkey to modify the Treaty of Montreux or, worse yet, that threats of military intervention within a crisis involving bilateral Turkish-Soviet relations would not trigger the mechanisms of solidarity and support by the whole Alliance.

(11) Great Britain, and France later on, also sent naval units to the Indian Ocean, but strictly on the basis of national policy.

(12) It should be kept in mind, however, that overseas requirements are only one of the possible uses for the RIF.

(13) Keeping in mind that the success of an overseas operation depends 80% on logistics, which are affected by factors of the local situation (concession of landing or transit rights, or, on the contrary, denial of rights to fly through certain air space).

(14) See Piero Ostellino and Luigi Caligaris, I Nuovi Militari, Mondadori, Milan, 1983, pp. 179-186 and 187-188, and the chart on p. 184.

(15) Ibid. pp. 206-212 and 213-224.

(16) Ibid.

(17) The English version is as follows: "During peacetime, many of these combat units are assigned to the US Readiness Command for purposes of training: Since they represent some of our most mobile and ready forces, they are available on a priority basis to the

Commander in Chief, USCENTCOM (USCINCCENT) for his SWA mission. They are also available for rapid deployment missions in other regions.

(18) See Report from a Panel of the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, Feb. 1985.

(19) Colonel Jean Pierre Goze, Preparation interarmees

(20) See Libro Bianco, 1977, pp. 157, 161 and 165.

(21) Such deployment would be offset on the operational and political-military levels by a parallel transfer of a similar unit in Italy's theater.

(22) In order to provide maintenance on a continuous basis for a pair of aircraft to provide coverage for a convoy at 1000 km (600 miles) from Italian territory, it would be necessary to have a flight group including five air tankers and three radar aircraft.

(23) "Preferred" recruits include now, for instance, paratroopers requesting to serve in that special area and would therefore be subjected to a strict ad hoc selection process. They would thus be "volunteer" draftees, distinguished in professional terms from volunteer enlistees personnel only by virtue of their shorter term of duty (12 months).

(24) For a more indepth analysis, see "I Nuovi Militari", op.cit., pp. 44 and 60.

(25) These units singled out for special status and treatment include "auxiliary" carabinieri, paratroopers, garrison infantry, marines, etc.

(26) The problem arising between volunteer personnel and drafted personnel is addressed in I Nuovi Militari, op.cit., pp. 57 and 59.

(27) Training of the San Marco battalion, entails both its amphibious capability and the naval and ground aspect within the "amphibious" brigade.

(28) As is known, the tri-service intelligence organization, the SISMI, was totally disassociated from the Central Staff Defense, which is responsible for tri-service operations, five years ago.

(29) Duties would be distributed as follows: the amphibious operation would be developed by the naval division while the ground side of operations would be developed by the "amphibious" brigades of the Army.

(30) This is already the case in the event of NATO exercises. But they need to be longer, more intensive, and more demanding.

(31) For example, a task group could include: a helicopter or VTOL carrier, two guided missile destroyers units, three frigates and a tender.

(32) The Marine (Lagunari) Regiment and the San Marco battalion already have LVPTs, MTMs and MTPs available.

(33) The two landing vessels (LPD) planned to be introduced, one of which would also be used for civilian emergency operations, could each carry 30 LVPT/VCCs, three MTMs, three MTPs and two medium to heavy CHINOOK or EH-101 helicopters.

(34) A typical force commitment could include two fighter-bomber groups, two air defense groups and a reconnaissance cell.

(35) Ibid.