

Political Success in War: A Criterion for Success

**A Monograph
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Abstract

POLITICAL SUCCESS IN WAR: A CRITERION FOR SUCCESS by MAJOR Stephen Scott Jackman, US Army, 44 pages.

What is success in war? Who defines success? A review of past theorists such as Sun Tzu, Thucydides, Jomini and Clausewitz along with modern scholars such as William Martel, Azar Gat, and J. Boone Bartholomees produces a model for understanding success.

First, success must be defined using political terms. Since war is a political endeavor at the strategic level, success in war must be defined using political language. Politicians and military leaders must define the objectives of war and convince the population that the political condition has improved using whatever political language is required for the given situation. Military tactical language is not sufficient for defining success at the political level.

Second, the political leaders must define the desired objective for the military campaign. Political leaders understand politics and the nature of the population. Military leaders should help political leaders define success in war. Politicians understand the population and military leaders understand the theory and history of war.

Third, the political condition that exists at the end of the war determines whether the war was successful. Victory in battle is important but is not always necessary for success. War must improve the political condition.

Finally, a review of two US conflicts in Lebanon against the success model demonstrates its utility. The political and military leaders in Lebanon 1958 followed the theory of the model and achieved a successful outcome for the conflict. The political and military leaders of Lebanon 1983 did not adhere to the theory of the success model and were unable to achieve success. Although adherence to the model will not ensure future success, it can be used to help political and military leaders better prepare for future conflict.

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Introduction

“Again, unfortunately, we are dealing with jargon, which, as usual, bears only a faint resemblance to well defined, specific concepts.”
Carl Von Clausewitz¹

What is success in war? Who defines success? In ancient times, warring factions would take land, people, or materials from the vanquished opponent. Times have changed. From WWII to Operation Desert Storm, America has waged war to stop countries from acquiring land and resources. If the nation and the military cannot gauge success by the amount of land, people, or materials taken, leaders must define success in a different way.

Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 states “The President and the Secretary of Defense, through the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), direct the national effort that supports combatant and subordinate commanders to ensure the national strategic objectives and joint operation termination criteria are clearly defined, understood, and achievable.” This statement does not account for the chameleon effect of warfare.² It implies that the President and the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) will be able to foresee how war will change, and predict which national strategic objectives and joint operational termination criteria are achievable or even desirable. It also assumes the politicians will understand the consequences of how they articulate their criteria to the military.

Historically, Presidents have had difficulty articulating their vision of success. Many Presidents have attempted to define success using military tactical terminology. Terms such as destroy, secure, and protect are unsuitable for describing the desired conditions upon completion of a military campaign. Therefore, military planners have regularly developed campaign plans with inaccurate and incomplete objectives and termination criteria.

¹Carl Von Clausewitz, *Two Letters of Strategy*, Translated by Peter Paret and Daniel Moran (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1984), 37.

²Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, Edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 89. Clausewitz expresses that war is more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case.

History demonstrates that politicians and military commanders are usually unable to predict the conditions that will exist at the end of a war. Therefore, their attempts to forecast and define achievable objectives and termination criteria are often proven invalid. Senior level military commanders, trained in the art of war, must understand this dilemma.

The military leadership and the SECDEF must help the President define success in a manner that is acceptable and achievable. Success in war hinges upon the political condition that exists at the end of the conflict. The number of enemy killed does not matter as long as a favorable political condition exists. The President and the SECDEF, with the help of senior military leadership, should define success in war by describing and explaining the political conditions desired at the end of the conflict.

To fully understand this requirement, a review of the classical and contemporary theories of “war aims” will help develop a baseline for different definitions of success. Once a definition of success is established, the leadership can measure the progress of a campaign. Complexity work, such as Robert Axelrod’s and Michael D. Cohen’s, include methods for defining and measuring success. Additionally, current joint doctrine outlines methods for measuring military effectiveness. Finally, a historical review of two United States military interventions, Lebanon in both 1958 and in 1983, will demonstrate how, and if, the President accurately defined success in each incursion.

A successful military campaign should produce an improvement in the political condition. If the President accurately describes the desired political conditions, military leaders should be able to design campaigns to reach this desired condition. If the President inaccurately describes the desired political condition by using military tactical terminology, military leaders may not develop campaigns that achieve the true desired political condition.

Before attempting to define contemporary success, politicians and military leaders should understand what past theorists and historians have developed in this field. From Sun Tzu to

Thucydides to Clausewitz to B.H. Liddell Hart, scholars have analyzed the conduct and outcome of war. Their theories of war and success will help develop a current definition of success.

Historical theories for defining success

Sun Tzu

Sun Tzu is an ancient Chinese military strategist and General believed to have served under the King of Wu that lived ca. 544—496 BC. Historians credit him for writing the book *Art of War* which outlines a general philosophy of Eastern war. *Art of War* is one of the earliest treatises on the conduct of war.

Sun Tzu usually used the term victory when explaining tactics. William Martell, military historian and professor at Tufts University, believed that for Sun Tzu, “victory ... should be achieved as quickly as possible with the least expenditure of resources.”³ Sun Tzu spoke about the employment of military forces and military victory by saying “a victory that is long coming will blunt their weapons and dampen their ardor.”⁴ Victory seemed clear to Sun Tzu and many of his axioms deal with achieving victory in battle.

³William Martell, *Victory in War: Foundations of Modern Military Policy* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 17.

⁴Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, Translated by Ralph D Sawyer (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, Inc, 1994), 173.

However, success, and even the concept of success, was more elusive. He understood that victory in battle would not always translate into long-term success. One of Sun Tzu's axioms is "Thus when making a comparative evaluation through estimations, seeking out its true nature, ask:

Which ruler has the Tao?
Which General has the greatest ability?
Who has gained [the advantage of] Heaven and Earth?
Whose laws and orders are more thoroughly implemented?
Whose forces are stronger?
Whose officers and troops are better trained?
Whose rewards and punishments are clear?
From these, I will know victory and defeat."⁵

The prudent statesman and General should consider these areas when preparing for war. Though the General could achieve victory on the battlefield, more was necessary before victory could be converted into long-term success.

Sun Tzu realized that tactical victories did not ensure long-term success. Success for him occurred before the battle even began. If the General or the leader was able to create the proper conditions, he could achieve success before the battle even began. Success meant preparing for battle more than achieving victory in battle. Success meant molding, preparing and accounting for the domestic and international political environment.

Thucydides

Thucydides was a Greek historian and author who lived ca 460 – 395 B.C.. Originally, he was a General in the Athenian army. However, due to his inability to achieve victory in Amphiboles, he was exiled from Athens. He used this status to travel among the Peloponnesian allies and view the war from afar. His writing of the *History of the Peloponnesian War* helped establish him as the father of history. He applied cause and effect reasoning to write the book instead of referring the wishes of the gods.

⁵Ibid., 167.

Thucydides understood that victory and success were different. Although he used the terms interchangeably, he understood there was a conceptual difference between achieving victory in battle and achieving long-term success. While Thucydides did not specifically write about the differences between victory and success, he did attempt to codify what he believed each to represent.

In defining victory, Martell interprets Thucydides to say, “Victory should be viewed in terms of the tactical conditions that exist when one force defeats another in battle.”⁶ Thucydides validates this statement with, “Thus far victory was with the Peloponnesians and the Athenian fleet destroyed.”⁷ These statements show that Thucydides generally viewed victory in the short-term tactical sense.

It is more difficult to identify how Thucydides defined success. He understood that victory in battle would not necessarily lead to long-term success by documenting one of Pericles’ speeches in which the Athenian general said, “No irritation that we may feel for the former must provoke us to a battle with the numerical superiority of the Peloponnesians. A victory would only be succeeded by another battle against the same superiority.”⁸ Additionally, he understood that Sparta’s total military victory “gained little more than short-lived supremacy in Greece.”⁹ The Athenians and the Spartans could achieve victory but success was not easy to obtain.

In the Melian dialogue, Thucydides showed that success involved not only the immediate object or victory but also the perception of the larger enemy, the other neutrals, and even their own allies.¹⁰ The Athenians realized their immediate actions would produce long-lasting effects, both positive and negative. Thucydides confirmed this by capturing the Athenian comment of

⁶William Martell, *Victory in War*, 18.

⁷Robert B Strassler, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1996), 147.

⁸*Ibid.*, 83.

⁹William Martell, *Victory in War*, 19.

¹⁰Robert B Strassler, *The Landmark Thucydides*, 350-357.

“and it is certain that those who do not yield to their equals, who keep terms with their superiors, and are moderate toward their inferiors, on the whole succeed best.”¹¹

Thucydides demonstrates how victory and success can be in tension. Victory can be considered a positive military action but it is a component of the larger concept, the concept of success. Success is linked to the political condition that exists at the end of the conflict. Military victory was good but it must create conditions for improving the political situation.

Antoine-Henri Jomini

Antoine-Henri Jomini, (1779 – 1869) was born in Switzerland. He served as a General under Napoleon Bonaparte and then under the Russians during the latter stages of the Napoleonic Wars. His writings have heavily influenced the tactics of many western armies, to include that of the United States. He was a prolific writer of both military history and strategy.

Most military planners and historians believe Jomini was concerned only with the tactical side of war. This misconception is easy to make because of the amount of writing Jomini dedicated to tactics and strategy. Brian Bond, a military historian and professor at King’s College London, claims that Jomini’s “highly influential legacy contributed to the dangerous Napoleonic delusion that superior strategy and tactics in the decisive battle would assure victory, irrespective of the political and social context in which the battle was fought.”¹² William Martel even claims, “One of his most important contributions to strategy was the argument that victory entails destroying the military forces of the enemy, because only then is it possible for the state to conquer its opponent successfully.”¹³

Jomini seemed very comfortable with his concept of victory on the battlefield. He devoted five chapters of *The Art of War* to this concept. He claimed, “in general, a cherished cause, and a good general who inspires confidence ... are powerful means of electrifying an army

¹¹Ibid., 355.

¹²Brian Bond, *The Pursuit of Victory* (United States: Oxford University Press, 1996),

¹³William Martell, *Victory in War*, 32.

and conducting to victory.”¹⁴ He proposed that superiority in the general’s skill is “one of the most important certain pledges of victory.”¹⁵ To this cause, Jomini argued, “Victory entails destroying the military forces of the enemy, because only then is it possible for the state to conquer its opponent successfully.”¹⁶ These proposals seemed to clearly link victory to tactics on the battlefield.

However, Jomini recognized that there was more to war than victory on the battlefield. Dr. Azar Gat, military historian and previous Chair of the Political Science department at Tel Aviv University, wrote a detailed historiography on the evolution of military strategy entitled *The Origins of Military Thought* in which he outlined much of Jomini’s work. According to Gat, Jomini never considered battle to be the exclusive means of war.¹⁷ Jomini “embraces the political considerations relating to the operations of armies... the passions of the people to be fought, the military system, their financial resources ...”¹⁸ Jomini’s treatise was much more than lines of operations and interior lines.

In the first section of *The Art of War*, Jomini defined the art of war and laid out six distinct parts; the first being “Statesmanship in its relation to war.”¹⁹ He identified ten reasons a government goes to war. The different reasons for war may influence “in some degree the nature and extent of the efforts and operations necessary for the proposed end”²⁰ and the different

¹⁴Baron De Jomini, *The Art of War*, Translated by Capt. G H Mendell and Lieut. W P Craighill (Westport, Ct: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1977), 41.

¹⁵Ibid., 42.

¹⁶William Martell, *Victory in War*, 32.

¹⁷Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to Clausewitz* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 116.

¹⁸Ibid., 126.

¹⁹Baron De Jomini, *The Art of War*, 13.

²⁰Ibid., 14.

combinations and reasons for war “belong more or less to statesmanship.”²¹ The statesman identifies the object of war.

Military Policy is the term Jomini used to label those issues not exclusively diplomacy or strategy but are still of the highest importance in the plans both of a Statesman and a General. He identified ten essential bases of military policy which a wise government should adopt. Here, he claimed that when a statesman decides upon war, it becomes necessary to design –not an entire plan of operations – but a system of operations necessary to guarantee the “success of the enterprise.” Success of the enterprise is much more than victory on the battlefield. Success of the enterprise deals with the long-term viability of the states strategy and political situation.

With the recognition of the reasons for going to war, the different areas for military policy, and the need to prepare for the success of the enterprise, Jomini demonstrated that there was more to the art of war than tactical success. He did not articulate how to define success and he regularly interchanged the terms victory and success. However, he understood the concept of success and that defining success was in the realm of the statesman and the senior Generals. The statesman must identify why he is going to war and develop a supporting system of operations to guarantee success of the enterprise.

Carl Von Clausewitz

Carl Von Clausewitz, (1780 – 1831) was born in Prussia. He served as a General in the Prussian Army and even did a brief tour with the Russian Army from 1812-13. One of the most influential positions he held was that of Director of the *Kriegsakademie*, where he served from 1818-1830.²²

²¹Ibid., 15.

²²The *Kriegsakademie* is the German military school comparable to the United States Army Command and Staff College (CGSC). Here, he further developed his philosophy on war and his masterpiece *On War*.

Arguably, Clausewitz's most famous premise is that "war is merely the continuation of policy by other means."²³ Clausewitz goes further to emphasize the importance of politics in the definition of success by saying, "The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose."²⁴ There is no reason for war other than to further a political objective. The policy may direct a limited war or a total war but the policy must define success. Though war may be a chameleon, the politician must continue to update the policy.

Peter Paret and Daniel Moran translated Clausewitz's *Two Letters on Strategy* which provides a practical application of "On War." *Two Letters*, which was Clausewitz's written response to a former student requesting mentorship, demonstrate how he applied his theory on war in the development of two theoretical campaigns. He argued that politics must define success in war by saying "the political purpose and the means available to achieve it give rise to the military objective."²⁵ Military planners cannot create supporting campaigns unless they understand the political purpose. Clausewitz does not say that the politicians must define tactical objectives but they must define the political purpose. The political purpose is the first and foremost issue.

According to Paret, the opening paragraphs of *Two Letters* criticize the student for failing to "identify the political purpose of the antagonist" and to "establish the level of significance the military operations possessed for the opposing governments." Clausewitz claimed that without this information, sensible strategic and operational planning was out of the question.²⁶ Clausewitz

²³Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, 87.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Carl Von Clausewitz, *Two Letters of Strategy*, 24.

²⁶Ibid., 4.

could not see how it was possible to plan a campaign without indicating the political condition of the belligerents, and the politics of their relationship to each other.²⁷

There are two types of war, total and limited.²⁸ The first type is aimed at completely overthrowing the enemy and the second at a limited objective. The political aim will “set its [the wars’] course, prescribe the scale of means and effort which is required, and make its influence felt throughout down to the smallest operational detail.”²⁹ The political aim and the definition of success affect the development and execution of the entire military campaign.

Success was attained when the state achieved its political goals. The key to success is the achievement of political goals, not simply the acquisition or destruction of enemy.”³⁰ Within the theoretical campaign, he recognized that success in the campaign meant more than defeating the Austrians on the battlefield. Success dealt with the political situation and had longer lasting implications. COL Wallace P. Franz interpreted Clausewitz to that “success is always greatest at the point where victory was gained.”³¹

Although Clausewitz interchanged the terms victory and success, he firmly believed that success in war meant the victor was able to improve its political situation. The very reason for war was to change the political situation. Military leaders must design campaigns to achieve the political objectives. There is no other reason for war.

B.H. Liddell Hart

Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart (1895-1970) was an English historian and military strategist. He served as a Captain in the British Army during WWI on the Western Front. He was retired from the Army as a Captain due to two heart attacks which were likely caused by the effects of

²⁷Ibid., 22.

²⁸Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought*, 218.

²⁹Ibid., 220.

³⁰William Martell, *Victory in War*, 33.

³¹Carl Von Clausewitz, *Two Letters of Strategy*, xi. COL Wallace P. Franz was an infantryman at the US Army War College during the middle 1980s. He provided the forward to *Two Letters of Strategy*.

gas from WWI. He then continued as a military writer for newspapers and published several books on military history and strategy. Some claim that the Germans used some of his strategies against the British during WWII.

Hart identified one of the problems with defining success in war. To him, history showed that “gaining military victory is not in itself equivalent to gaining the objective of policy. But as most of the thinking about war has been done by men of the military profession, there has been a very natural tendency to lose sight of the basic national object, and identify it with the military aim.”³² He recognized that this problem exists within democratic societies when the political arm of government is separated from the military arm of the government.

It is the statesmen’s responsibility to ensure the steps taken in a military conflict do not overstrain the fabric of the nation or damage its future. Success implies that a nation’s prospect after the war is better than if it had not made war. Unfortunately, “whenever war has broken out, policy has too often been governed by the military aim and has been regarded as an end in itself, instead of as merely a means to the end.”³³ The true aim of the strategists should be to “seek a strategic situation so advantageous as to produce victory itself” and “without any serious fighting.”³⁴

The President has too often defined success by using tactical terminology. This is because military men usually study war, plan for war, and help politicians define war using familiar military terminology. However, as Hart demonstrates, this creates erroneous design and strategy. Success in war must be defined by how it improves the nation’s prospect at the end of the conflict. Success must be defined using political language.

³²B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach* (New York, NY: Fredrick A. Praeger, Inc, 1954), 351.

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴*Ibid.*, 338-339.

Current Theories for defining success

J. Boone Bartholomees

Dr. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr., Professor of Military History at the US Army War College, is the course director for the “Theory of War and Strategy.” As with most of the previous historians and strategists, Bartolomees believes that winning a war is a political condition. The US military cognitively categorizes war into three tiers: tactical, operational, and strategic. The strategic outcome of war is the most important because this level is all that matters in the end. Therefore, if war is a political act, victory at its highest levels is correspondingly defined in political terms.³⁵ At the tactical and most of the operational level, winning is a military condition. The assessment of this victory is generally defined by well-established military terminology. However, at the strategic level, public opinion and the political condition determine whether the conditions for success exist. At the strategic level, success in war is a political condition.

Within the American understanding of war, there are four categories of people who decide whether success was achieved. In order, they are: (1) the American people, (2) American political and military elites, (3) the opinion of friends and allies, and (4) world opinion.³⁶ The American people must be convinced that the war was successful. The political condition that exists at the end of the conflict must support this understanding.

The President, SECDEF, and military leadership are responsible for setting the goals of military campaigns. With success being dependent on the American population’s understanding of the political condition that exists at the end of the conflict, it is incumbent on the US leadership to create goals and define success using political terminology. Goals based on different criteria would not achieve the desired end state or condition.

³⁵J. Boone Bartholomees, "Theory of Victory," *Parameters* XXXVII, no. 2 (Summer 2008), 27.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 37.

William Martell

Dr. William C. Martell, Associate Professor of International Security Studies at the Fletcher School, Tufts University, teaches courses on leadership, decision making, and policy foundation. He has written several policy books and articles to include *Victory in War*, which specifically addresses the theories and difficulties of achieving success in battle.

Since the nuclear age, nuclear equipped powers have found it increasingly difficult to define and achieve success because of the inability to use all of their resources. They are forced into limited wars for limited aims as opposed to being able to wage total war. In effect, it slowly dawned on strategists and policymakers that a form of weaponry (nuclear weapons) “may have rendered the concept of military victory totally meaningless.”³⁷ They must find a way to subjugate the “non-nuclear” foe without resorting to the use of nuclear weapons.

In “Victory in War”, William Martell conducted a detailed review of American wars.³⁸ He identified six criteria that would translate into an American understanding of victory which are:

- Defeat enemy military forces and its economic infrastructure
- Control the enemy state
- Political and governmental reform
- Rebuild the economy and infrastructure
- Realign the enemy state’s foreign policy
- Build a strategic relationship with the defeated state.

The United States wages war to achieve one or more of these objectives. Theoretically, the President should identify which criterion represents the national strategic objectives for each military intervention. Armed with this knowledge, military leaders and planners will be able to develop supporting campaign plans. However, Presidents may not understand, or even desire to understand, how to communicate precisely with military leaders and planners. Military leaders must do everything possible to ensure the desired political objectives are defined.

³⁷William Martell, *Victory in War*, 120.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 136-146. William Martell goes into detail on each of these six criteria.

The American public and most politicians have a mental model of what the success should look like after war. The unconditional surrender, the global scale of hostilities, and the total destruction of the two belligerents by the end of WWII form the foundation for this mental model. Since no conflict is the same as the one before, these exact circumstances, however, will never exist again. Military leaders must help politicians accurately describe their current vision for success in the context of the current conflict. Martell's concepts can assist in developing the dialogue.

Theory for defining success

Historical and contemporary theoreticians have developed a broad understanding of success in war. This information should be brought together to develop a model for how the American political and military system should define success. Though this model may not be correct for every situation, it is a starting point for further discussion. It will be most applicable for reviewing historical conflicts. It can be used to conduct an analysis of past conflicts. Additionally, it can be used to provide a starting point for politicians that are seeking to develop military policy.

First, success must be defined using political terms. Since war is a political endeavor at the strategic level, success in war must be defined using political language. Politicians and military leaders must define the objectives of war and convince the population that the political condition has improved using whatever political language is required for the given situation. Military tactical language is not sufficient for defining success at the political level.

Second, the political leaders must define the desired objective for the military campaign. The political leaders understand politics and the nature of the population. Military thinkers and leaders are trained in the theory and history of war but are not politicians subject to the population. Military leaders should help political leaders define success in war. Politicians understand the population and military leaders understand the theory and history of war.

Third, the political condition that exists at the end of the war determines whether the war was successful. Leaders should use this axiom to guide their decision making. Victory in battle is important but is not always necessary for success. Victory in battle has even on occasion proven harmful to the political end state. The political environment in the United States from mid-2004 to late 2007 after the defeat of the Iraqi army is an example of this condition. Although the military had many tactical victories, the majority of the US public and many of the political elite were not convinced the war had improved their environment. Success at the political level is the most important. War must improve the political condition.

Measuring Success to support learning

Once the political and military leaders have developed an understanding of the desired political end state, they must develop methods for measuring success. They must develop methods to measure whether the military campaign is achieving the desired political condition. Since no plan survives first contact, the organization must develop methods for learning. They must learn how to adjust the campaign plan and goals to better support long-term political success.

Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier, written by Dr Robert Axelrod and Dr Michael Cohen,³⁹ defines complex adaptive systems and how they define success. This book is relevant because military campaigns typically deal with (and are) complex adaptive systems.⁴⁰ A system is complex when there are strong interactions among its elements, so that current events heavily influence the probabilities of many kinds of later events. Adaptation means to seek improvement according to some measure of success. Complex adaptive

³⁹Dr. Axelrod holds a PhD in Political Science from Yale. He is currently an instructor of political science and public policy at the University of Michigan. Dr. Michael D. Cohen received his PhD from the University of California, Irvine, in Social Science. He is currently a professor of complex systems and public policy at the University of Michigan.

⁴⁰Huba Wass de Czege, BG(R) USA, "Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions," *Military Review*, (January - February 2009), 1.

systems are systems containing elements that seek to adapt based on some measurable definition of success.⁴¹

One critical factor when dealing with complex adaptive systems is the ability to define the criteria of success. Axelrod and Cohen state that “First, it is valuable to appreciate that performance measures are defined within the system. They are modified (or maintained) and applied (or discarded) by the agents themselves.”⁴² Given the political system within the United States, the senior political leaders have the requirement to define the mission and goals of any military action. They must define success. Therefore, it is important for senior military leaders to remain connected to, or inside of, the political system so they can understand, influence, and possibly change the definition of success. Senior military officers should not become involved in political parties. However, they should be involved in developing the political definition of success for a military campaign. Agents outside the system cannot affect the measures for success.

Another critical issue for defining success is “How success is defined affects the chances for effective learning.”⁴³ If the only measure of success is winning the war, military commanders will never know if they are being successful until the campaign is complete. A military campaign may be successful but military units will not incrementally learn during the conduct of the war.

The game of chess can demonstrate this dilemma. If winning the game of chess is the only measure of success, then the player can only improve by playing complete games. Learning would only occur once the game was complete. However, if the chess player developed incremental measures of success, he could learn during the conduct of the game. The control of the center squares could be one incremental measurement of success. The player determines that

⁴¹Robert Axelrod and Michael D Cohen, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier* (United States: The Free Press, 2000), 7-8.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 121.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 122.

the chances for winning improve if he controls the center squares. This measure of success allows the player to have multiple iterations of learning during the conduct of a single game.

Current military doctrine does not place a premium on incrementally measuring success with regards to the desired political goal.⁴⁴ Specifically, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 claims that commanders should adjust their operations based on their assessment to ensure that military objectives are met and the military end state is achieved.⁴⁵ While the military objective is very important at the tactical and operational levels, only the political condition matters at the strategic level. Since the Joint Publication series is the highest level of doctrine for the military, this publication series should account for and measure the political condition.

JP 3-0 talks about the assessment process. It says, “The assessment process uses Measures of Performance (MOPs) to evaluate task performance at all levels of war and Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) to measure effects and determine the progress of operations toward achieving objectives. Well-devised measures can help the commanders and staffs understand the causal relationship between specific tasks and desired effects.” JP 3-0 does not put enough emphasis on the measures of success. Commanders and Staffs must ensure their measures of success are nested with the higher headquarters so the organization can learn and adapt toward achieving ultimate political success. MOEs/MOPs are useless if they do not support the ultimate definition of political success.

The United States experience in Vietnam demonstrates how poorly designed measurements of success can lead to failure. President Johnson and SECDEF McNamara became obsessed with assigning targeting priorities. They placed a premium on bomb damage assessment

⁴⁴JP 1-02 defines measures of effectiveness and measures of performance. Measures of effectiveness are criterion used to assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment that are tied to measuring the attainment of an end state, achievement of an objective, or creation of an effect. Measures of performance are criterion used to assess friendly actions that are tied to measuring task accomplishment.

⁴⁵JP 3-0, Joint Operations (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2006), IV-30.

and body counts. Since the political leadership measured tactical events, the military became very good at tactical level activity. COL Harry G. Summers even made a comment to a North Vietnamese colonel named Tu that, “You know, you never defeated us on the battlefield.” Colonel Tu thought, and then replied, “That may be so. But it is also irrelevant.”⁴⁶ However, the US was unable to incrementally learn how to win the strategically and politically because success was not measured or defined using those metrics.

JP 3-0 goes further to say that MOEs and MOPS should be relevant and should avoid collecting and analyzing information that is of no value to a specific operation.⁴⁷ Additionally, it says that MOEs and MOPs help commanders and staffs determine progress toward creating desired effect, achieving objectives, and attaining the military end state. Again, these assertions underestimate measurements. If the MOEs and MOPs are irrelevant, they could actually cause the unit to derail its own operations. Organizations learn how to achieve those things they measure, whether or not the measurements are valid.

Since World War II, the United States military has been weak in identifying the desired political condition and the supporting measures of success. Post-WWII conflicts have been less about killing enemy forces and more about achieving a desired political condition. However, many political and military leaders have remained focused on defining success by using military tactical terminology. They must develop a better understanding of how to achieve success in limited war in the nuclear age.

⁴⁶Excerpts from an interview between COL Harry G. Summers and an English speaking North Vietnamese COL named Hu. This interview took place in April 1975 at the Hanoi airport. Accessed at <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/PARAMETERS/07autumn/halloran.htm>.

⁴⁷JP 3-0, Joint Operations (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2006), IV-33.

Historical application of model

Two U. S. Presidents have sent military forces into Lebanon. The following analysis will apply the success model to Lebanon 1958 and 1983. A historical review of these conflicts against the success model will demonstrate how these Presidents defined success and will evaluate the political condition that existed at the end of the conflict. Additionally, the case studies will attempt to evaluate the incremental measures of success. The analyses will highlight the success, or failure, of these two interventions.

President Eisenhower and Success in Lebanon

On 15 July 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower announced, “In response to (an) appeal from the government of Lebanon, the United States has dispatched a contingent of United States forces to Lebanon to protect American lives and by their presence there to encourage the Lebanese Government in defense of Lebanese sovereignty and integrity.”⁴⁸ This announcement signified the beginning of Operation Blue Bat whose stated purpose was to support the pro-Western government of Lebanese President Camille Nemr Chamoun against internal opposition and external threats from members of the United Arab Republic (UAR).

A year and a half earlier on 5 January 1957, President Eisenhower spoke before Congress on the situation in the Middle East. He spoke of the Soviet Union’s desire to dominate the Middle East for the sole purpose of “power politics.”⁴⁹ This speech laid the groundwork for the Eisenhower Doctrine, which was an extension of the Truman Doctrine and occasionally referred to as the Middle East Doctrine, which promised economic and military aid to Middle East nations to assist in the fight against Communism.

⁴⁸Headquarters, United States Army, Europe G3 Division, *The U.S. Army Task Force in Lebanon (U)* (After Action Monograph, United States Army, Europe, 1959).

⁴⁹Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Special Message to the Congress on the Situation in the Middle East." *The American Presidency Program*, January 5, 1957.

By mid 1957, the Middle East became increasingly uneasy. Egypt became increasingly friendly toward the Soviet Union with its acceptance of economic aid for the Aswan High Dam project⁵⁰ and direct military assistance.⁵¹ In April 1957, King Hussein of Jordan foiled an attempted coup d'état from elements who supported Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser. Egypt and Syria formed the United Arab Republic (UAR) as a first step toward a pan-Arab state in February 1958. President Nasser saw Lebanon as a "natural addition to his United Arab Republic."⁵²

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, apprehensive of the "direct possibilities of an overthrow of the Jordanian government and a coup d'état in Lebanon" directed the establishment of a "Specified Command" which could be activated on order.⁵³ Admiral James Holloway, the Commander in Chief, Specified Command, Middle East (CINCSPECCOMME) along with the JCS, developed OPLAN 215-58 to address these issues.⁵⁴ This joint multi-national plan included eight courses of action along with possible British involvement. The "U.S. only" course of action was entitled Operation Blue Bat.

By early 1958, the Muslim tribes of Lebanon were increasingly violent against the Christian pro-Western government of President Chamoun. He had been elected in 1952 to a six-year term. According to the Lebanese Constitution, the president could not succeed himself. However, there were indications that President Chamoun wanted to have the constitution amended so he could be reelected.⁵⁵ Many of these tribes were supportive of the UAR were

⁵⁰Roger J Spiller, *Not War but Like War: The American Intervention in Lebanon* (Leavenworth Papers, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute, January 1981), 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵²Headquarters, United States Army, Europe G3 Division, *The U.S. Army Task Force in Lebanon (U)*, 3.

⁵³Roger J Spiller, *Not War but Like War*, 10.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁵Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon 1958* (Marine Corps Historical Reference Pamphlet, Washington D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Historical Branch, G3, 1966), 4.

against amending this action. May 1958 was especially violent as Nasib Matni, a left-wing newspaper editor critical of President Chamoun, was assassinated.⁵⁶ The next day, a United States Information Service (USIS) library in Lebanon was burned. The unrest continued to grow as several Lebanese deputies of parliament resigned in protest of President Chamoun and helped form the paramilitary group National Union Front (NUF). These two anti-Chamoun groups, the UAR and the NUF, added to the unrest by promoting general strikes in the streets of Beirut.

On 14 May, Lebanese President Chamoun asked the United States for “standby aid” in accordance with the Eisenhower Doctrine. The US Ambassador to the region, Ambassador Robert McClintock, announced, “We are determined to help this government to maintain internal security”⁵⁷ but the American government “would not intervene to insure Chamoun’s possibilities of re-election.”⁵⁸ On 14 July 1958, several Iraqi military officers lead a coup d’état which ended with the assassination of King Feisal and its prime minister. These events caused President Eisenhower to order the implementation of Operation Blue Bat on the morning of 15 July 1958.

Elements of the Marine landing force stormed the beach by 1500 15 July 1958 unsure whether they were going to receive any opposition. U.S. intelligence organizations estimated that there were some 10,000 rebel forces. The Marines were actually greeted by bikini-clad beachgoers and construction workers. They quickly secured the airfield and began preparing defensive positions. The Marines immediately established a relationship with General Chebab, who was in charge of the Lebanese Army.⁵⁹

General Chebab promised that the Lebanese Army would guarantee the safety of President Chamoun, who had received credible death threats. However, General Chebab was

⁵⁶Headquarters, United States Army, Europe G3 Division. *The U.S. Army Task Force in Lebanon (U)*, 5.

⁵⁷Roger J Spiller, *Not War but Like War*, 16.

⁵⁸Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon 1958*, 5.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 11.

concerned that he would lose control of the Lebanese Army if the Marines continued to act like an occupation Army.⁶⁰ Seeing that the Lebanese Army was holding the country together, the Marines moved quickly to change their posture. They took in Lebanese Army liaison officers to coordinate activity. More importantly, they developed an integrated police force comprised of Lebanese and American Army, Navy, and Marine personnel.

Army forces began flowing into the region and quickly assumed responsibility for the southern sector around Beirut. By the end of July, Army and Marine forces had established a twenty-mile perimeter around Beirut to prevent attack from any direction. The original plan had the military defending against a foreign, communist-dominated army by blocking off the main roads to the city.⁶¹ Instead, they needed to avoid conflict with the local irregulars. They were to protect the integrity of the local government and not to support any internal political faction.⁶²

The President recognized that the situation in Lebanon was purely political in nature. The level of violence the U.S. forces encountered did not speak to the kind of emergency which President Chamoun had declared when he invoked the Eisenhower Doctrine. He sent the Deputy (Under) Secretary of State Robert D. Murphy as political advisor to CINCSPECCOMME to coordinate the activities of the U.S. military command and the American Embassy in Lebanon. Secretary Murphy believed that the election of a new president was the only solution to the problem in Lebanon. This situation could not be resolved with U.S. military force.

Secretary Murphy decided the best way to create a viable new government was to bring together the leaders of the various dissident elements.⁶³ The Lebanon Chamber of Deputies

⁶⁰Ibid., 22.

⁶¹Roger J Spiller, *Not War but Like War*, 20.

⁶²Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon 1958*, 32.

⁶³Ibid., 33.

elected General Chebab President on 31 July.⁶⁴ Next, Secretary Murphy announced that the U.S. forces would withdraw as soon as requested by the Lebanese government. As a gesture of American intentions, a Marine unit was withdrawn on 14 August. The SPECCOMME continued to coordinate with General Chebab on the tactical disposition of the American troops. SPECCOMME and Secretary Murphy were very deliberate about showing support to the Lebanese government.

Over the next few weeks, the U.S. military conducted joint exercises with the Lebanese Army. Though the exercises did not meet U.S. standards for training, they were valuable on several levels. The joint exercises showed that the U.S. military was supporting the Lebanese government. The U.S. military was able to maintain a higher level of readiness due to the exercises. Finally, the Lebanese Army was receiving exceptional training, which increased their level of expertise and confidence.⁶⁵ The exercises set the stage for the U.S. military to begin its withdrawal.

General Chebab succeeded Chamoun as President of Lebanon on 23 September. He picked his Prime Minister and formed his cabinet from the various rebel leaders. Though this act initially caused some political dissention, it eventually proved successful because the various national interests were represented. Chamoun's supporters were the most vocal but they eventually accepted the new government. The formal Lebanese government was formed on 23 October with representatives from each of the major political parties

The U.S. forces completely withdraw from Lebanon on 25 October. They had completed the task of providing stability to the Lebanese government. Operation Blue Bat did not mature into major combat operations. Instead, the U.S. forces helped an ally maintain stability while it

⁶⁴Headquarters, United States Army, Europe G3 Division. *The U.S. Army Task Force in Lebanon (U)*, 36.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 47-48.

formed an acceptable government. The U.S. forces were able to meet the political objectives though the environment changed dramatically

Guidance for Operation Blue Bat

The basis for Operation Blue Bat came from the Eisenhower Doctrine (sometimes referred to as the Middle East Doctrine). President Eisenhower introduced the Eisenhower Doctrine in a speech before a joint session of Congress on 5 January 1958. Congress approved the context of this speech, with minor modifications, as a resolution on 5 March 1957.⁶⁶ This speech, and subsequent resolution, was a “reaffirmation of the Truman Doctrine” which called for “an open-ended commitment against communist aggression.”⁶⁷

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) used the Eisenhower Doctrine to guide the political assumptions required to develop military plans. The JCS were in a difficult position during this time. The Eisenhower administration placed little value in their advice.⁶⁸ Conventional forces were reduced from 1.5 million soldiers during the Korean War to less than 1 million with large commitments to NATO. The Administration’s New Look emphasized nuclear deterrence to prevent war and saw massive retaliation in the event of war.⁶⁹ Though conventional forces were not allocated to support the Eisenhower Doctrine, Operation Blue Bat was formulated under its umbrella.

The Eisenhower Doctrine outlined three provisions. The first provision was the right to use armed forces if the President deemed it necessary to preserve the independence and integrity of Middle Eastern states requesting protection against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism. The second and third clauses promised economic and

⁶⁶Carolyn Ann Tyson, *Making Foreign Policy: The Eisenhower Doctrine* (Doctoral Dissertation, The George Washington University, Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1984), 208.

⁶⁷Ibid., 216.

⁶⁸Ibid., 221.

⁶⁹Ibid., 213,222.

military assistance to any Middle East country, which desires such aid in the interest of maintaining its independence. The first provision specifically informed the JCS in the development of Operational Plan 1-58, otherwise known as Operation BLUEBAT.

In November 1957, the JCS directed Admiral James S. Holloway, Commander in Chief, Naval Forces Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (CinCNELM) to activate Specified Command, Middle East (SPECCOMME) and develop contingency plans for military action in the Middle East. The original plan, Operation Plan 1-58, had several courses of action to include multi-national operations with the British. The plan that was executed, OPLAN 215-58 Operation BLUEBAT, was a joint U.S. course of action. The purpose of the plan was to “support the legal Lebanese government against any foreign invasion, specifically against the Syrian First Army.”⁷⁰

The Plan

The chain of command for Operation Blue Bat was as follows: the Eisenhower administration at the strategic level; SPECCOMME at the operational level; the Sixth Fleet, the 2nd Provisional Marine Force (Task Force 62) and the Army Task Force (ATF) 201 at the tactical level. Each of these three components influenced Operations Plan 215-58 and its execution.

At the strategic level, the Eisenhower administration was deeply involved in the execution of Operation Blue Bat. Upon request from Lebanese President Chamoun, President Eisenhower ordered the initiation of Operation Blue Bat. The Eisenhower Doctrine was the foundation of his guidance which called for the maintenance of national independence for the supported country. President Eisenhower and the State Department were not in favor of sending more troops than necessary into Lebanon.⁷¹ They did not want to over-commit American power and they did not want to provoke a new crisis with the Russians or the Middle-East community as a whole.

⁷⁰Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon 1958*, 8.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 26.

At the operational level, Admiral Holloway (CinCSPECCOMME) took a different approach considering the recent military history. A powerful military organization had been developed for deployment to the Middle East. However, Admiral Holloway asked his planners to develop a plan for the “restoration or maintenance of governments.”⁷² Though the current information available does not specifically address the reason for this decision, the Eisenhower Doctrine must have informed his thought process. U.S. Ambassador McClintock’s announcement on 14 May of “We are determined to help this government to maintain internal security”⁷³ supports this assertion. Admiral Holloway seemed more concerned about preserving the Lebanese government than he did destroying an external threat.

Later in the campaign, another operational level command was activated. This was the American Land Forces (AMLANFOR) command, which took command over all land forces in the theater. AMLANFOR had five objectives. The first was to assure the security of the U.S. forces operating ashore and establish a firm operational base to enable these forces, if necessary, to conduct military operations. Second, they were to be prepared to protect American lives and property in Lebanon. Third, U.S. forces should defend Beirut from external and internal attack. Fourth, AMLANFOR would offer a training assistance program to the Lebanese government. Finally, they were to support the legal government and to be strictly impartial toward the factions outside the government. The overall desired effect of these operations was “to create and maintain an atmosphere of relative stability.”⁷⁴

At the tactical level, the Marines and the Army developed plans to support Operation Plan 215-58. For the Marines, they were to “seize the airfield and implement as much of the Blue

⁷²Roger J Spiller, *Not War but Like War*, 13.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 16.

⁷⁴Headquarters, United States Army, Europe G3 Division, *The U.S. Army Task Force in Lebanon (U)*, 42.

Bat plan as possible.”⁷⁵ The Army Task Force (ATF) 201 developed Operation Plan Grandios to support Operation Plan 215-58 by providing combat forces to defeat the Syrian First Army. BG Gray, commander of ATF 201 had four considerations upon landing in Lebanon: first, to be able to respond to any operational requirements that might arise; second, the security and well-being of the troops; third, the movement to Lebanon of TF Charlie; and fourth, the establishment of good relationships with the U.S. Embassy, the CIA, the USIA, and other U.S. Governmental organizations operating in the area.⁷⁶ TF Charlie was the command and control elements along with various combat support units.

Success or Failure

Operation Blue Bat was successful. U.S. forces accomplished their objectives and withdrew from Lebanon with a central government in place. A review of the success model demonstrates how Operation Blue Bat was a success.

First, success was defined using political terms. The Eisenhower Doctrine was a political speech and resolution. This doctrine was informed by the earlier Truman Doctrine, codified by the Eisenhower Administration, and refined and embraced by the U.S. Congress. This political resolution and language formed the basis for the planning and execution of Operation Blue Bat.

Second, the political leaders defined the desired objective for the military campaign. President Eisenhower and his administration were intimately involved in defining the objectives of the operation. They did not leave it up to the generals in the field. From Ambassador McClintock’s announcement on 14 May 1958 to President Eisenhower’s announcement on 15 July 1958, it is clear the politicians were defining the objectives of the operation. The JCS were

⁷⁵Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon 1958*, 10.

⁷⁶Major General David W. Gray, U.S. Army (R). *The U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958: A Commander's Reminiscence* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College; Reprinted by Combat Studies Institute, August 1984), 21-22.

prepared for “any eventuality – all out war or limited war, right now.”⁷⁷ From tank battalions to Honest Jones rockets to nuclear equipped B-57s, they had amassed a military force that could defeat any Middle Eastern army. However, all-out war was not the intent of the operation. The intent was the maintenance of a stable form of government in Lebanon. Success could not be achieved by destroying the various militant tribes. Success could only be achieved by establishing a stable government. Admiral Holloway understood this and used the political language from the administration and the Eisenhower Doctrine to define the mission for the military under his command. Political language was used to define success instead of tactical language.

Third, the political condition that existed at the end of the conflict shows that the conflict was successful. Though President Chamoun was not in office when U.S. forces left Lebanon, General Chebab (the senior general of the Lebanese Army) was in power after an election by the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies.⁷⁸ He appointed a rival to be his Prime Minister, which brought many of the Arab tribes into compliance. This election was the result of negotiations between the Deputy Under Secretary of State Robert D. Murphy, some of the rival leaders, and General Chebab.⁷⁹ Groups loyal to ex-President Chamoun initially conducted sporadic violence and strikes throughout Beirut. However, by 20 October 1958, a balanced cabinet had been appointed and travel throughout Lebanon was safe. The Lebanese Army had returned to its barracks, opposition groups were disbanded, and business establishments were re-opened. Both the United States and Lebanon saw an improvement in the political situation at the end of the conflict.

Incremental Learning

Operation Blue Bat did not, however, specifically account for incremental learning. Measures of Effectiveness and Performance were not in the military doctrine of the time.

⁷⁷Roger J Spiller, *Not War but Like War*, 17.

⁷⁸Headquarters, United States Army, Europe G3 Division. *The U.S. Army Task Force in Lebanon (U)*, 36.

⁷⁹Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon 1958*, 33.

However, the military was able to incrementally learn throughout the conflict. They initiated the operation expecting a conventional military fight and ended up successfully winning a political engagement.

As the operation revealed its true shape, political intelligence became all-important.⁸⁰ BG Gray specifically sought advice from the Ambassador, incorporated Lebanese army LNOs into his formation, and did not become involved in the internal politics of Lebanon. As they learned that the Lebanese military was holding the country together, they developed training programs to bolster the effectiveness of the Lebanese Army. These programs had less direct effect than a western military official would have desired. However, thousands of civilians and numerous Lebanese Army officers and soldiers participated. The effect of these programs was that the military personnel of a friendly country were trained and the combat readiness of U.S. troops was increased, which contributed to the stability in the area.⁸¹

As it became clear that the Lebanese President was unable to provide leadership and stability for the country, the U.S. military worked with indigenous personnel to develop an alternative government that had the support of the population. They did not attempt to impose an U.S. government on the country but supported the existing political climate. This incremental learning helped the U.S. military achieve the ultimate objective, which was to support the legal government and to be strictly impartial toward the factions outside the government.

Summary

Operation Blue Bat was an example of a successful military operation. The politicians defined a desired political outcome with political terms that was achievable by the military. The military was not stuck on the initial plan and were able to learn throughout the conduct of the campaign. The end state was a political environment that was favorable to the United States.

⁸⁰Roger J Spiller, *Not War but Like War*, 39.

⁸¹Headquarters, United States Army, Europe G3 Division. *The U.S. Army Task Force in Lebanon (U)*, 48.

President Reagan and Success in Lebanon

In June 1982, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) launched an attack into southern Lebanon. The purpose of this operation was to create a 40 KM artillery buffer zone to prevent the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from launching attacks into northern Israel and to drive them out of Lebanon if possible. The 32nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU), which was afloat in the Mediterranean Sea as the Sixth Fleet's landing force, prepared for operations in Lebanon as part of a Multi-National Force made up of the French and the Italians.

Although Secretary of Defense Weinberger and the Joint Chiefs strongly opposed the operation, the U.S. mission was established as to:

“Support Ambassador Habib and the Multi-National Force (MNF) committee in their efforts to have PLO members evacuated from the Beirut area; occupy and secure the port of Beirut in conjunction with the Lebanese Armed Forces; maintain close and continuous contact with other MNF members; and be prepared to withdraw on order.”⁸²

The Marines went ashore on 25 August 1982 and assumed control of the port of Beirut from the French Army. They immediately struck the French flag and raised the Lebanese flag, an act that was favorably commented on by the Arab-language press.⁸³ In support of the mission to evacuate PLO members from the Beirut area, they began checking PLO personnel onto the Greek ship *Sol Georgious*. They would process 6,436 Palestinians, to include the PLO leader Yasser Arafat, before the evacuation was complete.

By 3 September 1982, the Marines had evacuated all of the PLO and Syrians. The atmosphere in Beirut was improving, power and lights were on with increased traffic, and new businesses opening. Believing their mission was complete, they began boarding their ship on 9 September 1982. The next day, President Reagan and the Secretary of Defense called to congratulate the Marines on a job well done.

⁸²Benis M Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon 1982-1984*, 12.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 13.

However, the situation in Lebanon continued to spiral toward civil war. President-elect Bashir Gemayel was assassinated on 14 September by Habib Shartouni.⁸⁴ The Israelis immediately occupied portions of Lebanon to include the area surrounding the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.⁸⁵ On 16 September, Maronite Christian soldiers from the Lebanese army moved into these refugee camps and killed seven hundred Palestinian refugees while the IDF stood by.⁸⁶ These developments impelled Amin Gemayel, the new President and brother of Bashir Gemayel, to request the return of the Multi-National Force. His request was for the MNF to “ensure the safety of the population of west Beirut until the Lebanese Armed Forces could accomplish this mission and facilitate the withdrawal of Israeli forces.”⁸⁷

Ambassador Philip Habib, President Reagan’s Special Emissary to the Middle East, pursued the diplomatic arrangements necessary for the re-insertion of U.S. forces into Lebanon. These efforts resulted in an Exchange of Diplomatic Notes on 25 September between the United States and the government of Lebanon, which formed the foundation for the mission statement. Secretary Weinberger and the Joint Chiefs again opposed the mission. Weinberger opposed because “this MNF would not have any mission that could be defined. Its objectives were stated in the fuzziest possible terms, and later, when that objective was clarified, the new defined

⁸⁴Habib Shartouni was a member and sympathizer of the Syria Social National Party (SSNP). He believed Bashir was a traitor who sold out Lebanon to Israel. Accessed on 23 April 2009 at the Nahamet.com Lebanese News Portal Desk. <http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/newsdesk.nsf/0/68B45B406488C72FC225725E004A9A65?OpenDocument>.

⁸⁵Benis M Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon 1982-1984*, 142. According to accounts from COL Mead who was the commanding officer of the 32nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU), the Israelis entered west Beirut ostensibly to provide security for the PLO families remaining behind after the evacuation of the PLO guerrillas. “In reality, they were opportunistically going ahead with their desire to remove all caches from the area. They knew that substantial amounts of weapons and ammunition still existed in the area. This was fully substantiated later.”

⁸⁶Dale R Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency* (United States: The University Press of Kansas, 2005), 279.

⁸⁷Benis M Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon 1982-1984*, 22.

objective was demonstratively unobtainable.”⁸⁸ The Joint Chiefs stood firmly against the new deployment for five days. However, they saw that the President was not going to change his mind about the deployment. They prepared and issued the mission statement to the United States Commander in Chief Europe (USCINCEUR), which was largely the mission provided to the Marines in the form of OPREP 1. The mission statement read:

“To establish an environment which will permit the Lebanese Armed Forces to carry out their responsibilities in the Beirut area. When directed, USCINCEUR will introduce U.S. forces as part of a multinational force presence in the Beirut area to occupy and secure positions along a designated section of the line from south of the Beirut International Airport to a position in the vicinity of the Presidential Palace; be prepared to protect U.S. forces; and, on order, conduct retrograde operations as required.”⁸⁹

In simpler terms, the mission was to provide “a presence in Beirut that would in turn establish the stability necessary for the Lebanese government to regain control of their capital.”⁹⁰ Their sole task was to “interpose itself between the other forces.”⁹¹ This mission statement received only four minor modifications over the next 18 months.

The 32nd MAU came ashore again and conducted operations, which became known as Beirut II.⁹² Their mission profile remained mainly that of military presence in specific operational areas. The 24th MAU conducted Beirut III and saw their mission profile expanded to include daytime motorized patrols.⁹³ Additionally, they conducted joint training to enhance the

⁸⁸Dale R Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, 279.

⁸⁹Department of Defense, "Report of the DoD Commission on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act, October 23, 1983." *Ibiblio*. December 20, 1983, 35.

⁹⁰Benis M Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon 1982-1984*, 22.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 281.

⁹²The various Beirut iterations are distinguished by the rotation of MAUs to the area. The 32nd MAU conducted Beirut I from 25 August 1982 – 30 October 1982. The 24th MAU conducted Beirut II from 30 October 1982 – 30 May 1983. The 32nd MAU, re-designated as the 22nd MAU, conducted Beirut III from 15 February – 30 May 1982. The 24th MAU conducted Beirut IV from 30 May – 19 November 1982. The 22nd MAU conducted Beirut V from 19 November 1982 until it's withdrawn on 26 February 1984.

⁹³Benis M Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon 1982-1984*, 38.

capabilities of the LAF. Through Beirut IV, the mission remained the same with restrictive Rules of Engagement.

Their only operational requirements, besides providing presence, were to conduct patrols and train the Lebanese Armed Forces. The Marines recognized an increased terrorist threat but their mission did not change nor did they change their posture. On 18 April 1983, a terrorist drove a van into the American Embassy in Beirut and detonated 2000 pounds of explosives. The Marines hardened their positions as the situation continued to deteriorate.

As the 24th MAU prepared for Beirut V, they received their letter of instruction which was similar to the letters issued to earlier MAUs.⁹⁴ Through July and August, the various factions in Lebanon continued to degrade further into civil war while occasionally attacking the MNF elements in the area. On 4 September, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) withdrew from Beirut without coordinating with the MNF or any of its embassies leaving a huge power vacuum that the LAF could not fill. However, the MNF mission statement did not change.

Various factions began to escalate the violence in the region. After the U.S. Navy provided naval gunfire to the LAF to fend off a Palestinian attack on 19 September, the Marines became “legitimate” targets by the anti Lebanese government force.⁹⁵ On 23 October, a large Mercedes truck drove into the concrete-reinforced building that was the Marine battalion headquarters and barracks. The driver then set off five thousand pounds of explosives. Two hundred and forty one Marines were killed along with seventy wounded in this attack. A few minutes later, the French MNF force was struck by a suicide attack killing fifty-eight soldiers.

The Marines continued their presence mission in Lebanon until 26 February 1984. The President saw the bombing as an “obvious attempt to run us out of Lebanon.”⁹⁶ He stated his

⁹⁴Ibid., 70.

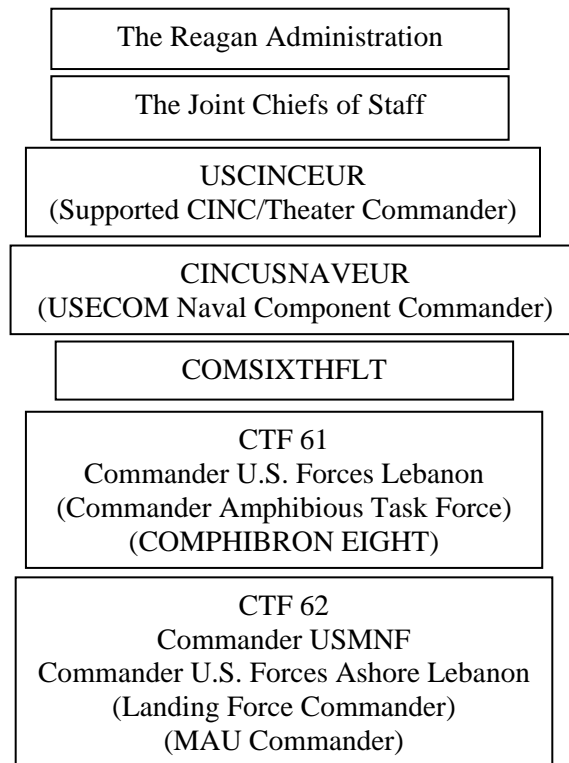
⁹⁵Ibid., 89.

⁹⁶Dale R Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, 284.

desire to retaliate. The Marines and Navy continued to provide support to the LAF but various Druze and Muslim militias gained control over much of Beirut. Increasingly, everyone involved began to realize that keeping the Marines in Lebanon was a risky and unnecessary policy. The 22nd MAU withdrew in February 1984 ending operations in Lebanon. The French and Italian members of the Multi-National Force completely withdrew by March.

The Plan

The chain of command for the U.S. Multi-National Force in Beirut from 1982-1984 was as follows:



The President firmly stated that the United States would participate in the Multi-National Force at the invitation of the Lebanese government. He felt that “the United States must contribute to a visible, definitive, constructive, international effort to help the central government of Lebanon

begin to regain control over its own country.”⁹⁷ The Diplomatic Notes and the President’s statements were the only concrete guidance for the Joint Chiefs.

Although some operational details were added, the original mission statement, which was crafted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was passed unchanged down the chain of command through the Alert/Execute Orders and to OPREP 1.⁹⁸ Additionally, the chain of command only slightly modified the mission four times throughout the entire deployment though the operating environment changed dramatically. The mission statement to “establish an environment which will permit the Lebanese Armed Forces to carry out their responsibilities in the Beirut area” told the Marines to provide a presence in region.

Success or Failure

The Marine operation in Lebanon from August 1982 – February 1984 was a failure. The United States did not achieve its objectives and withdrew from Lebanon as the situation continued to spiral out of control. A review of the success model demonstrates how operation was a failure.

First, success was not defined using political terms. The President said that he wanted to support the Lebanese government in regaining control over its country. This statement better described a security condition rather than a political goal. Ambassador Habib created the Diplomatic Notes between Lebanon and the United States, which formed the basis of the Marine deployment. These notes did not define success in terms of an improved United States or Lebanese political condition. They were more along the lines of administrative agreements between the two countries, the United States and Lebanon. Additionally, Secretary of Defense Weinberger said the stated objectives were stated in the “fuzziest possible terms” and were

⁹⁷Ibid., 280.

⁹⁸DOD Commission on Beirut, *Report ...on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act*, 37.

“demonstratively unobtainable.”⁹⁹ He did not believe an achievable mission could be drawn out of these “fuzzy terms.”

Second, the political leaders did not define the desired objective for the military campaign. President Reagan wanted the U.S. forces to contribute to a visible, definite, constructive, international effort to help the central government of Lebanon regain control over its own country. The President of Lebanon asked the U.S. forces to remain in Lebanon until the Lebanese Armed Forces could take over security of the capital. Ambassador Habib created the Diplomatic Notes but he was not an elected U.S. official in a position to define a desired political condition. In effect, the most senior level strategic guidance was void of coherent political guidance and was not tempered with trained military advice.

Third, the political condition that existed at the end of the conflict showed that the conflict was unsuccessful. The situation in the Middle East in February 1984 could be considered anything but favorable towards the United States. Almost everyone involved in the deployment of the MNF realized that the deployment was an unnecessary and dangerous policy.¹⁰⁰ The Marines had taken several hundred casualties and left without achieving the “fuzzy objectives.” The Druze and Muslim militants continued to gain control over larger parts of the country. The Syrians eventually occupied the country and destroyed the government and the LAF. The deployment of the Marines did not improve the political condition for the United States or even its allies.

Incremental Learning

The chain of command was unable to develop methods to learn at the operational level during Operations Beirut I-V. The “fuzzy terms”, as described by Secretary Weinberger, did not lend themselves to the development of effective measurements. Although the Marines conducted five different deployments during this operation, each subsequent unit received generally the

⁹⁹Dale R Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, 279.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 285.

same mission statement and rules of engagement. They were not even allowed to chamber rounds unless directed by a commissioned officer. The Marines were unable to get ahead of the enemy or even adapt to the changing environment.

The five different rotations provided a good environment for the incremental learning. The Marines should have adapted to the changing environment. They should have realized that their current mission profile was not achieving any objectives. These two facts should have prompted all levels of command to review past missions, learn from these events, and develop methods to improve future rotations.

Summary

The 1982-1984 mission in Beirut to provide stability for the Lebanese government was a failure. The intervention is an example of a well-intended mission with poor objectives. It is noble to support an embattled ally. However, good intentions do not set the condition for success in war. The politicians did not define a desired political outcome with political terms that was achievable by the military. The military was stuck on the original plan and did not develop methods for learning. The end state was a political environment that was unfavorable for the United States and the then current Lebanese government. This mission should stand as an example of how NOT to employ U.S. military forces.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The review of the historical body of knowledge and current theoreticians helped create a solid success model. The success model is most useful for reviewing past conflicts. However, it can be applied in the development of future campaigns. Political and military leaders, along with historians, should use this model when reviewing the success of past conflicts and preparing for future endeavors. This model will help them realize that war is not about winning tactical battles but achieving an improved political situation.

In the *Soldier and the State*, Samuel P. Huntington presents his theory on civil-military relations. One section of the book deals with “officership as a profession.” Many military officers embrace Huntington when he says “His [the military officer] responsibility to the state is the responsibility of the expert advisor.”¹⁰¹ Therefore, the military officers believe they should only advise the political leaders on the technical aspects of waging battle. Huntington’s book has been so influential that even some Presidents have commented that they are leaving the war to the Generals on the ground. The development of the success model has demonstrated this theory to be wrong. War is about improving the political situation. The senior politicians and generals must realize this and develop military campaigns to achieve political results. If they use the success model, they will increase the chances of accounting for the political nature of war.

First, success must be defined using political terms. The military campaign must be designed to achieve political objectives. Tactical victories and objectives must support the political goal. Second, the political leaders must define the desired objective for the military campaign. The United States is a democracy in which the military is subservient to the elected officials. The military leaders should give advice to the politicians but recognize that political considerations are of utmost importance. Political leaders are the individuals who must define the political objectives. Third, the political condition that exists at the end of the war determines whether the war was successful. Leaders should use this axiom to guide their decision making. Victory in battle is important but not necessary for success. War must improve the political condition. Success is achieved when the political condition is improved.

Senior Military commanders must be trained in and embrace the politics of war. The position of a senior military officer is inherently political. The senior generals answer to two masters, the President and the Congress. This statement does not mean that senior commanders

¹⁰¹Samuel P Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 16.

should become involved in political parties. However, they should be versed in the politics of international relations and the internal politics of the nation. The nation's citizens must support the war effort and must be convinced that success was achieved.

Once the success model is accounted for, the military must develop methods for learning. The military cannot afford to only learn at the completion of the campaign. They must learn throughout the campaign to increase the speed of the campaign, minimize the loss of life and equipment, and increase the chances for a successful campaign. Incremental learning increases these chances.

The review of two distinct conflicts in Lebanon has highlighted the importance of using the success model and incremental learning. President Eisenhower and the military leadership of the time accounted elements in the success model. They learned about the environment throughout the entire campaign and adapted to the conditions on the ground. These efforts led to a more successful campaign. Conversely, President Reagan and the military leadership of 1983 did not account for elements within the success model. Success was not defined with US politics in mind. The political and military leadership was unable, or unwilling, to adapt to the conditions in the area of operations and were therefore unable to learn. This campaign ended as a military failure and failed to produce an improved political situation for the United States or the friendly government of Lebanon.

Appendix

The Eisenhower Doctrine – (The Middle East Doctrine)

Joint Resolution to promote peace and stability in the Middle East

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President be and hereby is authorized to cooperate with and assist any nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East desiring such assistance in the development of economic strength dedicated to the maintenance of national independence.

SEC 2. The President is authorized to undertake, in the general area of the Middle East, military assistance programs with any nation or group of nations of those areas desiring such assistance. Furthermore, the United States regards as vital to the national interest and world peace the preservation of the independence and integrity of the nations of the Middle East. To this end, if the President determines the necessity thereof, the United States is prepared to use armed forces to assist any nation or group of such nations requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism: Provided, That such employment shall be consonant with treaty obligations of the United States and with the Constitution of the United States.

SEC 3. The President is hereby authorized to use during the balance of fiscal year 1957 for economic and military assistance under this joint resolution not to exceed \$200,000,000 from any appropriation now available for carrying out the provisions of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended, in accord with the provisions of such Act: Provided, That, whenever the President determines it to be important to the security of the United States, such use may be under the authority of section 401(a) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended (except that the provision of section 105(a) thereof shall not be waived), and without regard to the provision of section 105 of the Mutual Security Appropriation Act, 1957: Provided further, That obligations incurred in carrying out the purposes of the first section of this joint resolution shall be paid only out of appropriation other than those for military assistance. This authorization is in addition to

other existing authorizations with respect to the use of such appropriations. None of the additional authorizations contained in this will be used until fifteen days after the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives and, when military assistance is involved, the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives have been furnished a report showing the object of the proposed use, the country of the benefit of which such use is intended, and the particular appropriation or appropriations for carrying out the provisions of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended, from which the funds are proposed to be derived: Provided, That funds available under this section during the balance of fiscal year 1957 shall, in the case of any such report submitted during the last fifteen day of the fiscal year, remain available for use under this section for the purposes stated in such report for a period of twenty days following the date of submission of such report. Nothing contained in this joint resolution shall be construed as itself authorizing the appropriations of additional funds for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the first section of the first sentence of section 2 of this joint resolution.

SEC. 4. The President should continue to furnish facilities and military assistance, within the provisions of applicable law and established policies, to the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East, with a view to maintain the truce in that region.

SEC 5. The President shall within the months of January and July of each year report to the Congress his action hereunder.

SEC 6. This joint resolution shall expire when the President shall determine that the peace and security of the nations in the general area of the Middle East are reasonably assured by international conditions created by action of the United Nations or otherwise except that it may be terminated earlier by a concurrent resolution of the two Houses of Congress.

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