

### The Campaign

1. Henri Jomini, *The Art of War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1971) p. 178. What Jomini describes as strategic would be classified as operational by today's construct.
2. B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York: Praeger, 1967) p. 338.
3. *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Montgomery* (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958) p. 197.
4. Joint Pub 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*.
5. Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (February 1995) p. III-4.
6. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, p. 351.
7. **Military strategy:** "The art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy by the application of force or the threat of force."  
**Strategic level of war:** "The level of war at which a nation, often as a member of a group of nations, determines national or multinational (alliance or coalition) security objectives and guidance, and develops and uses national resources to accomplish these objectives. Activities at this level establish national and multinational military objectives; sequence initiatives; define limits and assess risks for the use of military and other instruments of national

power; develop global plans or theater war plans to achieve these objectives; and provide military forces and other capabilities in accordance with strategic plans.” (Joint Pub 1-02)

8. **Strategic concept:** “The course of action accepted as the result of the estimate of the strategic situation. It is a statement of what is to be done in broad terms sufficiently flexible to permit its use in framing the military, diplomatic, economic, psychological and other measures which stem from it.” (Joint Pub 1-02) Sometimes itself referred to as a “strategy.”

9. **Tactical level of war:** “The level of war at which battles and engagements are planned and executed to accomplish military objectives assigned to tactical units or task forces. Activities at this level focus on the ordered arrangement and maneuver of combat elements in relation to each other and to the enemy to achieve combat objectives.” (Joint Pub 1-02)

10. **Operational level of war:** “The level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained to accomplish strategic objectives within theaters or areas of operations. Activities at this level link tactics and strategy by establishing operational objectives needed to accomplish the strategic objectives, sequencing events to achieve the operational objectives, initiating actions, and applying resources to bring about and sustain these events. These activities imply a broader dimension of time or space than do tactics; they ensure the logistic and administrative support of tactical forces, and provide the means by which tactical successes are exploited to achieve strategic objectives.” (Joint Pub 1-02)

11. Erich von Manstein, *Lost Victories* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982) p. 79.

12. David Jablonsky, "Strategy and the Operational Level of War," *The Operational Art of Warfare Across the Spectrum of Conflict* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1987) p. 11.

13. In fact, they can be quite small. For example, consider the killing of Haitian guerrilla leader Charlemagne Peralte by two Marine noncommissioned officers in 1919. During this period, U.S. Marines were involved in the occupation of Haiti. Peralte had raised a rebel force of as many as 5,000 in the northern part of the country. From February through October, Marine forces pursued the rebels, known as "cacos," fighting 131 engagements but were unable to suppress the rebel activity. So, disguised as cacos, Sgt. Herman Hanneken and Cpl. William Button infiltrated Peralte's camp, where Hanneken shot and killed the caco leader. The rebellion in the north subsided. In this case, a special operation consisting of two Marines accomplished what 7 months of combat could not.

14. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed., Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984) p. 607. "No other possibility exists, then, than to subordinate the military point of view to the political."

15. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) p. 93.

16. Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987) pp. 69–71 and 208–230 discusses this "interpenetration" of the levels of war.

17. Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (February 1995) pp. III-4–III-5.

18. Col W. Hays Parks, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, “Crossing the Line,” *Proceedings* (November 1986) pp. 40–52 and LCdr Joseph T. Stanik, U.S. Navy (Retired), “Welcome to El Dorado Canyon,” *Proceedings* (April 1996) pp. 57–62.

19. **Battle:** “A series of related tactical engagements that last longer than an engagement, involve larger forces, and could affect the course of the campaign. They occur when division, corps, or army commanders fight for significant objectives.” MCRP 5-2A, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (June 1997).

20. **Engagement:** “A small tactical conflict, usually between opposing maneuver forces.” (MCRP 5-2A)

21. For a detailed discussion of the Guilford Courthouse battle and its impact on British operations, see Thomas E. Baker, *Another Such Victory: The Story of the American Defeat at Guilford Courthouse That Helped Win the War of Independence* (New York: Eastern Acorn Press, 1992).

22. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973) pp. 32–35.

23. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, p. 338.

24. See J. F. C. Fuller, *Grant and Lee: A Study in Personality and Generalship* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982) particularly pp. 242–283.

25. Weigley, p. 92.
26. Ibid., p. 118. Fuller, p. 253.
27. Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant* (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1982) p. 369.
28. Ibid., p. 367. Grant to Sherman, 4 April 1864. Grant repeated this phrase directly from Lincoln.
29. Ibid., p. 366.
30. Fuller, pp. 79–80.
31. Weigley, p. 139.
32. Ibid., p. 108.
33. Ibid., p. 123.
34. Grant, p. 384.
35. Fuller, p. 268. “In this respect there is no difference between Grant and Lee; neither understood the full powers of the rifle or the rifled gun; neither introduced a single tactical innovation of importance, and though the rifle tactics of the South were superior to those of the North, whilst the artillery tactics of the North were superior to those of the South, these differences were due to circumstances outside generalship.”

### Designing the Campaign

1. Clausewitz, p. 182.
2. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, p. 343–344.
3. John F. Meehan III, “The Operational Trilogy,” *Parameters* (September 1986) p. 15.
4. The distinction between strategies of annihilation and erosion is discussed further in MCDP 1-1, *Strategy*. It originates in Clausewitz’s distinction between limited and unlimited war. See Clausewitz, *On War*, Book I. It was further developed in the theories of Hans Delbrück, whom John Keegan calls “the figure who bestrides the military historian’s landscape.” John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: The Viking Press, 1976) p. 53, see also pp. 34–35 and 54. See Hans Delbrück, *History of the Art of War Within the Framework of Political History*, trans. Walter J. Renfro, Jr. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985) especially vol. 3, book III, chapter IV, “Strategy,” pp. 293–318.
5. We use the terms “annihilation” and “incapacitation” more or less interchangeably, but the words themselves pose some problems. Soldiers tend to think of annihilation as the absolute *physical* destruction of all of the enemy’s troops and equipment. This is rarely achieved and seldom necessary. Germany still had large numbers of well-armed troops at the end of World War II, yet there is little argument that the *Wehrmacht* was strategically annihilated. Nonmilitary people tend to confuse the military goal of annihilating the enemy’s military capacity with political or ideological goals like genocide and extermination and may thus be

shocked or horrified to hear of our plan of annihilation. “Incapacitation,” on the other hand, is literally exactly what we mean to convey: the destruction of the enemy’s military *capacity* to resist. Unfortunately, the word also connotes the use of nonlethal weapons and other limited forms of warmaking that contradict the strategic concept we seek to convey. To deal with such semantic problems, military leaders must understand the underlying concepts and, in describing their strategies, use words appropriate to the particular audience.

6. As with annihilation and incapacitation, labels carry some problems. Attrition has developed a negative connotation because of the experience of *tactical* attrition in Grant’s later campaigns, the Western Front in World War I, and U.S. actions in Vietnam. Erosion carries no such negative connotations, and that is why we use it more prominently here. The words mean literally the same thing, however, and attrition is the traditional term used in classical military theory to describe the concept we wish to convey.

7. The United States pursued such unlimited political aims in the American Civil War, World War I, World War II, Grenada in 1983, and Panama in 1989. Another successful example is the North Vietnamese war against South Vietnam. Unsuccessful examples are the German invasion of Russia in 1940, the North Korean campaign against South Korea in 1950, and the Russian war against Chechnya in the mid-1990s.

8. Some readers will object that this could not have been a strategy of annihilation because we left Saddam Hussein in power. That is confusing the political with the military goal. Had we wished to pursue the overthrow of Saddam’s government, we were well positioned to do so, having eliminated Saddam’s air and naval

power, thoroughly demoralized his army, and completely isolated him from external support.

9. In annihilation strategies, military forces always represent the main effort—with the important exception of internal wars. Such internal struggles for power are very often zero-sum events in which one side's victory entails the other's elimination. Therefore, the opponents seek each other's complete destruction, which normally cannot be achieved until the enemy's military protection is removed. Remember, however, that every government at war has to take political action to maintain the "home front," as well as military action against the enemy. In internal wars, the opponents share a *common* home front. Therefore, economic, diplomatic, and psychological programs (e.g., land reform, political reform, pacification operations, etc.) sometimes take precedence over purely military operations even when the military goal remains annihilation. In Vietnam, for example, the U.S. and the government of South Vietnam waged a strategy of erosion against what they perceived to be an external foe, North Vietnam. Within South Vietnamese borders, however, they waged a war of annihilation against the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese regulars who supported them. Energetic search-and-destroy and aerial bombing operations against enemy military forces often conflicted with various internal nation-building efforts which sought to create legitimacy for the government in Saigon. The failure to harmonize both military and nonmilitary actions at the operational level often proved counterproductive.

10. The term "center of gravity," as it is used in military doctrine, originated with Clausewitz. He used the term (*Schwerpunkt* in the original German) in many different ways, usually as a handy metaphor rather than a well-defined doctrinal term. Often he used it



merely to mean “the main thing” or “the most important concern.” Our definition derives from a few specific discussions in *On War*, especially pp. 485–486 (which deals with the concept at the operational level) and 595–597 (which looks at the concept in strategic terms). The purpose of identifying centers of gravity (preferably reducing the list to one crucial item) is to force us to think through the essential elements of a particular enemy’s power and thus to help us focus on what makes him dangerous and what we need to do to defeat him. Unfortunately, this sometimes leads us into thinking that we must directly attack those strengths. The philosophy of *Warfighting* therefore uses the concept of the critical vulnerability, which forces us to think through creative ways of undermining the enemy’s strength at the minimum possible cost and risk to ourselves.

11. Charles XII of Sweden did in fact lose his army in Russia in 1709 and is considered a failure.

12. Clausewitz, p. 596.

13. Ibid., p. 163.

14. Ibid., p. 77.

15. Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis*, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1923) p. 5.

16. Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (New York: Doubleday, 1990) p. 256.

17. L. D. Holder, "Operational Art in the U.S. Army: A New Vigor," *Essays on Strategy*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986) p. 124.

18. Eisenhower, p. 176. Also: "In committing troops to battle there are certain minimum objectives to be attained, else the operation is a failure. Beyond this lies the realm of reasonable expectation, while still further beyond lies the realm of hope—all that might happen if fortune persistently smiles upon us.

"A battle plan normally attempts to provide guidance even into this final area, so that no opportunity for extensive exploitation may be lost . . . ." p. 256.

19. These two approaches are also called "progressive" and "inverse." The concept is discussed in the Advanced Amphibious Study Group's, *Planner's Reference Manual* (Draft), vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1983) pp. 7-1-6.

20. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3500.04A, *Universal Joint Task List*, version 3.0 (September 1996).

21. The Confederates understood this too. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989) p. 766.

22. **Reconstitution:** "Those actions that commanders plan and implement to restore units to a desired level of combat effectiveness commensurate with mission requirements and available resources. Reconstitution operations include regeneration and reorganization." (MCRP 5-2A)

23. Eisenhower, p. 228.

24. Ibid., p. 225.

25. Ibid., pp. 228–229.

26. Ibid., p. 229.

27. The Malaysian campaign illustrates the exception noted in footnote 9 on page 105: In internal wars, even a military strategy of annihilation may require the subordination of the military effort to other instruments of power.

28. Joint Pub 5-0, *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations* (April 1995) pp. II-18–II-21 and MCDP 5, *Planning*, pp. 18–21.

29. Meehan, p. 15.

### Conducting the Campaign

1. Clausewitz, p. 77.

2. Quoted in Robert D. Heinl, Jr., *Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Academy, 1978) p. 1.

3. Clausewitz, p. 128.

4. Eisenhower, p. 119.

5. Weigley, p. 32. Such a victory is called a “Pyrrhic victory,” after the Greek king Pyrrhus. After meeting the Romans in battle for the first time and winning but suffering great losses in the

process, Pyrrhus reportedly said, “ ‘One more such victory and I am lost.’ ” R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy, *The Encyclopedia of Military History From 3500 B.C. to the Present* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) p. 59.

6. Sir William Slim, *Defeat Into Victory* (London: Cassell and Company, 1956) p. 292.

7. Heinz Guderian, *Panzer Leader* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1952) p. 97.

8. Ibid., pp. 105–106.

9. Gen George S. Patton Jr., *War As I Knew It* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1979) pp. 373–374.

10. **Deception:** “Those measures designed to mislead the enemy by manipulation, distortion, or falsification of evidence to induce him to react in a manner prejudicial to his interests.” (Joint Pub 1-02)

11. Ladislav Farago, *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph* (New York: Ivan Obolensky, Inc., 1963) pp. 399–400.

12. Slim, pp. 451–452.

13. See Robert A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster: The Development of French Army Doctrine 1919–1939* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1985) p. 4.

14. B. H. Liddell Hart, *History of the Second World War* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1970) p. 73–74.

15. The extent to which these subtleties were actually taken into account at the time is unclear. For a good examination of the problem, see Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, *The Generals' War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995) especially pp. 361–363.

16. Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (February 1995) pp. III-9–III-10.

17. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3500.04.

18. For further explanation of the importance of command and control, see chapter 1, MCDP 6, *Command and Control* (October 1996).

19. Holder, p. 123.

20. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, p. 152.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 339. Italics in the original.

22. **Mobility:** “A quality or capability of military forces which permits them to move from place to place while retaining the ability to fulfill their primary mission.” (Joint Pub 1-02)

23. For example, the light armored vehicle has less tactical mobility than a main battle tank in most environments but has far superior operational and strategic mobility. It can be transported in

much greater numbers by strategic lift. Its comparatively simple automotive system, fuel efficiency, and wheels give it far greater operational range and speed.

24. Patton, pp. 380–381.

25. MCDP 1, *Warfighting* (June 1997) p. 83.

26. **Targeting:** “2. The analysis of enemy situations relative to the commander’s mission, objectives, and capabilities at the commanders’ disposal, to identify and nominate specific vulnerabilities that, if exploited, will accomplish the commander’s purpose through delaying, disrupting, disabling, or destroying enemy forces or resources critical to the enemy.” (Joint Pub 1-02)

27. Ronald H. Spector, *Eagle Against the Sun* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985) pp. 168–176, 448–451.

28. Meehan, p. 16.

29. **Logistics:** “The science of planning and carrying out the movement and maintenance of forces. In its most comprehensive sense, those aspects of military operations which deal with: a. design and development, acquisition, storage, movement, distribution, maintenance, evacuation, and disposition of materiel; b. movement, evacuation, and hospitalization of personnel; c. acquisition or construction, maintenance, operation, and disposition of facilities; and d. acquisition or furnishing of services.” (Joint Pub 1-02)

30. The distinction between strategic, operational, and tactical logistics is outlined in Joint Pub 4-0, *Doctrine for Logistic Support of Joint Operations* (January 1995) p. III-3 and MCDP 4, *Logistics* (February 1997) pp. 48–53.

31. Maj Charles D. Melson, Evelyn A. Englander, and Capt David A. Dawson, comps., *U.S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990–1991: Anthology and Annotated Bibliography* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, History and Museums Division, 1992) pp. 158–159.

32. Slim, p. 542

### Conclusion

1. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Thomas Cleary (Boston: Shambala Publications, 1988) pp. 80–81.

2. Meehan, p. 15.