

THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT AS PART OF CANADA S DEFENCE EFFORT

The Development of Doctrine, Strategy and Prior Training for Peace and Protection Operations

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INTRODUCTION

American military strategists and doctrine developers coined the phrase Operations Other than War (and the atrocious acronym OOTW- pronounced Oot Wah) during the immediate post Cold War period. Peace operations were subsumed within this category. The simple notion that peace operations are **not** war fighting, but are an activity **other than** war is profound. The term peace operations is used here as it was in the Report as an umbrella expression including peacekeeping, peace enforcement, peace building, peace making, etc.

When one begins to consider the requirements of a doctrine for military intervention to prevent or stop gross human rights violations such as genocide or massive ethnic cleansing, it is not immediately clear as to whether we are speaking of a variation on war fighting or still something else other than war. This paper aims to contribute to the developing dialogue on a doctrinal and tactical framework for military operations responding to the responsibility to protect.

THE DALLAIRE THESIS

General Romeo Dallaire reportedly has said that if he had had a single well equipped, well trained brigade at his disposal in 1994, that he might have been able to prevent the Rwandan genocide. Expanding on this statement, we are presumably talking about somewhere between three thousand and five thousand troops — a brigade. Well equipped would imply motorized troops, at least, or preferably a mechanized force. The requirement to be both well equipped and well trained could be taken to imply that the troops would have to have come from a developed country. Had the general — and the world - been so fortunate as to have had these troops, it is a fair question to ask how they would have gone about preventing — or stopping - the catastrophe. In short, what is the doctrine and what are the tactics of humanitarian intervention?

DOCTRINE AND TRAINING

Canada, like many other countries develops military doctrine in specialized staff cells at the national level. Doctrine prescribes how the members of the profession of arms should think about certain issues; tactics prescribes the processes and procedures they

should use in applying the doctrine. Command and staff colleges are the principal institutions for the promulgation of doctrine and the teaching of tactics and the higher levels of military art and science.

THE ATTACK ANALOGY

Over a quarter of a century ago, the author of this paper spent a good part of a year at staff college in learning how to conduct an attack. Students were taught that there were several different forms of attack and that there were specific techniques associated with each. There are attacks off the line of march, quick attacks, deliberate attacks, spoiling attacks, secondary attacks, counter attacks, and night attacks. Which form was appropriate in any specific circumstance depended upon an analysis of host of factors such as enemy, ground, weather, morale, obstacles, and more. A military attack is a serious business and it was taken seriously by students and faculty alike. Looking back, it took a long time to even begin to master the intricacies.

MILITARY HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

Military humanitarian intervention is equally serious, and it promises to be equally complex. It will probably turn out, in the final analysis, not to be exactly like war fighting. We may be talking about some other form of managed violence here. But we have to make a start. There is a need to develop the doctrine and the accompanying tactics now; to practice them now. It will be too late if these issues are not considered until after troops have been committed to the field.

SOME FACTORS SHAPING THE TACTICS OF MILITARY HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

We are not working in a realm of pure theoretical speculation here. Unfortunately, we have several historical instances of both genocide and of ethnic cleansing, some of them depressingly recent, to inform our analysis. Some of the factors that may need to be considered in preparing a military humanitarian intervention are:

Size. How big is the country and how large is the population? Rwanda is different in that respect from the Congo. China is something else again.

Agents of Violence. Who is carrying out the genocide or the ethnic cleansing? Are the full resources of the state involved? Is it regular military forces or are para military militias involved? Are elements of civil society involved?

Cleavages. What is the difference that triggers the violence? Is it race; religion; language; ethnicity; or something else? Can the two parties be readily identified?

Distribution of Violence. Where is the violence taking place? Is it localized in one particular sector or province or is it country-wide like a patchwork quilt with minorities in every city, town and village at risk?

Symmetry of Violence. Is the violence unidirectional with the A s threatening the B s in all instances? Is it more complicated? Are the A s attacking the B s in the regions where the A s are in the majority, while the B s are attacking the A s in places where they are most numerous?

Weapons of Choice. Is the violence being delivered by technologically advanced weapons of modern warfare — tanks, artillery, aircraft — or are common small arms and light weapons in the fore? Or, as we saw in Rwanda, are simple tools such as machetes, axes and hoes being used as the means of extermination?

Answers to these questions and others like them will shape the selection of the most appropriate tactical approach for military humanitarian interveners.

THE TACTICS OF MILITARY HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

Just as there are several forms of attack available to the field commander, there are many forms of military humanitarian intervention available to that same commander when exercising the responsibility to protect. In each case, the most appropriate form will be dependent upon analysis of the relevant factors such as those listed above. In many instances, a combination of several of the options listed below would be required. Some intervention tactics are:

Intimidation. The mere presence of an obviously well equipped, well trained intervening force may be sufficient in and of itself to prevent or stop genocide or ethnic cleansing.

Destruction. This would involve focusing traditional military force upon a specific enemy and continuing operations until the opponent was annihilated or surrendered. (This option would be akin to war fighting.)

Immobilization. Genocide and ethnic cleansing are protracted events that are dependent in some ways upon movement. Curtailing movement through curfews and road blocks might effectively immobilize a violent group.

Containment. An armed cordon that surrounded a violent group and faced inward might serve to stop the genocide

Protection. This is the opposite of containment. The intervening military force in this instance would surround the threatened population and face outward.

Separation. If geography permits, separating the factions by means of a buffer zone might well be the optimum solution.

Disarmament. Confiscating and/or destroying the weapons of the agents of violence might be an appropriate tactic in some instances.

CONCLUSION

The law of armed conflict with respect to proportionality, and the economy of effort principle of war suggest military humanitarian interventions will require a doctrine and tactics that differ from those of pure war fighting. Sir John Hackett argued decades ago that the soldiering was a true profession — like law, medicine and the church - in that the profession of arms had a social responsibility, a discrete body of knowledge and was self educating and self disciplining. As the face of violent conflict continues to change, the social responsibility of Canada's military will require that appropriate doctrines and tactics continue to be developed and promulgated.

This is not solely an intellectual exercise. The concepts embodied in doctrine manuals and tactical pamphlets must be transferred into the concrete knowledge and skills that make up the competencies of the modern professional soldier. This is not to suggest that the war fighting competencies should be supplanted. They should supplemented with the practical knowledge and skills suggested above so that Canada can continue to play a meaningful international role in a still dangerous world.

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