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The Necessity of Dissent in the Planning of Military Operations

by

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

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Abstract

Planning for military operations at the national strategic level has a direct impact on a commander's ability to meet his operational objectives. It is important during the planning phase for operations that an environment exists wherein all professional views can be presented and properly considered. In the planning for Napoleon's 1812 campaign against Russia, Japanese planning for Midway, and U.S. planning for Vietnam and IRAQI FREEDOM, the inability of civilian and military leaders to accept professional dissent ultimately led to defeat or protracted conflict resulting in inconclusive results. These historical examples show that national strategic leaders rejected advice which could have turned the tide or at least made a more positive difference in achieving the established objectives. When legitimate, professional advice is not taken into account, the danger exists for operational considerations such factor space (Napoleon 1812), force concentration (Japan in Midway), and factor force (Vietnam and IRAQI FREEDOM) to ultimately keep military commanders from being able to achieve their assigned objectives.

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Introduction

Questionable decisions made at the national strategic level can have an impact that cripples operational planning designed to achieve the objective. History has shown that there are common attributes in difficult military campaigns that have either resulted in outright loss or an unexpected and protracted struggle. Bad national-level decisions based on faulty assumptions by civilian and military leaders impede proper consideration of the operational factors that determine the eventual outcome of a campaign. This paper will show that not allowing professional dissent and the acceptance of false assumptions during planning at the national-strategic level cripples the operational commander in his effort to accomplish his assigned objectives. The points used to support this thesis will highlight the attributes in previous military campaigns that have lead to protracted operations and / or defeat ranging from establishment of the objective based on false assumptions, civilians in operational and tactical control of military forces, non-acceptance of alternative points of view, removal of persons who offer alternative points of view from the decision chain, and keeping bad news from decision makers.

Previous military campaigns that effectively illustrate these points are Napoleon's Russia Campaign in 1812, the Japanese Combined Fleet and Naval General Staff during planning for the Midway attack, the United States national-level planning of strategy during Vietnam, and the United States planning of operations for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

Analysis / Discussion

During the Russia campaign, Napoleon was not only the Head of State, but also the Commander-in-Chief.¹ While this leadership construct is not exclusive, Napoleon's campaign considerations as the top general while also serving as a head-of-state whose decisions would not be questioned is what made his situation unique. During the planning and fateful execution of the 1812 Russia campaign, he was directly in charge at each level of warfare: national-strategic, operational, and tactical. This approach was not conducive to the more effective leadership style of centralized planning and decentralized execution.

In his eagerness to go to war against Russia, Napoleon rejected professional dissent with regard to factor space considerations. His trusted aide, General Armand Augustin Louis de Caulaincourt, knew that the vast distances of the Caucasus plain could pose problems for an over stretched logistics train.² In his planning and preparation for war against Russia, Napoleon did not adequately consider the distance between the beginning of his march from Chateau de Saint-Cloud west of Paris to Moscow - a distance of over 1550 miles. Indeed, Russia's Tsar Alexander knew that Napoleon could be formidable on the battlefield, but that the attending challenges regarding factor space could prove insurmountable. Caulaincourt unsuccessfully tried to tell Napoleon that the Tsar:

Has often pointed out to me that his country was large; that though your genius would give you advantages over his generals, even if no occasion arose to fight you in advantageous circumstances, there was plenty of margin for ceding you territory, and that to separate you from France and your resources would be, in itself, a means of successfully fighting you.³

Another factor space consideration Napoleon did not properly weigh during

his planning for the Russian campaign was weather. Although the march to Russia started in the early summer of 1812, the Tsar refused to allow Napoleon to draw his forces into a decisive battle. This dragged out the campaign longer than Napoleon had planned for. Soon, winter loomed and Napoleon's army found itself facing two enemies: The Russians and the Russian winter. Again, Caulaincourt tried to warn Napoleon about the possible effects of winter when he pointed out the Tsar had observed, "Our climate, our winter, will fight on our side."⁴ Alexander planned all along to draw Napoleon in so as to expose French forces to the harsh Russian winter. In his planning, Napoleon did not build a logistics plan which took into account the burden of having to move supplies over ice, snow and mud. Whereas the Russians and the Cossacks (mercenaries fighting on the side of the Russians) moved their provisions using horse-drawn sleigh when the weather turned cold, Napoleon's forces became bogged down as their carriage wheels sank into the snow and mud during the fall and winter months. Napoleon's troops had left France without provisions suitable for a battlefield with temperatures as low as minus 15° Fahrenheit during the winter of 1812-1813. Napoleon's army "suffered and died from hunger, cold and exhaustion than from the constant raids and the few massed attacks on their columns."⁵ Clearly, Napoleon did not expect his campaign into Russia to last beyond the summer / early fall of 1812. His unwillingness to accept alternative factor space viewpoints from a trusted subordinate resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of soldiers during the 1812 winter campaign. Tsar Alexander was clever enough not to be drawn into a decisive battle against a superior tactician and allowed weather and distance to become formidable allies

against Napoleon's army.

The Japanese Combined Fleet Staff was also guilty of not accepting alternative factor space considerations in planning for the Battle of Midway. Indeed, the Battle of Midway eventually became the decisive battle sought by the Japanese against the United States, but the result was not one that they bargained for.

To be sure, there was a debate amongst the Japanese as to whether or not capture of the Midway Islands should have been included in the Pacific campaign. The Japanese General Staff and the Combined Fleet were initially on opposite sides of the question led by Vice Admiral Shigeru Fukudome and Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto respectively. After Pearl Harbor, Yamamoto felt strongly that a blow must be struck which would cripple the U.S. Fleet and provide a way station for operations in the Pacific. Fukudome and the General Staff believed that Midway was not essential to their strategy in the Pacific. The General Staff believed "that Midway would be difficult to maintain and supply."⁶ Indeed, the 5912 nautical miles between Tokyo and Midway would have created a critical vulnerability resulting from the newly created and very long maritime logistics train. At a minimum, Japanese troop and supply transports would have had to dodge American submarine patrols and possible harassment from airpower projected from U.S. aircraft carriers on station in the Pacific east of the Hawaiian Islands. Ultimately, the question was not decided on the merits of whether maintaining the long-distance, maritime supply train from Japan to Midway would be too hard to keep together under fire. There was no extensive or reasoned debate on the

operational function of maritime logistics. Yamamoto simply threatened to resign if the General Staff did not accept his plan to attack Midway. Because of “Yamamoto’s position and prestige”⁷, the General Staff withdrew its dissent from the Midway plan.

Incredibly, Yamamoto would have one more chance to consider (and reject) well-reasoned, professional dissent before proceeding with Midway. Yamamoto dismissed another alternative view offered by the head of the Japanese Second Fleet, Vice Admiral Nobutake Kondo. Kondo observed that U.S. forces would be able to bring a higher concentration of air assets to the fight for Midway because they were in possession of the Island. The U.S. would have the benefit of both land-based and carrier aircraft, whilst Japan would only have carrier-based aircraft to launch for the battle. This would result in the Americans, having a higher concentration of force than Japan.⁸ Yamamoto rejected Kondo’s observations without any apparent consideration and proceeded with preparations that would eventually lead to Japan’s defeat in the Battle of Midway.

During planning for the Vietnam War, the Joint Chiefs of Staff did not have their views fully considered by civilian leaders at the national-strategic level. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson did not want the professional opinion of their advisors, they wanted their loyalty. During early planning for initial assistance to South Vietnam, Kennedy and his advisors bought into the “argument that massive retaliation be supplanted with a military doctrine of ‘flexible response’.”⁹ Flexible response was an approach devised by then-retired General Maxwell Taylor and was based on the notion that civilian leaders could change the behavior of the North

Vietnamese through graduated pressures by choosing from a menu of limited military options. At the time, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) was General Lyman Lemnitzer. Lemnitzer did not agree with the flexible response plan. He believed that unless the United States was prepared to use overwhelming force, it should not become involved in Vietnam. Kennedy's reaction to the professional, alternative view given him by his top military advisor was to replace him with General Taylor:

Having concluded that the Joint Chiefs were more an impediment than an asset, Kennedy moved to replace the 'holdover' Chiefs of the Eisenhower administration with his own men, who would be less likely to resist his administrations defense policies.¹⁰

General Taylor was called out of retirement and eventually put in charge of the JCS.

President Lyndon Johnson as president also did not brook alternative points of view with respect to his policy in Vietnam. His leadership style was to build a consensus on a set policy and then move forward with decisions. President Johnson did not see the utility in allowing "wide-ranging debate on policy issues."¹¹ His approach was to set the policy and then cherry pick from the facts to support his decisions.

President Johnson's advisors knew better than to bring him information contrary to his predilections on policy. After returning from a fact finding trip to South Vietnam in December of 1963, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and CJCS General Taylor laundered their report by leaving out the serious leadership problems they observed in the South Vietnamese government.¹¹ The failure was two-fold. First, the president was at fault for putting his advisors in the position of

telling him only what he wanted to hear. Second, his advisors were at fault for allowing themselves to be intellectually neutered on a national-strategic issue that would ultimately cost lives. Information regarding the instability in the South Vietnamese government should have been proffered as a huge red flag. Without a reliable partner against the Vietcong Guerillas, the United States faced a situation wherein U.S. forces would have to carry the possible burden of a protracted conflict. Had he been armed with information regarding a shaky government in South Vietnam, President Johnson could have mitigated a situation that allowed for a change in the South Vietnamese government an “average of once every two months for two years...”¹²

Denial of the facts on the ground and suppression of dissent were natural enablers for operational decisions being made in Washington as opposed to commanders on the ground. Secretary McNamara should not have withheld information from President Johnson. Instead, the Secretary of Defense subordinated operational decisions during 1964 based on putting President Johnson in the best possible position for re-election.¹³

The Johnson administration not only set national-strategic policy, but also intervened and made decisions at the operational and tactical levels. For example, during a meeting with Army Chief of Staff, General Harold Johnson, the president demanded a specific mixture of troops in order “to blur the distinction between combat formations and advisers.”¹⁴ General Johnson realized that the JCS needed to take back the operational and tactical decisions that had been commandeered by civilian advisors and planners who were influencing the president:

He (General Johnson) argued that the ‘self-imposed restrictions’ on

the bombing of North Vietnam had ‘severely reduced’ its effectiveness and made the successful execution of four ROLLING THUNDER missions per week virtually impossible.¹⁵

In effect, the planning of initial engagements in Vietnam had veered into the realm of centralized planning and centralized execution. As Professor Milan Vego points out:

One of the most serious problems in the modern military is the tendency toward excessively centralized decision making and constant interference by operational commanders, and even military-strategic commanders of theater-strategic commanders and national-strategic authorities in the purely tactical decisions and actions of subordinate commanders.¹⁶

The president and the Secretary of Defense had become involved in the operational and tactical minutiae and were actually selecting targets from the White House.

In addition to making decisions with respect to targeting, the Johnson administration also imposed itself in factor force considerations. General Johnson believed that it would take at least 500,000 troops to win in Vietnam. Civilian planners in Washington believed that the objective of convincing the North Vietnamese to cease its support of the Vietcong could be achieved with far fewer troop levels. Military leaders were concerned that inadequate planning for needed troop levels in the beginning of the Vietnam conflict would mean an eventual loss of the war and the U.S. getting bogged down indefinitely in a guerilla campaign.

During the Nixon administration, civilian planners again overrode the professional dissent of uniformed men with regard to military operations. In the spring of 1972, administration planners, led by Dr. Henry Kissinger, National Security Advisor, considered whether or not to recommence bombing on North Vietnamese soil. General Creighton Abrams, Commander of U.S. forces in

Vietnam, believed that North Vietnam was about to begin its spring offensive. In order to blunt the enemy attack, he requested permission to begin bombing north of the DMZ (in North Vietnam). Administration planners denied his request partly for reasons not relating to operational concerns. In his memoirs, Kissinger admitted that part of the reason for the denial was that the administration did not want anything to disrupt President Nixon's upcoming trip to China.¹⁷ In other words, an in-theater, military commander believed his situation to be in peril from an impending enemy attack. The commander, General Abrams, asked for permission to blunt the pending attack and seize the initiative. His view of the situation dissented from planners at the national strategic level and his request was denied by civilian planners because they did not want the president's travel plans disrupted.

In the planning for IRAQI FREEDOM, the Bush administration also did not properly consider factor force requirements after initial combat operations in its inability to consider alternatives views. Just as during President Johnson's administration, military leaders were kept from instituting the force implements at the operational level they believed were necessary to conduct the war after initial combat operations. As Duffy points out in "Revolt of the Generals":

What distinguishes the latest rebellion is that the retired Generals are taking on their old boss not over policy or budgets but the operation of an ongoing war.¹⁸

Army Chief of Staff, General Eric Shinseki, believed that it would take no fewer than several hundred thousand troops to occupy Iraq after initial combat operations. A few days later in testimony before Congress, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz contradicted General Shinseki and intimated that no more than 100,000 troops would be needed for initial operations and re-

construction. In the run-up to the war, General Shinseki tried to offer professional dissent relating to factor force and was replaced. Using a gambit out of the Johnson administration playbook for dissenters (As mentioned above in this paper: General Taylor was brought out of retirement in order to ensure acquiescence to President Johnson's Vietnam policy), the Bush administration brought General Shoomaker was brought out of retirement as the replacement for General Shinseki.

Analytical Conclusions

Clearly, Napoleon did not take into proper account the impact that factor space would have on his campaign against Russia during the winter of 1812-1813. He believed that beginning his efforts in June of 1812 would ensure that the campaign would be over by the fall. Even after being warned by Caulaincourt, he did not accept that Tsar Alexander's plan of simply giving up territory and saving his forces from engagement until the winter set in was an issue of concern. Once winter arrived, Napoleon was then faced with the hardships of frigid cold combined with inadequate provisions for his troops in the field. Caulaincourt also tried to warn Napoleon that the distance involved with a march across the Caucasus winter would create a critical vulnerability in the form of an expanded logistics train that needed further consideration. Napoleon did not heed his counsel's warning. It can be concluded that if he had properly considered the fact that his forces were marching not only into Russian territory, but quite probably the Russian winter, he would have been able to equip his troops accordingly. The seeds for Napoleon's defeat in Russia were sown in his inability to consider alternative points of view.

In Midway, Yamamoto insisted on proceeding with the campaign without due consideration of the alternative views offered by the Japanese Second Fleet and the Naval General Staff. The Naval General Staff did not concur with Yamamoto's notion of Midway's strategic importance. They thought that the objective of capturing Midway Island as a launching point was important, but that the American Fleet needed to be engaged first. They logically concluded that capturing Midway would be difficult without first eliminating the seaborne threat of the American carrier forces that escaped destruction at Pearl Harbor. They believed that Midway as a way station would be marginally effective as long as the maritime external lines of communication and supply were able to be harassed by the United States fleet. Therefore, finishing off the American Navy was paramount and should be the objective prior to capturing Midway. They were correct. Yamamoto ignored the counsel of the head of Japanese Second Fleet, Vice Admiral Nobutake Kondo, with regard to the Japanese being at an operational disadvantage with regard to concentration of forces. Kondo pointed out the U.S. would bring a dual concentration of forces to the maritime battlespace (from Midway island and the American carrier fleet) compared to the one-dimensional fleet-based option for Japan. Yamamoto ignored this advice. Only one conclusion can be drawn from the results of Yamamoto's refusal to brook professional dissent: It was one of the primary causes for Japanese defeat at Midway.

In Vietnam, President Johnson and his advisors did not allow for alternative points of view in the initial planning of U.S. involvement. Men who tried to point out that insufficient forces were being sent in to accomplish the mission were

replaced with others who were more amenable to carry out set policies without question. The only conclusion to be drawn from having advisors around national-strategic leaders who are discouraged from having an opinion is that only lock-step information conforming to notions of how to conduct military operations will be presented to the decision maker. This was the case in Vietnam. Advisors in the Johnson administration went to Vietnam and saw the truth of the situation on the ground with respect to the shaky South Vietnamese government. This truth was not shared with President Johnson.

Defense Secretary McNamara was involved in the actual selection and approval of targets. Analysis of McNamara's control over execution leads to one conclusion: Pilots were sent into harm's way under operational restrictions from Washington that led to poorly run missions. As McMaster points out:

Limitations on the use of force and the centralization of decision making in the White House compounded the difficulties of bad weather, enemy air defenses, and the general precision of bombing.¹⁹

An additional conclusion drawn from the Vietnam example has to do with the objective. In Vietnam, the objective was never clear. One day during a planning meeting with his advisors, President Johnson asked everyone in the room to tell him what the objective was for our efforts in Vietnam. The response was telling. According to McMaster, responses ranged from "stalemate" to just "holding on." From an operational standpoint, the objective is what the military effort is designed to achieve. If the national strategic planners believe that "hanging on" is the purpose of a military effort, then the seeds for quagmire have been sown - which is precisely what happened in Vietnam. McMaster puts it in very succinct terms when he points out that "without a clear idea of the objective, the military

strategy under which U.S. forces would operate remained unclear.”²⁰

In IRAQI FREEDOM, it can be concluded that faulty factor force assumptions led to unpreparedness once the insurgency took hold on the ground. Defense planners at the national strategic level believed that “we would be greeted as liberators.” Ironically, an alternative view was offered by lower-level staffers that apparently reached the attention of Secretary Rumsfeld. Retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner was appointed head of the transition team for Iraq. His planners conducted a “rock drill” wherein a rehearsal was conducted in order to predict any shortfalls or surprises that may be on the horizon after initial combat operations. His planners determined that:

Current force packages are inadequate for the first step of securing all the major urban areas, let alone for providing interim police...We risk letting much of the country descend into civil unrest and chaos whose magnitude may defeat our national strategy of a stable new Iraq, and more immediately, we place our own troops, fully engaged in the forward fight, in greater jeopardy.²¹

More prescient words could not have been written prior to operations in Iraq. It is now clear that the United States went into Iraq without adequate forces to handle the insurgency which developed after initial combat operations. The result of the non-acceptance of the alternative views presented by Garner’s team was that U.S. forces were caught flat-footed once the neighborhood militias and terrorist insurgents began attacks on both American forces and the Iraqi citizenry.

Lieutenant General Sir Aylmer Haldane was in command of British forces during the Mesopotamian (now Iraq) insurrection of 1920. In a letter to then British War Secretary, Winston Churchill, Haldane points out that being sent to Mesopotamia with an insufficient number of forces has hampered his ability to

combat the Arab insurgency.²² What can be drawn from Haldane's experience is that an underestimation when it comes to factor force considerations can significantly impair the commander's ability to carry out and accomplish the objectives associated with an asymmetric campaign. That was a conclusion drawn after careful analysis by a commander on the ground almost ninety years ago.

Recommendations / Lessons Learned

For Napoleon's ill-fated Russia campaign, he should have listened to the counsel of Caulaincourt and fully considered the issues relating to factor space. Napoleon was already a legend by 1812. As such, he was not pre-disposed to being told what to do. According to Schneid, "His cult of personality galvanized the rank-and-file..."²³ Having a man at or near the pinnacle of the national strategic pyramid who is answerable to no one can be disastrous if his judgment is off the mark. Napoleon chose not to accept Caulaincourt's advice regarding the deleterious effect that the Russian winter would have on his Army. The result was disastrous. Less than 10% of the original number made it back from the Russian campaign. The levers for national strategic authority should never be in the hands of only one person.

In Midway, the Japanese suffered from the same fate by adherence to Yamamoto's cult of personality. When alternative points of view were brought to him concerning very-relevant issues pertaining to maritime force concentration and extended vulnerable lines of communication, the issues were not decided on the merits of the questions involved. Instead, the Japanese General Staff yielded to

Yamamoto's desire to proceed with the Midway operation simply because it was what Yamamoto wanted. Questions pertaining to national security should never be subject to any consideration other than the merits of the issues involved. Once personalities become a part of the decision-making process, operational considerations will inevitably take a back seat to the cynosure of the men around the table. Japanese leaders in the spring of 1942 reached a decisive point in whether or not to proceed with Midway as a part of the Pacific campaign. Instead of an objective discussion, the debate gave way to Yamamoto's stature. Planners on the Japanese General Staff should have had the opportunity to appeal their case in opposition to Yamamoto to the Military Staff in Tokyo. This was "planning for", not an "ongoing" operation. When there is time to carefully consider all the merits of an operational decision, the various positions should be studied on appeal so that decision makers at the national strategic level are aware of the merits for each point of view. This is not so that national leaders can be induced to micromanage an operation. On the contrary, once the decision is made to proceed, the latitude in execution should remain with the Commander - in this case, Admiral Yamamoto. But at the very least, the Military Staff should have been made fully aware of the divergence in view between the Naval Staff and the Combined Fleet Staff prior to the engagement at Midway which was still months away.

In Vietnam, when alternative viewpoints were proffered by senior military leaders, they were simply replaced. President Johnson sent his advisors to Vietnam on fact finding mission. Instead of coming back with the truth about the instability of the South Vietnamese government, a concerted effort was made to conceal the

truth. The truth should never be kept from civilians at the national strategic level. One lesson from the Vietnam example is that our civilian leaders need to be in the position to make informed decisions with regard to policy and strategic objectives. They should not be overwhelmed with information, but that does not mean they should not be told the truth. President Johnson did not realize in the transition period from 1964-1965 that the South Vietnamese government was shaky. If he would have known this, he could have shaped his policy and levied his requirements on the military based on a more accurate notion of how reliable (or not) the South Vietnamese would be on the battlefield. Another lesson learned from the Vietnam example is that the national strategic thinkers should not be involved in tactical execution. As stated in the discussion section above, Secretary McNamara and President Johnson were involved in target selection and approval. That was beyond getting into the weeds. At that point, they were sucking at the root. The result was telling. A costly lesson on this point is that the restrictions placed on the men wearing camouflage in the jungles of Vietnam by the men wearing suits in the palatial comforts of Pennsylvania Avenue resulted in the former not being able to accomplish his mission on the tactical level. Operational and tactical decisions should be left to the military commander, period. That is not to say that civilian at the national strategic level cannot provide the national strategic contours to be followed by the operational commander. If centralized planning at some point needs to give way to decentralized execution, decisions made by the operational-level commander may be hampered to the point of eventual defeat.

Factor force considerations did not receive due attention in the run-up to

IRAQI Freedom. When Lieutenant General (Ret) Garner's low-level civilian planners determined that American forces going into Iraq were insufficient, Secretary Rumsfeld told Garner to remove them from his team. In planning military operations, it is essential to listen to alternative points of view. Instead of surrounding himself with an "amen corner" of advisors, a commander or a civilian at the national strategic level should endeavor to seek professional dissent during the planning process. This does not mean subordinates should not respect the vertical nature of a chain of command or not carry out direction once the execute order has gone out. But the Iraq example shows in stark and undeniable terms that factor force estimates for the insurgent Battlespace were insufficient. Operational Military Commanders should make sure that as much as practicable, alternative points of view should never be suppressed. If the planning process reveals errors in assumption prior to the commencement of a military operation, military leaders are obliged to make sure that both the civilian and military establishment at the national strategic level are thoroughly informed. British Lieutenant General Sir Aylmer Haldane provides the best possible recommendation for a commander in operational force planning based on his experience in Mesopotamia during the Insurgency of 1920:

For the commander who finds himself in such a quandary, come what may, there is one course and one course only: he must make a rigid examination of his conscience, and frame his recommendations strictly in accordance the military requirements.²⁴

Conclusion

From Napoleon's ill-fated campaign to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, common themes can be discerned when professional dissent is rejected in the planning of military operations.

First, leaders at the national strategic level need to ensure that there is appropriate distance between themselves and operational execution. As much as practicable and as much as time permits during the planning phases of any campaign, professional dissent and alternative points of view need to be cultivated and made a welcome part of the deliberative process. Status of high-level authorities involved in the decision chain should not trump or dissuade initiative and foresight when military operations are being planned and policy is being set at the national strategic level.

Second, civilian planners need to have at least a basic knowledge of the operational factors faced by the commanders in the field. A common element in the Vietnam and Iraq examples is that force level asked for by the military commander was not granted by civilian authorities at the national strategic level. In both examples, both military and civilian personnel who tried to offer professional dissent were summarily replaced. If leaders at the national level do not have the proper sense of basic considerations such as factor force when making policy, then the policy will be flawed from the outset. The military will ultimately have to pay the price as American forces either have to "catch-up" to the situation or be withdrawn over time after inconclusive or worse result in the Battlespace.

Also, once the decision has been made to proceed with the operation, the operational commandeer should not have undue restrictions placed on his latitude to accomplish the mission. If the commander feels that he has not been given the freedom of execution (and thought) he needs to accomplish the mission, as Haldane points out in the lessons learned section above, he needs to have the guts to speak up no matter what the consequences may be.

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