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Endstates: The Facts and Fiction

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Abstract

This paper examines the significance of strategic end states in the design and conduct of operational level campaign plans. It questions whether military commanders should consider end states from a different perspective? A perspective that considers pragmatic measures first and focuses on the provision of prudent advice to political masters and sustaining domestic support.

Using former American Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger's Doctrine, as a lens, it examines the American experiences of the 1991 Gulf, 2001 Afghanistan and the 2003 Iraq Wars, as well as, Canada's current Afghanistan operation. The complexity and difficulty of attempting to predetermine the exact political conditions that end a commitment and inform a nation's exit strategy are a timeless issue. Operational commanders need to consider carefully the realities and dynamics that surround the issue.

Highlights of insights:

- The failure to summon the national will to support military action abroad produces strategic vulnerabilities that erode the ability to exercise military force.
- Clarity of purpose and matching military capabilities to realistic political goals and end states were powerful lessons the American military drew from Vietnam, that need to be rediscovered and carefully considered.
- Military leaders must articulate the limitations of military power to politicians on one hand yet provide military options to support political aims on the other.
- Professional military education, especially campaign planning, formalizes an end state passion, but fails to emphasize the real world political difficulties of determining practical end states.
- Operational commanders must be mindful of fostering and protecting domestic support for operations. Commanders have a significant role in maintaining strategic convergence between the nation's government and its public support during war's conduct.

Endstates: The Facts and Fiction

First, we were told that it would be a two-year commitment, maximum; now we are told it is a five-year commitment, minimum. First, we told we had sent enough troops; now we are sending hundreds more. First, we were told no tanks would be needed; now we are sending tanks...Do our troops not deserve better than to have made up policy on the fly?

Jack Layton¹

Today, as in the past, the rationale and wisdom of exercising national and military power abroad are under question. What is Canada trying to accomplish in Afghanistan and when is our commitment concluded? Indeed, Canada's role in Afghanistan raises interesting questions relevant to the operational level of war. Operational Art aims to create the conditions that are set out in national strategy.² In turn, campaign plans are designed and conducted until ends are achieved. This sounds straightforward but real world realities conspire to unsettle the logical processes militaries create to satisfy political end states.

While it is easy to identify end states in theory, it is difficult to accomplish them in practice. This paper examines the significance of strategic end states in the design and conduct of operational level campaign plans. Should military commanders consider end states from a different perspective? If popular domestic support is the ultimate end state arbitrator, have militaries begun to focus too much on idealistic end states and not enough on the provision of prudent advice and pragmatic measures necessary to set the conditions for success?

To consider these questions, the paper explores America's historical war experience with strategic end states that emerged in the years following its Vietnam defeat. Using principles developed by American Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger, as a lens, the paper examines the American experiences of the 1991 Gulf War, Afghanistan 2001 and the 2003 Iraq Wars, as well as Canada's current Afghanistan

¹ Galloway, Gloria, "We Won't Quit Afghanistan, PM Pledges." *Globe and Mail*, 19 September 2006.

² Operational Art is defined as "the skilful employment of military forces to attain strategic and /or operational objectives through the design, organization, integration and conduct of theatre strategies, campaigns, major operations and battles." Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-500/FP-000 *Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 6.

operation.³ This examination helps one consider the complexity and difficulty of attempting to predetermine the exact political conditions that end a commitment and inform a nation's exit strategy. Insights garnered will help Operational commanders better understand realities and dynamics that might affect Canada's Afghan commitment.

The Weinberger Doctrine

Determining whether to commit military power to further national objectives is a timeless issue. It was the central issue that Casper Weinberger intended to tackle when he devised his six tests to be applied in weighing the use of American combat forces abroad.⁴ Developed in 1984 and dubbed the Weinberger Doctrine, his primary influence was the strategic lessons derived from the Vietnam experience. The years following the defeat were full of strategic and military soul searching.⁵ It was time for a re-evaluation of this timeless question.

America's defeat affected its society but perhaps more significantly it was the driving force behind political and military reform. The War Powers Act (1973) was one-step on the road to political reform.⁶ Conceived as a remedy to ill-conceived commitments, it curbed presidential war making power. The clear intent of the war powers legislation was to stop the President from deploying American military forces

³ Casper Weinberger served as U.S. Secretary of Defence 1981-87 under President Ronald Reagan and was the second longest serving defense secretary after Robert McNamara. For more detail on his career see: http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/secdef_histories/bios/weinberger.htm; Internet accessed 25 September 2006.

⁴ Michael Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 309.

⁵ There are many varied accounts of why the U.S. lost the war. Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defence 1961-68, in his memoirs entitled *In Retrospect*, cited eleven reasons: (1) misjudged enemy, (2) misjudged people and leaders of South Vietnam, (3) underestimated the power of nationalism, (4) misjudgment and ignorance of history, culture and politics of the region, (5) failed to recognize limits of military power, (6) failed to engage Congress into strategic war debate prior to commitment, (7) failed to retain American popular support, (8) failed to recognize that Americans are not omniscient, (9) failed to adequately consider the use of American military force and the use of the multinational community, (10) failed to recognize that some problems have no immediate solutions, and (11) failed to organize the American government executive branch to deal with complex strategic issues. Robert S. McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 321-323.

⁶ The War Powers Resolution required the President to consult and report to Congress on the employment of U.S. forces abroad, and limited the time of their deployment to no longer than 60 days although a 30 day extension is possible. The President was and is limited to deploying forces into hostilities or imminent hostilities under three conditions: "(1) a declaration of war, (2) specific statutory authorization, or (3) a national emergency created by attack upon the U.S., its territories or its armed forces." James M. McCormick, *American Foreign Policy and Process*, (Toronto: Thomson Wadsworth Publishers, 2005), 300.

abroad and getting them mired in a conflict without a clear objective. Put more simply, it was intended to reduce the possibility of future Vietnams.⁷

Nevertheless, legislation could not stop foreign intervention misstep or misfortune. In the years that followed Vietnam, successive administrations sought to reduce foreign military interventions, however, with the 1980 election of President Ronald Reagan a new era arrived. Reagan's foreign policy was aggressive towards the Soviet Union and the spread of communist influence.⁸ But it was the 1983 peacekeeping tragedy in Beirut that revived the soul-searching. When a suicide bomber in Beirut killed 266 United States Marines, the United States promptly withdrew.⁹ The logic behind their mission troubled Americans, and in particular, then Secretary of State Casper Weinberger. Frustrated, he was resolved to do more to prevent such loss, for what he assessed to be less than compelling motives.

Weinberger sought to remedy the political tendency to apply military power and thereby put American lives at risk, prior to a serious evaluation of strategic and military rational behind such commitments. For Weinberger and others, America's Vietnam experience and its frightful costs in terms of blood, treasure, and national honour were a hurt that had not healed.¹⁰ The urgency to establish a better process to evaluate strategic decision-making criteria grew and crystallized with the ill-fated Marine Corps bombing. Informed by defeat and tragedy, Weinberger sought to establish clarity for future military commitments. Under what conditions is military force used to achieve strategic goals? Weinberger's answer was to craft a doctrine to assist in solving this thorny issue.

⁷Ibid, paraphrased from 300-332.

⁸ Ronald Reagan, 40th American President (1980-89) was also noted for reduced taxation, increased defense spending to counter world communism, commencing the Strategic Defense Initiative and the Irangate scandal where the administration had entered into a secret arms deal with Iran with profits illegally being passed to anti-communist forces in Nicaragua. *Encyclopedia of World History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 557.

⁹ On 23 October 1983, 266 Marines were killed in bomb attack upon their barracks. The attack spurred the American withdrawal from international peace efforts in Lebanon and has been cited as an example of "a cut and run" or casualty adverse America foreign policy. Weinberger and senior defence leaders were sensitive to the still fragile and Vietnam haunted military. Their view was that American military lives should not be endangered for "irresolvable grey area conflicts". Michael Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 309-310.

¹⁰ The American intervention in Vietnam 1950-1975 claimed over 57,000 American lives, cost over 150 billion dollars and had enormous impact in domestic and international politics and has created lasting consequences on the American national institutions and people. For an more complete discussion see George Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc 1996), 304- 307.

Table 1: Weinberger Doctrine

Criteria	Goal
1. Commit forces abroad only if our or our allies' vital interests are at stake.	Vital national interest.
2. If we commit forces abroad, do so with all the resources necessary to win.	Clear intent to win and assign appropriate forces.
3. Commit only if there are clearly defined political and military objectives. And we should know precisely how our forces can accomplish these objectives.	Clear political and military objectives, a plan or strategy to achieve objectives.
4. If the objectives change, be prepared to modify the forces we have committed – their size, composition, and disposition.	Continually reassess the objectives and forces assigned.
5. Before we commit combat forces abroad, there must be some reasonable assurance we will have the support of the people and their elected representatives.	Ensure national public will and the government of the day can support the mission.
6. Commitment of forces to combat should be a last resort.	Combat mission is a last resort.

Source: Speech delivered 28 November 1984 by U.S. Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger to National Press Club, Washington, D.C.¹¹

Although crafted in the Cold War era, when the United States was concerned with being drawn into a never-ending number of political and military quagmires, the tests continue to resonate today because they underline simple truths. They speak to the notion that strategy that does not fully consider national interests, values, priorities, resources and, most importantly, a people or a nation's resolve, would prove fragile. Moreover, Weinberger's logic is fully in accord with classic theorists. Clausewitz observed that war's nature could never be separated from its link to political or strategic design.¹² Therefore, the value of Weinberger's Doctrine lies in its aid to judgment and in providing a context from which to consider past cases and present challenges.

¹¹ Table paraphrased from the original text. Full text can be viewed at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military/force/weinberger.html>, Internet; accessed 17 September 2006.

¹² Clausewitz for example, maintained that war's objectives and conduct must remain subordinate to political strategy and that statesmen must understand war's enduring nature to make knowledgeable decisions about it. "No one starts a war - or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so - without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it" *Carl von Clausewitz, On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret with introductory Essays by

Weinberger's doctrine is far from perfect. Critics offer that Weinberger's construct is too simplistic in approach and that it fails to fully consider the political realities.¹³ However, for the intent of this paper, it serves to provide a framework for examining historical experience and food for thought relevant to end state realities.

Analysis

Each Weinberger tenet must be examined in relation to historical experience. The First Gulf War (1991 Gulf War), the 2001 Afghanistan War, the Second Gulf War (2003 Iraq War) and finally Canada's participation in the Afghanistan War are examined to glean historical context and to inform our current view on end states.¹⁴

Weinberger tenet: Vital national interest

First Gulf War

The 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait threatened many fundamental interests.¹⁵ It was an act of aggression that defied international order, posed a threat to neighboring Middle East nations and international stability, and endangered access to significant regional oil resources. The response of the international community was interest based. After diplomatic attempts failed to restore order, an U.S. led coalition commenced a war to re-establish order. This war was in the United States vital interests and in those of her

Peter Paret, Michael Howard and Bernard Brodie and a Commentary by Bernard Brodie, (New Jersey, Princeton, 1976), 579.

¹³ Critics maintain that the Weinberger "checklist" works well to avoid Vietnam like quagmires but fails to address post Cold-War realities. In effect the doctrine has created a U.S. bias against involvement in low level conflicts and humanitarian interventions. See: Kenneth J. Campbell, *Once Burned, Twice Cautious: Explaining the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine*, Armed Forces and Society Journal, 1998, Volume 23, No 3, 357-374.

¹⁴ The term war is used in relation to Canada's involvement in Afghanistan since 2001. Although rarely used by the government the term accurately characterizes the nature of the operation. In September 2006, Prime Minister Harper referred to the mission as a war.

¹⁵ Coalition forces lead by the U.S. launched a war in response to the 2 August 1990 Iraqi invasion of and annexation of Kuwait. After garnering international support through a series of UN Security Council Resolutions, the coalition commenced operations. The 1991 Gulf war lasted just 43 days (17 January -27 February), of which 40 days were an air campaign followed by a brief ground campaign. *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 348.

Middle Eastern and European allies. For the United States, it showed support for an ally, and served to re-establish its credibility in the exercise of national and military power. In addition, the war supported the United Nation's authority in enforcing Security Council Resolutions, thereby contributing to international peace and stability. In sum, this war was in both the United States and in the International Community's vital interests. This was an open and shut case - the military commitment was in accord with Weinberger's first criteria.

2001 Afghanistan War

After the 9/11 terror attacks, most of the world rallied behind the United States and in support of the U.S. led military campaign in Afghanistan.¹⁶ It was the beginning of President George W. Bush's (43rd U.S. President, 2001-present) wartime leadership and it all started so clear-cut. The safety and security of U.S. citizens were compromised and under threat by al Qaeda and supported by Afghanistan's Taliban government. There was no question of the fundamental responsibility to defend citizens and that this constituted a vital national interest. The 2001 Afghanistan war met Weinberger's vital interest test.

Second Gulf War

Vital interest clarity is not apparent in the Second Gulf War. It was not clear at the war's onset if Iraq's possible possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) posed an imminent threat to the U.S.¹⁷ When the WMD threat rang hollow; the war's

¹⁶ Following the 9/11 attack there was nearly unanimous international support for the U.S. in its response to this direct attack. The UN, NATO and indeed most nations expressed their outrage, sympathy and support for subsequent military operations when it was evident that the terrorists responsible emanated from Afghanistan and that its government had provided tacit support. For an overview of numerous UNSCR (1193, 1214, 1267, 1333 and 1386) relating to Afghanistan see: United Nations, <http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/afghan/un-afghan-history.shtml>, Internet; accessed 29 September 2006. On 12 September 2006 NATO took the unprecedented action of invoking Treaty article 5, (an armed attack against one or more NATO member states is considered an attack against all). While this has turned out to be a largely symbolic gesture for most alliance members, it does underscore the fundamental support in principle if not practice for the alliance. For more on NATO's role in Afghanistan, see: NATO, <http://www.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/>, Internet; accessed 29 September 2006.

¹⁷ Colin Powell, U.S. Secretary of State appeared before the UN Security Council (UNSC) on 5 February 2003 and attempted to tie Iraq to many threats to international peace and security, including WMD, and links to Al Qaeda and other terrorists. Colin Powell later stated he regretted his presentation to the UNSC and that it was "blot" on his record. See: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200509/s1456650.htm>,

rationale grew into a terrorism context.¹⁸ However, the terrorism connection fails to resonate with reason and more importantly as a vital interest. The U.S. National Security Strategy is less than convincing on this front.¹⁹ “Iraq is the central front in the global war on terror. Failure in Iraq will embolden terrorists and expand their reach; success in Iraq will deal them a decisive and crippling blow.”²⁰ These statements link failure in Iraq and a terror threat from Iraq as the grave threats to the U.S. This appears to be an overstatement; it is more correct to cite regional stability as vital to the U.S.’s national interest in Iraq, rather than an Iraq based terror threat or terrorists encouraged by U.S failure in Iraq.

Perhaps vital interests are now blurred by a sense of opportunity and unconstrained unipolar power. Much had changed since the First Gulf war. Terrorists had struck home, a successful Afghanistan war has made confident the U.S. Executive Branch and the strategic notions of preemption, unilateralism and the idealistic notion of spreading the seeds of democracy has gained traction. Were these vital interests or desires? Iraq in 2003 posed no meaningful military threat but did remain a frustrating example of non-compliance with international will. The benefit of hindsight has revealed that neither plausible links to terror nor threats existed.²¹

Internet; accessed 30 September 2006. For complete text and slides of the 5 February UNSC presentation see: United States, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html#12>, Internet; accessed 30 September 2006.

¹⁸ One of the conclusions of U.S. Senate Report into pre war intelligence observed: “There comes a point where the absence of evidence does indeed become the evidence of absence.” See: Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence on Postwar Findings about Iraq’s WMD Programme and Links to Terrorists and How they Compare with Pre War Assessments, dated 8 September 2006. For complete text see: United States, <http://intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf>, Internet; accessed 30 September 2006.

¹⁹ Broad themes of the 2002 US NSS include: (1) champion aspirations for human dignity, (2) strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends, (3) work with others to defuse regional conflicts, (4) Prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies and our friends with weapons of mass destruction, WMD, (5) ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade, (6) expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy, (7) develop Agendas for cooperative action with the other main centers of global power, (8) transform America’s national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century. To review the U.S. NSS See: United States, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf>, Internet; accessed 2 October 2006.

²⁰ The NSS makes the case that victory in Iraq is a vital interest based because it is the main front in the war on terror and that the fate of Middle East hangs in balance on American success there. Further, a failure in Iraq would have a profound and lasting impact on America security. U.S. NSS, 1-2.

²¹ An U.S. Senate Report concluded that there was no evidence that Iraq had attempted to restart its nuclear, biological or chemical programme following the First Gulf War (pages 52-62) and the Iraq regime had no connection with the al Qaeda terrorists (108-112). See: Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence on Postwar Findings about Iraq WMD Programme and Links to Terrorists and How they

It is still too early and historical records require examination before a definitive assessment can be made about U.S. war motives. President Bush's administration may have felt threatened by Iraq's potential WMD but without a credible threat, the vital interest test that Weinberger devised is not met. According to Weinberger, if vital interests are not directly threatened, then means other than military force should be pursued.

Canada's Afghanistan War

The case for Canada's participation in Afghanistan is clear and consistent with its vital interests.²² Canadian vital interests have been a constant: defense of Canada, defense of North America and contribute to international peace and security.²³ The Canadian government aims in Afghanistan are:

- Defend Canadian interests at home and abroad by preventing Afghanistan from relapsing into a failed state that provides a safe haven for terrorists and terrorism organizations;
- Provide the people of Afghanistan with the hope for a brighter future by establishing the security necessary to promote development; and
- Help the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and its people to build a stable, peaceful, and self-sustaining democratic country.²⁴

In response to the 9/11 attacks, Canada joined a U.S. led coalition to defeat the Taliban government and the Afghan based Al Qaeda terrorist group.²⁵ Starting in

Compare with Pre War Assessments, dated 8 September 2006. For complete text see: United States, <http://intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf>, Internet; accessed 30 September 2006.

²² For a synopsis of Canadian Government participation in Afghanistan see: Canada, <http://www.canada-afghanistan.gc.ca/background-en.asp#1>, Internet; accessed 30 September 2006.

²³ Successive Canadian defence policies have underlined the main tenets of defending Canada, defence of North American and contributing to international peace and stability. For the most recent published Canadian Government Policy Statement see: *Canada's 2005 International Policy Statement, A Role Of Pride and Influence in the World*, April 2005.

²⁴ Canada's participation in Afghanistan has evolved from an early commitment working with U.S. Forces to a UN sanctioned NATO led International Stabilization Force (ISAF) whose mission is linked directly to Canadian vital interests. See: http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=1703, Internet; accessed 29 September 2006.

²⁵ The political decision was a conscious one, as Canada had the option to deploy under UN auspices in a British led UN mission based out of Kabul. Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chrétien wanted a more direct role, one that echoed the tone of his words on September 17, 2001. "We are at war against terrorism." The decision was largely applauded and its merit clear although few Canadians anticipated a long term Afghan commitment. "[J]oint operations with the U.S. would be more meaningful for Canada than - directing

October 2001, Canadian Naval ships provided maritime interdiction in the Arabian Gulf region. Canadian participation expanded in February 2002 to include a light Battle Group and Special Forces elements working under U.S. command in Afghanistan.²⁶ The evolving Canadian role is discussed later, but the constant motive remained to protect Canadian vital interests. Thus, the Canadian military commitment to support operations in Afghanistan meets Weinberger's vital interest tenet.

Weinberger tenet: Clear intent to win and assign appropriate forces

The First Gulf War

There can be little debate about whether or not the U.S. led coalition intended to win or commit adequate resources to ensure it achieved overmatch with Iraq forces during the First Gulf war.²⁷ The military capability was applied in full measure and for no longer than was necessary to achieve stated objectives. In fact, some assert that the decision to end the war was premature.²⁸ The bottom line was that all necessary support and resources were applied to secure a clear victory. Hence, the Weinberger doctrine was satisfied.

2001 Afghanistan War

The Afghanistan War remains extant, although its character has changed from a conventional war to an insurgency phase concurrent with ongoing nation-building efforts. Initial operations were unconventional, swift, and effective in removing the Taliban government. Special Forces and Central Intelligence Agency operatives using a combination of precision long range air power and indigenous militia forces

traffic in Kabul." Yves Fortier, "The Mature Exercise of Sovereignty," Canadian Military Journal, Volume 3, Number 1, Spring 2002, 4-5.

²⁶ For an overview of Canada military participation in Afghanistan see:

http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=1703, Internet; accessed 29 September 2006.

²⁷ The U.S. and coalition allies mustered more than 750,000 military personnel, 1,200 high performance aircraft, 300 naval vessels including eight aircraft carriers and 1,800 tanks, of which ¾ were US forces. The cease-fire and armistice forced Iraq to agree to all UNSCR resolutions and to pay reparations. After the armistice the US sought to remove Iraq leader Saddam Hussein, and the UN maintained tough economic sanctions on Iraq in an attempt to force out President Hussein. *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 348-349.

²⁸ See Cohen Eliot A., *Supreme Command*, (New York: First Anchor Books, 2003), 230-231.

overwhelmed Taliban forces in short order.²⁹ The fight commenced 7 October 2001 and Kabul fell on 13 November 2001. However, subsequent nation building efforts have met increasing insurgency and resistance over time as the newly elected Afghanistan government, assisted by international forces, attempts to expand its control nation wide. Despite the difficulties that insurgency presents for Afghans and all nations involved, it is clear that the U.S. maintains the intent to win and continues to adjust force posture to sustain the effort.³⁰

U.S. resolve has been manifest in its unwavering actions and provision of resources from its initial actions on 7 October 2001 to present military and national efforts.³¹ In addition, the U.S. has sought and maintained the international communities focus on this war through the UN Security Council and NATO auspices. In sum, the U.S. efforts continue to meet Weinberger's second test.

The Second Gulf War

Some things are very clear in the Iraqi War. The Bush administration is succinct. "Our mission in Iraq is to win the war. Our troops will return home when that mission is complete."³² The U.S. is clear in its intent to win and it has been consistent in the application of military force to do so. To be fair, the overall U.S. strategy features political, security and economic tracks and incorporates an integrated approach working with the Iraqi people, coalition partners, and the international community to achieve a

²⁹ For a more detailed account of Afghanistan campaign see *American Soldier: General Tommy Franks*, (New York: Regan Books, 2004) 296-301 and 377-381

³⁰ President Bush expressed his clear determination to defeat any challenge to the elected Afghanistan government and ensure that adequate military forces are available to help Afghans grow their capacity to secure their country. See the text of President Bush speech to the Reserve Officers Association: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060929-3.html>, Internet; accessed 1 October 2006.

³¹ The U.S. is currently on its sixth rotation of military forces since its initial 2001 deployment to Afghanistan. Currently there are approximately 19,000 U.S. military personnel in the region, although these numbers will decrease with increased NATO force deployment. For an overview see: Andrew Feickert, *U.S. Military Operations in the Global War on Terrorism: Afghanistan, Africa, the Philippines and Columbia*, dated 20 January 2006, (Washington: U.S. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2006), 1-14. <http://www.usembassy.it/pdf/other/RL32758.pdf#search=%22US%20military%20involvement%20in%20Afghanistan%20%22>, Internet; accessed 1 October 2006.

³² The intent to win and the commitment of all resources necessary is clearly laid out in the U.S. National Security Council plan for Iraq. See *U.S. National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, U.S. Government, (Washington: National Security Council, November 2005), 1-2. Full text available: http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq_strategy_nov2005.html, Internet; accessed 2 October 2006.

stable and secure Iraq. However, this analysis is more concerned with military aspects vice other identified strategic components. Although there have been disagreements on operational plans and concepts, it is apparent that all the military means available have been mustered and maintained for the war effort. The intent to persevere, and assign appropriate forces to do so, is unmistakable. "Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own: we will remain in Iraq as long as necessary, and not a day more."³³ The Bush Administration has steadfastly maintained its will to win and therefore fully meets Weinberger's second criteria.

Canada's Afghanistan War

Canada's government has been consistent in its approach and commitment to the war. Responding initially with military forces in 2001 and increasing its commitment with operations in Kabul and later in the NATO expansion in Southern Afghanistan, Canada has been an important and enduring partner. The current Canadian government has pledged its support until 2009. Prime Minister Harper has been crystal clear on his intent and shown willingness to allocate military resources to achieve objectives.

Canada is making progress in Afghanistan...The mission will be considered a success, when changes to the country in terms of peace and security are irreversible...It is time for Canada to shoulder its share of the burden of fighting for peace and stability in the world.³⁴

Prime Minister Harper did not mince words. The number and types of forces have evolved with the mission. Unlike previous observations about Canada not pulling its weight in NATO, the same cannot be said about its Afghanistan mission. Involved from the earliest days, engaged in combat, continuing to support the mission despite domestic pressure, and with all military resources requested by operational commanders, no other nation is questioning Canada's commitment. The Canadian government's approach satisfies Weinberger's second tenet.

³³ President Bush's statement from his National Security Council document entitled: *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* dated November 2005. See full text at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq_national_strategy_20051130.pdf, Internet; accessed 2 October 2006.

³⁴ Quoted from Prime Minister Harper's interview with Peter Mansbridge, 19 September 2006. See: <http://www.cbc.ca/story/canada/national/2006/09/19/harper-afghanistan.html>, accessed 2 October 2006.

Weinberger tenet: Clear political and military objectives, and a plan or strategy to achieve objectives.

The First Gulf War

In retrospect, America's Gulf war victory appears to be a textbook case of political clarity and the subsequent matching of military capabilities to realistic political goals, plans, and end states. It featured political resolve supported by sound military advice and action that concluded with a clear-cut end state. President George H. Bush (41st U.S. President, 1989-1993) laid it out plainly.

Our objectives are clear. Saddam Hussein's forces will leave Kuwait. The legitimate government of Kuwait will be restored to its rightful place and Kuwait once again will be free. Iraq will eventually comply with all relevant United Nations resolutions.³⁵

Many indeed have praised the President's handling of the 1991 War.³⁶ In contrast to Vietnam, he set out clear objectives, mobilized elements of the reserves, and consolidated American and international support for the war. Then he let the military execute an approved strategy.³⁷ Indeed, the American military and coalition partners rapidly defeated Iraqi forces but did America achieve enduring strategic success?

³⁵ January 16, 1991 statement of President George H. Bush defining what American sought in terms of objectives in the First Gulf War. Harry Summers, *A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*, (New York: Dell Publishing, 1992), 162-163.

³⁶ Most notably senior serving U.S. Generals and military experts were his biggest cheerleaders. Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf sung his praises, as did others such as Harry Summers who had crafted an influential interpretation of Vietnam's strategic blunders, which concluded among other things that there was no clear strategic goal in Vietnam. Summers later crafted a book (*A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*) citing the First Gulf War as an example of how to marry strategy with a masterful campaign. See Colin Powell with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey*, (New York: Random House, 1995). Richard Pyle, *Schwarzkopf: The Man, The Mission, The Triumph* and Summers, (New York, Signet Books, 1991), Harry Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War and A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*.

³⁷ Summers, *A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*, 172-176. Despite Summer's assertion that there was no clear strategic goal in Vietnam, this argument runs counter to the fact. The stated U.S. political aim in South Vietnam was "to establish a safe environment within which the people of South Vietnam could form a government that was independent, stable and freely elected - one that would deserve and receive popular support." In fact political and military aims are clearly stated in the document. See pages 1-7. Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, Commander in Chief Pacific and General W.C. Westmoreland, Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, *Report on the war in Vietnam as of 30 June 1968* (Washington: United States Department of Defence, 1968).

President Bush believed so. “Kuwait is liberated; Iraq’s army is defeated. Our military objectives are met.”³⁸ However, subsequent international sanctions against Iraq and the requirement for the 2003 Iraqi War indicate otherwise. Could the mantra of political and military end state have been too dominant a factor in decision-making? Perhaps senior military leadership was too forceful in asserting that strategic objectives/victory is achieved by battlefield success.³⁹ However, the President was satisfied and exercised his authority to cease combat. The war concluded in accordance with the strategy and objectives, thus it satisfied Weinberger’s criteria. There were clear political and military objectives and a plan to achieve these objectives.

2001 Afghanistan War

The Bush Administration has clear objectives in Afghanistan and a plan to achieve them.⁴⁰ These objectives have evolved over time. His original objectives initially focused on concrete items: close terrorist training camps, hand over al-Qaeda leaders, and return all foreign nationals unjustly detained in Afghanistan.⁴¹ After further consideration, these objectives expanded to broad themes outlined in the U.S. NSS.⁴² What is not so clear is when or if ever, these broader objectives outlined in the NSS are achievable. They are ambitious.

It is the policy of the United States to seek and support democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. In the world today, the fundamental character of regimes matters as much as the distribution of power among them. The goal of our statecraft is to help create a world of democratic, well-governed states that can meet the needs of their citizens and conduct themselves responsibly in the

³⁸ Harry Summers, *A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*, 176.

³⁹ General’s Powell and Schwarzkopf both assessed they achieved their objectives that were established prior to the fighting. *Ibid*, 176-177.

⁴⁰ The U.S. National Security Strategy laid out imperatives, “fighting and winning the war on terror and promoting freedom as the alternative to tyranny and despair...we have joined with the Afghan people to bring down the Taliban regime- the protectors of the al-Qaida network – and aided a new, democratic government to rise in its place.” President’s covering letter in the 2006 U.S. National Security Strategy.

⁴¹ For the text of President Bush’s 20 September 2001 that outlines his initial objectives see: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>, Internet; accessed 29 September 2006.

⁴² For complete text see: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>, Internet; accessed 30 September 2006.

international system. This is the best way to provide enduring security for the American people.⁴³

Idealism is virtuous but pragmatism is closer to the art of the possible. Put simply, can U.S. or even world resolve transform a failed state to a stable nation? Regardless, strategic objectives are laid and a strategy has been devised to accomplish these aims.

The problem with the strategy is the scope of the challenge and means available to implement it. In this respect, it is assessed that President Bush's objectives are so broad and arguably long term that it is impossible to know if the military forces can meaningfully assist in their accomplishment. To be sure, the military cannot do so alone; it is a multi-agency, multi-national effort. Thus, in this instance President Bush's NSS fails to meet Weinberger's criteria. The Administration's goals are not tangibly, defined political and military objectives, but rather are noble ideals that merit support but do not lend themselves to military solutions.

The Second Gulf War

The U.S. political objectives in Iraq also went from realistic to idealistic. Initially, they were to prevent Iraq from threatening us, our allies and our friends with WMD, and later to defeat Iraqi based terrorist threats and build a democratic state. The magnitude of these goals poses problems.

At present, the U.S. Administration and the military have downplayed the question of end states in the wake of ongoing Iraqi insurgency. The reason is clear. Who, with any certainty, could outline the exact timing or conditions that might lead to an American withdrawal from Iraq? Donald Rumsfeld (U.S. Secretary of Defence, 2001-ongoing) responded truthfully to a question concerning benchmarks and end states that might result in the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq.

Because our country's invested a lot of lives, a lot of heartbreak. The courage of our troops and the sacrifice of those that have fallen and were wounded is

⁴³ U.S. NSS, 1.

important...It is misleading people to think that you know something you don't know. And we know, we don't know.⁴⁴

The truth is not always reassuring. To be fair, while the U.S. National Strategy for Victory in Iraq does not point to any end date or state, it does outline conditions to be achieved in short, medium, and long term.⁴⁵

Critics of America's 2003 Iraq War planning were quick to point out that a brilliant military invasion campaign has been followed by a dud in post invasion operations.⁴⁶ One explanation for this failure was that Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, and other civilian masters and advisors, advocated fighting the war with too few troops. Michael O'Hanlon goes further and makes the point that the civil military relations balance is now tilted in favour of civilian defence officials, such as Rumsfeld. This differs from the days when Colin Powell was Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff and his personal influence often crossed into political spheres and aggravated many civilian military relations observers.⁴⁷ O'Hanlon lays the blame on civilian defence officials and military leadership that allowed no detailed planning or even contingency planning. He argues that had the military at least prepared some post conflict options, America would be better served.⁴⁸ Donald Rumsfeld admits that they underestimated the insurgency aspect but this in itself does not alter the big picture approach the Bush Administration takes toward Iraq's future. This big picture is the idealistic picture.

Although the U.S. did not have a plan for post invasion success, this is now remedied. It does have a plan and is utilizing all components of national power to realize

⁴⁴ Siobhan McDonough, "Rumsfeld says Troop Recruiting to Increase," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 6 February 2004, A3.

⁴⁵ Iraq goals paraphrased: Short term goals - an Iraq that is making steady progress in fighting terrorists, neutralizing insurgents and building democratic institutions. Medium term goals - an Iraq that is in the lead defeating terrorists and insurgents and providing its own security with a constitutional government in place and on its way to achieving economic potential. Long term goals - an Iraq that has defeated terrorists, is peaceful, united, stable, secure, well integrated into the international community, and is a full partner in the global war on terrorism. *U.S. National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, National Security Council, November 2005, 1.

⁴⁶ Michael E. O'Hanlon, "*Iraq Without a Plan*," in *Policy Review*, December 2004, 33-46.

⁴⁷ Notable examples were his outspoken stance against President William Clinton's policies to become engaged in Bosnia and to amend the U.S. military's homosexual and lesbian policy. The most famous was clearly his New York Times opinion-editorial piece that criticized any suggestion of U.S. intervention in Bosnia. Colin Powell, "Why Generals Get Nervous," *New York Times*, October 8, 1992.

⁴⁸ Michael E. O'Hanlon, "*Iraq Without a Plan*," 46-47.

the objectives.⁴⁹ While the approach satisfies what Weinberger sought in his third principle, it still suffers a fundamental weakness. Despite the best of plans, the goals may simply not be feasible.

Canada's Afghanistan War

Prime Minister Harper sees Canada's Afghan end state plainly. "The exit strategy is success. There will be no other conditions under which this government leaves Afghanistan."⁵⁰ The political circumstance that Canada seeks is a stable, self-sustaining democratic country. The objective is identified but what about the strategy?

Prime Minister Harper's remarks to the UN General Assembly illustrate broadly how Canada intends accomplish its mission in Afghanistan. "It [Afghanistan] is also, by far, Canada's biggest and most important overseas engagement. So the UN's mission is Canada's mission."⁵¹ The government's strategy point is clear, working collectively and harmonizing efforts is how Canada intends to achieve its objectives.

In the UN sanctioned and NATO led International Stabilization Assistance Force (ISAF), Canada will work with others to help Afghans develop the capacity to improve their lot. Canada's internal approach also has a collective aspect. Within the Government of Canada, a "whole of government" approach is developed that sees numerous departments focus their efforts at making a significant impact in Afghanistan. Coined the 3D approach, Canada intends to focus and harmonize its efforts along Diplomatic, Development and Defense themes to achieve success.⁵² Thus, what defines

⁴⁹ See the *U.S. National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* for details. 1-35.

⁵⁰ Galloway, Gloria, "We Won't Quit Afghanistan, PM Pledges." *Globe and Mail*, 19 September 2006.

⁵¹ Prime Minister Stephen Harper, 21 September 2006, speech to UN General Assembly. For text see: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20060921.wtext0921/BNStory/Front>, Internet; accessed 1 October 2006.

⁵² The Government of Canada Country Strategy for Afghanistan is classified but can be established from government statements and sources. For an overview of Canadian government activity and aims in Afghanistan see: <http://www.canada-afghanistan.gc.ca/menu-en.asp>, Internet; accessed 7 October 2006. The Canadian Forces Afghan Campaign Plan is classified. It was developed following government of Canada direction, in consultation with Department of Foreign Affairs, Industry and Trade, Canadian International Development Agency and draws its framework from the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS). It is also consistent with UN efforts to assist and with the NATO campaign plan for the International Stabilization Assistance Force working in Afghanistan. Canada's efforts are harmonized externally with international partners and internally within government agencies. Source: Commander,

success and a broad scheme to implement it is clear. Canada has an end state and strategy for Afghanistan; it is now a matter to implement it in conjunction with other international partners. Without a doubt, Weinberger's tenet is satisfied, but in the final analysis, this does not make the detailed implementation easier nor offers any degree of success.

Weinberger tenet: Continually reassess the objectives and forces assigned

The First Gulf War

The speed of the military victory in the First Gulf War does not lend itself to demonstrating this tenet. However, during the diplomatic pressure in the build up to war, the Bush administration continually adjusted force strength, and postures to ensure that it had sufficient combat power to overcome Iraq opposition. Sufficient forces were mustered for military victory. Nevertheless, as identified previously, the question of whether President Bush's strategic objectives were met by the military victory remains debatable. The Weinberger continual reassessment tenet was not evident in the First Gulf War.

2001 Afghanistan War

The Afghanistan war's evolution has forced the U.S. to reassess continually its forces assigned but not so much its objectives. The objectives did change with the issue of the 2002 U.S. NSS. Initially, the Bush Administration focused on removing the Taliban government and elements of al-Qaeda within Afghanistan. This later expanded to a commitment to nation building and a longer-term view on the war on terror. This was a significant change in substance and required a wider UN sanctioned and NATO led effort. The U.S. Administration has continued to reassess its mission and forces, and use other NATO members to assist in its Afghan efforts when it was beyond their immediate military capacity. Thus, in the main, Weinberger's fourth criterion is satisfied.

Canadian Expeditionary Command's (CEFCOM) brief to Advanced Military Studies Programme 9, 3 October 2006.

The Second Gulf War

President Bush's Administration has had to change its objectives because the original objectives were unfounded. Iraq's WMD did not exist and, in addition, the war's character evolved from a conventional fight to counter-insurgency and nation-building effort. Accordingly, the military forces required adjustment and were clearly not in accordance with original plans.⁵³

The war's objectives broadened to reflect the wider aims articulated in the 2002 U.S. NSS and the Administration had to develop a new strategy and force package to implement the plan. This has proven to be difficult for the U.S. because of the limited number of forces available and the small number of allies contributing to this war effort. Regardless, it has modified its objectives and forces to meet the needs. Setting aside the objective's feasibility, it is clear the Administration is meeting the Weinberger doctrine's spirit. Yet, it is uncertain if the U.S. can muster adequate resources or develop ways to achieve its objectives.

Canada's Afghanistan War

Canada's Afghanistan commitment has featured consistent objectives and frequent adjustment of forces employed. From the earliest days, the broad political objectives have remained; remove the Afghanistan based terrorist threat and contribute to regional and international stability. In addition, one need only quickly review the forces assigned from 2001 onward to see the force adjustment aspect; from ships supporting counter-terrorist operations in the Middle East, to battle groups, Special Forces, brigade headquarters, provincial reconstruction teams, and later to strategic advisory teams.⁵⁴ Force numbers, size and employment varied with task and role assigned during operations.

⁵³ There are numerous accounts of disagreements on the number and types of forces required to accomplish political objectives in the Second Gulf War. For an account from the military perspective see Cobra II, Chapter 1, "Snowflakes from the Secretary." It portrays U.S. Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld's meddlesome role in planning for Iraq. Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), 1-38.

⁵⁴ For a chronologic review of Canada's Afghan involvement see: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/afghanistan/timeline.html>, Internet; accessed 1 October 2006.

In addition, military forces have been equipped with new capabilities such as unmanned aerial vehicles, improved tactical equipment and were augmented with Leopard tanks when the tactical commanders requested more immediate direct firepower and force protection capability. Within Canada's means, the government has been prepared to modify its forces and their employment in attempting to satisfy its objectives and in keeping with maintaining itself as a significant contributor to the UN sanctioned and NATO led Afghanistan coalition.

Consequently, Canadian governments have been in accord with Weinberger's precept on objectives and adjusting forces assigned to suit the task.

Weinberger tenet: Ensure national public will and the government of the day can support the mission

The First Gulf War

On 2 August 1990, the day of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, President Bush took actions designed to foster the widest support for the potential mission. He issued an Executive Order declaring a national emergency, thus commencing the groundwork to garner domestic and international support.⁵⁵ At the UN, the U.S., in concert with the international community, condemned Iraq's actions and joined in the call for immediate Iraqi withdrawal.⁵⁶ These early efforts were followed with addresses to the nation and formation of a "coalition of the willing" prepared to take military action if necessary to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Domestically, this also included mobilization of reserve forces, a clear signal of the situation's gravity and the need for wide spread public support.⁵⁷ These actions and signals, both domestically and in international forums yielded results. Not only was the U.S. public firmly behind the effort but so too was the

⁵⁵ U.S. Executive Order 12722 issued by the President George W. Bush: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/07/20010731-7.html>, Internet; accessed 6 October 2006.

⁵⁶ UN SRC 660 passed 2 August 1990, full text available at: <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/575/10/IMG/NR057510.pdf?OpenElement>, Internet; accessed 7 October 2006.

⁵⁷ For example 38 ships from the Ready Reserve Fleet were activated, a historic first, as well as the Civil Reserve Air Fleet. The estimated peak number of Reserve call outs for all services was approximately 228, 561 personnel broken down as follows: 143, 211 Army Reserve, 34,693 Air Force, 30,548 Marine Corps, 19,119 Navy and 990 Coast Guard personnel. Summers, *A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*, 174-175.

international community.⁵⁸ The evidence was in the numbers. Over 40 nations joined the coalition and there were over 200,000 other allied force personnel participating in the operation.⁵⁹ There is no doubt that the Weinberger precept of securing support was satisfied.

2001 Afghanistan War

The terrorist 9/11 attacks provided the basis for initial and arguably lasting public and governmental support for the mission. Unlike the Iraq war, this is a case where the attack came directly from a specific nation, group and identifiable ideological movement. When this threat has been effectively removed, the support will likely diminish. The 9/11 cause and effect on America psyche crystallized their will. In this case, President Bush had the implicit support of the nation and government. The question of how long this will last is more difficult. However, Weinberger's fifth tenet is realized.

The Second Gulf War

President George W. Bush's Administration attempted to garner international support and domestic support before invading Iraq. He appealed to the UN, allies and to America's public. While the international efforts largely fell short, the domestic support was significant during the war's initial stages. At the war's onset, 62% of Americans believed the war would aid U.S. security.⁶⁰ However, domestic support for the war has been steadily dropping. From a high of well over 65% in 2003, to approximately 45% in

⁵⁸ Canada joined in a U.S. led, UN backed, multi-national coalition whose objective was to rid Kuwait of the Iraqi invader. For the Canadian government this was a no-brainer. Here was an aggressor, a weaker victim and the international consensus to act. This was the way the UN was supposed to work. Canada committed 4,500 service personnel to the operations and had begun what was to become their busiest operational decade since the Korean War. This was the first CF combat commitment since Korea. It was modest affair. The CF contingent consisted of three naval ships, one squadron of fighter aircraft and an army field hospital. "The sea capabilities were primarily used in command and control of, and support to, a naval combat logistics area; the land capabilities were primarily concentrated in the establishment of a field hospital near the end of hostilities; the air capabilities were more broad ranging; refueling, combat air patrols, bombing missions (56), and bombing escorts." Lawrence McDonough, *On the Demise of the Canadian Forces*, http://www.rmc.ca/academic/poli-econ/idrm/papers/2003-7_e.html, Internet; assessed 30 September 2006.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 237-238.

⁶⁰ Washington Post Article <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/07/AR2005060700296.html>, Internet; accessed 9 October 2006.

2004, 41% in 2005, it decreased to a mere 19% in 2006.⁶¹ This does not bode well for the Bush Administration and clearly shows waning public support.

With WMD unsubstantiated, the domestic support and international credibility began to unravel. Coupled with mounting costs in terms of blood and money, and without signs of success, doubt about the wisdom of the war rose while domestic support waned. Regardless of the specifics, Weinberger's precept was not followed. Reasonable assurance of public support was not sought before the war and the case and potential consequences of war were not made in satisfactory detail to the American people. In the context of 9/11, political and national resolve were focused on combating international terrorist, but a compelling case for the Iraqi war was still required.

In sum, President Bush's Administration may have made an adequate initial case for the war but has failed to maintain public will to sustain it. Without this support, the feasibility of victory diminishes. In this instance, Weinberger's criterion is not met.

Canada's Afghanistan War

Canada's involvement in Afghanistan may be fall victim to a similar fate as President Bush's war efforts in Iraq. However, the circumstances are very different. Initial support was high and the Liberal government did explain that it was contributing to the war because 9/11 had changed the security paradigm.⁶² However, over time the support for the mission has waned, especially when the contribution increased and the cost in lives rose dramatically. Further, the perception has generally been that the

⁶¹ Angus Reid Polls on U.S. domestic support for the Iraqi War show a clear steady downward trend. See: <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/index.cfm/fuseaction/searchSimpleResults/iw/1/keyword/iraq%20and%20saddam>, Internet; accessed 9 October 2006. This trend is also reflected in a host of American national media polls. An American Public Broadcast Station feature on "Assessment of the Iraq War" after three years reinforces this general observation. See: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/jan-june06/iraq_3-20.html, Internet; accessed 9 October 2006.

⁶² Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, Paul Martin and Stephen Harper, as well as successive defence minister's made the case that Canada's security was threatened by 9/11; 24 Canadians were killed, another four were killed in the Bali attacks and Canada was on the al-Qaeda's "hit list." Further, Afghanistan was the clear source of the threat and that Canada, by taking action was helping secure Canada and was also following in the Pearson tradition was helping secure a war torn nation. There were two fundamental reasons: self-interest to increase our own domestic security and fight terrorism and to help others by contributing to international stability. This case has been made numerous times commencing in 2001. See the Government of Canada website entitled "Protecting Canadians Rebuilding Afghanistan" for chronologic speeches relating to Canadian involvement from 2001 to 2006. See http://www.canada-afghanistan.gc.ca/news_2003-en.asp, Internet; accessed 9 October 2006.

mission is not well explained to Canadians and it is not apparent if Canadians are making any difference in helping rebuild the nation. It is not certain if Canadians will sustain the will to keep up the war effort in Afghanistan.⁶³ Recently, support for the war effort has increased following Prime Minister Harper's outspoken support for the mission, and President Harzai's visit and words of thanks and encouragement for Canada's efforts.⁶⁴

In Canada's case, it is not apparent that the government made any sustained effort to foster support for the mission. Considered over time, the effort has been decidedly modest with only limited focus on building wide spread public consensus on the war's rationale. It has been an understated affair that has only reached significant public scrutiny when casualties occur or when questions about a lack of progress surface. While this may be a product of recent inexperience with war, it nonetheless points out a deficiency in relation to Weinberger's doctrine. Successive governments have not made a sustained effort to ensure national public will or government support for the effort. Weinberger's test of developing public support is absent.

Weinberger tenet: Combat mission is last resort

The First Gulf War

President George H. Bush did not rush to war. He instead chose a path that could lead to war if the national objectives are not met. First he established the goals, and then he set about to achieve them concurrently using all elements of national power.⁶⁵ Diplomatically, he engaged the UN and International Community to call for Iraqi withdraw and return of the legitimate government. Information efforts set out and communicated national and international objectives. Economically he imposed national

⁶³ A snapshot in time shows the change, when asked: Do you support or oppose Canadian participation in the war in Afghanistan? : 62% of Canadians supported the war in December 2001, this fell to 38% in September 2006 and only 19% opposed the war in 2001 with this growing to 48% in 2006. Source Angus Reid Poll, see: <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/index.cfm/fuseaction/viewItem/itemID/13208>, Internet; accessed 9 October 2006.

⁶⁴ Despite a recent rise in support for the mission, most Canadian wants to see their soldiers return home after the 2009 commitment expires. See "Support rises for Afghanistan" Andrew Mayeda, Canwest News Services: <http://www.canada.com/chtv/vancouverisland/news/story.html?id=902c3060-c5c4-408b-bfa1-5187d4d2bca3&k=77709>, Internet; accessed 9 October 2006.

⁶⁵ The U.S. Army Doctrine Field Manual 3-0 Operations describes the role of the national security strategy as defining the broad strategic guidance necessary for advancing the United States' interests through the instruments of national power. National power instruments are classified under five categories: diplomatic, informational, military and economic. U.S., Washington, Department of the Army, 2001, 1-9.

embargos and led efforts to impose international sanctions. Finally, militarily he commenced preparations for action. While war was clearly possible, it was not inevitable. President Hussein's actions and his government's response to the international community were a critical piece. President Bush's approach was broad. Weinberger's tenet was clearly apparent. The opportunity to avoid war was present and war was a last resort.

2001 Afghanistan War

President George W. Bush did not rush to war in Afghanistan. War rushed to him. The 9/11 attacks upon the U.S. were acts of war and were traced back to a specific source, an al-Qaeda network functioning from Afghanistan with Taliban government support. Although the American military response occurred 7 October 2001, a month after the attacks, there were efforts made to avoid war.⁶⁶ President Bush demanded that the Taliban government hand over al-Qaeda's leaders and close its camps, and return foreign nationals unjustly held in Afghanistan. Granted, these demands were unlikely to occur, but given the nature of the attacks, the U.S. response was not generally viewed as unreasonable. Nor were its military actions. The circumstances do make a difference and while it may be argued that the war commenced too quickly, it was clearly not known if further attacks upon the U.S. might be forthcoming. Once attacked, use of force in self-defense is considered legitimate and reasonable to remove the threat of further attack. In this case, Weinberger's last resort precept was eclipsed by the initial attack and the continued existence of the threat.

The Second Gulf War

It appears President George W. Bush rushed to the Second Gulf War because of the imminent threat of WMD. While hindsight has proven this assertion false, many continue to speculate on what were the actual motives or goals behind the invasion.

⁶⁶ See President Bush's Whitehouse announcement of military strikes in Afghanistan, 7 October 2001 and his discussion that he gave the Taliban two weeks to respond to his demands in the aftermath of 9/11: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2001/10/mil-011007-usa01.htm>, Internet; accessed 6 October 2006.

Nevertheless, one needs to look no further than the U.S. 2002 NSS.⁶⁷ The strategy of preemption featured predominantly. And now the dangers of such a strategy, even after such a clear initial military success, are also plainly manifest. Preemption flies in the face of Weinberger's last test. However, while it is easy to judge, it is perhaps more important to understand the context behind this policy. 9/11 was a seminal event that etched the world in black and white terms for the Administration and heightened their threat perception. No longer would they remain idle while threats gathered. This, coupled with the initial positive results of the 2001 Afghanistan War, may have contributed to the mindset that military force could remove a threat before it struck America. But without just cause, the unintended consequences of preemption and its potential long term effects remains a concern. What is clear however is that imminent threat is did not exist and war was not used as a last resort. Weinberger's tenet is not evident.

Canada's Afghanistan War

Canada's use of military force as a last resort must be viewed in relation to the 9/11 attacks. Our neighbour, our largest trading partner, our NORAD comrade, and NATO ally was attacked. It was a case where our interests were also under attack. Our military contribution was a visible signal of solidarity and logically appropriate given the circumstances. The threshold of violence was crossed and the threat required action. This response was consistent with both protecting Canadian interests and contributing to international security interests. Considered in the 9/11 context, the response is in accord with Weinberger's doctrine.

Reflections on End States

Although it is dangerous to draw too much from different circumstances, it is just as dangerous to ignore hard won experience or insights. Even this brief overview of

⁶⁷ 2002 U.S. NSS second thrust: "strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends," signified the mindset and established the strategic policy that President Bush's administration adopted post 9/11.

recent war experience seen through the lens of the Weinberger doctrine has value. In this case, reflection upon political realities and end states and the military commander's task provides value. Colin Gray notes the essence of political and military tension. It is the difference between the practical and the theoretical.

True wisdom in strategy must be practical because strategy is a practical subject. Much of what appears to be wise and indeed is prudent as high theory is unhelpful to the poor warrior who actually has to do strategy, tactically and operationally.⁶⁸

Truth be told, the end state is not a static condition or set of conditions, or an idealistic platitude. The end state occurs when the lawful political authority terminates military actions at a given time. One may or may not have achieved the original political objectives or conditions but changed circumstances or events may have made it politically necessary to end military action. This is neither glamorous nor dull but simply reality. This reality needs to be reflected upon by strategic and operational level commanders. Many implications and questions arise.

Perhaps the most basic and most difficult to consider is the significance of national will. While clearly in the political domain, it remains the underlying linchpin for sustainable military campaigns. Operational and tactical victories are ultimately made irrelevant when juxtaposed against the national will. How much risk a government's leader is willing to accept is one thing. How much the nation's populace is willing to support remains another matter. This critical factor was raised by theorists like Clausewitz and reinforced through the ages. Put simply, failure to summon the national will to support military action abroad can produce strategic vulnerabilities that erode the

⁶⁸ Colin S. Gray, "Why Strategy is Difficult", *Joint Forces Quarterly*, (Washington: Department of Defence, Summer 1999), 7. Gray argues that developing effective strategy will continue to remain a difficult endeavour because of its nature, which is uncertain at best, the multitude and variety of factors that impact on strategy and because it involves predicting the future. Given these reasons despite technological advances and carefully developed methodologies it will remain difficult for strategic and operational level commanders to consistently achieve strategic success.

ability to exercise military force.⁶⁹ However, there are other fundamental aspects to consider.

The limitation of military force requires consideration. Military force is but one aspect of national power and by itself cannot hope to achieve lasting political solutions. This premise is central in Weinberger's requirement for political objectives and a plan or strategy to achieve these objectives. This is why combat is considered a last resort and that before any military commitment a plan or strategy was required. However, this is not new. Clarity of purpose and matching military capabilities to realistic political goals and end states were powerful lessons the American military drew from Vietnam. They need rediscovery today and to be considered in relation to contemporary strategies.

General Fred C. Weyland (a former U.S. Chief of Staff of the Army and Commander of the Military Assistance Command in Vietnam) summed up one of the military's greatest shortcomings.

The major military error was a failure to communicate to the civilian decision makers the capabilities and limitations of American military power. They can defeat enemy forces on the battlefield...They can carry the war to the enemy on land, air and sea...But there are fundamental limitations on American military power...The Congress and the American people will not permit their military to take total control of another nation's political, economic and social institutions in order to completely orchestrate the war...The failure to communicate these capabilities and limitations resulted in the military being called to perform political, economic and social tasks beyond its capability while at the same time it was limited in its authority to accomplish those military tasks of which it was capable.⁷⁰

General Weyland's observations about Vietnam continue to resonate today. Military commanders still face this critical dilemma. Military leaders must articulate the limitations of military power on one hand, yet provide military options to support political aims on the other. This becomes particularly acute when planning to protect vital interests as opposed to projecting idealistic political objectives. A laudable goal

⁶⁹ Harry Summers argued in *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, "The failure to invoke the national will was one of the major strategic failures of the Vietnam War. It produced strategic vulnerabilities that our enemy was able to exploit." 19.

⁷⁰ Harry Summers, *A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War*, 78-79.

would be to reduce unreasonable expectations in political and military strategists. However, this is unlikely to change and it points to yet another aspect for consideration.

Professional military education, especially campaign planning, formalizes an end state passion, but fails to emphasize the real world political difficulties of shaping practical end states. While campaign planning is an excellent tool to approach war's conduct, it must strive to consider political circumstances. Perhaps current planning practices are too much like engineering and too little like the political instrument they ultimately are. Moreover, they fail to integrate civilian masters who ultimately decide when and how force is applied and terminated in the nation's interest.

Certainly having a notion of what defines success is good but probably far too precise for the politics of human and international relations. It smacks of trying to impose order on an inherently irrational form. End states are necessary but there is precious little to guarantee they will unfold as originally planned. Simply put there are too many variables come into play.

Granted, it is difficult to proceed and plan without precise direction or when change, due to shifting domestic and foreign politics, occurs but this may well happen. With the military seeking political clarity and the politician seeking to keeping options open and constantly assessing their way in evolving circumstances, it is little wonder that tension between politicians and military leaders exists and will continue to exist. Those attempting to impose order on the nature of politics and war are unlikely to triumph.

The truth is that political objectives change. And this truth needs further reflection upon by military commanders. Clausewitz was aware and mindful of it. Put in its broadest terms, "the original political objects can greatly alter during the course of the war and may finally change entirely since they are influenced by events and their probable consequences."⁷¹ Weinberger was all too well aware of this dynamic. He viewed it as political callousness and strategic idealism that disturbed him so much; he attempted to formulate doctrine to guard against the seemingly senseless loss of military life.⁷²

⁷¹ Clausewitz, *On War*, 92.

⁷² A note of caution for the operational commander is in order. Commanders themselves need to guard against an emotional attachment to an end state that may change. This task is complicated by the inevitable loss of life and human factor influences generated through war's conduct. An end state that one-month was

Conclusion

This broad and brief sweep of specific American and Canadian war experiences seen through the lens of the Weinberger doctrine served to provide historical and contemporary examples of the complexity and difficulty of attempting to predetermine the exact political conditions that end a military commitment. It provides some insights for operational commanders and puts Canada's current Afghanistan war in perspective.

In the end, Canada's public support for the Afghan mission trumps all. Brigadier General Dave Fraser (Commander of NATO Multi-National Brigade Regional Command South-Afghanistan) acknowledged that Canadian domestic support is our source of strength and our weakest link.⁷³ It is Canadian society and, specifically, its electorate, who ultimately bears the costs in terms of lives and money. Further, they will weight the benefits of Government strategic objectives and finally shape national foreign policy. Simply put, if they judge that the costs are too high in relation to the benefits, a government will fall. Therefore, the Canadian people's opinion of government strategy, and its assessment of comparative costs and benefits, will ultimately decide any strategic end state's fate.

This truth poses a challenge for the military operational commander. It renders their means strategically powerless without domestic public support. New Democratic Party Leader Jack Layton was correct to question Canada's Afghanistan policy. He highlights the requirement for an informed public that is essential to support Canadian international efforts. As well, his comments underscore the significance for military commanders to provide prudent advice to political masters. The upshot is that operational commanders must be mindful of fostering and protecting domestic support for operations. Operational commanders have a significant role in maintaining strategic convergence between the nation's government and its public support.

worth human life might be unimportant the next. This indeed is a harsh reality. Military personnel inherently understand this and still go willing into combat knowing that some will not return. Nevertheless, this fact weighs heavily on leaders, and is a burden of leadership.

⁷³ General Fraser who commands 8,000 NATO soldiers in Southern Afghanistan observed that "It is the Canadian public and not the Taliban that is the greatest threat to peace and prosperity in Afghanistan." because of the "...Canadian tendency to seize on negatives and worry them to death." But, "... we need to see this through for as long as Afghans want us there." Interview with Brigadier-General Fraser by Mitch Potter, "General frets About Home Front", Toronto Star, 1 October 2006, A1.

As Thucydides observed in ancient times, “nations go to war for interests, honour or fear.”⁷⁴ Perhaps of more enduring significance in today’s democratic context is what sustains nations embarked on such a path. It is prudent policy united with popular domestic support. Today, Thucydides might have added, but it is national will that sustains them.

⁷⁴ Donald Kagan, *The Peloponnesian War*, (New York: Penguin, 2003), 46.

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