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**Operational Reasoning: The Overlooked Aspect of
Operational Art In Peace Operations**

By

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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15. Abstract: With the American revolution as the precedent, one might surmise an equal affinity in the military for missions ranging from war to MOOTW. Yet MOOTW and peace operations are viewed as second rate missions. The system of joint doctrine, training and education focuses on war, particularly in the operational art area. But, the complexity of MOOTW is significantly different from war. Peace operations require conceptual knowledge of political, social, economic and other intangible factors that contribute to the operational environment. The new concept, "operational reasoning" incorporates empirical and conceptual knowledge with analysis and synthesis to lead to situational understanding. Situational understanding and operations area conceptualization are required for commanders to employ the correct forces, and make the right decisions at the right times. Incorporation of operational reasoning as part of a unique operational art for peace operations will alleviate the systemic planning and execution problems that have occurred over many previous MOOTW.			
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ABSTRACT

Operational Reasoning: The Overlooked Aspect of Operational Art in Peace Operations

With the American Revolution serving as the precedent, one might surmise development of an equal affinity within the American military for missions ranging from full-scale war to what we today call “Military Operations Other Than War” (MOOTW). Yet, the pervasive military attitude views MOOTW, particularly peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and counterinsurgency, as second-rate missions that interfere with the primary mission of warfighting. The “war first” mindset results in joint doctrine, training and education that focus on combat. Joint doctrine overlooks any unique operational art for MOOTW.

MOOTW are likely to continue over the long term. While some of the existing operational art applies to peace operations, a new concept called “operational reasoning for peace operations” should be added to joint doctrine to alleviate recurring planning and execution problems. Applying operational reasoning as part of the operational art of peace operations means departing the comfort zone of empirical knowledge, and adding conceptual knowledge and a versatile thought process. Operational reasoning leads to situational understanding and operations area conceptualization. The process guides commanders toward using the right resources, making the right decisions, and taking the right actions. As peace operations continue, the systemic planning and execution problems need not continue.

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Hope also and greed...cause the widest ruin, and, although invisible agents, are far stronger than the dangers that are seen. Fortune, too, powerfully helps the delusion, and by the unexpected aid that she sometimes lends, tempts men to venture with inferior means; and this especially is the case with communities, because the stakes played for are the highest, freedom or empire...In short, it is impossible to prevent...human nature doing what it has once set its mind upon, by force of law or by any other deterrent force whatsoever.

-Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness...whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the right of the People to alter or abolish it...

-American Second Continental Congress, *The Declaration of Independence*

Had today's dominant military mindset, which demands full popular support, overwhelming force, an exit strategy, and minimal casualties, existed back in 1776, America might likely never have opted for war with Great Britain. Fortunately, from an American perspective, the "revolutionaries" stood firmly over time, received external assistance, and combined regular and irregular warfare to defeat the British. With the American Revolution serving as the precedent, one might surmise development of an equal affinity within the American military for missions ranging from full-scale war to what today we call "Military Operations Other Than War" (MOOTW). MOOTW missions range across a wide spectrum that includes missions such as peacekeeping, counterinsurgency, peace enforcement, and freedom of navigation, to name just a few of those as shown in Figure 1.

Yet, the pervasive military attitude views MOOTW, particularly peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and counterinsurgency, as second-rate missions that either directly or potentially interfere with the primary mission of warfighting. Presidential Decision Directive 25, "The Clinton Administration's Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations," and Joint Pub 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, provide two samples

of this condescending attitude. These remind military leaders “their primary mission will always be to prepare for, fight and win America’s wars.”¹ While appearing intuitively obvious that in the event of war, MOOTW missions may be ignored, relegated to a hold status, or non-existent, the statement regarding the military’s primary mission serves, in reality, to drive force manning, training and equipping.

RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS		
MIL OPS	US GOALS	EXAMPLES
WAR	FIGHT & WIN	LARGE SCALE COMBAT OPERATIONS: ATTACK/DEFEND/ BLOCKADE
MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR (MOOTW): MAY HAVE COMBAT	DETER WAR & RESOLVE CONFLICT	PEACE ENFORCEMENT COUNTERTERRORISM SHOW OF FORCE/RAIDS STRIKE/PEACEKEEPING COUNTERINSURGENCY NEO/NATION ASSISTANCE
MOOTW: NONCOMBAT	PROMOTE PEACE AND SUPPORT US CIVIL AUTHORITIES	FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION COUNTERDRUG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROTECTION OF SHIPPING US CIVIL SUPPORT

Figure 1 – Range of Military Operations (From Joint Pub 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for MOOTW*)

This paper will not argue whether war readiness and war fighting should be the primary focus of the military. But, given that MOOTW are likely to continue over the long term, the purpose of this paper is to highlight selected shortfalls still affecting the execution of peace operations.² This paper will show specifically that operational art requires the addition of a new concept called “operational reasoning for peace operations” to alleviate continuing inadequacies in the planning and execution of such MOOTW.

BACKGROUND.

The military's expectations for sizable active duty forces with a combat-centric focus as the *raison d'être* do not follow directly from a strict interpretation of the Constitution or from the historical employment of the U.S. military. The U.S. Constitution allows for a standing Navy, but intended only a small, if any, standing Army. Article I, section 8 of the Constitution authorized Congress "to raise and support Armies, but no appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years." The Constitution did not specify that the Army should be used only for "war," although such an interpretation ensued since Article 8 also gave Congress the power to provide for the defense and general welfare of the country, and the authority to declare war.

From the Revolutionary War through the present, American military forces received missions for both conventional warfare³ and MOOTW⁴ as shown in Figure 1. The definitive shift toward big, conventional land warfare as the army's main military purpose can be traced to the period following the Civil War, even as the army conducted irregular warfare with the American Indians. At that time, "The Army leadership concluded that its role in peacetime was to prepare for war. The question was which type of war?...For organization, tactics, and instruction the Army continued to rely on European models."⁵ Thus, conventional ground warfare along Napoleonic lines achieved top standing in priority, regardless of actual requirements for military utilization in support of national interests.⁶ In the aftermath of WWII, the formation of the Warsaw Pact, followed by the Korean War, led to an even stronger devotion among the military leadership to maintaining readiness to fight the next big war. The requirement for a large navy that could execute Mahan's doctrine for major fleet engagements to defeat any enemy well outside U.S. coastal waters retained its popularity. And, unlike the

Athenians prior to the Peloponnesian War, America decided to maintain an army to defeat at least two concurrent opponents, and would do so outside American borders.

Thus, the mindset of fighting Napoleonic and Mahanian-style conventional warfare imbued itself in doctrine, education, and training. This mindset dominated military strategic, operational and tactical thought through the Vietnam period. “The generals of the army believed that conventional army forces using standard military tactics and techniques could defeat a guerrilla force.”⁷ Through the present, army leaders consistently argue against the creation of units trained specifically for peace operations, insisting that the conventional warfare training of regular forces is sufficient for peace operations, given a small amount of pre-deployment specialty training. The same conventional war mentality embraced the stationing of two army corps in Germany for 45 years to deter or defeat the Soviets, but continues to view peace operations, which are geared to deter regional wars, as a detractor from the prime peacetime mission of war readiness. As joint warfighting emphasis progressed after the institution of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act, the conventional war mindset permeated joint doctrine and its concepts of operational art.

LACK OF APPROPRIATE OPERATIONAL ART FOR PEACE OPERATIONS:

Operational art links strategy to campaigns and operations. “JFC’s employ operational art, in concert with strategic guidance and direction received from superior leaders, in developing campaigns and operations.”⁸ Since peace operations should have some form of plan, and by definition involve “operations,” the requirement exists for applicable operational art. And, operational art appears particularly relevant to peace operations as Joint Pub 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, states:

All military personnel should understand the political objective and

the potential impact of inappropriate actions. Commanders should remain aware of changes not only in the operational situation, but also of changes in political objectives that may warrant a change in military operations.⁹

To find a description and discussion of joint operational art, one must consult the overarching publication for all operations, Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*. It lists and describes 14 fundamental elements of operational art.¹⁰ Since the stated purpose of Joint Pub 3-0 is to provide “guidance to joint force commanders and their subordinates for the direction, planning, execution, and support of campaigns and operations – in war and in operations other than war,”¹¹ it acts as the central repository for joint operational art doctrine. But, operational art as contained in Joint Pub 3-0 presents a “one-size fits all” solution for the entire range of military operations. The words “combat” and “enemy” dominate the descriptions of the art’s elements. Only one of the 14 operational art elements, “synergy,” even mentions MOOTW.

One can argue that since many peace operations have the potential for combat, the 14 facets of operational art apply equally well to peace operations and warfighting. This argument ignores the premise that peace operations differ significantly from war in purpose, design, and objectives. War means large-scale combat operations, includes physical objectives, and seeks to defeat or destroy an enemy. MOOTW and peace operations are designed to deter war or promote peace, usually have “opponents” versus a uniformed enemy, and seek to attain objectives such as peace, security, and stability. Counterinsurgency, one type of MOOTW, shows that “one size fits all” operational art disregards the complexity of MOOTW, and presents a clear case for developing unique operational art for MOOTW.

Successful counterinsurgency operations address the social, political, economic and informational conditions that foster or inhibit an insurgency. Key participating units, such as

those that conduct civil affairs and psychological operations, undermine rather than directly fight insurgents. Effective counterinsurgency works to fix underlying causes of the insurgency. Figuratively speaking, counterinsurgency operations which seek only to destroy enemy forces through direct engagement just place band-aids on severed arteries. Thus, trying to translate the operational art fundamentals for war directly to operational art for MOOTW, and subsequently for peace operations, is the equivalent of trying to shove a square peg in a round hole. Merely translating operational concepts developed for war to MOOTW can lead once again to the military's mistakes in Vietnam, when commanders focused on enemy conventional forces, rather than popular support in South Vietnam as the center of gravity for the insurgency. With the joint publications outlining distinct principles and characteristics for peace operations, it follows that the art, which translates strategy to the operational level of execution, ought to be tailored appropriately.

Certainly some of the operational art concepts outlined in Joint Pub 3-0 apply to peace operations. But, the relationship between the underlying political aims, complex environment, objectives, actors, and desired endstate for peace operations predicates a new perspective regarding useful operational art. During war, the military serves as the primary tool to achieve political aims; in peace operations, the military may be the primary tool for an initial period, but overall supports diplomatic efforts. Peace operations may not involve a clearly identifiable opponent, or even any enemy. The goals and missions can range from separation of warring factions to providing a secure environment. The military must interact with diplomatic representatives, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), and private volunteer organizations (PVO's). Thus, limiting the operational art of peace operations to merely a modified interpretation of the published fundamentals for operational art in war

serves as a convenient way of remaining within the “comfort zone” of the conventional warfighting thought process. Appropriate operational art for MOOTW and peace operations requires senior leaders to depart the “comfort zone.”

DEPARTING THE COMFORT ZONE: OPERATIONAL REASONING AS THE KEY TO OPERATIONAL ART IN PEACE OPERATIONS.

You have to imagine that there are two ruling powers, and that one of them is set over the intellectual world, and the other over the visible... knowledge and being, which the science of dialectic contemplates, are clearer than the notions of the arts as they are termed, which proceed from hypotheses only; these rules are also contemplated by the understanding, and not by the senses...

-Plato, *The Republic*, Book VI

Why do peace operations require an operational art concept called “operational reasoning” if operational art for war bypasses it? The answer lies in the different nature of the operations, their environments, and the level of application of “knowledge” required in each. In *The Republic*, Plato refers to the difference between what is visible to the senses and what is known without being seen. He distinguishes between the levels of knowledge, with reason as the highest, followed by understanding, faith, and visual perception. For conventional war, the military continues to apply itself to full battlespace visualization, the reduction of uncertainty through acquisition of sensor data, with the goal of defeating physical enemy objects. Supporting the idea of battlespace visualization, the published operational art revolves around the physical/measurable components of forces, space and time. Similarly, the requirements for automated information systems center around the goal of a digitally shared, visual portrayal of the enemy.

For planning and executing combat operations, commanders require information on enemy capabilities. This information is mostly based on physical characteristics (numbers and types of combat systems, numbers of combat units, etc.). Non-material characteristics of

enemy capability, called “intangibles,”¹² fall into the category of desired, but not critical, information. Physical capabilities generally override intangible factors during operations planning and the resultant decisions regarding the use of friendly forces. “In calculating the factor force, intangible elements (specifically leadership, doctrine, morale and discipline, training, etc.) are often far more important than simple numbers of troops or platforms. However, numerical superiority is always critical to success.”¹³

In short, the military uses an empirical thought process for conventional war operational art, training focus, and institutional education focus. The highly sensory empirical process relies largely on prior training experience, experiments, observation, data, and science. Weapons ranges and numbers form the basis for force ratios; weapons are tested in proving grounds and over the course of pre-fielding tests; during After Action Reviews, the *a posteriori* process is often used to reason backwards from effects or consequences to causes; and simulation exercises use computerized scenarios based upon friendly and enemy physical capabilities. Pre-operations and combat execution “knowledge” center around an awareness of the enemy in regard to physical tangibles. The critical “intangible” or uncertainty involves the free will of the enemy and his decisions.

At this point, thought must shift outside the empirical “comfort zone.” Synthesis, deductive reasoning, and knowledge-based understanding of causes and effects related to friendly and enemy force interaction, become the bread and butter of intelligence professionals and commanders. Perhaps the ability to apply this reasoning process was what Clausewitz tried to describe when he discussed military genius, chance, uncertainty, assumptions, imagination, and intellect.¹⁴ The preference for the empirical process seeks to minimize uncertainty, and that which cannot be physically seen or proven.

So, if peace operations cannot rely on empirical methods, what is operational reasoning? Given that entry into peace operations equates to debarkation into the world of intangibles, operational reasoning must provide concepts that facilitate thought in a vague and uncertain environment. The goal of operational reasoning envisions the use of knowledge to determine appropriate actions and measures in the peace operations world of intangibles. In other words, the art of applying knowledge to achieve theoretical aims/objectives (such as, “support diplomatic efforts” or “maintain peace”) must also include the acquisition of knowledge and a versatile thought process that leads to use of the right resources at the right times for the desired effects.

Since in many areas of peace operations the “right resource” is not a weapon system, the thought process underlying operational reasoning involves an epistemological approach to understand root causes. A minimum understanding of the root causes underlying each peace operation - such as environment (history, culture, degree of enmity); what motivates the indigenous actors in the current operational environment (greed, honor, passion, fear, revenge, ideology, politics, values), and prevailing individual and group interests (freedom, security, self-preservation, food, family, money, reputation, fame, self-importance), leads to understanding when to take action and what type of action to take. Figure 2 highlights examples of interests and motivators.

Peace operations seek to change or influence the behavior of multiple actors. Therefore, leaders must recognize motivators and interests, and understand cause and effect relationships in the conceptual realm of human nature. Understanding of motivators, interests, and their relationships to the people/situation, allows leaders to see past the surface and address root causes rather than succumbing to the tendency to merely judge the actions/responses of the

actors relative to American ideals for behavior. Although human nature applies in warfighting since the operational commander wants to impact enemy behavior, by definition, war influences behavior by inflicting overwhelming violence on physical targets. In peace operations, simple empirical focus on only physical effects leads to short-term treatment of symptoms, and the tendency of the conventional military mindset to label those things not resolvable through force as “political problems.”

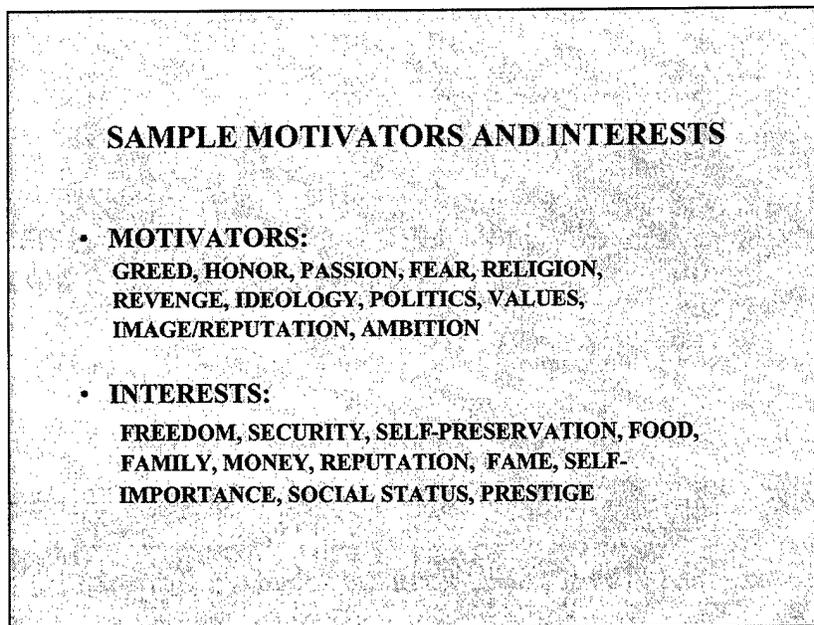


Figure 2 - Motivators and Interests

Definition: Operational Reasoning means acquiring both conceptual and empirical knowledge, and then applying a versatile thought process to attain enhanced knowledge, and comprehension of the causality (i.e., relationships between causes and effects) pertaining to the peace operation at hand. The knowledge and thought processes that lead to comprehension of causality, result in the net product of operational reasoning, which is *situational understanding*. Situational understanding serves as the basis for sound

decisionmaking in the complex peace operations environment. Figure 3 portrays the basic concept of the art of operational reasoning.

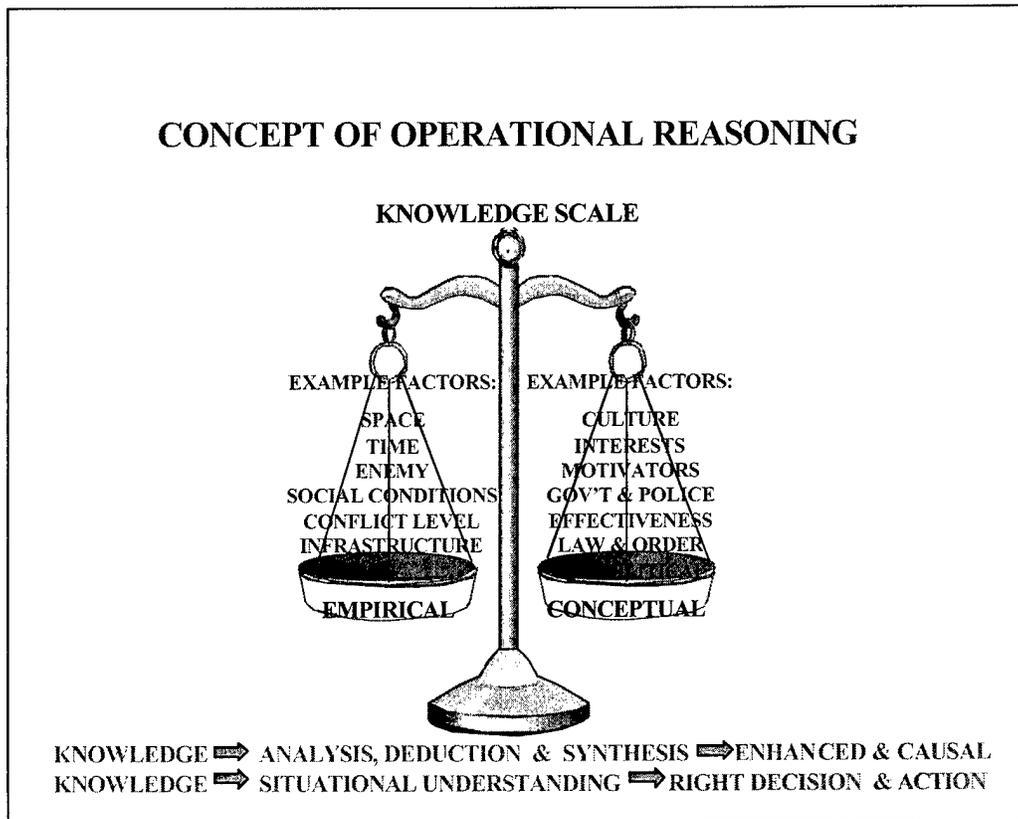


Figure 3: Concept of Operational Reasoning

Knowledge used for operational reasoning consists of both empirical and conceptual knowledge, as shown in Figure 3. Empirical (historical, prior experience, or physically observable) knowledge is useful for the measurable factors of a peace operation (space/geography; enemy forces if applicable; level of conflict; economic infrastructure; information structure; time; transportation infrastructure; and social conditions). Conceptual knowledge applies to the theoretical, or intangible, factors of an operational environment

(geopolitical situation; indigenous culture; level of consent to the cease fire; accountability and discipline of the disputing parties; effectiveness of the governments involved, and degree of law and order).¹⁵ For peace operations, scales weighted on the side of empirical knowledge portend lack of situational understanding.

The versatile thought processes used to obtain knowledge and make it meaningful include analysis, synthesis, and deduction. Analysis separates “the whole” of an issue or problem into parts. It examines the nature of “the parts,” and their relationship to each other, tracing these parts back to the source of the issue/problem. Synthesis puts two or more parts together to form a complete view. In peace operations, synthesis assembles the parts from multiple problem sets concurrently to provide the big picture and interrelationship between issues/problem sets. As a subset of synthesis in operational reasoning, deduction takes simple elements or parts of one whole problem set and moves from cause to effects. The net result of operational reasoning denotes the difference between the goals for the thought processes as accepted in the military for combat, versus the goals proposed here for peace operations. The accepted terms for the end result of knowledge and thought for combat operations are “*situational awareness*,” and “*battlespace visualization*.” Because of the complexity of the peace operations environment, operational reasoning aims for “*situational understanding*” and “*operations area conceptualization*.”

OPERATIONAL REASONING AND SITUATIONAL UNDERSTANDING IN PLANNING FOR PEACE OPERATIONS:

Operational reasoning enhances the planning process and supports development of sound plans for peace operations. To conduct operational-level planning, commanders and staffs must acquire a basic level of situational understanding. Individual staff estimates and

the overall commander's estimate of the situation set the knowledge foundation for planning. They also identify knowledge gaps. Mission analysis and development of the operations concept should lead to further research, discussion, consultation with area experts, analysis, deduction and synthesis. Operational reasoning in the planning process results in: a plan with a clearly stated mission, a commander's intent that provides a vision for conduct of the operation and endstate, an overall concept of operations linked to the higher headquarters' plan and the political goals of the operation, the determination of the number and type forces needed to accomplish the mission, and tasks to subordinate units to achieve the mission.

Area experts and information from higher headquarters or outside agencies play a key role in assisting the planners. Operation Just Cause shows the importance of operational reasoning in the planning for peace operations. Even with months of time available for Operation Just Cause planning,¹⁶ the effort focused on the combat portion of the operation, and failed to understand the link between the Panamanian military (PDF) and the rest of Panamanian society.

For example, because planners lacked contextual knowledge, they misunderstood critical issues and failed to anticipate the kinds of disruptions that occurred following the defeat of the PDF...the larger problem in this case is that it did not estimate the en masse collapse of the civilian agencies of the government or the disruption that would result from looting.¹⁷

The post-combat operations plan for Panama did not address restoration of law and order, or the civil affairs and military police unit requirements in restoration efforts.

"Restoration was an afterthought that only became important when several unanticipated but serious civil-military problems emerged."¹⁸ Thus, during the Panama operations, the civil military operations task force "proved to be unprepared to reshape the security forces, lacked a coherent organizational structure, and found itself short of personnel as the crisis unfolded."¹⁹

Three years later, planning for Somalia exhibited the same shortsightedness on the usefulness of civil affairs, when only 30 civil affairs specialists were deployed.²⁰

Jump-starting the restoration of the Somali justice system with an adequate civil affairs program would have ensured a smoother transition to UNOSOM II... A civil affairs program would also have helped to ensure the success of the UN operation... Instead, U.S. Rangers were used to perform the essential police functions of attempting to capture General Aideed...²¹

After the 1995 Implementation Force (IFOR) assumed the mission in Bosnia, the same type planning deficiencies came to light. A review of operation's planning states:

The IFOR deployment has illuminated the fact that many traditional ground-combat commanders have little knowledge of civilian affairs or understanding of CIMIC activities. This lack of knowledge was demonstrated in many areas, but none more so than in the campaign planning stage... The campaign plan not only inadequately identified military tasks for CIMIC, but also negatively affected CIMIC deployment, manning and logistics requirements.²²

The recurrence of similar oversights for operations from 1989 -1995 indicates a systemic problem in the planning process for peace operations. As in Vietnam, lack of situational understanding combines with a general lack of respect for and knowledge of the capabilities of civil affairs, psychological operations, logistics, and other "non-combat" units. Under the "train for war first" mentality, these non-combat units function in a support role, while combat units ("the operators") are the center of the universe for commanders' attention. After all, in war, the combat units form the center of gravity, or strength, for the commander. The idea that combat units might actually play the supporting role to a center of strength that relies on civil affairs, psychological operations, intelligence, logistics, and civilian agencies runs contrary to years of educational and training indoctrination.

As part of the predeployment education and planning process, a thorough understanding of the next higher headquarters plan is especially important since the nature of peace operations blurs the lines between the tactical, operational and strategic levels. Actions at the lowest

levels either positively or negatively impact attainment of the strategy. Brigade and battalion commanders require, at a minimum, the same level of knowledge of the peace operations environment (which will normally also be multinational) as found at higher headquarters. For long-term peace operations, formal updates to the original campaign plan appear neglected in many instances. For example, prior to the 101st Airmobile Division's recent deployment to Kosovo, its requests for a current higher headquarters campaign plan and measures of success were met with resounding silence. Part of the problem with plan updates and dissemination may be the lack of published campaign planning doctrine. After more than 10 years of attempts to publish joint doctrine, JP 5-00.1 *Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning*, remains in draft form.²³ Through inclusion in doctrine and application, operational reasoning will assist in solving the systemic planning problems. It should lead to the development of sound plans, with correctly identified centers of gravity, that sufficiently address more than just the employment of combat forces.

OPERATIONAL REASONING IN EXECUTION OF PEACE OPERATIONS:

Execution of peace operations often reflects the sins committed in planning. The military operations in Lebanon and Somalia provide two cases in which lack of situational understanding led to unanticipated American casualties. With U.S. Marines given an unclear peacekeeping mission in Lebanon, and positioned between the Lebanese army and Shiite forces, the *U.S.S. New Jersey* received orders to shell Shiite positions above Beirut. "When the shells started falling on the Shiites, they assumed the American 'referee' had taken sides against them. And since they could not reach the battleship, they found a more vulnerable target, the exposed Marines at the airport."²⁴ Likewise, the failure to fully analyze the probable Somali reaction to military attempts to capture Aideed, ultimately resulted in U.S. casualties.

From Aided's perspective, operations appeared "to be a one-sided intervention by the UN"²⁵ that favored an increase in power for a rival clan leader. Aided's interests centered on retaining his power base and position. The military ignored the degree to which Aided and his supporters would go to protect those interests.

The military generally deduced the wrong lessons from Somalia regarding the mission and tasks. Review of the operation should examine how the results might have been different given military and civilian efforts to train a professional Somali police force, (which is a nation building task), versus the enthusiastic military acceptance of the mission to capture Aided. After Lebanon and Somalia, the military exhibits an increased aversion to MOOTW and peace operations, particularly the nation building aspects of these operations. Many associate the resulting casualties from these operations as inherent to MOOTW missions, rather than understanding the causal relationship between U.S. actions and the consequences.

In lieu of analyzing mismatches between missions, intended goals, actions, and actual consequences in peace operations, the logic that abhors nation building also directly associates nation building tasks with "mission creep." Although the planning for combat operations builds on success and accepts mission expansion within capabilities, the doctrine for peace operations implies that change can equal the pejorative term of "mission creep." The negative view of nation building leads to doctrinal caution regarding civil affairs use.

Mission creep may develop from...unrealistic development of implied tasks in planning. It can also derive from well-meaning but erroneous interpretation of law or regulation. One example would be to conduct civil action projects that fall outside the authority of the force commander.²⁶

Previous peace operations show that commanders and planners often do not properly employ their civil affairs, psychological operations, and information operations capabilities. Part of

this results from the fear of mission creep. Yet, the expertise that support units bring to peace operations proves extraordinarily powerful.

One of the military's best contributions is identifying critical infrastructure. Although it may help to reconstruct some of it, properly identifying the most critical projects can help all relief providers determine which group is to assume responsibility for which task.²⁷

Operational reasoning and situational understanding, combined with knowledge of the value that support units bring to peace operations, help clarify the distinction between tasks that contribute to mission success, and those which are outside the capability or mandate of the peace operations force. Operational reasoning supports decisionmaking throughout operations. Situational understanding allows commanders to determine the proper mix of combat and support units for the force. It also allows the commander to balance force protection with the mission, rather than force protection becoming the primary mission.

For example, at the start of the Kosovo air war in March 1999, the situation grew tense in Bosnia as power, phone service, and trade were disrupted in eastern Bosnia. Intelligence, information operations and civil affairs teams were most needed to interact with the Bosnian population, but teams found themselves confined to base camps due to increased force protection measures established by the division headquarters. With the exception of the northern U.S. task force, the combat units denied requests by the support teams for convoy escort support. Thus, not only did rumor, misperception, and fear grow in the communities near the border, but the division blinded itself. When the support units requested a change to the policy in order to continue the mission, the response was, "Force protection is the number one mission." Since these U.S. teams also supported the multinational brigades in the operations area, the "blind spot" extended outside just the U.S. area.²⁸ Consequently, frustration grew in the multinational units.

“Unintended consequences,” a term used to describe reactions not planned for, can be alleviated by operational reasoning. In Bosnia, General Montgomery Meigs, the Stabilization Forces (SFOR) Commander, demonstrated mastery of operational reasoning. In reviewing planned operations and in discussing courses of action, he always saw causal relationships and effects that actions, if taken, could have. The intelligence analysts from the U.S.-led Multinational Division North (MND-N) made a point to be in the briefing room during General Meigs’ visits as his situational understanding and conceptual knowledge, especially in regard to the political, military, economic, police, social, and criminal factors of the situation, provided beneficial discussion and insight.

In cases where specious information reports of questionable credibility sent the division headquarters spiraling into a planning frenzy, a corresponding visit by General Meigs led to a levelheaded assessment. On several occasions, using knowledge from the days when he commanded the MND-N operations area, he identified local contacts who could provide the truth of the matter. Respect for General Meigs extended to the local population in the MND-N operations area. Intelligence teams discovered on more than one occasion that locals of all ethnic groups praised General Meigs’ fairness, and to measure the team’s bona fides, would ask whether the team knew the general. While the SFOR Commander had extensive personal experience in Bosnia, and he holds a doctorate in history, his abilities in operational reasoning appeared innate. But, is operational reasoning only an inherited ability?

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION:

No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge...If [the teacher] is indeed wise, he does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

-Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet

MOOTW and peace operations will continue over the foreseeable future. Systemic problems in planning and executing peace operations need not continue. The inclusion of “operational reasoning for peace operations” as part of the operational art outlined in joint doctrine will alleviate recurring inadequacies of those operations. Operational reasoning is crucial to all aspects of peace operations – from conception to termination. While the ability to apply operational reasoning to peace operations may be an inherited trait, like leadership, learning can occur through education.

After adding the concept of operational reasoning to joint doctrine, the next logical step involves education. Operational reasoning should be incorporated in the military’s institutional education system for all leaders. A two week course, such as the CIA provides its analysts, offers one option for foundation learning in the area of logic and deductive reasoning. School and unit exercises should include operational-level (vice just tactical) peace operations scenarios that allow commanders and staffs to exercise the operational reasoning thought process. Exercise time should allow for examination of the entire process, and encourage discussion of potential consequences of actions. These exercises will also serve to enhance leader knowledge of the capabilities and potential of civil affairs, psychological operations, and information operations in the peace operations environment. Another possibility involves adding a track of study on operational reasoning to the Army’s School of Advanced Military Studies at Ft. Leavenworth.

Since every peace operation is unique, connectivity to knowledge bases and information sharing will enhance leaders’ acquisition of empirical and conceptual knowledge prior to deployment. Transmission of plans, estimates, special product assessments, and updates from the joint command to deploying leaders’ at home station via unclassified and

classified internet services can be done with existing technology. Designation of a single electronic repository site for each peace operation, that includes the available empirical and conceptual information, will support early development of situational understanding, and alleviate the problems units currently experience just trying to locate information.

Development of situational understanding should include face-to-face and electronic dialogue between area experts, planners and deploying leaders. Preparations for Haiti operations provide a good lesson in this regard. "There were numerous visits and interchanges of ideas between the U.S. and the UN...This included an intensive two week training session in early March..."²⁹

Finally, individual study plays an important role in knowledge acquisition and operational reasoning. To assist leaders in their studies, professional reading lists and institutional reading should include a sampling of works related to critical reasoning, and even philosophy. Following the lead of the Naval War College, which includes works by Thucydides and Mao Tse-Tung in its curriculum, the addition by the services to reading lists of those authors and writings by Plato, Kant, Hume and General Giap will prove invaluable for development of operational reasoning as part of the art in peace operations.

The addition of operational reasoning to doctrine and education, aided by information sharing and individual study, will ensure development of the versatile thought processes that leaders require for decisionmaking in peace operations. Operational reasoning might not guarantee the best decision being made in every case, but it will lead to good decisions. The "war first" mindset advocates need not feel threatened by the idea of a special form of art for peace operations. In the final analysis, the benefits of operational reasoning support the thought processes required for combat.

NOTES

¹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, Joint Pub 3-07 (Washington, DC: 16 June 1995), I-7. Additionally, the same guidance is provided by the White House, in "The Clinton Administration's Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations (PDD 25)," 1994. The PDD 25 wording is slightly different as it states, "As specified in the 'Bottom-Up Review,' the primary mission of the U.S. Armed Forces remains to be prepared to fight and win two simultaneous regional conflicts."

² Ibid. GL-4. Defines peace operations as peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations conducted in support of diplomatic efforts to establish and maintain peace. The publication defines peace enforcement as the application of military force, or the threat of its use, to compel compliance with resolutions or sanctions designed to maintain or restore peace. Military peacekeeping operations are undertaken with the consent of all major parties to a dispute, designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an agreement.

³ The term "conventional warfare" used herein refers to the large battles that pit army against army for decisive battles, as occurred during Napoleon's reign in Europe. The term also includes the clash of naval fleets in decisive battles, which Alfred Thayer Mahan described in naval doctrine at the end of the 19th Century.

⁴ Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), as described in Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, "are an aspect of military operations that focus on deterring war and promoting peace." I-2. Joint Pub 3-07 elaborates further by saying "To understand MOOTW, it is useful to understand how they differ from operations in war... war encompasses large-scale, sustained combat operations to achieve national objectives or to promote national interests. MOOTW are more sensitive to political considerations and often the military may not be the primary player." vii.

⁵ John Waghelstein, Preparing for the Wrong War: the United States Army and Low-Intensity Conflict, 1755-1890 (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services, 1990), 286.

⁶ Ibid. Dr. Waghelstein provides a discussion in Chapter 7, pages 252-283, on the military attitude toward irregular warfare, and the training and education focus on conventional warfare, in contrast to the reality of irregular warfare mission requirements.

⁷ Donald Rose, Peace Operations and Counterinsurgency: The US Military and Change (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2000), 90.

⁸ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Operations Joint Pub 3-0 (Washington, DC: 1 February 1995), III-9. The acronym JFC stands for Joint Force Commander.

⁹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War Joint Pub 3-07, vii.

¹⁰ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine For Joint Operations Joint Pub 3-0, III-10 lists the facets of operational art as: synergy, simultaneity and depth, anticipation, balance, leverage, timing and tempo, operational reach and approach, forces and functions, arranging operations, centers of gravity, direct versus indirect, decisive points, culmination, and termination.

¹¹ Ibid, I-1.

¹² "Intangibles" cannot be 'observed' directly by sight, touch, smell, taste, or sound. They are, by nature, conceptual characteristics.

¹³ Chet Helms, "Operational Factors," NWC Joint Military Operations Department 4092A extract from Milan Vego's Operational Warfare (Newport: Naval War College, 2000), 13.

¹⁴ Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), 100-110.

¹⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Tactics, Techniques, Procedures for Peace Operations Joint Pub 3-07.3 (Washington, DC: 12 February 1999), I-20. The "other factors" listed on page I-20 formed the basis for the non-physical factors portion of the definition for operational reasoning proposed in this paper.

¹⁶ Thomas Donnelly, Margaret Roth and Caleb Baker, Operation Just Cause, the Storming of Panama (New York: Lexington Books, 1991), 17. The planning process actually began in November 1987 when General Woerner gave initial guidance to the planners to develop options against the PDF and Noriega. The final planning for the December 1989 operation was conducted from June - December 1989.

¹⁷ Richard H. Shultz, Jr., In the Aftermath of War reprint by the U.S. Naval War College (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1993), 23.

¹⁸ Ibid, 28.

¹⁹ Ibid, 29.

²⁰ Walter Clarke, "Failed Visions and Uncertain Mandates in Somalia," Learning From Somalia, ed. Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 9.

²¹ Ibid, 34-35.

²² James Landon, "CIMIC: Civil Military Cooperation," Lessons From Bosnia: The IFOR Experience, ed. Larry Wentz, (Washington, DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1997), 129.

²³ The Joint Publication web site lists this publication's status as in final draft, with projected final approval scheduled in February 2002.

²⁴ Colin Powell, My American Journey (New York: Random House, 1995), 291.

²⁵ Kevin Kennedy, "The Relationship Between the Military and Humanitarian Organizations in Operation Restore Hope," Learning From Somalia, ed. Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 121.

²⁶ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Peace Operations, I-9.

²⁷ Brad Hayes and Jeffrey Sands, Doing Windows: Non-Traditional Military Responses to Complex Emergencies (DSD Research Report 97-1), (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 1997), 65.

²⁸ The multinational units could not meet the convoy escort requirements mandated by the increased force protection measures because they did not have the armored vehicles necessary. Eventually, the multinational units were allowed to use non-armored vehicles for convoy escort of the teams.

²⁹ David Bentley and Robert Oakley, "Peace Operations: A Comparison of Somalia and Haiti," Strategic Forum, no. 30 (May 1995): Naval War College Reprint, 1.

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