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**CAMPAIGN PLAN FAILURE: AN ANALYSIS OF  
THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN OF 1862 AND ITS  
IMPLICATIONS TO CURRENT JOINT OPERATIONS**

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1862 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS TO CURRENT JOINT DOCTRINE

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ABSTRACT

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The Peninsula Campaign of 1862 during the American Civil War provides an excellent case study for many facets of current U.S. joint planning doctrine. This examination explores the reasons behind the Union campaign plan failure, using aspects of today's joint doctrine that was relevant during the Civil War. The study focuses on flaws in the application of the concept of center of gravity and the failure to incorporate unity of effort into the planning process. The analysis concludes with a connection to current relevancy.

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## SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

The commander of the expeditionary force left the shores of America with a well trained and superbly equipped force. Most of his men were green troops with little or no combat experience. His commanders fared slightly better; however, any combat experience most had seen was many years earlier as junior officers. The commander faced many challenges in the upcoming campaign against a formidable enemy. His force would depend on sea lines of communication to sustain the operation on hostile shores. The Navy had to achieve dominance over blue and brown water threats to ensure a successful ground campaign. The campaign plan depended heavily on seriously flawed military intelligence on both the enemy and the terrain. Domestic political infighting eroded the commander's confidence in the support he would receive from Washington after his departure. If these concerns were not enough, the entire operation was under the close scrutiny of the media--always looking for a story to sensationalize. Even as the campaign planning neared completion the situation evolved, raising further doubts of the plan's adequacy. The commander went on in spite of these challenges. In his heart he knew that this force, led by him, was the only hope the nation had left to secure victory.

The characteristics of this actual scenario could easily serve as a template for a joint operation today. An alarming consideration for a joint force commander (JFC) today is that this operation resulted in a dismal failure--the defeat of a superbly equipped and trained American force by a numerically

inferior enemy. The campaign was the Union's Peninsula Campaign of 1862 during the American Civil War. The Union commander, Major General George B. McClellan, was the architect for both the campaign plan and its execution. This paper will assess McClellan's planning failure during the Peninsula Campaign using current relevant joint doctrine and its theoretical underpinnings. This assessment will serve to validate selected campaign development concepts, as well as identify potential planning flaws that may inhibit joint operations in the future. Since this study will apply current joint doctrinal thought to a historical scenario, it is important that the methodology for this examination is clear.

## **SECTION II - METHODOLOGY**

Many simply attribute the Union failure on the Peninsula to the poor generalship of McClellan. Such a simplistic condemnation fails to consider the campaign planning and execution faults that combined with obvious generalship flaws may have contributed to the defeat. This inquiry will search for some of those underlying influences by using selected joint campaign planning concepts as an investigative tool.

The campaigns of Napoleon strongly influenced campaign planning and execution during the Civil War. Two military philosophers of the time, Antoine H. Jomini and Carl von Clausewitz, codified the Napoleonic military theories and principles of campaigns. Jomini's influence was greater during the Civil War since his work received a wider reading in America

at the time, though Clausewitz's thoughts are also germane to our analysis.<sup>1</sup> These philosophers still influence military planners in America, though Clausewitz now surpasses Jomini in American military thought. The theoretical similarity between the ages provides the initial foundation for this study. To ensure the integrity of the remaining examination, I have stripped out those joint concepts, such as airspace, airland battle doctrine and its derivatives, and special operations, that were not relevant 134 years ago. I will examine service relationships, although modern concepts were not accepted at the time--General McClellan did not "command" the joint force; the prevailing relationship of the period was "cooperation." There are, however, sufficient similarities in the strains of the two forms of joint relationships to warrant our review. Lastly, there will be no appraisal of tactical activities since they provide little relevance to today's JFC.

The analysis of the campaign planning effort will have three parts. First, I will explore the selection of the center of gravity and the relationship of chosen decisive points. Next we will consider unity of effort at the strategic and operational levels and its impact upon the campaign plan. The analysis will conclude with a review of the campaign plan's flaws and an insight into their relevance to today's JFC. Before the analysis can begin, a brief summary of the campaign is in order.

### SECTION III - CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

The Union's strategic situation before the Peninsula campaign was precarious. Their defeat in July 1861 at Bull Run shook the nation's confidence in its military and leaders. The closely encamped Rebels threatened the national capital. After much searching, President Lincoln selected General George B. McClellan to command the army. Nicknamed "Young Napoleon" for his deep study of Napoleon's campaigns and his displayed persona, the thirty-five year-old commander immediately began a program to rebuild the Army of the Potomac. Even his greatest detractors agree that McClellan was successful in creating a formidable fighting organization.<sup>2</sup>

Public pressure increased for the Army of the Potomac to launch into action against the Rebels. Abraham Lincoln also became anxious since McClellan failed to share his planning efforts with the President. Lincoln soon took matters in his own hands, by conducting secret meetings (excluding McClellan) to form a campaign strategy and publishing a highly political order that named McClellan's corps commanders.<sup>3</sup> Spurred into action, McClellan quickly outlined his campaign plan to Lincoln. He would not attack directly through the Rebel positions immediately south of Washington--the plan that Lincoln favored. Rather, he would conduct an indirect attack against Richmond by moving his forces by sea to the city of Urbana (Figure 1). This movement would outflank Major General Joseph E. Johnston's Rebel army, and allow sufficient time and a rail system to move on Richmond and

seize the Confederate capital. Then the Rebel army would be left with the task of attacking McClellan's army in defensive positions, on the ground of his choosing. Lincoln acquiesced with reluctance, though not without qualifiers. He directed that McClellan must leave sufficient forces behind to defend Washington. This constant concern over the protection of Washington would prove to be a recurrent theme in the operation.<sup>4</sup>

Shortly after the approval of the campaign plan, General Johnston, concerned about the Union buildup across the Potomac, repositioned the Rebel army further south behind the Rappahannock River. This movement to the south

negated most of the advantages McClellan sought with the amphibious assault at Urbana, since Johnston could quickly react to the landing from his new position. Intent on sticking with the plan, McClellan shifted the landing site to the Union-controlled base of Fort Monroe. This modified location presented new challenges not faced at Urbana. Now McClellan's

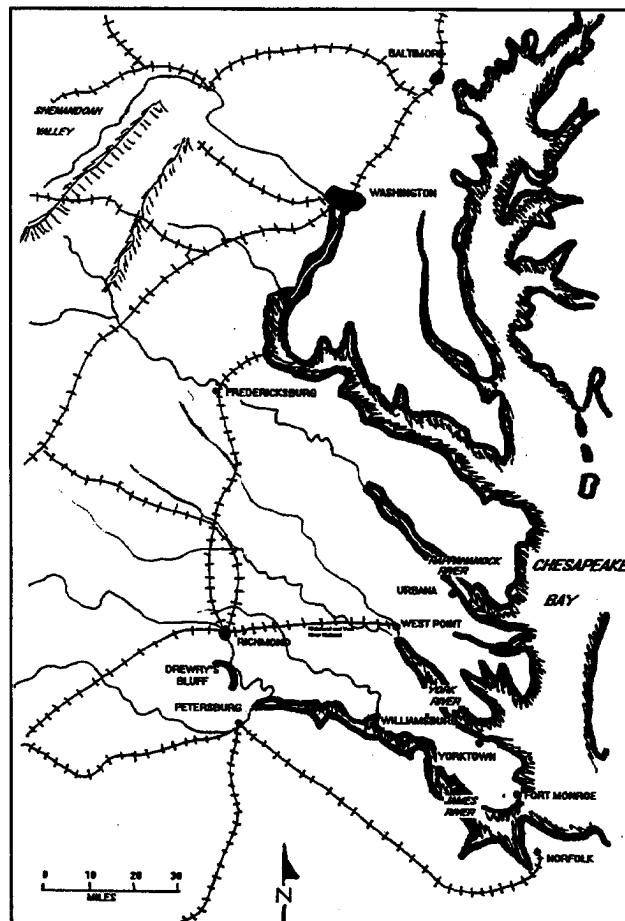


Figure 1 - EASTERN VIRGINIA THEATER

army must fight up the narrow Peninsula of Virginia to reach Richmond. There was no railroad present until he reached the outskirts of Richmond--this was critical for moving his heavy siege guns and sustaining his force. Lastly, the Rebels' armored ship *Merrimac* denied Union access to the James River, a key approach to Richmond.

The Naval Commander, Flag Officer Louis Goldsborough, considered the neutralization of the *Merrimac* his top priority. As demonstrated during its earlier foray in which it destroyed two Union ships, the *Merrimac* was a threat to his entire wooden fleet. Until they eliminated or neutralized the *Merrimac*, the Navy would be unable to provide substantial naval gunfire support to the ground operations.<sup>5</sup>

McClellan initiated his ground campaign in early April, 1862, shortly after his arrival at Fort Monroe. The campaign was designed and conducted on the incorrect belief that he faced a superior force. McClellan's intelligence came from the Pinkerton detective agency and generally overestimated the enemy by a factor of two. Coupled with the inflated enemy estimates was an erroneous analysis of the terrain. The poor conditions of the road networks and the appearance of previously unknown natural obstacles surprised McClellan.<sup>6</sup> During the Union movement to Fort Monroe, the President struck another blow at McClellan's plan. Lincoln pulled Major General Irwin McDowell's Corps out of the sea movement, and directed that it remain to secure Washington. Lincoln did this because he thought McClellan had

ignored his previous direction to leave a viable defense for Washington.<sup>7</sup> McClellan considered McDowell's Corps critical to the campaign's success. This force was intended to conduct an amphibious turning movement of the Yorktown defenses.<sup>8</sup> Its loss only served to worsen McClellan's belief of his Army's numerical inferiority and convince the general that political forces in Washington were working against him.

The Union forces established a siege of Yorktown, the first

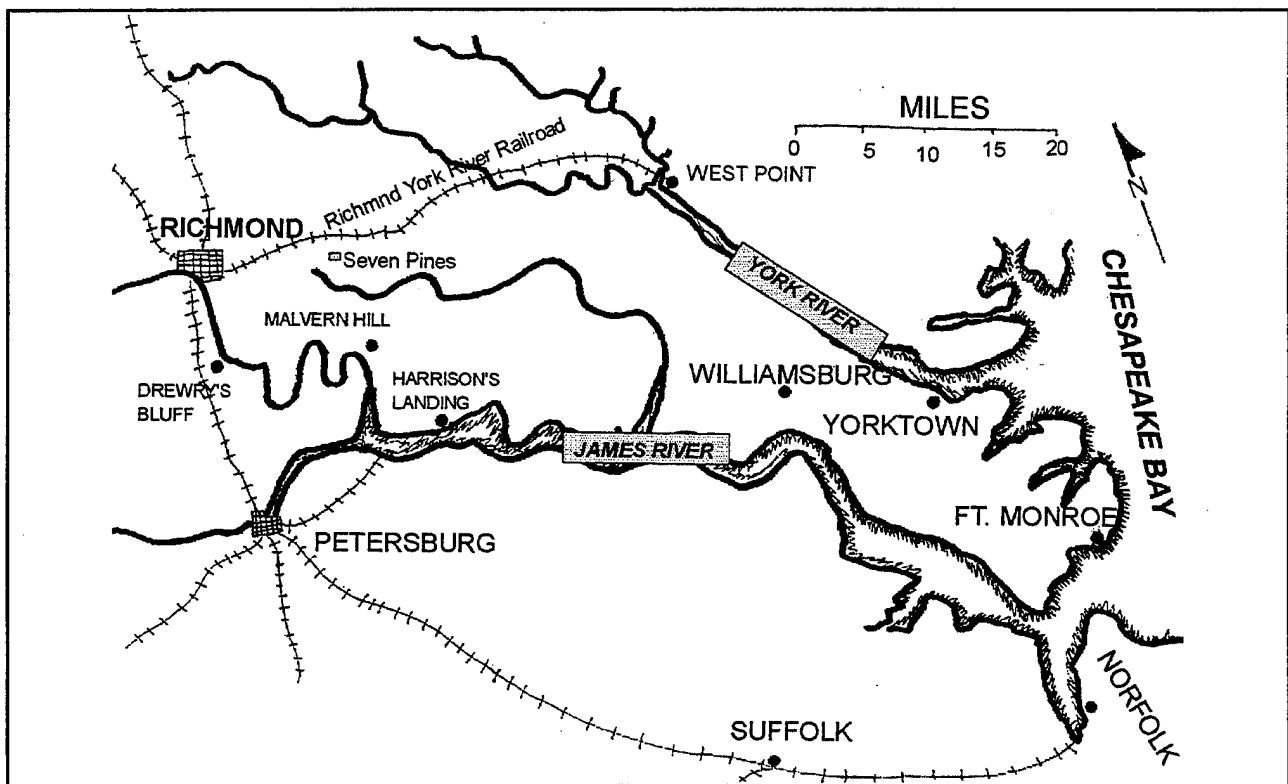


Figure 2 - THE PENINSULA, 1862

Rebel defensive position (Figure 2). This lengthy operation gave General Johnston sufficient time to reposition forces to the Peninsula. On 5 May, almost a month later, the Rebels withdrew to Williamsburg in good order, abandoning their position without

a fight. After a brief rear guard action at Williamsburg, General Johnston withdrew to the outskirts of Richmond. This last movement allowed McClellan to move his base of operations from Fort Monroe to White House Landing, allowing use of the same railroad he intended to use in his Urbana plan. Now a railroad was available to support his movement for the anticipated siege of Richmond.

McClellan split his forces as he established his new base. Johnston seized the opportunity on May 31st to launch an uncoordinated attack on an isolated Corps. The resulting battle of Seven Pines or Fair Oaks was tactically inconclusive, yet the Rebels harvested much from this encounter. First, the Rebel's confidence in conducting an attack reinforced McClellan's belief of his Army's inferiority in strength. Secondly, Johnston was wounded during the battle and replaced by General Robert E. Lee. Lee would not passively wait for McClellan's meticulous campaign plan to unfold.

Almost in spite of itself, the Union campaign was putting pressure on the Confederates. McDowell's Corps was now creeping forward on the land route from Washington (to protect Washington from attack) and threatened to join McClellan outside of Richmond. Lee realized the danger. He instructed General Thomas J. Jackson to conduct operations in the Shenandoah Valley to threaten Washington and draw forces away from the Union effort on the Peninsula. After accomplishing that, Jackson was to move immediately to Richmond to support operations against McClellan.

Jackson was tremendously successful. McDowell's Corps stopped its movement toward Richmond and responded to the Jackson threat. Upon Jackson's arrival in Richmond, Lee immediately attacked the Union forces.

The ensuing battles from 26 June through 2 July became known as "The Seven Days" battle. Lee directed successive attacks on the Union forces in an attempt to destroy the Army of the Potomac. A bold cavalry reconnaissance around the entire Union position preceded the offensive. The Rebel attacks were uncoordinated and resulted in staggering casualties. By the second day of the "Seven Days" battle, McClellan began to shift his base of operations from the York River to the James River. The recent neutralization of the *Merrimac* made this option available. The remainder of the Rebel attacks were against an army making a reasonably organized withdrawal. The series of battles climaxed at Malvern Hill, where a formidable Union defense soundly repulsed a final disorganized Rebel assault. The Union forces withdrew from Malvern Hill to a defensive position at Harrison's Landing under protection of naval gunboats. Lee was not prepared to attack such a strong defense, and McClellan had little desire to sally forth. Soon, Washington resigned itself to the fact that the campaign was over and ordered the withdrawal of the Army of the Potomac.

Thus ended a campaign that could have ended the Civil War in 1862. Instead, the war would go on for another three terrible years. Where did the campaign go wrong? How could this happen?

The next sections will attempt to answer these questions.

#### SECTION IV - CENTER OF GRAVITY AND DECISIVE POINTS

The identification of the enemy's center of gravity is an essential analytical tool during the formulation of a campaign plan. Once selected it becomes the focus of all efforts. Joint Pub 3-0 Doctrine for Joint Operations defines centers of gravity as ". . . those characteristics, capabilities, or locations from which a military force derives its freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight."<sup>9</sup> Once the commander identifies the enemy's center of gravity the focus of his plan should be on its destruction or neutralization. Conversely, a commander must identify his own center of gravity and protect it as best he can. It is also important to understand that just as a JFC is concerned with both the strategic and operational levels of war, he must identify centers of gravity at both levels.

McClellan's campaign objective was the capture of Richmond. This was the Rebel's strategic center of gravity at the time of the campaign's development. It was the capital of the new Confederacy and its loss would deal a serious blow to Confederate morale and also to potential European recognition--a critical factor for a Southern victory.<sup>10</sup> Possession of Richmond would also interdict the rail and telegraph lines coming from the south, and the key water lines of communication (LOC) feeding through and near Richmond, rendering significant organized Rebel operations in Virginia impossible. More important, McClellan believed that General Johnston's army, the Rebel operational

center of gravity, would fight a decisive battle of Napoleonic proportions to save the city.<sup>11</sup> His original Urbana plan placed him in the stronger tactical position of a defensive behind prepared works to fight this battle. This final battle, on ground of his choosing, would seal the Union victory.

Though McClellan was correct in his selection of the strategic center of gravity, he failed to fully appreciate the operational centers of gravity. While Johnston was in command, his army was correctly identified as an operational center of gravity. The other operational level center of gravity was the *Merrimac*. It denied the use of the James River, and tied down one of the Union's operational centers of gravity--the naval fleet. Yet McClellan considered the *Merrimac* a Navy sideshow, allowing it to slowly eat away at his campaign until the Rebels finally scuttled the ship to prevent its capture. By failing to address the quick resolution of the *Merrimac*, McClellan accepted a lengthy siege at Yorktown, something a Navy, free of *Merrimac* concerns, might have contributed more to resolve. He also forced himself into using the York River, a less adequate line of communication (LOC) than the *Merrimac*-defended James River.<sup>12</sup>

Another aspect of the center of gravity is that it may change over the course of a campaign. Our joint doctrine warns:

JFCs and their subordinates should be alert to circumstances that may cause centers of gravity to change and adjust friendly operations accordingly.<sup>13</sup>

When General Lee replaced General Johnston after the battle of Seven Pines, the dynamics of the campaign began to evolve. The

addition of General Jackson and his army as Lee's tool for decisive operations furthered the change. The enemy's introduction of an offensively oriented commanding general with the added means to fulfill his intent should be a sufficient catalysis for a review of the campaign's centers of gravity. McClellan did not revisit his plan's orientation. His campaign continued its focus on Richmond. In McClellan's defense, the impact of the change of Rebel commanders would not be apparent until the Seven Days battle. Earlier in the War, Lee fought McClellan in West Virginia with little distinction. Even in the Rebel army, Lee's focus on defensive position preparations earned him a passive reputation that belied his true offensive nature. Accordingly, McClellan's personal insights into his new opponent gave little reason for an adjustment of the plan. By the time McClellan realized that Lee indeed changed the dynamics of the campaign, the issue was moot. When Lee attacked, McClellan was only concerned with saving his force. His will was broken and he believed that the campaign had culminated. Identifying and attacking Rebel centers of gravity was now irrelevant. It is significant, however, from this point forward, the Confederate strategic center of gravity was clearly identified as General Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia and not Richmond.

Identification of the enemy's center of gravity is critical, and neutralizing it is the essence of the campaign. Normally by its very nature a center of gravity is strong and difficult to attack directly without great cost. Paths to the center of

gravity are found by attacking or controlling decisive points. *Joint Pub 3-0* defines decisive points as: "By correctly identifying and controlling decisive points, a commander can gain a marked advantage over the enemy and greatly influence the outcome of the action." It goes on to say ". . . they are the keys to attacking protected centers of gravity."<sup>14</sup>

McClellan selected as his first decisive point the seizure of Urbana followed by control of the York River railroad. By selecting these points he would bypass the enemy's strength (Johnston's army) and be in position for a quick movement to Richmond. The Union army could not operate a large force far from its sustainment base for any period of time. The poor road networks of the region coupled with the immense effort to move supplies by wagon proved a constant drag on offensive operations of the time.<sup>15</sup> The presence of a railroad offset the greatest logistic mobility challenges and would provide the means to sustain his force on land and to move his heavy siege guns.<sup>16</sup> The next decisive point was the neutralization of the Rebel stronghold at Yorktown. This position controlled access to the York River, the only suitable LOC to support operations on the York River railroad. For this task, McClellan expected heavy naval gunboat support and a ground assault. This expectation would later prove ill-advised.

When the Rebel army moved south from its positions along the Potomac, McClellan lost the advantages presented by landing at Urbana. Though the York River railroad was still a part of his

plan, after an uncontested landing at Fort Monroe he would still require the seizure of Yorktown. This decisive point became even more important. In the Urbana plan, once the Union force controlled the York River Railroad, the force would receive its sustainment from a logistic base on the York River. Under the revised plan, not only would his army require the York River for sustainment, McClellan's army must move by ground through Yorktown.

Though the Union army was aware of the *Merrimac* and concerned about its impact upon the operation, it failed to sequence its destruction as a part of the campaign.<sup>17</sup> Concern about an enemy capability and identifying one as a center of gravity are two different things. While the former warrants consideration, the latter *requires* attention. To do otherwise entails taking risk--something that was not one of McClellan's strengths. By failing to identify the *Merrimac* for what it was, an operational center of gravity, McClellan's campaign plan made two grave errors. First, it failed to provide for sufficient means to neutralize the threat. The Navy's plans rested on a direct attack by their own untested iron clad ship the *Monitor*--privately, even they were dubious about its chances for success.<sup>18</sup> A more certain outcome would have come from identifying Norfolk as a decisive point. A land attack on this vulnerable port would have fatally exposed the *Merrimac*. The Navy, as well as others, suggested that McClellan adopt this option, but without success.<sup>19</sup> McClellan recognized that

Norfolk's fall would occur during the campaign, though he did not readily understand its importance and linkage to the *Merrimac*.<sup>20</sup>

The second planning error was the failure to phase the operation to ensure the elimination of the *Merrimac* threat before the ground campaign was committed to a line of operation. *Joint Pub 3-0* describes the benefit of campaign phasing as a means to:

. . . assist commanders in achieving major objectives, which cannot be attained all at once, by planning manageable subordinate operations to gain progressive advantages . . . <sup>21</sup>

McClellan was fully committed to a lengthy fight up the Peninsula by the time the Rebels scuttled the *Merrimac*. Yet, the entire campaign would have evolved quite differently if McClellan had used the James River and had access to Navy gunboats free from concern of Rebel naval threats.

The campaign plan failed to place the *Merrimac* in the proper context. As a result, McClellan's ground options were limited. Was this error sufficiently grievous to doom the operation? Probably not. However, the Union operation did suffer from another campaign design weakness, lack of unity of effort, which, when combined with the planning flaws did prove fatal.

#### **SECTION V - UNITY OF EFFORT**

Joint Pub 1, Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States, states that "success in war demands that all effort be directed toward the achievement of common aims."<sup>22</sup> It goes on to say that unity of effort is first gained at the national level. The first step in achieving this unity is accomplished during the early phases of campaign's development. McClellan failed to

achieve this simple yet important goal.

President Lincoln supported the campaign plan against his better judgement. He believed that an attack on Richmond by a ground approach was best.<sup>23</sup> A lack of resolution and a fear for the safety of Washington on Lincoln's part resulted in his withdrawal of McDowell's Corps from the sea movement to the Peninsula. This action by the President, while combat operations were ongoing, dealt a serious blow to McClellan's campaign plan.<sup>24</sup> Unity of effort at the national level suffered further from the poor relationship of McClellan with Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. As early as mid-March Stanton was urging Lincoln to replace McClellan.<sup>25</sup> There was little cooperative spirit between the two. In a letter to his wife McClellan described Stanton in the following manner: "I think that he is the most unmitigated scoundrel I ever knew, heard or read of."<sup>26</sup>

By not gaining the support of his superiors, McClellan established an atmosphere of distrust. As a result, the President and Secretary of War often modified the campaign plan. The degree of political interference was enormous. Chinese military philosopher Sun Tuz sums up the impact of political meddling as follows:

1. When ignorant of that the army should not advance, to order an advance or ignorant that it should not retire, to order a retirement. This is described as hobbling the army.
2. When ignorant of military affairs, to participate in their administration. This causes the officers to be perplexed.

3. When ignorant of command problems to share in the exercise of responsibilities. This engenders doubts in the minds of the officers.<sup>27</sup>

Lincoln's constant long distance meddling and criticism only served to further undermine McClellan's campaign plan, achieving the exact opposite effect the President was seeking. The best example of his berating McClellan is his correspondence of 9 April--four days after he withdrew McDowell's Corps from the sea movement:

. . . You will do me the justice to remember I always insisted that going down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, was only shifting, and not surmounting, a difficulty . . . The country will not fail to note, is now noting, that the present hesitation to move upon the entrenched enemy is but the story of Manassas repeated.<sup>28</sup>

Liddell Hart condemns Lincoln's actions as nullifying McClellan's plan.<sup>29</sup> However, it was McClellan's failure to include his superiors in the development of the campaign that allowed this atmosphere of distrust to fester.

Relationships did not improve when the President and his Secretary of War (also accompanied by the Secretary of the Treasury) decided to visit the front after the fall of Yorktown. While at Fort Monroe, Lincoln personally directed operations against Norfolk in hopes of gaining access to the James River. He, along with his two traveling companions, actually participated in landing site reconnaissance operations. All of this executed without any consultation with McClellan.<sup>30</sup>

Unity of effort was also lacking at the operational level. As already described, McClellan required naval cooperation to

successfully accomplish his campaign objectives. On this point he was quite clear early in the planning.<sup>31</sup> The Navy, intent on dealing with the *Merrimac*, did not see support of the ground campaign as a compelling requirement. In fact, the naval component commander was surprised to hear that he held any significant role in the critical Yorktown operation.<sup>32</sup>

Incredibly, McClellan did not consult the Navy about the Yorktown operation during the campaign planning phase nor did he discuss the importance of sequencing the neutralization of the *Merrimac* before the start of ground operations. Had consultation occurred, McClellan would have learned that the Navy guns could not elevate high enough to engage the Yorktown batteries.<sup>33</sup> This bit of information might very well have driven McClellan to use the James River, instead of the York, as his main line of operation. Such a planning session with the Navy would certainly have raised the issue of phasing the neutralization of the *Merrimac*.

The problem of joint planning continued even as the campaign was underway. After the *Merrimac's* elimination, the Naval commander conducted his own operation up the James River to reach Richmond. His force bombarded the Rebel fortification on Drewry's Bluff--the only opposition remaining on the James River and only a few miles from Richmond. The ships were unable to overcome the fort without ground troops. Even the Rebels admitted that a few thousand ground forces attacking in concert with the ships would have overcome their defense and left

Richmond fully exposed. Unfortunately, it was an uncoordinated operation that generated no support from McClellan.<sup>34</sup>

The campaign plan suffered from a serious design flaw--it evolved in a vacuum. Either through arrogance, poor staff work, or a combination of the two, McClellan allowed the plan to develop without incorporating the support of his superiors and the critical input of the Navy. This planning atmosphere left little chance for enthusiastic patronage from above and coordinated support from the Navy.

#### SECTION VI - CONCLUSION

The Peninsula campaign is over one hundred thirty years old, though its lessons still ring true to today's joint force commander. This campaign reenforces the validity of key elements of our modern joint campaign planning doctrine and it also provides reminders to our present strategic leaders of pitfalls that await those that fail to glean these lessons.

The military of today employs tactics that rely on technologies unimaginable in the days of Clausewitz and Jomini, yet much of their thought remains viable to present day joint campaign planning and execution. From McClellan's experience we see that the proper identification of centers of gravity and the subsequent alignment of decisive points remain a fundamental early step in any campaign plan development. Neglecting this key joint planning tool invites at best battlefield inefficiencies, and at worst defeat.

The joint concept of unity of effort has also evolved over

time. Today's command and control architecture at both the strategic and operational levels bears little resemblance to those of the Civil War, yet similar dangers await the modern joint commander. Involvement of the President in the formulation of military strategy continues today. The impact of satellite media coverage only increases the likelihood of such political involvement. The technology exists today for the President to communicate directly with a tactical unit on the other side of the world--a 20th century version of Lincoln's actions at Fort Monroe. A commander of today can do little about this situation except to recognize it as a condition of today's battlefield. One requirement the commander must satisfy to reduce the impact of political involvement is to establish a bond of trust with the civilian and military strategic leadership. Lincoln's lack of faith in his military commander's plan, and later his generalship, served the nation poorly. McClellan was as much at fault as the President in fostering the atmosphere of distrust, though the President had the power to correct the predicament. Much like the situation with President Truman and General MacArthur in Korea, Lincoln should have replaced McClellan rather than try to conduct a disconnected campaign.

It would seem that the advent of joint commands today solves the unity of effort planning concerns at the operational level. No longer do our services operate under the guise of "cooperation." Yet, the lesson from the Peninsula campaign goes further than that. The lack of coordination between the Army and

Navy during this campaign surfaced when each service viewed the operation through their own service-peculiar filters. The Navy recognized the *Merrimac* as their top mission, to the almost complete exclusion of the Army's concern for the reduction of Yorktown. The Navy saw the capture of Drewry's Bluff as a way to take Richmond. They then conducted an unsuccessful single service attack because it was out of sync with the Army's operation. The parallel to today's joint operational concepts is the tendency of each service to develop their own subordinate campaigns to support the overall campaign. The challenge to the joint commander is to ensure that the service-oriented filters do not lead to uncoordinated operations by the services. This hazard arose during Desert Storm when the air campaign was initially based on a strategy of winning the war by itself. This vision was at the expense of targets critical to the impending ground war--the intended decisive blow.<sup>35</sup>

One hundred and thirty-four years ago, the American people turned to their Armed Forces to save the nation. They gave the services their young men and national treasures to accomplish the task. During the resulting campaign on the Peninsula of Virginia, the military squandered both. Today's joint doctrine provides the military planner an opportunity to avoid a similar epitaph in some future national emergency.



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33. Congress, United States, Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War. Army of the Potomac Part 1. (Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint Co, 1977), 630-34.
34. Anderson, 81-3.

35. Cal Waller, LTG(Ret), Deputy Cdr CENTCOM, comments made on PBS television show *Frontline*, 17 January 1996.



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