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**THE WAR ON DRUGS -- CAN AN OPERATIONAL
ARTIST HELP WIN IT?**

**A Monograph
by
Major Matthew L. Smith
Armor**



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**School of Advanced Military Studies
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The War on Drugs -- Can an Operational Artist Help Win It?

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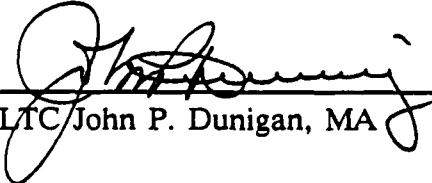
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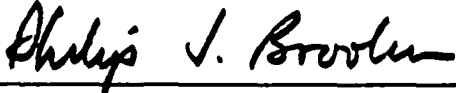
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ABSTRACT

THE WAR ON DRUGS -- CAN AN OPERATIONAL ARTIST HELP WIN IT? by
Major Matthew L. Smith, USA, 49 pages.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the current drug war and to determine if an operational artist's approach to planning and problem solving is applicable for the United States in its war against drugs. This paper is significant because the military's role in the drug war, while limited and sporadic in the past, is increasing, and if civilian agencies currently fighting the lion's share of the war continue to lose ground, then the military can expect to see its involvement significantly expanded.

The following methodology was used to examine the drug war and to make a determination concerning the applicability of an operational artist's methods. First, a current estimate of the drug war is presented. Its purpose is to identify the drug war's major participants; present their goals, objectives, and strategies; identify their bases, lines of operation and current use of available means and methods of operation; and discuss possible strengths and weaknesses. Second, the central concepts of operational art are identified and discussed and a determination is made concerning their applicability. The concepts examined are; operational art itself, centers of gravity, the relationship between ends, ways, means, and strategy, campaign planning, branches and sequels, culminating points, and operational maneuver. In addition operational guidance for the design and conduct of an operational artist's campaign plan for the drug war is presented.

This study concludes that the central concepts of operational art and an operational artist's planning methods are applicable and can help the U.S. turn the tide in its war on drugs.

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INTRODUCTION

"The inhabitants of the earth spend more money on illegal drugs than they spend on food. More than they spend on housing, clothes, education, medical care, or any other product or service. The international narcotics industry is the largest growth industry in the world. Its annual revenues exceed half a trillion dollars - three times the value of all United States currency in circulation, more than the gross national products of all but a half dozen of the major industrialized nations."

The United States is fighting a war against the international narcotics industry. The war has been going on for over a century starting with the importation of opium in the early nineteenth century. The war was expanded with the refinement of opium into morphine and the large scale addiction of the Civil War's wounded, and in the 1880's with the discovery and marketing of the "wonder drug" cocaine that was used to treat a host of medical problems ranging from morphine addiction and alcoholism to nasal sprays and teething syrups for babies. Add in organized crime control beginning in the 1930's, the complex social and political movements in the 1960's and 1970's when drug usage became acceptable and even indispensable in some population segments, and finally the growth and maturity of the Latin drug cartels of the 1970's and 1980's and one can begin to comprehend the scope and complexity of the drug war.²

If one measures success in winning the drug war by the amount of drugs currently entering the United States, or by the market price users have to pay for their drugs, or by the number of existing drug trafficking rings, then it can be said that the United States is currently losing this war.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the current drug war and to determine if an operational artist's approach to planning and problem solving is applicable for the United States in its war against drugs. This paper is significant because the military's role in the drug war, while limited and sporadic in the past, is increasing, and if civilian agencies currently fighting the lion's

share of the war continue to lose ground, then the military can expect to see its involvement significantly expanded. In addition, when the President of the United States, the Commander and Chief of all U.S. military forces, states that drug abuse and drug trafficking pose a threat to national security, then the military (whose primary mission is national security) had better get on board. Military leaders have a duty to assume a leadership position in developing the strategy, the goals, the objectives and end-state, and the ways to employ the available means.

The following methodology was used to examine the drug war and to make a determination concerning the applicability of an operational artist's methods. First, a current estimate of the drug war is presented. Its purpose is to identify the drug war's major participants; present their goals, objectives, and strategies; identify their bases, lines of operation and current use of available means and methods of operation; and discuss possible strengths and weaknesses. Second, the central concepts of operational art are identified and discussed and a determination is made concerning their applicability. The concepts examined are; operational art itself, centers of gravity, the relationship between ends, ways, means, and strategy, campaign planning, branches and sequels, culminating points, and operational maneuver. In addition operational guidance for the design and conduct of an operational artist's campaign plan for the drug war is presented.

THE DRUG WAR

This section presents a current estimate of the drug war. It includes a discussion of the major participants in the drug war, their strategies, their base and lines of operations, their current use of available means and methods of operation. In addition their possible strengths and weaknesses are examined.

The major participants in the drug war are the United States, the drug source and trafficking (S/T) countries (Mexico, Colombia,

Bolivia, Peru, Panama, Burma, Bahamas, and Turkey), and the domestic and foreign organized crime and narcotics cartels.

The United States

"...America's struggle against cocaine is much more like the war in Vietnam. As in Vietnam, the United States is fighting an adversary that is adept at concealing itself among the civilian population and operates from safe haven across international borders. As in Vietnam, the United States has misspent billions, botched both strategy and tactics, and consistently underestimated the enemy. And as in Vietnam, America is slowly losing the war. There is one vital difference, of course: this time the United States cannot pull out. Cocaine and crack are among the most addictive substances known to modern science, and they have already ruined the lives of millions of Americans."³

The U.S. drug trade's estimated annual value is over 100 billion dollars.⁴ Over 26 million Americans are drug addicts or use drugs on a recurring basis. Nearly 20 million people abuse marijuana, 6 million people abuse cocaine, and 500 thousand people abuse heroin.⁵ Americans annually purchase and consume the following amounts of illegal drugs:

| <u>DRUG</u> | <u>AMOUNT (tons)⁶</u> | <u>MAJOR SOURCES⁷</u> |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Marijuana | 4,6940 | United States Columbia Mexico Jamaica Belize |
| Cocaine | 73 | Bolivia Peru Columbia Ecuador |
| Heroin | 6 | Burma Afghanistan Iran Laos Mexico |

The current "National Strategy" employed by the United States in its war on drugs is twofold; to decrease the demand for drugs by its citizens through education, medical treatment and detoxification, research and punishing the users and to decrease or eliminate the supply of drugs available in the United States through eradication, interdiction, and punishing the drug organizations that control the drug flow. The "National Strategy" is composed of five principal elements, each directed at one part of the overall drug problem. The elements of the "National Strategy" call for actions aimed at:

- Reducing the quantity of illegal drugs entering the United States by bringing political and economic pressure to bear on drug producing countries.
- Increasing the resources available to domestic law enforcement agencies to improve coordination and cooperation.
- Increasing basic research concerning the nature of drug abuse, and towards improving intelligence gathering and drug eradication techniques.
- Improving medical detoxification and treatment programs.
- Assisting in drug abuse prevention through greater drug education efforts.*

In August of 1986, President Reagan announced, "six major goals for what we hope will be the final stage in our national strategy to eradicate drug abuse." The six goals for President Reagan's "national crusade against drugs" were:

- To seek a drug-free workplace for all Americans.
- To provide drug-free schools from grade school through universities.
- To ensure the public is protected and those involved in drugs are treated.
- To enlist full and active cooperation of every country with which the United States must work to defeat international drug trafficking.
- To strengthen law enforcement.
- To increase efforts to expand public awareness and prevention.*

In addition to these goals, President Reagan also stated:

"Earlier this year I raised the priority of drug abuse by declaring it a threat to our national security. we can take

additional steps to expand our joint efforts in affecting or attacking drug and narcotic traffickers at the source; continue Vice President Bush's initiatives to increase the support given by the United States military to drug law enforcement operations whenever it's appropriate..."¹⁰

In March of 1989, Reagan's successor, President Bush promised that the United States would "go all out" in using its armed services against drugs when it was prudent to do so. President Bush told the Veterans of Foreign Wars;

"I mean to mobilize all our resources, wage this war on all fronts ... We're going to combat drug abuse with education, treatment, enforcement, and yes, interdiction, and yes, with our nation's armed services.""¹¹

Drug czar-designate, William Bennett, responsible for preparing the United States' future national anti-drug strategy, will be looking "very hard" at the "best and most fruitful way that the military could be used."¹²

The lines of operation for the U.S. anti-drug efforts run from Washington through six major U.S. cities that are considered key regional drug importing or trafficking centers. These cities are Miami, New York, Los Angeles, El Paso, New Orleans and Chicago. The National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS), established in March of 1983, has the mission of coordinating these six regional drug enforcement efforts and to monitor suspected smuggling lines of operation originating outside the national borders and coordinate agencies' seizures of contraband and arrests of persons involved in illegal drug importations.¹³

The United States is currently using its available means for the following purposes; to enlist international support in the war, to stop the flow of of drugs from source to user, and to reduce demand through education, detoxification, and research.

Political and economic means are being used to encourage international support and to punish drug source countries that fail to fully cooperate in the war. In 1986, a certification

program was established that requires the President to annually review the anti-drug efforts of major drug source and trafficking countries to determine if they are cooperating in the war. Countries deemed "uncooperative" are identified and lose half of their U.S. military and economic aid and could suffer other economical penalties. In 1988, President Reagan "decertified" Syria, Iran, Afghanistan and Panama.¹⁴

There are 11 cabinet departments and 37 federal agencies and departments being used to fight the lion's share of the drug war. The anti-drug effort is headed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). They are supported by numerous other agencies such as U.S. Customs Service, the Coast Guard, and the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration. These civilian agencies are directly responsible for establishing policy, conducting research, gathering intelligence, and trying to curb the flow and use of illegal drugs.¹⁵

Military means are being used in a twofold manner; to train and to support. The military provides training for federal, state and local law enforcement authorities. This includes increasing their capability to detect, pursue and apprehend traffickers in difficult environments. In addition, training in land navigation, rappelling, and jungle survival is provided. Specialized training is available in the use of land radars and other sophisticated equipment such as night vision imaging systems. Basic arms instruction is also provided and drug enforcement personnel utilize military pistol and rifle ranges. The military provides personnel and equipment support to directly aid in the protection of U.S. borders including contributions from all the services in surveillance, detection, acquisition, tracking and pursuit of drug traffickers.¹⁶

Increased involvement by the military is only a matter of time. Proposed Senate legislation would make the interdiction of drugs outside U.S. borders an official military mission and would empower the military to make arrests outside U.S. territory or

water. The House of Representatives' proposed legislation would allow military arrests on U.S. soil and would permit interdiction patrols of U.S. troops along the nation's southern border.¹⁷

In February of 1989, the military outlined its 308 million dollar program before a House Armed Services subcommittee, showing how the Armed Forces will increase its role in the war. First, it will help build a secure communications system and complete a "fence" of radar-equipped balloons along the U.S. southern border to help law enforcement agencies detect and stop clandestine drug shipments. Second, the National Guard will be used in a twofold manner: along the southern border to search incoming cars, trucks and packages; and to locate and destroy domestic drug fields. Finally, the military is exploring ways to use a variety of intelligence assets, including Central Intelligence Agency spy satellites and the wire-tapping skills of the National Security Agency, to pinpoint incoming drug shipments as well as drug production areas overseas.¹⁸

Currently, the United States employs its means in various ways. These various ways include; eradication at the source, interdiction while in transit, and attacking the cartels themselves.

Eradication efforts are headed by the State Department and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Eradication entails finding or identifying areas used to grow plants used in drug production and spraying them with powerful herbicides to destroy the plants before they can be harvested for drug production. The U.S. uses its diplomatic and economic influence to encourage source countries into eradicating their drug fields. The U.S. spends over 40 million dollars annually in South America to curb coca plant growth.¹⁹ In addition, the U.S. military has assisted South American police in domestic anti-drug sweeps with the aim of destroying drug processing labs, supply points and capturing members of drug rings.²⁰

Interdiction efforts are headed by the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. Interdiction entails detecting and

intercepting possible carriers of illegal drugs. Interdiction is primarily the civilian agencies' responsibility with the military playing a supporting role by either conducting reconnaissance, providing intelligence or by providing air and sea transport.²¹ Interdiction efforts are hampered because more than 265 million people entered the United States via land in 1987, 30 million more by air. Also coming in were 421,000 commercial airline flights, 250,000 private planes, 84,000 merchant ships, 125,000 private boats, and more than 7 million cargo containers. The Pentagon estimates the minimal forces needed to stop small boats, planes, and vehicles from bringing drugs into the country are:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 90 infantry battalions | 1,000 fighter aircraft |
| 50 helicopter companies | 160 cruisers and destroyers |
| 54,000 Army personnel | 90 P-3 antisubmarine aircraft |
| 100 AWACS aircraft | 30 E-2 airborne radar aircraft ²² |
| 50 aerostat radar systems | |

The FBI's and the DEA's strategy is to attack major drug traffickers and money-laundering organizations dealing in heroin and cocaine with long-term investigations, using court-authorized electronic surveillance and other methods that will allow them to solve those particular crimes and present a case that will deal with a major organization. The Bureau estimates that there are over 450 major drug trafficking organizations in Latin America, Mexico, the United States and Italy. The Bureau was able to put less than 10 of these major organizations out of business in 1988. Currently 1,100 FBI agents and 2,500 DEA agents are attacking less than 40% of those 450 organizations.²³ The "National Narcotics Prosecution Strategy" has Justice Department attorneys targeting international multistate organizations trafficking in large amounts of narcotics: 10 kilograms of heroin a year, 50 kilograms of cocaine, 10,000 kilograms of marijuana. In addition, prosecutors are concentrating on big money-laundering groups -- those that launder \$5 million dollars or more derived from narcotics sales.²⁴

The strength of the United States' anti-drug efforts are grounded in its bipartisan support from the Congress and the people. Also, the U.S.'s significant technological and numerical edge in available means can be considered a strength. In addition, the U.S.'s moral or just cause for fighting drug abuse by U.S. citizens serves as a strength.

The weaknesses in the United States anti-drug approach are; the lack of consistent and clear cut strategic guidance, the lack of funds, intra-agency/department bickering and working against each other, and an unsupportive military.

There has been a lack of clear cut and effective strategic initiatives by top level leadership and no long-term continuity of national strategy and strategic goals and objectives during the past two decades.²⁵ Under the Ford and Carter administrations marijuana and cocaine investigations were de-emphasized and heroin was made top priority. In September 1975, the Domestic Council Drug Abuse Task Force chaired by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller produced a "white paper" that dismissed marijuana as a minor problem and stated that "cocaine is not physically addictive."²⁶ Peter Bourne, a psychiatrist who served as President Carter's adviser on drugs, held that "cocaine is probably the most benign of illicit drugs currently in widespread use." In 1974, Bourne wrote:

"At least as strong a case could probably be made for legalizing cocaine as for legalizing marijuana. Short acting - about 15 minutes -- not physically addicting, and acutely pleasurable, cocaine has found increasing favor at all socioeconomic levels in the last year.... One must ask what possible justification there can be for the obsession which DEA officials have with it, and what criteria they use to determine the priority they give the interdiction of a drug if it is not the degree of harm which it causes the user."²⁷

In contrast to both the Ford and Carter administrations' cavalier attitude for drug abuse and trafficking, President Reagan's Commission on Organized Crime in its March 1986 report,

"America's Habit; Drug Abuse, Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime" stated;

"International drug traffickers should be considered a threat to our national security because they comprise a direct attack on the physical and social well-being of our country."²⁸

Federal money spent has not been enough and has not matched political rhetoric. In the 1970's, President Carter slashed the drug enforcement budget.²⁹ In the early 1980's, President Reagan made speeches condemning drug trafficking and drug abuse, but his initial budgets proposed to slash funds for drug enforcement and for treatment and prevention programs. President Reagan wanted to reduce the size of federal government and argued that "under the Constitution, criminal law enforcement, drug prosecution and other such popular causes were state and local responsibilities."³⁰

The civilian agencies fighting the drug war are competing and fighting amongst themselves.³¹ Agencies such as the FBI, DEA, Customs and various drug enforcement task forces are required to compete with each other for federal funds and agent slots. The measure of an agency's success in the eyes of Congress, the media, and the American people is the amount and dollar value of drugs seized in an arrest.³² Critics charge that the DEA is more interested in seizing loads of drugs than developing long-term strategies to strike at the hearts of the trafficking organizations.³³ The South Florida Task Force wanted all federal drug seizures in South Florida to be announced by the White House and credited to the head of the South Florida Task Force, then Vice President Bush. Customs and DEA disagreed with this policy and wanted their own agencies to announce and be credited with their own seizures.³⁴

Internationally, the policy of encouraging control of drugs at the source flounders because of bureaucratic and diplomatic constraints. The battle against the Latin cartels is intertwined with politics and diplomacy. Drug interdiction or eradication is of secondary importance, if not a threat, to multinational

corporations, big banks, and their representatives at the Treasury Department, whose principal interest is sustaining cordial relations with Latin governments that owe U.S. lenders billions of dollars. In addition, U.S. fears of Soviet and Cuban activism in Latin America give lower priority to suppressing drugs than to counteracting Cuban and Soviet influence and crushing leftist guerrilla movements.³⁵

The Department of Defense has consistently resisted military involvement in drug interdiction; first, on the grounds that it would interfere with and impair the performance of its primary missions and second, that the performance of law enforcement chores by the military is contrary to the historic and institutional separation of military and civil functions.³⁶

The bottom line concerning U.S. efforts in the drug war is twofold; it has the popular and political support needed to wage the war and the means are available for fighting it. The main reasons for the drug war's poor results are that the war has been fought with inconsistent national strategy, with changing strategic goals and objectives, and in a poorly focused and unsynchronized manner.

The Source and Transit (S/T) Countries

The major source countries exporting illegal drugs to the U.S. are Columbia (which refines 75-80% of the cocaine used in U.S. and as much as 70% of the marijuana³⁷), Mexico, Bolivia, Peru, Belize, and Burma. The major transit countries are Mexico, Hong Kong and the Bahamas. Due to the similarities in their political structure, strategies, and problems, the S/T countries will be addressed as a group instead of as individual nations.

In general, the S/T countries are floundering democracies.³⁸ Their elected officials are trying to reform countries that for many generations served only the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor and weak. Corruption in all areas and levels of their administrative bureaucracies is rampant. Both right- and left-wing

factions are trying to force the governments to concede to the factions' demands through a campaign of violence and terror. Besides the right- and left-wing factions, these governments are fighting or competing against drug organizations or cartels that are much wealthier and may be more influential with the citizenry than the governments themselves.

The primary concern of the S/T countries' political leaders is not stopping the flow of drugs into the United States. These leaders form their national strategies using the following priorities:

- The key concern is survival, both physically and politically. The key threats to their survival are the drug cartels and right- and left-wing factions.

- Their next concern is maintaining or improving the economic well being of their countries. Most of these countries are very poor and in massive debt to western banks. Their chief legal exports are agriculture products such as coffee, bananas, sugar cane, tobacco, and cocoa. Many of these countries base a great portion of their economy on the drug trade, some as great as one-half or more.

- Ending criminal and political violence is also a concern. This will require either the pacification or the elimination of the political factions and the drug cartels.

- Weeding out wholesale corruption in the political and administrative bureaucracies. The massive degree of corruption is due to the seemingly endless supply of money used by the major drug cartels to bribe or corrupt officials.

- Reducing drug abuse and drug production. Drug abuse is a recent problem and is growing larger.

A dilemma occurs because these priorities clash. Surviving, maintaining the economic well being, and ending violence, clash with trying to reduce or fight drug trafficking. The chart below may help in understanding how and why the S/T countries act:

HOW THE PEOPLE OF S/T COUNTRIES SEE IT

Legally elected officials

Leaders of corrupt bureaucracies that for years have been cheating the people and supporting a system in which the rich own the land and the means of production, while the poor are exploited and without

Drug Cartels

Providers of jobs and billion of dollars in aid and commerce. The Capos have created local bases by constructing sports arenas, buying ambulances

hope of ever bettering themselves."³⁹ for hospitals and even building housing projects for their nation's homeless.⁴⁰

People that support U.S. backed eradication efforts that leave thousands of peasants without a means of feeding their families or surviving.

Give peasants a way to earn more money than they ever had before (growing coca and marijuana). Over 500,000 peasants are employed.

Cause of violence by their failure to reform their countries fast enough, their right-wing death squads, and their fighting with leftist guerillas and drug traffickers.

Viewed as peacemakers for their alliance with guerillas, other cartels and attempts to negotiate with the government to legalize the production of cocaine and marijuana.

Weaklings that bend to U.S. demands for extradition of their citizens.

Heroes defying "Yankee" or imperialist intervention.

The bottom line concerning the S/T governments is that they are not in control of their countries or of their citizens. The drug cartels are as powerful or more powerful than the elected governments.⁴¹ The illegal drug trade brings billions of dollars into these countries economies through the cartels' employment of hundreds of thousands of farm families and city dwellers who grow, refine, and transport coca and marijuana.⁴² The drug trade's size, combined with its illegality, has generated tremendous corruption, lawlessness, and violence throughout the S/T countries. Government officials ranging from common police officers to judges to high-ranking police, military officials and supreme court judges, and to cabinet ministers have been offered bribes many times their annual government salaries. If the bribes are not accepted, cooperation is attained by the threat of violence.⁴³

Despite what appears to be a hopeless situation, the S/T governments are trying to free themselves of the drug cartels shackles. Their strategy and use of available means includes

seeking international support in the form of economic, civilian law enforcement and military aid. Also, they are using their own civilian agencies and military to attack the cartels and put the drug lords in prison. In addition, they are increasing eradication of drug fields by both manual and aerial spraying techniques and they are targeting "demand" through increased education and drug treatment.

Economic aid is needed by the S/T countries to help take back the farmers and city dwellers by providing a legal way to earn a living and support a family. Civilian law enforcement aid is needed to provide intelligence and equipment to help combat the cartels by destroying their organizations, their refinery labs and eradicating their drug fields. Military aid is needed, mainly in the form of equipment and training, again to combat the cartels.

Education is an important weapon against the cartels because many farmers and city dwellers who work for the drug cartels are unaware that they are working for criminals and murders. Also these workers are unaware of the misery and destruction that is caused by the use and sale of drugs.

The S/T countries' strengths are as follows. They are the legal representatives of the people and are authorized to employ the civilian and military might of their countries to fight the drug cartels. Also, the U.S. appears eager to help by providing money, manpower, and equipment and the recent rise in domestic drug violence and drug abuse is causing the common man to turn away from supporting drug cartels. In addition, improvements in aerial herbicides are making eradication efforts more efficient and farmers are more reluctant to grow coca and marijuana plants.

The S/T countries' weaknesses are numerous and severely cripple their anti-drug efforts. These nations are poor countries with limited resources. Their political power is fragmented and weak and corruption severely hampers control and execution of civilian and military anti-drug means. Their economies are heavily dependent on drug trafficking because hundreds of thousands of their citizens earning their living from growing, refining,

transiting or selling drugs. Finally, their enforcement efforts are opposed by left-wing factions that are employed by the drug cartels to guard fields, refineries, and conduct acts of terrorism.

The Drug Cartels and Their Allies

"We are like the U.S. troops sitting on the Yalu River during the Korean War; well-trained, well-disciplined, well-equipped...facing an enemy that has unlimited resources and safe bases."**

The men who control or contribute to the worldwide trafficking of drugs are a mixed bag. They include the communist leadership of Burma, Cuba, China, Soviet Union and the worldwide revolutionaries they support, Muslim revolutionaries in Afghanistan and Lebanon, the upper class and wealthy families of Latin America and their cartels, the Mafia, and corrupt government officials worldwide. While some of these men and organizations work for each other, no central strategy coordinates or guides their collective actions.

The people and organizations who control the vast majority of drugs entering the U.S. are the Latin cartels. Since they are by far the U.S. greatest threat, they will be the focus of the remainder of this section.

The Latin drug cartels' aims concerning drug trafficking are to make as much money and attain as much power as they can. The cartels are sophisticated, determined, and ruthless multinational conglomerates.** They are structured and highly organized. Command and control is provided by prominent, upper-class, Latin American citizens, well known in their homelands and to U.S. law enforcement agencies. The people of Latin America sardonically nicknamed them "the magicians" because everyone can see them except the police.** The cartels employ their means in highly specialized ways to accomplish the following aims;

- To increase the acreage or amount of coca, marijuana and opium that is grown annually.
- To refine or produce drugs by the tons in an efficient and business-like manner.
- To transport their products worldwide safely and securely.
- To control the wholesale and retail end of the operation.
- To increase their market share of the drug business even if that means going to war with other drug traffickers.
- To control their base countries' governments and their law enforcement efforts through corruption, bribery and violence.
- To control or neutralize, through corruption, bribery and violence, the governments and their law enforcement efforts of countries where drugs are distributed and sold.

The cartels are federations of groups working together to grow, refine, traffic and sell illegal drugs. There are groups specialized in obtaining the necessary raw materials and delivering them to select clandestine laboratories throughout Latin America and the United States. There are groups responsible for security and for subverting law enforcement agents, military officials, judges, lawyers, and politicians. Other groups specialize in the transportation of the refined drugs to worldwide markets. Inside the U.S., the cartels control a major part of drug distribution, relying on a pool of thousands of Latin American aliens living in Miami, New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Also the cartels deal directly with U.S. gangs such as the Los Angeles based Crips and Bloods and Jamaican "Posses" who serve as domestic distributors in major cities throughout the United States.

Two key reasons why the Latin cartels are so effective in getting drugs into the U.S. are their use of multiple lines of operations and their variety of smuggling techniques or methods of operations. Drugs are as likely to land at Miami International Airport in a commercial airliner as they are to land on some hidden airstrip in a light plane. Drugs have been hidden behind panels and in the nose cones of commercial jets and in cargoes of orchids. They have been packed in false panels in heavy wooden furniture, brought in by freighter, and dissolved in bottles of imported wines. They have been smuggled over the border from

Mexico in trucks and cars and similarly brought in from Canada. Drugs have been unloaded from ships off Long Island, New England, California, and Oregon, and flown in on aircraft hidden among the planes and helicopters serving the oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.⁴⁷

While the cartels operate on numerous lines of operation, the majority of the drugs entering the U.S. utilize two primary lines of operation. Both lines start with the importation of drugs or materials (coca paste, marijuana, opium and the chemicals and equipment needed for refinement) into Colombia; direct by air from any of 3,000 airstrips, by trucks riding the Pan-American Highway, and by boats sailing the Pacific coast.⁴⁸ Colombia serves as the major refinement and processing node and also as home base for cartel leadership and their hemisphere wide communications network. From Colombia, the majority of drugs targeted for the U.S. market are shipped or flown to southern Florida. The reasons for using south Florida as the major transit and storage node are:

- Its unlimited accessibility by small boats and its very large navy of commercial/private boats.
- Its proximity to Latin America and other island nations.
- Its large Black and Latin American populations.
- The wholesale corruption and inefficiency of its local police force.
- Its history as a smugglers and organized crime haven.

If flown, drugs usually follow one of two paths;

- Flights follow the eastern coast of Central America, with refueling stops in Nicaragua or Belize, then into the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. There the planes head directly north over the Yucatan capital of Merida enroute to destinations along the U.S. Gulf Coast.

- Flights head northeast from Colombia and swing over the Bahama Islands chain before going straight into South Florida.⁴⁹

If shipped, the common means of shipment is via a "mothership," a 60- to 300-foot vessel which transfers its cargo to smaller high speed boats for the trip through U.S. coastal

waters and to the Florida coast. These high speed boats are usually private subcontractors, part of what is a major cottage industry in Miami. The small boat owners' strength lies in their detailed knowledge of the shallow waters along the Florida coast and their secret huequitos, "little holes," where they land. There are hundreds if not thousands of "little holes" in South Florida -- inlets, coves, bays, canals, causeways, swamps, and estuaries -- and every boatman has his own, unknown not only to law enforcement agencies, but to his colleagues as well.⁶⁰ The Bahamas serves as an ideal transshipment point from mothership to speed boat due to its proximity to southern Florida, the remote nature of many of the 700 islands in the archipelago, and the relative impunity smugglers have enjoyed there.⁶¹

A combination of air and sea routes have been developed and used. It entails the flying of drugs to U.S. coastal waters, making a communications link-up with high speed boats and air dropping the drugs into the sea for the boats to recover and carry back to the coast.

Once inside the U.S. drugs are off loaded and turned over to distribution groups (Latin aliens, Jamaican and U.S. gangs) for wholesale and retail operations. The distribution groups work under a strict code of discipline. A distributors' "bible" has been developed and is in print. It includes instructions for buying houses to be used for storing and selling drugs, who should subsidize the house, who should live in the house, the obligations of the occupants, the minimum standards which a house must follow, who approves the selection of the house, who must come and go into the house, what must the occupants of the house have ready at all times, and things the occupants of a house must not do. Security arrangements are made by experts whom the cartels send to the U.S. to "sort out" operations after they had suffered a number of seizures and rip-offs. ⁶²

In addition to smuggling drugs into the U.S., the cartels have to launder or smuggle out of the country billions of dollars in small U.S. currency while keeping the Internal Revenue Service

or the Customs Service in the dark. Laundering is usually done through lawyers, investment brokers and bankers in Miami, the Bahamas, Jamaica and Panama. Money smuggling is usually done using the same lines of operation, but just reversing the direction used to smuggle drugs.

The cartels methods of operation are extremely sophisticated and synchronized. They have invested in the latest communications equipment such as state-of-the-art radios and pocket-sized digital encryption devices. Mechanics and pilots outfit smuggling aircraft with long-range navigation equipment, radio altimeters, beacon-interrogating digital radars and communication scramblers. The cartels' transit operations exhibit excellent flexibility and agility due to the fact that every country in Central or South America can be used as a supply base or transit landing point.⁶³

The cartels' strengths are numerous. They control the entire network of growing, refining, transporting, and distributing drugs. The cartels utilize unlimited lines of operation and bases and they have access to unlimited resources. They have alliances with communist, revolutionaries and terrorists and they control or disrupt the legal governments' administrations and their law enforcement efforts through bribery and violence. Finally, the cartels greatly benefit from the ever increasing worldwide demand for illegal drugs. A drug like cocaine that is highly addictive and that produces a sensation of euphoria and dazzling clarity of thought, "Like being on the roof of the world" or "like a thousand orgasms" is going to be in great demand regardless of price or how much people know about its dangers⁶⁴.

The cartels weaknesses are also numerous and may reveal the pathway to their destruction. The majority of the cartels' activities are illegal and their organizations are subject to arrest and prosecution by legal authorities. The cartels suffer from individual greed for money and power which serves to destroy any organizational loyalty (The drug traffickers greatest fear is an informant working undercover in his organization). The amorality of drug trafficking and the increase of drug abuse and

drug violence in Latin American countries have hurt the cartels by decreasing their popular support. The resolve of some countries to pursue and request extradition of known cartel leadership has caused cartel leadership to turn underground and flee from past safe havens. Finally, the coalition nature or make-up of the cartels is a key weakness. The cartels have to depend on other groups from other countries to make their organizations function:

- * Growers from several different countries.
- * Smugglers of different nationalities and loyalties.
- * Distribution networks that contain U.S. and Jamaican gangs.
- * Money-laundering and banking experts from several different nations.

One must conclude that the Latin drug cartels are very rich, powerful, sophisticated, and popular. The product they sell is in great and ever increasing demand worldwide, with the rich western nations demonstrating the largest drug appetites. The cartels are expertly managed by upper class leaders and businessmen who over the years have constructed very efficient drug producing, shipping and distribution networks. Without major changes in current U.S. anti-drug strategy and efforts, the cartels' futures appear bright and the U.S. can expect increased amounts of cheaper illegal drugs available on its streets and in its communities.

CENTRAL CONCEPTS OF OPERATIONAL ART

The purpose of the section is threefold; to present the central concepts of operational art, to determine their applicability in the U.S.'s war on drugs, and to present operational guidance concerning the design and execution of a possible anti-drug campaign plan. The concepts discussed are operational art itself, centers of gravity, the relationship between ends, ways, means, and strategy, campaign planning, branches and sequels, culminating points, and operational fires. After defining each concept and explaining its conventional

application, a discussion is presented and a determination is made concerning each concepts applicability to the drug war. This section ends with a presentation of operational guidance for the design of an anti-drug campaign.

Operational Art

"...art is some goal-oriented creative activity. An operation, like a painting, is created out of divisions, a battlefield, lines of operations, ammunition and so forth. These elements, like the paints, brushes and canvas of the painter, are the tools of the operational artist. But the form of the operation or a painting--the choice of combinations like the choice of shapes and colors, the intensity like the texture, the design like the composition--is not created by the army or the paint and brush. It is created by ideas."*

Operational art is defined in FM 100-5 as:

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...
...Operational art translates strategy into tactical and operational actions...Reduced to essentials, operational art requires the commander to answer three questions:

- What military condition must be produced in the theater of war or operations to achieve the strategic goal?
- What sequence of actions is most likely to produce that condition?
- How should the resources of the force be applied to accomplish that sequence of actions?

From the definition and description above, the minimum requirements for the conventional use or application of operation art are;

- A war or conflict exists (not limited to high- or mid-intensity).
- Strategic goals are established.
- Military forces are employed (size independent).
- A creative mind exists to design a campaign to achieve strategy goals through the sequencing and linking of operational and tactical actions.

In addition to the minimum requirements, constraints (restrictions on freedom of action such as strategic considerations), fog and friction (the unseen, unknown, and the

countless minor incidents that combine to lower the general level of performance) and logistics weigh heavily in the conduct of operational art."

Relating back to the war on drugs, it appears by definition that operational art is applicable:

- A war was declared by the commander in chief.
- Strategic goals, while ambiguous and broad, are established:
 - * Stop the flow of drugs into the United States.
 - * Decrease the demand for drugs by U.S. citizens.
 - * Provide safe and drug free neighborhoods, schools and work places.
- Military forces are employed and their role is rapidly being expanded.
- Creative minds, both civilian and military, are available.
- Constraints exist and logistics are a problem.

What appears to be missing is the responsibility and the authority needed for the operational artist to design and execute a campaign plan and the willingness on the part of the military to take up a leadership role in the planning, execution and materials support for the war.

Centers of Gravity

"Identification of the enemy's center of gravity and the design of actions which will ultimately expose it to attack and destruction while protecting our own, are the essence of the operational art." FM 100-5

The concept of centers of gravity is key to operational art. It derives from the fact that effective operations of complex organisms depend not merely on the performance of each of the organism's component parts, but also on the smoothness with which the components interact and their reliability. Some components are more vital than others for the smooth and reliable operation of the whole. If these components are damaged or destroyed, their loss unbalances the entire organism, producing a cascading

deterioration in cohesion and effectiveness which may result in complete organism failure. In broad terms centers of gravity are:

- Sources of strength or balance.
- Characteristics, capabilities, or localities from which freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight derives. ⁵⁷

- or as Clausewitz stated, "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends."

In conventional operations, centers of gravity are applicable at the operational and strategic levels of war (some theorists and current military doctrine include the tactical level). They have value in two specific ways:

- They assist theater commanders in analyzing their enemy's and their own sources of strength before they design their campaigns.

- They provide focus, direction and objective to subordinate commanders as they develop their own operations in support of the theater plan. In other words it helps to convey and to clarify intent. ⁵⁸

Strategic centers of gravity include; a key economic resource or locality, a strategic transport capability or popular and political support. Operational centers of gravity include; the mass of an enemy force, a boundary between two of its major combat formations or a vital command and control center. ⁵⁹

Centers of gravity are not constant. They change based on numerous events such as a major shift in operational direction, replacement of a key political leader or military commander or the introduction of new units or weaponry or the formation of a new military alliance. ⁶⁰ An analysis of the drug war reveals several elements or components that are possible or likely strategic and operational centers of gravity.

At the strategic level two components are key; the demand for drugs by U.S. citizens and the huge profit margin or money that can be made by trafficking in illegal drugs. The demand by over 26,000,000 Americans for illegal drugs is undoubtedly the "hub... on which everything depends." Simply put, end or curb the demand for illegal drugs by U.S. citizens and drug marketing and trafficking in the U.S. will cease or shrink. The same argument

can be made concerning the huge profit margin that exists in the trafficking of illegal drugs:

"The source of the Latin cartels' power is money, tens of billions of dollars of it. Money has bought them guns, sanctuary and the power to command provincial and even central governments. No criminal enterprise has ever had the kind of money that is available to the Latin drug cartels.""

Money is the "source of all power or strength" for the Latin drug cartels. Their huge amounts of money allow them to bribe, corrupt, or physically threaten governments and entire nations. Their money buys them the popular support of the people and also their alliances with communist and rebel forces. Deny or reduce the profit and the cartels' abilities to corrupt and threaten will decrease. The reduction in corruption, violence, and influence should increase traffickers' arrests and prosecutions by legal authorities, further decreasing the cartels' security and profits. With the huge and secure profit margin eliminated, the cartels will either develop other products (coffee, bananas, and/or cattle) or will look for drug markets elsewhere.

At the operational level the cartels' centers of gravity are the leadership and the organizations themselves. The cartels' leadership and organizations are clearly the "hub on which large transportation, distribution, refinement and farming groups depend." The cartels' leadership and organizations provide the directions, coordination and make the deals that provide the capabilities from which freedom of action and power is attained.

The key problems with current efforts are not in recognizing centers of gravity, but in directing or focusing the employment of the means and in the numbers of friendly forces employed in the fight. Over 30 U.S. agencies/departments, plus numerous foreign governments and law enforcement agencies are fighting a war without a coordinated strategy or synchronization of their forces. Some agencies are actually working against their government's anti-drug efforts (the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and State

Department are two examples⁶²). Less than half of the known major drug organizations are being fought or engaged by friendly forces. The reasons why more drug organizations are not being fought are the limited amount of funds being committed to the fight and the limited number of friendly forces being employed by the political and military leadership.

Ends, Ways, Means and their Relationship with Strategy

"Operational art is the process by which the methods (ways) are selected that determine the application and utilization of combat power--the means--to achieve a desired end."⁶³

From Mr. James J. Schneider's paper, "The Theory of Operational Art," the following definitions were attained:

ENDS -- The clear and complete visualization of an objective (end-state) towards which all military action is directed. An end is considered suitable when its attainment will bring about a useful effect. An operational end is considered suitable only to the extent that its effect or outcome contributes to the attainment of the strategic end. The selection of the end-state may be the single most important decision a commander can make. In conventional operations, the commander's end-state is embedded in the mission statement of his OPLAN/OPORD.

MEANS -- The total combat power available to the commander... includes logistic capability, personnel, space, time and such intangible factors as morale. In conventional operations, the commander's means can be found in the following paragraphs of his OPLAN/OPORD; friendly forces, attachments and detachments, service support, and command and signal.

WAYS -- The method that the command selects to apply his combat power (means). It is the form of a plan's execution. In conventional terms, attack, defend, envelope, exploit...

Returning to the drug war, national strategists establish and assign strategic goals and objectives, allot means and select ways to employ military power and civilians resources to achieve the desired strategic end-state. The operational artist selects ways to employ his allocated means to achieve the desired operational

end-state which in turn should support or accomplish the assigned strategic goals and objectives.

The current strategic goals and objectives assigned to the military include; supporting the civilian agencies' interdiction efforts and supporting civilian eradication efforts in the U.S. and in foreign countries. The current ways that military means are being employed support these strategic goals and objectives. But, like centers of gravity, strategic goals, objectives and their assignments can change and it is highly probable that in the near future the military's strategic goals and objectives are going to be modified from their current supporting role to actually being responsible for stopping the flow of drugs into the U.S.. This change in strategic goals and objectives will significantly affect the military conditions needed to achieve the desired operational end-state, plus the ways used to employ means during the campaign.

Campaign Planning

A campaign is a military activity in which the commander of a theater of war or theater of operations coordinates, employs, and sustains available resources in a series of joint actions across a regional expanse of air, land and sea in order to achieve strategic objectives.⁶⁴

A plan for a campaign translates strategic guidance into operational direction for subordinates. The plan provides broad concepts for operations and sustainment to achieve strategic objectives in a theater of war or theater of operations. It provides an orderly schedule of strategic military decisions that embody the commander's intent and spells out how the commander will prosecute his portion of the war effort from the preparation phase through a sequence of military operations to a well-defined conclusion that attains the strategic objective. In times of peace, campaign plans are developed to protect national interests which are assumed to be threatened by a possible occurrence, or

contingency. In times of war, campaign plans are developed to achieve strategic objectives that counter a strategic threat."

The following tenets summarize what a campaign plan is and does:

- Provides broad concepts of operations and sustainment to achieve strategic military objectives in a theater of war or theater of operations; serves as the basis for all other planning and clearly defines what constitutes success.
- Provides an orderly schedule of strategic military decisions; displays the commander's vision and intent.
- Orients on the enemy's centers of gravity.
- Phases a series of related major operations.
- Composes subordinate forces and designates command relationships.
- Provides operational direction and tasks to subordinates.
- Synchronizes air, land, and sea efforts into a cohesive and synergistic whole; is joint in nature."

Again relating back to the war on drugs, it appears that some of the components needed to support the applicability of a campaign and campaign plan exist. The key components needed are;

- A war and a theater of war or operations.
- Military forces from at least two services (jointness).
- Strategic objectives are assigned to a theater commander who has the responsibility and authority to use military forces in achieving them.

From previous sections, it was determined that a war does exist and that joint military forces are employed in various areas of operations throughout the S/T countries and the air and seas between the U.S. and the S/T countries. In addition, strategic goals and objectives are established and assigned to various government departments and agencies. The one shortcoming in the applicability of campaign planning is the requirement to establish a theater commander who is responsible for and authorized to use military forces in the achievement of assigned strategic objectives. If this shortcoming is resolved, and it will be if the U.S. Congress is successful in its desires and attempts to make the interdiction of drugs outside the U.S. borders a Department of

Defense mission, then the development and use of a campaign plan can be incorporated to direct and focus a U.S. anti-drug effort. If not the Department of Defense, a campaign under another agency -- Treasury, FBI, DEA, or CIA -- is still conceivable.

Branches and Sequels

"The sequence, maneuver -- tactical event -- maneuver, can be seen to form an operation. We see then why operational art is so fundamentally concerned with developing branches and sequels through the depth of the theater of operations. It is the essence of the art."⁶⁷

Three of the inherent strengths of an operational artist's thought or problem solving process are that the artist realizes that there are several solutions to any given operational problem, that the enemy is a living, thinking, and dynamic organism who can react in an unpredictable manner to disrupt or defeat the operational artist campaign plan, and that victory is built or earned by linking or sequencing together a series of tactical events or battles.

Multiple solutions and a living, thinking, and dynamic enemy give rise for the need of a series of contingency combinations called branches.⁶⁸ In conventional terms, branches are the different ways combat units can be maneuvered on a battlefield.⁶⁹

A victory that has to be built or won by linking or sequencing a series of events or battles, or a line of action to be taken after a development in the campaign requires the commander to plan for actions following the outcome of each event or battle. These plans are called sequels. In conventional terms, the commander is required to anticipate outcomes of battles and arrange his disposition, plans and support actions to preserve freedom of action or to support a particular future course of action.⁷⁰

Relating back to the war on drugs, the need for branches and sequels is apparent. The existence of multiple solutions for curbing the drug flow and an enemy who is a living, thinking and dynamic organism support the need for the development of a series of contingency combinations or branches that will provide flexibility and improve the agility of the U.S. anti-drug effort. No one doubts that the U.S. will have to build or earn victory in its war on drugs through linking or sequencing a series of events or battles such as destroying cartel leadership, targeting distribution and transportation networks, and patrolling or monitoring its borders. Sequels will have to be developed for each event to provide direction and linkage towards the ultimate achievement of the strategic goals and objectives.

Culminating Points

"....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." FM100-5

In conventional terms, an attacking force reaches its culminating point when its losses, detachments, or extension make its strength barely sufficient to defend its gains. A defending force culminates when it loses its last chance to execute an effective counterstroke. It can go on defending, but it will not possess the ability to counterattack on the theater level again. Culminating points are important to an operational artist because the campaign plan is ideally designed with the intent of achieving the strategic objective prior to his forces realizing their culminating point."

When trying to apply the concept of culminating points to the drug war conflict arises. The conflict lies in the parasitic and limited nature of the drug war.

The U.S. is very large and powerful but it has been clumsy and slow to react and limited in its ability to react in

comparison to drug traffickers. The U.S. can arrest and jail thousands of drug traffickers, but there are so many and the U.S. has such a large area to protect that it can not stop all traffickers and many are able to smuggle drugs in and make a profit. In addition, the U.S. is fighting a limited or reactive war due to political and international constraints on the use of its means which prevents the U.S. from effectively striking and destroying the cartels in their home base countries. The U.S. may have to use its resources elsewhere (drug education, treatment or research), but it will never lose the ability to strike hard at traffickers, thus it will never culminate.

The drug traffickers', except for the communists, objectives are limited. Their objectives are to profit from of the enormous U.S. drug appetite, making huge profits and attaining power, but not destroying or defeating the United States. If at all possible, traffickers avoid head-on confrontations with U.S. authorities and depend largely on bribery, terrorism, and corruption to pursue their aims. The traffickers are similar to the Chinese Communists of the 1930's and 1940's or the Vietnamese Communists of the 1950's and 1960's in two ways; in their ability to organize or vary the level of their war or trafficking efforts based on a variety of circumstances such as popular support, the nature of the enemy, or the strength of the government, and in the continuous nature of the reasons for their existence. Just as continuous social injustice ensured that China and Vietnam would always have communists, no matter how much conventional force was used, the U.S. will always have to deal with parasitic drug traffickers as long as its citizens maintain their enormous drug appetite.

Due to the cartels' abilities to vary the level of trafficking, the continuous nature of the reasons for their existence, and the limited and parasitic nature of the drug war, an attempt to predict when a culminating point will occur for the U.S. or the drug cartels would be futile.

Operational Maneuver

"Operational maneuver is the theater commander's means of setting the terms of battle by dispositions and concentration before fighting begins....Later, it is the means of exploiting the results of tactical actions by positioning forces beyond the battle area to secure the advantages gained by fighting or to minimize losses of an unsuccessful battle....it is also the movement of forces to avoid battle on unfavorable terms."⁷²

In conventional terms, operational maneuver deals with lines of operation, deployment sites and sequences, and theater disposition of major organizations.

Reflecting on the drug war, it is apparent that operational maneuver is an applicable concept should the military ever be assigned the primary responsibility to interdict the drug flow. The requirement to protect thousands of miles of border and cut or monitor numerous drug lines of operation will magnify the importance of the theater commander's initial force dispositions and concentrations. In addition, the complex nature of the conflict and the enemy puts additional weight on the importance of sequencing and linking events in the achievement of strategic goals and objectives.

Operational Guidance for the Design and Conduct of a Anti-Drug Campaign Plan

Should an operational artist be tasked to develop a campaign plan for the U.S.'s war on drug, he would need operational guidance concerning the following areas:

- strategic goals and objectives (provided by political leaders with advise from military leaders)
- strength and composition of friendly forces (formulated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and based on assigned goals and objectives)
- desired end-state.
- command relationships.
- broad guidance concerning the ways the available means were to be employed or sequences in the attainment of the strategic goals and objectives.

- description or definition of the theater of war and operations.
- centers of gravity.
- timeframe for victory.
- constraints on use of means.

The following guidance is presented for use in a campaign against the drug trafficking cartels.

Recommended strategic goals and objectives include; stopping the flow of drugs across U.S. borders, eradicating drugs at the source, destroying the cartels' leadership, organizations, alliances, and their will to traffic in drugs, and supporting civilian agencies' anti-drug efforts.

Useful strengths for U.S. Armed forces are found on page eight of this paper. The recommended forces' composition highlights the need for the force to be joint in nature.

The operational end-state or military conditions that would achieve the strategic objective of stopping the flow of drugs into the U.S. is twofold; the military would have to control and be able to interdict all air, sea, and ground access lines or routes into the U.S., and the military would have to destroy the major drug cartels' leadership and organizations.

The military's goals would be twofold; to make drug trafficking expensive and dangerous. The military would conduct operations with the intent of making the trafficking of drugs into the U.S. so costly that the street price significantly increases, thus helping to shrink demand. In addition, the military would conduct operations to make drug trafficking so dangerous for the cartels and their distribution, transport, refinement, and farm groups that the cartels would market other products or they would look for safer more profitable markets elsewhere.

The command and control of the means must be combined and joint in nature. The campaign must be controlled and executed by an international effort including countries from the S/T group, North America, Europe and Asia. The composition of the command element will be similar to that used in low intensity conflicts:

"In many situations, the United States will need not just DOD personnel and materiel, but diplomats and information specialists, agricultural chemists, bankers and economists, hydrologists, criminologists, meteorologists, and scores of other professionals." 73

There will be multiple theaters (Latin and South America, Southeast Asia, North America ...) and multiple campaigns that will have to be monitored and synchronized.

Concerning ways and means, it seems the better or safer ways (to protect innocent civilians) to employ available means is to focus military means on the sources (the marijuana, opium, and coca fields), the remote refiners, and the major transit lines. In addition, special operations should target organizational leadership and communications nodes. Civilian means should be focused on the domestic distribution networks and money-laundering organizations.

The strategic center of gravity for the campaign would be the huge profit or money that is generated by trafficking in drugs. Possible decisive strategic points (...all those points which are capable of exercising a marked influence upon the result of the campaign ...Jomini) include eliminating the demand for drugs, interdiction in transit and eradication at the source, destruction of the cartels, reducing or eliminating their popular support, and destroying their alliances with communist and rebel factions.

The operational center of gravity would be the leadership and the cartels' organizations. Possible decisive points include eliminating key members of the cartels' leadership, and destroying farming, refining, transporting, distribution and money-laundering groups.

The campaign should be sequenced as follows;

- Phase I - MOBILIZE AND PREPARE THE FORCES
- * Generate international support.
 - * Mobilize and train friendly forces (domestic and international).
 - * Conduct intelligence gathering.
 - * Educate, detoxify and conduct research.

Phase II - CONDUCT THE FIGHT

- * Gain control of the access ways.
- * Eradicate at the source.
- * Destroy refineries, transport groups, distribution and money-laundering networks.
- * Destroy the cartels' leadership and their will to traffic in drugs.
- * Continue Phase I activities.

Phase III - ACTIONS AFTER VICTORY IS WON

- * Monitor access ways and source countries' agricultural areas.
- * Continue certain Phase I activities.

Guidance concerning the timeframe of the campaign would have to be broad and fragmented. Parts of the campaign (like, eliminating the demand, monitoring farm fields, and screening the access ways) would have to be continuous and will last for generations. Other parts of the campaign could be linked to a timeframe (destruction of certain groups or capabilities) that would allow sequencing and synchronization.

Constraints would focus on non-interference with innocents' civil liberties and way of life. Possible constraints include; probable cause and due process for searches and arrests inside U.S. water and territory, restrictions on the use of deadly force, maintaining the freedom of the air, ground and sea ways for commercial use, and denying direct use of U.S. military forces in foreign lands.

The net result regarding the central concepts of operational art and the operational artist's problem solving process is that the majority of the concepts and the process are applicable for use by the U.S. in its war against drugs and if certain changes in laws and the assignment of strategic goals and objectives are made then the concepts and process should be adopted to help the U.S. turn the tide in its fight against the international narcotics industry.

CONCLUSION

The U.S.'s war against the international drug industry will be harder to win than past U.S. conventional wars fought between two symmetric forces. The drug war's limited and parasitic nature, the multiple and complex lines and methods of the cartels' operations, and the inconsistency and lack of a combined and coordinated anti-drug strategy for use by international anti-drug forces, all tend to tip the "scale of victory" in favor of the drug cartels.

It is apparent that current anti-drug efforts are not likely to bring about victory. Drug trafficking across the U.S. borders is increasing, the street price for drugs is lower and there are hundreds of drug trafficking organizations defying current anti-drug efforts and injecting their poison into the life blood of America. A new approach is needed and an operational artist's approach is recommended. The central concepts of operational art and an operational artist's approach to planning and problem solving can help by:

- establishing a link with national strategy and strategic goals and objectives, and the ways available means are employed to achieve a desired end-state.

- providing focus, direction and objective to the various agencies, departments, and foreign anti-drug efforts through the identification and use of centers of gravity.

- providing an orderly schedule of decisions and spelling out how to prosecute the anti-drug effort from preparation through a sequence of operations to a well-defined conclusion.

- synchronizing anti-drug efforts into a cohesive and synergistic whole.

- improving the flexibility and the agility of anti-drug forces through the incorporation of branches and sequels in the campaign plan.

- employing a planner or problem solver who recognizes and takes into account that;

- * multiple solutions exist to solving the problem (the key to flexibility).

- * the enemy is a living and thinking being capable of taking actions to disrupt or defeat the operational artist's campaign plan (emphasizing the need to be agile).

* victory is earned or built through sequencing a series of events or battles towards a desired end-state that achieves or supports the achievement of assigned strategic goals and objectives.

Concepts such as centers of gravity, campaign planning, branches and sequels, the relationship between the ends, ways, means and strategy, operational maneuver and the inherent strengths of an operational artist's planning and problem solving process may enable U.S. anti-drug forces to collect themselves and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

If an operational artist is allowed to design and execute a combined and synchronized campaign plan, some obstacles still exist that may cripple his best planning and execution efforts. These obstacles include;

- generating international support and agreement concerning a long-term anti-drug strategy.
- providing and maintaining forces needed to fight and win the war.
- providing the enormous amount of money needed to successfully wage the fight.
- ending intra-department and international competition and bickering between anti-drug forces.
- maintaining domestic and international popular and political support for a long war effort.
- changing the laws to enable full participation by military forces.
- curbing the American and western nations appetites for illegal drugs through education, detoxification and research. Re-establish in the minds of Americans that using drugs for thrills or to escape reality is morally wrong and self-destructive.
- providing an alternative way to earn a living for millions of poor and uneducated people currently being employed by the drug cartels.

These obstacles are all civil, economic, or political in nature and their resolution is as important to achieving victory in the drug war as the operational artist's campaign plan. Solutions will not be quick or easy, and are going to depend largely on the political will of the elected leaders from the western nations and on the character and moral courage of their people.

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