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PANEL 3: ALLIANCE WARFARE:

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Panelists:

GREGORY PARKER
"Modular Seabasing and 21st Century Alliances:
Thinking in Sight of the Box"
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PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

PATRICK WARREN
"NATO Survival: Decisions for the Alliance"
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"U.S.-Japan Interoperability"
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. PIFER: Okay, well, let's begin the next panel. My name is Steven Pifer. I'm a senior fellow here at Brookings, and this panel is going to look at the question of alliance warfare and what are both the challenges and the opportunities of that. And I think if you look at U.S. military operations over the last 25, 30 years, increasingly American operations, but also those of our allies, are in an alliance format or in a coalition format -- the 1991 Gulf war, U.S. military engagement in the Balkans over the course of the '90s, the 2003 Gulf war and now ongoing operations in Afghanistan. And I think alliance warfare offers lots of opportunities: burden sharing, the opportunity to use inoperability, and it probably works in terms of political legitimacy. When there's an alliance, when there's a group of countries, that usually means it's going to be easier to justify both to domestic constituencies, but also internationally than if there's just one country.

But alliance operations also involve various challenges, the biggest one is, how do you make it work? And we see in today in Afghanistan we have 30,000 NATO troops which are making a very important contribution. But because of some of those national constraints, getting that operation to work in exactly the right way is a little bit more difficult than we might think. And I go back to when I was posted in Europe during the NATO conflict with Serbia, an observation that I think came from somebody in the U.S. Air Force when he said it turns out that all F-16s are not created equal. And the reference was to the problem where American F-16s with communications packages that allowed encrypted communications couldn't talk to other NATO F-16s which didn't have that same communications package. So there are challenges when you work together in these sorts of operations, but they can be successful. Again, when I was in Europe in the early 1990s it was very clear that when NATO went into Bosnia and replaced UNPROFOR , NATO was able to succeed as a military operation in a way that UNPROFOR was not, and that

reflected the experience and the interoperability training and a lot of work done by NATO

countries during the Cold War.

So, this panel is going to take a look at alliance warfare in the 21st century.

We're going to draw on the expertise of three federal executive fellows here at Brookings. I

won't give you long introductions because I think you have their biographies in the packets,

but we'll begin with NATO which is when most Americans think about alliances, that is the

traditional alliance, and Colonel Patrick Warren of the U.S. Army will talk about that.

We'll then take a look at probably America's most important alliance

relationship in the Asia-Pacific area, the U.S.-Japan relationship and interoperability between

American and Japanese forces and for that discussion we have Colonel Hiroaki Uchikura,

who is a colonel in the Japanese Air Self Defense Forces.

And finally we'll take a look at sea basing which may become more

important when we talk about areas where we may not have land allies and we have

Commander Gregory Parker of the United States Navy to address that issue. So, Pat, I'd

like to turn the floor over to you.

CDR. WARREN: Thank you, Ambassador Pifer. And it's a pleasure to be

here today and to be able to discuss my work with you.

I had the privilege of serving in NATO's military headquarter SHAPE in

Belgium for the last three years. And during my tenure I had the opportunity to observe the

many strengths and weaknesses that are in the alliance and from my perspective it has

plenty of both.

The genesis of my research stems from the rising pitch of complaints about

NATO coming from the various leaders both within and outside of the alliance, and

accompanying these complaints is a dire prediction that NATO now is obsolete and on the

risk of abandonment. These complaints tend to be focused in two major areas: first is a

concern that the alliance is not postured and in some cases not willing to come to the defense of its allies; and second area of complaint revolves around the recent occurrence of inequitable burden sharing. And these complaints are largely phenomena of fundamental -- of more fundamental issues, that of threat identification and diverging interests.

What my research has determined is that NATO does remain viable, but not for the purposes of collective defense unless hard decisions are addressed and those have largely been avoided. These decisions include threat validation and establishing systems to ensure equitable burden sharing.

Okay, while most of you would agree that the NATO alliance was established as the collective defense alliance, with its primary purpose to deter the Soviet threat, in reality, however, NATO was formed for multiple purposes, based on multiple rationales, therefore when considering any possible abandonment of the alliance, we ought to consider all of these rationales. Let me explain.

There are three general types of military alliances. The first is a collective defense alliance where all members are pledged to each other's defense. Article V of NATO's founding treaty unquestionably characterizes NATO as a collective defense alliance, essentially an attack against one is an attack against all.

The second is that of a collective security alliance where all members are pledged to abide by tenants and norms to include non-aggression against one another and often also in the collective defense mode against anyone else who attacks them. The idea here is that through agreed compliance, a greater security ensues.

By virtue of the fact that NATO was instrumental at keeping the peace, a Détente, if you will, for the last 61 years in Europe testifies to its value as a collective security alliance, and this role was recently reinforced through the addition of 10 new members.

The last type of alliance is a multilateral alliance with a purpose to pursue

works promoting agreed interests. NATO security activities throughout its history, especially in the last 20 years, performing humanitarian support, military development, counterpiracy operations, stability and peace operations, and so on, solidify its role as a multilateral alliance. Note, these activities do not contribute directly to countered and armed attack, but were rather manifestations of works done to promote greater stability. In short, NATO has adopted all three roles of the different military alliances.

Okay, so what? Well, understanding these alliances purposes provides some insight into its potential longevity. Specifically, in the last 100 years, more alliances were formed for multilateral purposes than those of collective security or collective defense. Furthermore, of 18 major military alliances existing today, the majority, 14, are multilateral alliances, followed by 11 collective security, and a distant third is collective defense with 4.

The point to take away is that for the last 100 years multilateral alliances were more attractive and resilient than the other two. Applying this logic to NATO implies that it's perhaps natural for NATO to evolve into a multilateral centric alliance. In fact, some might argue that NATO's unwittingly made this transition already.

Next question to answer is sort of why do alliances disband. Let me briefly highlight this for you. There are four reasons: the most common reason is that a member of the alliance is vanquished. Of the 65 major security alliances over the last 500 years, 45 percent of them disbanded for this reason. The second greatest reason involves the idea of the interests of the different partners diverging. About 27 percent were abandoned for that reason. The third, surprisingly, is that the threat went away and that here 24 percent of the alliances abrogated their treaties for this rationale. And lastly, a distant fourth, is that one or more of the alliance members failed to abide by the tenants of their treaty, and that's about 4 percent.

It's good news for NATO that none of its members are at risk of being

vanquished currently thus removing the largest reason for alliance to disband from serious

further consideration, but before I leave this topic, it is worth mentioning a debate recently is

what a defeat in Afghanistan would mean to the alliance. While not the same as having one

of its member nations catastrophically fail, an Afghan defeat does suggest that the alliance

will lose some of its appeal, it's prestige, power, and credibility. If this occurs, there's no

doubt that NATO will pay a price.

Regarding the second rationale, loss of a threat, the implosion of the Soviet

Union and subsequent abrogation of the Warsaw Pact have been central to the recent

debate concerning NATO's viability. To date, no overbearing threat has stepped into the

void although there are some like Iran that are lurking in the sidelines. So, with no threat to

deter or defend against, consequently there's no reason or rationale for collective defense

alliance. The Russians certainly pushed this rationale.

However, many alliance members are elected to have NATO give up this

role as it is a central pillar of their national defense programs. Many argue to retain a

collective defense role is to be ready for the next threat and from a purely national defense

perceptive, the preservation of this role is attractive. Unfortunately, without a threat it's

difficult to determine required policies, structures, and capabilities and this is one issue that's

formed many recent rancorous debates that NATO's -- that exhibit in NATO's divisive

behaviors.

There are two other issues clouding the question of threats. First, Central

and Eastern Europe members fervently believe that Russia has filled the shoes of the

Soviets. Conversely, their western allies, to include the United States, do not. So, NATO is

sitting on the horns of dilemma regarding Russia, a dilemma that, in itself, may drive a

wedge through the center of NATO if not careful. And certainly the Russian leadership is

active in lending its weight to the hammer on that wedge as it declares NATO as number

one threat and, furthermore, it conducts its training exercises, a recent one in Belarus where it targets -- where its enemy is NATO.

The second complicating factor is the security risk resident in the new domains of cyberspace and transportation, non-state actors, economic calamities, pandemic disease, and natural disasters. In general, allies differ as to whether some or all of these security risks are challenges for NATO at all. Consequently, it remains difficult for the alliance to agree on deterrent and defense measures for these largely unconventional and irregular threats, particularly when NATO's treaty pledge only recognizes armed attack. In short, much confusion reigns inside NATO regarding threats and without an identified threat, it's tough to determine where to apply scarce resources. Put another way, in times of peace political debate devolves to questions of where to apply your dollars.

Now, regarding the third challenge of diverging interests, differing interests is nothing new to NATO, the most famous case is, of course, when France pulled out of the military structure in 1967 for differences of opinion with U.S. and other major allies. Today in NATO there are a number of topics where significant differences of opinion exist not the least of which is the question of whether or not Russia is a threat. The second major point of friction is the manifestation of the ascendancy of the European Union. Here many nations within the EU led by Germany and France particularly, often place the advancement of the EU over that of NATO activities. Recent counterpiracy operations is an example and furthermore, the friction between the relationship to Turkey and the EU is another very contentious point.

Not to leave the United States out, its view of terrorism as a national security threat are contrary to many allies who view it as simply a civil police matter. So, these are but a few different interests that freeze NATO's ability to make decisions, thus weakening its viability.

The next rationale, failure to abide by tenants of a treaty, this is an area of concern on two fronts. Again, for our Central European allies it's about Russia. Certainly these nations believe that they've been abandoned by the alliance on the issue of Russia. They require defense assurances which they do not believe exist today.

At the center of the NATO stability debate is the question of burden sharing. This issue has come to light with the Afghan mission where 35 percent of its members provide over 90 percent of the forces and a very small percentage, about four countries, four or five countries, fight in the toughest areas and four countries have taken 90 percent of all deaths in the theater, which is amazing.

This cavalcade of domestic and political complaints from these countries that have suffered these burdens conclude that the allies are not holding up their end of the bargain, at best, not abiding by the tenants.

So, applying the conclusion stemming from the results of the treaty abrogation rationale, here is where NATO stands regarding its three alliance roles: to continue as a collective defense alliance, NATO is at great risk because first the alliance cannot agree on its threat. Consequently it's fallen into the debilitating cycle of attempting to determine policy structures, capabilities for an obsolete purpose. Second, the perception that members will not abide by the agreed tenants of the treaty is wrenching the fabric of trust between its members. And given the shift of interest, members become more inclined to look elsewhere for support, but particularly among EU members.

Regarding the retention of its role as a collective security alliance it again is at risk, but to a lesser extent than that of a collective defense alliance. The good news is that as a collective security alliance, you do not require a threat to achieve your purpose. However, if burden sharing remains inequitable, it validates the complaint that the members are not abiding by agreed tenants and more importantly, however, is the confusion

presented by the EU as it now views itself as the organization for which European nations should coalesce around. If the EU continues to replace NATO in this role, then NATO will find itself out of work again.

Lastly, NATO's greatest potential for survival resides in its roles in multilateral alliance. Like the collective security alliance, a threat is not required. Furthermore, this form of alliance allows the greatest flexibility with regard to accommodating a variety of interests. However, NATO should be warned that if interests continue to dramatically diverge, it will become harder and harder to achieve consensus on security matters.

Now, NATO's leadership don't have to accept this sort of fait accompli. In order to avert it, they need to tackle these questions, but it would probably be very, very difficult for them to come to conclusions because they're so contentious and particularly with the diverging interests of the different nations.

Ambassador Pifer, I'll stop right there.

MR. PIFER: Thank you, Colonel Warren. Colonel Uchikura, it's your turn, please.

COL. UCHIKURA: Thank you, Steve. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Colonel Uchikura of the Japan Air Self-Defense Force. Today I would like to talk about future U.S.-Japan interoperability with a particular focus on air power.

The year 2010 is an important milestone for the U.S.-Japan alliance making 50 years since the current security treaty was ratified. The strategic environment surrounding the alliance is becoming more complex and some would say the nations of northeastern Asia are increasingly faced with constraint on their access to global domains.

The recently released 2010 QDR states: "The United States must increasingly work with key allies and partners if it is to sustain stability and peace." The

government of Japan is currently developing its ten year strategic guidance given the

concurrent themes that will likely be reflected in each document. The time is ripe for

establishing closer relationships, and just as important, greater interoperability between the

military forces of the U.S. and Japan.

        The key question is not whether they should build greater interoperability,

but whether they can and if so, how. First, I would like to discuss what interoperability

means in military terms. Definitions are addressed in a series of DoD documents, but

interoperability has been changing in conjunction with changing nature of modern operation

and advancing technologies.

        Our re-concept of interoperability were predicated largely on the need to

own and employ the same asset. The military power served as a useful deterrent during the

Cold War, but happily was never tested in the cauldron of the military conflict. However,

Operation Desert Storm, ODS, very much illustrated the value of NATO in the coalition. This

was particularly true in the operational use of air power with coalition nations contributing to

an orchestrated air campaign.

        Interoperability had moved from the practiced theory in the harshness of

Cold War into operational reality. The period since ODS has seen considerable advance in

technology. In the 21st century, network-centric age, offers significant challenges to the

information sharing and the connectivity that underpins interoperability. The leading

innovator in terms of network centric operations, the U.S. is intentionally establishing

increasing gulf between its capabilities and those of its partners.

        It is unlikely that U.S. allies would be able to address this shortfall in the

foreseeable future, placing doubt on their ability to maintain the interoperability necessary to

meet the QDR's calls for a greater cooperation with key allies.

        Given such situations, real time information sharing and connectivity are

essential functions that must be pursued to provide a bridge gap for interoperability. And in this sense, one of the most important elements to maintaining interoperability is mutual respect and trust.

In discussion of interoperability, there is a crucial case study, I believe, that of the British Royal Air Force, RAF. Despite a number of capability gaps between RAF and the U.S. capabilities, that RAF has been able to maintain high levels of interoperability with the U.S. Operation Allied Force, OAF, a notable air campaign mainly conducted over Kosovo in 1999 made painfully clear many overwhelming capability gaps between U.S. military forces and their European allies.

Shortly after OAF, retired RAF Air Vice-Marshal Tony Mason stated, "There are two kinds of air power: the United States' air power and everybody else's." These capability gaps serve to place increasing challenges on the ability of allied air force to contribute effectively to missions planned and conducted during the campaign, and to be interoperable with U.S. forces. However, in the later operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, RAF demonstrated convincingly that it had made a significant effort to reduce the identified capability gaps and in turn reestablish its ability to maintain interoperability with the USAF.

So, how did the RAF make such progress? Analysis suggests that the RAF took a three pillared approach to rebuilding its interoperability credentials, doctoring capabilities, and trust-building. In the first pillar, the RAF refreshed its doctorial document to ensure coherence with U.S. air power capability development embracing common language and terminology. Under the second pillar, the RAF identified that so-called sensor to shooter loop had to become a key element of 21st century air campaigns and that is needed to address a number of critical capabilities shortfalls in this area.

Intensive efforts were made to fill such shortfalls with the introduction of

new hardware and the operational training. Importantly, the RAF achieved these increases

in capability through indigenous development to enhance the UK's industrial base. The

argument regarding indigenous weapons or cutting edge U.S. assets is, however, one of the

crucial interoperability dilemmas.

            And under the last pillar, the RAF revitalized the long and robust

relationships it has enjoyed with the USAF, which had been further reinforced throughout a

12-year campaign conducted in Southwest Asia. The strong and fruitful relationships at the

senior officer level proved extremely valuable during the planning and execution of complex

and time-sensitive missions in later operations.

            This analysis highlights that successful interoperability is not simply a

matter of having the right technology and hardware. Mutual understanding and trust and the

ability to share information using common terminology are just as essential to operational

effectiveness. Some in Japan might regard the U.S.-UK and in turn the USAF-RAF

relationship as a special relationship that can be maintained without significant effort,

however, it is created both nations and air forces work extremely hard to maintain their close

relationships.

            In turning to the USAF-Japan Air Surface Defense Forces relationship, it is

only right to recognize that significant support provided by USAF when the JASDF stood up

in 1954, the JASDF has seen the USAF as a role model since its establishment. U.S.-

designed equipment has continued to form a major proportion of its inventory, but defense

cooperation extends beyond simple procurement including in the training and exercise

arena.

            However, JASDF forces has yet to conduct combat air operations with the

U.S. -- USAF, either bilaterally or as part of a coalition. The contribution by the JASDF to

enduring operations has been limited to a five year operation in Iraq utilizing its C-130s.

This lack of key coalition combat experience is due to the legal framework under which the

JASDF operates. The government of Japan interpreted that deployment of forces for

overseas combat operations is prohibited by Japan's constitution. Furthermore, the GOJ

has imposed a ban on exercising that right of collective self-defense. These legal

restrictions are unlikely to be relaxed in the near future. As a result, the JASDF is limited in

its ability to mirror the approach taken by the RAF in developing improved interoperability

with the USAF.

One key area that offers a positive way for us in this regard is the ongoing

bilateral defense cooperation on ballistic missile defense. This area has seen successful

and prompt information sharing with the U.S. in a number of key areas.

Under these circumstances, how can the JASDF improve its interoperability

with USAF? First, I would like to focus on the plug and play architecture, that is the model

that enables bilateral or coalition partners who are connectable to the key nodes to share

real-time operational picture despite different locations and the constraint of mutual

command authority. It will also allow the JASDF to contribute to a variety of campaigns

utilizing indigenous capabilities within the limits of governmental authorization.

Second, I truly expect that ongoing U.S.-Japan collocation effort will

enhance bilateral relationship. It will serve to strengthen day-to-day interactions and

enhance the bilateral relationship at all levels.

Based upon my analysis, I would like to make the following tentative

recommendations in three key areas if we hope to build greater interoperability to the benefit

of both sides. First, with regard to bilateral effort, stand up a bilateral interoperability study

team with primary responsibility for developing shared strategic vision, scenarios, (inaudible)

for the region, including by staffing a JASDF officer on USAF strategic study group akin to

how there are RAF offices staffed in many Pentagon offices now.   Identification of critical

domains, mission areas, and the function where effort may be prioritized to effectively enhance interoperability, standardizing operational procedures, concepts, and so on in terms of coalition operations, the NATO standard may provide a sound basis.

Second, U.S. initiative effort will raise interoperability related technology to key allies in a timely manner. Allow allies participation in interoperability related studies in the projects both ongoing and in the future.

Lastly, Japan initiative effort: accelerate fulfillment of network connectivity with key asset as considering industrial base, commit to parity in the interoperability related studies and project as much as possible, secure information released by U.S. Government.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I firmly believe that the USAF and the JASDF must be able to work together to effectively deter and respond to any aggression particularly in terms of anti-access activities in the Asian-Pacific commons in the next 10, 15 years.

Policy can change quickly in response to crisis, but it takes a long time to build new capabilities and develop trust and doctrine. Therefore, we need to take both bilateral and unilateral action and we need to do it right away.

Thank you very much.

MR. PIFER: Thank you, Colonel. Commander Parker?

CDR. PARKER: Okay, I'm going to spend the next 10 or 12 minutes starting by arguing that seabasing has been the sort of barometer of a post-Cold War foreign policy and military theory and then the second half I'm going to argue that a reformulated concept of seabasing has a promising future, but I find that whenever I talk about seabasing the first question I always get is, what is it.

At its conceptual core, seabasing moves traditional land-based functions to sea and in a basic military sense that means aircraft, artillery, and ground forces. Now, this

was a concept that became popular in the 1990s after the Cold War with the draw down

from overseas bases, but really has historical roots going back centuries and especially in

the World War II push across the Pacific, for example, by mid-1945 when the U.S. was

capable of landing over a million troops on a foreign shore and supporting them with aircraft

and logistics.

Now, in 1990s, planners looked to the past as a model for using the sea as

this vast maneuver space on which the U.S. could position and deploy forces independent of

allies and foreign bases. Seabasing discussions from those years have these really strong

political overtones. During the Clinton years, for example, we have an administration that's

very wary of military intervention in foreign conflicts. You have the debacle in Somalia, you

have the 1998 missile strikes into Sudan and Afghanistan. Then you have the Bosnian

conflict.

In the 2000s, we had an administration that reserves the right to act very

unilaterally and preemptively, for example in the initial stages of OEF we launched Army

Special Operations forces and Marines off the coast from the North Arabian Sea. And

simultaneously, in the early part of the decade, you have these corresponding discussions

about transformation which is all about -- means smaller, lighter, and faster, and more

maneuverable in your military force.

So, in all these cases seabasing seems to offer this certain degree of

freedom and ultimately, at its core, it's a freedom from allies. It's a very different mindset

from the Cold War and it's in this environment that it really starts to gain steam as concept.

Now, the Navy is already a sea-based service so it's important to

understand the literature that seabasing and sea-based are generally two very different

things. In most contemporary conversations seabasing really refers to the ground portion of

the operation, so as I like to say, seabasing is all about the land. I don't think that's the way

it should be, but it's really the way it is. And the reason that is, is that there's this long history of sea-based capabilities at sea: carrier-based aviation, missiles, naval gun fire. There's no need for the ships or the aircraft to go on the land for that; they can remain at sea. But for the ground portion, which is really amphibious assaults, you had this iron mountain of logistics that would have to move ashore to support an invasion. This creates what the Marines call an operational pause and this huge vulnerability.

So, seabasing in the modern discussion then is really about floating this iron mountain and keeping all logistical and support and supplies at sea. So when we talk about seabasing, again in the modern context, we're typically talking about the ability to push a large ground force ashore and supply and sustain them from off shore.

So, it probably doesn't surprise anyone that most seabasing discussions in the United States are lead by the Marine Corps. The Marines don't want to be a second land army and seabasing offered them this new vision of amphibious warfare for the 21st century.

In the last decade the Marines proposed a squadron of 14 vessels to replace their three maritime prepositioning squadrons, and this was called the Maritime Prepositioning Force Future or MPFF. The MPFF was designed to support a brigade of Marines afloat and enable all supply and sustainment for two more expeditionary brigades via amphibs to remain at sea rather than using the deep water ports that current prepositioning ships require.

Now, prepositioning dates back to the Cold War where we were going to use these ports and air fields to rapidly reinforce our allies, we were going to fly in personnel to marry up with the equipment. The MPFF, then, was going to move this all out to sea and the Marine's seabasing division was essentially we were going to float this iron mountain.

So, let's fast forward to the present. Last month in its updated 30-year

shipbuilding plan, the Navy announced the cancellation of the MPFF. Now, it did include

some modified vessels that were kind of remnants of that, but essentially the MPFF was

gone and when it did that it claimed, the concept is valid, but it's not within the Navy's fiscal

reach. It was sort of an anti-climatic end to these really revolutionary discussions that we'd

been having for a long time.

So, what happened? Well, to start with, the foreign policy outlook in 2010 is

significantly different from the one in which seabasing was incubated. Starting very distinctly

in 2005 with the National Defense Strategy and the war going poorly in Iraq, we started to

see a very different language in a lot of these top level documents. Instead of, you know,

dissing our allies, we're courting our allies. Instead of this smaller, lighter, and faster mantra,

we're looking at large numbers of troops, heavily armored vehicles, and we're right now in

landlocked country. You know, meanwhile the Navy is struggling with its competing

missions, with ballistic missile defense, maritime domain awareness, and the fiscal demands

of its own shipbuilding priorities like the Littoral Combat Ship, the Bush class aircraft carrier,

and a bunch of other problematic programs.

And the net result is, you have this defense establishment that basically

loses interest in seabasing, you have a nation that's focused on counter insurgency, and you

have a Navy struggling to pay the bills. So, why is seabasing still worth discussing? Well,

the first answer, I think, is that it's very geographically compelling. We've all heard of this

string of troubling hotspots around the world that's often categorized as an arc of instability,

essentially Littoral in nature, some friendly, some not, anywhere from the Philippines to

North Korea, from Indonesia to Bangladesh, from India to Pakistan, you know, and from

Yemen to Somalia; countries located on the sea with mostly coastal populations not really

good sites for U.S. bases.

I have to give a little shout out to David Killcullen this morning for talking

about the movement of cities towards the coast. This is a very important region. So, any

solution that can seem to address this areas seems, in just a very basic geostrategic

concept, to be very relevant.

Now, that's a big area, and the Navy's answer to this has been a concept

called the "1,000 Ship Navy" that was published in November 2005 and because of wording

it was later rebranded simply as the Global Maritime Partnership. And I think if you go back

to the original language in that, it's very interesting. There was a speech that Admiral Mullen

who is the current chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was CNO in 2006 that he made

and he said membership in this Navy is purely voluntary and would have no legal or

encumbering ties. It would be a free-form, self-organizing network of maritime partners.

Now, I don't think it's entirely clear yet exactly what this means. In four

years -- four to five years after this was published, we're still sorting this out. To me it

sounds more like Facebook than foreign policy, but the evidence also suggests that it really

resonates with the international audience, particularly after it was reiterated in the Navy's

2007 Cooperative Strategy for the 21st Century's Sea Power, it's a tri-service strategy with

the Marines and the Coast Guard.

In the last International Sea Power's symposium of September of 2009 was

attended by 102 countries and 91 chiefs of services. Now that's an attendance that's

roughly double what was happening prior to this language coming out. Some examples of

success as well, you have the Combined Task Force 151 doing piracy off Somalia. Now,

you can argue whether it's been a success in terms of piracy, but the fact that you have all

these nations voluntarily coming together, I think, is somewhat significant.

And then an example where the U.S. was not involved was fighting piracy

in the Malacca Straits. We have Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia coming together, in just

the last few years, and agreeing that they have common interest and really having a

dramatic impact.

So, I think we have these two distinct emerging trends. We have this troubling littoral region centered around the Indian Ocean involving countries that are really poor candidates for U.S. bases, we have this new social networking model of maritime alliances that's emerging, yet, as yet unproven, but seems to be very popular, and I think it's possible that seabasing holds the key for these alliances in this region, but I would argue that it needs a complete seabase makeover.

Now, I mentioned that in the 2000s seabasing essentially became a Marine Corps program. Now, the Marines have constantly had to deal with the complaint, and they hate it, that there's been no large scale amphibious landing since Inchon in 1950, and I can see the look on your face right there. Now, this is not to argue that the Marines have not been busy, whether it's been on the land or even on the sea in the Marine Expeditionary Units. It's just not been on the brigade scale that this MPFF was designed for in the last decade.

General Charles Krulak, whose comments talked a decade ago about the next conflict being more like the unwanted stepchild of Chechnya rather than the beloved son of Desert Storm. I would say if we apply that to the littorals, I think it's very likely that rather than the son of Iwo Jima, we're more likely to face a stepchild of Mogadishu.

So, what's the right model then? Well, there's this emerging modular concept of navel organization that's been communicated in their literature lately that I've spent some time looking at, and especially Robert Work, the Undersecretary of Navy, has described all the Navy's ships as boxes or capability containers. They would deploy individually or in groups and they'd act as mother ships for vessels and aircraft manned and unmanned. Now, this is partly about shipbuilding because these ships have 30- to 50-year life cycles, and they need these modifications, and we have ships in our history that we

didn't modify because it was too expensive, so there's a very pragmatic reason here.

There's also this really -- this emerging ethos of modularity that builds on the Navy's multifunction past where now we're going to rapidly assemble and disassemble various pieces to build different things. It's sort of a Lego model of navel affairs.

With respect to seabasing, if we talked about basing capabilities at sea, including, but not limited to amphibious assault, I think there's a potential for a much broader concept.

There are some signs of this emerging. For the past several years the Navy has operated the Global Fleet Station which is a ship of intermediary size that travels to various geographic regions like South America and Africa, for training and to build partner capacity. This is a seabase.

Just yesterday I saw an article in the news about DARPA creating these modular seabases from shipping containers, modified ISO containers, that they're going to dump over the side from commercial ships and they can build them up into infinite configurations, kind of a throwback to the mobile offshore space that they were considering earlier.

The Navy still deploys the majority of its assets, though, in these large strike groups around aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships, these large seabases. So, I think there's a disconnect between the large and the small.

The Marines, for their part, designed their seabasing constructs around this three brigade capability. If you count everyone, that's about a 45,000 person capability. Again, this is a large scale that has not been employed for quite some time.

However, the Marine Corps Warfighting Lab has been experimenting with reducing the lowest level of Marine Corps unit from a reinforced battalion that you seen in a Marine expeditionary unit to a reinforced company. That's interesting because you could

create a small, amphibious operations capability that would fit on one ship or even as far

down as a platoon on a joint high-speed vessel.

So, in seabasing we have this evidence of both the large and the small, but

we don't have a lot of evidence of a seamless link between the Global Fleet Station on the

small end and then the Marine's major combat operations seabase on the large end.

Seabasing needs this scalable modularity and it needs a seamless international link that the

joint force could plug into.

Now, there's some emerging platforms like the Littoral combat ship and the

joint high speed vessel that I think are very interesting in terms of this modular concept. I

don't really intend to address that here, but what I think is striking to me is that this modular

concept seems to be converging from three separate areas -- we have modular platforms, a

modular military organization, and to some degree, these modular alliances that are sort of

self forming.

Now, maybe none of this is completely new, but it seems to be coalescing

into something unique and I would argue that seabasing is the important skeleton for this

concept.

Now, I would like to tell you that I know where all of this is going or even

guarantee that it's going somewhere, but it may not be controllable from the top down and I

think that's ultimately the point. It's going to sort of emerge from the bottom up if it's going to

work at all, but most importantly I think it's important -- we have to realize that this revised

model of seabasing is more about finding ways to unite allies on the sea in this loosely

structure global network vice this post-Cold War outlook of being independent of allies in the

way that seabasing was developed. It may involve fundamentally reexamining identities. I

think the Marines are sort of emerging into this Littoral force something between amphibious

assault and being the second land army and I think that's very interesting. I don't know

where it's going, but they seem ideally poised for this. And I think that seabasing needs to

be part of this sort of -- this comprehensive solution to the worldwide littoral region that we've

been talking about for 20 years and I would argue that this is a fundamental part for sending

foreign policy back to sea. Thanks.

MR. PIFER: Well, thank you. And let me thank all three panelists for

keeping their remarks to a point where we can have about 25 to 30 minutes of discussion

and I'm going to exercise the moderator's right to pose the first question, and it comes off of

Commander Parker, your comments, about seabasing and I think the comment that you

made, one of the genesis of this was the idea of freedom from alliances. So, let me ask you

how you see that kind of move -- what it would mean for interoperability? Colonel Uchikura

noted that his recommendation for the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force would be to look at

ways that it could be operable to NATO standards so that it could plug in, but while Japan is

looking at something like that, is the U.S. military going in a different direction, which may

make it harder to be interoperable with allied and coalition forces?

CDR. PARKER: Well, I think that's a really important consideration and it's

interesting that the interoperability issue seems to pop up repeatedly. As Uchi pointed out,

we tend in the U.S. to trend towards these very high tech systems and, you know, one of the

things that came out of the transformation debates was this idea of the common operational

picture of the COP. We're all going to die under the COP, and that's really central to net-

centric warfare.

Now, really the theme running through the global maritime partnership is

that we're going to engage people of all levels and if they can take care of piracy or maritime

security on their shores, then please, by all means, let them because with roughly a 285 ship

Navy, we just don't have the vessels to cover it worldwide.

Now, I think that we're going to have to put some real effort and thought

into ways to dumb this down. Now, there are some really fascinating concepts, you know,

we talk about the 285 ship Navy of today, the 600 ship Navy of the '80s -- well there are

about 50,000 commercial vessels out there on the seas today. And this is a great resource

for some kind of netting of awareness, and there's been some talk of this. Obviously there's

the AIS system already, but if you could merge that with some ability to net different

commercial ships' radars and things, and this is something the strategic studies group was

doing a few years ago. I tell you what, that really builds up the capacity.

And one more point that relates to your question there, the mobile landing

platform is one of the vessels that came out of the MPFF that survived and I've got to tell

you, I love this thing, it's really neat, because you can move these really heavy vehicles

around at sea. And the Marines have these slides about, you know, transferring tanks back

and forth at sea and armored assault vehicles -- I just love this stuff. But when we were

talking about seabasing here at Brookings a week ago, Peter Singer actually asked a

question, we're going to build three of these things, are any of these things designed to

work, you know, from the ground up with the allies? Have we thought about this, how

they're going to work with their ships? And the answer was no. So, even though we're still

talking a lot about, you know, bringing together this big network, I think sometimes when we

get into the acquisition channels we still think in a very insular manner and a very parochial

manner, and it is something, if we're going to go with this kind of philosophy, we need to

think about.

Now, if you build your MLP just for your own amphibs, then maybe that's

okay, but if you want to network with the rest of the world then it's something different

entirely.

CDR. WARREN: With regard to interoperability with alliances, it was

already pointed out today that many other nations are just not going to ever measure up to

the capabilities that the United States has in general. And it's probably not worth our

spending much effort trying to have that occur because it's just impossible, you know, as you

pointed out the F-16s early in the talk.

However, that's not necessarily all a bad thing. If we look out today at both

Iraq, and particularly Afghanistan, and we have -- what? -- 42 nations there operating

interoperable. Now, some things are not perfect, but there are 42 nations there working

together. So, there is quite a degree of interoperability that, you know, I don't know, 50

years ago may not have ever been able to be achieved, so I guess what I'm trying to say is

that I don't know that we can ever get to a perfect level of interoperability, but we certainly

are at a level right now that is effective, maybe not efficient.

COL. UCHIKURA: Let me add quick things. What I want to emphasize

that if upcoming asset that Greg talking about, include a specific device which limit

interoperability, so I really like United States release up front of the development situation,

but if not, you don't have to, because of limited resource, we have to prioritize, what is

interoperable asset or not. So, that's what I want to emphasize.

MR. PIFER: Question over here.

MR. DIEGO: Thank you. (inaudible) Diego from (inaudible) Today. The

Japan-U.S. relation goes back for many, many years. When the new government in Japan

came, it came as a surprise to the U.S. when they ask U.S. bases to be moved out of Japan.

Do you think it was sending a wrong message for the U.S. and also maybe a wrong

message for neighboring countries, especially China, or there was some kind of influence

from somewhere else so that new government in Japan had to take such a drastic action or

sending a wrong message to the U.S. as far as bases are concerned? Because U.S. was

protecting Japan and its security also in the region for decades.

COL. UCHIKURA: I'm not saying Japan is going to progress away or

toward a different way. What I want to emphasize that, we enjoyed having a cutting edge

U.S. asset too much, so we have to realistically consider how -- what its interoperability is in

the next decade. So, I'm not going to say China is a threat, I'm not going to say specific

nation is a threat, but ballistic missile threat is an ongoing threat. But that's what I want to

say.

SPEAKER: This question is directed to Colonel Warren, specifically about

unequal burden sharing directly in the form of caveats with NATO, and how you have, like

you mentioned, specific nations like the U.S., the UK, Canada, et cetera, unequally sharing

the burden of having no caveats and having to deal with basically functionally inoperable

troops that have very specific and very far-ranging caveats and the anger of NATO

members bubbling over to the fact that even Secretary Gates called out other members to

say these caveats have to be dropped. And last year the Atlantic Council made a resolution

that very bluntly said no longer will caveats fly and there will be consequences if you do

instill these caveats. However, I don't know what happened with that resolution.

I was wondering if you could address what happens to that resolution -- I

believe it was January last year, and also, what kind of feasible consequences could there

be that the Atlantic Council could make to members that refuse to drop these caveats,

especially when you have the militaries wanting to be more functionally interoperable with

the U.S. and NATO itself, but you have the political machines of these countries not giving

much bargaining room with that.

CDR. WARREN: Certainly you hit on an issue that causes a lot of debate,

divisive debate, and its caveats. In reality, for most countries, the caveat issue is really,

believe it or not, more of a logistics issue. In other words, the United States -- and it's even

in our QDR -- is uniquely able to do expeditionary operations. Most countries do not. Now,

you could argue that that is one of the big issues, we need other nations to be expeditionary,

but currently they aren't, and as a consequence, when they get somewhere, if and when they finally get somewhere, they're sort of stuck where they are, so their logistics tail, if you would, their tether, their umbilical cord back to their logistics points, are very tenuous, so they can go out very, very short distances.

That's one challenge and one reason why there are some caveats. However, there are certain caveats where -- either implied or stated, where nations just say, I'm never going to station any forces in the south, for instance. Those are the kind of caveats that are the most debilitating in the minds of most, except for all the types of caveats sort of get lumped into one big pot. We sort of don't realize that most of them are of the more benign kind, but there are a few of the more divisive kind.

Now, as far as a resolution being passed, I don't know the answer to that, but quite frankly, NATO -- one of the challenges of NATO and what sort of makes it different than for instance like the EU is that it really doesn't have very many rules. It has a lot of norms that it likes to have nations comply with, like you'll spend 2 percent of your GDP on defense and other things, but there are no "punitive measures" for anybody in the alliance. And some might argue that's a problem, some others might say, no, that's why it continues to this day, because there's not a lot of rules that it has to go in and around.

But you sort of hit on one of the challenges or one of the problems that NATO has run up against in the last 20 years or so is that it -- in the past, things were pretty simple because everything sort of went to one threat, sort of knew what we were doing, we all agreed on that issue. Now that we don't have one threat and we have all these more ethereal and "you-can't-put-your-hands-on-it" kind of threats, there's a lot of disagreement which we don't have any systems to resolve the problems. So you put your finger on the problem.

MR. PIFER: Pat, let me follow up on that question which is, you spoke, I

think, very correctly about some of the tensions within NATO in terms of the alliance trying to

figure out, you know, what missions -- what role it has. And an answer that I've heard

sometimes to the question of how do you square NATO's desire, or at least the part of some

NATO members, and I put the United States firmly in this camp, to have expeditionary

capabilities for places like Afghanistan versus the desire, particularly on the part of countries

such as in Central Europe, the new NATO allies, to have NATO focus more on traditional

defense. And some have said, well, you can develop an expeditionary capability and if that

capability can get you to Afghanistan, it could get you to Estonia. And that has some appeal

to it, but I guess the question I would ask is, is that a realistic answer in terms of looking at

what you would be going to do in Afghanistan is probably different from what you would

have to be able to do in a place like Estonia or Poland.

CDR. WARREN: Certainly there's -- I think there's sort of truth in both

those ideas there. I think that, you know, for Italy to get to Estonia, they could do it by rail,

but it would be slow and long and it would be better if they had some kind of air -- when we

say expeditionary, it's largely air and some navel issues, but -- so -- and quite frankly, the

chances of Italy getting attacked or Portugal or some of these other countries is, you know,

is almost on the point of ludicrous. So -- and some would argue that maybe it's also

ludicrous for Estonia, but they don't believe that. So, it would be helpful to have more

equipment that could get them there.

The challenge is money, it's all resources. You know, all politics are local,

so people want to -- nations want to spend their money where they're going to get the most

bang for the buck and usually the most domestic bang for their buck, meaning that their

people are pleased with how they're spending the money. And so, to buy, for instance,

strategic lift C-17s or the A-400 is -- they hope to have sooner or later in Europe is expensive

and not all of them want to put their money there, they would rather put their money in the

current economic crisis for instance.

So, the answer is, is that for many countries, I don't think that they could get to an expeditionary capability any time soon. I also -- but some could and some have in the UK, for instance, being an island country, but others can certainly start moving down that line, but it will take some considerable diplomatic effort and cajoling to keep that process moving and it won't be quick because these are countries that right now do not have large militaries and certainly, considerably downsized after the Cold War, but as we look to date -- or even if they still had the Cold War forces they had, they would be the wrong forces at this time.

So, yes, they need to do it. Some could and even the ones that -- the Estonias and the Central European countries, Poland, et cetera, who argue that they have a threat on their flank or at least what could be a threat on their flank, and they want to keep territorial forces, the reality is, is that they don't really have much of a force anyway so it's sort of a moot point.

MR. FRANKEL: I'm going to keep you on the hot seat, Pat. Based on your presentation and your answer to Ambassador Pifer's question, I'm wondering, when you talked about, sort of, NATO's identity crisis and the variety of missions it's trying to take on sort of simultaneously -- collective defense, multilateral -- how much of that is a function of the composition of the organization itself?

In other words, you know, it was easy to define the mission when it just included Western Europe as a buffer against the east, now that NATO has expanded to take on Eastern and Central Europe, where their primary focus is still the collective defense against Russia, where as I think most of Western Europe has already moved on. How much of this is a function of what NATO has become, which is sort of a roundabout way of asking, you know, what is the proper composition of NATO in the future based on which of the

missions you think it's going to accomplish? And, you know, in hindsight it was this -- if we wanted to keep NATO in this form, have we made some mistakes in terms of what -- how large we've let the organization become?

CDR. WARREN: That's a second question there.

MR. FRANKEL: (inaudible)

CDR. WARREN: No, no, I was -- well, you were -- I was going one way and then you said the last sentence there changed my -- NATO has devolved/evolved, I don't know how you want to say it, to doing, as I mentioned, these security tasks that are not directly related to their direct defense. Why? Because that's sort of what's going on in the world, you know, we've got piracy, we've got, you know, problems in Serbia, we've got problems in Yugoslavia -- former Yugoslavia, et cetera. So, they have looked out at this world of tasks or issues and have selected some to do, ones -- more likely they selected the ones that are more closer to home although we have picked Afghanistan and piracy is starting to move out there. And there has been some actions in Africa although very, very small.

So, those are the capabilities that NATO -- if that's the way the world's going to look, those are the capabilities that are probably -- at least to continue to develop, which are what the United States has run across recently and that is that many of these challenges are not directly of a military nature. There's the pandemics and the, you know, the nation building and those kind of issues.

As far as enlargement goes though, that's a very interesting question because you -- as a matter of fact, the Russians would argue -- I sat in an interesting meeting the other day where -- that by the U.S. allowing -- or U.S. -- NATO, U.S by default, allowing countries that are of questionable stability or potentially allowing countries of questionable stability, in this case Georgia, to come to NATO, they believe that it will -- that

NATO will now -- if they do something stupid like they did in August of last year -- or 2008,

rather, then NATO will get right behind them and support them on that and NATO will be

sucked into a fight with Russia that it shouldn't have been in. Well, that's probably a naïve

way of looking at it, but certainly that question is in fact resident in many minds particularly in

Europe.

About a year ago, when they were debating whether or not to let Ukraine

and Georgia in about a year and a half ago, I guess, now, that was, in fact, the argument

that Chancellor Merkel used. She said, you know, I'm not sure that these countries are

stable enough yet to come into the fold, so we will wait to see if they can stabilize

themselves so they don't do something irrational which would -- not necessarily of

somebody attacked Russia would NATO go to its aid, but it would cause a lot of problems

that NATO does not want to tackle right now.

So, I hope that answers your second question.

MR. PIFER: Last question here.

MR. BRADLEY: I'm Tom Bradley. The question is for Colonel Uchikura.

And I'd like -- there are many purposes served by the presence of United States forces in

Japan. With the rapid increase in capability of the Japan Self-Defense Forces over the last

30 or 40 years, I'd like to hear you talk -- and I know this is not directly toward the subject of

your research, but you have to have thought about this pretty deeply in the last year, at least

-- with the rapid increase in capability of the self-defense forces, what is the primary purpose

served by the large number of American forces in Japan today? Is it deterrence and defeat

of any aggression against Japan? Is it to provide a sense of stability in the relationship

between the two countries? Or is it to provide a good base of operations for American

military operations in East Asia? How do you see the primary purposes served by those

forces?

COL. UCHIKURA: In my sense, there are two main objectives. The first one is in peace time, to deter the situation -- deter any aggression in Asian-Pacific region. The second thing is because of large -- huge distance from CONUS to our region, they have to have some sort of force in place in a particular place to take prompt action when something occurs. So they're to deter and response. There are two meaning.

And also, in terms of conventional and unconventional, we expect the nuclear umbrella done by U.S. forces, also conventional asset. According to current U.S.-Japan defense guidelines, U.S. is primarily in charge of offensive operation, we're going to take defensive operation. We already share the missions like this.

But concept-wise, we can already share the roles, but in reality, there is room that we can fix, we can improve. That's what I want to say. Do you understand what I'm saying?

MR. PIFER: Okay. Well, I think we have just about exhausted our time, so let me ask everybody please to join me in thanking our panelists for the discussion.

(Applause)