

«OPERATION «DESERT FAREWELL»»; «DESERT CALM»; «PEACE WALKER» (1991)

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Abstract: *This paper decade or so, the U.S. Army has rediscovered operational art. In this period, major doctrinal changes have been introduced, debated and reformulated. There has been a renaissance of thinking about the operational level of war and operational art.*

Key words: *perspectives, practice, rediscovery, consequence, attainment.*

Introduction:

Operational art is different from strategy and tactics. It holds to a different logic. The perspective of operational art is different as well. Operational art is the connection between the aims of strategy and tactics. Strategy involves the conduct of warfare to accomplish political and military aims. While tactics involves the conduct of battle to overcome and destroy the enemy, operational art contributes to the conduct of strategy by the achievement of military objectives. It differs from strategy by not having a political objective.

In the 19th century, German Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke the Elder began to differentiate among military strategy, operations and tactics. He recognized that strategy in war is inherently linked with the attainment of the political objective, and that operational art defines military objectives which underpin the political objectives. His conduct of operations his practice of the operational art has been studied ever since. German usage and practice led to Russian-Soviet adoption of the operational art concept in the 20th century. Rediscovery of the importance of the operational art for American and allied forces is a consequence the «Cold War».

Material and Methods

The dimensions of war change among strategy, operations and tactics. The strategist aims at the enemy's center of gravity, be it a nation's will, the delicate seam of an alliance or key resources. The operational center of gravity is the mass of enemy military force and its command, control and communications.

At the tactical level, the tactician has a more limited perspective. Tactical commanders are concerned with how to fight; operational commanders define where and when to fight; and strategic commanders decide whether or not to fight. In tactics, maneuver and fires are mutually interdependent. At the operational level, maneuver and fires are used to unbalance the enemy and achieve momentum and tempo. In tactics, intelligence is concerned with capabilities. At the operational level, intelligence is concerned more with intentions. Deception is used by the tactical commander to hide forces. In the operational context, deception is used to hide intent and cause the enemy to reveal his intent.

In operational art, the use of reserves is critical, but they are not the same reserves an uncommitted ready force thought of at the tactical level. Reserves at the operational



level should be thought of as the future use of forces which may or may not be presently engaged. Also, at the operational level, logistics may be considered another form of reserve. At the strategic level, force generation capability and logistics are the reserves.

At the tactical level, logistics is used to affect the battle in progress. However, logistics at the operational level is more than sustaining the force. Logistics is part of the commander's concept of operations and scheme of maneuver. Logistics adds synergism to all of the elements of operational art and helps to underwrite campaigns.

At the strategic level, the commander looks toward the outcome of campaigns of the war as a means of achieving policy objectives. His time horizon is distant. At the operational level, the commander also looks to the future; he looks beyond the outcome of battle. He is concerned with several moves ahead, in days, weeks and even months. The tactical commander looks toward the outcome of engagements and battles in hours.

Results

The strategist formulates aims and generates capabilities; the operational commander seeks unity of effort over time; the tactical commander orders immediate action in the field of battle. Operational art involves a vision of unity of action which carries out the strategic objectives. As the previous discussion points out, operational art is composed of different perspectives. The elements of operational art-which are essential to its understanding are outlined below. This framework is used in turn to measure operational logistics in the Gulf War. Inherent in the difference between power-projection and forward-deployed forces is the maturity of the theater. In a theater where forces are forward deployed, the infrastructure of the theater is known and their use is well planned. The logistical readiness of forward-deployed forces enables those forces to roll out of their different bases and deploy into combat. Sustainment supplies, reserve stocks and spare sets of equipment are prepositioned with the forward-deployed force. A forward-deployed force is familiar with road, rail, aerodromes, ports and infrastructure that have been used numerous times in peacetime rehearsals. Contracts for services and supplies are established and exercised.

Communications-telephone and radio are well established, with satellite relay where necessary. All aspects of the logistical movement of forces and their sustainment and control would be known, rehearsed and in readiness. Little would be unknown in the logistical world, including that of the enemy.

This is not necessarily true in the power projection of forces. The theater of war and theater of operations may have only very recently entered the planning horizon. The theater may not have any U.S. forces near it or on the ground. The logistical infrastructure the ports, rail, road, airports, telecommunication system may be known only by study conducted from afar. The plethora of things that go with living in a place where you expect to fight will simply not be there. Everything, including fuel, food, ammunition, transportation, communications equipment and maps, has to be brought with the force being projected into the theater. A thousand questions will be left unanswered. Will there be off-loading ramps at the aerodromes? What types of cranes are available in the ports? How much water can be provided? Are there military specification or compatible fuel and oil?



Discussion

What personal hygiene facilities are there? Can an influx of troops at surge rates of 5,000 a day be accommodated? Where will soldiers live, sleep, eat, work, shower and go to the bathroom? Can a force coming from a distinct different climate function? How long will it take for soldiers' equipment to arrive? What of cultural, religious and societal differences? How will soldiers be received into an entirely different culture? These questions in the broadest sense-indicate the potential unknown nature of the theater logistical infrastructure and critical shortfalls which may confront a power-projection force.

Conclusion

The logistics applications in Southwest Asia can be measured through use of the operational framework described above. The strategic objectives of the Gulf War articulated by President George Bush Sr. were to: free the western hostages held by Iraq; defend Saudi Arabia; liberate Kuwait; and destroy weapons of mass destruction so as to increase the stability of the region. General Norman Schwarzkopf Jr., the theater commander, used these strategic objectives to focus on the military objective to destroy the Iraqi military force. General Norman Schwarzkopf postulated the center of gravity of Iraqi forces to be two-fold: the Republican Guardcore, well-equipped forces which supported the regime of Saddam Hussein and the command and control infrastructure used by Saddam Hussein to control his military forces.

Acknowledgement

In power projection, the operational commander the theater commander-in-chief is constrained by the strategic aspects of logistics. How much air and sealift is available and how much time is available? The national level decisionmakers will be advised of how much lift to make available by doing a risk analysis. If speed is of the essence, emergency authority from the president may be required for allocation of civilian aircraft and ships.

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