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The Operational Art ~ A Canadian Façade

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Abstract

This paper is about the proper use of military language. The thesis of this paper is that the Canadian Forces do not function at the operational level of war. This thesis will be argued from a uniquely Canadian perspective and will highlight the fact that Canada's multilateral policies at the strategic level preclude the requirement for the CF to function at the operational level. These multilateral policies directly influenced the 1994 White Paper which clearly assumes that Canada will continue to contribute forces to the UN, NATO or some other coalition and not take a lead role. The definitions of strategic, operational and tactical levels of war will be examined as well as the concept of the operational art. These constructs are then examined against current and past operations to which Canada has contributed forces. The questions of how Canada and the CF can explore the operational art and national objectives are only posed as a means to stimulate thought on how the CF can best act as an element of national power. The conclusion of this paper is that Canada does not function at the operational level of war.

"It used to be the most important person the community was the blacksmith.

Now it's the wordsmith"

Morris C. Shumiatcher

This paper is about the proper use of military language. In Army parlance, one must know the meaning of the terms fix, contain and block if one is to achieve the commander's intent. Similarly, a naval officer must understand what is meant by command of the sea versus sea control or sea denial. In armed conflict there are situations when not knowing your profession's language could result in disaster. Ernest Hemingway stated that, "One of the difficulties in language is that all our words, from loose using, have lost their edge." Perhaps as evidence of our difficulty with language, the word 'war' is often replaced these days with 'conflict', or 'armed conflict.' These words will be used interchangeably in this paper. The word operational, however, is one such example of military language that has lost its edge.

The breadth of meaning of the word 'operational' in the Canadian Forces (CF) is truly both astounding and confounding. Sharpe and English give a concise history of the term operation in their book *Command and Control* and say that if a person or unit was ready to be engaged in combat, it/they were operational. It tended to distinguish troops ready for battle from those in training.[1] Today, CF units training for an overseas deployment must be declared 'operationally ready' before they can depart. Almost every activity that isn't training has the prefix

[1] Sharpe, Brigadier-General (retired) G.E. (Joe), English, Allan D., Principles for Change in the Post-Cold War Command and Control of the Canadian Forces. Winnipeg, DND-CFTMPC, 2002, p. 33-34.

'Operation,' for example: Operation APOLLO, PALLADIUM, ATHENA, and FUSION just to name a few. The CF regularly declares certain equipments as operational, as opposed to administrative or national stock. The DND ADM-HR (Civ) web site discusses "civilian operational functions"[2] with respect to the civilian contribution to operational readiness. In recent years, two new phrases are becoming more prominent in our lexicon: 'operational level of war' and 'operational art.' Flowing from these is the concept of an operational commander, or, a commander who practices the operational art. During the conduct of Command and Staff Course (CSC) 29, two separate speakers identified themselves as the Canadian Operational Commander for the 3 PPCLI Battalion Group deployment to Afghanistan on Operation APOLLO. I contend that neither were operational commanders.

Understanding military language with respect to the usage of the word 'operational' is fundamental to the thesis of this paper. Fortunately, there are accepted definitions that clearly delineate how this word is to be used. Unfortunately, not everyone has the requisite understanding of the 'operational level war' and 'operational art' to properly distinguish between their intended meaning and, for example, DND's "civilian operational functions."[3] This lack of understanding causes problems when the CF plans, mounts and conducts operations. In an effort to shed some light on these terms this paper will examine the concepts of 'operational level of war' and 'operational art' within the overall CF doctrinal context of the three levels of war: strategic, operational and tactical. The examination of the strategic level of war will require an examination of Canada's approach to international relations, multilateralism, and how this approach affected the focus of the 1994 Defence White Paper. From this strategic perspective,

[2] World Wide Web. Civilians in Defence. Operations Support. [http://www.forces.gc.ca/hr-civ/engrapg/operations_support_e.asp] March 2003

the minor role envisioned for the CF as an element of Canada's national power will become clear. The inevitable result is a military that does not function at the operational level of war. These concepts will then be examined against some recent deployments including domestic, peacekeeping and war fighting operations and thus will include the full spectrum of conflict. At this point, the thesis of this paper will be clearly proven; the Canadian Forces do not function at the operational level of war.

To initiate the argument about whether or not Canada functions at the operational level of war, it important to have a clear understanding of what this phrase really means. In pursuing national policy objectives military actions are categorized into three levels: strategic, operational and tactical. Each of these levels will be defined as the initial benchmark for proving the thesis of this paper.

> "The strategic level of conflict is that level at which a nation or group of nations determines national or alliance security objectives and develops and uses national resources to accomplish those objectives… Military strategy is that component of national or multinational strategy that presents the manner in which military power should be developed and applied to achieve national objectives or those of a group of like-minded nations."[4]

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[3] ibid
[4] DND, Canadian Forces Operations, B-GG-005-004/AF-000, p. 1-4/1-5

As can be seen in this definition, the role of the state is paramount in any armed conflict. While this definition from the *CF Operations* manual accurately reflects the role of the nation during conflict, it warrants closer examination due the vital role governments play with respect to their respective national objectives. Jomini insists that when taking an army to the field, "the first care of the commander should be to agree with the head of state upon the character of the war."[5] With respect to the character of the war he is referring not only to the objectives of the war, but also to how the war is to be conducted. Jomini clearly recognized the key role played by the head of state. Clayton Newell, author of *The Framework of Operational Warfare*, describes the aforementioned three levels of war as three perspectives of war and with respect to strategy he states that, "the strategic perspective of war provides a view of the nation at war, using all of its capabilities in coordination to attain national goals by the use of force."[6] Finally, Clausewitz identifies "the political object [as] the original motive for war."[7] The point of expounding upon the CF definition of the strategic level is to reinforce how crucial a role is played by the state. As will be shown, the Canadian government is somewhat mute in this area of public policy, the 1994 White notwithstanding.

The operational level of war "is the level at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted and sustained to accomplish strategic objectives within theatres or areas of

[5] Jomini, Baron Antoine Henri de, The Art of War, London, Greenhill Books, p. 66.
[6] Newell, Clayton R., The Framework of Operational Warfare, London, Routledge, 2001, p.9.
[7] von Clausewitz, Carl, On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton University: Princeton University Press, 1976) p.81

operations."[8] It is at this level that military commanders craft a campaign plan that is designed to achieve the strategic objectives. From Clayton Newell's perspective of war, "the military commanders who view war from the operational perspective play a critical role in establishing militarily achievable goals."[9] The determination of what is militarily achievable is the purview of the military commander. One can immediately recognize the tremendous accord that must be continuous between the head of state and the military commander at the operational level. When employed as a means to state ends, the military commander must continue to be reactive to the head of state. Anything less could compromise the objectives of the state. When you include the complexity of modern military campaigns, characterized by coalitions that have both national and international objectives, reconciling precedence of objectives is only possible if your own objectives are clear from the start. In Canada's case, as will be shown; the national objective is simply participation in the coalition. In such a circumstance, reconciling campaign objectives with Canada would not be an issue with the coalition commander as long as Canadian forces were coalition participants. The strategic link to the CF, therefore, is dominated by the governments desire to participate in international operations, not lead them. In such cases, there is no requirement for the CF to function at the operational level of war since the campaign plan is someone else's responsibility.

The operational art, as distinct from the operational level of war, refers to how commanders develop a campaign plan that links the strategic goals to tactical combat. While the origins of this term are not exactly certain, it started to be discussed after the Napoleonic Wars based on how the Emperor fought them. Napoleon himself stated that, "The art of war is a simple art;

[8] DND, Canadian Forces Operations, B-GG-005-004/AF-000, p. 1-5/1-6
[9] Newell, Clayton R., The Framework of Operational Warfare, London, Routledge, 2001, p.11.

everything is in the performance."[10] The coining of the phrase itself is attributed to General-Major A.A. Svechin, a Soviet military writer who expounded upon "the imaginative leadership skills required to campaign successfully on the greatly expanded battlefield of the industrial age."[11] The key words, as applied to the operational art, in Svechin's quote are, imaginative and campaign. The former refers to the art of war while the latter refers to the level of war. You will recall that campaigns are fought at the operational level of war. The art, therefore, is developing *how* a campaign is to be fought. The nation decides what must be achieved; the military commander decides *how* military power can best achieve that end. Once again, this concept is difficult, or perhaps profoundly easy depending on your point of view, to apply in Canada when one considers that *participation in coalitions* is Canada's strategic aim.

The third and final level of war is the tactical. "The tactical level of conflict is the level at which battles and engagements are planned and executed to accomplish military objectives assigned to units."[12] The battles and engagements of the tactical level will be planned in accordance with the overall campaign plan. In this manner, only those battles and engagements that are necessary will be fought and since they have been determined to be of importance, they will be resourced accordingly. In this manner, the tactical level of war is well nested with both the operational and strategic. Canada has some strength at the tactical level and is able to provide capable troops to coalitions. The size of the CF, and one might add Canada itself, precludes Canada from ever leading a coalition or taking unilateral action and thus negates the requirement for the CF to be

[10] Falls, Cyril, The Art of War From the Age of Napoleon to the Present Day, Oxford, 1961, p. 231
[11] McKercher, B.J.C. and Hennessy, Michael A., The Operational Art – Developments in the Theories of War, London, Praeger, 1996, p. 2
[12] DND, Canadian Forces Operations, B-GG-005-004/AF-000, p. 1-4/1-5

capable of functioning at the operational level of war. As a nation that functions at only the strategic and tactical levels, the logical place to start this discussion is at the top.

The inability of the CF to function at the operational level of war is rooted in Canadian foreign and defence policy. These policies are derived from Canada's extensive use of multilateralism which is its primarily apparatus for pursuing international objectives.[13] It is not within the scope of this paper to judge the wisdom of this approach, however, it is within the scope to identify the limitations it imposes on the CF. Multilateralism is defined as "the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of three or more states, through ad hoc arrangements or by means of institutions."[14] It is widely acknowledged that Canada makes extensive use of multilateralism and one of the key factors for choosing such an approach is considered to be "Canada's relative power status in the international system."[15] In the military jargon of 'lead, follow or get out the way', Canada appears to have found a place between lead and follow. By participating in multilateral forums, Canada is able to have some influence on world events while simultaneously resisting the pressure to do all things American. The effect on defence policy is, therefore, predictable. Canada is content to participate in international activities that are determined to require military force, but does not envisage ever taking a leading role. In terms of operational art, this relieves the CF of that responsibility. If Canada has no objective for which it is prepared to take a lead role in using military power, then the CF will never need to function at the operational level of war. NORAD, and now Northern Command, are good examples of Canada's lack of a need for operational level functionality. The United States is willing to

[13] Keating, Tom, *Canada and World Order* – The Multilateralist Tradition in Canadian Foreign Policy, Toronto, McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993, p. 22
[14] Keohane, Robert, Multilateralism: an agenda for research, International Journal, Autumn, 1990, p. 731

shoulder the majority of the financial burden and thus the NORAD commander is always an American. Since there is "no immediate direct military threat to Canada"[16], operational control of NORAD defaults to the U.S. This is as true today as it was during the Cuban missile crisis when higher alert levels were ordered without consultation with Canadians.[17] A more recent example, the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York, is even more alarming. As widely reported in the media, it was a Canadian officer on duty at NORAD that caused the redirection North American inbound civilian aircraft to Canadian airspace. This action should raise serious questions about whom NORAD is really designed and organized to protect.

As Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, in their book *Power and Interdependence*, acknowledge, "military force is always a central component of national power."[18] They subsequently modify this assertion for states that have a large degree of interdependence. The western powers fall into this category where war between these states is rendered more and more unlikely with their ever-increasing degree of interdependence. [19] This interdependence is the result of multilateral pacts and Canada's relative disinterest with military power is very likely the result of the security it has garnered on those fronts. The 1994 Defence Paper formalizes these ideas into policy.

The 1994 Defence White Paper continually refers to the need for Canada to contribute forces or to the idea of collective security. In justifying the need for combat capable forces, the White Paper states "we cannot expect our political influence in global and regional security

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[15] Keating, Tom, Canada and World Order – The Multilateralist Tradition in Canadian Foreign Policy, Toronto, McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993, p. 13
[16] 1994 Defence White Paper. P. 12
[17] Byers, Michael. Canadian Armed Forces Under U.S. Command. Vancouver. Centre for the Study of Global Issues, University of British Columbia, 2002, p. 6.
[18] Keohane, Robert and Nye, Joseph, Power and Interdependence, New York, Longman, 2001, p. 23
[19] ibid, p. 24

arrangements to be out of proportion to our military contributions."[20] It follows, therefore, that the only reason to have a military, as a contributor to national power, is to garner global and regional, or multilateral, influence. This idea is well supported throughout the Defence White Paper in terms of how the government envisages the CF: "Canada's record of commitment to multilateral operations is unsurpassed;"[21] "Canada must be prepared to contribute forces…;"[22] and our commitment to both NATO and the UN are resolutely reaffirmed. It is clear, therefore that the Defence White Paper is a logical extension of Canada's multilateral approach to international affairs in general, and defence and security in particular. Since Canada's policies are based on its relative international power, its military is sufficiently resourced to maintain the desired multilateral influence. In accepting that Canada's "collective defence remains fundamental to our security"[23] Canada also accepts that it will not take a leadership role in military operations. Canada will not attempt "to cover the entire military spectrum [however] the CF must be able to make a genuine contribution to a wide variety of domestic and international objectives."[24] By policy, therefore, Canada will not take a leadership role in the conduct of international military operations. The nation's size and resources do not permit the establishment of a military capable of such an undertaking, however, contributing military resources to coalitions allows the nation to retain a measure of influence. In this scenario, as already postulated, the CF is removed from the operational level of war and the operational art.

Contributing forces is about force generation at the tactical level. According to current policy the CF will be commanded by a foreigner, albeit an ally, who has crafted the operational design.

[20] 1994 Defence White Paper. P. 13
[21] Ibid. p. 31
[22] ibid. p. 31
[23] ibid. p. 12

In such cases the CF is functioning only at the tactical level. To suggest that by generating troops CF is functioning at the operational level, because *that* is the strategic objective, is to expose one's miscomprehension of the operational level of war and the operational art. There is little doubt that many CF officers would disagree with this position. This is unfortunate because in order to maximize our power as a nation the CF must understand and accept its place in the international order. McKercher and Hennessy allow that most nations are not capable of waging war at the operational level and that smaller nations "may be compelled to prepare training and doctrine commensurate with their larger allies."[25] They go on to assert that, "for these lesser powers to remain credible allies, capable of contributing to the 'first team,' they must come to terms with the American conception of the operational art."[26] Remaining a credible ally of the U.S. is a constant balancing act for Canada, but it is also central to Canada's multilateralist approach.

Up to this point we have examined the levels of war, the operational art, Canada's use of multilateralism to derive international strength and how this policy has affected defence policy and the CF. It has been suggested that Canada's use of multilateralism, as its foremost means for achieving strategic objectives, renders CF functionality at the operational level to be impossible. By examining the missions to which Canada has provided troops, it may be determined that the CF has not functioned at the operational level. This examination will take us from the theory of multilateralism and the operational art to the practice of deploying military forces.

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[24] ibid. p. 13
[25] McKercher, B.J.C. and Hennessy, Michael A., *The Operational Art – Developments in the Theories of War*, London, Praeger, 1996, p. 4
[26] ibid. p. 4

Of the 2777 personnel currently deployed on 14 missions throughout the world, not one is controlled at the operational level by Canada. The United Nations, NATO, European Union, and the United Kingdom (Op Sculpture) function in this capacity with Canada providing tactical units or individuals.[27] An examination of past operations reveals a similar situation.[28] The three operations that appear to be exceptions are: Operations MEGAPHONE, CONSTABLE and ASSURANCE. As will be shown, during MEGAPHONE the CF could be considered to have functioned at the operational level. During CONSTABLE, however, a closer examination reveals the CF clearly did not function at that level and finally, for ASSURANCE, the CF could not function at that level.

Operation MEGAPHONE has its roots in the conclusion of Canada's participation in the Kosovo mission when a shipping company was contracted to transport the contingent's equipment back to Canada. Due a monetary dispute between contractors the ship, CTS Katie registered in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, was ordered by its owners not to enter Canadian waters. The Canadain government and the CF strived to achieve an impasse but none was forthcoming. "Finally, when all other options had failed, diplomatic notes were sent to the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which replied that no objections would be raised if Canadian authorities boarded the vessel."[29] Having received the orders to do so, the Captain of HMCS Athabaskan ordered Katie boarded and "compelled the captain [of Katie] to resume his previous course to Bécancour, where the Katie arrived on August 6."[30] Whilst the complete details of this

[27] DND Web Site. http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/current_ops_e.asp. This site gives a description of each mission, including Canada's participation, and identifies the lead international nation/organization.
[28] DND Web Site. http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/past_ops_e.asp. This site gives a description of each mission, including Canada's participation, and identifies the lead international nation/organization.
[29] Ibid. Go to Operation MEGAPHONE.
[30] Ibid.

operation are not available, it is clear that the government of Canada used it national power to secure its objective: the return of its military equipment. Canada demonstrated a willingness to use military force and this fact no doubt contributed to the success of the diplomatic notes. While no grand campaign plan was likely required, the CF would have had plans in place that would have led to strategic success. How well the CF functioned in terms of defining the operational level, as discrete from the strategic and tactical, is less important for this paper than the fact that the operation was completely Canadian with all the elements present to allow the CF to function at the operational level. This case, however, is unique.

Operation CONSTABLE supports the thesis of this paper especially well because most people consider that by providing the force commander to this mission, the CF did, and does, function at the operational level. This operation was Canada's contribution to the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH).

The UN mandate was to assist the government of Haiti by supporting and contributing to the training and professional development of the Haitian National Police. The Canadian contingent was the largest in UNTMIH with 650 personnel.[31] Considering that the overall force military commander was a Canadian, it appears that the CF was in fact functioning at the operational level. The strategic level in this case, however, was the UN and it was with the UN that the Canadian brigadier-general worked in order to develop his campaign plan. From a CF perspective, therefore, the Canadian commander was no different than any other contribution Canada makes to UN missions. The CF was not functioning at the operational level. This fact is highlighted by an incident when NDHQ stated reservations with the force commander's concept

of operations. When NDHQ staff caused this issue to be raised with the UNHQ in New York, the UN supported *its* commander despite Canada's objections.[32] Canada's influence at the strategic level was limited, as derived from its multilateralist approach, and Canada had no influence at the operational level.

Operation ASSURANCE was the mission designed to get aid to the thousands of refugees on the border between Rwanda and Zaire. In this case Canada accepted the role of lead nation but as Dr. Michael Hennessy points out, "this proved to be a major challenge [as Canada] had never led a UN Chapter VII operation."[33] Operation ASSURANCE, perhaps fortunately, never fully deployed but details from the mission support the thesis of this paper. Firstly, the strategic level was not prepared for, nor did it understand what it was expected to do. Hennessy identifies liaison problems between all the major players at this level including: the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Nation Defence, Privy Council Office, the Cabinet, and the UN itself. Canadian Lieutenant-General Baril in his Post Operation report states, "...the only apparent elements of a national strategy were the objectives inferred from UNSC Resolution 1080."[34] This should not be a surprise. Given Canada's multilateral policies up to that point, it had no reason to expend the time and resources necessary to be prepared to lead an international operation. When required to act strategically, in terms of laying out military objectives, it was mute. As already discussed, however, the ability of a nation's military to function at the operational of war is directly tied to the strategic level. The void at the strategic level led to a

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[31] ibid.
[32] Gagnon, Brigadier-General R. Operational Level Command. Presentation to Canadian Staff Course 29, Canadian Forces College, Toronto, 24 April 2003. Printed here with the permission of Brigadier-General Gagnon.
[33] Hennessy, Dr. Michael A.. Operation 'Assurance': Planning a Multi-national Force for Rwanda/Zaire Canadian Military Journal, Spring 2001, p. 11
[34] ibid. p.18. This quote is taken from Baril, 3350-95 (Comd) 30 April 1997, Op ASSURANCE Commander Multi-National Force Headquarters – Post Operation Report. ATI (A97)-0671.

void at the operational level as well. The CF was not prepared or capable of forming a functional multinational headquarters nor was it capable of supporting the mission. As highlighted by Hennessy, the CF "doctrine assumed Canada would not be a lead nation, and therefore we had no permanent mechanism for responding to the challenges of being one."[35]

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102(1)(b) the TFC-appointed by the CDS exercises operational command, reporting to the CDS through the DCDS;

102(1)(c) except in an article five NATO operation where Canada has decided to provide forces under Operational Command (OPCOM), participating CF will normally be placed under the Operational Control (OPCON) of UN, NATO or other coalition commanders;…

104(1)(c)(3) …The Canadian National Commander will not normally have a role in the operation from a national or an alliance perspective, but will have Administrative Control and would be responsible for such matters as discipline and admi

The same is true of domestic operations. The National Defence Act is very clear that the CF must respond to domestic situations. The Queens Regulations and Orders (QR&O) are equally clear the CF "does not replace the civil authorities but assists them…"[39]. It is the civil authorities that remain in overall control of domestic situations and as such are more likely to function at the operational level. While the CF has deployed thousands of troops in recent years and done remarkable work, it was the applicable civil authorities that functioned at the operational level.

The whole argument of this paper has been about the accurate use of military language with respect to the operational level of war and the operational art. Troops must be declared 'ready for operations' before any deployment. Within DND, if you are not supporting operations in such a limited resource environment, you are in danger of elimination. One would have difficulty arguing that DND civilians do not support operations, but by focusing on the word 'operations' we tend to, as suggested by Hemmingway, cause it to lose its edge. The DCDS Directive for International Operations tends to aggravate this situation. By assigning a TFC as the operational commander, the appointed officer could try to inject himself in the development of the campaign plan. The DCDS Directive attempts to clarify the role of the TFC in a later paragraph, but unless CF officers understand the concept of the operational level of war and operational art, this problem will persist. Colonel K.T. Eddy wrote an article in 1992 titled *The Canadian Forces and Operational Level of War* in which he argued that the CF should doctrinally adopt the concept of the three levels of war and train officers to function at the operational level. He states that, "without training at this level, the CF will be ill prepared…to

[39] DND. Queens Regulations and Orders. Volume One, Chapter 23.03 – Position of the CF in Relation to the Civil Power.

plan or even to cooperate in the planning and conduct of campaigns and major operations."[40] While efforts have been made in the training of officers, the overall doctrine and practices of the day remain tactical in nature.

By examining the accepted definitions of the operational level of war and the operational art, it has been shown that Canada's policy of pursuing national objectives through multilateralism has effectively eliminated the CF from the operational level of war. While it is not the aim of this paper to discuss the ramifications of this situation, it is important to understand that as long as CF officers believe they are functioning at the operational level, they will never change or adapt to the nation and the global situation. Just as World War I and II Canadian generals have been criticized for limiting their doctrine to supplying troops to British commanders, so to will modern day generals be criticized for basically the same thing. John Gellner speaks of Canada's "mute acceptance of plans worked out by others" during the Second World War and that Canada "never exercised any influence on the conduct of the war."[41] A good understanding of this situation actually creates an opportunity for the CF to develop doctrine that accepts a multilateral Canada and a military that is not currently capable of functioning at the operational level. Perhaps Canadian objectives could extend beyond mere participation? Perhaps well placed CF officers on coalition, UN or NATO staffs could work more closely with organizations like DFAIT and strive to influence certain military outcomes that would effectively achieve an expanded set of Canadian objectives? Colonel Eddy, albeit from a different standpoint, argued the same idea when he stated that our doctrine had be "consistent with uniquely Canadian

[40] Eddy, Colonel K.T., The Canadian Forces and the Operational Level of War. Canadian Defence Quarterly. April 1992

[41] Gellner, John. The Defence of Canada: Requirements, Capabilities and the National Will. Toronto : Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1985.

policies and must reflect decision making procedures at national political as well as at military levels."[42] It has been suggested in the media, based on Canada's position on the recent Iraqi conflict, that at least the Americans have the wisdom to know what their national interests are. As long as the CF confuses force generation with operational art, it will remain in a mold that was cast in the First World War. When the thesis statement of this paper, *that Canada does not function at the operational level of war*, was presented to author Jack Granatstein, he simply stated that, "I am certain you are right…indeed, I think one can argue this has always been true."[43]

In conclusion, this paper has discussed the usage of the word operational as a means of highlighting the fact that the CF does not function at the operational level of war. In order to prove such an argument, the operational level of war was examined from a uniquely Canadian perspective.

Canada strives to achieve its strategic objectives through multilateralism. This approach to international relations, in large measure, predetermines that Canada does not need a large military. When considered against Canada's geographic position and hence the military threat, the conclusion is that resources for the military can be minimized. In order to maintain the desired international influence, Canada recognizes that it needs multi-purpose combat capable forces.[44] The multilateralist approach, however, does not require Canada to take a prominent position on any given issue. In terms of military strength, if Canada is able to participate on international operations and garner the desired diplomatic influence, then the military is properly

[42] ibid. p. 23
[43] Granatstein, Jack. Email to the author. 7 January 2003

resourced. The provision of forces however, as a means of achieving a strategic objective, should not be confused with functioning at the operational level of war.

The operational level of war is the level where campaigns are planned and sustained in order to achieve strategic objectives. It is the link between the strategic goals and tactical actions. How a campaign is designed is considered to be the operational art. Functioning at this level is not considered essential from a Canadian multilateralist point of view. If Canada is able to garner what it deems to be the requisite international influence by providing individuals and tactical units, then it has been successful. Hence, the CF has not been directed or resourced to function at the operational level, therefore it is not capable of doing so. An examination of CF deployments further supports this argument.

Of the personnel currently deployed on 14 missions, not one is being led by Canada. The same is true for past operations with the potential exception of three missions: Operations MEGAPHONE, CONSTABLE and ASSURANCE. Operation MEGAPHONE was Canada's recovery of its military equipment from a transport ship whose owners refused to let the ship enter Canadian waters due to a contract dispute. The recovery of this equipment became a national objective and both diplomatic and military resources were brought to bear. While the operation was, relatively, not very complicated, it did have all the elements present to assess the CF as functioning at the operational level. While this case is dubious in terms of assessing the CF of functioning of the operational level, it also remains unique.

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[44] 1994 Defence White Paper. P. 14

During Operation CONSTABLE, Canada provided the military commander for the UN mission to Haiti. The keys words in this description are: 'provide' and 'UN mission.' While the commander in question clearly functioned at the operational level, the CF did not. The commander developed his concept of operations in consultation with his strategic headquarters, the UN. When officers in NDHQ objected to the commander's concept of operations and had the issue raised in the UN, the UN supported *its* commander regardless of the Canadian objections. In this case, Canada maintained its traditional role of troop provider while someone else led the operation. Operation ASSURANCE would have been Canada's first attempt leading a modern mission. The mission was over taken by events and the full deployment never occurred. This appears to be fortuitous for Canada since considerable difficulties exposed several Canadian doctrinal and resource inadequacies. Not surprisingly, these inadequacies were rooted primarily at the strategic level, which in and of itself rendered functionality at the operational level problematic. This operation cannot be considered a success in terms of functioning at the operational level of war.

The CF does not function at the operational level of war. The policies of the Canadian government simply do not require the CF to be functional at that level. These facts are very important for CF officers to recognize. They do not negate the requirement to study and understand the operational art, far from it; they demand the CF determine its unique position within this construct. Only in this manner can the CF break the World War I model of simply providing troops to others. While force contributions are likely to continue, Canada should only do so as part of an integrated national campaign plan. As an element of Canada's national power, the CF must be better integrated with those other elements of national power in order to

permit a more synergistic approach to achieving national objectives. Only in such a scenario can the CF begin to function at the operational level of war.

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