

Quotes:

Twenty-two UH-1N's are urgently needed as attrition replacement by the Marines to provide command and control, movement of reconnaissance teams, medical evacuation, search and rescue, psychological warfare, wire-laying and administrative support missions An additional 40 of these helicopters are required by the Navy for support missions on LPH's, LHA's, assault and support carriers, cruisers and other nonaviation ships. In situations requiring combat helicopter support, tactical helicopters based aboard the carriers are not available for support missions when most urgently required because the combat and support missions occur simultaneously. Support helicopters must be provided to allow tactical vehicles to perform their assigned mission.

The Marine Corps is now employing the AH-1 armed helicopter in Vietnam to provide suppressive fire support for Marine forces.

If we have learned anything at all from Vietnam, we learned that one of the best ways in the world to clear a beach or clear a jungle area or dispose of guerilla forces is with vertical infiltration, which requires the ability to move troops by vertical takeoff and landing aircraft. Certainly the (AH-1) Cobra gunship, for instance, furnishes the kind of firepower on pinpoint targets which I do not think we should ever be without if we are going to conduct operations like this.

The Marine Corps requirement for the (helicopter) forces stated was developed in a study of the Marine Corps amphibious mission by the Marine Corps Development Center in which three contingency scenarios were war-gamed. In addition, the actual experience of over four years of intensive helicopter combat operations in Vietnam have validated these Marine Corps stated requirements.

The mobility, dispersion, and vertical-lift helicopter capability, provided by the LHA and LPH/LPD types of ships, ideally suit amphibious forces for operations throughout the spectrum of modern warfare, including operations in a nuclear environment. These helicopter- and surface-borne forces are uniquely qualified by mission, doctrine, organization equipment, and experience to project seaborne combat power ashore against resistance. Because of the capability of U.S. amphibious task forces to launch attacks from the sea at times and places of their choosing, the almost infinite number of possible helicopter landing areas, and the large number of beaches suitable for surface assault or for seaborne support of helicopter vertical envelopment, historically potential enemies have deployed a vastly disproportionate number of coastal defense and mobile forces to counter the threat of an amphibious assault.... Amphibious task forces can provide a continued presence in unrestricted international waters close to a crisis area. They possess the unique characteristics of independence from developed ports and airheads and the self-contained capability to support and sustain combat power projected ashore through a wide range of environments. Such forces need not grant of passage, are immune to political objections, and can proceed without revealing final destination. They preclude the necessity for securing

guarantees or agreements for staging, transit, overflight or basing, payment rent, or prepositioning of supplies. Amphibious task forces, forward deployed to crisis area, can be retained offshore as a show of force and a demonstration of United States concern.

Their presence without commitment, may prevent or limit the introduction of third party forces, and also insures that insurgent forces, consider the consequence of their actions in terms of U. S. involvement. When required, they can land their landing forces over unprepared beaches or in helicopter landing zones within a few hours after notification. They are able to apply selectively the amount of force appropriate to the situation. An immediate responsiveness to national decisions is thus provided; further, these landing forces can be retracted just as rapidly, providing national authorities with positive control over the level and duration of U.S. commitment. It is these characteristics that epitomize the amphibious task force in conflicts at all levels of intensity.