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Rules of Engagement:
What is the Relationship Between
Rules of Engagement and the Design of Operations?

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Major Michael A. Burton
Armor

School of Advanced Military Studies
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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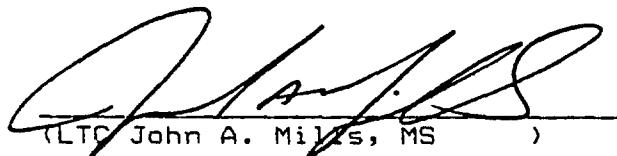
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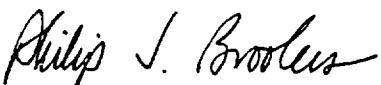
(LTC John A. Miles, MS)

Monograph Director



(COL Richard Hart Sinnreich, MA)

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(Philip J. Brookes, Ph.D.)

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ABSTRACT

Rules of Engagement: What is the Relationship Between Rules of Engagement and the Design of Operations? by Major Michael A. Burton, USA, 34 pages.

The full power of America's combat capability has been restrained in a variety of forms since World War II. Restrictions on the use of military force as a political instrument have characterized each confrontation. The purpose of this paper is to examine one specific set of limitations imposed on the operational commander, rules of engagement.

This paper initially explains the role ROEs play in the use of military force as a political instrument. Rules of engagement are then characterized into three categories using theory and a historical overview of recent armed conflicts. From this analysis, the relationship of rules of engagement and the design of operational plans are investigated.

This study concludes that rules of engagement impact on the design of operations in three significant ways. First and foremost ROEs introduce a new equation of uncertainty into operations. Since rules of engagement are an indirect reflection of policy imposed on the battlefield, the operational commander must not only understand the political objective but be prepared for the rapid, fluctuating changes in policy. Second, the operational commander must address the unusual degree of risk associated with limiting the use of force in relation to the enemy. Finally, limitations on the use of force can radically change the capabilities of the friendly force. The operational commander must assess his own force with respect to the limitations imposed by rules of engagement.



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I. INTRODUCTION

Since the end of World War II the United States has been involved only in limited armed conflicts. The full power of America's combat capability has been restrained in a variety of forms. Restrictions on the use of military force as a political instrument have characterized each confrontation.

Limitations on the use of force, however, are not uncharacteristic of wars. Even in World War II nations placed self-imposed boundaries on military operations. Switzerland and Portugal, for example, enjoyed neutrality throughout the war which was respected by all parties. The use of chemical weapons, as another example, was rejected by all participants.

In other cases during World War II, similar circumstances brought marked disadvantages to nations which observed such restraints. Field-Marshal Sir William Slim related such an instance in his book Defeat Into Victory. Preparing for an attack by the Japanese into Burma in late 1941, British forces were denied access into Siam by the British government. Britain did not want to offend the Siamese. Therefore the Allied forces failed to establish an intelligence organization in that country. As Slim stated, "Ignorance of Japanese movements was profound."^[1] The Japanese subsequently surprised the British in their direction of attack and drove them from Burma.^[2] While these examples do indicate a measure of restraint in what is normally considered

unrestrained warfare, the recent past and future expectations of combat suggest even more restrictive scenarios.

FM 100-5, Operations, recognizes that the operational commander will be constrained in his design of campaigns and major operations.

Operational planning begins with strategic guidance to a theater commander or with the commander's recognition of a mission in an active theater of operations.... Strategic guidance will constrain operational methods by ruling out some otherwise attractive alternatives. Withholding of nuclear weapons, prohibiting the unopposed surrender of territory or cities, ... are examples of the curbs that strategy may impose on operations.[3]

Operational commanders can expect political and strategic considerations to narrow the range of military options, even "by ruling out some otherwise attractive alternatives."^[4]

Just what is the nature of these constraints which limit the operational commander's use of available combat power? The purpose of this monograph is to examine one specific set of limitations imposed on the operational commander, rules of engagement (ROE), and discuss what role ROEs play in the use of military force. Further, the paper will examine what impact ROEs have on operational planning.

The paper will initially explain what role ROEs play in the use of military force as a political instrument. With this foundation, ROEs will be characterized in general terms using theory and a historical overview of recent armed conflicts. This discussion will establish that ROEs can be classified into three general categories.

Then the relationship between ROEs and operational design will be examined. Using the previously developed three categories of ROEs, the impact on operational design will be determined by analyzing the affect of ROEs on the application of three Principles of War-- the Objective, the Offensive, and Security. Conclusions will be drawn as to the future implications of ROEs on the commander's design of operations.

This study will focus on those rules of engagement which have an influence on the operational level of war. Tactical limitations on the use of force will not be considered unless a direct effect on operational planning can be demonstrated. Additionally, the paper will not address specifically the implications of the use of force in relation to international law and the moral issues of humanity. That a balance should be reached between the level of violence used and the significance of the military objective is unquestionable.[5] "The law of armed conflict and domestic law, of course, are important influences on drafting ROE," but these limitations are by their nature relatively consistent regardless of the circumstances surrounding the use of force.[6]

Finally, the scope of this study is further narrowed to the Air-Land Joint Operations force at the operational level in less than a total war. The rules of engagement covering the peacetime crisis threshold which defines when U.S. forces may initiate action or return fire in self-defense is outside the parameters of this monograph. Nor will the actions of the U.S. Navy be addressed. It should be duly noted, however, that the U.S. Navy has staffed and enacted an extensive policy concerning rules of engagement during

peacetime crisis operations. [7] Concepts applicable to air-ground operations will be the primary focus.

II. THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE and RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

One of the major changes in international politics since World War II is the attitude toward the use of armed forces. The idea of totally destroying the enemy's capability and will to fight has been replaced by "the view that the principal objective of military policies is the avoidance of general war and the limitation and control of lesser wars according to political ends short of traditional military victory."^[8] Nowhere is this attitude more prevalent than with regard to nuclear weapons.

The advent of the nuclear age significantly changed the philosophy on the nature of future wars. The U.S. was content initially to rest within the security of its nuclear umbrella. As the world's only nuclear power, the U.S. was confident that just the threat of nuclear retaliation would deter its enemies from aggression. Unfortunately, two events were to expose the futility of an absolute dependence on nuclear weapons.

The first event was the acquisition of the atomic bomb by the Soviet Union in 1949.^[9] This technological achievement by the Soviets in such a short period of time was a psychological shock to America. The possibility of nuclear powers confronting one another and unleashing atomic weapons was a scale of war yet to be imagined. Liddell Hart stated in 1956 that:

[W]here both sides possess the power to use thermo-nuclear weapons of unlimited destructiveness that very potentially imposes fundamentally limiting conditions on warfare and the military aim.[10] [emphasis added]

That a probable enemy could now threaten a similar annihilation of the U.S. was the first limitation of America's nuclear arsenal.

The second limitation on the dependence of nuclear weapons was revealed by the attack on South Korea in June 1950. "The traditional insistence [of Americans] on reserving our military effort for an unambiguous threat and then going all-out," did not appear to fit the situation presented in Korea.[11] As Russell Weigley states in his book, The American Way of War:

In Korea, to be sure, the Communists launched an aggression unambiguous enough to provoke an American reaction, though not large enough to persuade the American government to employ nuclear weapons.[12]

The lesson was clear: not all conflicts have a nuclear weapon solution. What role was military force to have under these restricted conditions? Policy makers would have been well served by consulting Clausewitz's classic work On War.

Clausewitz recognized two kinds of war. Having revised On War twice already, Clausewitz stated in his note of 10 July 1827 his intention to undertake a further revision specifically to develop the concept of two types of war.[13] The first kind of war is recognizable as the all-out fight, or that which has the objective "to overthrow the enemy-to render him politically helpless or militarily impotent, thus forcing him to sign whatever peace we please."^[14] It is exactly this type of confrontation that

Americans have instinctively understood and supported.

Unfortunately, this is not the type of war which has been presented to the U.S. since 1945.

Clausewitz's second kind of war is that for the purpose of obtaining limited political objectives such as seizing a section of the enemy's territory in order to negotiate favorable peace terms.[15] He noted through his study of history that even in the early 1800s:

History records numerous cases that do not lack for an aggressor or a positive ambition on one side at least, but where this ambition is not pronounced enough to be relentlessly pursued until it leads to the inevitable decision.[16]

The goal of the aggressor was less than the complete overthrow of the enemy. Clausewitz also cautions the reader on the utility of military force in pursuit of less than total victory. The more limited the political objective, "the less will the military element's tendency to violence coincide with political directives."^[17] This is the dilemma America has faced in applying military force as a political instrument since 1945. The military "means" and capability for massive destruction far outweigh the pursuit of limited political objectives and avoiding nuclear war.

Clausewitz's definition of the war to gain a negotiated peace has been referred to as limited war. Without debating the numerous variations of the meaning of limited war, Henry Kissinger's definition will suffice: "Limited war is war fought for limited political purposes."^[18] Further, Robert Osgood argues that the two prerequisites for limited war are limitations of political

objectives and limitations of military means.[19] It is from the second prerequisite, specifying the purpose and use of military force to limit military means, that the concept of rules of engagement was conceived.

Rules of engagement are "directives that a government may establish to delineate the circumstances and limitations under which its own naval, ground, and air forces will initiate and/or continue combat engagement with enemy forces."[20] Conceivably, ROEs can help match the military instrument of power to the political goals. But, it was the incompatibility of military force with limited political objectives that caused the dilemma of how to use combat forces. As Robert Osgood states:

In order that military power may serve as a controllable and predictable instrument of national policy, it must be subjected to an exacting political discipline.[21]

ROEs can act as a method for directing the use of military force to the political end. As will be discussed later, ROEs provide policymakers a measure of control and predictability under which the operational commander fights the war.

In summary then, the challenge faced by policymakers since 1945 has been to balance the appropriate military means with limited political objectives. It is apparent that without a method of controlling and directing the use of military force for specific purposes, it is doubtful if military power could remain a viable instrument of national policy. ROEs contribute to the achievement of harmony between the political authorization of force and the

operational commander's application of combat power in support of limited political aims.

III. THEORETICAL and HISTORICAL CHARACTERIZATION OF ROEs

Paraphrasing Clausewitz, war is but another means of achieving political objectives. ROEs, then, are a method of tailoring or limiting the manner in which those means are employed: It is important to emphasize that ROEs are not the only mechanism for limiting war. As an example, FM 100-5 lists three aims of military strategy. Military strategy:

- 1- Sets the fundamental conditions of operations in war or to deter war.
- 2- Establishes goals in theaters of war and theaters of operations.
- 3- Assigns forces, provides assets, and imposes conditions on the use of force.[22]

The operational commander must translate these three aims into winning combinations of major operations and campaigns.[23] From this list it is clear the operational commander's capabilities can be limited in a number of different ways-- the fundamental conditions of operations, goals which are established, forces assigned, and assets provided. ROEs, however, are directives which specify the circumstances in which combat power will be employed and how the enemy will be engaged, ie., the conditions imposed on the use of force.

Conceptually, an infinite number of ways exists to limit the operational commander's capabilities. Raymond Aron in an essay in Problems of Modern Strategy stated that wars today are limited

within defined frameworks. The boundaries of this framework are prescribed by the theater of operations, types of weapons used, "volume of resources", and the "resolution or patience of the population."^[24] John Collins in his book, Grand Strategy: Practices and Principles, argues that wars are limited by political objectives, military aims, choice of weapons, target selection, nature of participating forces, and geographic areas.^[25] Robert Osgood discusses limitations of military force in terms of the "scale of war". Besides geographic area, weapons, selection of targets, and manpower, three new constraints are offered in his list of limitations-- number of belligerents, duration, and intensity.^[26] At first glance, it is apparent that some of these limitations suggested by the three authors above cannot be directly applied as rules of engagement. (See figure 1)

As previously mentioned, there are other mechanisms which limit war besides ROEs. ROEs primarily focus on the use of force and the conduct of the engagement with the enemy. The "resolution or patience of the population" as stated by Aron can have a limiting effect on the conduct of the war. The effect may influence the scale of the war as described by Robert Osgood in terms of duration and intensity. However these concepts are levels of resolution far above the operational commander's scope. But the translation of these ideas-- resolution of the people, duration of the conflict, and intensity-- into specific directives concerning use of weapons or selection of targets would constitute the formation of ROEs.

LIMITATIONS on WAR

ARON

COLLINS

OSGOOD

	political objectives	
	military aims	
theater of opns.	geographic area	geographic area
types of weapons	choice of weapons	weapons
volume of resources	nature of forces	manpower
	target selection	target selection
resolution of population		
		duration
		intensity

Figure 1

John Collins proposed two other limiting factors of war, political objectives and military aims. Neither are elements which directly restrain the operational commander's combat power. ROEs, meanwhile, indirectly influence the achievement of the military aim and thus the political object by tailoring and controlling the use of force. Both of these factors are a higher order of limitations than ROEs. The quote from FM 100-5 above on military strategy recognizes limited political objectives and military aims as setting "the fundamental conditions of operations in war," and establishing "goals in theaters of war."^[27] Once again, the intent of the political objective and the military aim could be transmitted through a specific restriction on the use of force. However, neither could be applied directly as a rule of engagement without this translation.

Finally, all three authors identified resources as having a limiting effect on war. The most common resource is manpower. The operational commander's capabilities can be generally defined by the types of forces he is assigned and their number.^[28] Without the proper provision of manpower and equipment, certain missions are foreclosed. If only military advisers are sent to a theater of war, there is little chance of American forces conducting major combat operations. Constraints on resources are an effective measure for limiting war. However, this method of indirectly controlling the actions of the operational commander is not within the parameters of rules of engagement.

In analyzing the remaining types of limitations suggested by the three authors, three general categories emerge-- geographical,

types of weapons, and methods. Each category can be used directly to restrain and/or define the use of force. Further, all three categories are supported by examples from limited armed conflicts since 1945.

Limiting the geographical area in which military operations take place is one of easiest and most common ways to restrain an operational commander's use of force. The designation of the theater of operations defines an area in which force can be used. Conversely, these boundaries exclude areas, nations, and other targets from accidental involvement with friendly forces.

Geographical constraints typically serve two purposes. First, geographical boundaries are imposed on the operational commander to limit or fix the number of belligerents. A major concern in restricting the scope of combat operations is not to provoke the allies of your enemy.[29] During the Korean War, significant efforts were undertaken not to incite the Russians or their allies the Chinese into an escalation of the war.[30] Initially, ground operations were conducted only within the territorial limits of South Korea. Air operations could not approach within five miles of the North Korean/Chinese border. These restrictions were successful in keeping China and Russia out of the fight during this phase of the war. After the success of Inchon and the decision to pursue enemy forces into North Korea, both air and ground operations were restricted to no closer than five miles of the Chinese/North Korean border.[31] As history records the event, this change in geographical limitations on the use of force may have influenced China into entering the war.

After the Chinese intervention, geographical restrictions continued in an attempt to limit further expansion of the conflict. The boundary on all operations shifted to the southern half of the Yalu River. This restraint also precluded the penetration of Chinese air space.[32]

Similar techniques with minor variations were employed in Vietnam as rules of engagement. Ground combat operations were given one set of parameters while air operations were given another. Ground forces were excluded from operating in North Vietnam and with rare exception Laos and Cambodia.[33] Air operations were given restrictions along the Chinese/North Vietnam border similar to those in Korea. One purpose of these rules of engagement was to avoid provoking China into the war.[34]

Geographical constraints also serve to clarify the intent of a nations' commitment to the armed conflict. While limits to the theater of operations may reduce the threat of escalation by your enemies' allies, a message is simultaneously being sent to the international community and your own populace. The intervention into the Dominican Republic in 1965 provides a good example of this technique. The intent of the U.S. was to stabilize a government torn by two rival factions. Initially, the U.S. Army's actions were viewed suspiciously by other nations. The positioning of U.S. forces and their area of operations suggested particular favor to loyalist forces and possible ulterior motives against communist insurgents.[35] A redesignation of the area of operations was instrumental in changing the perception of a U.S. orientation toward communist rebels to a neutral peace-keeping force.[36]

Geographical limitations in Vietnam served a similar purpose. By limiting ground operations to South Vietnam, the United States reinforced policy objectives to Americans and the world. U.S. forces were supporting the defense of a legitimate government and not expanding the scope of operations.

The second category of ROEs, restrictions on the types of weapons to be used by an operational force, is another commonly imposed condition. Robert Osgood stated that two of the most controllable limitations that can be placed on a military force are geographic and types of weapons.[37] Any reduction in the commander's inventory of combat systems represents a loss in combat power and thus some decrement of capability. Nuclear and chemical weapons are the most frequently excluded weapons. The reasons for this exclusion are obvious-- to induce similar restraint by your opponents, avoid escalation into a global nuclear war, and maintain credibility in world opinion. As mentioned previously, these considerations were key to the U.S.'s decision not to use nuclear weapons in Korea.

Conventional weapons are also of interest in tailoring the use of force by the theater commander. In small operations such as the Dominican Republic, conventional weapons may be limited by their size and/or accuracy. The largest weapon authorized for U.S. forces in the Dominican Republic was a 106mm recoilless rifle.[38] Of special note is the fact that the recoilless rifle is a direct fire weapon. In an attempt to reduce the number of casualties, area weapons such as artillery, rockets, and bombs can be restricted. Even special munitions such as napalm and tube fired

or air delivered mines can be withheld from use. During Vietnam, most of these restrictions in weapons and munitions were imposed at some stage of the war.[39] The resultant effects on the operational commander of such limitations are to take away his capability to strike deep, limit the range and scope of his operations, and reduce his ability to mass combat power through high yield weapons.

Restrictions in the methods of employing combat power represents a third category of ROEs. These measures can be as variable as the situation dictates. As a collective category of ROEs, their only commonality originates in the specific nature of the directives to employ force or not to employ force to some end. Practically, these ROEs should be constructed with an appreciation for the feasibility and clarity in execution by friendly forces and the cause-effect relationship with respect to the enemy. Three kinds of ROEs concerning the method of force employment will be discussed-- target selection, objectives, and casualties.

One method of controlling the specific employment of force is target selection. A standard practice in Vietnam was for higher authority to select or exclude targets for the theater commander. Michael Carver states in Makers of Modern Strategy that one limitation common to all military confrontations since 1945 is the avoidance of bombing one another's cities when possible.[40] During the Vietnam War cities, factories, and ships of our enemy's allies were exempted from attack. Harbors were mined or specifically left mine free.[41] This type of ROE affords policymakers strict control of military operations. This method is

also flexible. As in Vietnam in 1965 and 1972, politicians can control the level of violence by increasing the number of targets to be struck or excluding targets.[42]

A second method for directing the specific use of force involves the designation of military objectives. For reasons of national policy, operational commanders can be directed to undertake certain missions. These missions may include the seizure of key terrain, the attack of a particular element of the enemy, or the retention of a critical city or territory. One of the more famous examples of retention of a critical location comes from World War II. Hitler ordered 6th Army to retain Stalingrad at all costs for reasons of national policy. To the exclusion of nearly all other efforts, including the near collapse of the Eastern Front, German forces attempted to carry out that directive.[43] That the attempt to retain a specific objective failed in this historic example is not important. This manner of ROE gives the national command authority some predictability on the actions of the operational commander. Within a broader framework than selection of targets, ROEs which designate objectives also control the employment of military forces.

A third method of directing a more specific use of military force is to control all operations as a function of casualties. This technique is possible in small scale conflicts. The casualties in question may be friendly troops, enemy forces, civilians, or a combination of any/all three. The principle behind this ROE is that the command authority is more assured about the operation's cost in lives and reasonably confident about the

expected level of violence. Israel imposed a restraint on military operations with respect to casualties during the opening days of the 1973 War. Having suffered significant losses against Egypt in the first five days of the war, Israel curtailed all operations which might incur further casualties for questionable gains. Israeli leaders were concerned about the moral support of the nation which was shaken by the magnitude of losses. Attacks were halted and counter-attacks forbidden while the Israeli Defense Force gathered its resources for a major offensive.[44] The challenge to the operational commander from the Israeli example is the risk assessment for each course of action and the amount of force to be used. As FM 100-5 reminds us, attractive alternatives may have to be ruled out.[45]

To summarize then, the manner in which ROEs have been constructed in the recent past seems to focus on three general categories-- geographical, types of weapons, and methods. The theoretical sources substantiate that there are other ways to limit the use of force besides rules of engagement. Two key alternatives are limiting forces assigned or assets provided. ROEs, however, involve limitations on the direct application of force. Geographical limitations establish the general boundaries in which force is to be applied. Limitations in weapons restrict the levels of violence theater wide. Limitations in methods direct specific measures of force tailored to the situation. Conceptually a combination of ROEs from these three categories should provide the command authority the capability to match military means to a limited political end. There is, however, no free lunch. Each ROE

degrades the operational commander's capability and flexibility. While the reasons for imposing conditions on the operational commander may be politically sound, militarily the restrictions may be self-defeating.

One great difficulty in developing... military strategy and tactics capable of meeting the threat of limited war lies in the fact that the requirements for limiting war do not necessarily correspond with the requirements of fighting limited wars effectively.[46]

What then are the future implications of ROEs on the operational commander's design of operations?

IV. IMPLICATIONS OF ROEs ON OPERATIONAL DESIGN

ROEs are nearly impossible to forecast before the initiation of combat. If the military aim is a function of limited political objectives, the nature of the enemy situation and friendly combat power, then the probable ROEs for any conflict are infinite.

Robert Osgood claims that:

Both the Korean and the Vietnamese wars indicate that the particular restrictions on military operations will be determined by such a variety of conditions and considerations that it is almost fruitless to try and predict them in advance.[47]

A plausible conclusion then is that we can only speculate on the specific ROEs for future contingency plans. Therefore, if the relationship between operational design and ROEs is to be discerned, some timeless elements of operational design should be analyzed with the three categories of ROEs developed above.

The Principles of War as defined in FM 100-5, Operations, Appendix A, are suitable elements within the design of operations to examine the relationship of ROEs. For the purposes of this study, the application of three principles will be analyzed-- the objective, the offensive, and security-- with the three categories of ROEs.

FM 100-5 simply states the principle of the objective as;

Direct every military operation towards a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective.[48]

Rules of engagement affect the application of this principle in the design of operations in two significant ways. First, ROEs can influence the selection of the operational objective.

The selection of objectives is based on the overall mission of the command, the commander's assigned mission, the means available, the characteristics of the enemy and the military characteristics of the operational area.[49]

As discussed previously, geographical ROEs can dictate the parameters of the operational area and attempt to fix the number of belligerents. Limitations on specific methods and/or the types of weapons to be used affect the means available to the operational commander. Thus, ROEs can limit or define most of the elements listed above as key to selecting the objective. Imposing ROEs on the operational commander without a full understanding of their effects can influence or misdirect the selection of operational objectives. Vietnam is a classic example of this phenomenon.

What was the operational objective in Vietnam with respect to the limitations imposed on the geographical area and use of force?

Was it the Secure Hamlet Program and "winning the hearts and minds" of the South Vietnamese? Or was it the search and destroy missions to eject the North Vietnamese from the South?^[50] The lesson here is that policymakers and strategic planners confront a dichotomy in purpose concerning rules of engagement. ROEs are an efficient way to tailor the use of force in pursuit of limited political objectives. They provide control and a measure of predictability over military forces. On the other hand, ROEs unknowingly can confuse or adversely affect the selection of the operational objective, thus producing military operations that do not achieve or support national policy.

The second way in which ROEs affect the application of the principle of the objective is in the unusual degree of uncertainty imposed upon military operations. In selecting his objectives and deciding on the conduct of operations the operational commander must be alert to the temporary nature of ROEs. Rules of engagement can change in scope and permissiveness in short periods of time. Prior to the success of the Inchon landings by MacArthur, the northernmost limit for Eighth (US) Army's and the United Nations Command's ground operations had been the North-South Korean border.^[51] When this restriction was removed, General Walker found his objectives had changed and his forces and logistical support ill positioned for new operations.^[52] Similar short notice changes took place in the intervention in the Dominican Republic and in Vietnam.^[53] Changes in ROEs can make former objectives obsolete and/or unattainable. Operational commanders must anticipate the effects of changing ROEs. The uncertainty

presented by ROEs must be met with an eye toward flexibility of purpose and preparation for multiple contingencies at the operational level.

Rules of engagement also influence the application of the principle of the offensive. FM 100-5 defines this principle as, "Seize, retain, and exploit the initiative."^[54] In that light, one of the premier concepts of the capstone doctrine is the center of gravity.

Identification of the enemy's center of gravity and the design of actions which will ultimately expose it to attack and destruction while protecting our own, are the essence of operational art.^[55]

It is apparent that if the operational commander identifies the enemy's center of gravity and designs operations to strike it, he has met the principle of the offensive. ROEs can be constructed to limit the collection of operational intelligence. If electronic collection measures are restricted to geographical limits, the center of gravity may never be identified. Even more disheartening to the operational commander, ROEs of any of the three general categories could preclude friendly forces from striking the enemy's center of gravity. Russell Weigley contends that lack of authorization to strike the enemy's source of power was critical to obstructing overall success in Korea. No decisive operations seemed possible with the limitations imposed because "the sources of North Korea's ability to make war, except for manpower, lay outside the country."^[56] Harry Summers in his book On Strategy voiced the same argument about North Vietnam.^[57] Thus, ROEs can

restrict the operational commander from striking the enemy's center of gravity and seizing the initiative.

Rules of engagement create two other conditions which have an impact on the application of the principle of the objective. ROEs can require changes in the procedures of the chain of command and indirectly impact on soldier morale. With modern communication technology, tactical and operational decisions can be controlled at levels above the theater commander. As Robert McClintock describes this effect, the decisions of limitation are so critical that the President himself may make the smallest tactical decisions such as in the Cuban Missile Crisis.[58] Similarly, the operational commander must consider the severity of the situation and the nature of all ROEs in whether authorization should remain at his level. Such a change to normal chain of command responsibility may drastically affect the U.S. Army's decentralized command system. Initiative, agility, and synchronization of the force may decrease.

The morale of the combat soldier is also subject to adverse reactions from particularly restrictive ROEs. Restrictions on the use of weapons or methods of employing force may be perceived by the combat soldier as a serious threat to his welfare. When other means of combat power are taken away, destroyed, or restricted, it is always the soldier who has to make up the difference. Operational commanders must be sensitive to the translation of ROEs and their purpose at the tactical level. A loss in morale or cohesion in the force can have operational repercussions in seizing or retaining the initiative from the enemy.

Finally, applying the principle of security to the design of operations is also influenced by rules of engagement. FM 100-5 describes this principle as, "Never permit the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage."^[59] The concept of ROEs itself presents the operational commander an immediate disadvantage and element of risk which must be addressed. Limiting one's own operations in the use of force contains an unspoken presumption that the enemy will do the same. There is an inherent disadvantage for friendly forces not knowing how the enemy will react. Contained within this disadvantage is an unpredictable factor of risk. The enemy does not have to accept the conditions of limited war. Michael Carver argues the U.S. placed itself in an inferior position to North Vietnam by conducting limited warfare. North Vietnam never recognized the conflict as anything but total war.^[60] Against a more sophisticated enemy, the degree of risk can threaten destruction of the force. How does the operational commander address high yield weapons whose platforms sit outside his defined theater of operations? If the enemy chooses not to apply similar restrictions on his methods of war, the friendly force commander risks destruction of massed forces, logistical networks, and indeed his entire command. Operational commanders must recognize and account for this added factor of risk imposed by the restraints of rules of engagement.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine rules of engagement as one set of restrictions imposed on operational commanders. The recent past and future expectations of combat suggest limitations on the use of military force will be the rule rather than the exception. If military power is to remain a viable instrument of national policy, then the application of force must be tailored to obtain limited political objectives. It is in this framework of imposing limitations on the use of force for limited political objectives that rules of engagement were created.

From the vantage point of the politician, ROEs are a method for directing the use of military force to the political end. ROEs provide policymakers a measure of control and predictability under which the operational commander fights the war. The challenge presented to the National Command Authority is to balance the appropriate military means to the limited political objective. "Military effectiveness in limited war must be measured not only by the combat capability on the battlefield in respect to the enemy, but the political and psychological consequences of various actions."^[61] As Clausewitz reminds us in his classic work On War:

No one starts a war- or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so- without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it.^[62] [emphasis added]

Thus, the dilemma of the policymakers is evident. To what degree will the use of force be restricted to provide the necessary measure of control and restraint under conditions of limited war?

Simultaneously, what effect will these limitations have on the military's capability to achieve the military aim and thus the political objective? The answer to the first question, the nature of the control mechanism for directing the use of force, will forever be a political issue. The answer to the second question, the effect of limitations in use of force (ROEs) on the military's capability to achieve the political objective, must be viewed through the eyes of the operational commander.

From the vantage point of the operational commander, there can be little doubt that ROEs influence the design of operational plans. First and foremost rules of engagement introduce a new equation of uncertainty into operations. If ROEs are an indirect reflection of policy imposed on the battlefield, is it clear what the military aim is? Have geographic limitations or restrictions on weapons and methods inadvertently defined a lesser objective or the wrong objective? Should not the operational commander now formulate his plans to address the unpredictable nature of changing policy? Changes in policy represent changes in ROEs and possibly changes in objectives. Has the operational plan been constructed with sufficient flexibility to meet the future implications for the continued use of force? What are the future implications for the use of force? Will ROEs be loosened allowing a wider range of military options or will ROEs be tightened? The objectives of warfare and the uncertainty of its purpose have been complicated significantly since the days of annihilating the enemy and his will to fight.

The second significant impact of rules of engagement on operational design concerns the element of risk. Imposing limitations on the use of force does not mean your enemy will accept similar conditions in his conduct of the war. To what degree do rules of engagement endanger your force? How will the enemy exploit the nature of your ROEs to construct a war-winning strategy? The rules of engagement may have given the enemy a sanctuary for his operational base. How will the operational plan be designed to protect the command and reduce the enemy's capability to exploit your limitations in the use of force?

Finally, rules of engagement force the operational commander to address the tough issue of assessing his own capabilities. Doctrine has been written to address an expected enemy situation and capabilities versus an American force with specific capabilities. What is the impact if rules of engagement take away the use of deep battle systems? How effective will U.S. doctrine be when conducted piecemeal? What is the affect of ROEs on the command and control system of AirLand Battle doctrine? Soldiers are being trained to use their initiative under a decentralized command structure. If the military operation is highly sensitive in its use of force, should the operational commander release authority for certain actions below his level? What will be the implications on agility and synchronization? The operational commander must evaluate these questions in order to understand the effectiveness of his command. Subsequently, the design of the operational plan must include an appreciation for the capabilities of the force under the limitations of rules of engagement.

In conclusion, it is clear that the design of operational plans are affected by rules of engagement. It should also be obvious that the implications of ROEs on operational design are of significant importance to both policymakers and operational commanders. For the conduct of war in the future, ROEs will be a common fixture of both policy and plans. While this paper did not attempt to establish hard answers, one nugget of truth shines bright. Policymakers and warfighters must place a high premium on mutual understanding.

No major proposal required for war can be worked out in ignorance of political factors; and when people talk, as they often do, about harmful political influence on the management of war, they are not really saying what they mean. Their quarrel should be with the policy itself, not with the influence.... Only if statesmen look to certain military moves and actions to produce effects that are foreign to their nature do political decisions influence operations for the worse.[63]

It is the responsibility of both policymakers and operational commanders to understand the intent of rules of engagement to restrict the use of force to further limited political objectives. Simultaneously, both must appreciate the effect of ROEs on military operations. The success of our next summons to combat may rest on the close coordination of statesmen and warfighters to address the uncertainty, risk, and reduction in capabilities induced into operations by ROEs.

ENDNOTES

1. Field-Marshall Sir William Slim, Defeat Into Victory, (London: Cassell and Company LTD., 1956), p. 13.
2. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
3. FM 100-5, Operations, (May 1986), pp. 28-29.
4. Ibid.
5. A selected sample of sources are: William V. O'Brien, The Conduct of Just and Limited War, (New York: Praeger, 1983); J.A. Baumgarten, "The Importance of Fighting Well: Ethical Considerations For the Operational Commander," Naval War College Review, (Newport, R.I., 3 March 1986); FM 27-10, Law of Land Warfare, Department of the Army, July 1956; and AF Pam 110-31, International Law--The Conduct of Armed Conflict and Air Operations, Department of the Air Force, 19 Nov 1976.
6. Ashley J. Roach, "Rules of Engagement," Naval War College Review, (Jan-Feb 1983), p. 46.
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13. Richard M. Swain, LTC, USA, "Clausewitz for the 20th Century: The Interpretation of Raymond Aron," Military Review, (April 1986), p. 40.
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18. Henry Kissinger as cited in John Spanier's Games Nations Play, 5th ed., (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982), p. 196.
19. Robert E. Osgood, Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 238.
20. Roach, p. 46 as paraphrased from JCS Pub 1, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), p. 298.
21. Osgood, Limited War, p. 14.
22. FM 100-5, Operations, p.9.
23. Ibid.
24. Aron, Problems of Modern Strategy, p. 33.
25. John Collins, Grand Strategy: Practices and Principles, (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1973), p. 40.
26. Osgood, Limited War, pp. 242-243.
27. FM 100-5, Operations, p. 9.
28. Collins, p. 44.
29. Bernard Brodie, War and Politics, (New York: Macmillian Publishing Company, 1973), p. 67.
30. Osgood, Limited War, pp. 169-170.
31. Brodie, p. 74.
32. Ibid., pp. 64-66. Of particular note, the geographical boundaries in the Korean War were taken to extremes. In attacking the bridges across the Yalu River, bombing was authorized only against the southern or North Korean spans of the structures. Aircraft were forbidden to make bombing runs which penetrated Chinese air space.
33. Ibid., pp. 177-181.
34. Ibid.
35. Richard W. Mansbach as cited by Ralph W. Hinrichs Jr., Maj, USA, "United States Involvement in Low Intensity Conflicts Since

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38. Hinrichs, p. 127.
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40. Michael Carver, "Conventional Warfare in the Nuclear Age," Makers of Modern Strategy, edited by Peter Paret, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 790.
41. Brodie, pp. 64-66 and p. 180. See also Weigley, p. 464.
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