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“JUST DO SOMETHING”: MEASURING AND ACHIEVING OPERATIONAL SUCCESS
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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14 November 1997

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Abstract of

'JUST DO SOMETHING';

MEASURING AND ACHIEVING OPERATIONAL SUCCESS IN PEACE OPERATIONS

The conduct of peace operations is a highly complex mission for the operational commander. Determining the mission, translating political objectives, defining and measuring success, delineating termination criteria and developing an exit strategy are much more difficult than in military combat operations. This creates a whole new set of challenges for the operational commander.

This paper will analyze Operation RESTORE HOPE, Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, and Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR from an operational perspective, specifically focusing on determining and measuring success.

As peace operations become a more common mission for the U.S. military, as a unilateral effort as well as part of a multinational force, the operational commander will be well served by applying the tenets and principles of operational art with particular awareness of indicators of success as well as symptoms of failure.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Peacekeeping is not a soldier's job, but only a soldier can do it."

Dag Hammarskjold

Determining the mission and when it and the corresponding military objectives are achieved is a critical responsibility of the operational commander. This task is even more critical during the conduct of peace operations where military and political objectives are often less precise than they are in other types of more conventional operations.

The Clinton Administration stated that peace operations;

are a useful tool to help prevent and resolve such conflicts before they pose direct threats to our national security...mean the entire spectrum of activities from traditional peacekeeping to peace enforcement aimed at defusing and resolving international conflicts...provide finite windows of opportunity...should not be open ended...should have a specific timeframe tied to intermediate and final objectives, and the political/military strategy should be integrated with humanitarian assistance efforts.¹

This then is the policy backdrop from which today's operational commander will receive and execute his mission.

As a type of military operation other than war(MOOTW), peace operations encompass three general types of operations; peacemaking(diplomatic actions), peacekeeping(non-combat military operations), and peace enforcement(coercive use of military force).² The

¹ Susan E. Strenansky, "Balancing the Trinity: The Fine Art of Conflict Termination," Unpublished Research Paper, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 1996. 12.

² Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1 February 1995, V-10.

objective of all peace operations is to achieve a peaceful settlement among belligerent parties, primarily through diplomatic action. However, military operations may be necessary if diplomatic actions are insufficient or inappropriate.³

Prior to the decision to employ military force in the conduct of a peace operation, the operational commander must ensure that the political objectives can be translated into military missions and goals. In doing so, the operational commander is obligated to candidly articulate the capabilities and limitations of the force and to confirm that it is the right tool for the job. The desired outcome or when to terminate the operation should be defined from conception in concert with political authorities and be considered from the onset of planning. Military advice to political authorities regarding military objectives for termination should include estimates of military feasibility, adequacy, and acceptability; as well as estimates of the time, costs, military forces, and risks required to achieve the objectives.⁴

Every military operation must be directed toward a clearly defined, decisive and attainable objective, and this principle is paramount in the conduct of peace operations.⁵ The relationship of the military portion of the operation to the overall political aim must be clearly described and understood by both political and military authorities **prior** to the commitment of forces. Inherent in the principle of objective is the need to understand what constitutes mission success, and what might cause the operation to be terminated before success is achieved.⁶ Having defined the desired end state in conjunction with political

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid, I-10.

⁵ Ibid, II-1.

⁶ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 3-07, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 16 June 1995, II-1.

authorities, the commander must then ensure that there is a precise understanding of how he gets there, or what constitutes and how to measure success. In peace operations, settlement not victory, is the ultimate measure of success. Though settlement is rarely achieved through military efforts alone, the idea of traditional victory or defeat is inappropriate in peace operations.⁷ The commander must understand specific conditions that could result in mission failure as well as those that mark success.⁸ As the commander embarks upon a peace operation mission, he must keep oriented on the end state much as a compass orients north and continually validate the operation's execution in terms of progress toward that objective. The commander must be attuned to changes not only in the operational situation, but also to changes in the political objectives that may warrant a change in military operations. Casualty rates, successful or failed diplomatic efforts, conflicting interests of multinational partners and lack of political perseverance can all exert influence on the conduct of the operation. Peace operations are characterized by ever changing conditions and failure to recognize and adapt to these changes could lead to an ineffective or even counterproductive military operation.⁹ Through analyzing the measurement of success in peace operations in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia the operational commander will be provided with a model thought process for use in projecting toward future peace operations.

⁷ U.S. Army, FM 100-23 Peace Operations, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., December 1994, V-VI.

⁸ *Ibid*, 15.

⁹ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 3-07, I-2-I-3.

CHAPTER II

OPERATION RESTORE HOPE(SOMALIA)

Operation RESTORE HOPE was conceived as a humanitarian intervention. From United Nations Security Council Resolution(UNSCR) 794 of 3 December 1992, President Bush declared, "We will create a secure environment in the hardest-hit parts of Somalia, so that food can be moved from ships overland to the people in the countryside...**our mission is humanitarian...we do not plan to dictate political outcomes**".¹⁰ It was appropriately determined that military force would be able to stabilize the situation but could not solve the underlying political, social, and economic problems in a country in chaos. The operational commander, Commander in Chief, United States Central Command(CINCCENTCOM), consequently conducted his mission analysis and derived his mission statement, "When directed...CINCCENT will conduct joint and combined military operations in Somalia, to secure the major air and sea ports, key installations and food distribution points, to provide open and free passage of relief supplies, to provide security for convoys and relief organization operations and assist U.N./NGOs in providing humanitarian relief under U.N. auspices."¹¹ Carefully omitted were any tasks that could only be achieved over an extended period, that offered no measurement criteria and were inappropriate for military forces operating without legitimacy.

¹⁰ Army/Air Force White Paper: An Analysis of the Application of the Principles of MOOTW in Somalia, Army-Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict, February 1994, 2-3.

¹¹ Ibid.

The National Command Authorities(NCA) approved the CENTCOM mission statement and limited United States military operations to conduct those tasks required to achieve near-term objectives delineated by the mission statement. The mission was definable and achievable, with famine seen as an easy enemy to defeat. The Joint Task Force was designated as United Nations Task Force(UNITAF) Somalia to reflect the combined organization and developed the mission which was to "...create an environment in which the United Nations and non-governmental organizations could assume full responsibility for the security and operation of the Somalia relief effort."¹² To achieve this goal, UNITAF developed a four phase operation:

1. Establish a lodgment.
2. Secure relief sites and convoy routes.
3. Expand security in relief sectors.
4. Provide for the transfer of functions to U.N. control.

At this stage, the operational objectives were distilled into doable and measurable tasks. In keeping with General Powell's philosophy of ensuring the use of overwhelming force; a heavily armed force operating under robust rules of engagement(ROE) was employed.¹³ The capabilities of the force were much greater than that required to fulfill the mission. This would ultimately challenge the operational and tactical commander in observing the principle of restraint.

On 8 December 1992, the United Nations' Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali stated that the mission would be to, "Feed the starving, protect the defenseless and **prepare**

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Strenansky, 11, 45.

for political and social reconstitution.”¹⁴ Immediately there was conflict in terms of the perception and expectation of the end state of U.S. military involvement and the measurement criteria to achieve it. While the political agendas of several of the participants sought to expand UNITAF activities, CINCCENT worked to resist so called “mission creep.” Additional tasks may have been essential in the long term, but they were neither specified nor implied in the CENTCOM mission statement. Additionally, UNITAF forces were limited in their ability to conduct many of the tasks. Although CINCCENT authorized the force to conduct partial weapons cantonment and disarmament, this was done more to facilitate the handover to U.N. follow-on forces as was stipulated in the original mission. The commander established measurable standards for success such as tonnage of food delivered, death rates due to starvation, number of wells drilled, amount of potable water produced, acreage cultivated, crops harvested, number of children vaccinated, and the number of Non-Governmental Organizations(NGO) and Private Voluntary Organizations(PVO) that returned to operation in the country.

As the mission transitioned to United Nations Operation in Somalia II(UNOSOM II), there was an immediate asymmetry--the operational objectives were expanded to be more ambitious but did not match the capabilities of the military resources on hand. The mission soon evolved into peace enforcement involving combat operations and nation building. The mission’s subsequent failure was exacerbated by inappropriate and ill conceived tasks as well as a blurred command structure. This ultimately led to tragedy with the death of 12 U.S. Army Rangers on 3 October 1993. U.S. /U.N. legitimacy and impartiality had eroded and

¹⁴ Army/Air Force White Paper: An Analysis of the Application of the Principles of MOOTW in Somalia, 2.

U.S. withdrawal from the mission soon followed. As described afterwards by an unnamed military official, the Somalia operation under UNOSOM II did not experience "mission creep," but rather "mission gallop." This event exemplifies the results when measurable criteria for success and mission attainment are abandoned and deteriorate through mission encroachment.

Peace operations are dynamic--success hinges on understanding operational feedback and rapidly and effectively responding to changes in the nature of the operation. To achieve this, the commander is better served to establish reliable feedback mechanisms, understand the significance of the information that they provide and then respond to new conditions in a timely manner. This feedback can either be direct, such as discussions with local interlocutors, or indirect such as observing changes in the behavior of the local populace towards the forces. Opening a dialogue will create opportunities to coopt and engage the varying factions as well as to establish relationships that will be useful for problem solving. The commander must then apply his judgment to determine what this feedback signifies and what the ramifications are for the success of the operation. These cold and often sobering assessments must be conducted continuously throughout the operation. As peace operations are preventative in nature, the wrong or inappropriate response may lead to escalation of the original situation or conflict. UNOSOM II ultimately responded to the need for transition by withdrawal, unable to execute the mission without reinforcement or reorganization. The commander should always maintain the flexibility to **deliberately** shift or expand his mission in order to adjust to the situation or need. The key is to remain synchronized with political objectives and to not lose focus on the end state conditions which drive the ways and means

for execution. Under UNOSOM II, political and military objectives were formally and deliberately changed. The line had been crossed into combat operations. However, these changing conditions were inconsistent with the previously developed criteria for success and exit strategy. The result was a loss of "big picture" focus ultimately leading to withdrawal short of achieving the desired end state and termination objectives.

CHAPTER III

OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY(HAITI)

United States intervention in Haiti had as its objective the restoration of democracy through the removal of General Cedras from power and the return of President Aristide. The Clinton Administration, through the interagency process, identified several issues that supported U.S. interests in Haiti and felt compelled to act in the face of and in response to criticism and bad press. On 31 July 1994, the United Nations declared the situation in Haiti a threat to peace and security in the region. The United Nations Security Council passed Resolution (UNSCR) 940 which condemned the de facto regime's disregard for agreements and refusal to cooperate with the existing U.N. mission. The goals of restoring democracy and returning President Aristide to office were reaffirmed by the United Nations. The U.N. authorized a multi-national force "under a unified command to use all necessary means to facilitate the departure...of military leadership...and return the legitimately elected President to power...establish and maintain a secure environment...facilitate free and fair elections."¹⁵

The U.N., learning from its Somalia experience, sought to define the end state in more specific terms and focus on goals that were explicit and concrete such as the removal of the military leadership and facilitating free and fair elections. However, the UNSCR still contained vague "Somali language" of "establish a secure and stable environment."¹⁶

Although U.N. language and rhetoric called for restoring democracy, the U.S. viewed its role

¹⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution 940 of 31 July 1994.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Although U.N. language and rhetoric called for restoring democracy, the U.S. viewed its role as a short term presence to return President Aristide to power. The U.S. had drafted plans for both a permissive and non-permissive environment, with branches and sequels in order to maintain flexibility and freedom of action upon execution. The Joint Staff and operational commander, Commander in Chief, United States Atlantic Command(CINCUSACOM), Admiral Paul Miller, fused political and military objectives into a desired exit strategy. The USACOM mission statement read: "When directed, CINCUSACOM conducts combined military operations in Haiti, under the sponsorship of the United Nations...to maintain a stable and secure environment in which the government of Haiti(GOH), with the support of international organizations and agencies, can return to functional governance... On order, return responsibilities for any and all operational tasks to the GOH or designated international organization." ¹⁷

The U.S. designed an operation that allowed for the quick withdrawal of U.S. forces. The U.S. commander of the multi-national force(MNF), Lieutenant General Shelton saw the key component of his mission as the establishment of a stable and secure environment. Several measurable indicators of success were developed to include:

- number of violent acts by both Haitian Army and police.
- number of weapons confiscated.
- number of Haitians voluntarily repatriated.
- establishment of services and utilities such as electricity, water and sanitation.
- number of weapons turned in under the "buy back" program.

¹⁷ U.S. Army Tenth Mountain Division, Operations in Haiti: Planning/Preparation/Execution, August 1994 thru January 1995, Unknown, June 1995., 2-2.

- the decline in the number of U.S. MP patrols and the increase in the International Police Monitor(IPM) team patrols.
- number of detainees.
- number of Haitians enrolled in technical and vocational job training programs.
- amount of educational supplies and materials distributed.
- number of functioning courts.
- number of prisons totally Haitian managed and sustained.
- number of sectors wherein newly graduated Haitian National Police could assume full control.

The restoration of democracy portion of the mission was left to the follow- on U.N. force to implement. Lieutenant General Shelton declared Haiti "secure and stable" in January 1995. The U.N. did not take over until 31 March 1995. President Clinton called Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY a success and a "triumph of freedom over fear."¹⁸ The mission of returning President Aristide to power had been achieved. However, the resumption of democracy and a society with basic needs is a long term project. Use of military force alone could not put in place the habits, institutions or conditions necessary to make democracy work. The U.S. experience in Somalia significantly influenced the Haiti decision making process. The U.N. mission of establishing a secure environment could be vague and open to interpretation as well as difficult to quantify and measure success. The mission was intentionally limited in scope for U.S./MNF military involvement in order to avoid unintended "mission creep" and escalation.

¹⁸ Larry Richter, "Clinton in Haiti, Marks the Withdrawal of GIs", The New York Times, 1 April 1995, 1:4.

The role of the operational commander and military planners was a proactive one from the beginning in developing well-defined military objectives, a timeline to achieve them and the end state conditions and exit strategy. A lesson learned from Somalia was that the operational commander must conduct “bottom up” termination planning. If the political leadership does not provide a clear end state and exit strategy, then the commander must develop and propose a plan **prior** to the commitment of forces. The U.S. had refined the broad U.N. mandate of a “secure and stable environment” to definable military objectives and conditions. The mission of removing the military leadership and returning President Aristide to power was objective and measuring success was well defined. The debate is that such a narrowly defined objective may have failed to accomplish the overall mission.¹⁹ I would conclude that in this example, military force was employed in a supporting role. The mission for the U. S. led military operation phase was to act as an enabling force, expeditiously creating a sustainable environment for the GOH and follow-on forces and agencies to achieve the ultimate political end state objectives.

¹⁹ Strenansky, 40.

CHAPTER IV

OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR(BOSNIA)

Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR was the United States-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization(NATO) commitment of ground forces as the implementation force(IFOR) in support of United Nations Security Council Resolution(UNSCR)1031; the peace enforcement mission of the Dayton Accords. This followed over two and one half years of uncertain diplomacy. The Clinton Administration realized that U.S. troops would inevitably go to Bosnia. The decision was only whether they would help to extricate U.N. peacekeeping troops from a failed mission or to enforce a peace. With diplomatic efforts having achieved a peace agreement, the military was committed in an enforcement role.²⁰

President Clinton described the U.S.-led NATO force as “a terrific success”.²¹ According to former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, the “military operation in Bosnia rates an A plus.”²² This operation provides an opportunity to examine U.S. military participation in a conflict that began over 600 years ago. The challenge for the operational commander in Bosnia was to understand the historical, political and ethnic origins of the conflict. He had to guard against oversimplification regarding the complexities of the social and political issues confronting the force. Clearly the use of force had its limitation in this mission, which was realized by the political leadership. “I don’t think you can use American or NATO or other

²⁰ Elaine Sciolino, “Bosnia Policy Shaped by US Military Role”, The New York Times, 29 July 1996, A15:3-6.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Adm Leighton W. Smith Jr., USN(ret), Interview, Naval War College, Newport, R.I., 4 December 1996.

forces to change human hearts. That is not something outsiders can do,” said National Security Advisor Anthony Lake.²³

Developing an exit strategy and measuring success in this operation would prove difficult. The establishment of a one year deadline was an artificial condition under which the operational commander, Admiral Leighton Smith, was to plan and execute his operation. Redeployment of forces was part of the mission and the end state was that U.S. forces would withdraw after one year--not necessarily tied to the progress in enforcing the Dayton Accords.²⁴ Former Secretary of Defense Perry had a modest view of what constituted success for this mission. His view was not that all of the provisions of the Dayton Accords be implemented. Success in terms of the U.S./NATO mission was that the warring factions be separated, their big guns stored in cantons, the arming and training of the Bosnian Muslims undertaken, and the security conditions made stable enough for Serbs, Croats and Muslims to begin interacting and doing business at their own pace. The use of ground forces was strictly to deter war, not unify the country.²⁵ The operational commander developed a condition of success in this operation as “progress toward normalcy.”²⁶ This was measured using indicators such as the price and availability of goods and services, civic rebuilding projects undertaken, availability of power and resumption of services, and miles of roads repaired and operable. As indicators such as these showed progress up the “normalcy curve,” the mission was successful. In the words of Admiral Smith, “Any way you cut it, IFOR was a success.” What’s not clear is if we’ll muck it up by giving a smaller force more to do.

²³ Sciolino, A15:6.

²⁴ Adm Smith Int.

²⁵ Thomas L. Friedman, “Exit Strategy”, The New York Times, @4 April 1996, A21:5-6.

²⁶ Adm Smith int.

IFOR will likely lead to other things.”²⁷ Admiral Smith was adamant in not drawing his force into missions they could not enforce or define. He remained focused on the mandate and the capabilities of his force, determined to preserve both the legitimacy and the security of the operation.

²⁷ Ibid.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Through an analysis of the Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia peace operations, it is evident that the end state should be the existence of a condition, not a date in time. Applying a time limit other than for general planning purposes, could in fact create a critical weakness/critical vulnerability. This could subsequently be exploited by a belligerent to reach the operational, if not strategic center of gravity of the U.S. or other participating forces. Planning for the end state and indicators of success must be a proactive and dynamic process for the operational commander. It is too important to be left solely to the politicians.

Missions such as establishing secure environments, rehabilitating political institutions and rebuilding infrastructure are long term and complex objectives. In these types of undertakings, U.S. military force may be more appropriately employed as an enabling force and in a supporting role, rather than as the lead agency. Termination of the military portion of the operation may be a phase of a synchronized inter-agency campaign plan, and not necessarily coincide with the overall mission end state. "Nation building," as National Security Advisor Anthony Lake noted, "had been scratched off of the list of U.S. interests because it was too burdensome and problematic for the kinds of forces the United States might be willing to commit".²⁸ Military force may temporarily relieve a condition and can support long term objectives, but most likely cannot achieve them independently. There is no such thing as "surgical strikes" in peace operations. Timelines and deadlines established

²⁸ Interview with Editorial Board/Staff of USA Today and Anthony Lake, USA Today, 7 April 1994, 13.

artificially and independently of criteria for success can be counterproductive. The belligerents know up front that they only need to wait out the U.S. will to commit force and could ultimately possess a fatal advantage. Additionally, if the end state is tied to casualties, the incentive could be to bloody U.S. forces.

In concert with political authorities, the commander must develop an exit strategy flexible enough to overcome the fog and friction assured to be present during the conduct of the operation. This will drive the ways and means for execution. Overwhelming force will not always be the right answer particularly when imprudently and injudiciously applied. Balance between the force capabilities and tasks is more significant than simply applying overwhelming force. The on-scene operational commander is best suited to make the call regarding termination. To do this he must be actively involved in the political process up front; ensuring that the desired political end state has been translated into a viable military strategy--including when and how to leave.

Conditions of normalcy as they exist in the developed world are not always useful indicators of success in peace operations. Measuring success must be in terms that have significance to the parties that are the object of the operation. The ideals of democracy may be lost on a people where the daily struggle is to survive and provide for the basic needs. Criteria that gauge success must be measurable and have a one-to-one relationship between the criteria and the objectives they measure. Milestones and indicators must reflect progress as well as warn of failure. Many MOOTW indicators differ from those used in conventional operations, but all must focus on the mission and how the commander knows when it has been achieved. Peace operations are dynamic in nature and success hinges on understanding

operational feedback throughout the conduct of the operation and responding rapidly and effectively.

The political and military leadership must continue to evaluate the participation and utility of military force in peace operations. As articulated in the National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, “The President’s policy review on peace operations requires the United States to undertake a rigorous analysis of requirements and capabilities before voting to support or participate in peace operations...we will employ rigorous criteria, including the same principles that would guide any decision to employ U.S. forces.”²⁹

Finally, newly appointed Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen hints at the future role of the U.S. military in peace operations; “We ought to be very careful in terms of how we employ them and where we deploy them...Our force is there to defend American vital interests, and important interests, and not to overindulge ourselves in employing them to humanitarian and other types of operations.”³⁰ Under these policy guidelines, the operational commander must stay engaged in the decision making and planning processes and provide candor concerning the capabilities and limitations of the employment of military force. Analysis of recent operations offers a framework for the operational commander to use in the planning and execution of the delicate peace operation mission. A process for measuring success and recognizing the symptoms of failure will serve the operational commander well the next time that the call comes to, “Just do Something!”

²⁹U.S. President, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, The White House, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, February, 1996, 23.

³⁰ Associated Press, “Cohen Sworn In, Cites Caution on Humanitarian Missions,” The Boston Globe, 25 January 1997, A6:3-6.

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