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**On
21st Century Operational Art**

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On 21st Century Operational Art

INTRODUCTION

What will constitute Operational Art in the future? The aim of this paper is to answer this question and submit that in the 21st century, operational commanders will not be celebrated for the war they waged but rather the peace created. This is a bold statement, but in light of the recent American led war on Iraq, known as *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, there is reason to believe this indeed will be the case.¹ Could, for example, the post-combat situation in Iraq have been avoided? The easy answer is yes, simply because the United States could have chosen not to go to war. But this was not the decision taken, and given the current circumstances in Iraq, we may now ask ourselves why didn't the American Government, the Pentagon and lastly the operational campaign planners in Central Command, fully appreciate what a war with Iraq might eventually involve?

To answer this question, and what will constitute Operational Art in the future, this essay will put forward that we in the West continue to prepare for the wrong kind of wars. Most of our doctrine and exercises, in particular Canadian Forces College exercises, are directed at defeating enemy forces similar in nature to our own technical and military capabilities and not the typical 'industrial-age' militaries and societies found throughout the non-Western, developing world.² In addition, it will be argued that operational commanders often receive insufficient strategic direction regarding how to achieve the desired end-state of a campaign and then lack the proper staff expertise to

¹ Certainly, the late Specialist Darryl Dent, killed in September 2003 while escorting a mail convoy along a road 16 miles northwest of Baghdad, might have had something to say on this had he lived. The National Guardsman was the 139th American killed in Iraq since the end of major hostilities declared by President Bush on 1 May 2003 – one more death than the 138 Americans killed during the actual war itself. And since Dent's death, more Americans soldiers continue to die. See Elaine Monaghan. "A Deadly Peace Catches Up With a Victorious War." (*Times On Line*. September 10, 2003); available from <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/newspaper/0,,1-810562,00.html>; Internet; Accessed 10 September 2003.

² It should be noted however, that many of the operational level war fighting exercises conducted at the College are actually exercises written by, and utilized for, NATO operational level exercises.

analyze what they do receive. Therefore, operational commanders naturally focus their efforts on attaining military victory and afterwards hope for the best.

However, new concepts such as Network-Centric Warfare and Knowledge Management increasingly make the conduct of military campaigns against 'industrial-age' militaries easier than ever before, and thus operational commanders no longer need to exclusively focus on just defeating an enemy's military force. Hence, this paper will also argue that future operational commanders will need the expertise to fully comprehend the strategic environment and when necessary, challenge strategic direction believed lacking in detail. Indeed, this paper will contend that the Joe8teoperational ingGroup

STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND OPERATIONAL ART

Canadian doctrine asserts that Operational Art is a skill whereby a commander translates strategic direction into operational and tactical action. Operational Art, we are also told, involves the design and conduct of military campaigns that dictate where, when and why a commander chooses to fight in order to achieve military success. In our doctrine, we also use the term ‘military end-state’ to express “that state of military affairs that needs to be achieved at the end of the campaign to either terminate, or help resolve, the conflict as defined by the strategic aim.” Determining the ‘military end-state’ and identifying the operational objectives is crucial to campaign design, yet as will be discussed, often overlooked by commanders and staff who favour concentrating their energy on essentially beating the enemy’s military into submission. Of course, there should not be any surprise in this as our own doctrine tells us “the identification of an enemy’s center of gravity, and the *single-minded focus* [emphasis added] to expose and neutralize it are the essence of operational art.”³ However, this *single-minded focus* seldom provides decisive victory as John Keegan reminded us in 1993 when writing on the general inutility of what he called the “Western way of warfare”:

In the Gulf War a Clausewitzian defeat was inflicted by the forces of the coalition on those of Saddam Hussein. His refusal, however, to concede the reality of the catastrophe that had overtaken him, by recourse to a familiar Islamic rhetoric that denied he had been defeated in spirit, whatever material loss he had suffered, robbed the coalition’s Clausewitzian victory of much of its political point.⁴

³ Canada. Department of National Defence, B-GL-300-001/FP-000 *Conduct of Land Operations – Operational Doctrine for the Canadian Army*, (Ottawa, ON: 1 July 1998), 38.

⁴ John Keegan, *A History of Warfare*. (Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited, 1993), xi.

In light of the Gulf War, Robert Leonhard added in 2000 that:

The U.S. armed forces will surely find themselves in twenty-first century conflicts in which they must replace the fascination with the offensive with the complex realities of attaining political ends through judicious application of military means. To instruct future generations of warriors that they must destroy armed forces through immediate and relentless attack as a prelude to victory is simply in error. Real military operations in the twenty-first century will not comply with such easy formulation.⁵

If anything though, recent events in Iraq demonstrate that operational level doctrine continues to be employed as it always has. For example, despite ample mention of the importance of civil-military affairs in campaign design found in *Field Manual 3*, the United States Army Operations Manual released in June 2001, the purpose of land operations remained to “seize the enemy’s territory and resources, destroy his armed forces, and eliminate his means of controlling his population.”⁶ Without doubt this is what occurred during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, prompting columnist Haroon Siddiqui in the *Toronto Star* to comment that the United States, although good at war, was “disastrous at making or keeping peace” and “incompetent at managing conquered turf or people.” In his opinion America remained “appallingly ignorant of foreign cultures, languages and politics.”⁷ *Toronto Star’s* Rosie DiManno added that the occupation of Iraq might have worked better if the American government had “intellectually understood that country’s internecine politics and ruinous religious hostilities, its history of geographical and tribal divides.”⁸

Even the *Washington Times* reported that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were told “a flawed and rushed war-planning process” had been responsible for the problems in Iraq

⁵ Robert Leonhard, *The Principles of War for the Information Age*. (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, Inc, 2000), 83.

⁶ United States Department of Defense. Headquarters Department of the Army, *FM 3-0 Operations*. (Washington D.C., 14 June 2001), 1-6.

⁷ Haroon Siddiqui, “Two Years After 9/11 Attacks, A Report Card.” (*Toronto Star*, September 7, 2003), F1.

⁸ Rosie DiManno, “Why Occupation Lite Will Fail in Iraq.” (*Toronto Star*, September 1, 2003), A2.

following the fall of Saddam Hussein.⁹ In another article the American Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, was described as having said how impossible it had been for the government to predict that thousands of enemy troops, including two Divisions of Republican Guard, would simply leave the battlefield relatively intact – and able to fight another day.¹⁰ The British government, in a July 2003 report, then added that the lack of clear information on Iraq (despite, as the report noted, a decade of surveillance and containment) meant that the coalition, notwithstanding their use of overwhelming military power, did not expect the Iraqi military to collapse so suddenly. In a move to perhaps absolve strategic and operational planners from blame, the authors then said “only with hindsight was it possible to assess the true state of Iraq’s infrastructure, organizational and social collapse, caused by years of official neglect, criminal activity, and international sanctions.” It seems, based on this report however, that battlefield intelligence was plentiful:

The remarkable tempo and effects generated by land, sea and air operations were directly attributable to the quality, availability and timeliness of the intelligence product, which was significantly enhanced by access to US and other coalition allies. Modern Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance assets helped to provide urban situational awareness as did the effective use of human intelligence. ‘Real Time’ targeting information including Collateral Damage Assessment could be passed back to headquarters and the resulting precision munitions strikes were extremely accurate and successful.¹¹

That the situation in Iraq today is the way it is was certainly not what the Coalition intended. The British government outlined its policy objectives in Parliament on 7 January 2003, with its overall objective for the military campaign being to disarm Iraq in accordance with United Nations Security Resolutions 678 and 1441. When the war began on 20 March 2003, the tasks assigned to the military were to overcome the

⁹ Rowan Scarborough, “U.S. Rushed Post-Saddam Planning.” (*Washington Times*, September 3, 2003); available from <http://dynamic.washtimes.com/print....cfm?StoryID=20030903-120317-9393r>; Internet; Accessed September 3, 2003.

¹⁰ Rowan Scarborough, “U.S. Miscalculated Security for Iraq.” (*Washington Times*, August 28, 2003); available from <http://dynamic.washtimes.com/print....cfm?StoryID=20030827-114516-5938r>; Internet; Accessed August 28, 2003.

¹¹ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence, *Operations in Iraq – First Reflections Report*. (London: Director General Corporate Communication. July 2003), 15.

Iraqi military, deny their use of weapons of mass destruction and remove the government itself. The military was also supposed to secure essential economic infrastructure from sabotage. Politically, the British government would support the military campaign by creating the conditions for a future, stable and law abiding government but it would be up to the military, “in the wake of hostilities” to:

- Contribute to the creation of a secure environment so that normal life could be restored;
- Work in support of humanitarian organizations;
- Enable the reconstruction and re-commissioning of essential infrastructure for the political and economic development of Iraq; and
- To lay plans for the reform of Iraq’s security forces.¹²

The four points noted above however, should arguably not have been items for consideration “in the wake of hostilities”. Indeed, they should have been considered well before and the subsequent military campaign designed around achieving these ends. Yet, it appears the operational planners put all their efforts in designing a military campaign for a far more robust military than the Iraqi’s actually possessed. Even Rumsfeld indicated that his staff believed there would be some sort of formal surrender of the Iraqi army – not that they would more or less disappear.¹³

However, as Colonel Greer, Director of the United States Army School of Advanced Military Studies, pointed out in a 2002 article, American operational doctrine hamstrings planners and commanders when designing and conducting “effective, coherent campaigns for operations across the full spectrum of conflict in today’s security environment.” While in his view the “conventional campaign-planning construct” could be retained, he acknowledged that the United States military needed to leave behind what he termed the “almost total focus on physical force.”¹⁴ Colonel Greer’s observations

¹² Ibid, 40.

¹³ Rowan Scarborough, “Defense Team Hit for Iraq Failures.” (*Washington Times*, September 16, 2003); available from <http://dynamic.washtimes.com/print....cfm?StoryID=20030916-125156-4689r>; Internet; Accessed September 16, 2003.

¹⁴ James K. Greer, (Colonel), “Operational Art for the Objective Force.” (*Military Review*. September-October 2002), 23 and 29.

were shared by Canadian Colonel (now Brigadier-General) Beare who pointed out in a 2000 essay, somewhat prophetically, that the OPP was based on outdated Cold War assumptions:

Failure to grasp the true essence of an enemy or to accurately visualize both what he/she is capable of and willing to do can lead, and has led, to unexpected, or indeed disastrous results. The OPP ignores the factors that determine an enemy's will to fight, and fails to consider the effect of will on enemy actions. The planning process assumes much with respect to a commander and staff's ability to predict enemy actions, principally by ignoring civil and political factors as well as the moral equation.¹⁵

However, with the advent of Network-Centric Warfare and Knowledge Management there should soon be no compelling reason for an operational commander to ignore civil, political and moral issues when designing a campaign plan. Indeed, future operational commanders will have a distinct advantage over their predecessors by gaining access to unparalleled amounts of information about the enemy. In particular, they will likely have an almost complete knowledge regarding the state of an enemy's military forces, so only the minimum amount of time will be necessary determining the most likely and most dangerous courses of enemy military action. With less time spent on guessing an enemy's military intentions, more time can then be spent on other factors of greater importance. Of course, to reach the goal above great reliance has to be placed on concepts such as Network-Centric Warfare actually working and then having a somewhat amenable enemy powerless to intervene. Having faith in both occurring at the same time however, is not as improbable as first might appear.

NETWORK-CENTRIC WARFARE AND OPERATIONAL ART

Network-Centric Warfare is not just about better, faster technology. Conceptually, it must be regarded as a comprehensive cultural shift that takes place inside a military force so that greater importance is placed on information sharing and

¹⁵ Stuart A. Beare, (Colonel), "Understanding the Enemy: Time to Touch Up the Planning Process," (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Advanced Military Studies Course 4 Paper, 2000), 15.

enhancing overall situational awareness rather than operating in service “stove-pipes”. The net effect is that at the operational level, future commanders will have the means “to generate precise warfighting effects at an unprecedented operational tempo, creating conditions for the rapid lockout of adversary courses of action.”¹⁶ Creating situational awareness and a common operating picture is possible today but full implementation of a network-centric military, according to the United States Department of Defense, remains “a monumental task [that] will span a quarter century or more.”¹⁷

But will Network-Centric Warfare really allow operational commanders to do away with uncertainty on the battlefield regarding an enemy’s military intentions? Dr. Thomas Barnett, from the United States Naval War College, argues that it will, simply because there isn’t an enemy out there with anywhere near the same sort of technological capability as the United States – now or in future.¹⁸ Dismissing potential peer competitors arriving to challenge the United States militarily, he wrote in 1999 that:

Once you get past the [lack of] potential peer competitors, you are entering the universe of smaller, rogue enemies that many security experts claim will be able to adapt all this information technology into a plethora of brilliant asymmetric responses. Frankly, it stretches my imagination to the limit to conjure up seriously destabilizing threats from resource-poor, small states, unless we let our lust for a bygone era distort our preparations for a far different future.¹⁹

¹⁶ United States. Department of Defense, *Network Centric Warfare*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 27 July 2001), v; available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/c3i/NCW/>; Internet, accessed 31 August 2003.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, i.

¹⁸ In a July 2003 Department of Defence (DOD) Report to Congress on China’s growing military potential, China’s information warfare capabilities were described as very robust. This Report also noted that the Chinese spent \$20 (US) billion in 2002 on defence, although the Report’s authors speculated that the real sum was more like \$65 (US) billion! However, as Dr. Barnett (see footnote 19) noted in his essay *The Seven Deadly Sins of Network-Centric Warfare*, the first thing Network-Centric Warfare proponents ‘lust’ for is an “enemy worthy of its technological prowess.” However, will China really become the new Soviet-Union? In the same Report, the DOD admitted, for example, that the Chinese Air Force in 2003 was barely able to muster 150 fourth generation (1992 and later) fighters (compared to Taiwan with 300 fourth generation fighters).

The difficulty military professionals have with a concept like Network-Centric Warfare becoming ‘the answer’ to battlefield uncertainty, has more to do with our own lack of faith in technology than anything else.²⁰ For example, retired Marine Corps Colonel G.I. Wilson wrote in 2003 that America’s new enemies “prefer Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW) judo, avoiding a decisive fight, leveraging our addiction to technology and “throwing us” using our own bureaucratic weight to do so.”²¹ Colonel Greer also reminded us that “potential opponents will be more numerous, adaptive, creative and willing to employ force to achieve strategic goals.”²² Yet, the examples he cites of opponents using low-technology asymmetrical means to defeat the United States were unremarkable indeed. It seemed, according to him, that the proliferation of cell phones, the small-boat attack on the USS *Cole* and the attacks on 11 September 2001 were all indicative of a supposed new enemy that would make the future operational environment “far more challenging for the U.S. Armed Forces than that of today.”²³

Despite the concerns raised by Colonels Greer and Wilson, Network-Centric Warfare will dominate future battlefields and not only an opponent’s decision-making capabilities. Indeed, it may even be possible to determine exactly what an opponent will do before he decides to do it himself. And if he does something unexpected, future operational commanders should also be in a position to steer him back to where we want. As Leonhard writes:

We can conceive of a commander who knows every important detail about the battlefield around him: He knows where he is, where his subordinates are, and where the enemy is. He knows the true nature of the enemy – his strengths and weaknesses. He understands completely the external factors

²⁰ One need look no further than to American popular culture to see this phenomena at work. In the second season of *Star Trek – The Next Generation* (1989), the Starship *Enterprise* had its first encounter with the technologically advanced half-humanoid, half-robotic race known as the *Borg*. Yet despite being told by the *Borg* that *resistance [was] futile*, and that the *Enterprise* crew would be *assimilated*, Captain Picard and his crew managed to win every encounter usually by utilizing some hastily derived asymmetric response. Larry Nemeck, *The Star Trek – The Next Generation Companion*, (New York: Pocket Books, 1992), 85.

²¹ G.I. Wilson, John P. Sullivan and Hal Kempfer. “4GW: Tactics of the Weak Confound the Strong.” (*Military.com*, September 8, 2003); available from http://www.military.com/NewContent?file=Wilson_090803; Internet; Accessed 10 September 2003.

²² Greer, 24.

²³ *Ibid*, 24.

that will bear on the outcome of his fighting – political, cultural, environmental and so on. Such a commander is easy to imagine, but next to impossible to produce. The reality of Information Age warriors will be something less than omniscience personified. But, we will make progress toward that goal.²⁴

But if Network-Centric Warfare gives future operational commanders near omnipresence on the battlefield, will our current OPP serve us well? Or will our contemporary *single-minded focus* on what constitutes Operational Art, keep us forever immersed in a *Cold War* mentality best typified by *Operation Iraqi Freedom*?

ON 21st CENTURY OPERATIONAL ART

According to our doctrine, any Canadian operational commander devising a campaign plan is supposed to employ Operational Art:

- To identify what military conditions must be achieved in order to meet the strategic end-state desired;
- To order his campaign in such a way as to achieve the military conditions required;
- To ensure that along the way he has sufficient forces in order to conduct his campaign successfully; and
- To ensure that he is aware of the potential risks being undertaken and that if necessary, alternate plans are made.²⁵

To assist the operational commander and his staff in realizing the above, the OPP was designed as a formal process to guide decision-making. In a process of five steps – Initiation, Orientation, Course of Action Development, Plan Development and Plan Review, complicated situations are analyzed and operational plans made to meet strategic requirements. Led by the J5 and the JOPG, the OPP has proven very useful in making sense out of often very complex circumstances. However, there are problems with the OPP and the first occur right from Step 1, Initiation.

²⁴ Leonhard, 128.

²⁵ Canada. Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-500/FP-000, *Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process*. (Ottawa, ON: 6 November 2002), 3-1.

Ideally, during the Initiation step, operational commanders would like to have explicit strategic direction and plenty of resources to do whatever asked and sample initiating directives found in Canadian military publications offer this impression. For example, it is suggested in the CFC Staff Officer's Handbook (SOH) that an initiating directive will contain information on:

- The political situation and enemy forces in the area of operations;
- The National or Coalition strategic goals;
- Canada's national interests;
- The desired political and military end-state for the campaign;
- The anticipated attitude and potential actions of friendly nations;
- The type and source of military forces available for planning;
- Any restraints or constraints on military action;
- Any historic or current information that may assist planners;
- Any economic considerations; and
- Any risks foreseen.²⁶

The CFC SOH also indicates that operational commanders should expect to be given the strategic center of gravity and a mission. To be fair, most exercises conducted at the CFC do provide this information and the JOPG has a wealth of material to digest. Nevertheless, Step 2 of the OPP, Orientation and the Mission Analysis, often centers the JOPG on military matters to the exclusion of everything else. The catalyst for this focus manifests itself in the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (JIPB) process led by the J2. Defined as a continuous process allowing commanders and staff to “visualize the full spectrum of adversary capabilities and potential courses of action across all dimensions of the joint battlespace,” the JIPB utilizes four key steps:

- Defining the battlespace environment;
- Describing the battlespace effects;
- Evaluating an adversary largely from a military perspective; and
- Determining potential enemy military Courses of Action (COA).²⁷

²⁶ For example see Annex A, Section 1, Chapter 2, Part II in Canada. Department of National Defence, CFC CJ SOH/MEMII *Canadian Forces College Combined and Joint Staff Officer's Handbook*, (Toronto, ON: CFC 21 August 2003).

²⁷ Ibid, II-3-1-1/5 and 2/5

Of course, the J9 and his Civil-Military Cooperation Staff (CIMIC) are, according to doctrine, also key players during the OPP whose input regarding civil-military issues is “necessary to ensure that the Commander has a sufficient understanding of the civilian environment and its impact on the mission.”²⁸ However, input from the J9 is often not considered or not played and to illustrate this it is useful to consider one of the exercises conducted at the CFC known as *Exercise Strategic Power*.

Exercise Strategic Power (an exercise held during the National Security Studies Course (NSSC) straddling the line between the strategic and operational levels of war) entails the invasion of one Caribbean country by another. In this case, *Bardon* is the aggressor nation and captures oil-rich *Wessex County*, a part of *Mandara* (described as one of the strongest democracies in the Western Hemisphere). The exercise read-in material adds that:

- *Bardon* is a brutal, one-party, self-serving dictatorship;
- *Wessex County* (up until 1913) belonged to *Bardon* but was later given to *Mandara* following a colonial conference in 1913;
- The population in *Wessex County* is mainly *Bardonese* and they have been continuously discriminated against by the *Mandarans*;
- The *Bardonese* economy is in a severe depression. The GDP has declined by 40 percent and inflation is around 47 percent;
- Although *Bardon* did invade *Wessex County* they did so because the *Mandaran* government, 20-years previously, had arbitrarily established a 200 nautical mile economic exclusion zone (200 nm EEZ) that limited *Bardon's* access to the some of the richest offshore oilfields in the region. In 2001, *Mandara* declined to renew 20-year leases with the *Bardonese* government that gave them offshore drilling rights despite the 200 nm EEZ; and
- As a result of not having income from the oil leases, the *Bardonese* government was fast losing public confidence, its civil infrastructure was crumbling and fuel reserves would likely last only for a few more months.

The information provided in the exercise papers leads one to think the *Mandarans* deserved to be invaded. However, any debate on this matter is overshadowed by the need

²⁸ Ibid, III-7-12/13.

for the operational planners to get on with the real business of defeating the *Bardonese* military - and what a robust military the country has. Returning to the exercise papers again, the J2 and his staff discover:

- An Army with a mixture of forces that total 25 Brigades with some 650 tanks, 700 artillery pieces, surface-to-surface missiles, 350 air defence guns and 1,100 surface-to-air missiles;
- A Navy with 17 missile corvettes, 2 amphibious assault battalions, shore-based *Silkworm* missiles and 2 *Foxtrot* submarines;
- An Airforce with 130 combat aircraft, 30 attack helicopters and another 150 air defence missile systems;
- A Territorial Militia numbering over 275,000; and
- A military with potential WMD capabilities (chemical and biological).

This formidable force is further elevated in the minds of the operational planners by referring, in the exercise papers, to the equipment of the *Bardonese* military as being “*Soviet-style*.” In addition, planners are told “although the overall threat is not overwhelming, it is important that planners be aware that *Bardon* has the ability to inflict heavy casualties on Coalition forces if they conduct offensive ground operations to retake *Wessex County*.”²⁹ However, mostly missed in all this buildup is the admission, near the end of the exercise papers, that in fact *Bardon*’s equipment is old (industrial age) and its command and control capability is unsophisticated. Regardless, the Commander of the Joint Task Force, in his initial Joint Statement of Requirement still asks potential Coalition members for, amongst a long ‘shopping’ list of requirements, three Divisional Headquarters and troops, 16 squadrons of various aircraft and two carrier task groups.

Finally, the exercise papers note that the Coalition will be led by the United States under a Chapter VII United Nations-authorized operation giving them permission to use all necessary means to restore the international boundary between *Bardon* and *Mandara*. The United States Secretary of Defense then outlines the Coalition key objectives that include:

- The neutralization of the *Bardonese* government's ability to direct military operations;
- The removal of all *Bardonese* forces from *Wessex County*;
- The destruction of *Bardon's* offensive threat to *Mandara*; and
- The destruction of all *Bardon's* WMD capability.

Last on the list of the Coalition's objectives are the protection of all peoples in the region and the conduct of humanitarian aid "as required."³⁰

Fundamentally, the exercise papers focus mostly on the importance of defeating *Bardon's* military while reference to the significance of governmental, cultural (will to fight), religious, judicial, economic and environmental issues are not emphasized. Even the suggested *Bardon* COA's outlined in the exercise papers highlight the 'most likely' enemy COA as being yet another attack by *Bardon* beyond *Wessex County* and into the rest of *Mandara*. If there was any question about *Bardon* giving-up it is put to rest at this point.³¹ But, at this point, Prussian General Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz's quote below, might well have been worth reading by the NSSC course members (and the planners of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*) before they finalized their operational plans in 2003:

Theoretically, it is quite conceivable that a state may destroy the organized military power of another nation and overrun a great part of its territory, and yet not be able to bear for long the sacrifices [required] to grant a comparatively favourable peace to the defeated state. This is frequently lost sight of, and the destruction of the enemy's main army is taken as being synonymous with the complete attainment of the object of war.³²

This *single-minded focus* on military matters by operational planners largely originates with the JIPB process, that according to Colonel Beare: "falls short on how to incorporate civil factors into the process and [thus] it remains focused on military

²⁹ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Exercise Strategic Power 2003*, (Toronto, ON: Canadian Forces College, 2003), 4-A-4/65.

³⁰ Ibid, 3-C-2/4. On page 3-C-3/4, the Secretary of Defence is also reported as saying the Coalition must also be prepared for a period of intense combat to resolve the situation.

³¹ Ibid, 8-H2-3/5.

³² Leonhard, 234.

considerations alone.”³³ His is a critical observation and why the J9 must be consulted from the outset of campaign planning in order to provide the operational commander with the right advice on what the enemy will likely do and what he, the operational commander, needs to do to successfully bring the campaign to a close. For example, in the *Bardon-Mandara* example, the J9 might have told the operational commander that the deployment of his Coalition would not lead to a conventional fight and instead:

- The *Bardonese* military would likely withdraw from *Wessex County* but not before creating a guerrilla force amongst the mainly *Bardonese* population in the County;
- The *Bardonese* military itself might change tactics and mount a guerrilla campaign;
- The *Bardon* government might choose to create an environmental disaster by destroying as much oil producing capability in *Wessex County* as possible;
- That the entire collapse of the *Bardonese* government could happen, creating a humanitarian disaster; and
- That allowing the *Mandaran* military to move back into *Wessex County* might lead to retribution being taken on the local *Bardonese* population for supporting the *Bardon* incursion.

The points noted above are but a few civil-military related issues that possibly will impact on the operational commander’s final campaign plan. Yet, these issues would likely be critical to the success of the campaign and certainly not secondary in nature. But to reach a point that the J9’s input to the JIPB would become paramount in the design of future campaign plans would likely be a difficult step for a contemporary operational commander to take, as some might not hold the J9 and his staff in the same high regard as compared to the more classical, campaign-designing J1 through J5 staff. Nonetheless, Leonhard is clear on what he thinks about the matter of inclusion when it comes to designing campaign plans. Effective war fighting, in his opinion, requires commanders who can think subjectively and objectively. It is, he writes:

From this holistic perspective on the military art that we must utterly reject the U.S. Army’s official insistence on the destruction of enemy armed forces as the ultimate objective in war. This assertion is a time-honoured,

³³ Beare, 5.

well-respected load of hogwash. The ultimate objective of military operations is the application of combat power to enforce a policy of some kind, whether cultural, political, economic, or related to security. The destruction of our enemy counterpart is a necessary, vital component of the whole strategy, but it is at most half of the operation.³⁴

If the emphasis is not on destroying the enemy armed forces as a matter of first priority then the operational commander needs a J9 and staff that can assist in the conduct of campaign planning right from the beginning of an operation. However, from a Canadian perspective, our doctrine provides that specialist cells in the J9 staff, such as experts in government, economics, utilities and so forth, only join the staff during the deployment phase.³⁵ Their main aim, it appears, is to bring order to chaos once the enemy's military center of gravity has been dealt with. Indeed, the entire J9 staff appear directed toward the running of CIMIC Centers once the fighting is over. Yet, doctrine actually requires the J9 to provide the operational commander with potential lines of operations and civil-military COA's. But, without the right staff, the J9 cannot possibly provide this advice early in the OPP. As a result, and besides the normal CIMIC and specialist augmentation staff, the J9 requires a new team with him right from Step 1 of the OPP that would include:

- A J9 of equal or higher rank to the other principal staff in the JOPG. This individual would have a combat arms background, preferably with experience in military and civil matters during operational campaigns. In addition, education in international relations or political studies would be ideal;
- Civilian or military experts capable of providing historical advice on how the enemy military and civilian population might react to the deployment and employment of the Coalition. This would also include an assessment on the enemy's will to fight and how best to defeat the enemy. In addition, plans would be laid out and presented on how to best re-

³⁴ Leonhard, 233.

³⁵ FM 3-0 notes that upon receipt of a mission, the commander must visualize the battlespace and in particular consider what civil issues might impact on the mission. To this end, FM 3-0 uses the short form METT-TC as a reminder to commanders to consider, in their visualization process, the Mission, Enemy, Terrain and weather, Troops and support available, Time available and Civil considerations. As FM 3-0 notes: "The nature of full spectrum operations requires commanders to assess the impact of nonmilitary factors on operations. Because of this added complexity, *civil considerations* has been added to the familiar METT-T to form METT-TC." See FM 3-0, 5-3.

constitute the former enemy's military (if desirable) and on the expected scale of the Military Assistance mission required;

- Civilian or military experts capable of providing historical data about Coalition partners and their impact, culturally, on the operation;
- Psychological warfare and Special Operations experts to advise on how best to gain control of enemy infrastructure;
- Economic experts who could advise what key infrastructure of economic importance would require capturing early-on based on the assessment of likely enemy reaction to attack;
- Environmental and fire-fighting experts who could also advise on what infrastructure needed to be captured early-on to prevent its destruction and therefore reduce the likelihood of environmental disaster;
- Cultural experts who could advise on what cultural (museums for example) or religious sites needed to be secured early-on to possibly prevent the moral collapse of a host nation or Coalition allies; and
- Public Administration and governmental affairs experts who could advise on what critical public administrative locations (hospitals, jails, town

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between Israel and Palestine, the Iraq situation itself, Iran's attempts to acquire nuclear weapons, an uprising in the Solomon Islands, continuing tension on the Pakistan-India border, Maoist rebels operating in Nepal, political tension with Burma, unrest in Indonesia, problems involving Islamic guerilla's in the Philippines and definite concern that North Korea was attempting to build their own nuclear weapons.³⁷ All of these crises, big and small, help explain why it is so vital for an operational commander to have a J9-led team of 'experts' on the immediate staff to provide him with advice throughout the OPP. To illustrate this further using the *Exercise Strategic Power* example, we would expect the J9 staff to analyze the:

- Military moral centers of gravity (will to fight);
- Civilian moral centers of gravity (will to resist);
- Governmental centers of gravity;
- Cultural centers of gravity;
- Religious centers of gravity;
- Judicial centers of gravity;
- Economic centers of gravity; and
- Environmental centers of gravity.

Based on their assessment of these numerous centers of gravity, the operational commander would be given many more constraints, restraints, assigned and implied tasks to guide his actual campaign planning. Constraints, restraints and tasks that might require him to attack, eliminate, protect or neutralize anyone or all of these centers of gravity in order to achieve the desired end-state. There would however, no longer be a *single-minded focus* on destroying the enemy's military capability indeed the opposite might be true. So, what could we expect the J9 and his team of 'experts' to tell the operational commander? Returning to *Exercise Strategic Power*, the following might

Concept for the Planning, Execution and Assessment of Future Military Effects Based Operations (a discussion paper from the UK Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, September 2003).

³⁷ The Pentagon's office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, responsible for administrating Iraq after the military conflict, became operational just two months before the war began. This was hardly enough time to gather and analyze the necessary intelligence to provide strategic advice to Central Command as they would have already prepared their campaign plan, plus any branches and sequels. See Tom Blackwell, "Canadian Military Predicted Post-War Turmoil in Iraq," *National Post*, September 23, 2003, A13.

have been just a few of the recommendations regarding the operational objectives of the campaign:

- That in the initial stages of the campaign plan, special forces supported by air and ground elements would seize all key land and off-shore oil production facilities (it should be noted that in the exercise papers the security of the *Mandaran* oil fields is described as being vital to our national interests). UAV and UCAV missions would also be pre-planned to fly along all key roads, railways, pipelines and so on to monitor the situation and prevent destruction of key infrastructure;
- That communications sites (television and radio for example) would be identified, added to the target list for non-lethal (soft kill) attack only, and that adequate communications personnel would be available to restore them back to full use as soon as possible;
- That psychological and informational operations would be directed at the local authorities in *Wessex County* to remain at their place of employment throughout in order to prevent a breakdown in civilian order and that robust Coalition military and civil police forces would be deployed to assist the civil authorities in maintaining order. This would include the provision of food and water supplies;
- That *Mandaran* civilians of *Bardonese* extraction acting in a collaborationist role would have their departure from *Mandara* facilitated by keeping open certain routes for their withdrawal. In addition, more military and civil police would be requested to assist the *Mandaran* authorities in reestablishing law and order;
- That given the tenuous position of the *Bardonese* government and their economy that the destruction of their military would have to be carefully thought through so that a complete collapse of the government would not occur because of the *Bardonese* government losing control. While the maintenance of the *Bardonese* government might not be of great concern directly to the operational commander, at the strategic level there may be a desire to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe;
- That psychological and military operations should be directed at *preserving* the *Bardonese* military's conventional *will to fight* so as to prevent a breakdown in command and control and resultant loss of order or the adoption of guerilla tactics. It might be recommended that destruction of the enemy's military power be gradual in nature allowing the enemy commander to gain confidence and commit his troops. At this point a 'shock and awe' campaign pressed home would allow for the visible defeat³⁸ of the enemy instead of having them leaving *Wessex County* to potentially fight again; and finally

³⁸ In Burma, at the conclusion of the Second World War, Field Marshall Slim insisted that the Japanese had to surrender their swords on parade, in front of their soldiers, to his British officers. As he noted: "I was convinced that an effective way really to impress on the Japanese that they had been beaten in the field

- If the aim of the Coalition had been to replace the government of *Bardon* (such as it was for *Operation Iraqi Freedom*) it could be recommended that the commander, in the campaign plan, identify military units the staff determined could form the nucleus of a new security force for the new government. Such military units would be moved to holding areas, re-trained and re-assigned in support of the Coalition.³⁹ The cantonment of weapons and ex-combatants could have also been deemed a priority, as the re-integration of ex-combatants once a war is over is usually crucial to the follow-on peace. Such a decision might also assist in the capture of earlier identified war criminals.

With regard to the last two points noted above, the maintenance of an ‘industrial-age’ enemy’s will to fight will be vital for any operational commander practicing Operational Art in the 21st century and he needs the J9 and his team of ‘experts’ to do their job. Of course the J2 has his role to play but a *single-minded focus* on the enemy’s ‘Soviet’ center of gravity is simply no longer good enough. As General Zinni noted in September 2003:

The military traditionally is supposed to go out there and kill people and break things. And then from that, we determine how we’re going to right the disorder or fix the conflict [with help from the strategic level]. That has not happened. Right now the military in Iraq has been stuck with this baby. In Somalia it was stuck with that baby. In Vietnam it was stuck with that baby. And it’s going to continue to be that way. And what we have to ask ourselves now is, is there something that the military needs to change into that involves its movement into this area of the political, the economic, the information management? If the others, those wearing the suits, can’t come in and solve the problem - can’t bring the resources, the expertise, and the organization - and we’re going to get stuck with it, you

was to insist on this ceremonial surrender of swords. No Japanese soldier, who had seen his general march up and hand over his sword, would ever doubt that the Invincible Army was invincible no longer. We did not want a repetition of the German First War legend of an unconquered army.” The point here is that in the first Gulf War the Iraqi military, although militarily defeated, was not spiritually defeated as Keegan noted. In *Operation Iraqi Freedom* most military units wisely left the battlefield in response to Coalition psychological warfare and the ‘shock and awe’ campaign for which they had little response. However, the Iraqi military, it could be argued, were not defeated spiritually once more, hence the on-going guerilla war. William Slim (Field Marshal). *Defeat into Victory – Battling Japan in Burma and India 1942-1945*. (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000), 533-534.

³⁹ In the case of Operation Iraqi Freedom this pre-planning was not carried out. However, after the main fighting was over the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq laid down plans to establish a new 40,000 man Iraqi military (New Iraqi Army or NIA) based on officers and enlisted men from Iraq’s former armed forces. However, only 18 tanks and a few artillery pieces were left after the fighting so estimates as to when this new military force would be effective are unclear. See the Coalition Provisional Authority website “Ministry of National Security and Defense,” available from <http://www.cpa-iraq.org/ministries/defense.html>; Internet; Accessed October 1, 2003.

have one or two choices. Either they get the capability and it's demanded of them, and we learn how to partner to get it done, or the military finally decides to change into something else beyond the breaking and the killing.⁴⁰

However, General Zinni was only partly right in his observations. He is correct in that the traditional application of Operational Art should not necessarily continue to be simply *breaking* and *killing*. While this may indeed occur, Operational Art, as discussed in the model presented in this paper, acknowledges that operational commanders must think about what it is they have been asked to do with full consideration of almost every imaginable civil-military concern. Moreover, the application of Operational Art described here should disallow the need for the very recommendations that General Zinni considers a future military might have to do – a potential move into long-term nation building. This is the exact opposite of what we would expect to happen given our J9 staff of 'experts' presenting the operational commander with advice. Indeed, we would expect the J9's planning advice to cause the operational commander to conduct his campaign in such a way that when the final military objectives were seized, the resultant conditions left behind, would facilitate the arrival of civilian governmental and non-governmental agencies to begin re-building.

On the other hand, if there happened to be a problem in having such support arrive in a timely fashion, the very same operational commander would likely have positioned himself very well for post-war campaign success based on following the J9's advice. Why? For the very reason that while the aim of the initial military campaign might not have been to have the military act as nation builders, the possibility of doing so successfully would have been significantly improved if the operational commander found himself with such a post-war role. Regardless of the circumstances though, any operational commander, who has the wherewithal to shape the conditions for peace, during the conduct of his operational campaign, will be recognized as the true practitioner of Operational Art in the 21st century.

⁴⁰ Anthony Zinni (General), "Address to the Naval Institute Forum 2003." (September 4, 2003); available from <http://www.mca-usniforum2003.org/forum03zinni.htm>; Internet; Accessed September 28, 2003.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this paper has been to submit that in the 21st century, operational commanders will not be celebrated for the war they waged but rather the peace created. And, as Keegan, Leonhard, and Zinni note, there has to now be a fundamental shift away from the ‘Western way of warfare’ of simply *breaking* and *killing* then wondering who will be responsible to do the cleanup afterwards. As we have witnessed during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, ‘industrial age’ militaries are no match for a modern coalition led, for example, by the United States. The advent of Network-Centric Warfare and Knowledge Management only serve to reinforce this point. In essence, we should expect that future operational commanders will dominate the battlefield to such an extent that the only issue will be deciding when and if to defeat an enemy’s military force when confronted with having to go to war.

In the 21st century, Operational Art will transition from waging straightforward military campaigns in the traditional sense, to engaging in much more creative operations designed to meet well-described military, political and civil end-states. Operational commanders will, as a result of this, have to develop imaginative campaign plans that will likely be developed under increasing constraints, restraints, limitations and many more assigned and implied tasks – some imposed from the strategic level but perhaps even more originating from his own Mission Analysis during the OPP.

Operational commanders will also have to become accustomed and indeed comfortable with not always receiving clear and concise strategic direction. And if they do receive this direction they must also have the ability to comprehend what it is they are being asked to do and if necessary the courage to challenge the substance of what has been presented. However, to transform strategic direction into high-quality, inventive operational campaign plans, future operational commanders will unquestionably need the right staff. While the J2 led JIPB is useful in conventional campaign planning, what is required now is a J9-led staff of ‘experts’ to have primacy in framing the campaign right from Step 1 of the OPP. This team of both civilian and military ‘experts’ would provide

the operational commander with the necessary advice to allow for the consideration and selection of COA's that would still complete the military mission successfully but also give full consideration to the numerous other centers of gravity that can, in the end, have a significant and detrimental impact on the outcome of a campaign if not considered. Such advice, fully considered during the OPP, would also ensure that once hostilities ended, his forces would have created the best possible military and civil end-state.

This creation of the best possible military and civil end-state is fundamental to the argument made in this paper about the need for a new J9-led team of 'experts' to advise the operational commander on campaign design. It is not about creating military forces for nation-building purposes as General Zinni suggests. Indeed, the involvement of the J9 in campaign design is to create the exact opposite outcome recommended by the General. Only through the full consideration of all potential military and non-military centers of gravity will there be a chance of creating the conditions necessary to allow others to begin the process of nation-building – the military might assist but would not, as *Operation Iraqi Freedom* has suggested, be the best administrators. In sum and in the future, only through the creation of the right conditions by an operational commander to allow his forces to depart the field of battle sooner rather than later, will a campaign ultimately be declared successful and he in-turn celebrated for the peace created.

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