STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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# EXIT STRATEGY: THE NEW DIMENSION IN OPERATIONAL PLANNING

BY

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# ABSTRACT

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TITLE: Exit Strategy: The New Dimension for Operational Planning

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 15 May 1997 PAGES: 37 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Significant changes are occurring in the force structure, operational tempo, and the roles and missions of the military for operations other than war. Strategic policy and military doctrine are evolving and exit strategy is a dominant factor in these trends. This study explores the nature of exit strategy. It reviews the changes in the post-Cold War military and the evolution of exit strategy. The paper defines the types of exit strategy and establishes criteria for an effective strategy. It relies on current documents and case studies of various peace operations to examine exit strategy.

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# INTRODUCTION

Significant changes have occurred since the fall of the Soviet Union. Perhaps the most significant change, the post-Cold War emergence of the United States as the only superpower, has caused a paradigm shift resulting in the United States moving from a National Security Strategy of Containment during the Cold War to a strategy of Engagement and Enlargement. As the United States struggles to redefine its world role, pressures at home such as balancing the budget, reallocating resources, and public perceptions of the post-Cold War environment as a "no threat" environment have resulted in reduced funding for the military. However, economic linkage due to a global market place requires altering previous understandings and beliefs regarding what constitutes national interest. Natural disasters and regional conflicts in distant lands do affect the United States and require multi-national coalitions and interventions in order to prevent local problems from developing into international incidents. Small regional conflicts with little or no U.S. interest at stake often draw attention to prevent escalation to major wars. The continued involvement of the United State in international operations of this nature requires a re-examination of the military, its roles, and its involvement. Due to this transition in national interest and military responsibilities, exit strategy is emerging as a fundamental aspect of intervention planning. Increased multi-national coalitions or United Nations operations inevitably involve the United States. A transition of the roles and missions for the military is an outgrowth of these trends. Exit strategy is emerging as a fundamental aspect of intervention planning.

Doctrinal publications inadequately address the issue of exit strategy. A doctrinal void exist and there is no precise definition. Information for developing and executing an exit strategy is lacking. Joint Doctrine addresses conflict termination and post conflict

operations, but it fails to provide guidance for planning or executing an exit strategy.[1] FM 100-23, *Peace Operations*, refers to a transition to endstate. "The reference in FM 100-23 implies transition among military forces during an operation, or between military forces and outside civil agencies, such as the U.N."[2] Exit strategy as defined by Strednansky is "a plan to remove U.S. military combat forces once the endstate has been achieved." Another view is an environment so that "...the military instruments of power can give way to other instruments."[3] Benson and Thrash's definition is "The planned transition to the host nation(s) of all functions on its behalf by peace operations forces." Collectively the various definitions share a common theme of establishing clear objectives to achieve an endstate, a transition, and then military disengagement. Inherently exit strategy must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in strategic conditions that subsequently affect goals and objectives.

Developing an exit strategy is always difficult due to the uncertain nature of conflict. During a crisis situation, intervention issues are debated in the media while government and political leaders formulate policy. Decisions regarding operational planning must not only be made in accordance with political directives, but must also transform political goals into a viable operational plan which also includes the means to employ, the will to resolve the conflict, the time available for the operation, and the most expedient means to resolve the conflict. While intervention questions do converge with the operational plan, often little thought is given to exit strategy. Planning must define the endstate for an operation. The inherent relationship between an exit strategy and intervention requires no less. "A viable endstate, along with a strategy for termination and conflict exit, should drive the ways and means for the execution of the intervention."[4] Without an exit strategy and decisions "...about the limits of our involvement in those operations, we could find ourselves once again unable to recognize the desired endstate

when we reach it."[5] Coalition consensus must be attained as appropriate. Intense planning by government and military leaders prior to entering a conflict is the norm, but very little thought is devoted to a subsequent exit strategy.[6]

Often the urgency to act further complicates the planning process. In the race to develop a viable intervention strategy, the exit strategy is lost. Therefore, this study addresses the idea that exit strategy is a distinct and critical element of intervention planning and proposes that Joint Doctrine should be revised to include exit strategy as an essential element in the planning process. This study will examine exit strategy in depth as the new dimension in planning military operations. A review of the legacies of Vietnam and the Weinberger Doctrine along with a survey of post-Cold War military involvement provides both an evolutionary view of the emerging military role as well as insight for discussion. The central thesis of this paper is that an exit strategy is an integral dimension of intervention planning prior to or at the beginning of the conflict and remains so until operation termination. A review of different types of exit strategies with contrasting case studies of success and failure also broadens the study. Finally, the paper concludes with essential criteria for an exit strategy.

## THE LEGACY OF VIETNAM

"By God, we've kicked the Vietnam Syndrome once and for all!"[7] This declaration by President George Bush was delivered shortly after the decisive defeat of Iraq in the Persian Gulf War. In a radio address President Bush later stated, "The spectra of Vietnam has been buried forever in the desert sands of the Arabian peninsula."[8] The national obsession with "no more Vietnams" prompted President Bush on the eve of the ground war to state, "This will not be another Vietnam...Our troops will have the best possible support in the world and they will not be asked to fight with one hand tied behind their back."[9] The obsession was eased somewhat with the victory, but the influence of Vietnam lingers in military thinking. The victory restored confidence in the military and lessened opposition to future interventions. It failed though to erase the painful memories and bitter feelings of another distant war. Exit strategy in military planning is a firsthand example. Understanding the legacy of Vietnam is essential to formulating a successful exit strategy.

Vietnam continues to cast a long shadow in American foreign policy and the involvement of the United States military throughout the world. The public debate endures regarding the military's role. Many citizens remain confused and divided about national goals and how to attain them. Despite the success of Desert Storm the impact of the Vietnam Syndrome continues to be evident in the 1990's.

There is a strong sentiment to oppose military intervention abroad. The United States finds itself in a paradox of desiring world prominence but yet harboring vivid memories and abhorring a Vietnam-like quagmire anywhere in the world. The nation continues to struggle with the appropriate balance of military use in foreign policy.[10] The will to defend vital national interest has waned as Americans now question "national

interest." Events such as the demise of the Soviet Union, the Iranian Hostage Crisis, Somalia, Haiti, and the Persian Gulf War further complicate the issues as the United States sends mixed signals with its response to the different crises.

Another haunting aspect of the Vietnam Syndrome is the debate as to the reasons the United States failed in Vietnam. The principle arguments are that the "graduated response" by civilian leaders and the war of attrition fought by the military was the cause of failure. Still others argue that the military never enacted an appropriate counterinsurgency strategy in an unconventional war.[11] Many lesser arguments abound with their collateral issues. The resulting near consensus was to avoid intervention unless the nation's vital interest demanded action. Furthermore, there was a recognition of distinct limits to American power. It is interesting to note that exit strategy has not been addressed although it was the most dominant aspect of American involvement.

> The lessons drawn were as divergent as the arguments advanced. Those who felt the United States lost because it did not act decisively concluded that if a nation became involved in war again, it must employ its military power quickly and without limit to win before public support began to erode. Those who felt that the basic problem was the formulation rather than the execution of strategy insisted that military and civilian leaders must execute more carefully the nature of the war they were in and formulate more precisely the ways in which American power could best be used to attain clearly defined objectives.[12]

The intervention issue has spurned significant military and political thought since the end of Vietnam. Much has been written for decision makers considering military intervention but the same literature fails to discuss exit strategy. Former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger defined an intervention test in 1984.
The intervention model established criteria for intervention but neglected exit strategy. These principles known as the Weinberger Doctrine are:

1. The United States should not commit forces to combat overseas unless the particular engagement on occasion is deemed vital to our national interest or that of our allies.

2. If we decide it is necessary to put combat troops into a given situation, we should do so wholeheartedly, and with the clear intention of winning. If we are unwilling to commit the forces or resources necessary to achieve our objectives, we should not commit them at all.

3. If we do decide to commit forces to combat overseas, we should have clearly defined political and military objectives. And we should know precisely how our forces can accomplish those clearly defined objectives. And we should have, and send, the forces needed to do just that.

4. The relationship between our objectives and the forces committed...their size, composition and disposition...must be continually reassessed and adjusted if necessary.

5. Before the United States commits forces abroad, there must be some reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people and their elected representatives in Congress. This support cannot be achieved unless we are candid in making clear the threats we face; the support can not be sustained without continuing and close consultation.

6. The commitment of U.S. forces to combat should be the last resort.[13]

The Weinberger Doctrine strongly influenced the prosecution of the Persian Gulf War. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Colin Powell and General Norman Schwarzkopf, combat veterans of Vietnam and strong advocates for Weinberger, applied the fundamental premises relentlessly. Winning decisively with overwhelming force within a short duration while sustaining minimal casualties was the theme for Desert Storm.[14] The Cold War intervention test was validated in the Persian Gulf.

Some planners feel that the employment of military force in operations other than war negates the relevance of the Weinberger Doctrine. Post Cold-War strategic planners envision the increased use of U.S. military forces in complex international peace missions. The role of military force in foreign policy is an issue. Critic's argue that "...the assumptions behind the Weinberger Doctrine, already questionable at the time of its creation, are now essentially invalid and distort potentially meaningful resolution of any debate on U.S. intervention policy."[15] Intervention principles, however, have a strong relationship to exit strategy as the two concepts are interdependent. Comprehension of the Weinberger Doctrine only facilitates understanding the "cause and effect" relationship between intervention and exit strategy. The seemingly rigid standards of Weinberger are indeed adaptable to operations other than war. It offers a previously undefined base line for decision makers who must then exercise reasonable judgment for intervention decisions.

Secretary of State George Shultz considered the Weinberger Doctrine as restrictive and limiting for U.S. political-military efforts. Debates between Secretaries Weinberger and Shultz raged during the 1980's. Shultz insisted on prudent involvement while Weinberger advocated the cautious and calculated use of military force. "This difference of views, seen by some as disruptive and disharmonious, has served to guide and direct the evolution of U.S. national security policy to the present." [16] Weinberger prevailed and emerged triumphant in that the doctrine continues to dominate U.S. military intervention policy. Secretary Shultz argued that the employment of armed forces in areas short of "vital" national interest is sometimes a legitimate requirement. He too neglected discussing exit strategy but supported the use of force when: It helps liberate a people or support the yearning for freedom; its aim is to bring peace or to support peaceful processes; it prevents others from abusing their power through

aggression or oppression; and it is applied with the greatest effort to avoid unnecessary casualties.[17]

Former President George Bush advocated the use of military force to complement diplomacy. In a January, 1993 speech to the cadets at West Point he identified his principles for using military power. His view closely favored an abstract of Weinberger's. He stated:

> In the complex world we are entering there can be no simple set of fixed rules for using force. Inevitably, the question of military intervention requires *judgment*. Each and every case is unique...But to warn against a futile quest for a set of hard and fast rules to govern the use of military force is not to say there can not be some principles to inform our decisions... Using force makes sense as a policy where the stakes warrant, where and when force can be effective, where no other policies are likely to prove effective , where its application can be limited in scope and time, and when the potential benefits justify the potential cost and sacrifice.[18]

The Clinton Administration in 1994 drafted Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25 to establish factors for determining whether to support multi-national peace operations. The PDD 25 document considers the difficult question of whether the proposed operation could succeed without U.S. support. PDD 25 further demands consideration of resource requirements, logistical capabilities, and political will.[19] Key concepts of the directive include well-defined objectives, an established endpoint, command and control relationships, and the advancement of U.S. interest. Again there is a close resemblance to Weinberger's principles. The guidance expands previous thought by stating that an operation "...should not be open-ended,...should have a specified time frame tied to intermediate or final objectives." Exit strategy is not addresses beyond establishing a conflict termination timeline.[20]

Hans Mark, former Secretary of the Air Force, devised another set of criteria for military intervention. Recognition of the direct relationship between intervention

planning and exit strategy are central to his thoughts. His post-Cold War paper addressed two previously unmentioned intervention criteria. These included establishing a success (victory) criteria and developing an exit strategy. He emphatically states "an exit strategy must be developed" once a decision is made for military intervention. The liberation of Kuwait and the defeat of the Iraqi military were cited as examples of achieving the "success criteria" and effecting an exit strategy. He questions, "Having intervened, how does a coalition or how does the United States get out of the situation?" [21]

The legacy of Vietnam and the Weinberger Doctrine continue to influence and dominate post-Cold War decision making. Evidence of the Vietnam syndrome and the Weinberger Doctrine permeate foreign policy, military intervention planning, and exit strategy in operations from Grenada to Bosnia. Its significance can not simply be ignored.

## POST-COLD WAR MILITARY

Fundamental changes are occurring in the post-Cold War military. The Army is confronted with downsizing and restructuring during a period of increased operational commitments. The consequences of these changes profoundly influence intervention planning and subsequently exit strategy. Force structure has declined from 18 divisions to 10 divisions and the Army's budget during draw down has decreased by over 40%. A global redistribution of U.S. military forces reflects a significant decrease of personnel deployed abroad. For example, military personnel in Europe has decreased from approximately 300,000 to a presence of about 100,000.[22] In addition the Army's role has changed focus from one prepared to defeat a known threat in a specific theater. The Army must now be "capable of being continually engaged in many operations involving many different missions around the world."[23] An "adaptive" military that can cope with a broad spectrum of operational contingencies from regional conflicts like Desert Storm to operations other than war is now the standard.

The emphasis is primarily military operations other than war such as humanitarian operations and peace operations. Intervention is predicated by arguments "to stop the human suffering, feed the hungry, or bring order out of chaos." Politics and economic criteria drive the use of the military instrument of power in humanitarian operations. The United States may find itself involved in ethnic and tribal issues with no vital interest and little or nothing to be gained from involvement.[24] Developing a workable exit strategy under these complex conditions is even more difficult than during conventional warfare between nation states with established governments. In addition, the Army must also sustain its core competency to fight and win while conducting military operations other than war.

Most of the change to date is a consequence of downsizing the military's Cold War force structure. The formal design and organizational structure has not changed significantly. The congressional mandated Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) began in January, 1997 for the purpose of reassessing defense policy. The review focuses on the military's roles and missions for the next century. Force structure dominates the discussion as planners attempt to determine the proper size, cost, capability, and configuration of the military while also anticipating the future use of such forces.[25] The Quadrennial Defense Review decisions will affect future intervention planning and exit strategy.

The role of the reserve components in the force structure is also subject to debate. The Army National Guard and the Army Reserve augment the active component with approximately 600,000 personnel. Many planners advocate the use of the reserve components as the primary military instrument for peace operations. Active component responsibility would center on the war fighting mission and the reserve components would accept the burden of peace operations. A greater dependence on the reserve components is a growing trend. The reserve components have the capability to provide military police, civil affairs, medical, and engineer units for peace operations. A comprehensive examination under the QDR process promises to alter the old paradigms of the Cold War.[26]

Another change is that operational tempo has increased dramatically during the post-Cold War era. This is due to the elimination of several constraints. The Cold War limited the use of military forces except in areas of vital national interest to avoid triggering opposition from Soviet-backed forces. Secondly, the superpowers simply could not allow small conflicts to escalate to a major war. Finally large military forces pursuing a nonvital interest could jeopardize the reinforcement of other forces.

Consequently, the military has conducted nearly 40 operations since Desert Storm. There are currently 11 operations ongoing that directly involve 50,000 military personnel.[27]

Senior Army leaders have expressed concern that the frequent deployments and the increased operational pace may affect retention of quality soldiers. General Dennis J. Reimer, Chief of Staff, states that quality soldiers are a precious resource and deserve the quality of life and stability promised. In testimony before the national security subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, he indicated that the time is drawing near when the operational tempo becomes a retention issue. Secretary of the Army Togo West noted that during the past year more than 100,000 soldiers were stationed overseas with 35,000 deployed from their home bases in more than 70 countries.[28]

The deployment of Army soldiers since the end of the Cold War has increased 300%. The size of the force has declined 35% during this period and "nearly 25% of the operational Army (120,000 out of 495,000) is forward deployed or operationally engaged right now." During the period from 1950-1989 the Army conducted 10 deployments over almost 40 years. This is a distinct contrast to the period since 1990 with the Army executing 25 deployments in six years. It is also significant that the Army's role includes a wider variety of missions in a greater number of places than ever before.[29]

These deployments often meet a unique multi-faceted threat with a variety of inherent dangers and hazards. The missions are complicated further by attempting to determine the proper size of the force for the complexity of the task. The increase in the number of operations and the frequency in which they occur strains heavily the downsized Army. Intervention planning and exit strategy are directly impacted by the post-Cold War military posture.

## EXIT STRATEGY

Exit Strategies vary according to the military operations conducted and the existing and emerging strategic conditions. These strategies may be categorized according to the trigger that initiates the action. Exit strategies thus may be defined as event-oriented, time-oriented, mission-oriented, or as an operational composite.[30] Somalia is an example of an event-oriented exit strategy. Mission-oriented exit strategies include Panama, Grenada, and the Persian Gulf War. Haiti is a prime example of an operational composite by combining two or more strategies to effect an exit. The decision for a deployment of one year to Bosnia is obviously time-oriented. To better understand exit strategy it is helpful to compare and contrast the past and current strategies employed. A review of the success or failure of a particular strategy contributes to the study.

### Time-oriented

The duration of a military deployment is often the central issue for debate for Congress and the American public. The length of U.S. intervention is sometimes predicated by the calendar rather than its mission effectiveness. An exit strategy devised to accommodate a time frame may be defined as time-oriented. Established time limits for a military presence are often counterproductive. The announcement of an intended early departure of military forces during the initial phases of an operation severely limits military options. Meaningful political agreements and the accomplishment of complex humanitarian missions are often the casualty of a time-oriented exit strategy. "In Somalia, the warlords, especially Aideed, were as interested in seeing the departure of the

U.S.-led forces as were its commanders. There was little to be gained in attacking openly a military force that had announced at the outset its desire for an early and clean departure."[31] Subsequent events quickly altered the exit strategy for Somalia and it became an event-oriented exit.

The most notable example of a time-oriented exit strategy involves the United State's presence in Bosnia. Despite the success of the Persian Gulf War, emotional debates raged over possible military intervention in the ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. The bitter memories of Vietnam surfaced as public polls indicated many Americans feared involvement regardless of the atrocities. The American public perceived a quagmire without an exit. Prominent Vietnam veteran senators such as John McCain and Hank Brown expressed deep concern. Presidential advisors also cautioned President Clinton "...that intervention in Bosnia might be political death for him as Vietnam had been for Lyndon Johnson." [32]

The signing of the Dayton Peace Accord in late 1995 by the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims mandated a NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) under Operation Joint Endeavor. The decision for military intervention had been made. A force was deployed and included 20,000 Americans. The mission was to provide a credible deterrent to maintain a secure environment and regional stability. The intent was to separate warring factions to allow regional elections and begin rebuilding the country's infrastructure.[33] The announced goal was the withdrawal of all U.S. military personnel by December 20, 1996 thus fixing a one-year time limit for the Operation Joint Endeavor. The one-year time limit was only a precursor to a subtle evolving time-oriented exit strategy.

> For a number of important reasons, setting such a constraint initially was a good idea. Foremost, the firm deadline avoided the impression of an open-ended NATO and IFOR commitment, and it quickly set a benchmark, forcing factions to resolve issues rather than allowing IFOR and international organizations to carry the burden of implementing the peace. This approach also compelled the entities to collaborate quickly, establishing precedents for future cooperation. It additionally pressured the parties to establish government institutions and processes that will contribute to a sense of normalcy that, hopefully, will accelerate the healing process. Finally, a strict time limit required the international community to act rapidly to assist in restoring Bosnian society.[34] Rumors of an extended deployment began to circulate in April, 1996.

Former Secretary of Defense William Perry's statements indicated that "most" forces would "probably" be out of Bosnia in early 1997.[35] This prompted Congress to demand of the Pentagon a clear exit strategy. Deputy Defense Secretary John White assured the House National Security Committee in September that the IFOR mission would be completed and that the forces would be withdrawn on schedule. Secretary White did concede, however, the possibility of a "follow-on force" if deemed necessary. Various options included: 1) retention of an IFOR contingent, 2) total withdrawal, 3) establishment of a sustainment force, 4) a deterrence force with force inside or outside Bosnia.[36] It was apparent by now that a primary weakness of a time-oriented exit strategy was evident. Government and military planners have great difficulty accurately projecting future conditions. Furthermore, a time-oriented exit strategy must often be revisited to met the current situation.

General George Joulan, commander of U.S. Forces in Europe as well as NATO's supreme commander, also stated in September that he was ready to begin a new operation in Bosnia. General Joulan declared that the politicians have yet to give him clear and unambiguous directions on what they expect troops to accomplish in Bosnia after the

current mandate ends Dec. 20, 1996.[37] He said that he must know the mission's objective, another critical aspect of exit strategy.

Former Defense Secretary William Perry on October 26, 1996 stated "press reports that the United States already is preparing to send ground troops to Bosnia for another year is wrong." General John M. Shalikashvili echoed the same ideas by saying that no decision as to the size or shape of a future American force has been made. He further indicated that his recommendations would depend on NATO's analysis of Bosnia.[38]

Later it was announced that a new 7,500 troop "covering force" would deploy from Germany to Bosnia. The "covering force" was tasked to provide protection for U.S. personnel while closing up the camps utilized during the Bosnian operations. The issue of an extended "follow-on force" remained undecided and was further complicated by the continued postponement of local elections. The Bosnian elections considered essential to stabilize the country were a premise for the initial U.S. intervention.[39] The long term implication though was an extended deployment.

The formal announcement was made in December that a Stabilization Force (SFOR) was committed to staying in the former Yugoslavia for 18 months. This was the anticipated "follow-on force." The clearly defined exit strategy requested by Congress last April failed to materialize. The time-oriented exit strategy for Bosnia was simply extended to a new time frame. Again the inability to adequately forecast requirements in complex peacekeeping operations snared a timely exit. A re-examination of the Bosnian state in light of existing and emerging strategic conditions initiated the decision to extend the deployment.

In February, 1997 newly appointed Defense Secretary William Cohen emphasized during his confirmation hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee that U.S.

forces will leave Bosnia at the end of the 18 month tour. He acknowledged that setting a deadline is not advisable in most cases, but that it sends a message that the United States is not making an unlimited commitment. He denied that this was an exit strategy, but rather an indication that an indefinite deployment was not forthcoming.[40] Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott indicted that Congress would deny funds for another extension and stated, "...Secretary Cohen has taken a firm stand on this issue, and I expect he will hold the administration to his commitment."[41] Thus the debate continues about Bosnia as Congress continues to assert its influence in determining the appropriate exit strategy.

The ambitious agenda and the challenges of Bosnia-Hercegovina problem were too great to be accomplished in the allotted time frame. Success has been achieved in creating a safe, stable, and secure environment, but the political process will be slow and difficult. Major tasks remaining include holding elections and turning the results into viable government institutions. Restoration of the infrastructure such as roads and bridges must be completed. Economic recovery and rebuilding local economies must continue to provide employment along with the free flow of commerce. The return and resettlement of an estimated two million refugees dislocated by four years of war will afford additional stability for the country. The negotiation and implementation of arms control agreements must limit the potential for an arms race by various factions. Finally, the arbitration of the strategic terrain in the Posavina Corridor and the city of Brcko must commence with a suitable agreement implemented.[42]

Much remains to be accomplished for a lasting political settlement that provides stability in the region. "The underlying problems in Bosnia are essentially political, economic, and social in nature; military power alone can not lead to an ending political solution."[43] U.S. national objectives and interest must be the basis for decisions affecting

United States participation rather than a rigid timetable. Thus, the omission of exit strategy in doctrine generates several questions. Does the United States have an exit strategy for Bosnia? Is the proper strategy in place? Should the exit strategy be changed or modified? Are U.S. forces adhering to a planned exit strategy? These questions and others indicate the sensitivity of the issue. Exit strategy must become an integral dimension of intervention planning.

## Mission-oriented

A mission-oriented exit strategy is characterized by the accomplishment of defined goals and objectives. The invasion of Grenada, a small Caribbean island, is one example. Operation Urgent Fury in October, 1983 was a response to civil chaos following the assassinations of Marxist Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. The use of armed force was justified to counter the threat to regional security and also to protect the lives of American citizens. The disruption of a Soviet-Cuban attempt to transition the island into a military base was successful.[44] "Among the 35,000 pounds of documents seized...were five secret military agreements detailing the extent and nature of Soviet, Cuban, and North Korean support. These documents disclosed unequivocally the Socialist division of labor by which Grenada was subverted, manipulated, and ruled."[45] Grenada proved that clearly defined goals and objectives allow effective and rapid response to protect U.S. interest. The United States achieved its main objective of eliminating a Marxist regime and consequently raised the risk and cost for Soviet and Cuban exploitation.[46]

Intervention in Panama during Operation Just Cause was also conducted within set goals and objectives. The stated objectives were to depose General Manual Noriega,

eliminate the Panama Defense Force, establish civil government under the democratically elected President Guillermo Endara, and build a security force. The Panama Defense Force was subdued in two days with an intense and rapid engagement.[47] General Manual Noriega was arrested, extradited, and the new government began to function. The achievement of the clearly defined goals resulted in the desired endstate and allowed the exit of U.S. forces. General Colin Powell later explained, "The lessons I absorbed from Panama confirmed all my convictions over the preceding twenty years, since the days of doubt over Vietnam. Have a clear political objective and stick with it. Use all the force necessary....Decisive force wins wars quickly and in the long run saves lives."[48] This reflective insight was clearly a vision for the future.

Regardless of the military success in Panama, the United States was not adequately prepared for the postconflict nation building efforts. Richard Shultz states, "Looking back on the experience in Panama, it is evident that the U.S. government was programmatically and structurally ill equipped for the situation that followed the fighting." [49] He identified a lack of clear postconfict objectives, exclusion of civilian agencies in the planning process, a lack of experienced personnel for restoration, and the failure to comprehend the impact of authoritarian rule as factors contributing to the problem. He explained, "There was no integrated strategy for supporting nation building and democratization in Panama following Just Cause."[50] Panama demonstrated that nation building is a legitimate aspect of a military intervention as validated by subsequent operations in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia.

Exit strategy for the Persian Gulf War was also mission-oriented. The large scale conventional warfare in Iraq demonstrated that a defined endstate may be achieved with clear objectives and goals. "Unfortunately, the techniques that provided such a startling and clear-cut victory in the Gulf are largely inappropriate for application in the most

prevalent forms of currrent U.S. military involvement: complex humanitarian operations and participation in peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations."[51] The missions of evicting Iraq from Kuwait, defeating the Republican Guard, and restoring the international borders were accomplished. Critics assert that the "ghost of Vietnam" constrained President George Bush from seeking total victory by stopping short of Baghdad. They contend that President Bush feared a long term military involvement and the enduring political consequences.[52] A more plausible explanation is that military advisors cautioned against "mission creep" by refusing to change the planned endstate.

The mission-oriented exit strategies of Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf were all deemed successful. The operations differed substantially with varied environments, threats, social, economic, and political conditions. The successes were a result of several factors. U.S. national interest was defined and supported by the American public. The operations were conducted with overwhelming force in a short time frame while incurring minimal casualties. Clearly defined goals and objectives lead to a predetermined endstate thus avoiding "mission creep". In addition, each operation maintained the integrity of the individual country's borders and allowed a transition to viable governments.

## Event-oriented

The occurrence of a significant event often triggers an exit strategy. Somalia is such an example. The initial time-oriented exit strategy for Somalia quickly changed to an event-oriented exit. There was little opposition initially from the American public for a humanitarian relief to war-torn Somalia. The tolerance for American casualties suddenly evaporated with the loss of thirty U.S. soldier's lives and 175 wounded. The

idea of "wasting" American lives prompted calls for U.S. withdrawal. Former JCS Chairman General Colin Powell reminded the President that democracy was no substitute for hundreds of years of tribalism and warned that the United States find a way to "...get out, and soon."[53] "Warnings about the dangers of incrementalism resonated of Vietnam. Calling Somalia a 'true child of Vietnam' liberal *New York Times* columnist Anna Quindlen warned that once again, as in Vietnam, the United States had underestimated local nationalism and that once again, American soldiers were caught in an alien political culture expecting appreciation for their good works and getting shot at instead." [54] Fearing another Vietnam and heeding political pressue, President Clinton responded with an accelerated unilateral withdrawal of military forces. Once again the nation was haunted by the ghost purportedly expunged by Desert Storm. The greater lesson was the substantial price paid to determine that Somalia was not a vital interest.

This is in sharp contrast to the truck-bomb deaths at Khobar Towers. The June, 1996 terrorist bombing that killed 19 airmen in Dhahran, Saudia Arabia provoked a different response. This event did not set off demands for U.S. withdrawal. Instead the United States increased security, dispersed and relocated troop billeting, and implemented additional force protection measures. An event alone is not adequate to force exit. National interest determines the ensuing action and is commonly equated as to whether the anticipated benefits justify the potential sacrifices and the associated cost. The gauge is often the willingness of the American public to accept casualties.

An analysis of the Somalia intervention provides additional insight into the mission failure. Muhammad Siad Barre, Somalia's ruler, was overthrown at the end of the Cold War. Rival warlords began a civil war as the government failed. A major consequence of the war was the inability of farmers to plant crops and the killing of livestock by the rival militias. In August, 1992 President George Bush authorized the

airlift of food to Somalia to lessen the suffering. The mission escalated incrementally from food delivery to airlift support of multinational troops. As the security situation deteriorated with attacks on food conveys and incoming aircraft, the deployment of U.S. ground forces became inevitable. The mission Operation Restore Hope in December, 1992 was for U.S. ground troops to provide security in humanitarian relief operations and distribute food. The U.N. mandate specified peace enforcement with implicit missions of humanitarian assistance and the restoration of order. Both missions suggested the disarmament of the warring factions.[55] The operation was now driven by imprecise and fluid objectives leading to "mission creep."

United States forces began to withdraw and turn the mission over to multinational forces. The operation then became the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) II and the mission changed from one of humanitarian relief. The new mission was to rebuild Somalia's political and economic structures. The United States argued that the mission was not one of nation building, but none the less the operation reverted to United Nations control. The sought after "safe environment" expanded from the confines of the Mogadishu airport to the entire country. As the forces withdrew the warlords reignited the power struggle and killing.

This soon lead to attempts to capture General Mohammed Farah Aidid, the country"s principal warlord. The ambush and deaths of 18 rangers in the streets of Mogadishu and the television footage of an American pilot being dragged through the streets captured the attention of American citizens. The ambush was the major event that triggered the exit strategy. Unilateral withdrawal began because the political situation was untenable. In 1995 the United Nations also acknowledged failure and suspended the peace-keeping effort. "The critical downfall of the Somalia operation was that the international peace-keepers, initially dispatched for the humanitarian purpose of feeding

the people, ignored the political solution that had created the hunger in the first place. The hunger had not stemmed from a natural disaster; it was man-made." [56] Resolution of the political problem was essential to resolving the humanitarian crisis.

"The failure of the initial U.S. strategic political vision condemned the Somali operation to certain failure. The idea that a substantial military force can occupy portions of a country in anarchy without affecting the local political situation is a chimera." Humanitarian intervention implies two inherent political task: maintaining the integrity of the challenged country's borders and building a government where it is absent. The outcome was a failure to build a viable political process "to prevent the return of politically induced starvation."[57] The restoration of civil society was ultimately the responsibility of the Somalian people. Military intervention was only the catalyst for a return to normalcy.[58]

No viable government exist in Somalia today. The level of violence has not diminished and clashes between the warlords continue. Aideed proclaims himself president while his loyal armed militiamen patrol the streets. The country continues to linger on the brink of civil war. The widespread hunger, however, has abated to a degree as the people of Somalia harvest the largest crops in recent history.[59]

Somalia may be judged as a failure for humanitarian relief efforts. There are many lessons for formulating and executing an exit strategy from this intervention. It clearly demonstrates that the American public will readily drive an exit strategy when there is a limited U.S. commitment. Another lesson is that exit strategy may be hindered by "mission creep" as the changing nature of the mission alters the strategy. The force structure was not adapted or adjusted sufficiently to accept mission changes. Furthermore, "...the political objectives were too broad and kept changing which made the difficult task of developing a viable exit strategy based on accomplished goals

virtually impossible."[60] The lack of an infrastructure and a viable government also delayed the implementation of an exit strategy. Additional lessons reflected that broad mission statements with several implied task complicate exit planning. Multiple chains of command and disagreement by political and military leaders of a coalition further complicate the issues. Another significant lesson is the difficulty of withdrawing from a coalition effort because of the reliance on U.S. resources such as airlift and manpower. Finally, an ill defined endstate makes a timely exit impossible.

## Operational-Composite

An exit strategy may be defined as an operational-composite if two or more strategies are employed in the exit process. The U.S. intervention in Haiti qualifies for this definition. The exit strategy was a time-oriented, event-oriented, and to a limited degree mission-oriented mix. A 1991 coup had allowed Lieutentant General Raoul Cedras to take power in Haiti. The primary purpose of the intervention was to restore democracy and allow the legally elected president, Reverend Jean-Bertrand Aristide to assume office while ousting Cedras. Additional international and domestic issues supporting intervention included the increased drug trafficking in the area, the constant flood of Haitian refugees to the United States, and the political demands for action from the Congressional Black Caucus. "The current U.S. national foreign policy of fostering new democracies to help promote new markets for economic growth as well as supporting people's rights was highlighted as significant, because Haiti was one of a few countries in the Western Hemisphere where the population was denied democratic government and human rights were violated on a daily basis."[61] These problems culminated with Operation Uphold Democracy and the occupation of the Port-au-Prince

airport by the U.S. military in September, 1994. Hostile action was avoided as a permissive entry into the country had been negotiated by former President Jimmy Carter and retired General Colin Powell.

An inherently weak infrastructure in Haiti included feeble governmental entities such as the police force and fragile judicial systems. Decrepit water and sewer treatment facilities and the lack of other modern systems necessitated a process of nation-building. Therefore, the military endstate was to establish a normal peaceful environment for the Haitian people and then exit for the United Nation's operation. The more difficult long term political endstate of achieving democracy and protecting human rights was relegated to the United Nations.

John F. Christiansen, director of the Haiti Task Force in the Office of the Secretary of Defense confirmed that exit planning began in advance of the operation. He stated that the task force members often discussed "how we are going to leave." The exit strategy was predicated on a quickly executed operation with limited objectives and an early withdrawal of U.S. forces to avoid the "mission creep" of Somalia. The avoidance of a nation-building mission was critical to the planned strategy. It was characterized by a defined endstate and a pre-planned exit strategy at the beginning of the operation. Military and civilian planners blended the political and military objectives to gain the desired exit strategy.[62]

A major issue for the planners was determining the measures of effectiveness or measures of success of the operation. It is difficult to assess progress toward objectives in peace operations such as Haiti and Somalia. The success (victory) criteria discussed by Hans Mark must be defined. There must be a quantifiable, plausible, and reliable means to weigh milestones toward the objectives in peace operations. Successful exit strategy hinges on the ability to adequately track attainment of operational objectives.[63]

The time-oriented exit was set for 29 February 1996 in accordance with the planned end of the United Nations mandate. In January, 1995, Joint Task Force (JTF) 190, the regional Multi-National Force (MNF), assumed control of operations in Haiti. Subsequently, the MNF relinquished responsibility to the U.N. Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) on 31 March 1995. The initial phase of the pre-determined exit strategy began with the U.S. military reducing its forces from 22,000 to 2,400. The residual force was the U.S. contingent for the U.N. Mission in Haiti.

Four significant events were identified to initiate the event-oriented exit phase. All of these events would occur prior to the transfer of responsibility to the government of Haiti. The events were: 1) the need to maintain patrol activity, 2) the Haitian presidential election, 3) Inauguration of the new president on 7 February 1996, 4) the Pre-Lenten Carnival between 17-20 February 1996. Thus an operational-composite strategy resulted as patrol reductions tied to a calendar were infeasible and offered no flexibility. Also, an "event pure" strategy relied on an untenable assumption that the government of Haiti would be "fully capable" by the 29 February 1996 time line.[64] The complex and difficult exit strategy for Haiti was an operational-composite with a time-oriented, event-oriented, mission-accomplishment mix.

Operation Uphold Democracy may be declared a limited success. The United States planned and executed a limited intervention with a pre-determined exit strategy. Success was achieved in returning a democratically elected president to power. The serious refugee problem of Haitian "boat people" fleeing poverty and political persecution has abated. Violence, however, continues to rage and threatens stability in the country. Economic recovery has not proceeded as quickly as anticipated and crime is increasing. Much work remains to be accomplished in the political, economic, cultural, and social arenas. The Haitian people must ultimately determine the country's direction and their destiny.[65]

## EXIT STRATEGY CRITERIA

Developing a viable exit strategy is a difficult process. It encompasses translating intangible endstate goals into quantifiable military objectives in an ever changing environment of uncertainty. Political constraints and restraints weigh heavily in the process. Several fundamental elements are essential for the execution of a successful exit strategy. These are common threads that in varying degrees define the strategy. The factors listed in this study are not all-inclusive, but are none the less significant.

Clearly defined goals and objectives are a critical component of exit strategy. Vietnam vividly demonstrated the importance of this dimension. Post-Vietnam military interventions have also proven the criticality with various degrees of success and failure. Secretary Weinberger recognized its significance by declaring it as a major cornerstone in his doctrine. Subsequent political and military writers have also included clearly defined goals and objectives as a primary factor in intervention planning. It is essential that goals and objectives are established in order to achieve the desired endstate. Without a clear understanding of the objectives, the military can not work toward the endstate and eventually an exit. It must be noted though that the uncertain nature of conflict often compels planners to alter goals and objectives. Exit strategy must be flexible and adaptable to accommodate these changes.

The goals and objectives are a path to the endstate. Endstate may be defined "...as a clear and concise description of required conditions that, when achieved, will accomplish the national strategic objectives." [66] The endstate must be precisely defined to avoid open-ended involvement and "mission creep." It is essential that political and military planners "define the endstate and develop the accompanying exit strategy prior to the beginning of the conflict."[67] For example, the endstate for the Somalia operations

was never defined. Although an endstate alone will not assure success nor prevent failure it is an integral aspect of exit strategy.

The ways and means of successfully prosecuting a conflict are dependent on a well defined endstate that is determined by precise goals and objectives. The current deployment to Bosnia is an example of the difficulty in attaining the required integration. The military is challenged to properly employ the armed forces effectively in Bosnia and yet concurrently develop a viable strategy to leave. Another consideration is that the perceived endstate often differs for the various actors. The United States may seek stability in the Balkans while the people of Bosnia chart a different course. This is further complicated as conditions within a country change. Once again a failure in Somalia was that force structure, the equipment required for the task, and the goals and objectives did not track the change in mission and the nature of the involvement. A continuing assessment of progress toward the objectives allows for revision of the endstate as necessary.

Therefore a criteria for success or a measure of effectiveness is another integral aspect of exit strategy. Benson and Thrash indicated that for Haiti key decisions involved selecting a method of wargaming and then defining the evaluation criteria. Wargaming was used to compare courses of action and to anticipate actions, reactions, and counteractions during the operation. The utilization of a decision matrix was a useful tool for gauging the progress of executing the exit strategy for Haiti.[68] Regardless of the techniques employed, it is necessary to assess frequently the effectiveness of the strategy. This is the only way for goals and objectives to be translated into the desired endstate.

Mission accomplishment is the optimal desire of political and military planners and is a vital component of exit strategy. Once achieved it is the culminating event that brings a military intervention to closure. Inherent in operations other than war is the

requirement to translate the desired endstate into military strategy. "Strategy targets success, and when one develops a strategy one implies victory." The "all or nothing" approach is often inappropriate for humanitarian and peace operations since the very nature of such operations precludes decisive victory in the traditional manner. Consequently, political and military leaders must not categorize such operations as either a success or a failure. In addition, "...part of this strategy must include an understanding of when and how to leave the conflict."[69]

Military leaders have an aversion for termination of an operation prior to accomplishing the established goals. There is a latent fear that a withdrawal by the United States short of achieving its objectives, even in cases with minimal U.S. interest, will have long-term implications. It is argued that such action would cost the United States credibility and prestige in the world. Concern that other countries will question the U.S. commitment and refuse to support future operations haunts planners. There is a further concern that withdrawal indicates weakness by not achieving a decisive outcome.[70] History indicates that few nations lose credibility when acting in their own interest. The reluctance of the United States to extricate itself from Vietnam was costly, but leaving Somalia was of no consequence. "All too often our priorities are set according to the success or failure of any given situation. National interest should be stable and should not be reinterpreted situationally."[71] It is apparent that the world recognizes national interest and judges accordingly. Operations other than war differ substantially from conventional war and the United States should be willing to withdraw once the cost outweighs the benefits. Mission accomplishment must be properly framed within the context of the operation.

A stable infrastructure within a country is yet another essential criteria for exit. Intervention inevitably carries the political task of "...guaranteeing the borders of the

country under challenge and constructing an apparatus of government where it is absent."[72] Grenada, Panama, and Haiti all shared border integrity and a limited, but fragile governmental base to build a viable society. Somalia and Bosnia, however, required extensive nation-building efforts. A strong judicial system augmented by civilian police encourages stability and fosters economic development. Exit strategy is largely dependent on the restoration of roads, bridges and schools along with the rebuilding of the economic infrastructure. Stable, secure, and functioning governmental institutions are a prerequisite for the departure of U.S. forces.

Force protection is a priority for any exit strategy. The experience of the United States in Somalia only increased the awareness of this criteria. Major General Joseph W. Kinzer, the force commander in Haiti, established his priorities as force protection, safety, and mission accomplishment.[73] A major challenge of Bosnia-Hercegovina is to halt the conflict and bring stability to the region while simultaneously protecting U.S. forces. The SFOR currently is tasked to provide sufficient military capability to deter factions from violence, provide rapid response
to breaches of the ceasefire, provide reconnaissance, and to ensure force protection.

Adequate logistical support is another key component of exit strategy. Logistical support like force protection is an ongoing process that continues after conflict termination. Unfortunately many planners disregard the importance of this component. Equipment recovery, repair, and maintenance from the Persian Gulf War continued for approximately18 months after the cessation of hostilities. Other operations share a similar history for logistical efforts. A deliberate and carefully executed plan for logistical support is necessary for the total intervention-exit cycle.

There are many varied criteria for exit strategy to include: clearly defined goals and objectives, a defined endstate, a measure of effectiveness, mission accomplishment, a

stable infrastructure, force protection, and adequate logistical support. Additional factors may be included as this listing is not all inclusive. The criteria identified are primary, however, and are intrinsic in successful exit strategies. Each of these factors contribute significantly to the task of translating intangible endstate goals into quantifiable military objectives for a viable exit strategy.

# CONCLUSIONS

The post-Cold War reverberates with armed conflict and humanitarian crises. Conflicts and crises grounded in ethnic, religious, racial, political, and economic ideologies abound. Stabilization around the globe remains an elusive objective. Natural disasters, failed states, armed conflicts, and humanitarian crises compel the United States to engage their military in operations with parameters, objectives, and goals differing from the traditional methodology of warfare. A shift has emerged from the traditional war-fighting roles for the military. Therefore an evolution in strategic policy and military doctrine is required and is occurring.

The nature of the threat, force structure, roles and missions, and operational tempo have changed significantly since the fall of the Berlin Wall. The legacy of Vietnam, the Weinberger Doctrine, and the military successes in the Persian Gulf War all provided a cornerstone for the new evolving roles and doctrine. Critical to the success and continued well-being of the military is a re-examination of doctrinal principles and operational methodology. Exit strategy is an important element that has been consistently ignored or omitted in this ever changing process. Exit strategy has not been included in military doctrine despite the need to support military operations in the varying world situations. Therefore, another conclusion of this study is that exit strategy must become a doctrinal principle.

While the impetus for the changing role of the military is driven by the on-going use of the military for operations other than war, there is also a change in the nature of the military threat to the United States. The change in the force structure and the tempo of military operations further drives the need for revision and re-examination of military roles, operations, and doctrine. Force structure will continue to decline while the

operational tempo increases. The threat then becomes the most fixed of all variables. Thus a revision of roles and missions for the active military as well as the reserve components is inevitable.

A review of exit strategy in military interventions since Grenada indicates varying degrees of success and failure. The strategies employed differ for each particular operation. It is apparent that the strategies are distinctively event-oriented, time-oriented, mission-oriented, or an operational-composite based on the initiating trigger. Each strategy is characterized by a process of establishing objectives, achieving an endstate, transition from a military presence, and finally disengagement. Consequently, planning of exit strategy must begin simultaneously with intervention planning and continue to the post-operation period.

While criteria for exit strategy are diverse and varied, several fundamental standards may be applied regardless of the particular strategy employed. These components are: clearly defined goals and objectives, a defined endstate, a measure of effectiveness, mission accomplishment, a stable infrastructure, force protection, and adequate logistical support. A viable exit strategy is dependent on intangible endstate goals being translated into quantifiable military objectives supported by these criteria.

The world has changed profoundly in the post-Cold War era. The global leadership of the United States as the world's only superpower requires that the challenges of the 21st Century are met. Exit strategy is a crucial underpinning of the current National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement. Consequently, the U.S. Army must respond with the ability to breech the spectrum from peacekeeping to war-fighting.

# ENDNOTES

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