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Since World War II, the United States has participated in several conflicts that have been fought for limited objectives. The results of these conflicts, it can be argued, have been disappointing and illustrates the difficulty in terminating wars of limited objectives. An analysis of war terminations issues from limited wars such as Dorea, Vietnam, Panama, etc. have shown how difficult it has been in achieving a desired political objective or end state. Therefore, the lessons learned from these conflicts can be extremely important to operational commanders to insure that war termination considerations are addressed at the outset of hostilities and continues through post conflict operations.

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OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WAR TERMINATION

by

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

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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OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WAR TERMINATION

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OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WAR TERMINATION

*"No one starts a war, - or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so - without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it."*¹

-Carl von Clausewitz

I. INTRODUCTION

With the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the prospects for a global war seem very remote and our focus has shifted to a strategy that is centered around meeting regional threats that challenge our national security. Since World War II, our last global war fought for the total defeat of an enemy and unconditional surrender, the United States has participated in several conflicts that have been fought for limited objectives. The results of these conflicts, it can be argued, have illustrated the difficulty in ending limited wars and the disappointment with the less than satisfactory outcome of several conflicts conducted by the United States in the last fifty years. The lessons learned from these conflicts can be extremely important to operational commanders in future campaign planning to insure that all efforts are directed toward a military strategy that achieves the political objective or "end state"

II. POLITICAL OBJECTIVE AND MILITARY STRATEGY

The political objective - the original motive for the war - will thus determine both the military objective to be reached and

¹Carl von Clausewitz, On War. ed. and trans. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 579.

the amount of effort it requires.² Perhaps the most difficult and critical task prior to committing U.S. armed forces is determining the political objective and developing a military strategy that achieves a desired end state. Army Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, states: "A military end state includes the required conditions that, when achieved, attain the strategic objectives or pass the main effort to other instruments of national power to achieve the final strategic end state. That end state describes what the National Command Authority (NCA) wants the situation to be when operations conclude - both military operations, as well as those where the military is in support of other instruments of national power".³

The result of not establishing a clearly defined political objective or military strategy can best be illustrated by our failure in Vietnam. As Fred Charles Ikle' put it: America's conduct of the war in Vietnam suffered not so much from limits imposed on the use of military force as from lack of an overarching strategy for applying military force in a way that would bring the war to a satisfactory end.⁴ In simplistic terms, Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, stated the United States objective as:

²Clausewitz, p. 81

³U.S. Dept. of the Army, Field Manual 100-5, Operations, June 1993, p. 6-1.

⁴Fred Charles Ikle', Every War Must End, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. x.

"We seek an independent, non-Communist South Vietnam."⁵ General Westmoreland, Commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, translated this political objective into a strategic objective which was: To assist the Government of Vietnam and its armed forces to defeat externally directed and supported communist subversion and aggression and attain an independent South Vietnam functioning in a secure environment.⁶

The military strategy during the Vietnam War changed several times by our incremental involvement and gradual escalation during the conflict. Our strategy evolved from providing advisors, small unit counterinsurgency operations, conventional warfare, to pacification. All these military operations were designed to isolate South Vietnam, stabilize the government and defeat the insurgency. Many have argued, however, that the Communist insurgency in South Vietnam was the direct result of the external support and aggression of North Vietnam. As Harry Summers points out in his book, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*: "Instead of focusing our attention on the external enemy, North Vietnam - the source of the war - we turned our attention to the symptom - the guerilla war in the south - and limited our attacks on the North to air and sea actions only."⁷ As a result,

⁵Terrence Maitland and Stephen Weiss, The Vietnam Experience: Raising the Stakes, (Boston, MA: Boston Publishing Company, 1982), p. 102.

⁶Harry G. Summers Jr., On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War, (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982), p. 101.

⁷Ibid. p. 102.

our military strategy was not focused on the elimination of North Vietnamese support and aggression (center of gravity) that could have achieved the end state of a non-Communist South Vietnam.

In addition, the conflict in Vietnam was a Communist led insurgency in which political, economic, and social factors must also be considered. Throughout the conflict, these factors played a major role in our failure to reach a satisfactory ending to the war. For example, a key factor for the support of the Communist insurgency was the corrupt South Vietnamese government. According to Bernard Brodie: "They tended to be severe and vindictive with political opponents or dissenters and utterly corrupt in their management of the government, and thus, one should hardly need to add, ineffective in dealing with their own people."⁸ Therefore, emphasis on developing and forming an effective government would have contributed to the end state. Close coordination between military planners and civilian leaders in developing a strategy to accomplish stated objectives must include all factors that contribute to achieving the overall political aim.

Another example of a flawed political objective and military strategy is our less than satisfactory involvement in Somalia. In today's troubled world, Somalia provides an insight into the potential conflicts in which the United States could be drawn into in the foreseeable future. President Bush, in an address on 4 December 1992, announced the U.S. objectives in Somalia as:

⁸Bernard Brodie, War & Politics, (New York: Macmillian Publishing Co., 1974), p. 164

"First we will create a secure environment in the hardest hit parts of Somalia so that food can move from ships overland to the people in the countryside now devastated by starvation; and second, once we have created that secure environment, we will withdraw our troops, handing the security mission back to a regular U.N. peacekeeping force."⁹

In simple terms, President Bush had announced the political objective as the establishment of a secure environment in order to deliver humanitarian aid. The objective is extremely vague and does not provide a clear picture of the desired end state. The military strategy to accomplish this "secure environment" was to send overwhelming combat forces to Somalia to secure the entire country so that humanitarian aid could be delivered to the starving, stabilize the situation, and turn the operation over to the United Nations and withdraw U.S. forces as soon as possible. This military strategy was not specific as noted by Michael R Gordon of *The New York Times*, who wrote: "As if to underscore the point that getting into Somalia is expected to be easier than getting out, the Pentagon was vague on how it planned to establish a "secure environment" in the heavily armed nation so that the United Nations could take over."¹⁰

The political objective and military strategy do not adequately address the long term causes of the situation in Somalia and therefore failed to articulate an achievable end state. The strategy treats only the symptom - starvation - and neglects the

⁹George Bush quoted in "Bush's Talk on Somalia: U.S. Must Do it Right." The New York Times, 5 Dec 92, p. A.4.

¹⁰Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. is Sending Large Forces as Warning to Somalia Clans", The New York Times, 5 Dec 1992, p. A.4.

cause of the problem. The problem in Somalia stems from lack of a functioning government and anarchy caused by marauding clans and individuals who have terrorized the country. Having failed to correct these causes, the country is doomed to revert back to the conditions that existed prior the U.S. intervention. Perhaps if President Bush had included the establishment a stable government as part of the political objective, the prospects for a favorable end state in Somalia could have been improved. In addition, the military strategy could have also included actions, in coordination with the State Department, that would assist in the establishment of a stable government. On the other hand, the establishment of a stable government in Somalia would be a major undertaking which would involve a long term commitment by the United States. It is doubtful that the American people would be willing to support such a costly commitment.

The Persian Gulf War, on the other hand, provides a useful model to show how successful a well defined political objective and military strategy can achieve a desired end state. President Bush in an address to the nation on August 8, 1990 stated our objectives in the Persian Gulf as: "Four simple principles guide our policy; First, we seek the immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait; Second, Kuwait's legitimate government must be restored to replace the puppet regime; and third, my administration, as had been the case with every president from President Roosevelt to President Reagan, is committed to the security and stability of the Persian Gulf; and fourth, I am

determined to protect the lives of American citizens abroad."¹¹

Central Command (CENTCOM) defined its objectives as end-states in terms of two fairly clear policy goals, restoration of the legitimate government of Kuwait and regional stability.¹² In order to accomplish these end-states, the Iraqi army had to withdraw from Kuwait either through negotiations or by force. The military strategy to accomplish these objectives consisted of a campaign which was conducted in two phases - an air phase and land phase. CENTCOM had identified the Iraqi center of gravity as the Iraqi army and more specifically the Republican Guard. The operational plans called for the air phase to attack Iraqi command, control, and communications, air defenses, cut off their supplies and reinforcements, and attack Iraqi ground forces. The ground phase consisted of an attack against ground forces in Kuwait with the main attack against the flank of the Republican Guard through Iraq. The campaign was a complete success as noted by Harry Summers, "... Central Command's military campaign plans at the operational level of war were designed specifically to achieve the strategic objectives. And that's what they did."¹³

Although the liberation of Kuwait and the legitimate government had been restored, there is an argument that the second

¹¹Harry G. Summers, JR., On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War, (New York: Dell Publishing, 1992), p. 173.

¹²John T. Fishel, Liberation, Occupation, and Rescue: War Termination and Desert Storm, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1992), p. 60

¹³Summers, On Strategy II, p. 176

part of the strategic objective, regional security, had not been accomplished. As John Fishel points out: "The military strategy saw regional stability in terms of an Iraq whose military capability had been so degraded that it could not threaten its neighbors but not a dismembered Iraq consisting of a Shiite state in the south, a Kurdish state in the north, and a Sunni Arab Mesopotamia state in the center, all at war with each other."¹⁴ Since American forces are still in the region, one could argue that regional stability has not been accomplished.

III. ENDS VERSUS MEANS

Providing the means to accomplish the strategic objective is another key factor that political leaders and operational planners must consider. Clausewitz has written: "The degree of force that must be used against the enemy depends on the scale of political demands on either side. These demands, so far as they are known, would show what efforts each must make; but they seldom are fully known - which may be one reason why both sides do not exert themselves to the same degree."¹⁵ The Korean War, for example, was our the first major conflict fought by the United States since World War II in which our efforts were limited in terms of forces committed, available means, and area of conflict. On the other hand, the North Koreans were involved in a total war in which all available means were committed. The same can also be said of our involvement in the Vietnam War.

¹⁴Fishel, War Termination and Desert Storm, p. 61.

¹⁵Clausewitz, p. 585.

Initially, the political objective in the Korean War was to resist communist aggression and return the Korean peninsula to the status quo. In addition, Burton I. Kaufman, in his book *The Korean War*, also points out that, "The administration's whole purpose, in fact, was to try to contain the war in Korea and, above all, to avoid a military showdown with the Soviet Union and China."¹⁶ President Truman, at that time, was extremely concerned with the possibility of Soviet aggression in Europe and therefore was reluctant to divert forces from the defense of Europe to participate in the Korean conflict. Despite these limitations, one could argue that the initial political objective of the return to the status quo could have been achieved as early as October 1950. General MacArthur's brilliant operational landing at Inchon caused the North Koreans to retreat above the 38th parallel and were on the verge of collapse. In all possibility a return to the status quo may have been reached at that time. However, our political objective expanded, as a result of General MacArthur's convincing plan for ending the war, to the reunification of Korea and the total defeat of the North Korean Army. This expanded political objective and our pursuit of the North Koreans to the Yalu River, caused the Chinese to enter the war in October 1951.

President Truman, reluctant to commit more forces or expand the conflict, changed our political objective once again back to the status quo and eventually resulted in a stalemate along the

¹⁶Burton I Kaufman, The Korean War, (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1986), p. 38.

38th parallel which was to last over two years. During this stalemate, operational planners were restricted in their ability to use all the means available to achieve the desired end state and terminate the war. For example, the military was not allowed to attack targets in China, were restricted against air attacks on the electric power complexes on the Yalu river, lacked the commitment of additional ground forces to conduct an offensive advance against Communist forces as far as the North Korean neck, would not establish a naval blockade of the Chinese mainland, and ruled out the use of nuclear weapons. Despite these restrictions, the United States did succeed in achieving the political objective of halting Communist aggression and return to the status quo. As Burton Kaufman points out:

"The United States was able to achieve a military victory in Korea, this argument continues, because it tailored its political objectives to the limited military means its political leaders were willing to expend. Unprepared to make the military commitment necessary to bring about the total destruction of the enemy (in this case Communist China), the Truman and Eisenhower administrations opted instead for a limited war with limited political objectives and, within that framework, the UN command adopted the necessary military strategy to achieve a military victory."¹¹

Unlike Korea, the Persian Gulf War demonstrated the effectiveness of providing the means to achieve a desired political objective. Effort to remove Iraqi forces included both political and military means. On the political side, intensive diplomatic efforts by the United State and United Nations were conducted to convince Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. In addition,

¹¹Kaufman, p. 351.

economic sanctions were ordered by the UN and a naval blockade was established. Moreover, the overall operational plan developed by CENTCOM featured a campaign that included land, air, sea, space, and special operations. As noted by Bob Woodward in his book *The Commanders*: [General] Powell told the prince, "If we have to [fight], I'll do it but we're going to do it with everything we have." Powell said that the president had ordered that this not turn into another Vietnam. The guiding principle was going to be a maximization of firepower and troops."¹⁸ Providing the means necessary to achieve the end state was also noted in the DOD Final Report to Congress, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, which stated:

"In order to achieve assigned goals quickly and with minimum Coalition casualties, US defense planners applied the principle of decisive force. This contrasted with the incremental, attrition warfare which had characterized US operations in Vietnam. When US forces were committed to combat in Southwest Asia, planners were able to exploit every possible advantage in tactics, equipment, command and control, and the forces deployed to the theater at maximum speed. The Coalition used these advantages to conduct massive, simultaneous operations throughout the KTO and Iraq, rather than attacking centers of gravity and other crucial objectives piecemeal."¹⁹

The events that took place in Somalia during the Fall of 1993 also provides a valuable lesson on providing the means to achieve a desired political objective. Our strategy had shifted from seeking a political solution for the country to a military goal of capturing General Aidid and bringing him to justice.

¹⁸Bob Woodward, *The Commanders*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), p. 324.

¹⁹U.S. Dept. of Defense, Final Report to Congress, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, (Washington: 1992) p. 92.

Unfortunately, the United States had withdrawn most of the overwhelming combat forces from the country and were attempting to capture General Aidid with Special Operations Forces. These forces, however, suffered many casualties in a raid against a Somalia stronghold and failed in their mission to capture Aidid. This event was a major turning point for American involvement which prompted the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Somalia. If our original goal had included the capture of General Aidid, there would have been a better chance of success when the United States had the means (overwhelming combat forces) when the Somalia operation began.

IV. CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

James W. Reed, in his article *Should Deterrence Fail: War Termination in Campaign Planning*, noted that: "Ever mindful of Fred Ikle's caution that decisionmakers not take the first step toward war without considering the last, every aspect of a campaign plan - target selection, rules of engagement, psychological operations, to cite but a few examples - should be designed and evaluated according to contributions made or effect upon the explicitly defined end state to be achieved.²⁰ In addition, Reed also points out that, "the process of explicitly and clearly defining terminal conditions is an important one, since it requires careful dialogue between civilian (strategic) and military (operational) leadership which may, in turn, offer some greater

²⁰James W. Reed, "Should Deterrence Fail: War Termination in Campaign Planning, Parameters, Vol. XXIII, No. 2. Summer 1993, p. 49.

assurance that the defined end state is both politically acceptable and military attainable."²¹

The campaign plan during the Persian Gulf War took into consideration the effects that the bombing of specific targets would have on the civilian population of Iraq. Every effort was made to minimize civilian casualties and damage to civilian buildings. In addition, planners were aware that each bomb carried a potential moral and political impact, and that Iraq has a rich cultural and religious heritage dating back several thousand years.²² Had these targets been bombed, the potential backlash in the arab world could have resulted in complicating the war termination process. Operational planners must also be mindful when developing campaign plans of what effect the destruction of a country's infrastructure will have on war termination efforts and postconflict operations.

V. FIGHTING WHILE NEGOTIATING

Ending a conflict while negotiating a peace settlement, cease fire, or armistice can be extremely difficult. This can be illustrated by our difficulty in terminating the Korean War during over two years of negotiations. In June 1951, the Chinese Communist and North Korean armies had been pushed back to the 38th parallel and were on the verge of collapse. The Allies, however, halted their offensive based on a willingness by the Chinese to

²¹Ibid., p. 45.

²²Final Report to Congress, Conduct of the Persian Gulf War, p. 132.

begin armistice negotiations. As the negotiations began, a defensive military strategy was adopted with limited offensive action. The consequences of this decision in ending the conflict has been noted by Burton Kaufman who wrote: "Had greater military pressure been maintained against the Chinese and North Koreans after negotiations began in July of 1951, it is quite conceivable that a settlement of the war might have been reached much earlier, long before Eisenhower raised the threat of atomic warfare. But the longer the war dragged on, the more hazardous a general offensive became and the more difficult it was to follow any military strategy other than the active defense."²³ As a result of this defensive strategy, the Chinese and North Koreans were able to establish strong defensive positions by reinforcement of men and material. It should also be noted that during the Vietnam War the United States unilaterally stopped the offensive bombing of North Vietnam while negotiations were taking place which, like Korea, gave the Communist time to supply and reinforce their forces in South Vietnam which prolonged the war.

Military leaders must also be mindful that opponents have used negotiations as a means to prolong conflicts in an effort to erode American public support. The North Vietnamese had correctly identified the will of the American people as our center of gravity and therefore embarked on a protracted war which in the end was successful. In addition, we should be mindful of our adversary as to their overall intentions for negotiations. As an example, the

²³Kaufman, p. 356.

Communist Chinese consider negotiations as a "continuation of war by other means." As noted by Mao Tse-Tung, "...negotiations are not originated by revolutionist for the purpose of arriving at amicable arrangements with the opposition. Revolutions rarely compromise. Thus, negotiation is undertaken for the dual purpose of gaining time to strengthen a position (military, political, social, economic) and to wear down and frustrate the opponent. Few, if any, essential concessions are to be expected from the revolutionary side, whose aim is only to create conditions that will preserve the unity of the strategic line and guarantee the development of a "victorious situation".²⁴

Another difficulty in war termination while negotiating has been illustrated by H. A. Callahan, in his book *What Makes a War End?*, who stated: "The primary reason is that when a country once starts peace overtures, it ceases to fight. Soldiers do not willingly risk their lives when they know it does not matter."²⁵ This point was also reinforced by Callum A. MacDonald during the Korean War who noted that: "The troops were not fighting for victory but merely to influence negotiating positions at the talks. It was hard to ask men to die in a remote corner of North-East Asia when national survival was not at stake and equal sacrifices were not asked from other sections of the armed forces or the home

²⁴Mao Tse-Tung, On Guerrilla Warfare, (Translated and with an introduction by Samuel B. Griffith III) (Baltimore, MD: N&A Publishing Co of America, 1992), p. 49.

²⁵H. A. Callahan, What Makes a War End?, (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1944), p. 254.

front. They felt that they were a forgotten army in an increasingly meaningless war."²⁶ As a result, fighting limited protracted war while negotiating can cause the erosion of both the morale of the military and American public support.

VI. KNOWING WHEN TO TERMINATE A WAR

Our involvement in conflicts since World War II have shown that limited wars rarely end with the total defeat of an enemy. Therefore, political or diplomatic solutions are frequently the means in which limited wars end. Perhaps the most difficult task is determining the most advantageous time to begin war termination efforts that will lead to the achievement of the desired political objective. According to Michael I. Handel, the circumstances that must be taken into account by any country that is deciding to terminate hostilities can be summarized in the following table taken from his book *War, Strategy and Intelligence*:²⁷

<u>Decision in Favor of Termination</u> Expectation that:	<u>Decision Against Termination</u> Expectation that:
the situation is deteriorating politically, militarily, or economically	circumstances are in our favor or show signs of improving politically, militarily, or economically
time is on the enemy's side: minimize or cut losses while it is still possible	time is on our side or the enemy's situation is deteriorating more rapidly than ours
no external support is forthcoming or expected	external support is being received or will soon arrive
domestic situation unstable: social and political unrest, morale low or declining, economic problems	domestic situation stable: morale high and public continues to support war effort

²⁶Callum A. MacDonald, The War Before Vietnam, (New York: Free Press, 1986), p. 220.

²⁷Michael I. Handel, War, Strategy and Intelligence, (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1989), p. 479.

little or nothing can be gained even if victory is possible; war goals are attainable	a 'time out' will work to our enemy's benefit
the enemy offers convenient, reasonably lenient terms for conclusion of war	terms the enemy offers are tough, excessively demanding and unacceptable
a break for negotiations will work to our advantage	initiating negotiations will weaken our bargaining position
military setbacks, defeat, stalemate or attrition: the limits of war potential have been reached or exhausted	gains can be maximized and/or a continuation of the fighting will help cut losses; military situation is improving (or will) and our war potential has not been fully actualized

The above table can provide an insight into our decision to terminate the war in Vietnam. Clearly, there were several factors which prompted President Nixon to change our political objective (peace with honor) and seek to terminate the war. First, our domestic situation was unstable in terms of the anti-war movement that was raging in this country; second, time was on the side of the North Vietnamese since they were aware that American public support for the war was declining; third, political support for the war in Congress was deteriorating; and lastly, we had reached a stalemate in the war and were not prepared to commit more forces. Conversely, our decision not to terminate the Korean War in October 1950, when the North Korean Army was on the verge of collapse, was due to the expansion of our political objective to total defeat of the enemy and reunification of the Korean peninsula. No attempt to terminate the war was made at that time since General MacArthur had convinced President Truman that a military victory was imminent and there was domestic public and Congressional support for continuation of the war. In retrospect, there is a strong possibility that the war could have been terminated by June 1951

had the original political objective of return to the status quo not been expanded and the initiation of negotiations.

VII. POSTCONFLICT OPERATIONS

Postconflict operations are an important aspect of war termination which requires detailed planning at the outset of hostilities and is continuous through the end of the conflict. During this aspect of the war termination process, the role of various civilian national or international agencies may become increasingly prominent, and particular responsibilities may transfer from the military to the civilian domain at this stage. Various civil affairs functions, especially refugee control and humanitarian assistance, come to mind as examples in which a transition toward greater civil relief agency involvement may be prudent.²⁸

The chaos that resulted in Panama from Operation JUST CAUSE clearly indicates the need for planning postconflict operations. Generally speaking, JUST CAUSE from an operational standpoint was a complete success. The Panamanian Defense Force was clearly defeated, however, this created a void in a force capable of maintaining law and order in the country. As a result, widespread looting and general chaos took place in Panama City. The breakdown of law and order resulted from the lack of a comprehensive plan for Civil-Military Operations (CMO) at the completion of hostilities. In his study on the *In the Aftermath of War*, Richard H Shultz, Jr. noted:

²⁸Reed, p. 46.

"Panama provides an example of what can occur when planning requirements are neglected. Destabilizing developments appeared, not foreseen in the contingency plan (Operation Blind Logic), that considerably weakened restoration efforts. Massive looting, a new Government of Panama (GOP) that was "hollow" and not ready to govern, an empty treasury, and a decaying societal infrastructure proved to be major obstacles. The Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CMOTF), which executed Operation Blind Logic, was unprepared for each. It likewise was not ready to address the security force issue. The CMOTF stood conceptually deficient, lacked a coherent organizational structure, and was short of personnel."²⁹

Other factors that contributed to postconflict problems in Panama were the lack of coordination between non DOD agencies and the military, and the lack of Civil Affairs (CA) personnel. Because of the military's security concerns, postconflict planning by the military was done unilaterally without input or coordination with other non DOD governmental agencies. However, in the postconflict environment, governmental agencies play a key role in the restoration of a government. Additionally, the postconflict plan did not have a long term plan for the use of CA personnel. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that most of the CA units are in the Reserve Components. According to Schultz: "Personnel from five different CA units were invited to Panama in small teams and on a volunteer basis for tours of 31 days. The result was an incremental and disjointed approach to planning that was bereft of continuity."³⁰ Clearly, postconflict operations for the Panama invasion had not received the same careful planning as the

²⁹Richard H. Shultz, Jr., In the Aftermath of War, (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1993), p. xii.

³⁰Ibid. p. 20

operational level.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

War termination issues at the operational level can be as challenging and complex as the planning and conduct of war itself. The following lessons learned from past conflicts can be useful in war termination planning for future conflicts:

- ▶ Prior to the commitment of U.S. forces to combat, the NCA must establish a clearly defined political objective that provides a clear picture of the desired end state. It should be developed in coordination with the military to insure that the goals are within the means of the military to accomplish.

- ▶ Military planners must identify operational objectives (center(s) of gravity) in which all efforts must be directed and that will lead to the desired end state.

- ▶ Prior to committing U.S. forces, both the NCA and military leaders must identify the means that will be employed to achieve the desired end state. Failing to provide adequate means to accomplish operational objectives will most certainly lead to the failure of achieving a desired end state.

- ▶ When developing campaign plans, every aspect should be evaluated in terms of what effect it will have on the desired end state.

- ▶ Conflict termination during negotiations can be extremely difficult and military planners must continue operational activities that will enhance ones bargaining position. This may

involve exceeding the operational objectives in order to improve your bargaining position.

- ▶ Limited wars pose a unique problem in war termination. Since these wars rarely end with the total defeat of an enemy, determining the optimal time to begin negotiations to achieve the desired end state can be both difficult and challenging. Understanding the circumstances under which war termination efforts are initiated by the belligerents is an important aspect of peace negotiations.

- ▶ Postconflict planning must receive the same emphasis as operational planning. Close coordination with civilian agencies, to include planning, is essential since post conflict activities usually involve non DOD agencies.

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