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JOINT OPERATIONS INVOLVE NEW THINKING: How to "Operationalize" Joint Vision 2010

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"It is a vacuous publication filled with an overabundance of cliches... [and it] lacks any intellectual rigor."
Lt Gen Paul Van Riper[1]

General Henry H Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and principal military advisor to the President has a problem, namely, the tar baby called *Joint Vision 2010*. Formulated and published in July 1996 by his predecessor, General John M Shalikashvili, *JV 2010* is intended to be the "conceptual template" for how America's Armed Forces will channel the vitality and innovation of our people and leverage technological opportunities to achieve new levels of effectiveness in joint warfighting [2] However, pundits like Gen Van Riper and others who would classify *JV 2010* as an "Immaculate Conception"—based on a viscid mixture of superlatives to the time tested military terms of maneuver, engagement, protection, and logistics—may have missed the point

Gen Shali's *vision* for America's Armed Forces in the 21st century is a continuation of its current status as the world's "standard for military excellence and joint warfighting "[3] I believe he wanted the document to serve as an operationally based template for the evolution of our armed forces—an evolution that depicts a future end-state, not an end-date Unfortunately, most of the critics of *JV 2010* focus on the semantics of the operational concepts being discussed and their evolution and fruition at the premised end-date of 2010 The challenges facing Gen Shelton as he attempts to remove the tar and "operationalize" *JV 2010* are twofold first, he must retail the vision

[1] Ernest Blazar, *Inside the Ring*, Washington Times, April 16, 1998, accessed via the Early Bird available at http://eoird dtic mil, Internet
[2] *Joint Vision 2010*, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D C , July 1996 5 Hereafter referred to as *JV 2010*, document is available at http //www dtic mil Internet
[3] *JV 2010*, 34

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for what it was intended to be, and what he intends it to be, and second, he must ensure the implementation strategy gives us the most effective way to capitalize on "jointness" to achieve strategic end-states. Failure to do so will not only put our future Armed Forces at risk, but also our ability to support and sustain our National Security Strategy as well

Retailing the Vision

In the convocation address to the National War College Class of 1998, the guest speaker outlined a process whereby four key items must be considered when formulating strategy and policy The first step, *conceptualization*, requires the strategist or policymaker to think the issue through from start to finish *Consensus* is the next step, not only within the organization, but also between affected agencies Third, getting the job done and where the detail in balancing the means to the ends meets is the *execution* phase And finally, the last step involves *retailing* the policy Using this simple framework, we can evaluate what challenges and opportunities face Gen Shelton as he attempts to operationalize *JV 2010*

Conceptualization

All indications are that Gen Shelton will continue with the basic concepts outlined in *JV 2010*—adjectives aside Who can argue against a vision that seeks to maintain American military dominance that will be persuasive in peace, decisive in war, and preeminent in any form of conflict? To do so would be counter to the ethos of the Armed Forces of the United States and seriously erode the empowerment given to the Chairman under the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 (GNA) To that end, Gen Shelton must heed

the words from Clausewitz on the two basic principles that underlie all strategic planning first, act with the utmost concentration, and second, act with the utmost speed [4]

Following Clausewitz's maxim, we would trace the strength of *JV 2010* back to the fewest possible sources—in this case, the use of maneuver, engagement, protection, and logistics—and ideally to one, again in this case, the oft implied end-state/end-date of 2010 The "attack" on these sources must be compressed into the fewest possible actions, again, ideally, into one [5] However, to attack these time-tested principles (espoused by the great theorists such as Clausewitz, Sun Tzu, and Liddel Hart, and applied by great masters such as Napoleon, Nelson, and Schwarzkopf) would be folly The only attack Gen Shelton can make on *JV 2010*, if he intends on completing the task, is to separate the end-state vision of 2010 from the end-date of 2010 Whatever attack mechanism Gen Shelton decides upon, he must act quickly He needs to get his "vision" of *JV 2010* on the streets to provide the necessary course correction

Consensus

Gen Shali achieved a moderate degree of consensus among the Services in regards to *JV 2010*, even though it was not a consensus document Designed to "become a benchmark for Services and Unified Command visions," the Services have taken varying approaches to interpreting *JV 2010* to their long-range planning

- Army The central focus of *Army Vision 2010* is the enduring versatility of land forces across the full spectrum of operations while linking the present army to the future vision described by *Force XXI* and the longer-term vision in *Army After Next* The document emphasizes the decisive contributions of land forces and describes how those forces support the major pillars of *JV 2010*

[4] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed and trans Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, New Jersey Princeton University Press, 1976), 617
[5] Ibid, 617

- Navy Published in 1992 *From the Sea* focuses on the critical contributions of naval forces in projecting power from the sea in support of joint and combined operations. A follow-on 1994 document titled *Forward From the Sea* expands on the value and role of naval expeditionary forces across the full spectrum of joint military operations The 1997 Navy Operational Concept provides additional depth to these documents and updates their terminology in view of *JV 2010*

- Marine Corps As the Department of the Navy's strategic vision, *Forward From the Sea* articulates the Marine Corps role in naval expeditionary force operations in the littorals Building on this vision, *Operational Maneuver From The Sea* describes the Marine Corps' use of the sea as a maneuver area from which to conduct seamless ship-to-objective operations

- Air Force Global *Engagement A Vision for the 21st Century Air Force* is based on the Air Force's understanding of what air and space power means to the Nation—the ability to affect an adversary's strategic, operational, and tactical centers of gravity and prevail throughout the full spectrum of military operations *Global Engagement* is grounded in *JV 2010* and embodies the Air Force's belief that in the 21st century, the strategic instrument of choice will be air and space power [6]

Although the sea services took a slightly different approach than the Army and Air Force, all services are concerned about the long-range impacts of *JV 2010* Any small mid-course corrections that Gen Shelton might offer for *JV 2010* would have little, if any, effect on the current service visions Only in the case of a complete redirection of a new "joint vision" (a new *Joint Vision 20XX*) would he be required to use the power of his position and that of the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee (JROC) to build consensus within and between the Services

[6] The Service Visions as noted are from the Selected DoD RMA Transformation Activities Annex to a letter from William S Cohen, Secretary of Defense, to the Honorable Strom Thurmond Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, Washington, D C , concerning comments on the Report of the National Defense Panel, (15 Dec 1997), available at http www dtic mil ndp annex html, accessed 16 Dec 1997

Execution

Clausewitz stated "any unnecessary expenditure of time is a waste of strength and thus abhorrent to strategic thought."[7] Gen Shelton has already seized the initiative and presented his initial views on *JV 2010* in the latest issue of Joint *Force Quarterly (JFQ)*. He spent his first article outlining what he feels is the relative simple task of operationalizing *JV 2010*. His three step approach involves establishing a joint experimental headquarters, using the RMA in information capabilities to test concepts, and lastly, focused experimentation on the four *JV 2010* conceptual areas culminating in the year 2004 with Global Challenge.

Unfortunately, Gen Shelton provided little insight into his personal views of *JV 2010* other than to comment that it "provided the first overarching joint operational framework for the services."[8] Additionally, he failed to divorce the notion of the end-state "vision" of 2010 with any implied end-date of 2010. But he did leave an avenue for dialogue with a request for comments from the CINC's, services, and major commands through contributions to future issues of *JFQ*. But what about the ideas from "smart operators?" How will the warfighters in the field and fleet be heard? What methods do they have to continue the dialogue with the Chairman on *JV 2010*? One possible answer lies in the "re-retailing" of the vision by Gen Shelton.

Retailing

While preparing this essay, I conducted a brief survey of my fellow National War College (NWC) students to determine when they had first become aware of *JV 2010*—the

[7] Clausewitz, 624.
[8] The Chairman's views on *JV 2010* are the frontpiece to the latest *JFQ*, Autumn/Winter 1997-98, available at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/, Internet.

results were extremely interesting Those fellow officers who had just come from the Air Staff or Joint Staff (inside the Beltway) all had first hand knowledge of *JV 2010* The percentage decreased slightly to approximately 75% for those who had an assignment at the MAJCOM level However, for those officers who had just come from the field and the fleet, the percentage dropped to approximately 25% The most oft quote for this category of respondents was "I never heard of it until I got here [at NWC] " How can a vision from our most senior military advisor and leader fail to make it to our airman, sailors, and soldiers in the field and in the fleet? The answer is simply a poor job of retailing the vision

To increase the "deployment" of *JV 2010* to the field and fleet, Gen Shelton can seize upon the opportunity of using information-age technology—namely the Internet A quick visit to the Chairman's home page (http //www dtic mil/jcs) allows the visitor to view a variety of documents, including *JV 2010* and other joint doctrine publications Additionally, links to each of the services has been established by the webmaster Unfortunately, any surfer who first accesses his or her "home page" will remain in parochial cyberspace with little hope of finding a link to any joint website It should take little cajoling on the Chairman's part to seek consensus from the service chiefs to install a link from their home pages to the joint home page

If we can link individual services to the joint staff, why not provide links between the services? If doing the former increases the dialogue on *JV 2010*, will doing the latter increase dialogue between the services? Establishing a distributed electronic network of this type is exactly what we need to spur new thinking on how to operate together and establish new processes and procedures It will also provide a solid foundation (if

utilized) for our smart operators to enter into any joint experiment with a basic understanding of the other services contributions to the operational concepts identified in *JV 2010*

The Internet is just one way of deploying the vision Both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman have successfully used the media and congressional forums to outline the vision and impacts *JV 2010* will have on the future of our forces J-7 has also produced the Joint Electronic Library (CD-ROM version) which is regularly distributed to personnel and units across the services But simply deploying the vision to promote new thinking and continue the dialogue is not enough The task to operationalize *JV 2010* involves balancing the ways and the means to achieve the strategic end-state Gen Shelton feels the task of operationalizing *JV 2010* will be relatively simple In short, it's not as simple as it looks

Implementation

The next benchmark in the *JV 2010* journey will be the *Joint Vision 2010 Implementation Plan*, expected to be published this summer This plan is expected to provide direction on implementation, project management, long range planning, and establish de-ailed assessment roadmaps for the future There are two central themes similar to the plan and the Chairman's three-step approach to operationalizing *JV 2010*, time and experimentation But both of these themes can become our ally or our enemy, depending on how they are utilized

On one hand, a traditional long-range time-phased planning process gives us the necessary milestones to focus our resources to ensure capability development These milestones provide a starting point from which we can adjust, alter, and integrate the

vision's six critical considerations doctrine, organizations, training and education, materiel, leadership, and people (DOTML-P) On the other hand, the same long-range time-phased plan built like a house of cards leaves little opportunity for managing risk

For example, let's take the projected Global Challenge experiment in 2004 Prior to this experiment, we will assume there will be a series of experiments involving precision engagement, dominant maneuver, full dimensional protection, and focused logistics If we started today to plan these experiments, and assumed even a moderate degree of success, we would be able to accomplish, at most, two experiments in each area prior to the "checkride" Joint Warfighting Experiment (JWE) in 2004

Following this milestone logic, we would take the results from Global Challenge, blend them into the Service POMs, change the Unified Command Plan, and develop joint doctrine Assuming we can accomplish a complete re-write of doctrine in two years, this would leave two years to take our post-Global Challenge force and conduct readiness training prior to calling it fully mission capable by 2010 On paper this sounds easy But, are we accepting too high a degree of risk with an approach like this? What if technology or information based superiority fails to produce the desired results in a key area? Can experimentation continue with one of the four pillars missing?

These are just a few of the questions and risks involved with a time-phased approach to an end-date force for 2010 But what will change if we take our transformation plan and extend the milestones out another 5 years? 10 years? First, without divorcing the notion of end-date from an end-state we run the risk of a loss of consensus within and between the services, an erosion of the management process for implementing the plan between the Joint Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense,

CINCs, and other defense agencies; and the loss of support and a potential increase in oversight from the congressional side of the house

Additionally, a longer time-horizon may in fact increase our risks as we attempt to achieve possibly an unachievable 100% solution If we act now in just two areas, *organizations* and *doctrine*, we may be able to mitigate the effects of time and reduce the levels of risk we may face in the future These two areas alone are vital to joint experimentation, something the Chairman stated will be "the engine for exploring concepts contained in *JV 2010* "

Organizations

One of the first milestones that must be met in order to start implementing *JV 2010* will be assigning responsibility for joint warfighting experiments to a single headquarters element Overall, the mission would entail monitoring all service and CINC related experiments, battle labs, and other training and exercises to determine what course of action needs to be taken in developing *JV 2010* experiments The requirements seem to point to a command with extensive background in joint training and exercises, something U S Atlantic Command (ACOM)—the heir apparent—already has The rhetoric has been steadily increasing for the crowning of ACOM as the *JV 2010* lead experimenter, but the decision is a long way off The Chairman has stated that "perhaps" as early as 1999 a decision will be made on who should take the lead

Any delay on this decision will only further exacerbate the problems in fielding the 2010 force and implementing the vision Additionally, if it takes this long to identify the joint lead agency, how long will it take the services to identify the forces that will take part in the experiments? Will they simply re-role units from exercises to experiments? What are the impacts to OPSTEMPO and PERSTEMPO? Just as the

Chairman and our senior service leaders are discussing who should be the lead organization, each service must start looking around now for their service leads

I propose that Headquarters, 8th Air Force, stationed at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, be designated as the Air Force's component to ACOM for all *JV 2010* issues 8th AF currently has a warfighting mission in support of ACOM and has established a solid working relationship performing various large-scale joint exercises each year Also, 8th AF also has something to offer which will be invaluable for experimentation—they can bring the Total Force package to any experiment, which consists of active, guard, and reserve forces[9] Making the "Mighty Eighth" the Air Force's arm of the *JV 2010* experiment makes sense—the decision must be made soon so we can really prepare for the future

Doctrine

The second area we can mitigate our risks is doctrine GNA made the Chairman singularly responsible for "developing doctrine for the joint employment of the armed forces" To carry out these responsibilities, the Chairman designated the Operational Plans and Interoperability Directorate, J-7, as the lead agency for managing the joint doctrine processes Since 1986, J-7 has accomplished a tremendous amount of work developing a total of 104 Joint Pubs Unfortunately, one problem is the assessment/revision timeline in the development process is excessive

Currently, the assessment/revision cycle is 18 to 24 months following publication, and no later than 5 years after development, each pub is reviewed If we factor this

[9] As an aside, the 608th Air Operations Group (AOG) is also analyzing ways to enhance Air Operations Center (AOC) activities for Air Expeditionary Forces (AEFs) that cross CINC boundaries 'Experiments" into Quick/Limited/Theater Response packages demonstrate the type of *new thinking* required for *JV 2010*

timeline into our projected JV 2010 implementation plan, we will be overcome by this bureaucratic process and fail to achieve any success in developing joint doctrine If we are building a force with information superiority as one pillar, isn't it reasonable to assume we can reduce our doctrine development timeline? If not, the entire implementation program will be put at risk To align doctrine development with the example 2010 timeline described above, the assessment/revision cycle must be reduced to 12-14 months with a follow-on review at the 2-year point

Another problem is the scope of the work to be done Of the 104 joint publications, only 63 are approved leaving 41 under development In the publications dealing with Joint Force Employment, a total of 63% are complete (15 out of 24) In the area of Joint Logistics, the total complete or under revision is even lower—41% (7 out of 17)[10] Can we afford to invest in joint experimentation with incomplete doctrine? Obviously, the answer is no We must expedite the completion of our doctrine, both in development and assessment, to provide a baseline for our joint warfighting experiments

Similar to identifying a joint headquarters element in a timely manner, we must fix our doctrine problems as soon as possible The organizational changes will supply the means, the joint doctrine the ways—failure to have either will only ensure failure in the end

Operationalizing *JV 2010* will not be as simple as the Chairman thinks It will require a transformational strategy—one that first retails the meaning of a *JV 2010* force and identifies the challenges and opportunities we face in implementing that vision It

[10] Information from Joint Pub 1-01 1 The Joint Staff is not alone in the doctrine problem A search of the Air Force Doctrine Hierarchy shows that of the total 32 doctrine pubs, 4 are published 17 are in coordination, and 11 are under development (http //www hqafdc maxwell af mil/doctrine/hierarchy htm)

must also involve new thinking—about the way we organize, train and equip, even about how we assess the risks we are willing to take It will require making hard decisions today, so we will have a *JV 2010* force of the future