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**No Guts No Glory - Operational Risk Taking:  
Gaining and Maintaining the Tempo**

**A Monograph  
by  
Major Richard C. Halbleib  
Military Intelligence**



**School of Advanced Military Studies  
United States Army Command and General Staff College  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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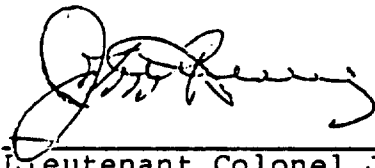
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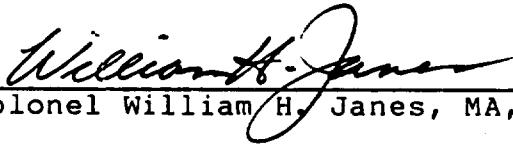
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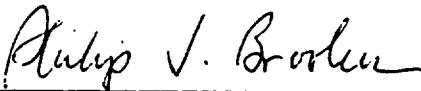
Lieutenant Colonel John P. Dunigan, MA

Monograph Director



Colonel William H. Janes, MA, MMAS

Director, School of  
Advanced Military  
Studies



Philip J. Brookes, Ph.D.

Director, Graduate  
Degree Program

Accepted this 29th day of June

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION .....	1
II.	TEMPO, RISK AND THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER .....	4
III.	HISTORICAL REVIEW	
	OPERATION SHINGLE: THE BATTLE OF ANZIO .....	13
	THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE - NO GUTS, NO GLORY ...	20
	OPERATION CHROMITE: THE INCHON LANDING .....	25
IV.	IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS .....	35
	APPENDIX A. MANEUVER/ATTRITION PARADIGM .....	41
	APPENDIX B. SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT .....	42
	ENDNOTES .....	43
	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	50

## I. INTRODUCTION

"To command is to risk"

FM 22-103<sup>1</sup>

Past wars have indicated that operational success requires commanders that can set the tempo of battle. However, gaining but failing to maintain the offensive tempo normally results in stalemate or defeat. Today, the U.S. Army's fighting doctrine is called AirLand Battle. This doctrine: "is based on securing or retaining the initiative and exercising it aggressively to accomplish the mission . . . Applied to the force as a whole, initiative requires a constant effort to force the enemy to conform to our operational purpose and tempo . . ." <sup>2</sup> FM 100-5. Operations, our capstone warfighting manual, suggests that in order to sustain the tempo of early success, operational commanders "must accept risks." <sup>3</sup> The operational commander combines risk and tempo to form the essential ingredients necessary for operational success.

In determining a suitable method of controlling tempo, the commander begins with an accurate assessment of enemy and friendly capabilities. This assessment sets the stage for the commander to concentrate his forces against the decisive point of the enemy's center of gravity. The willingness to mass at a decisive place and time necessitates economy of force elsewhere, and therefore the acceptance of risk. General George Patton's drive across

France; Rommel's maneuvers in North Africa; Guderian's offensive to Moscow, and Viscount Slim's campaign to reconquer Burma typify operational maneuvers which required commanders to economize their force and accept a high degree of risk.

Historically, military conflicts indicate that far too often operational commanders are selected who are unwilling to accept risk (i.e. General George B. McCellan's Peninsular Campaign). Reluctance toward risk taking frequently results in prolonging or losing campaigns and many times sets the stage for a nation's defeat. History also provides evidence that nations most prepared for war; economically, technologically and militarily (i.e. Germany in World War I), can experience defeat without an operational commander capable of making high risk decisions that guide the tempo of battle.

The operational commander's ability to make high risk decisions becomes increasingly important when one considers that war creates an environment where risk and uncertainty are omnipresent. This is particularly true on today's AirLand battlefield, where U.S. doctrine states that; "the tempo of operations will be such that the unexpected and novel will be the norm."<sup>4</sup> Operational commanders must therefore have the moral courage to make tough risk taking decisions in the face of uncertainty. The commander that makes and implements his decisions faster gains a decisive advantage over his opponent. "To delay action in an emergency because of incomplete information shows a lack of moral courage."<sup>5</sup> The operational commander must evaluate the risks involved in a



course of action, yet not let the destabilizing influence of uncertainty prevent him from acting decisively on his best judgment " . . . to allow the chronic uncertainty of war to dictate the pace of an offensive is to invite disaster."<sup>6</sup>

In selecting operational commanders, consideration should be given to their demonstrated potential for making high risk decisions.

This monograph will examine risk and tempo as components of warfighting which are inextricably linked and dependent upon a commander who is capable of assessing and accepting risk. The study will analyze three operational maneuvers (Marne, Anzio, Inchon) and examine the operational commander's ability to accept risk to seize and maintain the offensive tempo. This paper will also examine whether the operational commander can control the tempo on the AirLand battlefield without possessing risk taking characteristics as an essential quality of his competence. Finally, conclusions and implications will be presented which underscore the significance of selecting operational commanders that execute AirLand Battle doctrine by accepting risk to gain and maintain the initiative. In the opinion of the author, the key to operational art is the operational artist, and therein lies the truth to the saying, "A pride of lions led by a lamb, will succumb to a flock of sheep led by a lion." No Guts - No Glory!

## II. TEMPO, RISK AND THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

"Tempo is itself a weapon-often the most important." FMFM 1<sup>7</sup>

"If he is to succeed, the operational level commander  
must also take risks." FM 100-5<sup>8</sup>

"When in doubt as to two courses of action,  
a general should choose the bolder."

Field Marshal Viscount Slim<sup>9</sup>

In a future war, with the Soviets or their surrogates, we can expect the enemy to attempt to achieve the high operational tempo that their doctrine so often promotes.<sup>10</sup> In point of fact: "The dominant tenet of Soviet doctrine is that the decisive results are achieved only through offensive action of which the tempo of attack is the most important."<sup>11</sup> Consequently, if the U.S. operational commander is to win, it is imperative that he understand the dynamics of operational level tempo and the role risk plays in achieving it.

In Major Anthony Coralles' monograph, Fighting in the Medium of Time: The Dynamics of Operational Tempo, he defines the concept of tempo as an offensive concept. He notes that it is not merely a measure of the intensity of combat, but is

more a measure of advance against the enemy. While the attacker tries to speed up the tempo, the defender attempts to slow it down. Major Coralles states that, "The maintenance of high tempo is important to the attacker because it shortens the duration of an operation and preserves the initiative."<sup>12</sup> This dynamic effect of tempo deprives the enemy of time to effectively reposition his forces, yet offers the attacker the opportunity to maneuver his forces and destroy the enemy while simultaneously minimizing battle damage to his own force. The operative word is "time". Time is the most precious commodity in war, because once it is lost it can never be regained. Napoleon once said, "I'd rather lose 10,000 men than a minute of time."<sup>13</sup>

Time characteristically accelerates the impact of uncertainty, maneuver and friction. The U.S. Marine Corps' FMFM1, Warfighting, drives home the point that all actions in war take place in an atmosphere of uncertainty. That by its very nature, uncertainty involves the assessment and acceptance of risk, which may require the operational commander to make high risk decisions. In his monograph, The Decision to Take Risk: A Process for Effective High-Risk Decision Making at Senior Levels, Major Thomas Schmidt defines a high risk decision as, "a decision in which the chance for failure is equal to or greater than that of success."<sup>14</sup> The degree of risk involved in the commander's decision necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the enemy. Consequently, one of the first tasks of the operational commander is

forecasting enemy intentions, and this becomes the first risk he takes.<sup>15</sup>

Enemy intentions suggest to the commander where he should concentrate his forces, "The operational commander is concerned more with the concentration of forces at the decisive time and place while the tactical commander applies the combat power . . ."<sup>16</sup> Therefore, at the operational level, accurate and timely intelligence is key to creating the framework for high tempo maneuvers, and for determining an acceptable degree of risk. Properly focused intelligence enables a commander to assess his risk in attacking a weak (decisive) point of the enemy's defenses. The fact that the enemy is unprepared means that he may be surprised. It is through surprise that the commander establishes the conditions which characterize high tempo operations. Surprising the enemy results in his confusion, reduced resistance and a higher tempo of advance by the attacker.<sup>17</sup>

In the offense, operational intelligence supports the commander in determining the speed and location of attack as well as the degree of risk associated with the operation. Once surprise has been achieved, intelligence provides the parameters by which risk is assessed and accepted in order to continue high tempo operations. For example, imagine a car (operational formation) speeding down a dark road (depths of the enemy) with its headlights on (intelligence). The range of the headlights determine the safety parameters of speed and direction for the car. Based on the speed of the car and the quickness of the

driver's (operational commander's) reflexes, the driver can react to a hazard as it comes into view with an acceptable degree of risk. In essence, the driver compares how far he can see with how rapidly he can react and then determines his risk at achieving the maximum speed in the safest direction.<sup>18</sup>

The operational commander must economize force to mass force. Failure to accept the risk of economizing his force by being strong everywhere can only lead to defeat.<sup>19</sup> Fredrick the Great underscored this principle by saying, "He who defends everything defends nothing."<sup>20</sup> The speed at which the commander assesses and accepts the risk of economizing his force, while simultaneously massing his force at the most decisive point of the enemy's center of gravity, may determine victory, stalemate or defeat.

Colonel John Boyd, USAF, reinforces this idea by noting that commanders will operate at a faster tempo than their adversaries by getting inside his "observation-orientation-decision-action time cycle" or "Boyd Loop".<sup>21</sup> Rapid decision making to exploit surprise, deception and maneuver increases risk and tempo, while decreasing the enemy's ability to react and project his opponents intentions. This creates, through confusion and disorder, a paralyzing effect on the enemy's command and control. The result is the "destruction of enemy unit cohesion, harmony, increased friction and deprivation of opportunity to react."<sup>22</sup>

To illustrate the effectiveness of high risk maneuvers one has only to study the British campaign in

Burma during World War II. Field Marshal Viscount Slim, Commander of the British Fourteenth Army, realized that the successful methods the Japanese employed in pushing the British out of Burma, were as a result of daring and unexpected maneuvers. These maneuvers included high risk envelopment operations which caused confusion and indecision in the British Army.<sup>23</sup> The failure of the British to adopt a similar maneuver strategy convinced Field Marshal Slim that he was more likely to achieve success by conducting high risk, high tempo maneuvers. He decided to be bold and not to take counsel of his fears. He states, "When in doubt as to two courses of action, a General should choose the bolder."<sup>24</sup> In point of fact, the key to his resurgence in combat effectiveness is cited as, "his willingness to accept risk . . . to stretch his means to achieve his aim."<sup>25</sup> This change in operational strategy resulted in a resounding victory over the Japanese.

The example of Field Marshal Slim stretching his resources reminds us that resource constraints compel operational commanders to accept risk somewhere. The uncertainty of war dictates that risk is everywhere. Therefore, the commander must objectively and subjectively assess where he will accept risk.<sup>26</sup> In discussing the ability to accept risk, Carl von Clausewitz points to the commander's ability to overcome "the agonies of doubt and the perils of hesitation."<sup>27</sup> He identifies a faculty called, "coup d'oeil," which is the ability to perceive the outcome of a situation despite the friction and uncertainty of war. He notes

that uncertainty in war imposes two demands on a commander; he must be able to deal with adversity (through will power), and have the "intellectual flexibility to take advantage of chance whenever possible."<sup>28</sup>

Although an operational commander's personality, character and ability qualify him for leadership, his strongest attribute is his will power. When events in battle turn against him, or require a high degree of risk, his nerve must not waiver. His desire for victory will probably be his most notable contribution to battle. His vigor and singleness of purpose forges his will to win the campaign.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, an operational commander without the determination and strong will to accept risk invites defeat.<sup>30</sup> As Napoleon once stated, "War is waged only with vigor, decision, and unshaken will; one must not grope or hesitate."<sup>31</sup>

U.S. leadership and warfighting doctrine stress the importance of risk taking at the operational level. FM 22-103, Leadership and Command at Senior Levels, describes the professional skills key to senior commanders. It identifies "risk taking" as an essential quality of competence for operational commanders. It cites that, "many times, only by taking reasonable risks can senior leaders or commanders hope to succeed." It also notes that these commanders must see the "reality of risk (as) an opportunity, knowing that the opponent has to contend with the same difficulties."<sup>32</sup>

FM 100-5 states, "AirLand Battle is based on securing or retaining the initiative . . . Initiative requires audacity which may involve risk taking and an atmosphere that supports it."<sup>33</sup> It also identifies the requirement for audacity and risk taking in order to force the enemy to conform to our operational tempo.<sup>34</sup> In his monograph, The Shortest Way Home: Risk and the AirLand Battle, Major James Greer establishes the role of risk in each of the four tenets of AirLand Battle.<sup>35</sup> He underscores the unmistakable linkage between risk and the achievement of agility, initiative, depth and synchronization.

Unfortunately, many operational commanders lack the boldness to accept risk, even when it is necessary. Napoleon often noted that boldness is a highly desirable element in commanders yet it is frequently missing.<sup>36</sup> Major Greer provides insight into why some operational commanders are not risk takers. He notes that: "Psychological make-up, experience with risk, education, training, and external pressures cause commanders to generally be either risk takers or risk averters. Risk takers are comfortable in risky situations and do not hesitate to make decisions when the outcome is uncertain. Risk averters are uncomfortable in risky situations and attempt to delay or avoid decisions in an environment of uncertainty."<sup>37</sup>

An operational commander that is unable to accept risk due to a lack of information and uncertainty in battle faces defeat. In war, commanders are continually confronted with apparently uncontrollable situations which lack information



and time to determine the extent of risk.<sup>38</sup> FM 22-103 states, "risk taking means making needed decisions in varying degrees of uncertainty . . ."<sup>39</sup> The determinate factor in operational commanders making high risk decisions is his view of alternatives, such as deciding whether a glass of water is half-full or half-empty. His personality traits predispose him one way or the other in making high risk decisions. In this regard, there is little he can do to alter his personality and character.<sup>40</sup>

In discussing risk as "boldness", Carl von Clausewitz offers another view as to why some operational commanders are unable to make high risk decisions. He begins by stating, "Nearly every general known to us from history as mediocre, even vacillating, was noted for dash and determination as a junior officer."<sup>41</sup> However, he suggests that as the junior officer gets older, his lucid thought process and his disciplined self-control cause him to become more conservative or "timid". He notes that, "timidity will do a thousand times more damage in war than audacity. . . .Consequently, boldness grows less common in the higher ranks . . . This explains why it (boldness) is so rare in the higher ranks, and why it is all the more admirable when found there . . . a distinguished commander without boldness is unthinkable. No man who is not born bold can play such a role, and therefore we consider this quality the first prerequisite of the great military leader."<sup>42</sup>

J.F.C. Fuller's study on, Generalship: Its Diseases and

Their Cure, also examines the factor of youth among generals. He states that: ". . .the period of most efficient generalship lies between the years thirty and forty-nine, and that the peak is reached between the years thirty-five and forty-five."<sup>43</sup>

Fuller cites the following letter by Napoleon when he was twenty-seven years old, as an insight to the influence of youth on generalship:". . .As to generals of divisions, unless they are officers of distinction, I beg you not to send any to me; for our way of waging war is so different from others that I do not wish to entrust a division to a general until I have tested him out in two or three operations. It is essential for the Army and the Republic to send to me here young people (des jeunes gens) who are learning how to carry out a war of movement and manoeuvres; it is wars of this nature which have enabled us to gain such great successes in this army."<sup>44</sup>

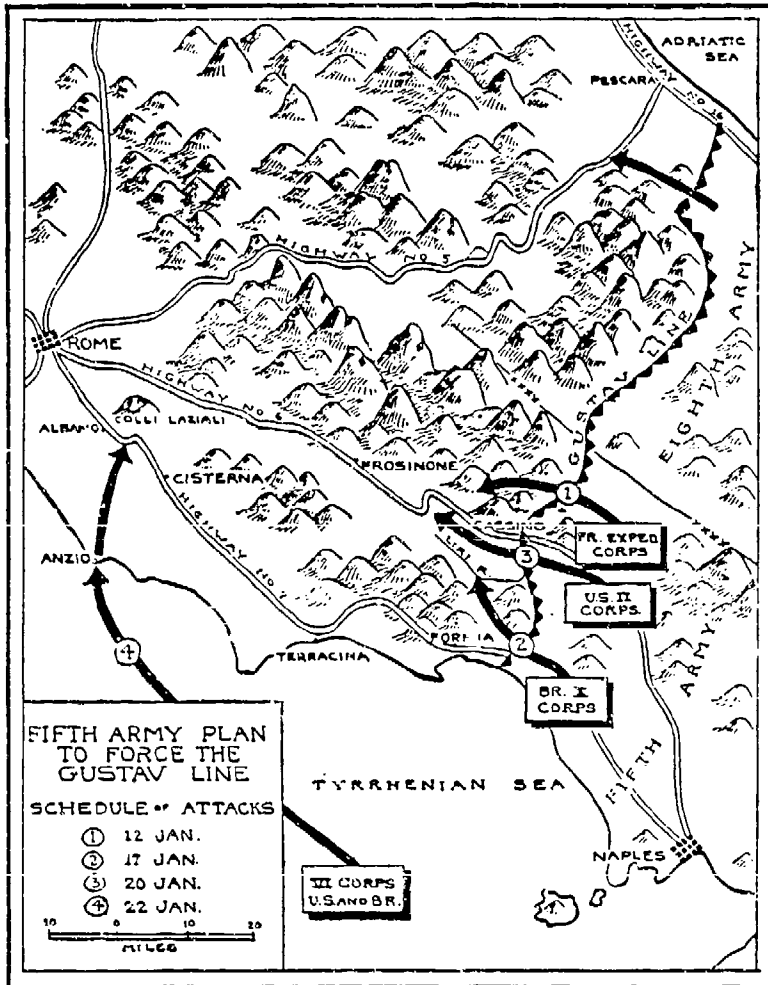
Napoleon's cries for a younger crop of senior officers seems somewhat similar to the trend of youth oriented promotions and command slating that our Army is currently experiencing. However, more to the point of this monograph is the discussion of the inaptitude for risk taking among operational commanders. Clearly, risk taking should be a key criterion in selecting senior commanders. The next section of this study will focus on three operational maneuvers in which commanders accept, or fail to accept, risk to seize and maintain the tempo of battle.

### III. OPERATION SHINGLE: THE BATTLE OF ANZIO

The Anzio operation took place in Italy during World War II. It is illustrative of a combat situation when the operational commander had every opportunity, yet refused to accept risk to seize and maintain the tempo of battle.

On 22 January, 1944, Allied forces conducted a high risk amphibious landing at Anzio. It was planned to be a surprise attack, designed to move rapidly inland, seize the Alban Hills and the road to Rome, thereby outflanking the German Gustav Line (Map 1)<sup>45</sup> The Alban Hills (also called Colli Laziali), are located twenty miles inland and only fifteen miles southeast of Rome. They dominate the two major highways leading north to Rome and the withdrawal route of major German forces fighting the Fifth U.S. Army. These hills marked the last natural barrier the Germans could use to block the Allies from entering Rome.<sup>46</sup>

By threatening the German main line of communications, the Allies hoped to force them to give up their strong defensive line, thereby relieving the costly advance the Fifth U.S. Army was making North from Salerno.<sup>47</sup> British Prime Minister Winston Churchill directed that the assault take place. He saw it, not only as a rapid way of seizing Rome, but felt the entire Italian campaign depended on its success.<sup>48</sup> Many others believed that if the Anzio assault had succeeded, it would have quickened the tempo of the war and brought it to a more rapid conclusion.<sup>49</sup> Unfortunately, Anzio proved to have very little positive effect on the outcome of the war and is



MAP 1 (Source: Calculated Risk p.285)

described as being, "boldly conceived, timidly executed."<sup>50</sup>

Churchill speaking sarcastically about Anzio said, "I had hoped that we were hurling a wildcat onto the shore, but all we got was a stranded whale."<sup>51</sup>

The man chosen to command the amphibious assault was Major General (MG) John P. Lucas, Commander of VI Corps. MG Lucas was an experienced corps commander, having fought the Germans through the mountains of the Bernhard Line. He is described as being a "down-to-earth practical soldier". . . Although a sympathetic and understanding man, he was not considered soft."<sup>52</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that he was subordinate to General Harold Alexander, Commander of Allied Armies in Italy, and General Mark Clark, Commander of Fifth U.S. Army, MG Lucas was designated the Allies' ground component commander for both the beachhead assault and subsequent breakout to the Alban Hills. Whether VI Corps remained at the beachhead or attacked the Alban Hills and beyond, would be determined by how MG Lucas sized up the situation and decided to act."<sup>53</sup> On MG Lucas alone would rest the responsibility for the decision of what to do after he reached the shore at Anzio . . . whether MG Lucas was cautious or bold would depend in large measure on MG Lucas himself."<sup>54</sup>

General Clark saw the mission in two phases; a) To seize and secure a beachhead in the vicinity of Anzio. b) Advance on Colli Laziali.<sup>55</sup> Conversely, "It had always been (General) Alexander's intention, and it was confirmed in his orders that this force should reach out to the Alban Hills."<sup>56</sup> Consequently, whereas GEN Alexander wanted MG Lucas to advance

at once "to" the Alban Hills, GEN Clark modified the order to read advance "on" so as not to force Lucas to take the hills.<sup>57</sup> Specifically, MG Lucas' instructions from General Clark were that he should not feel forced to push on to the Alban Hills if it risked losing his corps and beachhead.<sup>58</sup>

MG Lucas' assault force consisted of the 1st British and 3rd U.S. Divisions, reinforced by an armored battalion with each division. In support, he had an armored infantry battalion and a tank battalion from the 1st U.S. Armored Division; a Royal Marine Commando battalion; the 509th Parachute Infantry battalion; and three Ranger battalions.<sup>59</sup> MG Lucas' total force package exceeded 110,000 men.<sup>60</sup>

Although MG Lucas expected strong resistance, his landing took the Germans by complete surprise. General Lucas later wrote, "We achieved what is certainly one of the most complete surprises in history."<sup>61</sup> The only resistance came from a couple of small coastal artillery and anti-aircraft units which were quickly overrun.<sup>62</sup> By midnight on D-Day, the Allies had 36,000 troops and 3,200 vehicles ashore, lost only 13 KIA and 87 WIA, and took 227 prisoners.<sup>63</sup>

The surprise against the Germans clearly achieved operational proportions. Four days prior to the assault at Anzio, Field Marshal Kesselring, Commander of German Forces in Italy, had committed his two veteran divisions in Rome that were his operational reserve. These forces were sent to support the 10th Army commander fighting the British in South Italy. Consequently, Rome, Anzio and the Alban Hills

were emptied of German combat units and, "Kesselring had no forces available to counter Allied landings, no staff to organize even an emergency defense . . . The coast was clear for MG Lucas."<sup>64</sup> The Germans estimated that the landing could bring their main defensive front "to a state of collapse."<sup>65</sup>

Once ashore, Lucas had to decide whether to play it safe and buildup his beachhead, or take the risk of pushing out to the Alban Hills to make contact with the Germans and seize "a strategic objective", which in one stroke could "bring an end to an arduous phase of the Italian campaign."<sup>66</sup> MG Lucas chose to buildup his beachhead and limited his force to local reconnaissance and patrol operations.<sup>67</sup> He felt that building the beachhead was the most important priority after the landing.<sup>68</sup> He thought that even if he took the Alban Hills, he would not be able to hold them with his 110,000 man force and would therefore jeopardize the beachhead. Later, MG Lucas would learn that once the Germans occupied the Alban Hills, they held off his entire force with only 60,000 combatants.<sup>69</sup>

MG Lucas waited ten days to consolidate the beachhead before trying to take the Alban Hills. When he finally pushed out to the hills, he found that the Germans had taken them and he could not force them out. He had waited too long to attack, "After the third day Lucas lost time as an ally to Kesselring."<sup>70</sup> Consequently, VI Corps remained trapped on the beach for almost four months. The hills that he chose not to seize, provided a grandstand view over Anzio,

which made the entire beachhead extremely vulnerable to German artillery. In the end, VI Corps suffered 59,000 casualties before they were able to breakout on 11 May, 1944.<sup>71</sup>

MG Lucas demonstrated that he was not a risk taker by deciding not, as one historian writes, "to stick his neck out... Having gained surprise in the landing he proceeded to disregard the advantage it gave him."<sup>72</sup> Churchill noted that when MG Lucas decided to confine himself to the beachhead, "the opportunity for which great exertions had been made was gone."<sup>73</sup>

From the enemy's perspective, Field Marshal Kesselring noted that it was the lack of General Lucas' aggressiveness that allowed him to put together a successful defense.<sup>74</sup>

General Westphal, Kesselring's Chief of Staff, wrote:

"An audacious and enterprising formation of enemy troops . . . could have penetrated into the city of Rome itself without having to overcome any serious opposition. But the landed enemy forces lost time and hesitated."<sup>75</sup>

Kesselring estimated that if Lucas had exploited his unopposed landing, by seizing the Alban Hills and advancing on Rome, it would have jeopardized the entire German strategy of the Italian campaign.<sup>76</sup> He later wrote: "I had the constant feeling that the Allies had missed a uniquely favourable chance of capturing Rome and of opening the door on the Garigliano Front."<sup>77</sup>

From the Allied perspective, Churchill called Anzio, "a story of high opportunity and shattered hopes."<sup>78</sup> General Alexander complained to General Clark about MG Lucas' lack of



aggressiveness in pushing to the Alban Hills. He suggested that the outcome of the Anzio maneuver would have been different if Patton had commanded.<sup>79</sup> Lieutenant General Jacob Devers, Deputy Theater Commander, felt that MG Lucas should have moved as fast as possible to secure the Alban Hills.<sup>80</sup> Field Marshal Lord Harding, General Alexander's Chief of Staff, stated that he too thought MG Lucas had missed a great opportunity to force a German withdrawal by seizing the Alban Hills.<sup>81</sup> Initially, General Clark thought that MG Lucas could have taken the Alban Hills, but could not have held them.<sup>82</sup> Later, he pushed MG Lucas to take bolder action. He wrote: "I too felt however, that the beachhead progress was lagging unnecessarily . . . I . . . agree with Alexander's viewpoint and had for sometime been considering a change."<sup>83</sup>

On 17 February, 1944, exactly one month after the assault began, General Clark relieved Lucas. GEN Clark cited the reason for removing MG Lucas, to be his physical and mental fatigue from long responsibilities of command in battle.<sup>84</sup> MG Lucas' decision not to accept risk in taking the Alban Hills, thereby seizing and maintaining the offensive tempo, "caused the beachhead to be the largest self-supporting POW camp in the world as Axis Sally (the infamous radio propagandist) once claimed."<sup>85</sup>

In conclusion, General Lucas proved not to be a bold and audacious commander. Although he followed his orders and landed his force, he chose not to accept high risk options which would enable him to maintain the tempo. In examining U.S. Army operations doctrine, during the period of the Anzio landing,

it is clear that Lucas violated guidance on risk, decisive action and exploiting surprise.<sup>86</sup> For example, FM 100-5 dated 22 May, 1941, stresses leadership training which exploits situations with boldness and the knowledge that success depends on initiative and action: "The first demand in war is decisive action."<sup>87</sup> MG Lucas' doctrine also emphasized surprise as a method of placing the enemy in a state of mental, moral or physical unpreparedness.<sup>88</sup> Although he achieved this effect by landing his force, he did not exploit it. MG Lucas' operations manual also states that every effort should be made to deny the enemy time to take effective countermeasures once surprise is achieved: "The effect of surprise may be lost through dilatory methods of execution."<sup>89</sup>

MG Lucas chose to trade time for an opportunity to build his force. He adopted time intensive attrition warfare vice maneuver warfare employing speed, surprise and shock to maximize time. In doing so, Lucas lost the initiative and the opportunity to force the Germans into an early withdrawal from Italy.

#### THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE-NO GUTS, NO GLORY

The first battle of the Marne, in World War I, is an example of an operational commander who took great risk to seize the tempo of battle. However, the commander lacked the nerve to continue to accept risk in order to maintain the tempo. Richard E. Simpkin in, Race to the Swift, notes that the German operational offensive failed to achieve

victory because the "overall tempo was too slow."<sup>90</sup>

Prior to the outbreak of World War I, the Germans envisioned a conflict which would engulf all the major European nations. Specifically, they saw the probability of having to fight a two-front war with France and Russia. Faced with the military nightmare of fighting in two theaters of operations simultaneously, the Germans devised an audacious and high risk plan which hinged upon the execution of a fast tempo operational maneuver.

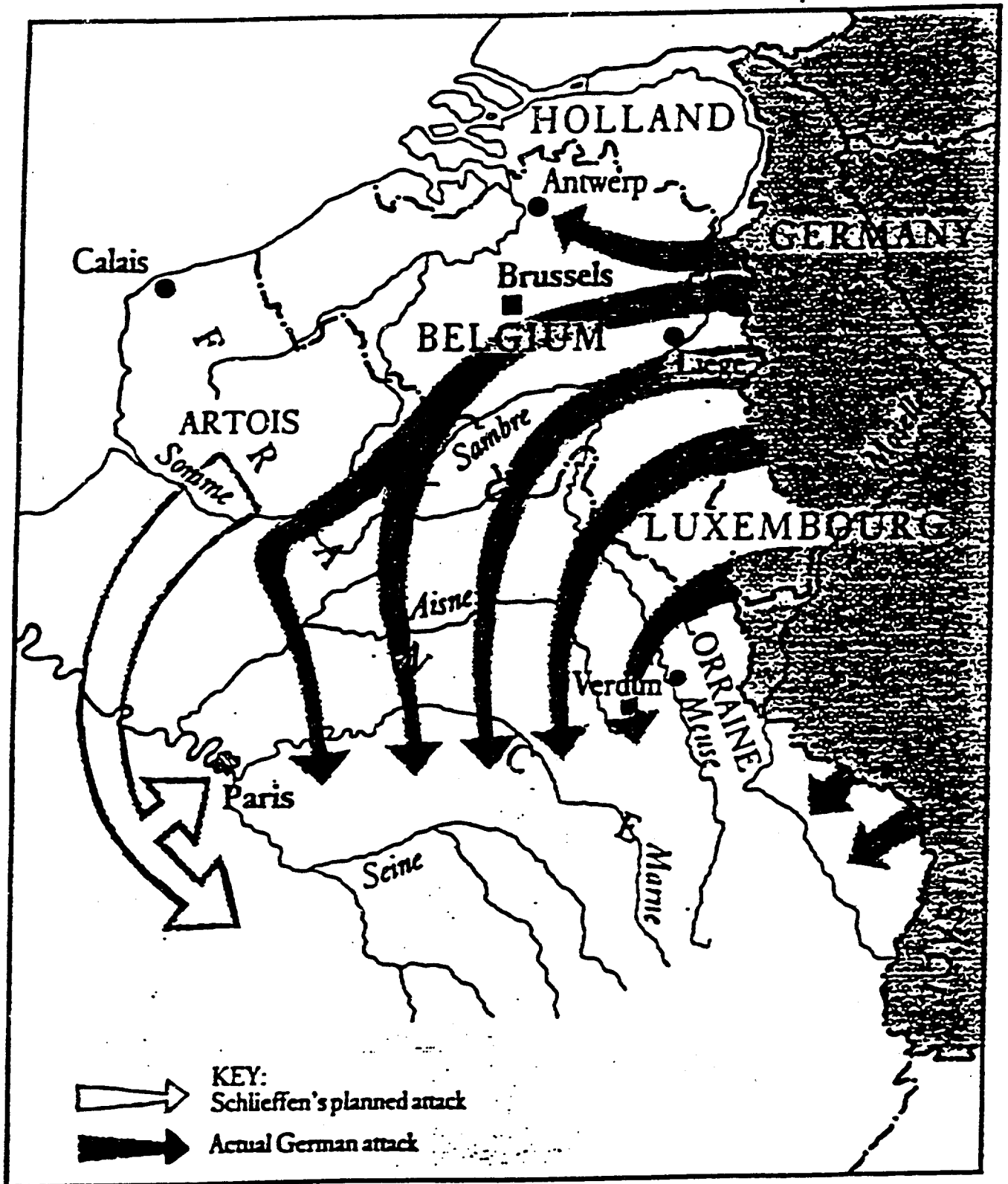
The Germans calculated that they could mobilize faster than the French and that the Russians would be slow to mobilize. To capitalize on this, they planned to defeat France within six weeks then move their army by train to the Russian Front. This scheme would present them with two single front wars.<sup>91</sup>

The short time to defeat France required the acceptance by the operational commander of a high risk, high tempo attack plan. The Germans capitalized on the French desire to recapture the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. They adopted the basic principles of a plan prepared by Count Alfred von Schlieffen, Chief of the German General Staff from 1881 to 1906. The plan called for the Germans to conduct an economy of force on their left flank. This force would total only 15% of the entire German attack force. These forces would draw the French main effort into the Alsace and Lorraine provinces. After the French committed themselves on this flank, the Germans would

shift nearly half of their left flank force to the main effort on the right.<sup>92</sup> Concurrently the German main effort, which would be six to ten times stronger than the left wing, would swing from the right flank in the North through Belgium.<sup>93</sup> The attack would then turn south-east taking Paris and then slam a crushing blow to the rear of the French main forces. The deeper the penetration, the more units would be withdrawn from the wing to protect LOCs and besiege enemy strongpoints. Therefore, speed had to take the place of what the Germans lacked in forces.<sup>94</sup> The key, as von Schlieffen stated in his dying words, was "Keep the right wing strong."<sup>95</sup> (Map 2)

General von Schlieffen's successor, General von Moltke was designated as the operational commander who would execute the high risk plan. GEN Von Moltke is described as a highly experienced staff officer with a brilliant mind.<sup>96</sup> This proved not to be enough to execute the Schlieffen Plan, which required a confident leader who was willing to make high risk decisions. GEN Von Moltke was definitely the wrong man for the job. He so much as said so when he was appointed as Chief of the General Staff. He confided to a friend, "I lack the capacity for risking all on a single throw."<sup>97</sup>

In the first ten days of fighting, the German Army was weakened more by GEN Von Moltke than by the French.<sup>98</sup> The three corps Moltke transferred to the eastern front arrived after the German victory of Tannenberg.<sup>99</sup> Not only did the transfer of these corps prove unnecessary in safeguarding East Prussia,



MAP 2 (Source: Great Battles Of World War I, p.12)

but they were not immediately returned to the western front where they were so desperately needed.<sup>100</sup> Additionally, GEN Von Moltke changed his attack plan after it began, by attempting a double, vice single envelopment.<sup>101</sup> Prince Rupprecht, commander of the Sixth Army, brow beat GEN Von Moltke into moving six corps from the right to left wing. In doing so, GEN Von Moltke lost the critical reinforcements necessary on the right wing to maintain the offensive tempo required to win. Ultimately, GEN Von Moltke was forced to deploy the entire Seventh Army from the extreme left flank to block a gap between First and Second Armies on the opposite end of the line.

GEN Von Moltke, proved to be incapable of accepting high risk and could not capitalize on GEN von Schlieffen's advice to "keep the right wing strong." He refused to accept the risk that the French might break through his weak left flank and invade Germany.<sup>102</sup> However, "there was no justification for strengthening the southern wing of the German Army excessively, since it enjoyed in the defensive the advantage of strong fortifications."<sup>103</sup> Although GEN von Moltke was willing to gamble and go to war, he wanted to increase his odds against losing by shifting forces away from his center of gravity - the strong right wing. He reallocated 42% of the entire attack force to the economy of force effort on the left flank and sent reinforcements to strengthen the eastern theater of operations.<sup>104</sup> "These modifications virtually ensured that Germany could not win the ensuing battle and would ultimately lose the war."<sup>105</sup> This in effect increased his odds against winning. GEN Von

Moltke shows once again, that operational commanders must be prepared to display their determination to accept risk in order to maintain the tempo. "Moltke took enough from Schlieffen to hang himself."<sup>106</sup>

Napoleon is quoted as saying, "Once you have made up your mind stick to it."<sup>107</sup> Moltke, as an operational commander, was clearly the wrong man to execute the Schlieffen Plan. He could not take the pressure associated with such a high risk, high tempo operation. While at his headquarters at Coblenz, 110 miles from his nearest troops, he was described as "going to pieces . . . ate little and slept less . . . lost his head, his battle and quite possibly the war . . . Though he could not stand the heat, he was still in the kitchen."<sup>108</sup>

Moltke's inability to execute a high risk operational maneuver made the difference between winning and losing the Battle of the Marne. "Every great leader, especially in war, has to have the element of the gambler in him and Moltke lacked it."<sup>109</sup> By not concentrating his force to maintain the tempo, Moltke lost the battle and probably the war. Not surprisingly, four days after the battle, Moltke was relieved of command.<sup>110</sup>

#### OPERATION CHROMITE:THE INCHON LANDING

The Inchon landing, during the Korean War, exemplifies an "exceptionally risky," high tempo operational maneuver

where the commander "bet everything on one operation . . ." <sup>111</sup>  
General MacArthur won his great operational victory by making the high risk decision to conduct a deep amphibious assault at Inchon to seize the initiative from the North Koreans. Although nearly everyone involved in the operation advised against it, General MacArthur demonstrated his determination to accept risk in order to gain and maintain the tempo of battle.

On 25 June, 1950, the North Koreans invaded South Korea. It was almost at the very beginning of hostilities that MacArthur conceived his counterstroke. On 29 June, while making an aerial reconnaissance over Korea, he foresaw the over-attenuating lines of supply the communists were creating. <sup>112</sup> He assessed that since the U.S. controlled the sea and air, the communist's logistical lines would run the entire length of Korea with Seoul as the hub of support. He saw the spearhead of their attack as being strong, but their flanks and rear weak. <sup>113</sup> He noted that as LOCs lengthened, "he would hit the enemy where they least expected it." <sup>114</sup>

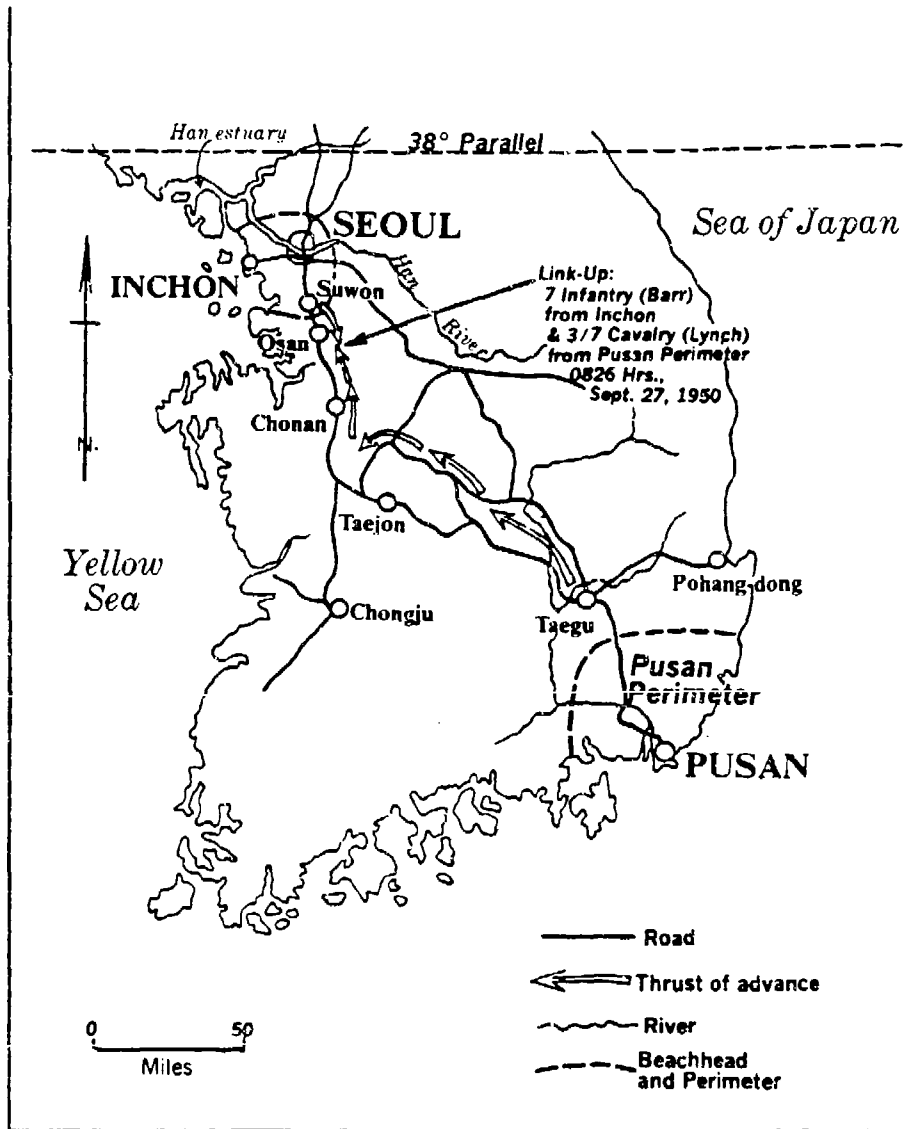
With South Korea in full retreat and U.N. forces moving to a desperate defensive perimeter around Pusan, MacArthur had three options: 1) attack from Pusan, 2) conduct a flanking amphibious assault at nearby Kunsan, or 3) the most risky option, an amphibious landing at Inchon. <sup>115</sup> MacArthur chose Inchon, primarily to exploit the advantages surprise would give him. He had made similar decisions throughout his career, but none more momentous, none more fraught with



risk, none that promised to be more conclusive if he failed or succeeded.<sup>116</sup> Yet, through intelligence collection, MacArthur knew the North Koreans were unprepared for a deep enveloping attack at Inchon.<sup>117</sup> He believed the high risk nature of the Inchon landing guaranteed surprise. He said, "the North Koreans would regard an Inchon landing as impossible . . . I could take them by surprise."<sup>119</sup> He maintained his determination, even when it became known that the plans for Operation Chromite may be compromised. The Press Club in Tokyo called Chromite "Operation Common Knowledge", yet MacArthur didn't take counsel in his fears.<sup>120</sup> He orchestrated multiple feints, deceptions and diversionary raids to confuse the North Koreans about his main attack effort. These efforts proved successful and he ultimately took the North Koreans by surprise.<sup>121</sup> (Map 3)

On 10 July, MacArthur said, pointing at Inchon on a map, "I would land them here and cut the North Korean armies off from their logistic support and cause their withdrawal and annihilation."<sup>122</sup> Here we see an example of von Clausewitz's "coup d'oeil," where in the darkest hour the commander envisions the shimmering light of victory. General Matthew Ridgeway said, "While others thought of a way to withdraw our forces safely, MacArthur planned for victory."<sup>123</sup>

On 23 July, MacArthur informed the JCS of his intent to land a two Division corps, on 15 September, in the rear of the enemy lines to envelop and destroy them.<sup>124</sup> The amphibious landing would be conducted in conjunction with an attack



MAP 3 (Source: Inchon Landing: MacArthur's Last Triumph, p.142)

from the south by Eighth Army.<sup>125</sup> MacArthur estimated that the seizure of Inchon would save 100,000 lives.<sup>126</sup> He noted that the bulk of the North Korean forces were committed against the Pusan perimeter and a frontal attack to breakout would be too costly.<sup>127</sup> His remarks on 23 August, reflected his assessment of Inchon's potential impact should it be successful. "By seizing Seoul, I would completely paralyze the enemy's supply system - coming and going. This in turn would paralyze the fighting power of the troops that now face Walker."<sup>128</sup> He surmized the strategic importance of capturing Seoul by stating that it, "would quickly end the war."<sup>129</sup> This set the stage for a high risk, high pay-off operation.

MacArthur's moral determination is expressly found in his acceptance of risk while under political and military pressure to reconsider his decision. Among senior members of the Department of Defense, Navy and Marine amphibious operations were frowned upon as being impractical. Just one year prior to the outbreak of the Korean War, President Truman's Defense Secretary, Louis A. Johnson, stated that, ". . . the Navy is on its way out . . . There's no reason for having a Navy and Marine Corps. General Bradley (Chairman of JCS) tells me that amphibious operations are a thing of the past. We'll never have anymore amphibious operations. That does away with the Marine Corps, and the Air Force can do anything the Navy can nowadays so that does away with the Navy."<sup>130</sup> After Bradley's prediction on amphibious operations, many

thought that, " . . . a successful amphibious operation in Korea would make Bradley look the fool and undermine his influence."<sup>131</sup> MacArthur provides insight into his attitude toward Bradley by his remark when he learned the JCS Chairman expressed his scorn to Rear Admiral Doyle for training Eighth Army units for amphibious training. He said, "Bradley is a farmer."<sup>132</sup>

The admirals and generals involved in planning the invasion thought Inchon was, "one of the worst possible places in the world to mount an amphibious assault."<sup>133</sup> The JCS conducted a campaign to persuade MacArthur to delay the Inchon landing or change the location.<sup>134</sup> Their 7 September message to MacArthur asked him to reconsider the entire "Chromite" operation. MacArthur said the JCS message "expressed doubt of success and implied the whole movement should be abandoned."<sup>135</sup>

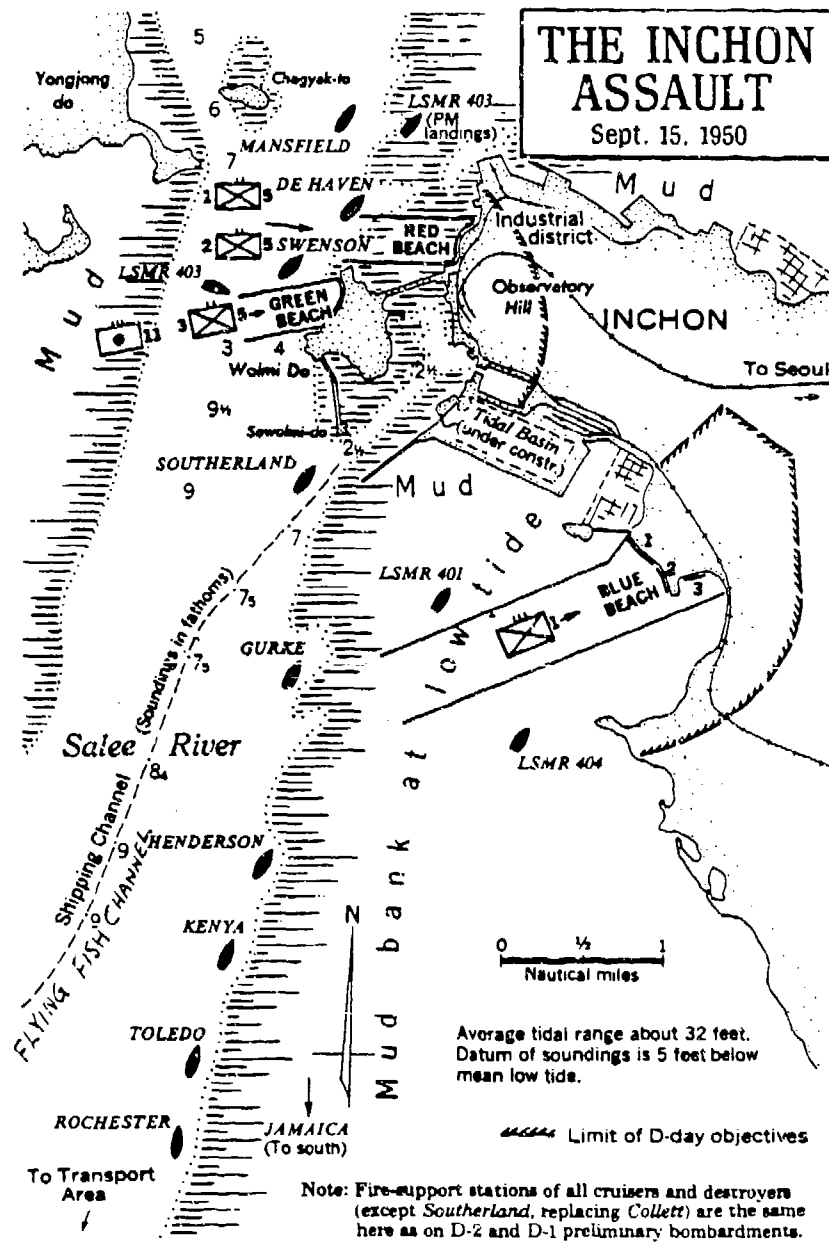
General Collins, Army Chief of Staff, didn't want Inchon as the landing site. He preferred Kunsan 100 miles south of Inchon, to reduce the risk of being cut off from Eighth Army. GEN Collins predicted Inchon would be a "disaster". As suggested by one historian, GEN Collins "probably had Anzio in mind".<sup>136</sup> However, as Michael Langley writes in Inchon Landing: MacArthur's Last Triumph, "MacArthur, or even just an average commander, would never have allowed his men to get stuck at Anzio."<sup>137</sup>

Major General Almond, MacArthur's Chief of Staff and

Commander of X Corps, which would make the Inchon assault, said Inchon was " . . . the worst possible place we could bring in an amphibious assault."<sup>138</sup> LTG Lemuel Shepard Jr., Commander of Fleet Marine Force Pacific, represented several key Navy and Marine leaders who preferred to stage the landing at Posung-Myon, twenty miles south of Inchon. "Shepard went to MacArthur and pleaded their case for the alternative landing site", but MacArthur would not yield.<sup>139</sup>

In examining Inchon as the site for a major amphibious assault, a staff officer for Rear Admiral Doyle, commander of the Inchon amphibious operation, said "We drew up a list of every natural and geographic handicap and Inchon had 'em all."<sup>140</sup> (Map 4) Some of the difficulties included:

Inaccessibility: The conditions of the inner harbor and its approaches would daunt even the most expert in amphibious assault operations.<sup>141</sup> Flying Fish Channel was narrow, had a treacherous current and could be easily mined; during the invasion twenty-four mines were found.<sup>142</sup> Also, the speed of the current ran almost as high as the speed of the landing craft which made movement slow. Additionally, the channel was so narrow that one ship could block it. Finally, the tidal range, in Inchon harbor, varied thirty-two feet and exposed huge sticky mud flats. Landing craft could enter and leave port for only three hours on each high tide. So, not only were the ships in the inlet a "sitting duck at the mercy of the enemy's artillery", but "the first wave had thus to be self sustaining for almost twelve full hours."<sup>143</sup> All these



MAP 4 (Source: Victory At High Tide, p.ii)

factors, plus the poor port facility, created immediate logistical support problems for the landing force.

Obstacles: The small island of Wolmi, in the harbor, dominated the waterfront and was manned and well fortified. This required that, "Before the main assault could be launched, Wolmi had to be invaded and absolutely secured."<sup>144</sup> Also, fourteen-foot-high sea walls lined the harbor, forcing the Marines to scale the wall with ladders.

Urban Warfare: The landing site was in the heart of a city with a population of 250,000. A determined enemy could force the assault units into house-to-house fighting, thereby slowing the tempo and gaining time for reinforcements.<sup>145</sup>

Weather: The invasion period was in typhoon season. Typhoon KEZIA with winds of 125 mph had nearly hit the invading armada but shifted away at the final hour. Typhoon JANE, ten days before the attack, had 110 mph winds and 40 foot waves that disrupted the first Marine Division's loading for thirty-six hours and damaged fifty ships.<sup>146</sup>

Enemy: The Inchon garrison consisted of two battalions totaling 2,000 men. Additionally, the military garrison of Seoul had an infantry division and regiment consisting of 13,600 soldiers.<sup>147</sup>

Notwithstanding these problems, the disadvantage that gave MacArthur his most severe misgiving was the distance between Inchon and the Pusan perimeter. Primarily, because he doubted that the demoralized forces in Pusan (140,000

soldiers against 70,000 North Koreans) could muster themselves to linkup with his assault force at Inchon.<sup>148</sup> However, after listening to all the pitfalls involved in the landing, MacArthur said "the very arguments that you have made as to the impracticabilities involved will tend to ensure for me the element of surprise, for the enemy commander will reason that no one would be so brash as to make such an attempt."<sup>149</sup>

When the JCS asked MacArthur to estimate the operation's feasibility and chance of success, he replied, "There is no question in my mind, as to the feasibility of the operation and I regard its chance of success as excellent. I go further and believe that it represents the only hope of wresting the initiative from the enemy and thereby presenting the opportunity for a decisive blow."<sup>150</sup>

The purpose of enumerating the difficulties involved with the Inchon landing is to illustrate that although it succeeded, whereas Anzio and Marne failed, the risk was as great if not more. There were many similarities between these maneuvers: Inchon-Anzio; amphibious operations, two division assault, beachhead in rear of enemy, mission to sever enemy LOCs, both required surprise and a link-up with the main force. Inchon-Marne; pressure by others to change plan, surprise, attack the enemy rear, and the requirement for the attacking force to achieve a high tempo. However, unlike Lucas, MacArthur accepted the risk and moved quickly inland even though he had a poorer logistical support base



at the beachhead and more enemy to fight. Also, unlike von Moltke, he did not succumb to pressure to change his plan and took greater personal risk to be with the maneuver forces to ensure success.

In comparing Inchon's degree of risk with Anzio and Marne, the latter two could bring an earlier end to the war, but if unsuccessful would not in themselves lose the war. Inchon's failure however, could lose the war because there were no more major units in reserve to reinforce the Korean theater. General Collins told MacArthur, "General, you are going to have to win the war out here with the troops available to you in Japan and Korea."<sup>151</sup>

#### IV. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In analyzing these three battles, all were high risk, high tempo operational maneuvers. All three plans achieved operational surprise. All three commanders were among the most talented, experienced, competent and accomplished generals their countries had available. However, only one operational maneuver succeeded and this one entailed perhaps the most risk and demanded the fastest tempo. Inchon was also the only one that began at the lowest possible ebb of war for the operational commander, when the theater of operations is at the brink of defeat. Yet Inchon succeeded, in large part because it was the only operation in which the commander showed the moral determination to fully embrace the risk he was taking and executed the plan as it was designed. No Guts-No Glory!

As a final note on these three commanders, I would like to draw attention to their ages. Von Clausewitz's and Fuller's linkages between age, risk taking and efficiency among senior commanders (described in section II of monograph) tend not to hold true. When Lucas and Moltke were relieved, after Anzio and Marne, they were fifty-four and sixty-six years old, respectively. According to von Clausewitz and Fuller we might suspect MacArthur to be the youngest, however, he was seventy-one.

With limited time, forces and resources, General MacArthur was compelled to defeat the North Koreans by executing an operational "maneuver" which included the acceptance of a high degree of risk. This scenario is indicative of the type of thought that current U.S. doctrine expects operational commanders to demonstrate by accepting risk and maneuvering.<sup>152</sup> However, although there are many operational commanders, only a few may be capable of accepting the necessary risk of executing an operational "maneuver".

War, like boxing, is a fight between two opponents. But just as the art of boxing has changed, the tactics of warfighting must also evolve as the art and opponents become more sophisticated. Boxing originally began with an attrition style of fighting, whereby opponents were required to "Toe the Line" drawn across the center of the ring. The stronger opponent won because neither were allowed to maneuver around the ring. However, the Marquis of Queensberry established new rules which eliminated the "Toe

the Line" rule and put mobility into prize fighting. Thereafter the stronger opponent did not always win. The opponent that could maneuver faster and be more clever with his punches could win the fight by wearing down his opponent and hitting him with a surprise knockout blow. Today's warfighting is much the same.<sup>153</sup>

In past military conflicts, the U.S. ultimately prevails by "wearing down the enemy by being bigger not smarter".<sup>154</sup> In battle with the Soviets, the relative combat power is not likely to favor U.S. forces. Given the two styles of warfare: attrition, based on firepower, and maneuver, based on the concentration and economy of forces, the U.S. has historically chosen attrition as its style of warfare.<sup>155</sup> On the modern battlefield, with Soviets as our opponents, the U.S. will need to adopt a more maneuver style of fighting to win. The implication of which is to fully embrace the complete concept of risk and maneuver in our doctrine, education and exercises.

While maneuver increases the potential of success it also increases the level of risk in an operation. Therefore, maneuver often carries a greater chance of failure. This increased chance of failure does not meld well with the well known U.S. military's "zero defects" mentality. As LTG (Ret.) Julius Becton Jr. stated, "Unfortunately, across the board, the system does not support risk-takers."<sup>156</sup> Consequently, attrition warfare being less risky is more frequently adopted. It is said that the

post Vietnam era changed the motto "Duty, Honor, Country" to "Me-My Ass-My Career".<sup>157</sup> Obviously, a system with this philosophy does not breed risk takers. Without risk taking, our warfighting doctrine cannot be implemented. We should therefore renew our efforts to emphasize and evaluate risk taking among the officer corps.

One possibility is to incorporate high risk, high tempo maneuvers in our operational exercises, such as field training, command post and map exercises. These exercises would be orchestrated to enhance operational risk taking by providing scenarios which restrict operational commanders in time and combat forces in accomplishing their mission. For example, today's spectrum of conflict predicts a high probability of a "crisis response" like the limited war in Korea, or the "use of force" in a distant immature theater where a third world country may have seized the tempo of battle against our ally. (Figure 1, Appendix A)

In such a scenario, U.S. forces are deployed in theater to seize the initiative. Normally, our solution becomes time and force intensive, as we build our force in order to rely upon our numerical advantage to win by attrition. Rather, we should train to accept risk at an early stage with minimal forces, albeit technological advantage, to attack the decisive points of the enemy's center of gravity through operational maneuver; much like MacArthur did at Inchon. This procedure will train our operation commanders and their staff to recognize, identify and exploit enemy vulnerabilities

by employing high risk maneuvers, under time constraints, to gain the initiative and seize the tempo of battle. (Figure 2, Appendix A)

We must train to maximize our technological advantage by a maneuver style of warfighting. We should envision the battlefield not like a checker game where all the pieces are given the same maneuver potential, but like a chess game. In chess, unlike checkers, a match can be won or lost in as few as four moves. By maneuvering in a high risk, high tempo environment, campaigns can be won quickly thereby minimizing friendly and collateral losses.

In a recent exercise, examining a post-Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) conflict in NATO's Allied Forces Central Region, conducted at the School of Advanced Military Studies, the following observations were documented:<sup>158</sup>

(1) A CFE force structure increases the importance that operational commanders must accept risk to resolve time-space issues in conducting maneuver warfare and AirLand Battle doctrine.

(2) Operational commanders must habitually train to intellectually contend with uncertainty and risk associated with maneuver warfare.

Another method to improve and emphasize risk taking, in order to hone our maneuver skills, is to re-examine current leadership and AirLand Battle doctrine. Notwithstanding the doctrinal linkages with risk that our warfighting and leadership manuals have identified, risk is inadequately

addressed; particularly at the operational level. For example, in FM 100-5, two of the tenants of AirLand Battle, depth and synchronization, make no mention at all of risk taking.<sup>159</sup> Additionally, in FM 101-5, Staff Organizations and Operations, as well as Command and General Staff College Student Text 100-9, The Command Estimate, there are no references to risk in key phases of the Military Decision Process (i.e. issuance of command guidance and mission analysis).<sup>160</sup> Finally, in FM 22-103, the requirement for risk taking is made, however the manual inadequately addresses the development of a command climate that supports risk taking.<sup>161</sup> The key point is, that given the role of risk in maneuver warfare, our doctrine should more comprehensively address its implications and applications, thereby improving its understanding and implementation among senior commanders.

Finally, operational art is only as good as its operational artist. We should therefore closely examine whether a senior officer is risk disposed or risk averse prior to selecting him as an operational commander. This can be accomplished, in part, by looking at his "track record". We must be able to determine not only if he takes risks during warfighting scenarios, but whether or not he is successful in taking them. Reports indicate that risk taking is an inherent part of an individual's personality which will impact on all of his decisions.<sup>162</sup> A study by the Syracuse University Research Corporation, demonstrated that it is feasible to obtain risk profiles which predict decision judgements of Army officers.<sup>163</sup> By careful examination of personality traits we may well be able to determine if a commander has the guts to win glory!

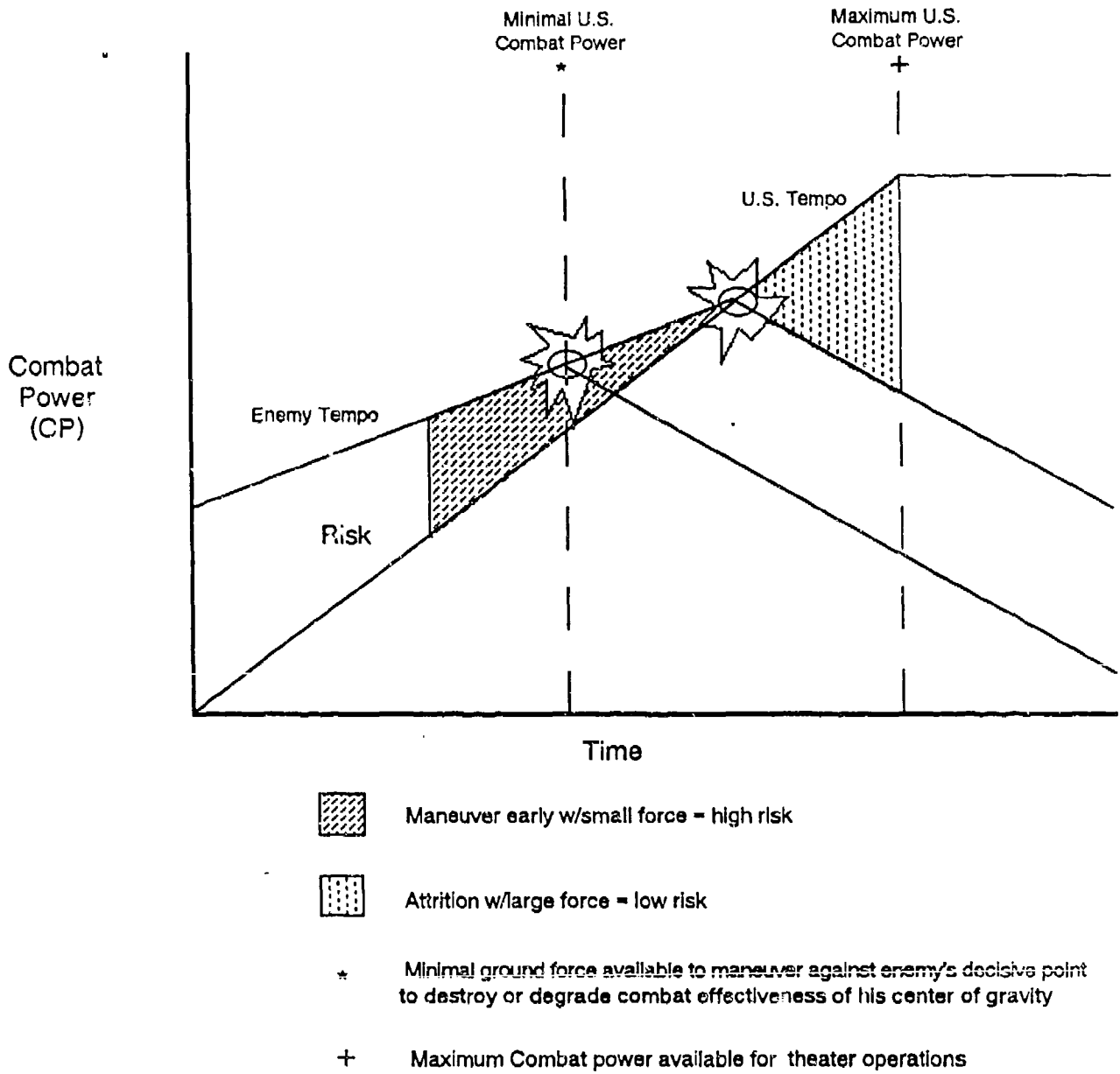


Figure 2

*The Spectrum of Conflict*

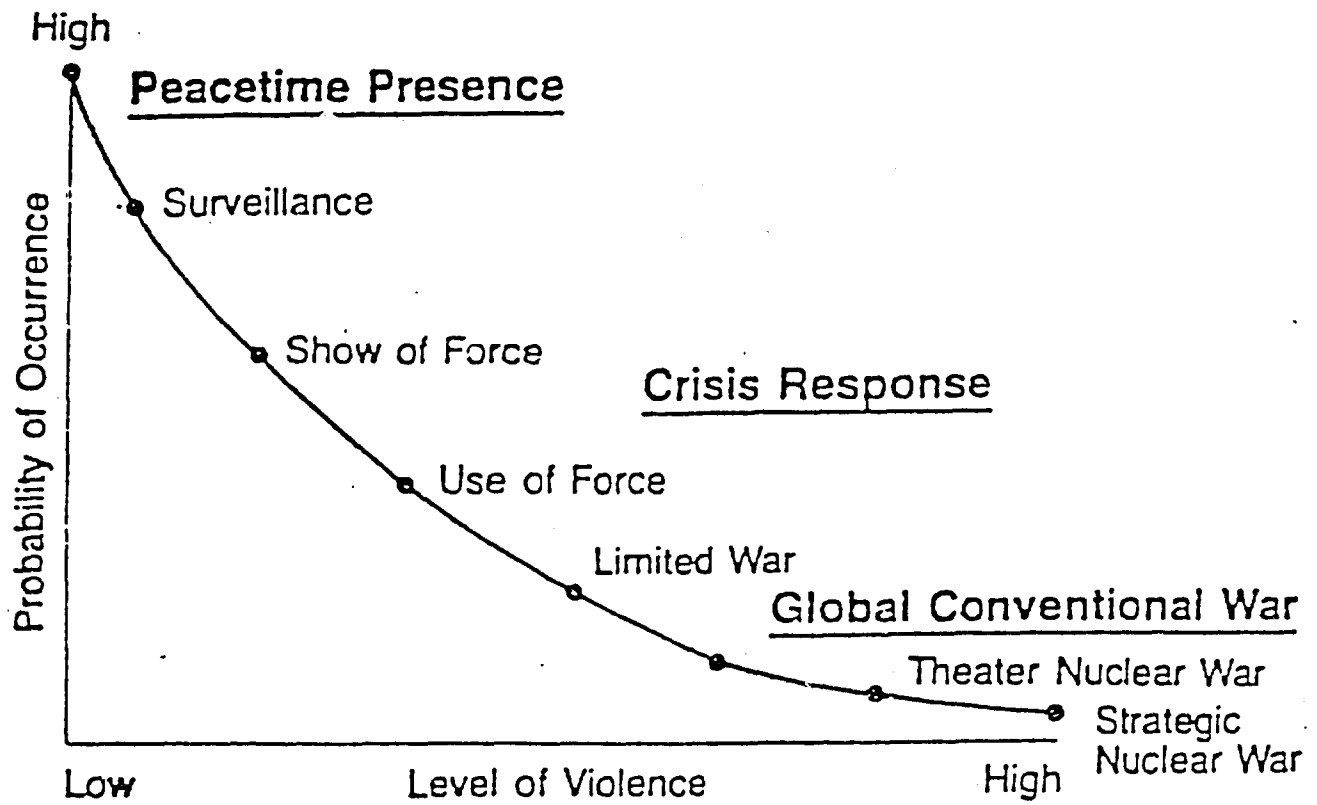


Figure 1



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