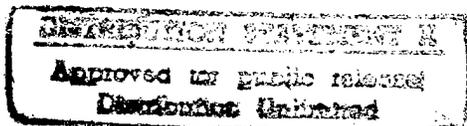


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ACHIEVING UNITY OF EFFORT
IN MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR

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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Since the end of the Cold War, American armed forces have found themselves involved more and more frequently in military operations other than war (MOOTW). These include a wide range of operations, both non-combat and combat. Almost invariably, these operations involve a variety of forces--military and civilian, government and non-government, American and foreign. Operations of this type require intense coordination and cooperation--known as unity of effort in Joint Doctrine--in order to achieve stated objectives and thus success.

The wide variety of participants in MOOTW brings unique problems, including command and control, lack of clearly defined objectives and desired end state, different objectives among the participants, and cultural differences.

This paper suggests that unity of effort in MOOTW must be considered and addressed constantly, from the earliest stages of planning until the desired end state has been achieved. Numerous examples of successes, failures and difficulties experienced with respect to achieving unity of effort during the peace operations in Somalia from 1992 to 1994 are provided.

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, American armed forces have found themselves involved more and more frequently in military operations other than war (MOOTW), which "focus on deterring war and promoting peace."¹ These include a wide range of operations, both non-combat and combat, from humanitarian assistance to peace enforcement to post-hostilities operations. Almost invariably, these operations involve a variety of forces--military and civilian, government and non-government, American and foreign. This mixture of participants changes the face of operations to which the U.S. military is accustomed.

Operations involving a broad range of organizations require intense coordination and cooperation--known as unity of effort in Joint Doctrine--in order to achieve stated objectives and thus success. The military could find themselves in either a supported role, where the military commander is in charge, or in a supporting role, where another individual, such as an Ambassador, is in charge.

How is unity of effort achieved? This paper suggests that unity of effort in MOOTW must be considered and addressed constantly, from the earliest stages of planning until the desired end state has been achieved. It examines situations that might hamper or enhance unity of effort through examples of successes, difficulties, and failures experienced during

the peace operations in Somalia from 1992 to 1994. Although it is only one example of a military operation other than war, the experiences there illustrate well the difficulties associated with achieving unity of effort.

Background

Military operations other than war "...encompass the use of military capabilities across the range of military operations short of war....MOOTW focus on deterring war, resolving conflict, promoting peace, and supporting civil authorities in response to domestic crises....[they] may involve elements of both combat and non-combat operations in peacetime, conflict and war situations."² When MOOTW involve combat, such as strikes, raids or peace enforcement, they may look very similar to war. Non-combat operations include disaster relief, nation assistance, and support to federal, state and local governments. Both combat and non-combat forms of MOOTW can occur before, after or during a war, or they can be entirely unrelated to war.

MOOTW can be short-lived, as is often the case in disaster relief operations, or protracted operations that may continue for many years. Long-term operations in particular tend to change focus as objectives, participants and conditions change over time.

There are principles of MOOTW, just as there are principles of war, intended to guide the conduct of operations in order to ensure success. Unity of effort, a principle of MOOTW, is a variation of unity of command, which is one of the principles of war. Unity of command "ensure[s] unity of effort under one responsible commander for every objective. [It] means that all forces operate under a single commander with the requisite authority to direct all forces employed in pursuit of a common purpose."³ Unity of effort, on the other hand, "...requires coordination and cooperation among all forces toward a commonly recognized objective, although they are not necessarily part of the same command structure."⁴

Critical to achieving unity of effort is another principle of both war and MOOTW, objective--"to direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective."⁵ Strategic objectives must be understood by the operational commander, and operational objectives must then support those at the strategic level. In order to have well defined, attainable objectives at any level, the desired end state, or conditions that define success, must be clearly articulated and understood by all participants. "If the desired end state is not clearly defined there is ample room for divergence to develop. Even if the end state is well defined but there exists disagreement on its desirability at any level then unity of effort will be less than wholly adequate."⁶

The peace operations in Somalia from August 1992 through March 1994 provide many examples that illustrate the difficulty of achieving unity of effort. The operations had both successes and failures in this area. The military forces of more than 20 nations, and approximately 50 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) were involved. Although it began as a humanitarian operation, the scope of the mission was expanded significantly as time passed.

There were three phases to Somalia operations, all conducted under the auspices of the United Nations. U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I), or Operation Provide Relief, from 15 August 1992 to 9 December 1992, was a humanitarian relief operation. Operation Restore Hope/United Task Force (UNITAF), from 9 December 1992 to 4 May 1993, commanded by Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, U.S. Marine Corps, provided security to the organizations delivering humanitarian assistance. In March 1993, the U.N. passed Security Council Resolution 814, which established UNOSOM II, the third phase of the operation, from 4 May 1993 to 31 March 1994. It expanded the mission to include disarmament of Somali clans and nation-building. Led by Turkish Lieutenant General Cevik Bir, UNOSOM II was a peace enforcement operation, including "application of military force, or the threat of its use...to compel compliance with resolutions or sanctions designed to maintain or restore peace and order."⁷ U.S. Army Major

General Thomas M. Montgomery served as General Bir's deputy, as well as Commander, U.S. Forces Somalia (USFORSOM).

Examples in this paper will be drawn from the latter two phases.

Achieving Unity of Effort

In war, unity of command is relatively easy to achieve due to the command and control (C2) structure of the military. Typically, the military uses a hierarchical structure in which all participants are part of a chain of command headed by a single commander. In MOOTW, command and control is much more complicated; thus, unity of effort is more difficult to grasp. The internal command and control structure of military forces is likely to be clear cut and unambiguous; however, non-military participants in the operation are not normally an integral part of that structure. They likely report to their own headquarters organizations, and have no obligation or inclination to report to a military commander, or even a civilian from another agency designated to be in charge of an operation. In the case of NGOs and PVOs, the structure is often horizontal; that is, all members are essentially equals and do not report to one another.

In some operations there is not a single agency or individual charged with coordinating all humanitarian assistance; each of these organizations operates

independently. During UNITAF, humanitarian operations centers (HOCs), headed by a U.N. official, were established to coordinate humanitarian relief efforts. Daily meetings were held for representatives of PVOs and NGOs, government agencies, and the military. Because of the different chains of command of the participants, however, there was still no command structure for the relief aspect of the operation. The HOC included a civil-military operations center (CMOC) to coordinate relief efforts with military support. The CMOC was staffed with coalition military and humanitarian assistance personnel. Through daily meetings, the CMOC improved the communication and coordination among participants, but by no means eliminated all problems between the military and humanitarian relief organizations (HROs).

Depending on the nature as well as the specific circumstances of an operation, a military commander may find himself or herself in a supporting role to an Ambassador or other civilian. Overseas, the U.S. Ambassador, as the President's personal representative to a nation, is normally in charge--assuming the embassy is still functioning. The Ambassador's primary tool for coordinating interagency operations is the Country Team, comprised of members of the embassy staff, as well as representatives from a number of other agencies, including the Department of Defense. Although a military commander may be a member of a Country Team, and the Ambassador has the lead, the military commander is merely

supporting the Ambassador, who officially has no authority over him or her. The Ambassador is directed by the President to work with the military commander to "...keep each other currently informed and cooperate on all matters of mutual interest. Any differences that cannot be resolved in the field should be reported by [the Ambassador] to the Secretary of State; area military commanders should report to the Secretary of Defense."⁸ Although it is in the best interest of each to work together, differences are inevitable and must be anticipated. The dual chains of command, however, provide legitimate avenues for avoiding resolution of problems. It is therefore imperative that these two key players have a very close working relationship even before a crisis develops, if possible, so that they may together achieve success.* That relationship must continue until the objectives have been met, and the desired end state has been reached.

Coalition forces present several C2 issues that must be resolved from the earliest planning stages. Possibly the most serious issue results from the fact that coalition forces often are not integrated into one C2 organization--at least not in practice. During hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 12 May 1994, Major General Montgomery stated:

*In an effort to improve the communication and coordination between their departments, the Department of Defense and the State Department have assigned Political Advisors to many of the Unified Command staffs.

...the major challenge for a United Nations force commander is that very often, contingent commanders either have access to or are under orders to call back to their national capitals before they either say 'Yes, sir,' or 'No, sir' to the force commander. You cannot have a strong command or chain of command given that kind of circumstance.⁹

During UNOSOM II, many nations who had agreed to provide troops for humanitarian assistance began to question why their troops were now involved in combat. The following describes the problems that resulted:

This concern manifested itself in a pronounced tendency for some of these national contingents to seek guidance from their respective capitals before carrying out even routine tactical orders. According to published reports, the commander of the Italian contingent went so far as to open separate negotiations with the fugitive warlord Mohammed Aideed--apparently with the full approval of his home government.¹⁰

The Italian Government apparently refused the U.N.'s request that the officer be relieved from command for insubordination, demonstrating "...both the fundamental existence of parallel lines of authority and the fundamental difficulties of commanding a coalition force under combat conditions."¹¹

Command and control of U.S. forces during UNOSOM II was not simple and straightforward as one might expect; on the contrary, it was quite complicated. The logistics forces, the Quick Reaction Force and Task Force Ranger each had their own chain of command. When a Joint Task Force was added to the operation, it was under operational control of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and tactical control of USFORSOM. Navy and Marine Corps forces off the coast of Somalia were under operational control of CENTCOM. A C2 organization as complex

as this exacerbated the normal problems associated with achieving unity of effort. As so aptly stated by Colonel Kenneth Allard, "If it takes more than 10 seconds to explain the command arrangements, they probably won't work."¹²

According to joint doctrine, there are three main options for command and control that can be used when multinational forces are involved in MOOTW. The first of these is the lead nation option, in which a particular nation agrees to provide the majority of forces, which, along with other nations' forces, will be under the operational control of a military commander from the lead nation. The commander's staff is comprised primarily of members of his own nation's military, but is augmented by other nations. The second option is the parallel option, in which a force commander is selected, but each participating nation has greater operational control over its own forces than in the first option. The commander's staff in this case has representation from all participating nations in the same proportion as their contributions to the force. The final option is the regional alliance. In this case, an existing alliance, such as NATO, would provide the command and control structure.¹³

As an operation moves through various phases, the C2 structure may change. A well-functioning team in one phase may be replaced entirely by a new team in the next phase. Although some turnover may occur, continuity will be severely

reduced, and the new team will inevitably go through a period of adjustment.

In Somalia, the lead nation option was used during UNITAF, and the parallel option was employed during UNOSOM II. The former proved to be much more effective, due in large part to its relative simplicity. The transition was less than ideal for a number of reasons. General Montgomery met his staff for the first time when he arrived in Somalia. The staff was not a group that had been working together for some time; rather, it was comprised primarily of officers sent individually from units all over the world on a temporary duty basis. Further, only 30 percent of them had arrived in Somalia by the start of UNOSOM II.¹⁴

All command and control issues must be addressed prior to the start of a MOOTW. Changing circumstances, however, may necessitate a change in C2. When the C2 structure does change during an operation, the effects of the changes need to be considered so that appropriate action may be taken to minimize problems. With more careful planning, the problems experienced during the transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II could have been avoided, and the operation would likely have begun with an effective, unified team.

Including all participants in planning from the start will also ease some of the difficulties. Military commanders are obliged to bring non-military players into the planning for operations, for these civilians often have a tremendous

amount of expertise in regional issues, culture, politics and language. The capabilities of all participants need to be included in campaign plans. The planning, and more importantly, the communication, must continue throughout the operation to facilitate best use of the expertise that is brought to the table. Prior to coalition forces sending troops to UNITAF, liaison officers from participating nations went to CENTCOM to participate in the planning process. This proved extremely valuable to the coordination efforts among the coalition forces. Commanders must be aware that the participants themselves may change at any time, requiring flexibility at all times.

As indicated previously, unity of effort is inextricably linked to objectives and desired end state. Unless objectives and the desired end state are explicitly stated and, perhaps more importantly, clearly understood at all levels, unity of effort will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Further, participants in a MOOTW must be working toward the same objectives and end state.

Each nation that enters into a coalition has its own motives for doing so--some to provide real military capabilities, others for the sake of appearances. Whatever, the motive for participating, it undoubtedly has some effect on the degree to which a nation supports the objectives of the operation.

Somalia offers an example of the importance of well-defined objectives--and more specifically, agreement on these objectives by all participants. U.N. Security Resolution 794 of 3 December 1992 stated that the mission of UNITAF, in addition to providing security for delivery of humanitarian assistance, was "...to restore peace, stability and law and order with a view to facilitating the process of a political settlement under the auspices of the United Nations, aimed at national reconciliation in Somalia...."¹⁵ CENTCOM's mission for U.S. troops was to "...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."¹⁶ No mention of restoration of peace was made. Although the U.S. mission supported that of the U.N., the U.S. mission was much less ambitious and much more limited in scope. There was apparently some disagreement between these two key players as to the mission.

Leaders at the strategic level must address unity of effort when they are determining objectives and desired end states. It is imperative that civilian leaders at this level consult with military leaders to ensure that the objectives they are setting can be supported militarily. If other nations are to take part in an operation, our leaders must

ensure that our national strategic objectives are in concert with those of the other nations involved and that those nations can and will support the objectives and desired end state.

Another example is the difference in, or rather, the lack of coordination between, objectives of the military and HROs. The military mission in Somalia was to provide security for delivery of humanitarian assistance. Yet decisions regarding how this was to be done were often made without the input of those actually delivering food and supplies to the Somalis, which hampered the efforts of the HROs.

UNITAF concentration on protecting a few major food transport corridors while simultaneously disarming NGOs served to limit NGO activities and concentrate food aid in a few major centers (which had become food distribution centers or havens for Somalis displaced by the fighting). This both attracted looters and added to health and water problems associated with large population concentrations. It also impeded NGO outreach to more distant rural areas not secured by UNITAF....¹⁷

Although military forces likely believed they were successfully achieving their mission, thus allowing the NGOs and PVOs to accomplish theirs, they were, in reality, preventing that from happening to some extent. Coordination from the outset would aid in tying military objectives to those of HROs.

The problem described above may also be the result to some degree of cultural differences between various participants in MOOTW. These differences impact their abilities to work as a cohesive, effective team. The military

and HRO cultures are at opposite ends of the spectrum, as became apparent in Somalia:

The military was frustrated by what they viewed as disorganization and waste growing out of a tendency not to conduct detailed planning. Individually, they saw relief workers as young, liberal, anti-military, academic, self-righteous, incompetent, expatriate cowboys who came to an area for a short time to 'do good' without fully considering the consequences....At the same time, many relief workers saw military officers as inflexible, conservative, and bureaucratic. They found them insensitive to Somali suffering....

Attitudes and perceptions of this nature often make it difficult for such diverse groups to break down barriers between them enough to accomplish the tasks at hand. Such differences are not easy to resolve. To address the cultural differences, exchanges need to occur on a regular basis prior to the start of a crisis, whenever possible. Stereotypes and misunderstandings are often easier to overcome when the parties involved have ample opportunity to interact on a regular basis without the added pressures of a crisis.

Forces from different nations also have to deal with cultural differences. There are language barriers, religious differences, varying work ethics, and longstanding feuds between nations that must be considered by a commander attempting to establish an effective coalition.

All of these differences among participants in MOOTW contribute to the difficulties of managing such an operation, and thus achieving unity of effort.

Conclusions

Unity of effort in military operations other than war is very difficult to attain. Without it, the probability of success of an operation is greatly reduced.

As seen in the case of Somalia, the wide variety of participants in MOOTW brings unique problems. These problems include command and control, lack of clearly defined objectives and desired end state, different objectives among the participants, and cultural differences. Each of these issues must be considered and addressed from the outset of an operation if the impact is to be minimized. Because of the constantly changing circumstances of MOOTW, they must be addressed throughout the operation as well. Continual reassessment by political and military leaders working in concert with each other is required. Coordination among agencies even before a crisis occurs would aid even further in achieving unity of effort.

As MOOTW become more commonplace for U.S. military forces, cooperation, coordination and consensus-building among a wide variety of participants is essential if unity of effort is to be achieved.

Notes

1. U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Publication 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations (Washington: 1995), viii.
2. U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Publication 3-07, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War (Washington: 1995), I-1.
3. U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Pub 3-0, A-2.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid, A-1.
6. John T. Fishel, "Achieving the Elusive Unity of Effort," in Gray Area Phenomena: Confronting the New World Disorder ed. Max G. Manwaring (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 122.
7. U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Pub 3-07, GL-4.
8. Letter from William J. Clinton to Lauralee M. Peters, 16 September 1994.
9. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Military Operations in Somalia, Hearings (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1994), 61.
10. Kenneth Allard, Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned (Washington: National Defense University Press, 1995), 56.
11. Ibid, 56-57.
12. Ibid, 92.
13. U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Pub 3-07, IV-5.
14. Allard, 26.
15. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, The Crisis in Somalia, Hearing (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1993), Appendix 3, 117.
16. Waldo D. Freeman and others, "Operation Restore Hope: A U.S. CENTCOM Perspective," Military Review, September 1993, 64.
17. John G. Sommer and Carole C. Collins, Humanitarian Aid in Somalia: The Role of the Office of the U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) 1990-1994, (n.p.: n.p.), 20.

18. Jonathan T. Dworken, "Restore Hope: Coordinating Relief Operations," Joint Force Quarterly, Summer 1995, 19-20.

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