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Sequencing Operations:
The Critical Path of Operational Art

by

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INTRODUCTION

Operational art involves the "employment of military forces to attain strategic goals in a theater of war or theater of operations through the design, organization and conduct of campaigns and major operations."¹ As such, it is the vital link between the strategic objective in the theater and the tactical operations by which military forces are employed.² This linkage of ends and means is laid out in what is known as the campaign plan. The campaign plan serves as the "roadmap" that describes how the available military means will be used within the theater of operations to accomplish the desired ends.

Campaign planning, or the act of executing operational art, can be viewed as involving four major functions. They are: 1) defining the operational objective; 2) deploying, 3) employing, and 4) sustaining the military means.³ The complexity of operational art stems from the fact that these functions are interdependent and interactive in time and space, providing requirements to as well as imposing constraints upon each other. This complexity is compounded as the functions are conducted within an environment of chance and friction and against an opposing enemy's will--variables over which the campaign planner has little or no control.

This paper focuses on the third campaign planning function, i.e., employing military means to achieve the stated operational objectives. It is here the campaign planner addresses the questions of when, where, and how do I fight? . . . with what forces and for what purposes? . . . all of which ultimately lead to accomplishment of the stated campaign objective. Addressing these questions is the realm of sequencing operations. The

concept of sequencing operations involves the employment of forces by anticipating their effects and ordering them in time and space to produce conditions that contribute to operational success. As such, sequencing operations can involve both the sequential and simultaneous use of available resources.

The concept of sequencing operations to achieve campaign objectives is not unique to AirLand Battle doctrine. M.N. Tukhachevsky, in his manuscript New Problems in Warfare, describes the historical development of the notion of sequencing battles to achieve the objectives of a war. In it, Tukhachevsky attributes to the changing nature of the battlefield the need to sequence operations. According to Tukhachevsky, operational art during the period of Napoleon principally involved the function of "deploying" forces to permit maximum combat power to be brought to bear in a decisive battle. Toward the end of the Napoleonic period there arose the need to conduct several battles in order to create the pre-conditions for the decisive battle of the campaign. Waterloo is an example of such a campaign. Subsequent to Napoleon, armies increased in size, weapons became more destructive, and the dimensions of the battlefield increased in width and depth. The ability of an army to destroy an opponent in one decisive battle vanished. Both the American Civil War and World War I clearly demonstrated this. In 1926 Tukhachevsky commented further that

"The nature of modern weapons and modern battle is such that it is an impossible matter to destroy the enemy's manpower by one blow in a one day battle. Battle in a modern operation stretches out into a series of battles not only along the front but also in depth until that time when either the enemy has been struck by a final annihilating blow or when the offensive forces are exhausted. In

*that regard, the modern tactics of a theater of military operations are tremendously more complex than those of Napoleon and they are made even more complex by the inescapable condition mentioned above: that the strategic commander cannot personally organize combat."*⁴

Eventually, "rejection of the concept of a single decisive battle and the acceptance of successive operations to achieve the war objectives focused the attention of theorists on the realm between strategy and tactics, hence the creation of the operational art."⁵

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the concept of sequencing operations from both a theoretical and historical perspective. Based on the results of this investigation an operational framework will be postulated for sequencing defensive operations that has direct application to the NATO environment. This will be accomplished in the following manner: chapter 1 is a discussion of the theory of the concept of sequencing operations; chapter 2 presents a historical case study for investigation; chapter 3 postulates a framework for sequencing defensive operations based on a synthesis of chapters 1 and 2; and chapter 4 is the conclusion.

Finally, although the discussion in this paper centers on the NATO environment, the postulated operational framework has utility for a low intensity conflict scenario. A brief description of the framework in such an environment is contained in appendix B.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter investigates the concept of sequencing operations to achieve campaign objectives from a theoretical perspective. Although there have been many noteworthy military theoreticians from which to draw insights, the works of Tukhachevsky, supplemented with certain theoretical concepts of Clausewitz and Jomini appear to this author to provide the most significant and comprehensive contributions to the subject at hand. In the interests of space, this chapter provides a distillation of the appropriate views of these theoreticians as they relate to sequencing operations rather than an exhaustive discussion or analysis of their writings.

Tukhachevsky

Tukhachevsky is considered by many to be the father of Soviet operational art.⁶ The majority of his work was done following World War I and is especially relevant to any theoretical analysis of that aspect of operational art we call sequencing operations. Although the majority of his writings refer to offensive operations, insights related to defensive operations can be drawn. Of particular significance are his discussions on the rationale for sequencing, operational containment, and the campaign plan.

Rationale For Sequencing:

Fundamental to Tukhachevsky's view of the battlefield was the absolute necessity to sequence operations not only because of the increases in magnitude of the battlefield (in space and forces), but also because there will be cases where a force is inferior in strength to its opponent. In those cases it is impossible to strike a decisive blow against the opponent unless one is able to concentrate relatively superior combat power in space and time. By sequencing operations, one is able selectively to concentrate in time and space. In effect, this becomes the essence of Tukhachevsky's rationale for sequencing battles and operations. It is to create overwhelming combat power against "one specific, clearly defined objective" ⁷ to destroy the opponent and create the conditions further to exploit this tactical success by translating it into an operational advantage. The goal is to achieve operational depth against an enemy force where the opportunity for maneuver is greater and the consequences are more devastating. According to Tukhachevsky then, one sequences operations with the object of "striking and destroying dispersed enemy battle and operational formations piecemeal by concentrating overwhelming manpower and equipment against individual units." ⁸

Tukhachevsky considers secrecy and speed of execution fundamental to success in conducting a campaign of successive operations.⁹ Additionally, he believes that a battle or engagement should be waged not only to destroy enemy forces, but also to create the preconditions that would enable that destruction or defeat at a later time. This is the notion of deep operations in time, i.e., conducting operations for a future payoff.^{*10} In this regard Tukachevsky states

"In those cases where the available resources of men and equipment are insufficient to strike a decisive blow against the enemy it is still possible to weaken him considerably through repeated, brief surprise attacks at different sectors of the front. By outflanking and destroying individual groupings in a short space of time it is possible to reduce the overall total of enemy manpower, shake his confidence in himself, and thereby prepare favorable conditions for more decisive encounters."¹¹

This then brings us to his most significant contribution to the notion of sequencing operations -- his concept of operational containment.

Operational Containment:

Central to his theoretical discussions is the concept of operational containment. Operational containment involves the view that the decisive battle of annihilation is no longer valid. The concept envisages that it is now necessary to conduct operations over time across the front as well as throughout the depth of the enemy echelons in order to achieve what "he considered to be the operational objective, irrespective of the policy objective...and that was destruction of the enemy force".¹² It then falls to the operational plan to link engagements, battles, and major operations in space and time to achieve this destruction of the enemy forces.

Fundamental to the concept of operational containment is the need to deny the enemy the opportunity of moving or transferring forces echeloned in depth to meet the main attack.¹³ A key component of this is the need to contain or limit the freedom of action of those enemy forces to the depths of his force dispositions. This involves the notion of orchestrating and

sequencing FLOT battles and deep operations to achieve operational success. The goal of such sequencing is to "nail down the enemy both along the entire front line and in the depth of his echelonment on the main directions of attack".¹⁴

Inherent in the concept of operational containment is the acceptance of risk. Such a concept requires the operational commander to accept local tactical inferiority in some places in order to achieve tactical superiority at the decisive point(s). This, of necessity, is linked to creating the preconditions for eventual operational success. A key variable in this is the time/space consideration as it relates to the enemy's ability to use his reserves to react to a breakthrough of the attacker. As Tukhachevsky states

*"The essential element of calculation in this case is the time required by the deep reserves of the enemy not only to destroy the assault forces proper, but also to restore the roads they have torn up."*¹⁵

Finally, without really calling them that, Tukhachevsky discusses centers of gravity. In this regard he talks of looking for and attacking those enemy elements that would produce the most decisive results and at the same time are most vulnerable.¹⁶ Of significance, he considers the enemy rear areas to be just such a place, and accordingly, the goal for offensive operations. He states that the targets are those that "would bring about a serious imbalance and a crisis if disrupted on the one hand and a minimum of risk for our assets"¹⁷ on the other. In the end, any operations in the enemy rear area must be linked to the operations at the FLOT...all of which must be designed to bring about the destruction of the enemy force.

Campaign Plan:

Regarding the campaign plan Tukhachevsky states

"One must outline the sequence in which the deployed enemy battle formations will be struck, i.e., one must combine the front and strength of the combined arms attack with the sequence of movements by bounds and reaching an area the possession of which determines the enemy's defeat. " 18

Inherent in the plan are certain characteristics he considers essential. First, is the need for flexibility. Much like von Moltke, he believes it is impossible to visualize accurately the flow of a campaign from initial dispositions to attainment of the desired end state. Regarding the need for flexibility Tukhachevsky states

"Battles are complicated and changeable, hence in exercising tactical control one should be prepared for drastic changes in a situation and occasionally for a radical reorganization of a previously drawn plan". 19

He furthermore recommends that the planner be prepared for these changes to his plan by anticipating enemy actions and preparing in advance alternatives to the main plan (we call these branches to the campaign plan). 20 He reinforces this necessity by describing what a clever defending enemy might do to an attacker who has achieved a penetration

"A cleverly maneuvering enemy can organize a zone of obstacles in front of one of the attacking

forces and set up a defensive semi-circle, and, at the same time he may prepare a concerted counterattack upon the flank of the other enveloping force and destroy it separately." 21

Finally, and of great importance, Tukhachevsky cautions the campaign planner to ensure he harmonizes the scale of the operation with the resources he has available. Not all operations, he states, need to be conducted simultaneously. Accordingly, economies of force are achievable and sequential operations are a means of stretching limited resources to attain the necessary ends.

"The whole of the operation or battle must conform to the conditions of the actual operational situation and be commensurate with the forces and means in their correlation with the enemy's forces and means and with considerations of the factors of space and time." 22

CLAUSEWITZ

Although Clausewitz does not specifically discuss "sequencing operations" in those terms, his views regarding strategy (what we now call operational art) provide some significant insights for comprehending the complexity of the subject. It is important to recognize that Clausewitz's work was done during a period when the essence of military art involved the quest for the one decisive battle. This does not make his theory any less relevant to the concept of sequencing operations; rather, it requires one to extrapolate as a result of the changing nature of the battlefield. Of direct

significance to this study is what Clausewitz said regarding ends and means, concentration and economy of force, and center of gravity.

Ends and Means:

In discussing ends and means Clausewitz acknowledges the subordinate role of tactical events to the operational objective. As such, the aim of a particular engagement or battle is derived from the operational objective. It is this aim that serves as the desired end for an engagement and when achieved, defines a "successful" tactical operation. Moreover, individual and combinations of tactical operations serve as the means for the achievement of the ultimate operational end.²³ One may conclude then that every tactical event should serve a specific purpose and this purpose must in some way contribute to the accomplishment of the operational objective.

Clausewitz also states that some engagements have greater significance than others,²⁴ i.e., a more direct influence on the achievement of the operational objective. A modern day interpretation of this would be that some engagements, battles, or major operations set the pre-conditions that enable subsequent or simultaneous ones to achieve their desired ends. In effect, the purpose of certain operations is to bring about necessary or favorable conditions for the execution of subsequent operations. Such an interpretation leads to the logical conclusion that sequencing operations in time and space is necessary to enable the constituent parts to lead collectively to the desired operational end.

Concentration and Economy of Force:

Closely linked to Clausewitz's discussion of ends and means are his views on concentration and economy of force. It is through the artful combination of these two concepts in space and time that available means are employed to achieve the desired tactical and operational ends.

Clausewitz states that "there is no higher and simpler law of strategy than that of keeping one's forces concentrated".²⁵ Clausewitz argues that concentration of superior combat power at a time and place on the battlefield relative to the enemy force is necessary to achieve the object of destruction or defeat of that enemy force. Such concentration involves more than just superiority in numbers of forces, although this is important.²⁶ He argues that to view concentration as involving only superior numbers fails to recognize correctly the true nature of war and the impact of the moral domain.²⁷ From a modern day perspective, what Clausewitz appears to suggest is that concentration in space and time includes not just the tangible, such as total numbers of combat systems on the battlefield, but also the intangibles such as leadership, state of training, morale, and the effects of friction and chance.

Regarding economy of force, Clausewitz defines it as involving the effective use of forces, i.e., "making sure that all forces are involved...that no part of the whole force is idle".²⁸ As such, any force that is not involved against the enemy for some purpose "is being wasted, which is even worse than using them inappropriately".²⁹

Combining the concepts of concentration and economy of force, one must conclude that from the operational perspective (what Clausewitz called strategic) all forces must be employed in such a manner, and at places and

times (economy of force) as to achieve superior combat power (concentration) to destroy the enemy. More simply, it is economy of force that enables concentration of force.

Center of Gravity:

Clausewitz's concept of center of gravity has general relevance to all three levels of war. Clausewitz defined it as "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends."³⁰ From an operational perspective, the center of gravity of an armed force "refers to those sources of strength or balance"³¹ of that force. It follows then, that an effective way of destroying an enemy force would be to attack and destroy its center of gravity. The utility of the theoretical concept of center of gravity is as an aiming point for an opponent's conduct of operations. Or as Clausewitz states, it is "the point against which all our energies should be directed,"³² i.e., all operations should in some manner be oriented toward the destruction of the enemy center of gravity. Clausewitz further explains that direct attack of an enemy's center of gravity is seldom an easy undertaking³³ and that an indirect approach to it is generally required. Such an approach would require the employment of forces in time and space in order to weaken or make more assailable the enemy's center of gravity. This requires the sequential or simultaneous employment of military means to achieve ends that collectively contribute to the eventual destruction of the enemy center of gravity.

JOMINI

Like Clausewitz, Jomini does not specifically refer to sequencing operations. He does however, discuss several theoretical concepts and

postulate numerous operational principles that are relevant to the subject. Also like Clausewitz, Jomini produced his work during a period when the one decisive battle was the essence of operational art. Of direct significance to this study is what Jomini had to say regarding decisive points and concentration at decisive points.

Decisive Points:

The concept of decisive points relates to the specific theater of operations. The decisive points of a theater of operations are described as those "capable of exercising a marked influence either upon the result of the campaign or upon a single enterprise" ³⁴ and are of two kinds.

First are decisive points resulting from the geography. The decisive point (of terrain) is relational to enemy forces, i.e., becomes a decisive point only in that the possession of it has impact on the enemy force.³⁵ In effect, it equates to our definition of decisive terrain.

The second kind of decisive points "are accidental points of maneuver, which result from the positions of the troops on both sides".³⁶ Jomini clarifies this when he postulates the general principle that "the decisive points of maneuver are on the flank of the enemy upon which, if his opponent operates, he can more easily cut him off from his base and supporting forces without being easily exposed to the same danger" ³⁷ Here, Jomini refers to the relative positioning of forces, with advantage going to the force that threatens the enemy flank and line of operations while not exposing his own.

The utility of the concept of decisive points is that Jomini considers the art of war to be conducting operations to bring one's force against the decisive points of the battlefield. If this involves one march with one

decisive battle as in the Napoleonic era, so much the better. However, if because of the magnitude of the battlefield and size of the forces a series of simultaneous and/or sequential actions is required to achieve final decision, then it becomes necessary to sequence operations to achieve the decisive points of the battlefield.

Concentration at Decisive Points:

According to Jomini, "grand tactics is the art of making good combinations preliminary to battles, as well as during their progress...to bring the mass of the force in hand against a part of the opposing army, and upon that point the possession of which promises the most important results." ³⁸ Put more simply, Jomini is stating that operational art involves bringing friendly strength against enemy weakness at the decisive points. Recalling Tukhachevsky's description of how the nature of war has changed since the Napoleonic era, a modern day extension of Jomini's maxim could be that a key ingredient for success is the requirement to sequence actions to bring friendly strength against enemy weakness. This notion of concentration, although generally accepted as a self-evident truth, is all too often neglected or forgotten as one conducts operations over time to achieve a campaign objective.

The works of Tukhachevsky, Clausewitz, and Jomini provide some key theoretical concepts that are particularly relevant to the subject of sequencing defensive operations within a campaign. Manstein's winter campaign in Russia in 1942-43 demonstrates many of these concepts and is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Manstein's '42-'43 winter campaign in Russia is particularly useful for analyzing the sequencing of operations as a fundamental component of operational art. First, Manstein's situation was much like the one we face in NATO today. Like Manstein, NATO must defend a wide front, with limited forces and no operational reserves, and not give ground willingly. Second, this campaign demonstrates many of the theoretical concepts discussed in chapter 1. Finally, Manstein's description of this campaign reflects a unique rigor and discipline in operational planning and execution. As such, this campaign is especially useful in deriving a theoretical framework for sequencing operations to achieve campaign objectives. This framework is subsequently developed in chapter 3.

Strategic and Operational Setting (MAP 1):

During the late summer and early fall months of 1942, attacking German forces on the Eastern Front approached their strategic offensive culminating point as their offensive diverged on two axis and overextended itself into the Ukraine and Caucasus.³⁹ Army Group A was bogged down in stalemate in the Caucasus while most of Army Group B was involved in the battle of Stalingrad. Hitler, adamant that no captured ground would be relinquished to the Russians, uncompromisingly enforced his infamous "stand fast" order, which by November of 1942 resulted in the encirclement of the German 6th Army at Stalingrad. By the time Manstein was given command of Army Group Don (German 4th Panzer Army, Rumanian Third

and Fourth Armies, and the encircled German 6th Army) German forces were in a precarious situation with the majority of their forces extended into two mutually exclusive salients.

German force dispositions by early February of 1943 had Army Detachment Hollidt defending an extended front along the Lower Donetz. First Panzer Army was assuming a defense along the Middle Donetz. Fourth Panzer Army was continuing to defend against overwhelming odds, protecting the corridor to Rostov. ⁴⁰

SOVIET PLAN (MAP 2):

The Soviets planned a multi-phased offensive with the first priority to destruction of the German 6th Army in Stalingrad. Simultaneously, the Soviets would launch a two front operation against the Italian 8th Army and AD Hollidt to interdict any German effort to relieve the encircled German 6th Army. The second phase of this two front offensive would then be an attack toward Rostov to sever the LOCs of the German forces of Army Group A in the Caucasus.⁴¹ The Soviet's "strategic goal was to encircle the southern armies before they could withdraw across the Dnieper."⁴² The major operational flaw of the Soviet plan was that it did not focus concentrated force at a single decisive point of aim. Rather, the Soviets "aimed at diverging objectives, and neglected to provide either air or infantry support on the scale required". ⁴³

Manstein's Campaign (MAP 3):

Shortly after taking command Manstein assessed the situation facing Army Group Don and the German armies in the South as follows:

-The German LOCs for the entire southern wing ran through three critical choke points--at two crossings of the Dnieper River (Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye) and at Rostov. What made this situation even worse was that the larger Soviet armies were actually closer to these critical points than were many of Manstein's own forces who were receiving logistics support over them. In effect, the enemy had a shorter distance to go to sever the German LOCs than the Germans had to travel to to resupply over them. As such they represented potential decisive points.⁴⁴

-"The 'proper' Soviet course", as Manstein said, "was not hard to fathom."⁴⁵ It was to penetrate the stretched and thinned German defenses, attack to the Dnieper, then turn south against the Black Sea west of the Crimea. Such a scheme would sever the entire German southern wing from their logistical tail and leave Army Group Center with an assailable southern flank.⁴⁶ In effect, the enemy's operational intent was discernible and it was against this anticipated enemy intent that Manstein designed his campaign.

Based on this assessment, and the fact that by late December the German 6th Army was beyond hope of being successfully relieved, Manstein viewed the mission of his Army Group as the maintenance of the southern wing of the Eastern Front.⁴⁷ Being outnumbered, defending an extended front, having flanks that were held by weak Axis armies, and possessing no operational reserves, Manstein decided it was necessary to sequence his

operations, accepting a "system of stop gap measures"⁴⁸ at the tactical level "without ever sacrificing the basic formula"⁴⁹ at the operational level. This "basic formula" involved a campaign design with the following sequential operational phases. These phases can be viewed as intermediate end states that served as the pre-conditions for accomplishment of the campaign objective:

-Phase I. "Keep the rear of Army Group A free while it was being disengaged from the Caucasus front".⁵⁰

-Phase II. "Keep open the lines of communications of the German armies' southern wing and prevent it from being 'tied off'".⁵¹

-Phase III. Regain the operational initiative by delivering a counterblow to the enemy.⁵²

It is necessary to analyze briefly Manstein's operational "formula" (what we would call operational design) from the perspective of AirLand Battle doctrine to comprehend fully the lessons of this campaign that are relevant to us today. Implicit in operational phases I and II is denial to the attacker of operational depth within the defense--referred to by Tukhachevsky as operational containment. Manstein envisioned accomplishing this by a "series of stop gap measures" at the tactical level,⁵³ what we would refer to as sequenced tactical events and operations. Furthermore, while doing this it was necessary to generate and position operational level reserves--a benefit from accomplishing phase I and an implicit requirement for executing phase III. This reserve was then concentrated in time and space to defeat the strength of the Soviet offensive, thereby concluding the campaign with the German forces able to dictate the terms of future encounters. Focusing on the notion of sequencing

operations, then, Manstein's conduct of this campaign involved a multi-echelon approach to sequencing, i.e., sequencing tactical level operations within the framework of sequenced phases of the campaign. Each phase of the campaign had an associated condition or end state, and it was necessary to employ forces to produce this series of conditions.

THE EVENTS (MAPS 4-6):

In December of 1942, Army Group B, to the north of Army Groups Don and A, suffered under the heavy offensive of Soviet armies with the loss of the Rumanian, Italian, and Hungarian armies. A wide gap was created between Army Group B and Don Army Group and presented the situation whereby the Soviets could threaten to cut off the German southern wing by attacking Manstein's left flank.⁵⁴ Manstein, seeing this possibility and anticipating Soviet intentions, had to determine how to sequence further his operations without sacrificing the basic operational formula of his campaign. His concept involved the creation of mobile reserves for use in the threatened western portion of his sector. He accomplished this by shortening his extended front while at the same time covering the withdrawal of the Army Group A forces from the Caucasus.⁵⁵ In effect, Manstein had to balance the desired operational ends (defined by the sequenced phases I, II, III above) by employing the available means. This required him to employ his forces based not only on an anticipation of Soviet actions but even more important, the effects such employment would produce, i.e., anticipation of the results of Soviet/German tactical encounters. The art, then, was to "order" these effects in time and space within the

framework of the sequenced campaign conditions/phases. To do this, Manstein ordered Army Group Don to accomplish the following tasks to create the conditions of phase I of the campaign:

-4th Panzer Army: "South of the Lower Don it had to protect Army Group A's rear and at the same time keep its communications open;"⁵⁶

-AD Hollidt: "In the large bend of the Don and forwards of the Donetz . . . retard the enemy's advance north of the lower Don to such an extent that he could not cut off 4th Pz Army, and with it, Army Group A, by a thrust on Rostov from the East;"⁵⁷

-"Finally, the Army Group had to find ways and means of keeping open the lines of communications running to the Lower Dneiper in the west"⁵⁸.

During this phase of the campaign, even though defending across a severely overextended front, the 4th Pz Army fought an aggressive operational defense, employing the tactical offense as an integral part. Remaining true to Manstein's ideas regarding concentration, the 4th Pz Army fought by keeping "its forces close together...offering strong opposition at vital spots to deal the enemy a surprise blow whenever an opportunity presented itself."⁵⁹ Manstein attributes the success of this phase of the campaign to the ability of his subordinate commands to take a task and then exercise initiative and discretion in devising the means of execution with the available resources.⁶⁰ Not only was it necessary for Manstein to sequence the operations of his Army Group, but it was necessary for the Armies and Corps to sequence their operations in order to accomplish the assigned tasks which collectively produced and linked to the conditions associated with each phase of the campaign.

By mid January, Manstein had been successful at protecting the rear of Army Group A as it withdrew and keeping Rostov open for sustainment of Army Groups Don and A. He continued to fight a successful operational defense, shorten his front, and prepare for future operations.

Toward the end of January, STAVKA misread the intentions of the defending German Army Groups as conducting a strategic withdrawal and approved two large scale offensive operations--STAR and GALLOP.⁶¹ Operation STAR, to be conducted by the Voronezh FRONT, involved an attack toward Kursk with two armies and toward Kharkov with three armies. Both thrusts were to be made in single echelon and without operational reserves. The intent of the STAR Operation was to recapture Kharkov and Kursk and drive German forces as far west as possible. The GALLOP Operation would be conducted by the Southwest FRONT two days prior to STAR and would be the main effort of the renewed Soviet offensive. The intent of GALLOP was to attack southwest toward Starabelsk and swing south toward the Sea of Azov to cut off the withdrawing German armies. Additionally, it was to seize the crossings at Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye. Like the Voronezh Front, the Southwest Front was to attack in single echelon and without any type of operational pause subsequent to the recently completed December 42-Jan 43 offensive.⁶² Furthermore, the two Soviet FRONTS were attacking along diverging axis, not focusing their efforts and failing to achieve concentration against the Germans.

On 12 January "the Russians attacked where they had for days been expected to attack,"⁶³ hitting the Italian Eighth Army and the Hungarian Second Army and "within a few hours this entire sector had been ripped wide open."⁶⁴ Army Group B was tenuously attempting to protect Manstein's left flank.

On 27 January Manstein received command of the 1st Panzer Army from Army Group A to his south and immediately began withdrawing it to the west through Rostov to position it in depth to counter the anticipated Soviet exploitation of success against Army Group B. Meanwhile, an SS Panzer corps was forming around Kharkov which Manstein projected would be available for use by mid-February. Initial success of the Soviet's Southwest Front brought them to within 70 miles of the critical Dnieper crossings. After much discussion with Hitler, Manstein was given permission to withdraw AD Hollidt to the MIUS River and the 4th PZ Army from south of the DON and Rostov.⁶⁵ Manstein's intent remained focused on producing the conditions of phases I and II of his campaign and involved the employment and repositioning of his forces to deny the enemy offensives the opportunity of cutting his forces off from their LOCs. His concept for accomplishing this involved generating reserves from the 4th Pz Army by shortening his front and buying time until he could create operational reserves with the 1SS Corps and other subordinate commands. Not only was more time necessary for generating his reserve, but providing he was able to deny the attacker the ability to achieve and exploit the operational depth of the German defense, time could be used against the Russians by allowing them to overextend themselves offensively. This would then produce the conditions favorable for phase III of his campaign plan--the counterattack by his forming operational reserve. Accordingly, with Hitler's permission, Manstein began the execution of his plan and by 18 February AD Hollidt and 4th Pz Army were in positions along the MIUS River.

It was also during this period that the Voronezh Front was having success against Army Group B to Manstein's north. The situation in Army Group B became so tenuous that on 13 February all of Army Group B except

2nd Army was chopped to Manstein's Army Group, now renamed Army Group South. Although ordered by Hitler to retain the city of Kharkov in similar fashion as Stalingrad, AD Lanz evacuated the city on 15 February. Manstein now had command of all the forces that could have an effect on his anticipated counterattack.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, the Soviet Southwest Front, the offensive's main effort, had made good success against Manstein's center and had committed Popov's Mobile Group early in the operation. However, defending German units conducted some tenacious tactical defensive operations, particularly around the built up areas such as Kramatorsk and Slavyansk. Division level counterattacks by the Germans against the advancing Group Popov met with marginal success. However, this defense successfully denied the enemy the ability of exploiting their tactical penetration to achieve the desired operational depth into the German rear areas. Although by 20 February Soviet forces were only 15 miles from the critical Dnepropetrovsk crossing site and had successfully cut the rail line leading from it, the German tactical defense had successfully contained the Soviet offensive and created conditions favorable for the counterattack.⁶⁷

Focusing his energies on the destruction of the enemy force threatening the Dnieper crossings, Manstein launched his counterattack with the 4th Panzer Army on 18 February. His concept involved the use of AD Hollidt as an economy of force measure to continue containing the defensive front from Voroshilovgrad to the Sea of Azov; simultaneously, his operational reserve, the 1st and 4th Pz Armies, would conduct a concentric attack into the flanks and rear of the Soviet 6th Army, 1st Guards Army, and Group Popov. By 24 February the Southwest Front's offensive had disintegrated and the SS Pz Corps and 48th Pz Corps had linked up. Reactive efforts by

STAVKA to save the Southwest Front and elements of the Voronezh Front were piecemeal and met with equal disaster. As manstein continued his counteroffensive towards Kharkov, the city was captured by the Germans on 14 March. By 18 March, just before the spring thaws, the SS Panzer Corps recaptured the city of Belgorod, operationally consolidating the Army Group against the Soviets, and the campaign came to a close.⁶⁸

For the reasons stated earlier, Manstein's '42-'43 winter campaign is particularly useful for gaining insights into the sequencing of operations in the NATO environment today. Based on a synthesis of the theory presented in chapter 1 and Manstein's winter campaign in this chapter, the next chapter postulates a framework for sequencing operations within the NATO environment .

CHAPTER 3

This chapter presents a conceptual framework for use in describing and understanding the key considerations in sequencing operations to achieve the objectives of a campaign. It is derived from a synthesis of the theory presented in chapter 1 and the experiences of Manstein's '42-'43 winter campaign in Russia. This framework, although of utility with minor modifications to all theaters of war, is optimized for defensive operations in the NATO environment.

As described in chapter 2, Manstein's campaign demonstrated a multi-echelon approach to the sequencing of operations. His delineation of sequenced phases in the campaign served as the framework within which operations were conducted; then within each phase, tactical operations were further sequenced and synchronized by Manstein and his subordinate commanders. Key to the success of the campaign were the necessary linkages between campaign objectives, objectives of the specific phases, and the tactical operations within each phase. While the campaign objective established the final military end state, the phases can be viewed as conditions or intermediate end states, the creation of which was the object of the tactical operations within each phase. Manstein defined the intermediate end states and determined their necessary sequence to achieve the campaign objective. Additionally, he assigned and sequenced operational tasks to his forces, the accomplishment of which collectively produced the necessary intermediate end states. His subordinate commanders were then responsible for exercising their initiative in

executing and synchronizing their tactical operations to accomplish the assigned tasks and produce the desired intermediate end states.

Based on the conduct of Manstein's winter campaign in Russia, the following operational phases are postulated as a framework for sequencing operations within the context of an initially defensive campaign:

- See the enemy
- Contain
- Concentrate
- Counterattack
- Consolidate

Associated with each phase are discrete intermediate end states and conditions. In no way are phases differentiated as involving purely offensive or defensive type operations. In fact, within any one phase there will be the simultaneous use of offense and defense, e.g., although the object of the containment phase is defensive, this is achieved by a combination of offensive and defensive tactical level actions. Additionally, although these phases generally flow in succession, in practice the phases overlap in time to a degree, i.e., two or more phases can occur simultaneously. To clarify this, consider figure 1 (page 41).

Figure 1 depicts the relationship between the phases of the campaign over time. Shown on the vertical axis are the phases of the campaign with time represented by the horizontal axis. Taking the first and third phase as an example, the figure shows that one may have to begin concentrating forces for the counterattack before determining with certainty the enemy intent and center of gravity (see the enemy). The remaining sections of this chapter discuss the phases of the operational framework, their

interrelationships, and considerations for sequencing operations within each phase.

SEE THE ENEMY:

It is during this phase of the campaign that we attempt to identify both the enemy's intent and his center of gravity. Although initially a reasoned professional judgment during the planning of the campaign, it becomes the focus for operational intelligence once the campaign begins. Since initial force dispositions as well as the concept of the campaign are based on this initial judgment, it is necessary to seek verification through intelligence as early in the campaign as possible. Von Moltke's caution that poor initial operational dispositions are almost impossible to overcome once battle commences is still appropriate.

Manstein's campaign provides some important insights. Manstein clearly focused his campaign on the destruction of the attacking Soviet armies rather than the holding of terrain. Although not couching it in such terms, Manstein apparently considered the Soviet's center of gravity as being their armor heavy mobile groups and corps.⁶⁹ Equally important, he was able to fathom the enemy intent early enough to allow him to conduct operations to counter it. Finally, not only did Manstein understand his vulnerability rested with the Italian and Rumanian armies to his north, but also he anticipated that the Russians understood this and would attempt to exploit that vulnerability to get to the decisive points along his LOCs and indirectly destroy the German center of gravity in Russia--the German southern wing. Accordingly, his operational scheme was to allow the enemy center of gravity to weaken and expose itself for a counterattack. Important here, is that although Manstein anticipated the enemy intent, it

was not with certainty nor was he certain how the enemy would accomplish that intent, yet he simultaneously conducted the containment and initiated the concentration phases.

In a NATO scenario, this phase would involve the corps fighting their GDP forward defense to gain tactical intelligence and to deny the attacking enemy immediate tactical success. The thrust of the operational intelligence effort is toward future enemy actions and ends. Here, the Army Groups focus their intelligence effort against the enemy second operational echelon as an indicator of the enemy's future actions. There is a tempered quest for corroboration or disproof of the anticipated enemy's intent.

This quest for greater certainty about the enemy, however, is tempered by the realities of time and space on the battlefield. More specifically, since the operational level involves moving larger bodies of troops over larger distances than does the tactical level of war (eg., divisions and corps versus battalions and brigades), there is more time required for an operational decision to have an impact on the battlefield. Consequently, the element of anticipation and acceptance of uncertainty are much more important and integral to operational decision making and planning. A desire for great certainty can lead to paralysis in the decision making process and result in a decision being made too late to have the desired impact when executed. For example, had Manstein delayed by less than one day the decision to begin shifting and concentrating elements of 4th Pz Army north, there is good reason to believe his Army Group would have been encircled. The art is to achieve a delicate balance between certainty and risk as one decides when to begin the next sequence of the operation. Flexibility is an important characteristic in this regard.

Flexibility to adjust a plan or action recognizes the reality of the nature of war, i.e., that the opponent can and will exercise a free will and pursue a course of action not necessarily in accordance with the one our projected sequence of actions anticipated. Furthermore, it is necessary that we be able to adjust our plan and execution in the event that we have incorrectly anticipated the effects of friendly tactical actions thereby invalidating the planned sequence of actions. A key tool for allowing an operational command to exercise flexibility and act with agility is the branch plans to the original campaign plan.

Branch plans allow an operational command to conserve time in the planning process which expands the amount of lead time available to begin implementation of the plan. In effect, branch plans have the potential of allowing an operational command to continue to act and set the terms of battle rather than react to unanticipated battlefield events. Such unanticipated events need not be limited to friendly force failures or setbacks. They can involve friendly tactical successes. An example of this was the Phillipines campaign in 1944. Because of previous tactical effects that surpassed those originally anticipated, MacArthur and Nimitz recommended to the JCS that it would not be necessary to follow the planned sequence of events to take Yap, Talaud, and Sarangani in Mindanao, but that they could move directly to the Leyte Gulf operation.⁷⁰ They accordingly set the tempo and terms of battle and maintained the operational initiative.

In summary, identification of the enemy operational intent and center of gravity is the product of this phase of the campaign. Based on time and space considerations the operational decision maker then balances certainty and risk as he sequences operations to counter the enemy intent and destroy

his center of gravity. The See The Enemy phase of the operational framework generally continues throughout the duration of the campaign as refinements are made and greater certainty is achieved.

OPERATIONAL CONTAINMENT:

This phase involves conducting tactical operations with a desired intermediate end state of denying the enemy operational success. According to Tukhachevsky, this involves denying the enemy the opportunity of translating any tactical successes into operational success by exploiting a penetration to operational depth.

Key during this phase of a campaign is the shaping of the battlefield based on an anticipation of the enemy intent. This involves conducting "deep operations to isolate current battles (tactical level) and to influence where, when, and against whom future battles will be fought."⁷¹ Influencing these future battles involves employing forces now in anticipation of their effects on the enemy in the future. This requires the visualization of what the battle is going to look like when it is over. More importantly, one must decide how he wants the battle to look when it is over. He must answer the tough question "What do I want this battle to accomplish"? The answer to this question defines success for that particular tactical operation. "Winning the battle" may not, from an operational perspective, be "success". In fact, the mind set of "winning battles" is an impediment to operational art because it fails to recognize the interconnectivity and linkages between tactical effects and operational objectives. Kamenev, commander of the Soviet Army from 1919-1924 stated:

"In spite of all victorious fights before the battle, the fate of the campaign will be decided in the very last battle.... Interim defeats in a campaign, however serious they may be, subsequently will be viewed as "individual episodes." ... In the warfare of modern large armies, defeat of the enemy results from the sum of continuous and planned victories on all fronts, successfully completed one after another and interconnected in time... The uninterrupted conduct of operations is the main condition for victory. " 72

The operational containment phase requires the planner first to define success for each of his tactical echelons and then provide the resources necessary to produce that success...and no more. Since the intermediate end state desired from the containment phase of the campaign is denial of enemy penetration to operational depth, acceptance of economy of force and potential tactical penetrations may be necessary. The operational planner must strike a balance between providing sufficient combat power for tactical echelons to achieve the effects he has defined as success, while simultaneously and/or sequentially (again depending on time/space considerations) preparing for operational success.

A key part of this preparation for operational success involves the conduct of deep operations, i.e., the employment of combat power in the current battle for an anticipated future payoff. It involves a balance between the competing demands of the present tactical battle and the provision of means (to include combat and logistical) through time and space to achieve the conditions deemed necessary for operational success. In this regard, there are two key components of deep operations that require delicate balancing. The first involves the employment of force now to weaken, expose, or unbalance the enemy center of gravity, thereby creating

the conditions for destruction at a later time. The second involves the posturing and concentration of force now (The Concentration Phase) for decisive employment at some later time against the weakened enemy center of gravity (the Counterattack Phase). Common to both is the need to anticipate the decisive places and times on the battlefield.

In the first case, this anticipation involves conducting and sequencing operations that will "create tactical conditions that may shape themselves to a crisis, thereby creating a general setting that will eventually produce a decisive action."⁷³ It then becomes the anticipated time and location of this general setting toward which the concentration of means are oriented (the second case of deep operations). This notion of anticipation of the decisive places and times on the battlefield can be likened to the game of chess. Each opponent, by sequencing the play of his pieces, attempts to create places and times on the board where he will have a relative superiority over his opponent, with the ultimate aim of exposing his opponent's center of gravity (the queen). This is exactly what Manstein did in his winter campaign. He used tactical "stop-gap measures" to create conditions for a Russian crisis (the overextension and exposure of the Russian mobile armor forces) to produce a decisive action (their destruction).

CONCENTRATION:

*"To attain victory over the enemy one must not dissipate his forces and means equally across the entire front, but the main efforts must be concentrated on the most important axis or sector and at the right time in order to form there the necessary superiority over the enemy in men and weapons."*⁷⁴

The concentration phase of the framework involves the posturing of combat power in anticipation of the exposure of the enemy's center of gravity for destruction. Alternatively, it may only present an opportunity for friendly forces to weaken the enemy center of gravity, thereby possibly delaying a decision until a future time. The important point is, however, that it is for operations against the enemy center of gravity, whether attacked directly or indirectly, that means are concentrated. Accordingly, the "See the Enemy" phase of the framework continues simultaneously as past anticipations and projections are refined and updated. Likewise, the Containment phase is conducted simultaneously to maintain the necessary intermediate end state of denying the enemy the opportunity of translating tactical successes into operational success. In this regard, there exists the dilemma between using scarce resources for containing the enemy while at the same time concentrating resources for the counterattack phase.

There will be tremendous temptation to allow the current tactical level battle to siphon off the resources being concentrated in time and space for future operations. In the NATO environment this temptation will be exacerbated as the forces of one nation involved in the current tactical level operations become attrited while another nation's forces posture themselves for future operations. The fact is that operational art requires the acceptance of risk that transcends that known at the tactical level.

This risk may require the acceptance of tenuous tactical situations, such as Manstein accepted in his winter campaign in order to posture for the desired end state. Yet the need to avoid "knee jerk" reactions to tactical level events and remain focused on the operational scheme of attacking the enemy center of gravity must drive the sequencing of operations during the

containment and concentration phases of the campaign. Such potentially risky tactical situations are acceptable if in their occurrence, the sum of events is advancing toward the conditions friendly forces have decided are necessary for operational success. As Tukhachevsky said, you don't need to win every tactical level encounter. . . you need to win the campaign.

Deception operations can play a significant role in helping the operational planner "stretch" his scarce resources. Deceiving the enemy as to the size, location, and intent of subordinate echelons and key elements of combat power can prove decisive in resolving the dilemma between the concentration and containment phases. Additionally, counterreconnaissance to deny the enemy accurate or timely operational intelligence will not only aid in protecting the force but, coupled with deception operations, also has the potential of permitting the friendly force to achieve tactical and operational surprise.

Another point to make regarding the concentration phase is the impact technology has and will continue to have. As weapons systems become more devastating with increased range and accuracy, it is possible and desirable to concentrate combat power from dispersed locations. It is necessary to understand then, that the concept of concentration refers to bringing together in time and space the effects of the means rather than the means themselves. The potential impact of this concept is that the concentration phase could be shortened and the same resources conduct the containment and counterattack phases almost simultaneously.

COUNTERATTACK:

This phase of the sequencing of events involves the use of Clausewitz's "flashing sword of vengeance" and, in theory, marks the operational defensive culminating point. It is during this phase of the campaign that the means that have been concentrated are brought to bear at the decisive point and time. The target is the enemy force center of gravity--either its destruction or severe weakening for future destruction.

During this phase there are at least two competing demands for the limited means available. First is the need to continue the operational containment of the attacking enemy force. Included in this phase is the requirement to continue to conduct deep operations to isolate the battlefield in time and space to create the conditions for future success. Second is the need to provide adequate means to the counterattack to ensure success. While many of the key decisions affecting this dilemma are made prior to the initiation of the counterattack phase, modern airpower possesses some unique capabilities for the operational planner.

Airpower represents a key tool for the operational commander in meeting the demands of near simultaneous operations. Not only does it have the capability of supplementing and complementing the available ground combat power, but it can turn around rapidly to deliver that combat power to another area. Its flexibility and speed of employment are unmatched by ground forces and therefore represent a key means for the operational commander of concentrating combat power in time and space to achieve the conditions required for operational success.

The notion of concentration of superior combat power relative to the enemy to achieve decisive effects in the counterattack is consistent with all

theoreticians and born out in all historical military campaigns. As Clausewitz pointed out, concentration involves more than just superiority of numbers. In this regard, the Wass de Czege power model is a useful device, particularly from a conceptual standpoint, for an operational commander to use to assess his level of concentration for the counterattack. The collective elements of firepower, maneuver, protection, and leadership⁷⁵ more accurately reflect the level of concentration an operational commander has achieved at a time and place than do pure numbers. As such, this model can serve as an intuitive aid to an operational commander as he anticipates his potential combat power or level of concentration vis-a-vis the enemy at the decisive points and times.

There is another important consideration for sequencing as it relates to the counterattack phase and that is the notion of counterattack, recock, counterattack again. Unfortunately, our army has extremely limited experience in conducting a counterattack with a large mass of forces and then reposturing them to counterattack again.*⁷⁶ It is, however, a potentially realistic requirement in the NATO environment given the Soviet's doctrine (and supporting force structure) of multiple operational and strategic echelons. Such a topic is something that can not be taken lightly and should be a subject for a future monograph.

A final point regarding the counterattack phase involves anticipation of the results of the counterattack. Here the campaign planner must war game the questions "what if. . . then what?". Sequels to the campaign plan provide operations plans that address these potential contingencies and enable operational flexibility. As such, they facilitate the timely exploitation of success as well as the rapid response to setbacks. The sequel to the counterattack falls into the phase entitled "consolidation".

CONSOLIDATION:

The final phase within the campaign involves the establishment of a favorable end state either for war termination or as the start state for a new campaign. In either case it is a state that has been envisioned and anticipated in the past and toward which combat and sustainment operations have been conducted throughout the previous phases of the campaign. Of particular significance during this phase are the topics of strategic-operational interface and the balancing of military ends and means.

During this phase the results of the dynamics and interrelationships between the numerous strategic means (military, economic, diplomatic, political, social, and psychological) that a nation can use to achieve its desired policy objectives become increasingly manifest. It is a strategic imperative that to achieve the national policy objectives quickly and at least cost, these means must be sequenced and synchronized by the National Command Authority. If this has not been done throughout the course of the campaign, then it is unlikely that a nation will be capable of translating any military success short of total enemy destruction into achievement of policy objectives. Although falling within the context of the strategic level of war, this involves major implications for the operational commander. Hence, his should be an informed and key voice in the strategic level decision making process not just during the consolidation phase but throughout the war.

Refocusing back at the operational level, the consolidation phase of the campaign involves balancing ends and means to produce the desired military end state. Maintenance of the operational initiative, with an end state clearly favoring friendly forces who are postured to continue Operations if necessary, provides the policy makers and military commanders the

necessary freedom of action to achieve the war's policy objectives. In this regard, the relationship between the theoretical concepts of offensive culminating point⁷⁷ and operational pause⁷⁸ is useful and warrants a brief discussion.

The utility of the offensive culminating point is as a condition that is anticipated and toward which operations are conducted so that one can take an operational pause from a position of strength. Manstein's campaign provides an excellent example of this. Recall that the Russians launched their February offensives without having taken an operational pause subsequent to their December-January offensives, overextended themselves, exceeded their offensive culminating point, and exposed themselves to a German counterattack. This is contrasted with Manstein who concluded the counteroffensive before reaching his culminating point and temporarily transitioned to the defense while maintaining the operational initiative. Furthermore, he exploited the effects of weather on operations by timing his operational pause to coincide with the spring thaws. Hence, the utility of the operational pause is as a method for balancing ends and means in a controlled relationship to one's culminating point.⁷⁹ This again involves the imprecise art of anticipation.

Finally, during the consolidation phase, there are at least three competing demands that require the sequenced employment of available means to produce a favorable end state. First, there may be the need to complete the destruction of the enemy's center of gravity as a followup to an encirclement operation or a counterattack that fell short of anticipated results. The German concept of "Kesselschlacht", whereby the encircling force assumes the tactical defense against the encircled force and exploits the advantages of the defense is a means of economizing resources for use

elsewhere. This elsewhere could involve the simultaneous requirement to conduct deep operations against a follow-on echelon (such as is often postulated for the NATO environment) to isolate the reduction of encircled forces from outside enemy forces. Finally, there may exist the requirement for the employment of resources to defend against the attacking enemy follow-on echelon. Based on considerations of time, space, and friendly deployment capabilities this requirement may be met by the sequential employment of those forces committed to reducing the encircled enemy forces or those being used to isolate the encircled force. Regardless, from an operational perspective it becomes necessary for a recycling of the phases of the operational framework, i.e. see the enemy, containment, concentration, counterattack, and consolidation.

As described, the framework serves as a conceptual model to assist in describing and understanding the complexity of sequencing operations to achieve campaign objectives. As is evident, a major aspect of this is the need to match ends with means based on anticipated outcomes and the linkage of this to the desired end state. The anticipation involves that of enemy intentions and center of gravity as well as the effects of the collision of opposing forces and wills at points and times on the battlefield. It is this element of anticipation and the associated uncertainty and risk that makes the sequencing of operations within a campaign an art and not a science.

CONCLUSION

During the course of this paper we have examined the concept of sequencing defensive operations from both a theoretical and historical perspective. From this analysis an operational framework was postulated and considerations for sequencing operations within the context of this framework were discussed. This framework is composed of five sequential phases which possess varying degrees of simultaneity based on the impact of the battlefield factors of time and space on military means. These phases are "see the enemy", "contain", "concentrate", "counterattack", and "consolidate".

Additionally, it was suggested that these phases delineate intermediate end states or conditions that must occur for achievement of the final campaign objective. These intermediate end states then serve as the end toward which all tactical operations are further sequenced and synchronized within that specific phase.

Sequencing operations to attain campaign objectives is a complex and imprecise affair. The interactions of ends and means within time and space and in an environment of chaos and uncertainty makes one question if there could possibly be any "method to the madness". It was not the purpose of this paper to present the solution; but rather to provide one view that may further stimulate continued dialogue on an element critical to the business of war-fighting.

SEE THE ENEMY

CONTAIN

CONCENTRATE

COUNTERATTACK

CONSOLIDATE

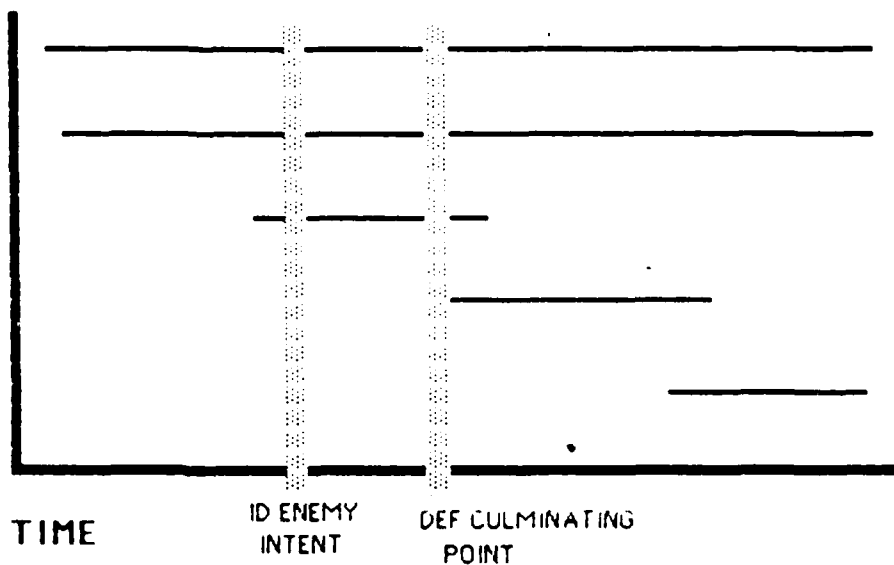
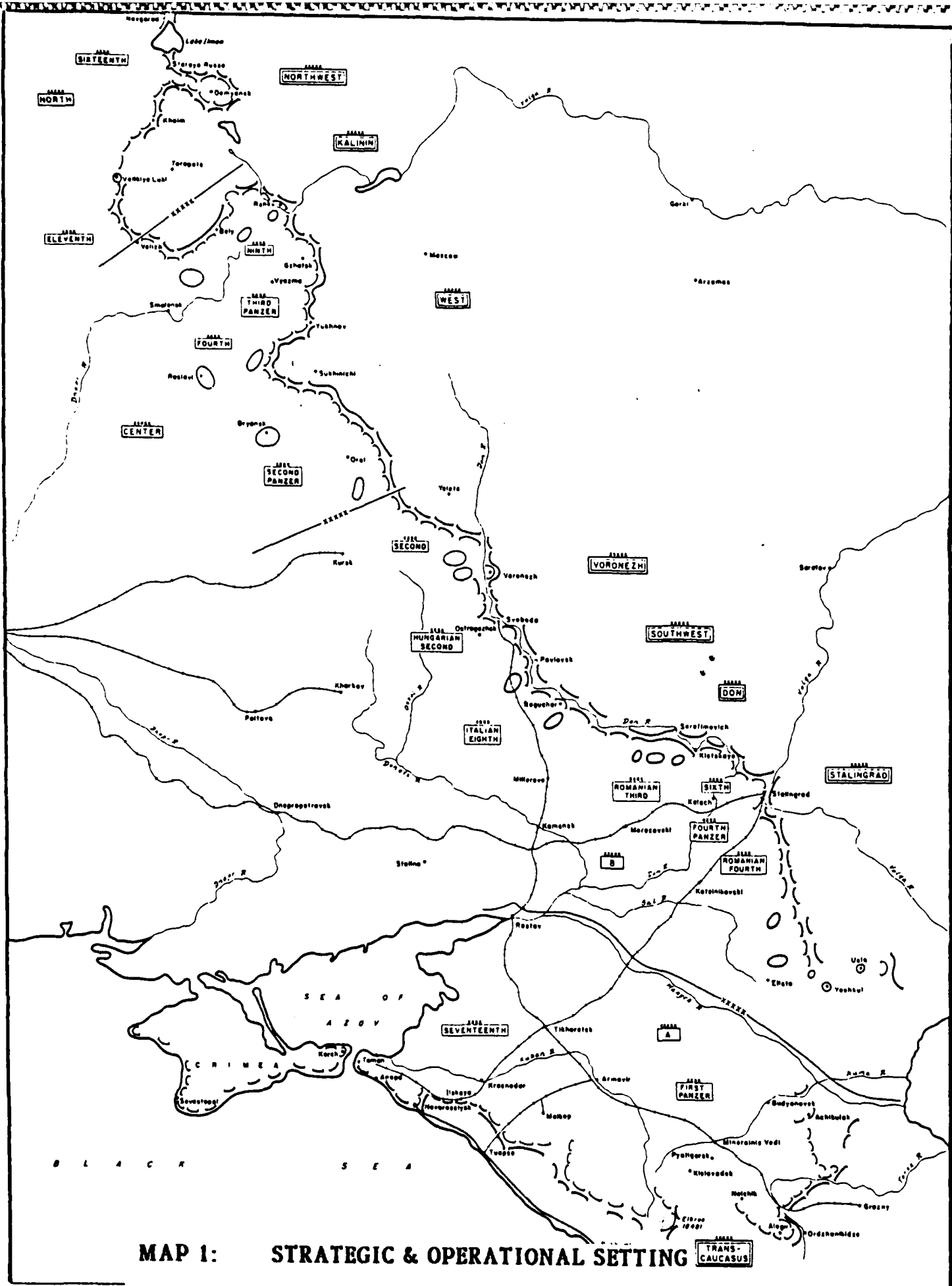
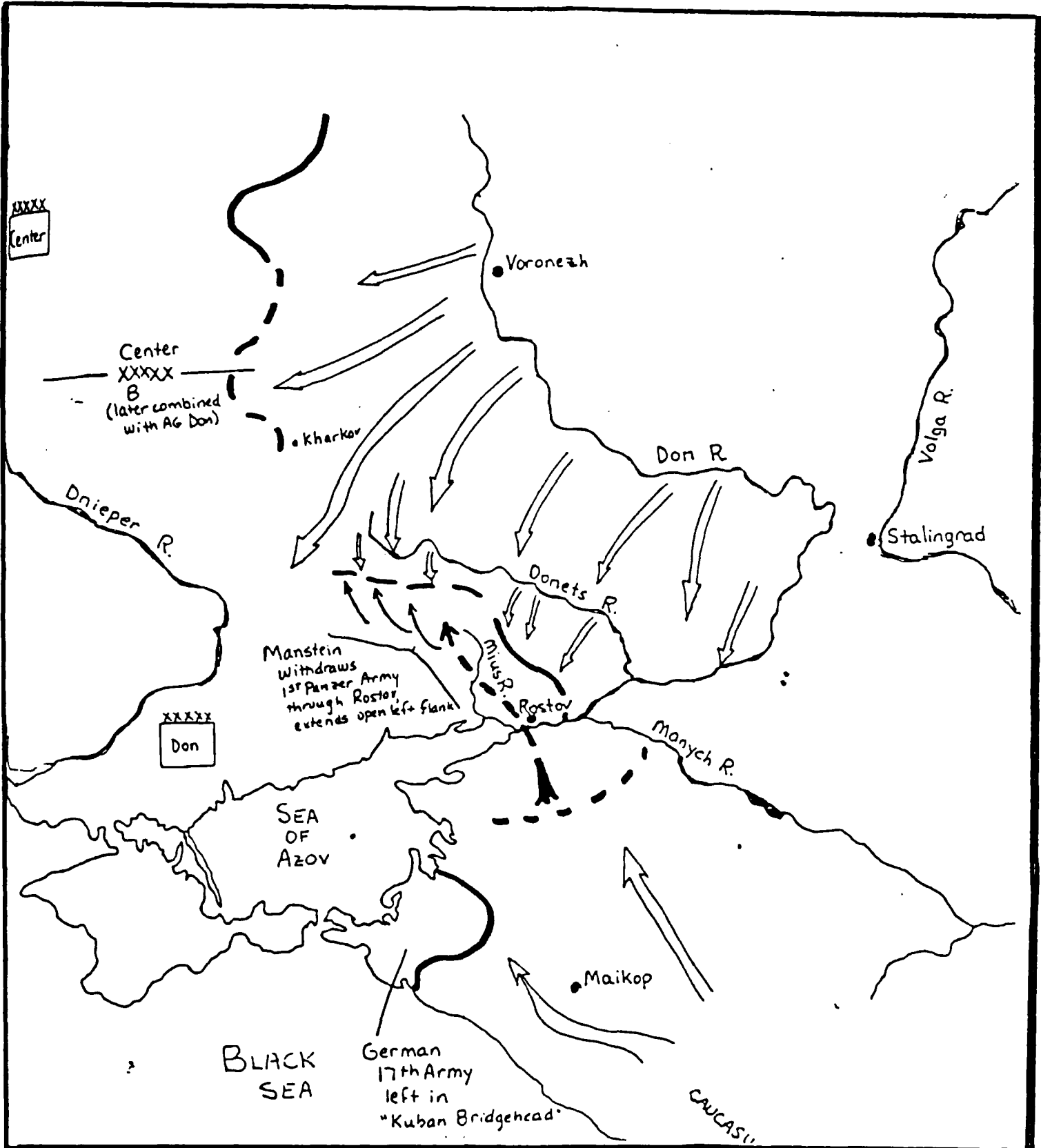


FIGURE 1: Operational Framework Phases



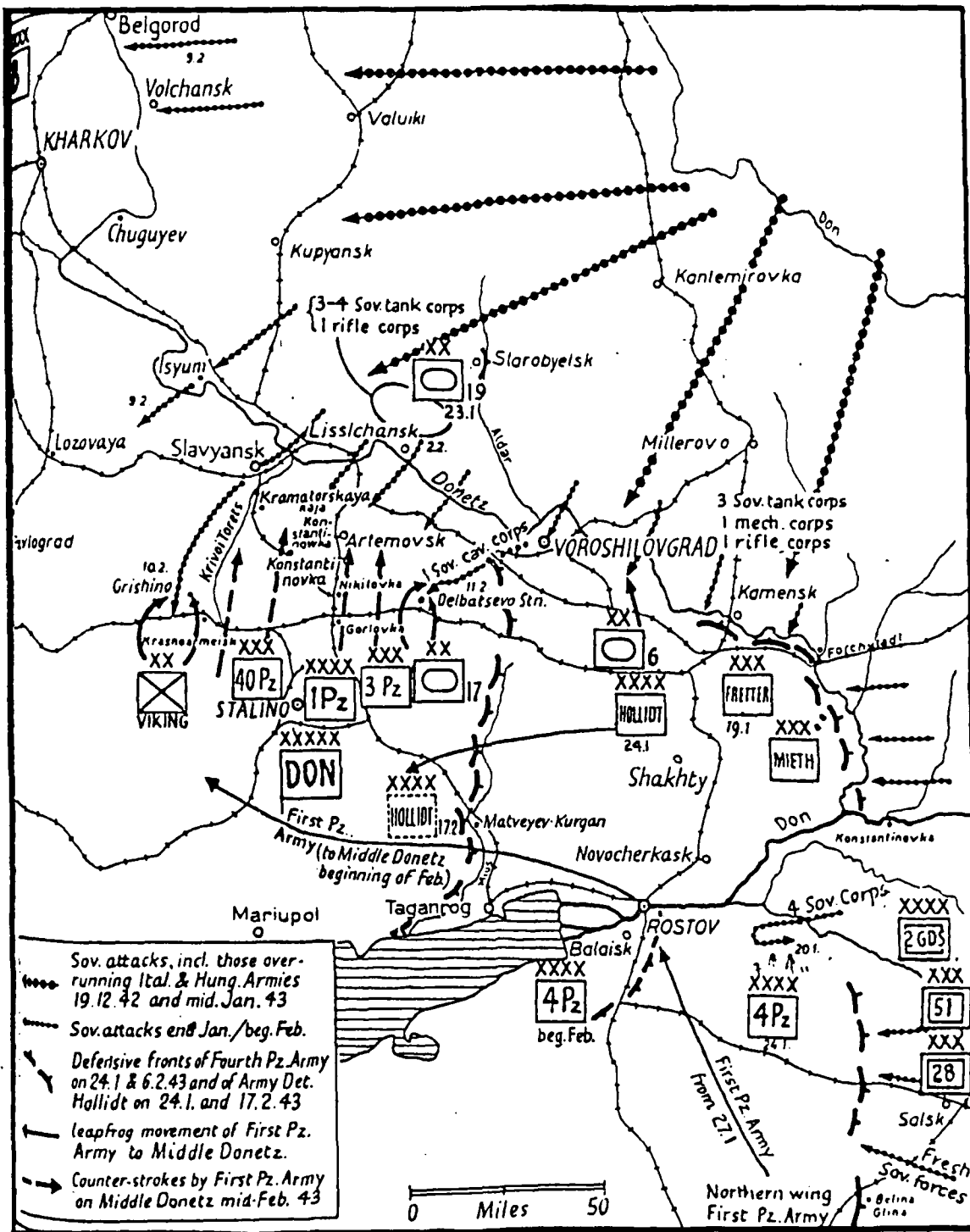
MAP 1: STRATEGIC & OPERATIONAL SETTING

(from: The German Campaign in Russia--Planning and Operations)

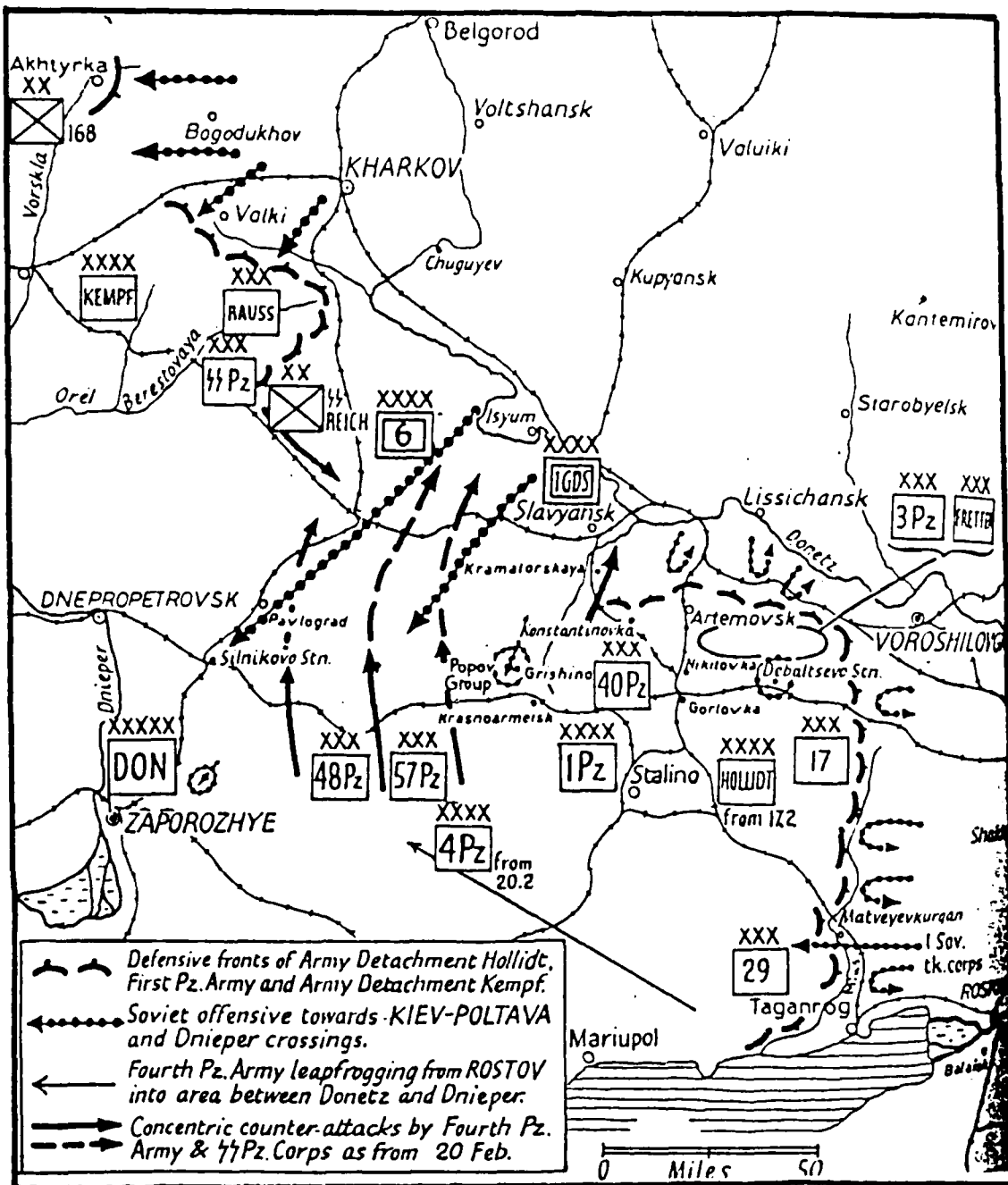


MAP 3: GENERAL CONCEPT OF MANSTEIN'S PLAN

(from: Standing Fast: Soviet Defensive Doctrine On the Russian Front During the Second World War)



MAP 4: OPERATIONS LATE DEC 42-MID FEB 43
(from: Lost Victories)



MAP 5: OPERATIONS MID FEB 43-MAR 43
(from: Lost Victories)

APPENDIX B

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK IN A LOW INTENSITY ENVIRONMENT

Events of the past forty years strongly suggest that low intensity conflict (LIC) represents the more prevalent and likely form of war for the foreseeable future. There is much debate regarding the subject of LIC, particularly as it relates to defining the military's role in such conflicts. That the subject is tremendously complex is born out by our inability to reach consensus on a definition of LIC. Nonetheless, lessons from the history of low intensity conflicts suggest that the social dimension is generally more dominant than in a conventional style war. Furthermore, that success is contingent upon viewing LIC as involving an interlocking system of actions in the political, economic, military, and psychological arenas. As such, developing the campaign plan to achieve our strategic objective within such an environment is much more difficult than for a NATO type conventional environment. The need to sequence and synchronize actions within and between each of these arenas becomes a major challenge. The challenge is further compounded by the fact that such conflicts are generally protracted in nature. What follows is a brief discussion of how the postulated Operational framework applies in a low intensity environment. The scenario involves an insurgency against a government friendly to the US.

SEE THE ENEMY

Important during this phase of the campaign is the determination of the nature of the conflict. This requires aggressive and effective use of intelligence and in many ways is similar in concept to intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). However, this IPB transcends the purely military arena and includes the economic, political, and psychological arenas. Generic priority intelligence requirements may include:

- what is the root cause of the conflict?
- what are the dissatisfiers around which support for the opposition coalesces?
- who is the opposition? their leaders? their sponsors?
- how is the opposition supported?
- what is the opposition's capabilities? what could be their strategy?
what could be their targets?
- what are the opposition's vulnerabilities (political, economic, psychological, and military)?

The purpose of this phase of the campaign is to comprehend the true nature of the conflict so that subsequent phases of the campaign can be correctly focused. From this understanding one should be able to identify a center(s) of gravity against which all other operations are oriented.

CONTAIN

The purpose of this phase of the campaign is to prevent the opposition from achieving a rapid, uncontested, victory. It involves actions to stabilize the situation and keep it from worsening (both from a reality and perception standpoint). Actions within this phase of the campaign could involve:

- use of US military for low profile security assistance.
- use of US economic aid to stabilize the nation's economy.
- use of psychological operations to diffuse the strength of the opposition; to enhance the strength of the friendly government.
- use of international diplomacy and politics to strengthen the friendly government and to undermine the opposition and its support/sponsor.
- use of US support for some emergency nation building, i.e., to eliminate some high profile dissatisfiers thereby gaining credibility for the friendly government.

It appears that a key ingredient during this phase of the campaign is the maintenance of a low profile by the US. The need for the friendly government to be bolstered, yet appear credible, legitimate, and capable of acting to correct some dissatisfiers is fundamental to the eventual success of the campaign.

CONCENTRATE

It is during this phase that the resources necessary to destroy the opposition's center(s) of gravity are husbanded. Indigenous military forces, US military forces, economic, psychological, and political means are mobilized and events placed in motion so that the effects of these are brought to bear and the decisive times and places. Actions during this phase of the campaign could include such things as:

- positioning of US carrier task force near friendly nation.
- positioning of US AWACS within operating radius.
- political workings to focus or divert international attention at the desired time.
- economic actions (not necessarily limited to the indigenous nation but may include opposition's sponsor, US allies, and friendly nation) that will generate support for the friendly nation while generating difficult if not crisis conditions for the opposition.
- development of infrastructure to support operations across the board (military, economic, political, psychological).
- develop plans and husband means to attack major dissatisfiers.

The basic thrust during this phase of the campaign is the "laying of the groundwork" to allow the friendly government to take the offensive in all arenas (not just the military) against the opposition.

COUNTERATTACK

It is during this phase of the campaign that the effects of ongoing and new actions are brought to bear against the opposition with the intent of destroying his center(s) of gravity. Key is that the counterattack phase involves more than military action, but includes a major offensive in the political, economic, and psychological arenas. Also important is that it is the effects of actions taken in these arenas that is concentrated here. In some cases, particularly in the political and economic arenas, actions may have been ongoing for some time. Accordingly, anticipation as to the effects and timing for such effects plays an important role. Such anticipation is fundamental to synchronizing and sequencing the actions not only within and between arenas, but also between phases of the campaign.

CONSOLIDATE

The final phase of the campaign involves the phased reduction of the US role in the campaign. In effect, it is like "weening" the friendly nation from the US. As the friendly government becomes increasingly stable in each arena, the US role can be reduced. It appears that the last US support that should be withdrawn is intelligence. Once again, the need to continue to "see the enemy" throughout the campaign is critical to correctly determining the nature of the conflict and the degree of success of previous actions.

ENDNOTES

¹ FM 100-5, Operations, (May 1986), Washington, D.C., p 10.

² AirLand Battle Briefing Slides, School of Advanced Military Studies, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, p 8.

³ These terms are defined as:

Operational objective: What the military means are to accomplish.

Deploying: Moving military means to and within the theater of operations.

Employing: Using the military means within the theater of operations to bring about decision vis-a-vis the enemy.

Sustaining: Providing the necessary logistical support for the military means.

⁴ David M. Glantz, "The Nature of Soviet Operational Art", Parameters, (Spring 1985) p 5.

⁵ Ibid, p 5.

⁶ Ibid, p 4.

⁷ M. N. Tuckhachevsky, "New Problems in Warfare", 1931, Moscow, USSR, reprinted in Readings in Soviet Operational Art, 5 January 1987, US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, Ks., p 27.

⁸ Ibid, p 29.

⁹ Ibid, p 14.

¹⁰ There is an important distinction between deep attack and deep operations in US Army AirLand Battle Doctrine. When we refer to deep attack, we are concerned with attacking enemy forces forward of the FLOT that are not in contact with friendly forces. The purpose of such attacks is to attrit enemy resources that are forward of the FLOT that have the potential of influencing the current battle. This then gives to friendly forces an advantage that is realized in the current battle. As such, "deep attack" has a spatial or geographic connotation. An example of deep attack would be counterfire by friendly artillery. Alternatively, deep operations refers to conducting an operation now to gain an anticipated future friendly force advantage. Accordingly, "deep operations" has a time connotation. An example of a deep operation would be the use of combat power to delay the arrival of a Soviet follow-on echelon force so that friendly forces in contact could complete the destruction of the initial echelon and have sufficient time to posture to defeat the follow-on echelon before its arrival.

¹¹ Ibid, p 17.

¹² Ibid, p29.

¹³ Ibid, p 7.

¹⁴ Ibid, p 19.

- 15 Ibid, p 19.
- 16 Ibid, p 11.
- 17 Ibid, p 13.
- 18 Ibid, p 26.
- 19 Ibid, p 26.
- 20 Ibid, p 16.
- 21 Ibid, p 16.
- 22 V. YE. Savkin, "Operational Art and Tactics", 1972, Moscow. Translated and published by the US Air Force, p 266.
- 23 Carl von Clausewitz, On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, New Jersey, 1976, p 143.
- 24 Ibid, p142.
- 25 Ibid, p 204.
- 26 Ibid, p 135.
- 27 Ibid, p 135.
- 28 Ibid, p 213.
- 29 Ibid, p 213.
- 30 Ibid, pp 595-596.
- 31 FM 100-5, p 179.
- 32 Clausewitz, p 596.
- 33 Ibid, p 597.
- 34 Baron De Jomini, The Art of War, translated by G. H. Mendell, originally published in 1862, Philadelphia, p 78.
- 35 Ibid, p 78.
- 36 Ibid, p 79.
- 37 Ibid, p 79.
- 38 Ibid, p 162.
- 39 F.W. Von Mellenthin, Panzer Battles, (Ballantine Books, New York, 1984), pp 192-194.
- 40 David Downing, The Devil's Virtuoso: German Generals at War 1040-5, (St Martin's Press, New York, 1977), p 138.
- 41 David M. Glantz, "From the Don to the Dnepr: A Study of Soviet Offensive Operations, Dec 1942-Aug 1943", US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, p 15.
- 42 Lawrence L. Izzo, "An Analysis of Manstein's Winter Campaign on the Russian Front, 1942-43", US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, p 7.
- 43 Downing, p 141.
- 44 Izzo, p 5.
- 45 Downing, p 138.
- 46 Ibid, p 138.

- 47 Erich von Manstein, Lost Victories. (Presidio Press, Novato, California, 1982), p 375.
- 48 Ibid, p 375.
- 49 Ibid, p 375.
- 50 Manstein, p 375.
- 51 Ibid, p 375.
- 52 Ibid, p 375.
- 53 Ibid, p 375.
- 54 Ibid, p 379.
- 55 Ibid, p 377-379.
- 56 Ibid, p 379.
- 57 Ibid, p 379.
- 58 Ibid, p 380.
- 59 Ibid, p 386.
- 60 Ibid, p 382.
- 61 Glantz, p 180.
- 62 Ibid, pp 101-105; also Izzo, p 29.
- 63 MS # T 15, 1947, p 66.
- 64 Ibid, p 66.
- 65 Izzo, p 33.
- 66 Manstein, pp 420-421; also Izzo, p 35.
- 67 Izzo, p 39.
- 68 Izzo, pp 41-45.
- 69 Izzo, p 62.
- 70 M. Hamlin Cannon, Leyte: The Return to the Philippines. (Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1954), p 9.
- 71 FM 100-5, p 19.
- 72 Glantz, "The Nature of Soviet Operational Art", p 61.
- 73 Willoughby, Charles Andrew, Maneuver In War. reprinted by the Art of War Colloquim, US Army War College, Carlisle, Pa. November 1983. Originally published by The Military Service Publishing Co., Harrisburg, Pa. 1939. p43.
- 74 Savkin, p 201.
- 75 Huba Wass de Czege, "Understanding and Developing Combat Power", US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, 10 February, 1984, pp13-15.
- 76 Although the US Army possesses limited practical experience, this author has had the opportunity of participating in several war games and map exercises that provided opportunities for drawing some

lessons regarding counterattacks involving encirclement operations. Observations follow:

- The penetration to begin the encirclement should be made at an enemy weakness and not point of strength. Otherwise, attacking forces can not achieve the speed nor early maneuver space necessary to employ their full combat power against the enemy. A point of weakness can be created by deception and avoidance of obvious penetration points. Linked to this is the element of surprise which certainly multiplies the effect. The direction of the attack, time, skillful use of terrain and meteorological conditions, and concealment of concentration of forces contribute to achieving this surprise.

- Once a penetration forms, attacking forces must maintain a high tempo by continually seeking points of weakness by fixing and bypassing enemy forces. Again, the need to gain maneuver space for follow-on attacking forces is the primary aim of the first echelon attacker in the penetration.

- Destruction of the enemy forces within a pocket should begin even before the encirclement is complete. This of course is contingent upon the amount of forces available to the attacker, but such an approach seems to have merit. First, it maintains a high tempo, presenting the enemy within the pocket with a changing and fluid situation, thereby degrading his ability to conduct a coherent and correct counter. Secondly, destruction operations within the pocket actually secure increased freedom of maneuver for the encircling force by tying down enemy forces which might otherwise attempt to counter the encirclement. Thirdly, it allows for the simultaneous employment of all the attackers combat power. Lastly, such an approach follows the logic that "you either kill them now or kill them later, so you may as well start now and get it done sooner".

- It appears that one of the better ways to destroy the encircled forces is to isolate them into separate elements and then use massed fires (air is especially effective) rather than maneuver and close combat. This approach reduces friendly casualties and accomplishes the destruction much faster.

- The AirLand Battle tenet of depth is extremely important as we decide how to reduce the encircled enemy forces. The encircled forces have to be sufficiently destroyed within a time constraint so that the defense can be reestablished to meet the 2nd operational echelon. As this author sees it,

the primary operative tenet is depth (resources, space, and time). In an attempt to elucidate this point, consider the following perspective: We gain increased depth of resources by minimizing the use of maneuver forces in reducing the pocket and maximizing the use of massed fires (air, army aviation, artillery, MLRS). We gain increased depth of space by having the maneuver forces reestablish the defense on terrain that is textbook favorable, forward of the encircled forces. We gain increased depth of time in that now we have more time to reduce the enemy forces in the pocket. Additionally, the encircled enemy forces will now not be capable of affecting friendly forces involved in the defensive battle against the 2nd operational echelon. In effect, we have expanded the tactical depth of the battlefield to our advantage and the enemy's disadvantage. The way we go about reducing the enemy in the pocket NOW, has the potential of producing a benefit for us in the FUTURE. Realistically, the issue that impacts on the feasibility of such a course of action is the situation on the flanks.

*77 Clausewitz defines the offensive culminating point as the point at which an attacker can/should transition to the defense because his remaining strength is just enough to maintain a credible defense. FM 100-5 defines the offensive culminating point as "a point where the strength of the attacker no longer significantly exceeds that of the defender, and beyond which continued offensive operations therefore risk overextension, counterattack, and defeat."

*78 Operational pause involves the notion of temporarily suspending offensive operations to allow the reposturing of means (especially important is logistics) for future resumption of operations.

79 Interview with Maj Dave Cowan, 22 April 1987, School of Advanced Military Studies, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas.

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