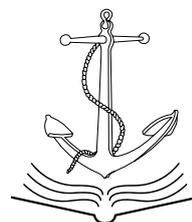


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**UK Air-Sea Integration in Libya,  
2011: A Successful Blueprint for the  
Future?**

*Geoffrey Till and Martin Robson*



**KING'S**  
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# UK Air-Sea Integration in Libya, 2011: A Successful Blueprint for the Future?

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## *Key Points*

- Libya was a successful operation fought in a manner Sir Julian Corbett would have immediately recognised as being typically British.
- Operational success was based upon the successful integration of UK air and sea assets.
- As a time, scope and geographically limited operation based on air and sea integration as part of an existing alliance framework (NATO), UK participation in the 2011 Libya operation seems likely to help set the course for British defence in the short-term.
- Sea based forces were crucial to ensure sea control as an enabler for projecting force ashore from the sea through TLAM and NGS and carrier based aviation. They also enforced a UN arms embargo on the Libyan regime while allowing supplies to reach the Libyan rebel forces.

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# **UK Air-Sea Integration in Libya, 2011: A Successful Blueprint For the Future?**

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## ***Introduction***

The aim of this article is to assess the United Kingdom's contribution to the intervention in Libya during 2011, and its possible implications for the future. Set against a background of British strategic uncertainty over future security challenges, economic austerity and an ongoing commitment to Afghanistan, Libya provides an interesting case study with which to reassess key long-term debates about British strategic thinking, in particular the 'maritime' versus 'continental' debate which so infuses much of British strategic writing. It argues that the work of Sir Julian Corbett, specifically his 1911 *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, still has much relevance to thinking about British strategy and security in the twenty-first century.

## ***Corbett's Thinking***

In devising their strategies, the British have always alternated between 'continental' and 'maritime' strategies. This has never been an easy or a simple choice, and rarely in practice one of either/or alternatives, but in the main it has been a question of pursuing a maritime course where they can, and a continental one where they must. In this connection, it is a sad indictment of the current state of British thinking about strategy that the 2011 centennial of the publication of Sir Julian Corbett's masterwork *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* passed largely without comment or celebration.<sup>1</sup>

One of Corbett's major pre-occupations was to help British policy makers avoid involving the nation in long-term continental military enterprises because he thought they played more to British weaknesses than to British strengths.<sup>2</sup> The 'Continental Approach' of large scale, Army-centred operations on the Eurasian land-mass was, and would be now, the very opposite of the kind of sea-based, cost-effective, offshore balancing/limited intervention 'maritime approach' that he advocated. While no-one would claim that the Afghanistan imbroglio equates to the Western Front of the First World War, there are certainly some disconcerting similarities between the two, not least the manner in which the short term focus on the campaign at least temporarily eclipsed the long-term maritime aspects of British thinking about security and strategy.<sup>3</sup>

Afghanistan, Corbett would have said, is an example of the kind of war we should not be fighting, because it suits the adversary: Britain is fighting on the enemy's terms. Partly of course, this is a matter of geography. Afghanistan is a land-locked country, with a primitive infrastructure, complex social characteristics, a traditional aversion to central government and porous border regions abutting external actors supportive of the insurgency. Resourceful adversaries have repeatedly demonstrated their capacity to make the most of the Coalition's unavoidable logistic vulnerabilities, not least the land transit phase through Pakistan which has so often been attacked.<sup>4</sup> Worst of all, in Afghanistan UN and NATO forces are, for all their dedication and professionalism, labouring under the enormous disadvantage of their association with a regime seen as illegitimate by a disappointingly large proportion of the local population following the 2009 elections.<sup>5</sup>

Good strategy, a twenty-first century Corbett would say, is about making the best use of one's advantages, and denying the adversary the ability to do the same. Importantly, Corbett understood that wars were (and still are) not the same for all the protagonists:

...wars tend to take certain forms each with a marked idiosyncrasy; that these forms are normally related to the object of the war and to its value to one or both

belligerents; that a system of operations which suits one form may not be that best suited to another.<sup>6</sup>

Of course, Corbett was talking about state-on-state conflict but his thoughts are also relevant to a counter-insurgency situation, where maximizing one's own resources while denying the enemy the ability to do the same is particularly difficult. Worse, boots on the ground can often seem to be counter-productive, more part of the problem than the solution, especially when, to the locals, their presence seems to take the form of inaccurate air-strikes based on faulty intelligence which kill or injure innocent civilians. The longer garrisoning forces stay in such places, the worse this usually becomes, especially if they are not of sufficient size and suitably armed, relative to the challenge they face.<sup>7</sup>

For such reasons Corbett, and other great British strategic thinkers such as General Sir Charles Callwell and Basil Liddell-Hart, emphasised an expeditionary and maritime approach in which 'maritime' decidedly did not just mean naval, since it incorporated land forces too.<sup>8</sup> If the Royal Air Force (RAF) had been around in 1911 when Corbett wrote *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, he would no doubt have included air power too. When Corbett used the word 'maritime' he meant a strategy reflecting the activities of joint forces in circumstances in which the sea is a significant factor, advocating mobile expeditionary forces rather than large garrisoning ones. This was the means by which disorder and crime could be contained and global conflict either averted or at least dealt early and most cost-effectively. For Corbett, Callwell and Liddell-Hart, the way Britain was sucked into the Western Front of the First World War, was a regrettable and hopefully temporary departure from the British norm.

### ***The Meaning of Security***

In addition to this the widening of the concept of security has provided a further level of complication to Britain's historic 'maritime' versus 'continental' dilemma. The news that the Taliban were responding to US drone strikes against their

leadership by stopping the inoculation of thousands of children against polio in Waziristan reminds us that conflict and war has an almost infinite capacity to change and hybridise.<sup>9</sup> As a result, one of the key issues in Britain today is the debate over the expansion of the nature of 'national security'. Once it largely meant the direct defence of national territory and critical national interests overseas against conventional military attack by other states. This would pitch conventional force against conventional force, like on like in state versus state conflict. Security was largely synonymous with defence; and defence was the prime justification for and duty of the state.

Of course, it was never as simple as that. The military had sometimes to cope with domestic insurrection, even civil wars. In the nineteenth century the British had a variety of colonial campaigns to conduct in extending and developing their empire. In the case of the Royal Navy's campaign against the slave trade, or dealing with the smuggling that threatened to undermine state income, naval forces acted to defend the state against various forms of criminal activity. But such things were never regarded as the 'main effort'. Even in Britain, a global imperial power with very little intention of fighting a war on the mainland of Europe in the nineteenth century, study of the specialist demands of these unconventional operations were almost totally neglected except for a few observers like Charles Callwell.

But now the situation has changed. The priorities have reversed because the concept of security has expanded. We talk of environmental security, human security, homeland security.<sup>10</sup> The UK's National Security Strategy of 2010 states that 'National security is about protecting our people – including their rights and liberties – as well as protecting our democratic institutions and traditions' – a pretty broad definition of 'security'.<sup>11</sup> With the expansion of 'security' has come a concurrent expansion of the main tasks of conventional forces. This does not mean that the conventional war-fighting roles of the military have become irrelevant. In fact, because major inter-state war still remains probably the worst threat the UK faces, deterring it through the maintenance and exercise of the

nuclear deterrent and conventional war-fighting capacity is still the major priority.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, despite the expansion of 'security' has anything actually changed?

With nuclear and conventional deterrence designed to assure us that the threat of state-on-state conflict is mitigated, at least to an acceptable degree, the main day-to-day tasks of the UK's conventional military is to deal with unconventional threats and situations, that include terrorism, nuclear proliferation, globalised criminal activity of many sorts, insurgency and various forms of hybrid war which may well reflect a mix of the conventional with the unconventional use of force.

This poses some major challenges and dilemmas for Britain's military including the following:

**Changing and expanding objectives.** These situations are often unexpected, confusing, ambiguous, and subject to constant change. One lesson from Afghanistan and Libya is that the military can no longer expect much in the way of warning about future deployment (three weeks in the case of Libya) or expect a set of clear, long-term objectives from government that their political masters want them to achieve.<sup>13</sup> They have to be quick off the mark, agile and flexible. No longer, for example can the British Army train, as it did for nearly 40 years, to meet the Soviet Third Shock army as it thundered through the Fulda Gap in Western Germany. Instead, modern militaries have to prepare for being unprepared.

**They therefore need to learn new skills, and to develop new capabilities – and to** interweave them comprehensively with the old ones. In describing this approach NATO uses the analogies of a twisted rope in which the various military, economic, social and cultural strands strengthen each other and are supplied from a variety of sources, governments and NGOs some of which may not be particularly sympathetic to the military approach.

**The need to make choices.** First, the demands on the military when they are engaged in unconventional military operations are likely to be very different in

terms of approach, concept and equipment from those suited to conventional ones. Traditional concepts of defeat and victory may make little sense. Long range anti-ship missiles may not help intercept drugs smugglers. Moreover, these dilemmas and choices arise in an age when Britain's military forces are facing budget constraints whilst at the same time confronting a wider and wider range of possible and necessary commitments. Accordingly, they face the prospect of having to make painful choices between competing capabilities. Does the heavy Royal Marine involvement in Afghanistan not necessarily weaken their amphibious expertise, for example?

**The need to cooperate with others against common threats.** Because defence resources are finite, the military have to combine with other forces in order to cope with the new security threats. While much thought has been given, often based on practical needs and experience, as to how the military might work with other government departments or NGOs, the 'integrated approach',<sup>14</sup> the development of this trend may well mean operating not just with existing allies. The future might lead to the UK working with unfamiliar and temporary international partners as part of a disposable alliance or coalition which comes together to tackle one issue but not others. Military campaigns and military tactics will need to be adapted accordingly.

These tendencies framed Britain's involvement in the Libyan operation of 2011 and seem likely to shape its defence policy for the next few years and it is worth looking at this in a little more detail.

### ***Libya: The Main Challenges***

*An unexpected, confused and changing remit*

February 2011. With the majority of British forces withdrawn from Iraq in 2009 and with an ongoing commitment to Afghanistan British forces badly needed a rest.<sup>15</sup> There was no suggestion of any further major commitments for British

forces; instead the focus was on cutting back on military expenditure by approximately 17 percent if making good the Ministry of Defence's previous budget deficit is taken into account.<sup>16</sup> But like the Arab Spring as a whole, no-one expected or anticipated an uprising in Libya. As it developed, the prospect of major instability, a humanitarian disaster in Benghazi and refugees flooding across the Mediterranean into Europe led to the conclusion that something had to be done.

The military had three weeks warning to get something ready. But what? Initially the aim was to protect civilians, limit the bloodshed, and somehow prevent the outbreak of a civil war in an important country on the edge of Europe. It soon became clear that the two sides were irreconcilable and that a lasting compromise was not possible. The aim therefore morphed from destroying the weaponry that could kill civilians to facilitating regime change. Only towards the end did the regime itself become the enemy. If it had been from the start things would have been different.

### *The Politics of Intervention*

Whether or not to intervene, and if so, how, became highly politicized. Hence the establishment of the no-fly zone in United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973 of 17 March 2011,<sup>17</sup> the eventual acquiescence of the Russians and Chinese, the political importance of the support of the Arab league and the actual participation of countries like Qatar, UAE and Jordan were all crucial in attaining legitimacy. The African Union was opposed to the mission and Germany's refusal to participate complicated it as a NATO operation, **both** illustrating the enduring difficulties of implementing coalition operations.<sup>18</sup>

### *Limited and Discriminating Intervention*

The answer to these dilemmas was a strategy of limited and discriminating intervention in the best Corbettian style, with a heavy emphasis on the use of air-sea forces and a conceptual reflection of Britain's maritime expeditionary tradition.

For a long time the biggest initial constraint was not to be seen as taking sides and intervening in what could easily become a civil war. Hence, for political as well as operational reasons there would be no 'boots on the ground'.<sup>19</sup> After Iraq and Afghanistan, the British were in no mood for another prolonged continental style intervention. This was going to be an unusual operation conducted largely by the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force, operating in mutual support under the conceptual banner of 'Air-Sea Integration'; in many ways Britain's version of the American 'AirSea Battle Construct'.<sup>20</sup>

The problem was that the insurgents were as ill-trained as they were politically unbending and their progress was very slow. So it all took much longer than people anticipated. The operational strain and the usage of stocks were much higher than hoped for. In the theatre of operations, civilian casualties had to be avoided at all costs, so air and naval forces could only strike when they were absolutely assured of their target and with the very minimum risk to the civilian population. The campaign had to be highly discriminate, but at the same time domestic opinion in Britain and France did not want another major operation resulting in casualties to their own forces. They preferred aircraft to fly high but still be absolutely accurate.

Large scale casualties amongst Gadaffi loyalists were to be avoided too; this was compounded by the 'other side' making the most of the problem by fighting amongst the people. The Libyan army even adopted the insurgent tactic of using 'technicals': flat bed trucks with mounted with heavy weapons. On one occasion at least, moreover, the insurgents made use of captured Libyan army tanks but failed to let allied air forces know and so lost them to an allied air attack.

### *An Allied Operation*

As far as the British were concerned it was absolutely vital to have as many allies aboard as possible in order to share the political, economic and military costs of the operation, and thus to render it cost-effective in a Corbettian way. Many allies were indeed secured but they came with varying degrees of commitment and

capability and the campaign plan had to be adapted to suit their various requirements.

First of all this meant responding to the simple question of who was in and who was out, and so deciding what kind of coalition campaign it was going to be. At the start of operation on 19 March 2011 the US, Britain and France took the operational lead. Then the US reduced its role, leaving the British and French to conduct and command the operation from the sea. Then, when Italian concerns had been assuaged and conducting the no-fly zone became a NATO operation, UNIFIED PROTECTOR, on 25 March, command was moved ashore. Doing all this in the midst of, rather than before, military operations was enormously difficult but nonetheless achieved. Finally, the unfamiliar but politically essential Arab partners, Qatar and the UAE had to be integrated into NATO procedures and the Air Tasking Order. This was a challenge.

#### *The Modalities of Cost-effective Intervention*

The modalities of the operation can be seen as an illustration of what the Corbettian 'maritime' approach can actually mean today, and because of the ultimate success of the operation seem likely to provide a blueprint for future British military policy.

#### *Limited Ground Forces*

Some analysts concluded that the disorganized state of the rebels, the increasingly evident need for regime change, and the longer-term protection of the population would actually require significant coalition ground forces.<sup>21</sup> There was indeed a small but important presence of Special Forces.<sup>22</sup> But the overall majority concluded that ground forces were likely to prove very expensive, economically and domestically, and to judge by experience in Iraq and Afghanistan would stand in danger of becoming part of the problem instead of the solution.<sup>23</sup> Robert Gates even quoted Douglas MacArthur: 'any future defense secretary who advises the President to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should "have his head examined"'.<sup>24</sup>

Instead the manifest advantages of a maritime approach were clearly recognised. As stated above, the approach was to be determined by the concept of 'Air-Sea integration'. This would provide the fastest, most discriminating and safest way of achieving the campaign objectives even if it was not employed as vigorously as the insurgents sometimes wanted.

### ***Air-Sea Integration: The Libyan Example***

First of all air and naval forces provided an effective means for the evacuation of non-combatants from the danger zones. Ships took thousands of non-combatants from Libyan ports and aircraft reached deep inside a disintegrating country to pluck them from situations of danger.<sup>25</sup>

This all took detailed intelligence, as did the subsequent rounds of air attack on government forces deemed as threatening the civilian population, or indeed coalition forces. The lesson seemed to be that in such situations you cannot have too much Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and in many cases the Commanders' problem was how best to allocate ISR assets to the competing demands of innumerable operational sub-commanders. The ISR assets themselves were provided from a huge variety of sea and land-based sites and had to be successfully integrated across the air-sea domain and national boundaries.

Even after it withdrew from leading the operations the US continued to provide a good deal of Intelligence, Surveillance, Target acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) in a manner which suggests that Europe needs to beef up these capabilities. Air attacks had to be coordinated by E3D Sentry and Sentinel R 1 ASTOR (Airborne Stand-off Radar) aircraft and Nimrod RI (the latter kept on despite Britain's Strategic Defence and Security Review). These assets liaised with NATO's Combined Air Operations Centre at Poggia near Venice, which controlled movements of up to one hundred aircraft at a time, identified targets,

authorized attacks and coordinated in-flight refueling (IFR). Sentinels flew 2,200 hours in about 200 sorties.<sup>26</sup>

This helped meet one of the wider objectives by enabling precision attacks with highly discriminating smart weapons systems. In the British case, this involved, in order of relative precision, Paveway II and III bombs (bunker-busters v hardened targets.), Dual-mode Brimstone missiles from Tornado and Typhoon aircraft and four Apache helicopter gunships operating from HMS *Ocean*.<sup>27</sup> The latter were accompanied by a Sea King helicopter and could only be used once enemy air defences had been largely suppressed. Since the Apaches flew much lower than the 15,000 feet of attack aircraft, they could deal with smaller, mobile targets, in an urbanized environment like Misrata, using hellfire missiles and 30mm cannon.<sup>28</sup> They also directly assisted coalition naval forces by attacking coastal radars and Libyan Special Forces patrol boats.<sup>29</sup> Two French Tiger helicopters and ten Gazelles operated from the French *Tonnerre* in a similar fashion. In order to ensure accuracy and avoid collateral damage, the French used air-to surface missiles filled with concrete or rubber.<sup>30</sup> To avoid risking casualties amongst civilians who might respond to the air strikes by going to look at the damage caused by particular attacks, the RAF attacked at night with multiple weapons released on first wave, thereby avoiding the need for second wave operations. Carrier based aircraft were especially cost-effective since their closer position reduced transit times and IFR requirements and made for more responsive targeting.<sup>31</sup>

### *Supporting the Air Campaign*

In order to deliver these effects, coalition air and sea forces needed themselves to be secure and supported. First of all, this required the Suppression of Enemy Air Defences (SEAD). The first act in the SEAD campaign was by Sea Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCMS) fired from Royal Navy and United States Navy submarines, the latter firing 221 SLCMS and the former seven shooting independently for the first time.<sup>32</sup> This was followed by the institution of control of the air through the imposition of a No Fly Zone (NFZ) (helped by fact that most of

the Libyan air force defected to Malta on first sortie).<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the Russian-supplied Libyan system was declared outdated by many commentators - galling to Moscow. Even so, about half of the daily one hundred and fifty or so air sorties throughout the campaign were required to defend the NFZ rather than to attack regime forces directly.

This demanded large numbers of sorties. By 29 September 2011, 23,246 sorties had been flown from sea and land sites of which 9,040 were strike missions (although these did not necessarily involve the release of weapons). It was arduous work. At one point, the RAF was down to only having about eight pilots trained for ground attack and single figures in its stocks of the best variants of Brimstone. Robert Gates said that the NATO air-operations centre had been designed for 300 sorties a day but was struggling to reach 150, a third of the rate over Serbia in 1999.<sup>34</sup> The RAF only had five Sentinels supporting operations in both Libya and Afghanistan and was pushed to the limit.<sup>35</sup> The RAF's six Typhoons operating out of Giaia Del Colle in southern Italy flew 84 hours a month compared to 25 hours normally, initially having to rely on the Tornados for target designation as Typhoons were really designed for air-to-air combat and so had to be re-roled.<sup>36</sup>

Keeping this sea and air armada flying was a prodigious task. The RAF delivered an average of 1.95 million pounds of fuel per day, with a peak of three million pounds.<sup>37</sup> Only Britain and France were able to satisfy their own requirements and much of this had to be provided for other coalition partners by the US. This again identified a need for the European nations to address; fuel is a vital enabler that tends to determine who in actual fact leads operations, simply having fast jets is not enough.

Sea-based forces required sea control as their key enabler. In the early stages of campaign, sea-based aircraft and Sentinels were mainly utilised to keep an eye on the daily presence and activity of the Libyan fleet in all of its ports. Later, the requirement to guarantee sea control led to the destruction of the Libyan navy at Tripoli and Al-Khums, mainly by air, and the sweeping of all mines. On several

occasions ships operating close to land had to protect themselves against missile and artillery attack from shore. HMS *Liverpool* for example came under fire on ten occasions but the ships success has reinforced British interest in the development of more sophisticated means of naval gunfire support.<sup>38</sup> Sea-based search and rescue helicopters based on coalition aircraft carriers maintained a near 100 per cent availability rate and provided support for air and sea based aircraft in transit to or returning from operations ashore.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, naval forces were essential in enforcing the imposition of the UN arms embargo on the Libyan regime and denying its supplies. Conversely naval forces were significant in keeping the rebels supplied, particularly those based in besieged Misrata and preventing Gadaffi forces from interfering with this supply operation. Rebel forces used small boats from eastern Libya to aid blockaded Misrata, and NATO stood by with humanitarian supplies.<sup>40</sup>

## ***Conclusions***

The Libya operation seems to have proved a useful and relevant illustration of the cost-effectiveness of the Corbettian maritime approach, as distinct from the continental approach characteristic of Afghanistan. Civilian collateral casualties were kept to a very low level, thanks to a zero-casualty bar being set and allied air-forces only using precision weaponry with none of the dumb-bombs that were used in the 1990s.<sup>41</sup> In January 2012 Nick Harvey MP, then Minister for the Armed Forces, stated the UK 'helped to enforce the maritime embargo and ensured that the sea lanes were free from threats to allow humanitarian aid to be delivered, which was particularly relevant in Benghazi and Misrata'.<sup>42</sup> Therefore the operation did protect the people in terms of the object and implementation of UNSCR 1973 and moved on to secure regime change. This reversed what would probably have been the bloody defeat of the rebels by the Gadaffi regime, and perhaps above all for the British government, avoided another Srebrenica on its watch.<sup>43</sup>

The financial costs of the Libyan campaign for the UK were in the order of £260 million, compared to about £4.5 billion pounds for Afghanistan per annum, (and even more if the lifetime costs of looking after the wounded are factored in).<sup>44</sup> The Afghanistan operation costs to July 2011 were officially costed at £18 billion.<sup>45</sup> As Malcolm Chalmers has argued the cost of the Libya operation was 'around 12 per cent of that of Afghanistan operations over the same (six-month) period'. Of course a lot of other costs were born by Britain's allies. At \$896 million, the US almost certainly spent more than either France or the UK on the operations, who probably owed the US about \$222 million for their help.<sup>46</sup>

Libya can therefore be seen as a successful expeditionary operation fought in a typically Corbettian way. It was conducted at the operational level, more than the tactical, but less than the strategic in the sense that it was not intended as a means of opening up a new front in larger war. Although it was conducted only across the Mediterranean, and so was geographically quite close to the main protagonists, it was 'distant' in the sense of requiring expeditionary forces to operate from the sea or foreign bases. For that reason it graphically illustrated the continuing 'tyranny of distance' in the conduct of military operations; even given the extended range of modern weaponry. For the UK the effect of this was reduced by good road communications to Italy for material support and ability to fly in key spares, munitions and people as necessary. This reduced the need for sea support of the kind normally required for expeditionary operations further afield. Above all, this was a joint operation involving the closest integration of air, sea and land forces.

For all these reasons, it could be argued that Libya seems likely to help set the course for British defence in the next few years, a point reinforced by the decision to cut the Army by 20,000 in the aftermath of Libya and as the Afghanistan campaign winds down. But continuing financial considerations will probably play an even greater role in shaping Britain's military future. Perhaps Libya is the first stage of redressing the implications of the SDSR that, despite being an island nation, Britain will be according to some analysts, the most land centric defence

force of all the major NATO countries by 2015.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, while Libya was not only a successful operation fought in a manner Corbett would have immediately recognized as being typically British, when set against Afghanistan, it also reignites the maritime versus continental debate in UK strategic thinking. It also raises concerns for the future of the UK's ability to intervene primarily utilising air-sea integration, especially as the Libya operation was focused around those capabilities. It has also served to illustrate the expanded concepts of security twenty-first century policy makers have to deal with. Moreover as Libya has already demonstrated, defence planners always have to accept that a strategic surprise is always lurking around the corner. As Commodore Steve Jermy stated to the House of Commons Defence Committee:

Events, and Her Majesty's Government's actions in Libya suggest that the UK has still not recovered its ability to think and act strategically in pursuit of the national interest. Although, at the time of writing [25/01/2012], the campaign appears to have taken a more positive turn, this may be temporary, and very possibly more to do with good luck than with good strategy. Luck - good and bad - very often plays an important role in operations and war, and we should naturally be prepared to ride good luck. But equally, we should also work to understand how to improve our strategy-making and, thus, our overall strategic performance.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the success of Libya as a military operation, this warning should be heeded

## Editorial Note

This is an English version of the chapter written in March 2012 and which appeared in 'Integration der britischen Luft- und Seestreitkräfte im Libyenkrieg 2011: Erfolgreiche Blaupause für die Zukunft?' in S. Bruns, K. Petretto, D. Petrovic (eds), *Maritime Sicherheit, Globale Gesellschaft und internationale Beziehungen*, (VS-Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2013), ISBN: 978-3-531-18479-1. The Corbett Centre would like to thank the publishers for permission to reproduce it as a Corbett Paper.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Corbett, J. S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, (London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1988, original published by Longman Green and Co., 1911). The only book on the subject was produced by a Swede: Widen, J.J., *Theorist of maritime Strategy: Sir Julian Corbett and his Contribution to Military and Naval Thought*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> One of the objects of his *England in the Seven Years War: a study in combined strategy* (London: Longmans, Green, 1907) was to show contemporary policy makers, who were facing similar issues, that during the Seven Years War (1756-1763) William Pitt the Elder had successfully balanced fighting a global maritime war for British interests while supporting Frederick the Great's Prussia in Continental Europe.

<sup>3</sup> This is a self-fulfilling problem as much of the debate about lessons from Afghanistan tends to assess lessons learned from the *campaign* in Afghanistan rather than discuss if it is the type of conflict the UK should be fighting at all. For example see Melvin, M., 'Learning the strategic lessons from Afghanistan', *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute*, April/May 2012, Vol. 157, No. 2, pp. 56-61

<sup>4</sup> An American air-strike which killed 24 Pakistani soldiers in November 2011 led to Islamabad closing the border to NATO convoys for seven months until US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton apologized for the strike leading to the reopening of land convoy route; 'Pakistan ends dispute over Nato supply routes after Hillary Clinton apology', *The Guardian*, 03/07/2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jul/03/pakistan-dispute-nato-hillary-clinton> (accessed 12/09/2012). Since the route reopened, there have been attacks on 24 July and 6 August 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19152903> (accessed 12/09/2012).

<sup>5</sup> See 'Afghan elections: responding to the test', *RUSI Analysis*, 10/09/2009, <http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C4AA8E80F56BF4> (accessed 12/09/2012); 'The fix is not quite in' *The Economist*, 25/11/2010, <http://www.economist.com/node/17583042> (accessed 12/09/2012). Though, as Michael Clarke has pointed out, the Karzai Administration has fluctuations in acceptability, 'Afghans optimistic for the future', *RUSI Analysis*, 11/01/2010, <http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C4B4B128C9D0FC> (accessed 12/09/2012).

<sup>6</sup> Corbett, *Some Principles*, p.9.

<sup>7</sup> 'Afghan sitrep' *Jane's Defence weekly*, 30/06/2010; Mearsheimer, J. J., 'Afghanistan: No More The Good War' *Newsweek Special Edition* June 2010. Even in the pages of the *British Army Review* the perceived need for major re-thinking seems clear. See Charles Dick 'Afghanization – Delusion or Decit?' and William F Owen, 'Killing Your way to Control' in *British Army Review*, No. 151, Spring 2011. There is now something of a fashion for regarding the Counter-Insurgency focus of the 9/11 decade as a detour from normal business.

<sup>8</sup> See Till, G., *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, (London: Routledge, 2009 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), pp.63-65.

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- <sup>9</sup> 'Taliban leader bans polio vaccinations in protest at drone strikes', *The Guardian*, 26/06/2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jun/26/taliban-bans-polio-vaccinations> (accessed 12/09/2012).
- <sup>10</sup> Broadening out the concept of security was the aim of Buzan, B., 'New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century', *International Affairs*, 67:3 (1991), p.433 and explicitly stated in the revised version of his 1983 book, *People, states and fear: an agenda for international security studies in the post-Cold War, era*, 2nd edn. (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) p. 8.
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