

**Adopting the Brigadier General (Retired) Huba Wass de Czege Model of
Defeat Mechanisms Based on Historical Evidence and Current Need**

**A MONOGRAPH
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Abstract

ADPOTING THE BRIGADIER GENERAL (RETIRED) HUBA WASS DE CZEGE MODEL OF DEFEAT MECHANISMS BASED ON HISTORICAL EVIDENCE AND CURRENT NEED by MAJOR Douglas J. DeLancey, US ARMY, 49 pages.

This monograph introduces a model of defeat mechanisms that could help establish a common, useful framework for planning. Brigadier General (Retired) Huba Wass de Czege's experience and study have shown him that three basic defeat mechanisms exist, each with a distinct historical foundation, and each with advantages and disadvantages based upon the situation they are employed. Attrition, dislocation, and disintegration are the three defeat mechanisms from his model, and they may be employed independently or in combination. Attrition emphasizes the physical dimension of warfare and the enemy sources of power. The destruction must take place at a higher rate than the enemy can recover. Dislocation orients on the enemy's leadership, rendering his plans and options irrelevant; rapidly changing the conditions so that the enemy cannot seize the initiative. Finally, disintegration focuses on the state of mind of enemy combatants, attacking the will of soldiers to resist—eroding the cohesion and teamwork of the enemy.

These defeat mechanisms should be included in doctrinal publications that discuss planning operations. A widely understood, common terminology about how the commander desires to defeat his opponent will help planners select decisive points that achieve the commander's intent.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This monograph recommends that U.S. Armed Forces Doctrine adopt a defeat mechanism model whose components are attrition, dislocation, and disintegration. Discussions and articles comparing attrition and maneuver as defeat mechanisms are common. Some describe maneuver as placing the enemy in a position of disadvantage, the use of the indirect approach, or the relative positioning of forces to achieve decisiveness with low cost. Some describe attrition warfare as assaults into the enemy strength to compel him to surrender. The truth might exist somewhere in the middle, but broadening the discussion is useful when considering the addition of defeat mechanisms to U.S. doctrine for planning operations. Conditions often dictate which end of the attrition—maneuver spectrum is most appropriate, and an understanding of defeat mechanisms can assist commanders and planners, while quelling the debates over whether attrition or maneuver is the sole defeat mechanism.¹

The German military historian, Hans Delbruck, concluded that two patterns of defeat mechanisms exist, annihilation (aimed at destroying the enemy army) and exhaustion (through maneuver). He based his analysis after studying the period of the Persian Wars to the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Another recently suggested defeat mechanism,

¹ Huba Wass de Czege, “Army Doctrinal Reform,” in *The Defense Reform Debate*, ed. Asa Clark IV (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 101-104.

called cybershock, is the degradation on the enemy's ability to command and control. This defeat mechanism emerged with the dawn of operational art as armies became more complex after the Industrial Revolution.² Other suggested defeat mechanisms, defined in subsequent chapters, include preemption and disruption.³

The term "defeat mechanism" exists in Army and Joint doctrine, although it is not widely used or understood. The Army Command and General Staff College *Offensive and Defensive Tactics* text defines the term defeat mechanism as, "the singular action or pattern of activities by which a commander defeats his opponent." The text also points out that a defeat mechanism may combine several types or forms of operations, and that the use of different mechanisms is possible in different phases of an operation.⁴ Another useful definition to help understand defeat mechanisms, explained in more detail later is, "an abstract notion intended to characterize, for analytic purposes, the particular combination of forces and effects that render an enemy force incapable of fighting." The defeat mechanism concept is a construct that aids in understanding how a battle or conflict is won or lost at the operational or the tactical level.⁵

One model of defeat mechanisms that could be included in doctrine, if found valid and useful, is a triangle with attrition at one corner, disintegration at another and dislocation at the third. This model is useful and should be included in U.S. military doctrine for planning. Brigadier General (Retired) Huba Wass de Czege determined

² Dr. James J. Schneider, "Cybershock: Cybernetic Paralysis as a New Form of Warfare," *Military Theory Readings*, June 1995, 2.

³ Robert R. Loenhard, *The Art of Maneuver Warfare: Maneuver Warfare Theory and AirLand Battle* (Novata, CA: Presidio, 1991), 61.

⁴ Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, *Command and General Staff College Student Text 100-40: Offensive and Defensive Tactics* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1999), 3-21.

⁵ Strategic Assessment Center, "Dominating Maneuver Concepts," p. 1; available from <http://www.sac.saic.com/dm/docs/dmconcepts.htm>; Internet; accessed 10/24/00.

through study and practice that three basic defeat mechanisms exist as mentioned. Each has a discrete definition and historical basis. Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of each defeat mechanism will help planners choose the most appropriate combinations of attrition, disintegration and dislocation at both the tactical and operational level.

Attrition focuses on the physical sources of power, such as killing soldiers and destroying equipment until the enemy can no longer fight. This approach, while reliable and sometimes necessary, has obvious shortcomings. It is usually a default mechanism when the conditions are not set for the other two mechanisms. Defeat by disintegration attacks the will of the combatants, and influences the cohesion and teamwork for organizations to function. Dislocation focuses on the state of mind of the enemy leadership by rendering his plans and viable options insufficient to achieve his purpose.⁶

To aid in understanding the concept of defeat mechanism, this monograph begins with a review of where United States Armed Forces doctrine uses the term defeat mechanism. Next, a review of military theory will show some of the literature that includes defeat mechanisms, followed by a description of Wass de Czege's concept of the three defeat mechanisms: attrition, dislocation, and disintegration. Finally, several historical examples will illustrate the Wass de Czege concept.

⁶ Personal email correspondence with BG Huba Wass de Czege (Retired), dated 6/22/00.

CHAPTER 2

THE DEFEAT MECHANISM

Defeat is a tactical task that occurs when an enemy force has temporarily or permanently lost the physical means or will to fight. The defeat mechanism is the singular action or pattern of activities by which a commander defeats his opponent. It is not a specific force or unit.

ST 100-40

What exactly is a defeat mechanism and does general agreement exist as to what the term means? The United States Army Command and General Staff College Student Text *Offensive and Defensive Tactics* contains a definition for the term, “defeat mechanism” as follows:

The defeat mechanism is the singular action or pattern of activities by which a commander defeats his opponent. It is not a specific force or unit. The specific defeat mechanism adopted by the commander depends on the factors of METT-TC. The presence of different defeat mechanisms, along with changes in task organization, signals the onset of different phases of an operation. For example, the defeat mechanism for an attack is to maneuver to isolate a portion of the enemy force, leading to its destruction or rendering it ineffective. In an area defense, the defeat mechanism’s primary pattern is to absorb the enemy’s momentum as he moves into an interlocked series of positions from where he will be destroyed largely by fires. A defeat mechanism may combine several types or forms of operations.⁷

Field Manual 101-5-1 *Operational Terms and Symbols* contains this definition:

⁷ Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, *Tactics*, 3-21.

That singular action, not necessarily the type of force or unit, that ensures the success of a course of action. It includes locating and identifying specific targets.⁸

To understand the defeat mechanism definition, it is necessary to have a common framework for what the term “defeat” means. When an enemy has lost the physical means or the will to fight, he is defeated. He becomes unwilling or unable to pursue his plan, and this can result from the use of force or simply the threat of force. It is important to understand that a commander can generate effects against the physical and psychological components to defeat an enemy, as certain defeat mechanisms rely on this premise.⁹

While several versions of defeat mechanisms exist in doctrine, books and articles, the greatest practicality exists when a commander understands how combining defeat mechanisms can accomplish a purpose. Understanding a particular defeat mechanism is not enough, as no mechanism will prove sufficient for every situation. Therefore, the most utility exists in a system or model of defeat mechanisms that explains what they do, what the advantages and disadvantages are, and what conditions warrant using a new mechanism.

Field Manual 101-5 mentions defeat mechanisms in Appendix B, titled “Commander’s Guidance Guidelines.” This appendix is a tool to help commanders develop guidance depending on the situation. While not designed to meet the needs of all situations, Appendix B can assist commanders in issuing guidance appropriate to a particular mission. The Course of Action Development Guidance section of Appendix B

⁸ Department of the Army, *FM 101-5-1 Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), 1-47.

⁹ Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, *Tactics*, B-9.

lists defeat mechanism as well as task organization, risk, tasks and purposes, reserve guidance, and command and control measures.¹⁰ Commanders are often less likely to issue guidance on a defeat mechanism than the other aspects of course of action development guidance.¹¹

The Joint Task Force (JTF) Headquarters Master Training Guide also mentions the term defeat mechanism. The purpose of this manual is to provide, “a descriptive, performance-oriented training guide to assist leaders in training their units and serve as a guide for the Joint Task Force Headquarters in actual operations.” This training document serves likely or designated JTF commanders and staffs. The concept of defeat mechanism exists in the task, “Analyze Courses of Action.” It serves as a tool for planning, conducting and assessing JTF Headquarters.¹²

While performing this task, a JTF will analyze a course of action to illuminate the advantages and disadvantages used to compare courses of action and recognize portions of the plan that need further planning. One step in this process is the selection of a method of wargame for analysis. One method, Manual Wargaming, permits an analysis of events from the perspective of phases in the operation or critical events. The staff focuses on certain critical events that, “encompass the essence of the COA:”

If time is particularly limited, they may focus only on the principal defeat mechanism. It is important to identify a Measure of Effectiveness that attempts to quantify the achievement of that defeat mechanism. This measure of Effectiveness should enable a consistent comparison of each COA.¹³

¹⁰ Department of the Army, *FM 101-5-1*, B-1.

¹¹ Author’s personal experience.

¹² Joint Staff, *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3500.5: Joint Task Force Headquarters Master Training Guide*, (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1997), B-1.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 5-II-45.

Field Manual 100-7, *DECISIVE FORCE: The Army in Theater Operations*, also mentions defeat mechanisms. This manual seems to treat the terms decisive operation and defeat mechanism as analogous:

When the campaign calls for ground operation to be decisive operations or defeat mechanisms, planning for the interdiction operations and target prioritization must be based on the ground commander's concept of operations.¹⁴

As seen above, a survey of Joint and Army doctrine shows that the concept of defeat mechanism exists, although a review of authors who have written about the concept can provide a deeper understanding of the origin.

Defeat Mechanisms from Hans Delbruck

Hans Delbruck identified two defeat mechanisms during his study and writing of military history. The first, *Ermattungs-Strategie*, is a "strategy of attrition." The second, *Niederwerfungs-Strategie*, translates into the "strategy of annihilation." Walter J. Renfroe, Jr. wrote in the Translator's Forward of Delbrucks's *History of War IV* (originally published in 1920) that he believes these are the closest English translations to the two terms, and that they most clearly show the meaning.¹⁵

Delbruck wrote that the strategy of attrition is a "bipolar strategy" where the commander continuously decides whether he will achieve his objective through battle or maneuver. He described the commander's decisions as varying constantly between two poles, maneuver and battle. In opposition to the strategy of attrition, Delbruck believed

¹⁴ Department of the Army, *FM 100-7 Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), 5-8.

¹⁵ Hans Delbruck, *History of the Art of War within the Framework of Political History IV*, trans. Walter J. Renfroe, Jr. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), vii.

that the strategy of annihilation existed. This defeat mechanism set out to destroy the enemy's forces and impose the will of the conqueror.¹⁶

In the strategy of annihilation, victory does not depend on the “point” where it is won or the “strategic line” along which one moves, but the commander assumes that with the victory the strategic points also fall into his hands, and he determines the strategic lines.

Delbruck cites Napoleon as an example of a commander who often used annihilation as a defeat mechanism. Napoleon would often thrust his entire force into a flank or wing of the enemy, envelope and destroy him as thoroughly as possible.¹⁷ The strategy of annihilation seeks victory to bring absolute success and an early end of the war.¹⁸ In contrast, the strategy of attrition does not seek victory through a quick defeat of the enemy, but by wearing him down as much as possible so that he prefers to accept the conditions of surrender.¹⁹

Defeat Mechanisms from *The Art of Maneuver*

Robert R. Leonhard suggests three distinguishable means of defeat in the book *The Art of Maneuver*: preemption, dislocation, and disruption. He calls his defeat mechanisms “infinitely superior to attrition thinking.” Leonhard's mechanisms are maneuver oriented, and his writings indicate that he does not believe that attrition is an acceptable defeat mechanism.²⁰

The concept of preemption as a defeat mechanism is a movement to attack the enemy before he expects an attack. Often considered rash or impulsive, these types of

¹⁶ Ibid., 108-109.

¹⁷ Ibid., 431-433.

¹⁸ Ibid., 296.

¹⁹ Ibid., 294.

²⁰ Leonhard, *Maneuver*, 61-73.

operations typically rely on surprise for protection. This approach seeks to snatch a victory from the enemy before he expects to decisive engagement. Leonhard established three characteristics of preemption. The first criterion is setting aside conventional caution, such as Rommel's 1941 campaign against the British in Cyrenaica, North Africa. Secondly, preemptive operations rely more upon speed than firepower, since speed is typically required to obtain enough surprise for the preemptive force to be successful. The last criterion is also speed-related; using speed to decrease the number of options that remain for the enemy. Leonhard describes preemption as the most difficult defeat mechanism to employ, but the best expression of maneuver theory.

The definition of dislocation in *The Art of Maneuver*, is rendering the enemy's strength irrelevant. This defeat mechanism initially avoids contact with the enemy and exists in the forms of positional and functional dislocation. Positional dislocation removes the enemy from the decisive point, such as a feint to remove an enemy reserve from where he can influence the battle. Functional dislocation renders the strength of the enemy irrelevant through technology or tactics, and neutralizes the enemy or makes his strength inappropriate. Leonhard uses the analogy of how the porcupine protects itself against the more powerful lion by its quills. Another example is the use of night vision devices to mitigate a less technologically laden enemy's firepower irrelevant.

Leonhard defines disruption as defeating the enemy by attacking his center of gravity, which he defines as the enemy's critical vulnerability. The goal of disruption is paralyzing the enemy where he is most susceptible to attack, without having to destroy the physical component of the army. He likens disruption to attacking the Achilles' heel of the enemy. This can be influencing through the state of mind of the enemy soldiers or

the enemy commander, or both simultaneously. Leonhard cites MacArthur's invasion of Inchon in the fall of 1950 and subsequent North Korean defeats with the combination of this maneuver and the breakout from Pusan.

The author of *The Art of Maneuver* concludes his discussion of defeat mechanisms by addressing the concept of attrition. Since war is fundamentally a psychological contest in which morale is an important factor, he argues, then attrition is absolutely excluded from viable methods of planning. He suggests that attrition entails a mathematical approach to warfare.²¹ The author does not address the effects of attrition on the morale of the enemy.

Dominating Maneuver Concepts Defeat Mechanisms

A paper written by The Strategic Assessment Center of the Science Applications International Corporation contains a relevant discussion of how defeat mechanisms apply to modern conflict. To understand how "Dominating Maneuver Concepts" envisions defeat mechanisms, one must comprehend how the paper views the enemy. The authors begin by seeing the enemy force comprised of three elements: soldiers, systems, and infrastructure. Defeat mechanisms must be oriented against all three of these elements sequentially or simultaneously to be effective. Defeat mechanisms become the linkage between intermediate goals and the pursuit of larger goals. Maneuver, firepower through destruction, or temporary disruption can neutralize the elements of the enemy force.

While infrastructure, soldiers, and systems are the physical elements of an enemy, less intuitive components include cohesion, institutional policies and methods,

²¹ Ibid., 73-76.

understanding of the intent or the plan, and the will to fight. These less tangible elements are what “Dominating Maneuver Concepts” say, “*enable* the physical elements to accomplish their objectives in space and time.” These enablers can be targeted and influenced just as the physical elements can be destroyed, disrupted, or rendered irrelevant.

The idea of dominating maneuver is to combine, in time and space, at the operational or strategic level of war, the positioning of forces and the application of effects from other assets (e.g., fires, information warfare) to defeat an enemy forces essence.

The essence of an enemy force is the synergy of the physical element and the intangible components described above. “Dominating Maneuver” uses defeat mechanisms as a tool to analyze and understand the combination of effects needed to defeat an enemy. It is important to understand the intent is to apply these defeat mechanisms in combination, but dividing them into categories promotes understanding. These categories are: *firepower-based force destruction, firepower-based force disruption, maneuver-based force destruction, maneuver-based force disruption, and maneuver-based force dislocation.*

Firepower defeat mechanisms consist of firepower-based destruction and disruption. Firepower-destruction is the most apparent defeat mechanism. After tactical-level movement to an advantageous position, firepower is the primary means to defeat the enemy force. This defeat mechanism is most closely associated with attrition. Firepower-based disruption also uses firepower as the method, but the object is not necessarily the destruction of the enemy. The object is preventing the enemy from effectively employing his soldiers, systems, and infrastructure. Firepower-based

disruption might include the use of firepower to separate enemy echelons, thus disrupting an enemy attack.

Three maneuver-based defeat mechanisms are included in “Dominating Maneuver Concepts:” maneuver-based destruction, disruption, and dislocation. Maneuver-based destruction is the use of maneuver to bring organic firepower to bear at the time and place that will defeat the enemy. The “Concepts” paper uses the land campaign of Desert Storm as an example, but notes that the early actions were more similar to firepower-based destruction. This is a good example of the combination of defeat mechanisms in a campaign.

The second maneuver-based defeat mechanism is disruption. This is the destruction of the coherence of the enemy’s operations. In these operations, the objective is the enemy plan. This defeat mechanism is similar to the third maneuver-based defeat mechanism, dislocation. Dislocation is maneuver that negates the combat power of the enemy. A turning movement such as the Inchon Landing is an example. The amphibious landings at Inchon into the North Korean lines of communication rendered the combat power positioned around U.S. forces to the south irrelevant since the North Korean forces had to reposition because of the new threat.²²

Cybershock as a Defeat Mechanism

Dr. James Schneider suggests that the concept of cybershock is a type of defeat mechanism distinct from attrition and maneuver. He argues that this defeat mechanism emerged with the onset of operational art and points to the industrial revolution as the

²² Assessment Center, “Dominating Maneuver Concepts,” 1-2.

beginning of increasingly complex armies and military operations. Commanders and their staffs now had to, “design and execute a whole complex mosaic of deep, extended operations to defeat an adversary.” This new degree of complexity created a vulnerability to what Dr. Schneider calls the danger of paralysis. The vulnerability created by cybershock-paralysis supplements and complements maneuver.

To illustrate the concept of cybershock, Dr. Schneider uses the American Civil War battle of Chancellorsville. This was perhaps the first instance where a force was defeated by cybershock. The Beardslee field telegraph aided General Joseph Hooker’s operational maneuver of the Army of the Potomac on April 27, 1863. Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson soundly defeated the Union forces when they lost the ability to direct and control effectively. While Hooker attempted to exploit the technology that was available with the introduction of the telegraph, he created a vulnerability to the danger of cybershock. The technology used by Union forces assisted in their defeat.

Cybershock drives an organized system into a disorganized state thorough the destruction of the information connectivity between the parts of a complex system. This disintegration leads to the destruction of the will to fight, since complex systems operate by reliable and freely flowing information.

The concept of cybershock includes five forms of paralysis. The first is denying the enemy comprehensive information he needs through operational security, psychological operations, and deception. The second form is electronic means to rupture “organizational coherence,” creating what Dr. Schneider describes as a seizure of the opponent’s nervous system. Next is active and vigorous reconnaissance, the crucial element in the struggle for relevant information. Fourth, the shock caused by surprise

induces a broad sense of panic, and lastly, the high tempo of the friendly forces imparts a cybernetic daze in the enemy. The enemy nervous system is overloaded, and the enemy is confused, finally reduced to subordinate units and then into disarray.

The theory of cybershock as a defeat mechanism does not suggest that it can stand alone without another defeat mechanism. In this model, attrition has the effect of annihilation and exists in the physical domain. Maneuver has an exhaustion effect and exists in the logistical domain, while cybershock paralyzes in the cybernetic domain. The outcome to these defeat mechanisms operating in concert seeks the outcome of disintegration. Dr. Schneider shows the relation of attrition, maneuver, and cybershock in the following way:

<u>Pattern</u>	<u>Effect</u>	<u>Domain of Action</u>	<u>Final Outcome</u>
Attrition→	Annihilation→	Physical→	
Maneuver→	Exhaustion→	Logistical→	DISINTEGRATION
Cybershock→	Paralysis→	Cybernetic→	

Figure 1. Dr. Schneider’s Cybershock, Attrition, Maneuver Compared²³

²³ Schneider, “Cybershock,” 2-9.

CHAPTER 3

WASS DE CZEGE'S CONCEPT

Forceful interventions and military campaigns can be fought in a wide variety of ways, but there are only three basic operational level defeat mechanisms—attrition, dislocation, and disintegration.

—Huba Wass de Czege

Wass de Czege's experience and study have revealed to him that only three defeat mechanisms exist—attrition, disintegration, and dislocation. By understanding these mechanisms, commanders can plan operations using a combination of defeat mechanisms most suited to the situation. Understanding how and when to employ defeat mechanisms (and when to shift to a new defeat mechanism) assists in keeping the enemy off balance. The mechanisms that Wass de Czege describes may have a new relevance, as an increased ability to project combat power more rapidly will offer more flexibility than just the attrition mechanism.

Attrition

Attrition places the emphasis on the physical dimension of warfare, or the sources of physical power. Field Manual 101-5-1 *Operational Terms and Graphics* defines attrition as the, "reduction of the effectiveness of a force caused by loss of personnel and

materiel.”²⁴ This approach is always a reliable option, and usually straightforward. Attrition has historically been the default defeat mechanism, used when the situation does not allow disintegration or dislocation. Attrition is complemented by precision munitions and modern surveillance and targeting methods.

The Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1, *Warfighting*, contains a useful discussion/definition of the term attrition:

Warfare by attrition pursues victory through the cumulative destruction of the enemy’s material assets by superior firepower. It is a direct approach to the conduct of war that sees war as a straightforward test of strength and a matter principally of force ratios.

Publication 1 states that the logical conclusion of attrition is eventually the physical destruction of the enemy’s entire arsenal. However, the enemy typically surrenders or disengages before this to avoid the high cost of attrition.²⁵ Although historic examples exist of well-entrenched forces withstanding significant abuse and continuing to fight, rarely will an enemy fight to the last man. Forces must achieve a sufficient level of enemy destruction too costly to bear that compels an adversary to yield in fear of continued degradation.

Among the disadvantages of attrition is the tendency for attrition to require a long time to become decisive. The amount of time needed for attrition to be successful is also difficult to predict, as the enemy will attempt to obscure damage assessments and employ decoys to confuse the attacker. Additionally, numerous historical examples of well-fortified and disciplined troops enduring sustained and intense pressure exist. Some cruel regimes continue to fight even after their armies and soldiers have suffered remarkable

²⁴ Department of the Army, *FM 101-5-1*, 1-14.

²⁵ Department of the Navy, *MCDP 1 Warfighting* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), 36.

attrition and little chance for success remains. The propensity for collateral damage is another disadvantage when attrition is the selected defeat mechanism.²⁶

Attrition might be rooted in Carl von Clausewitz, who stated that destroying the forces of the enemy is the overriding principle in war. Attrition uses battle to destroy the ability of the enemy to resist, either through quick attempts with superior force or by destroying critical resources faster than the enemy can replace them. The success of attrition hinges on the ability to put more equipment and trained people against the enemy than he has available, while reducing his ability to recover from the destructive effects of combat.²⁷

Combat is the only effective force in war; its aim is to destroy the enemy's forces as a means to further an end. That holds good even if no actual fighting occurs, because the outcome rests on the assumption that if it came to fighting, the enemy would be destroyed. It follows that the destruction of the enemy's force underlies all actions; all plans are ultimately based on it, resting like an arch on its abutment.²⁸

Attrition is measured best by the effects of destruction on the enemy's political aims and strategic goals. Attrition as a defeat mechanism means fixing efforts at a designated and advantageous locations and time to destroy his forces faster than he can recover. Enemy forces must first be located and tracked, a portion of that force is fixed, or echelons are separated. The enemy might be induced to enter a more vulnerable location. Finally, destructive direct and indirect firepower is unleashed throughout the depth of the enemy, followed through by pursuit or exploitation. This cycle continues until a high level of destruction is achieved, compelling the enemy to quit.²⁹

²⁶ Personal email correspondence, Wass de Czege, dated 6/22/00.

²⁷ Lamar Tooke, "Blending Maneuver and Attrition," *Military Review* 80, no. 2 (March-April 2000), 10-11.

²⁸ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 97.

²⁹ Tooke, "Blending," 3-4.

Dislocation

The concept of dislocation as a defeat mechanism is oriented on the enemy leadership, and aims to render his plans and options irrelevant. Dislocation seeks rapidly changing the conditions so that the enemy cannot seize the initiative. An example that Wass de Czege uses is the rapid reinforcement of a credible deterrent force to thwart an enemy plan to invade a neighboring country. The occupation of ground that the enemy desires for his plan is another example where an option is taken away from the enemy. By limiting the options available to the enemy quickly, he may not be able to adjust in time, creating a hesitation.³⁰

One model that Wass de Czege used to describe the process that allows dislocation to be an effective defeat mechanism is the Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act (OODA) Cycle. This cycle portrays the complicated process of command and control. The commander and his staff first observe the environment, collecting information through passive and active measures. This includes information about his own forces. Next, the situation must be oriented and visualized with the realization that some of the information available is false. This stage develops the situational awareness to clear the fog of war. From this awareness the commander must decide what to do, either in a deliberate planning mode or through a quick decision. Next, assessments are made based on the observation of the enemy reaction and the status of his own forces. This continuous cycle demonstrates the advantage and uniqueness of dislocation as a defeat mechanism. The commander (and his subordinate forces) who can operate within the enemy's OODA loop gain an advantage directly proportional to the difference in tempo between his forces and

³⁰ Personal email correspondence, Wass de Czege, dated 6/22/00.

those of the enemy. Speed relative to the enemy is the key, and the sustainment of increased tempo results in the enemy falling farther and farther behind.³¹

The concept of Blitzkrieg is close to Wass de Czege's concept of dislocation. Rapid small tactical victories and continued threats to an enemy can limit the enemy leadership's options and force him to continually react. A higher tempo of command and control can negate the plans of the enemy.³² Another example of dislocation is North Vietnam's use of guerrilla warfare and insurgency to dislocate the vast nuclear arsenal and large conventional forces of the United States. Other examples include Japan's attempt to pull U.S. Naval forces in World War II away from Midway to the Aleutians, and U.S. efforts to feint the D-Day assault into the Pas de Calais. Both of these operations sought to render the enemy forces irrelevant by removing his forces from the decisive point and neutralizing the enemy's relative combat power.³³

The advent of information warfare, and the complexity of warfare that Dr. Schneider describes, will allow the disruption of networks that the enemy needs to operate in a coordinated manner. This may take the form of combined precision strikes and information warfare capabilities to remove enemy options that are unfavorable. This is in contrast to attrition in that the progressive destruction of the enemy may not be required. Campaigns can combine information attack and long-range precision strikes to dislocate the enemy. An initial phase might attempt to disorient or paralyze the enemy through the disruption of the enemy's decision cycle. This can cause the enemy uncertainty about his

³¹ Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, Command and General Staff College Student Text 6-0: Command and Control (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 2000), A-1- A-2.

³² Personal email correspondence, Wass de Czege, dated 6/22/00.

³³ Tooke, "Blending," 2.

ability to control the outcome of a conflict, which may further increase the ability to surprise the enemy.³⁴

Joint Publication 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, contains a discussion that is similar to Wass de Czege's concept of dislocation:

Joint Forces should be prepared to degrade or destroy the enemy's command capability early in the action. The interaction of air, land, sea, special operations, and space capabilities offers the joint force commander a powerful command and control warfare capability that can dramatically increase the shock effect, disorientation, and operational paralysis caused by the joint force's operations against the enemy. By blinding the enemy and severing enemy command links, the joint force can drastically reduce an opponents effectiveness.³⁵

Disintegration

The state of mind of the enemy combatants is the focus of disintegration as a defeat mechanism. Wass de Czege sees attacking the will of the enemy soldiers and the cohesion and teamwork required for the enemy units to function. This is a more direct approach into the enemy's will to resist, and leads to the disintegration that Dr. Schneider describes (see Figure 1). If well executed, forces can incapacitate enemy organizations and gain control of objectives. This defeat mechanism relies heavily on the destructive and shock effects of fire, followed closely by ground assaults. Lethal and non-lethal effects can combine to produce synergy for the assault. Without well-coordinated and timed assaults, the disintegration can become attrition.³⁶ When executed well, the moral factors that Clausewitz describes can be influenced:

When we speak of destroying the enemy's forces, we must emphasize that nothing obliges us to limit this idea to physical forces: the moral element

³⁴ Thomas G. Mahnken, "War in the Information Age," *Joint Force Quarterly* (Winter 1995/1996): 40.

³⁵ Joint Staff, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1995), III-11.

³⁶ Personal email correspondence, Wass de Czege, dated 6/22/00.

must also be considered. The two interact throughout: they are inseparable. We have just mentioned the effect that a great destructive act—a major victory—inevitably exerts on all other actions, and is exactly at such times that the moral factors, so to speak, the most fluid element of all, and therefore spreads most easily to affect everything else.³⁷

Certainly, the will to fight that the enemy possesses is a common thread in all three of these defeat mechanisms. Wass de Czege contends that the will to fight is the foundation of all defeat mechanisms, and that one should always try to break the enemy's will and ability to resist. Certainly, the concept of defeating the will to resist is quite complicated. It is easier to measure efforts designed to destroy the ability of a force to resist than to measure what will be required to defeat the will to resist.³⁸ What is truly meant by “defeating the enemy's will to resist?” Is the objective to foster submission or to compel the enemy to flee?³⁹

One method of defeating the will to resist is to attack at a time or place the enemy does not expect. Surprise can significantly increase the attacker's combat power. If a soldier or a unit has a sense of safety from attack that is suddenly and violently violated, the probability of a rout or surrender increases. When a soldier feels that he or his unit is not in control of his environment, his will to resist affects his capability to resist. Attacks into the rear areas of the enemy are classic examples. Attacking in unexpected locations where he is less prepared degrades the enemy's ability to remain oriented and to resist. Once an attacked disturbs the observation-orientation-decision-action cycle, the enemy may panic individually and collectively. This can result in the disintegration that Wass de Czege describes.

³⁷ Clausewitz, *On War*, 97.

³⁸ Leonhard, *Maneuver*, 142.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 160.

Psychological research supports the concept of disintegration as a defeat mechanism. Research in the areas of information processing and human decision making describe the concept of “information overload.” When too much information comes in at once, as in the form of an unexpected attack, the typical reaction is fall back on inquisitive responses. New information might not be absorbed, may be flatly discarded, or decisions might be made merely because any option seems better than the current situation. If these responses fail, the normal human response is a “cascading effect” in which actions and responses become more inappropriate. Eventually a paralyzed state called “learned helplessness” can ensue. In this state, surrender or flight from danger can occur.⁴⁰

FM 100-5 *Operations* notes that historically, the most successful offensives have resulted in a greater number of prisoners than casualties due to the significant impact of shock on the enemy will to resist. Destroying the connectivity of the defense, isolating small units, and attacking in depth can eventually shatter the enemy’s will to resist; and this causes the disintegration the Wass de Czege describes.⁴¹

FM 100-5 captures the essence of Wass de Czege’s concept in Chapter 7:

Commanders should be ready to follow every attack (when not restricted by higher authority or lack of resources) without delay. Such bold exploitation keeps the enemy under pressure, compounds his disorganization, and erodes his will to resist. The ultimate objective of the exploitation is the disintegration of the enemy to the point where he has no alternative but surrender or fight.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid., 162.

⁴¹ Department of the Army, *FM 100-5 Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1993), 7-0.

⁴² Ibid., 7-9.

Wass de Czege's defeat mechanisms can be implemented alone or in combination. The area of possible combinations looks like this chart that Wass de Czege uses to graphically depict his model:

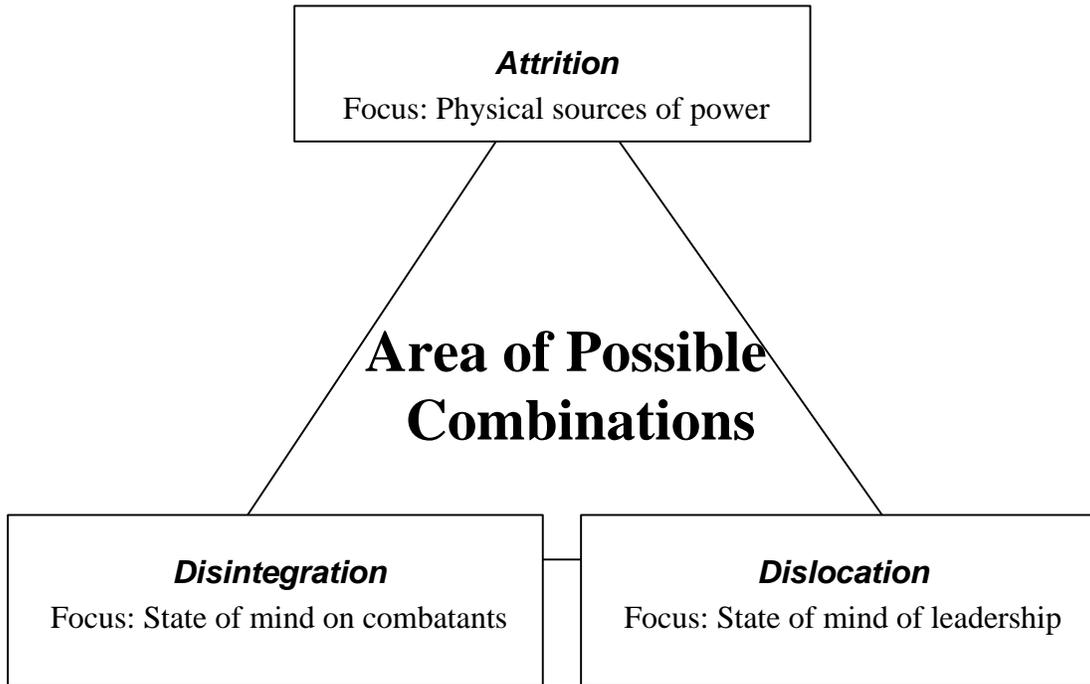


Figure 2. Wass de Czege's Area of Possible Combinations

CHAPTER 4

HISTORICAL BASIS

Down in the Maginot Line, life during the previous eight days of the battle had continued very much as in the months of the Phoney War. The desperate struggle to the north left it untouched. Inside its steel and concrete turrets, observers peered out, waiting for an enemy who never came.

—Alistair Horne

The following historical examples help illuminate the proposed defeat mechanisms and foster a deeper understanding of their use. Each might be considered classic examples of the defeat mechanism they represent. The Battle of the Atlantic shows attrition is a viable and effective defeat mechanism in some circumstances. The German thrust into France, and the concept of Blitzkrieg itself, show an adroit application of the dislocation defeat mechanism. Finally, the Battle of Vicksburg is included to show how skillful commanders must know not only what defeat mechanism serves the situation best, but also when to shift to a new defeat mechanism.⁴³

Attrition and the Battle of the Atlantic

The Battle of the Atlantic in World War Two presents a classic example of attrition as a defeat mechanism. The concept of attrition is producing and fielding a greater

⁴³ BG (Ret) Wass de Czege suggested the use of Blitzkrieg and Vicksburg as examples of his defeat mechanisms.

relative combat power than the enemy through more technologically advanced equipment and more and better-trained soldiers. The Allies continuously fielded technological innovations and destroyed enough U-boats to drive the German submarines out of the Allies lines of communication. Initial German success dealt staggering blows to Allied commercial shipping and also sank 187 warships during the campaign. From 1939-1943, U-boats sunk 2000 ships while sustaining few losses. To understand the effect this had on the Allied war effort, one estimation compares the loss of two transport ships and one tanker equivalent to the efforts of 3000 bombers conducting raids on land.⁴⁴

The German U-boat campaign created a shipping crisis that almost ruined planned civilian aid programs that included food and raw materials to the British. The Allied leaders who met at Casablanca in January 1943 considered elimination of the U-boat threat as necessary for an eventual Allied victory. The threat also had to be eliminated *before* building the invasion forces for the European continent.⁴⁵

The turning point for the Allies in the Battle of the Atlantic came in 1943 when the Allies sank more U-boats than in the previous four years. The German U-boat campaign finally succumbed to a combination of attrition efforts that included improved radar and sonar, escort operations, better air support, and decryption of Axis codes.⁴⁶

During the period of April to December of 1943, U-boats sunk only forty-five ships, but lost sixty-three U-boats.⁴⁷ Throughout May U-boats sank at a rate of about one per day, and the attrition became too much for the German Navy to bear:

⁴⁴ Tooke, "Blending," 4.

⁴⁵ David Syrett, *The Defeat of the German U-boats: The Battle of the Atlantic* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 1-2.

⁴⁶ Tooke, "Blending," 2.

⁴⁷ Syrett, *Defeat*, 263.

Historians of this war are likely to single out the months of April and May 1943 as the critical period during which strength began to ebb from the German U-boat offensive...because for the first time U-boats failed to press home attacks on convoys when favorably situated to do so. There is ground for confident estimate that the enemy's peak effort passed.⁴⁸

As U-boat losses mounted from the combination of factors above, Germany realized that the U-boat campaign was defeated in the North Atlantic. In October 1943, the Germans moved U-boat operations to another theater (to the Allied convoy routes between Gibraltar and Great Britain). An additional factor in moving to another theater was the attrition of nearly all U-boat tankers destroyed by the U.S. Navy.⁴⁹

Dislocation and Blitzkrieg

The concept of Blitzkrieg was far more than just a technique; it was also a product of emerging weapons and tactics. Hitler's military action needed rapid execution to stun the reaction of world leaders. He had to avoid an attrition strategy, as this would be fatal for Germany. This required Hitler to target the will of the government, not only his enemy's military leadership or the will of the opposing people. His use of propaganda and threats was followed by quick, violent strikes. The campaign of France in 1940 provides an excellent example. Hitler achieved an outcome in six weeks that Germany was unable to attain previously in four years and three months in World War One.⁵⁰

The concept of Blitzkrieg implies swift victory through the marriage of air power and mechanized forces to defeat the enemy through dislocation, rather than the methodical destruction of the enemy's forces. The internal combustion engine paved the

⁴⁸ Terry Hughes and John Costello, *The Battle of the Atlantic*, (New York: The Dial Press, 1977), 279.

⁴⁹ Syrett, *Defeat*, 230.

⁵⁰ Shelford Bidwell, *Firepower: British Army Weapons and Theories of War* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), 207-208.

way for Blitzkrieg by giving the German army the speed, agility, and range needed to use dislocation as a defeat mechanism.⁵¹ General Heinz Guderian once described the concept of Blitzkrieg in this fashion:

One night the doors of aeroplane hangers and army garages will be flung back, motors will be tuned up, and squadrons will swing into movement. The first sudden blow may capture important industrial and raw material districts or destroy them by air attack so they can take no part in war production. Enemy governmental and military centres may be crippled and his transport system disorganised. In any case, the first strategic surprise attack will penetrate more or less deep into enemy territory to the distances to be covered and the amount of resistance met with.

The attack described above was followed by motorized infantry to hold territory and free the more mobile component to continue dislocation efforts. The penetration continues using the speed and range of mechanization to break the enemy lines of communication and further dislocate the enemy. The air component attacks reserves, further limiting the options available to the enemy.⁵² Guderian's example above, the concept of an armored attack in depth, was a psychological attack on the minds of opposing commanders. Blitzkrieg attacked the nervous system of an army, more than the brain.⁵³

The key to Blitzkrieg was the dislocating effect on the enemy's command and control systems and communications (C³). The tempo of battle was quickened, and the agility and swiftness of the German Army dislocated by jarring the cybernetic links that become C³.⁵⁴ Command and control, as defined by current U.S. Army doctrine, "is the arrangement of personnel, information management, procedures, and equipment and

⁵¹ Messenger, *Blitzkrieg*, 7.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 81.

⁵³ Bidwell, *Firepower*, 217-218.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 248-249.

facilities essential to the commander to plan, prepare for, execute, and assess operations.” Command and control strives to reduce uncertainty through the timely gathering and distribution information, but how timely does that need to be? The ability of the enemy to react effectively is the essential component. Facing Blitzkrieg meant facing an enemy who could use time more effectively by increasing the tempo of operations and increasing uncertainty.⁵⁵

The stalemate and slaughter of World War One along the Western Front had a lasting influence on the French government. The shadows of Verdun and the French offensive operations of 1914, left deep scars on the collective memory of the French leadership planning France’s security in the aftermath of the war. Marshal Philippe Petain favored light defenses in depth, and Marshal Joseph Joffre favored the development of heavily fortified strongpoints. Eventually, heavily fortified regions were built to secure vital areas—the two strongest became known as the Maginot Line, named after Andre Maginot, the French Minister of War at the time. Although not a continuous line of defense, the system was anchored to natural obstacles where possible. A gap existed between the two main portions of the Maginot Line known as the Sarre (Saar) Gap. This low-lying area was not suited for underground fortifications, and the French planned to flood the area in case of attack. Lighter defenses were constructed along the Rhine River.⁵⁶

Germany attacked Poland on 1 September 1939, followed by Great Britain and France declaring war on Germany. The Polish forces resisted for about one month, as the

⁵⁵ Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, *Command and Control*, 1-6, 1-9--1-10.

⁵⁶ J.E. Kaufmann and H.W. Kaufmann, *Hitler’s Blitzkrieg Campaigns*, (Pennsylvania: Combined Books, 1993), 31-33.

Allies were unable to send relief.⁵⁷ German commanders awaited the long-anticipated invasion of Belgium and France. They did not have an obvious superiority in weapons or men, and would need to select a defeat mechanism that combined dislocation and disintegration.⁵⁸ The German approach would become commonly referred to as Blitzkrieg, or Lightning War.⁵⁹

The German invasion through the Ardennes in Belgium and to the coast of France is perhaps the clearest example of blitzkrieg. The German combination of concentrated armored and motorized forces shattered the enemy front. Instead of stopping to destroy small-encircled forces, the German Army continued to plunge deeply in France. Guderian's forces raced west, cutting communications and creating terror among the population and forces. Vulnerable German flanks were not truly tested because of the successful use of dislocation and disintegration defeat mechanisms.

The German plan commenced on 10 May 1940, and was labeled, "Fall Gelb," meaning Plan Yellow. Armored divisions and air force units initially attacked Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg, and in merely three weeks the Allied armies concentrated to the north were dislocated by the southerly elements of the German army that reached the coast. British and French forces were severed from effective command and control, and supply. They became demoralized. This resulted in the Allies fighting merely on the defensive.

The Germans transitioned to Plan Red in June, turning and fighting south. Italy declared war on France on 10 June, followed by the French Government opening Paris

⁵⁷ Ibid., 65.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 173.

⁵⁹ Robert Citino, *The Evolution of Blitzkrieg Tactics* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 72.

and moving to Bordeaux. The French President, Albert Lebrun, asked Marshal Henri Philippe Petain to form a provisional government after the resignation of the French Premier. Petain sued for an armistice with the Germans and agreed to terms on 22 June.⁶⁰

In fewer than seven weeks, the Germans captured the northern half of France, Belgium, and Holland. British forces were driven back into the English Channel, and the powerful Maginot Line had surrendered. Estimated Allied casualties were around 2,300,000 compared to the German losses of merely 156,000. This tremendous difference and the fact that two million of the Allied casualties were in German captivity, show how this battle was won by a combination of both disintegration and dislocation. The Allies were unprepared for a less methodical and more flexible enemy. They were unable to command and control their forces or to react to German offensive maneuver in sufficient time. An example is the following passage written by a junior French staff officer:

At the switchboard, which was receiving bad news at monotonous one-minute intervals, there was no longer any reaction: one officer would acknowledge messages in a quiet, soft voice, another with an almost hysterical giggle—“Ah, yes, your left has been driven in; oh, I see, they’re behind you, I’ll make a note of it!” Everyone else in the room, prostrate and silent, was sitting about in armchairs.⁶¹

Wass de Czege describes the German operations of 1940 as follows:

The classic case of combining disintegration and dislocation approaches was the dramatic collapse of France in six short weeks in the spring of 1940. The highly vaunted Maginot Line was passed, and the German mobile formations, supported by responsive airpower, achieved repetitive tactical successes so rapidly that resistance disintegrated.⁶²

⁶⁰ Len Deighton, *Blitzkrieg* (New York: Ballentine Books, 1979), 179-180.

⁶¹ Messenger, *Blitzkrieg*, 156.

⁶² Personal email correspondence with BG Huba Wass de Czege (Retired), dated 6/22/00.

The Fall of France also shows the how friendly casualties and collateral damage can be minimized by forces that retain the initiative. Engagements become quick and tactically decisive as the momentum is maintained. Forces operating against enemy flanks and rear areas combined with rapid, small victories shattered Allied command and control.⁶³ The attack relied heavily on surprise as Major General F.W. von Mellenthin describes:

The skillful use of surprise was a very important factor in our success. Rather than forfeit the opportunity of surprise, von Kliest forced the crossing of the Meuse on 13 May without waiting for his artillery; the successful co-operation between the Luftwaffe and the panzer corps on this occasion was duplicated later on during the pursuit in central and southern France. Time and again the rapid movements and flexible handling of our panzers bewildered the enemy. The use of our parachute troops in Holland also illustrated the paralyzing effect of a surprise blow.

In summary, the Fall of France is a great example of dislocation through what von Mellenthin described as the, “mobility achieved by the combination of firepower, concentration, and surprise, together with the handling of the latest modern arms—Luftwaffe, parachutists, and armor.”⁶⁴

Grant at Vicksburg: a Combination of Defeat Mechanisms

Wass de Czege describes the Vicksburg Campaign as a classic combination of all three defeat mechanisms. The Vicksburg campaign showed elements of what Wass de Czege characterizes, “dislocating maneuver, disintegration of the unity of opposing Army, and the piecemeal defeat by attrition of the body of confederate forces holding Vicksburg.”⁶⁵ As such, Vicksburg remains an example of how commanders must choose

⁶³ Personal email correspondence, Wass de Czege, dated 6/22/00.

⁶⁴ Erick von Mellenthin, *Panzer Battles* (London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 24-25.

⁶⁵ Personal email correspondence, Wass de Czege, dated 6/22/00.

the most suitable defeat mechanism and know when to transition to a different one as the situation changes.

In the era of the American Civil War, the Mississippi River was called the “spinal column of America.” Steamers and flatboats carried American agricultural products to world markets, and the river was something of a lifeblood. After the secession of the Southern states, Abraham Lincoln discussed strategy for re-opening the Mississippi with civilian and military leaders. With a large map of the nation before him, Lincoln made a sweeping gesture with his hand before placing his finger on the essential terrain:

See what a lot of land these fellows hold, of which Vicksburg is the key.
The war can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket.

The Union badly required control of the lower Mississippi to reopen Northern markets to the world. However, Vicksburg was located in naturally defensible terrain, and became even more important to the Confederate cause after the fall of Memphis. Ridges and ravines around the city were augmented with field fortifications. Nine large forts connected with communications trenches formed a huge arc anchored to the river to the north and south of the city. A large garrison of 30,000 men supported by 172 large guns protected the fortress.

Major General Ulysses S. Grant initially chose dislocation as his defeat mechanism. He divided his Union Army of the Tennessee into two columns. One column, commanded by Grant, conducted a shaping operation by maneuvering into north Mississippi from Grand Junction, Tennessee. His purpose was to lure Confederate forces out of Vicksburg to allow a decisive attack down the Mississippi by Major General William T. Sherman to seize Vicksburg. Grant’s logistical operations became increasingly vulnerable as his column moved south, and Confederate Cavalry

commanded by Nathan Bedford Forrest conducted successful raids on the railroad facilities and supply nodes that Grant relied upon. These operations compelled Grant to abandon his attack and pull back toward Memphis, while Confederate forces, operating on interior lines, rushed back to repel Sherman's attack to the northeast of the City.⁶⁶ In preparing for the next assault, Grant again chose dislocation as his defeat mechanism.

Grant conducted a personal reconnaissance of Haynes' Bluff to the north of Vicksburg with Admiral David Porter on 1 April 1863. Grant determined that the loss of life in an assault upon the Bluff would be very high because of the influence of the terrain on the Confederate combat power. Grant's no longer believed that it would be possible to assault Vicksburg from the north, and decided to dislocate the Confederate force. First he would move naval forces past the batteries at Vicksburg, maneuver his entire army south along the opposite bank, and cross to the Vicksburg side to attack. The choice of dislocation meant that the Union would be committed to a downriver campaign.⁶⁷

Grant used deception operations and deep cavalry raids by Colonel Benjamin Henry Grierson from April to May 1863 to shape his defeat mechanism. Grierson's mission had two purposes: to sever the rail lines of communications into Vicksburg, and to support Grant's planned amphibious operations to the south of Vicksburg.⁶⁸ Grierson's raids successfully cut the railway into Vicksburg, but more importantly, kept the Confederate forces off balance. Numerous confusing reports of enemy activity to his rear (east) caused Pemberton, the Confederate commander at Vicksburg, to weaken his defense and scatter some of his forces to counter Grierson's raids.⁶⁹ A division of Confederate

⁶⁶ Terrence Winschel, *Triumph and Defeat* (Mason City, IA: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 1-6.

⁶⁷ James R. Arnold, *Grant Wins the War* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), 63-64.

⁶⁸ Winschel, *Triumph*, 34-36.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 56.

infantry and, more importantly, Pemeberton's cavalry were devoted to find and fight Grierson's 1700 cavalrymen as they destroyed supply depots, trains and track. This supported Grant's maneuver (first to the northeast and then to the west), moved 200 miles while fighting five battles and capturing over 8,000 Confederate soldiers in eighteen days. Dislocation allowed Grant to move south on the Mississippi side of the river without detection and cross to the east without resistance⁷⁰

Near the end of May, Grant's forces were poised on the outskirts of Vicksbug. Grant now selected disintegration and attrition as his defeat mechanisms, and began a forty-seven day siege that broke the garrison's will to resist on 4 July 1863. The Union's close coordination between naval and army forces and lack of food in the garrison would break the Confederates at Vicksburg.⁷¹

Since Grant concluded that the city would only fall by siege, Grant's forces dug fortifications near the Confederate lines for protection. Eventually the Union would emplace 220 guns in the siege that created a steady stream of casualties and eroded the morale of the garrison.⁷² Even before the siege, the Confederate forces in Vicksburg often went hungry. Rations started to become very scarce as early as May. Portions were continuously reduced and soldiers turned to mules and rats to supplement the indigestible pea meal they were issued. This hunger effect of was multiplied by the heat, the lack of shade, Union artillery, and the accurate fire of Union marksmen who continued to kill exposed soldiers.⁷³

⁷⁰ Lt Col M.C. Anderson, "U.S. Grant's Hunt for the Moose: An Analysis of the Vicksburg Campaign Utilizing the "Principles of War," (War College Paper, Naval War College, 1997), 6-16.

⁷¹ LCDR Jeffery Harbeson, "The Vicksburg Campaign—Command and Control of a Successful Joint Operation," (War College Paper, Naval War College, 1994), 21.

⁷² Arnold, *Grant*, 262.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 271-273.

The Confederate garrison surrendered 29,491 men on 4 July. The effects of disintegration are evident in two facts. First, hundreds of Confederate soldiers chose imprisonment in Northern camps rather than to accept the parole that was part of the surrender terms. Many of the defeated men broke ranks and refused to continue serving and fighting. Desertion was common, and soldiers had to be removed from trains bound homeward at gunpoint. Pemberton tried to keep his army intact, but realized that at least a furlough must be offered or he might lose complete control. By 8 August, only 1,154 men returned. Even soldiers among units known for high morale were dispirited, and sullen.⁷⁴

Grant's combination of defeat mechanisms at Vicksburg illustrates how assessing the current situation carefully and deciding when to shift to a more suitable mechanism can achieve victory. Next, this monograph explores if Wass de Czege's model should be adopted into current doctrine.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 298-299.

CHAPTER 5

SHOULD THE WASS DE CZEGE CONCEPT BE ADOPTED?

The aim of war should be what its very concept implies—to defeat the enemy. We take that proposition as our starting point.

—Carl von Clausewitz

A criterion for adopting Wass de Czege’s concept and including his defeat mechanism in U.S. Army doctrine could be how well his defeat mechanisms attack the enemy’s center of gravity. The center of gravity concept is a crucial tool in planning effective campaigns. Once identified, the center of gravity becomes the focus of the operation. FM 3-0 defines center of gravity as, “those characteristics, capabilities, or locations from which a military force derives its freedom of action, physical strength, or the will to fight.” The manual also states that the destruction or neutralization of the enemy’s center of gravity is the most direct path to victory. The path to this destruction or neutralization can be considered direct or indirect based on the situation in terms of how the enemy protects his center of gravity.⁷⁵ Clausewitz wrote that one must keep the dominant characteristics of both belligerents in mind, and that, “Out of these characteristics certain a center of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement,

⁷⁵ Department of the Army, DRAG Version FM 3-0 Operations: (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000), 5-7.

on which everything depends.”⁷⁶ A direct correlation exists between Wass de Czege’s defeat mechanisms and the components, or traits, of the center of gravity concept.

Freedom of action is one of the forms that a center of gravity may take. Wass de Czege’s concept of dislocation as a defeat mechanism is directly analogous to the restriction of the enemy’s freedom of action by rendering his plans and options irrelevant. By rapidly changing the conditions in which an enemy must operate, his ability to maintain the initiative and act freely is severely restricted. Dislocation limits the available options the enemy has, and thus is capable of rendering his plans irrelevant.

Another source of a center of gravity is *physical strength*, probably better labeled as combat power. Wass de Czege’s view of attrition as a defeat mechanism seeks the emphasis on the physical dimension of warfare, or the sources of physical power. Thus, a center of gravity that is derived from physical strength might be defeated through attrition, if a less costly defeat mechanism is not available or possible.

The *will to fight* is the third form. A center of gravity derived from the enemy’s will to fight, might best be influenced through Wass de Czege’s disintegration mechanism. The state of mind of the enemy combatants is the focus of disintegration. With floundering cohesion and teamwork, units will gradually disintegrate. With the sudden loss of cohesion and teamwork, units will quickly disintegrate.⁷⁷

Another reason that the Wass de Czege model should be included in doctrine is the void of a current construct to understand and categorize the action that ensures success of a plan. If decisive points are the keys to attacking or protecting the center of gravity, as FM 3-0 states, then defeat mechanisms can serve as the conduit between decisive points

⁷⁶ Clausewitz, *On War*, 595-596.

⁷⁷ Personal email correspondence with BG Wass de Czege (Retired), dated 6/22/00.

and the center of gravity. Defeat mechanisms will show how the commander desires to link decisive points to the center of gravity. Common terms and a shared framework of understanding are of great value to the commander and his planners. The term and concept of defeat mechanisms needs a greater doctrinal exposure, because it is a valuable tool. The concept of decisive operations in FM 3-0 would be well complemented by the inclusion of a defeat mechanism discussion. Defeat mechanisms should be part of the current definition of decisive operation:

Decisive operations at any echelon directly achieve the mission of the next higher headquarters. Decisive operations conclusively determine the outcome of major operations, battles, and engagements. There is only one decisive operation for any phase of an operation for any given echelon. The decisive operation may include multiple actions conducted simultaneously throughout the depth of the Area of Operations.⁷⁸

By embracing the notion of defeat mechanisms and including the concept as described in this monograph, a valuable, common framework would exist that would complement the idea of decisive operations. This shared understanding of what defeat mechanism the higher unit is employing would be useful to subordinate units as they plan their operations.

⁷⁸ Department of the Army, DRAG Version FM 3-0, 4-22.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

—I Samuel 17:49

The concept of Brigadier General (Retired) Huba Wass de Czege's defeat mechanisms is a useful tool that could be used to fill a void in current warfighting doctrine. The defeat mechanisms of attrition, dislocation, and disintegration offer terms general enough to encompass most, if not all military operations, yet they are specific enough to have value in how planners think and discuss operations.

This monograph began with a review of what currently exists in doctrine about the concept of defeat mechanisms, and showed while the term is present, not much exists to integrate the concept into planning. Earlier versions of existing defeat mechanisms show how these mechanisms have become far more complex from Hans Delbuck's time to the present. Before the industrial age, mechanization, and the complex computer-based systems of today, attrition and annihilation were sufficient to describe patterns of defeat. Today, concepts like Dr. Schnieder's cybershock and the mechanisms from "Dominating Maneuver Concepts" reflect both the complexity of armies and operations and the greater need for discussing and understanding of defeat mechanisms. It is not enough to use the construct of decisive operation without a mechanism to refine how an

operation is decisive. Defeat mechanisms show the linkage between the decisive points that are selected and the enemy center of gravity.

Current doctrine is interrupted by the void that exists between the center of gravity and the decisive point. Armed with an understanding of what defeat mechanism the commander chooses to employ, the selection of decisive points will vary. Normally, more decisive points exist than can be influenced:

Operational art consists in part of selecting from all possible decisive points the ones that will overcome the enemy's center of gravity the most quickly and efficiently.⁷⁹

If the goal of the commander is a campaign or operation using dislocation, the selection of decisive points to influence might differ greatly from the selection if the commander desires to use attrition as the defeat mechanism. Additionally, the decisive points that subordinate commanders will chose might also vary according to the defeat mechanism his higher commander has chose to employ.

Advocates of “maneuver warfare” may not agree with the inclusion of attrition as a defeat mechanism. History shows, and the future will support, that in some situations the methodical destruction of the physical component of the enemy will cause the political leadership of the enemy to yield, avoiding further destruction of his means to resist. In some instances, attrition may be the least costly option in terms of friendly casualties. Some situations will not allow the use of disintegration nor dislocation, and attrition is a reliable and proven default.

The concept of defeat mechanisms has certainly withstood the test of time, and has shown recognizable patterns captured by Wass de Czege's model. This monograph

⁷⁹ Ibid., 5-7.

recommends the inclusion of the defeat mechanisms attrition, dislocation, and disintegration as described throughout the paper. The use and understanding of these mechanisms will answer the common question, “What are we really trying to do to the enemy?”

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