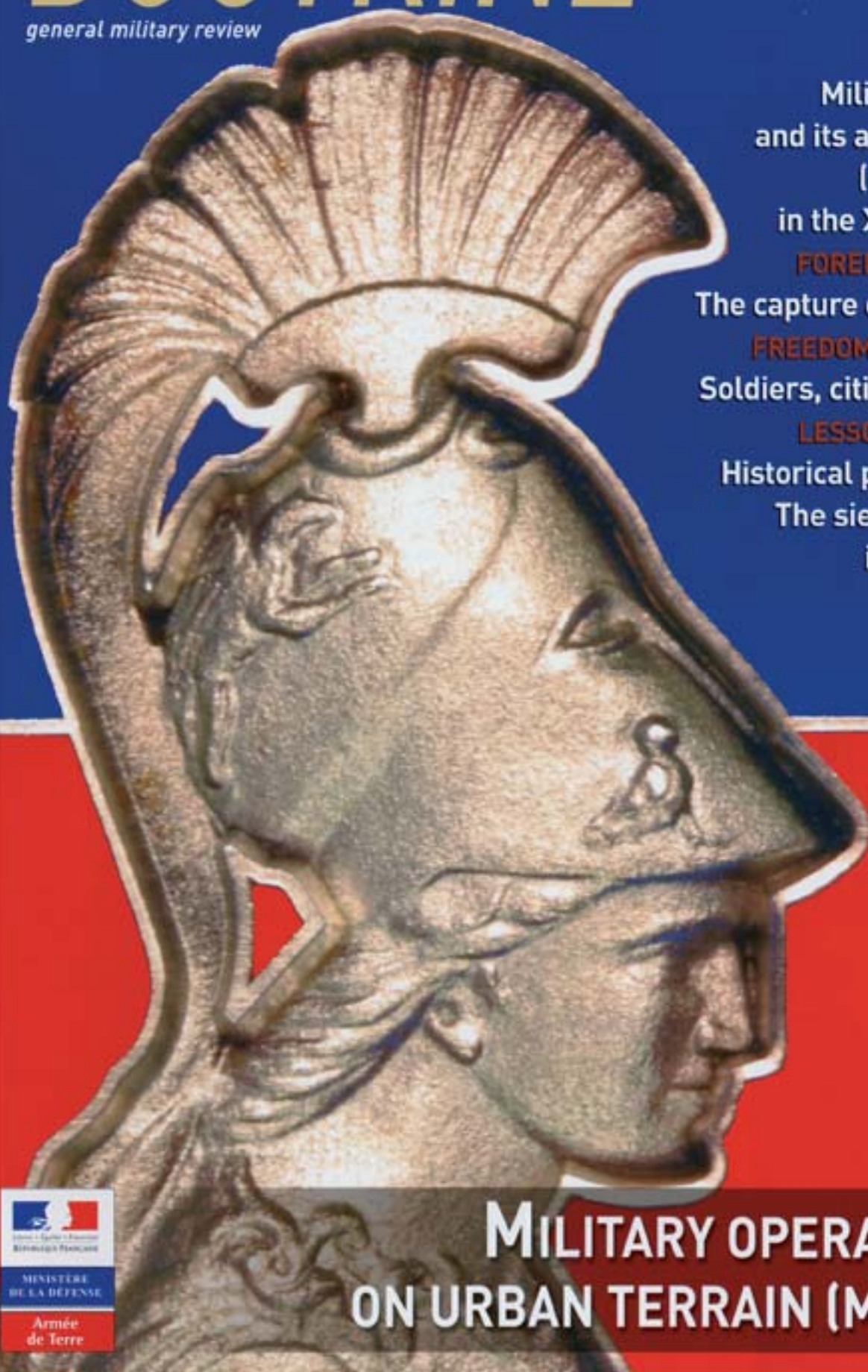


# DOCTRINE

general military review

# 03



## DOCTRINE

Military power  
and its applicability  
(modernity)  
in the XXI century

## FOREIGN STUDIES

The capture of Baghdad

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Soldiers, cities and war

## LESSONS LEARNT

Historical perspective

The siege of cities  
in Antiquity



## MILITARY OPERATION ON URBAN TERRAIN (MOUT)

» Lessons learnt

*Grozny : lessons learnt from a failure*



# summary # 03

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C.D.E.F



As decided by the Army COS, the CDEF (Doctrine and Forces Employment Center) is replacing the former CDES on July 2004.

Reporting directly to general THORETTE and taking advantage of its four divisions - Employment & Organization of forces, Studies & Lessons learnt, Operational Research & Simulation, Support & Documentation - that Doctrine Center is aiming at three goals :

- to be the "nervous center" for the operational preparation of Forces,
- to take part in the development of arguments enabling deciders to define budgetary choices concerning the resources allocated to land forces,
- to be the driving force in developing military tactical and operational thinking for the land component.

It is in this very spirit that Doctrine issue Nr 3, the first issue released under the aegis of the new CDEF, comes up, on the one hand, in total continuity with the former CDES when handling important issues - today a very essential one, MOUT (Military Operation on Urban Terrain) - the ones we will have to carry out tomorrow morning - thus completing the previous special issue about Intifada and his lessons learnt ; and, on the other hand, by establishing the foundations of future doctrinal evolution as developed in the paper written by the general, director of the doctrine center, and prefiguring the framework and the principles that could preside the employment of forces.

In fact, we are at the very moment when budgetary choices and geo-political, strategic and tactical evolutions are superimposing one over the other thus inciting to think about some defense and security models, especially for a Europe in progress. In addition, the importance of lessons learnt since over fifteen years on all theaters essential for Europe is sufficient to throw light on the concrete tracks of the evolution of our land forces through practice and obvious range of facts.

Are these lessons sufficient to answer our many questions, do they allow to question some certainties still largely shared and perhaps already relevant ?

For example, should we absolutely differentiate high and low intensity warfare, do we have to seriously envisage a concept like the "first in, first out" one, is it "operationally useful" to categorize our forces according to the weight of their vehicles and armament ?

Definitely, this is the type of approach that we should never cease to undertake, supplemented and clarified by the answers given to the four questions which set up the doctrinal corpus and the principles of the operational preparation of our forces :

- which type of enemies or opponents ?
- which kind of commitment scenarios ?
- which kinds of equipment ?
- for which type of units and which staff organization ?

**Major General Gerard BEZACIER**

# Military power and its applicability (modernity) in the XXI century

The defense and security of a Nation is a vast subject isn't it ? Vast subject indeed :

- When one considers the complexity and the evolution of the world. Again, vast subject it is - when one remembers the historical blunders of the last century, in particular those committed by France :
- When in 1914 (WWI), offense, which until then had been advocated at all cost by Lieutenant Colonel Foch, gave way to four years of obstinate defense ;
- When in 1940, a major error led to yet another one. First, the implementation of a policy of intervention in favor of the Central Nations, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, but supported by a purely defensive strategy - the Maginot Line. And second, opposing the first principle, the incredible decision to expose the army forward of " Fortress France " leading to a haphazard clash in the Flanders plains.

BY MAJOR GENERAL GÉRARD BEZACIER, COMMANDER, CDEF (DOCTRINE AND FORCES EMPLOYMENT CENTER) - US EQUIVALENT TRADOC

Definitely a vast subject, when one refers to the strict use of air power in the Kosovo operations. It was decisive in that it unequivocally relegated land forces to a secondary role performing ancillary tasks. Yet again, it is a vast subject when one considers the Iraqi, Ivory Coast, and Haitian situations where land forces reemerge as the principal actors, dominant and compelling. They are reasserting their role in rebuilding and setting the genuine conditions for military success and the peace that should have been engendered. But of course, one has to remain cautious when making these assertions. This should lead one to make judicious and well measured decisions when preparing for the future - decisions that cannot wait for tomorrow.

These are the first thoughts that come to mind as the one (of many) who has

to deliberate on these matters. We must confront this challenge with conviction and a the resolve to lead this project through.

Before shedding some light on our vision, let's begin by presenting a brief geopolitical analysis. In doing so, one cannot begin from the most recent and significant event - that of 9/11. This event, beyond the pain it inflicted, illustrates the violence and disorder of our times, and to the highest degree, symbolizes the following :

- The weakening of the nation states including the vanishing control of their territories - incidentally, the United States had never been directly aggressed since 1812 ;
- The fanatic use of violence aiming to inflict the highest number of casualties among the civilian populations ;
- The diversity and the proliferation of destruction capabilities.

To this premise, one must add the frequent unilateral behavior of some world powers that often confuse their self-interest with those of the rest of the world. In doing so, some may ignore what Thucydides said some 2500 years ago, ***"that of all the demonstrations of power, self-control is the most impressive."***

Going straight to the point, what should we learn from the weakening of nation-states raised by so many experts ? First, there is a corollary relationship with the end of the balance of terror between the Eastern

elsewhere - with all the associated tribalism, clannish behavior, and all types of corruption, worst of which financial. The latest takes its roots in the wake of transnational and globalization opportunities. It invests ever-greater resources in favor of stateless organizations of varying size and nature.

The first lesson we should draw is that nebulous entities prosper mainly because of the weakening states. Some have terrorist and/or mafia overtones and recruit from the many and fertile grounds of poverty.

***" If you don't take care of them, they will take care... of you ! "***

and Western blocs. This weakening finds its origins from above and in the supranational institutions like in Europe. But also from below and in the developing nations like in Africa and

This is what helps explain the presence of Al Qaida in Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, etc. The second lesson is a resultant of the first. Today, nation-states are not the

exclusive possessors of the exercise of violence and of the outrageous monopoly of its use. We have been witnessing an emergence of ideas, ideologies, organizations (adaptive or not), all of which equally and *de facto* legitimize their own use of violence citing the blatant injustices of an imposed world order.

From these ideas, **two strategic requirements that responsible States cannot ignore are self-evident.**

First, to ensure an intervention/expeditionary capability in all the sensitive zones providing bases and logistic support to violent groups. "If you don't take care of them, they will... take care of *you*!" This also applies to all illegal traffic organizations. It is the inherent cost of the "global village" we are building.

The second is much similar to the first one, and centers on this so-called mandated/legitimized right of interference in other nations' affairs (normally in failed states). It renders the principle of sovereignty less and less justifiable, in contradiction to human rights and, more generally, in contradiction to what have become universal values (the same applies for border inviolability).

It is in this context that we need to look at international security and globalization.

Going back to 9/11. This date carries more significance than 1789 or 1989. This cowardly terrorist act was planned in Central Asia, executed in New York and Washington D.C., and performed by Saudi and Egyptian



AFP

nationals who had pursued western post-graduate programs. Its consequences go far beyond, let's say, Japanese security policy.

This is a perfect illustration of what transcends from the resulting effects of mass exchanges that characterize our world today :

- First, and most important, information exchanges promote envy as the poor can observe the rich. Also, the youth inclined to passion, sacrifice, and ideological nihilism, inspires itself from conclusive blood-spattered successes and violent activities ;

- Financial exchanges point the finger at white-collar criminals of all nationalities and social backgrounds who feed the engines of violence with unlimited financial resources - sometimes exceeding those of the States ;

- Human migration / exchanges - man is a perpetual immigrant and traveler. Just like water, he espouses the path of least resistance - he rides the wave that leads to prosperity. And, just like

water these historical fluxes are difficult to canalize - to the chagrin of the Maginot line lonesome militant, this concept is definitely long-gone.

- Finally, analogous to the preceding idea, the large number of movements / exchanges of worldwide gatherings such as anti-globalization, anti-G8 and others demonstrates a strategy of destruction. These movements call into question a world order grown decidedly intolerable to three-fourth of the planet, in total disregard of the progressive advancements in the world.

These characteristics are not complete without pointing out some very specific but major exchanges - the proliferation of weapons, and above all their increasing and almost unlimited effects.

Unfortunately, weapon trade and technological know-how have become common practice, needless to say dual-use technology as well. Moreover, the number of nuclear states increases, and likewise the number of "ballistic" states. This is a process that will remain unrelenting.

And perhaps, sooner than later, we will have to revise the theory of nuclear deterrence. This would be in the aftermath of a new Hiroshima in Asia, in the Middle East, or on the periphery of the European Union. The latent nuclear pause invoked by General Poirier will be obsolete and pragmatism will triumph. We must remain attentive to this.

In terms of the consequences on crisis and war, proliferation has given way to an increase in weapons capabilities :

- It is now possible to deliver fires everywhere and from anywhere (space, air, land, sea, or subsurface) in increasingly shorter delays and with awesome precision.

Today, the delivery of weapons by means of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) still requires a flight time of six hours versus a few 20 minutes or so for an airplane. And all indications are that these delays will get even shorter.

- The lethal capabilities increase - exponentially for nuclear weapons, but as well for conventional weapons such as artillery projectiles. In 1870, bullets fragmented in some twenty pieces of shrapnel - today in well over 2000 pieces. On top of this, the development of lasers, chemical, and most importantly biological and genetic weapons have shown much potential. In this regard, we must not forget that the tularemia virus (rabbit fever) was used in Stalingrad. The USSR also used the *Burkholderia Mallei* biological agent in

Afghanistan (Glanders disease). While today we are concerned about Anthrax, we have become aware of the Ebola virus (hemorrhagic fever) and the absence of an antidote against it. Last but not least, history is filled with examples of plague-ridden cadavers used to infest cities undergoing sieges, and to pollute water-wells in desert areas, just to name a few examples.

Moving right along this military glimpse of the geopolitical world. We must underscore what may be considered to be the most determining fact of this coming century - this unbelievable phenomena -

during each recent crisis (albeit of low-intensity) this percentage has yet again increased and varies from 75 to 90%. It is in order to highlight that these percentages can translate into millions like in Cambodia or Rwanda. Further investigation points to what extent civilian populations have become major actors/targets of conflicts :

- Physical cleansing of minorities.
- Psychological manipulation of populations.
- Hostage taking.
- Use of women and children as agents/ combatants even as shields, and so on...

security issues, we cannot ignore the military balance of power.

All things being equal, we must recall that when building for the future one must take some distance from the present, if only for an instant, in order to get a clearer vision. Therefore, so as to get a good grasp of today's strategic context and in order to lay a good foundation in consonance with our political objectives, **we must discard erroneous debates and false concepts.**

Just as concepts (and God knows how much French people fancy them) can be useful, they are often counter-productive.

In particular, this applies to the Cartesian-minded person trapped inside his own intellectual logic and disconnected from reality - and this is the point, reality is all about the complexity of the human mind.

If concepts are such, we must note that they can contribute to shedding some light on as much as distorting reality. They can help in seeking tangible decisions but can weaken them when preconceptions get in the way. That is the case when we are dealing with defense matters such as courses of action, materiel, organizations etc...

Today, the most obvious example concerns artificial dichotomy. It is practiced by intellectual analysts who have never been in a theater of operation and have not been able to engross themselves with the **stench** of the battlefield nor with the differences between low and high intensity conflicts - each opposed to one another like day and night.

The divergence between these two precepts (low and high) contributes to the same apparent rigor, especially when one attempts to visualize a new architecture in the face of today's debates. Therefore, we must recognize that not one military operation, even limited in scope, never has been, is not, and never will be characterized as a purely low or high intensity conflict. On one hand, when you deal from a position of strength you assume you are in a low intensity environment. Conversely, if you are weak, the number of punches you receive is directly proportional to your sense that you are in a high intensity environment. We'll return to this point later.

Then, another idea emerges. A good one for sure, but very naive since it has the potential to stumble on the first obstacle it encounters - I am referring to the "Multinational", also referred to as "Supranational", concept. In such an environment, national vital interests in military interventions become increasingly intertwined. Hence, the following principle has grown to be to be accepted as the norm : " Each entity/nation acts in consonance within the limits of its own relative power... "

The contention that any world power has its own limits is linked to the previous pessimistic but realistic statement. Paraphrasing Mr. Brzesinski, it is vital to recognize that one's leadership capability is **inversely proportional** to his resolve to dominate.

**“ Each entity/nation acts in consonance within the limits of its own relative power... ”**

the "victimization" of civilian populations. Until now, they were at the heart of and the essence of the Law of Land Warfare. There was an obligation to distinguish them (from uniformed combatants) and to protect them. However, we are forced to recognize this is not so any longer. There are countless massacres in Africa ; in the Balkans - just 700 km from Strasbourg ; and now, massive terrorist attacks in the United States, Spain, the Middle East, in Asia, etc.

Besides, a brief glance at the past confirms that this situation is part of a growing and troublesome trend that merits further analysis. Indeed, in WWI, just in the last century, 10% of the total casualties were civilians. This percentage increased to 60% in WWII. Now, we observe that

Foremost, and a key point for our democracies, we should not forget that beyond our permeable borders and unlimited exchanges, the phenomenon of victimization of civilians affects our own populations as well. The 3/11 Madrid train bombing, and the hostage takings in Iraq are compelling evidence of that fact.

With hindsight, -as a rhetorical question - couldn't this criminal tendency on one end, and the growing and now imperialistic use of information on the other, be tied to the confrontation between fanatic religious ideologies and democratic and secular states ? Finally, in order to complete this snapshot of the world's defense and



Enlightened by these clues, we now need to characterize the correlation of military forces in the world. We will then draw some lessons and elaborate on the first assessment for the future role of our forces - in our case, land forces. And since it is our destiny, we need to focus this process on a XXI century force in a European context.

**First, we had previously established an essential premise.**

**The territory of the United States is no longer impervious from external aggressions.** Sure, airliners momentarily substituted missiles. But in the end, this brings comfort to and validates this major and vital interest - the pursuit to protect and safeguard national territories - tied to the permanent research of technological progress applications. After the conquest of the West, the Apollo program, Star Wars, let us remain convinced, that once the dividing and emotional parenthesis of the Middle East has been closed, that mighty America will raise to the occasion. Regardless of the results, something will come out of it. And in the end, those who stayed on the sidelines of this essential strategic race are doomed to become insignificant and ignored actors in a new world order. Therefore, whatever range or effectiveness, or shape or form the antimissile defense program takes, it will be recognized as the major defense system of the XXI century.

**The second premise involves the growing technological gap that exists between the American weapon**

**stockpiles and those of the western powers (including Japan) and Russia.**

The source of this imbalance originated chiefly in the mastery of information technology - eventually impacting on the art of war. Naming just three consequences :

- Mastery of time.
- Mastery in the observation and acquisition of targets.
- Mastery in precision fires.

In general, three corollaries can be inferred - one at the strategic level, the other two at the operational/ tactical levels :

- Opponents of western powers resort increasingly more to different interpretations of subversive warfare.
- “Exotic” weapons of the nuclear, biological, chemical types are sought after.
- The enemy makes an economy of force by withdrawing into isolated, built-up, mountainous or rough terrain areas.

Concerning the analysis of the correlation of forces, one must not overlook the human resources/forces enlisted because of their beliefs - in the end, belief is an especially decisive element of power. **Still today, people continue to die more easily in the cause of ideas than of interests** - this is a proven and **extremely** disturbing lesson-learned. But then, nothing is more foreign to our democracies, our hedonist societies, where we have long forgotten about the power of ideas and their resulting violence. So, what to make of all these examinations, premises, facts, and our uneasiness when confronted by the evolution of the threats as related



here ? We can draw four lessons directly related to the role of our future forces in the context of our defense and security organization.

**First and foremost, it concerns the joint aspect of our military operations.**

We must delve into it right away because it will form the basis for the budgetary and materiel choices of the future. Land, sea, and air components do not operate separately. The French military will have to conduct operations that require all three services<sup>4</sup> each one acting in the four main operational functions : Command and Control, intelligence, signal, and logistical support. But to suggest that we need to integrate all services into one in order to optimize the number and quality of our headquarters - we must reflect on that for a while... Let's look at it carefully without skipping over the fact that when traditions are ripped apart the price we eventually end up paying can be astounding.

**The second lesson**, and by no means less significant, is that we can now validate some certainties in the short and medium term.

**Obviously, we are getting to know our adversaries... if not enemies, may they be found in foreign theaters of operation or even on the European continent itself.**

In fact, in the framework of our assigned missions which aim to reestablish (and why not establish) democratic order, justice, security, and peace our forces will be faced with armed resistance fighters. As far as one can forecast, but for at least the next twenty years, while there may be an increasing number of hopeless adversaries, no capable army will be able to rival our European and Atlantic alliance coalitions. Most often, these enemies will be equipped with deep-rooted ideologies. And since these ideologies seek the upheaval and the overthrow of universal order and values, the foe will *de facto* conduct what we are compelled to refer to as subversive operations. At any rate, taking into account our air, space, and sea as well as subsurface technological superiority they will have no other choice. What we call today dissymmetric/asymmetric conflict is nothing other than the price we pay for our progress.

These acts, or some forms of war, are characterized by the combination of psychological operations (in priority targeting civilian populations either in the countries where we are engaged or in our own - civilians who have become the strategic actors and targets of this century's conflicts). Other acts are of an indirect type and nature (guerilla, terrorism) perpetrated against all infrastructures of our societies, and increasingly against information networks.

lands - at least, that our citizens will be able to perceive.

**The third lesson**, although still in the news in Iraq, is ancient history. It stands out like a sore thumb. Field Marshals Lyautey and Gallieni imparted that with us more than a century ago - even if in the colonial context of their time. While all things are equal, it is connected with what us, Europeans, understood well before our American friends who painfully discover it day by day.

**In a word, it has become a truism to notice that whatever type of military engagement we are involved in, the political dimension prevails, and always will, over the pure military approach.**

Beyond the very short (sometimes non-existent) combat phase conducted to neutralize an organized armed force (termed **intervention/expedition**) utilizing compelling and joint forces capable of conducting high intensity warfare or even a deterrence role, lays the transition phase. This phase, of varying duration, is termed **stabilization**.

This period can be precarious and subject to sudden violent flare ups. Such situations can produce the reverse effect of the intended outcome. It will precede the **normalization** phase. This later phase is intended to progressively reestablish the country's sovereignty with the help of **forces, acting in support of local and/or international institutions, capable of deterring or preventing hostile forces from acting.**

It is during the second phase, stabilization, that all the causes and sources likely to disrupt the reestablishment of peace are assembled. Incidentally, they can be the result of bad choices or poor planning in the phases leading up to the intervention. Again, lessons can be drawn from the Iraqi conflict.

As much as the intervention phase will be relatively easy to conduct, will the stabilization be difficult to bring to a close.

The later phase combines the need to conduct short and violent combats to reduce organized armed resistance against a fleeting enemy, all the while performing security and population control operations. As we have seen, this population is the target of subversive actions - incidentally, none of those on the receiving end label them asymmetric operations. As we have seen previously, it requires the implementation, or the support of complementary civil projects. These are exclusively of the political realm. They are the sole guarantors for a secure exit from the crisis. It's all and only about facilitating and garnering support for political projects and structures - the only peace promoters. Once more, make no mistake ; with regard to the insecurity that characterizes this phase, the role of the armed forces will remain significant. Their authority, even if under political control, will still be desired.

In this regard, we need to articulate **one more effect that can help us better determine the future model of the armed forces.**

Although it must clearly stated, we must treat with care a favored but disputed terminology that has not fared very well - "first in, first out". Derived, or rather imported hastily from the United States, this idea suggests that our expeditions/interventions be as short as possible. This theory does not resist the test of what happened in Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo, Ivory Coast, and of course Iraq. In the later, we observe that stabilization is about winning the hearts



ADC F. CHESNEAU/SIRPA Terre

But, as we have hinted to earlier, it is our most precious resources, our soldiers and our citizens, who will be taken for targets when they will fall victims to numerous assassinations.

This means, and make no mistake about it, that massive casualties may engender near political defeats -at least a political problem for our governments who will be forced to attend to a wide-ranging and emotional public opinion. What is more, is that none of our vital interests will be at risk in the majority of our engagements on foreign

**Our armies are no longer the protagonists of today's victories.** They have become the facilitators.

But peace, a very dynamic phenomenon, can only be approached progressively and preserved only by the implementation of complementary civil projects (juridical, economic, financial, constitutional, etc...) all part of a greater and **enduring exit strategy plan.** Anyhow, the military can play this facilitator role effectively only if its initial engagement is already a part of such a plan - and, when practical, only if under political authority as early as possible.



and minds as well, and it requires a long time - on the scale of the history of man.

Therefore, contrary to the assumption that **with technology we can do away with soldiers**, we remain convinced by how much their importance and numbers remain a fundamental constant. We must factor this in (and of course other parameters) when discussing resources during the upcoming debates about our new military - the only proper way to make sound investments.

**Finally, the fourth lesson.** What has become to characterize our engagements can be used as a model for our future army. We are talking about the **interweaving and the increasing interaction between armed forces and civilian populations** - whether friendly, neutral, or hostile.

These new difficult constraints are the result of demographic growth and substantial migratory fluxes/exchanges. They drag the entire world into an urbanization explosion. This can be observed not only in industrialized countries, but also in the majority of developing nations. Further, this occurs in numerous regions of potential crisis. This has created conditions encouraging the participation, voluntary as well as involuntary, of numerous groups of civilian combatants confronting our troops. The latest are and will remain engaged in these conflicts.

**Thus, we can say that our army will not conduct campaigns on an open landscape anymore - but in cities.**

It is now possible to draw our **first conclusion concerning our forethought on the role and the concept of our future land forces, specifically land forces. We will do this drawing on our two modes of operation - coercion mode<sup>2</sup> and violence-mastering mode<sup>3</sup>.** In general terms, these two approaches explain how to conduct operations in order to reach the fixed political/strategic objectives. First, we must note that they wholly complement one another and that they are inexorable. In fact, in order to reestablish (and ensure) security on a territory, we must be able to permanently constrain an adversary to renounce to his action even if this means that we have to destroy him. Also, everybody has known for ages that the mastery of violence is only possible when supported by strong deterrence forces. In the end, these two modes are not in opposition to one another, but are complementary (French operations in the former Yugoslavia were a good example of what not to do - immobilized and paralyzed forces, hostages, all sorts of slights, and so on).

**These two modes constitute the two poles of a range of possible actions from which we can alternate from one to another.** Besides, they



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are independent from the spectrum of warfare intensity, high or low - a trendy debate inside the Paris beltway, but not so for those in the trenches. So, let's discard once and for all some clichés such as the wishful thinking that wars are distinct from operations other than war. Let's reject all simplistic and overly simple ideas arbitrating whether or not to go heavy or light.

Lets be frank, **yes**, we need armor for protection ; **yes**, we need heavy weapons, and accurate at that, in order to deter and destroy rapidly and precisely when needed ; **yes**, we do need an exceptional and performing command and control system - intelligence as well, obtained by all available captors especially human, and good analysis ; **and no**, our forces, when employed for crowd control, have nothing in common with the Gendarmerie - they are trained and capable of facing situations when shots are fired from the crowds and facing the numerous improvised explosive devices attacks, such is not the case for our Gendarmerie forces whose

numbers are justly and duly calculated to maintain law and order within our borders<sup>4</sup>.

The objectives of military intervention have changed - we are not talking about conquering territories or cities. **We are talking about a new approach for the employment of our forces.** We are talking about is this - from now on, it's all about conquering the hearts and minds.

As we have explained, it is the political dimension that will prevail over the strictly military approach hereafter. The Iraqi conflict is an obvious illustration. For the most part, our operations aim to assist or protect threatened populations or communities, sometimes from their own governments. Besides the close and permanent interaction between the forces deployed on a theater and civilian non-combatants, paramilitary forces and/or armed factions often represent an ill-defined but real threat. In some cases, the foe blends in with the locals, in other cases, entire communities can turn against our troops.

The switching of alliances between factions and/or the use of non-combatant civilians by determined adversaries also constitute further add elements of confusion and of instability. As such, the identification of the threat on the ground remains uncertain and the use of force can be in inconsistent with the established objectives. Ground forces are the only elements that can discriminate in this identification. Therefore, they are compelled to direct their irrevocable strikes exclusively on identified and direct actors. This **new approach to the employment of forces** leans on the entire panoply of available tactics (TTP's - tactics, techniques and procedures). And, according to the circumstances and the appreciation of the situations, **three new principles for the employment of forces come to supplement Marshall Foch's principles of war :**

- **The progressive escalation of military effects** corresponds to **concentration of effort.**
- **The preservation of human resources,** of cultural and material wealth, and of infrastructures corresponds to **economy of force.**
- **And the permanent legitimacy of actions** corresponds to **freedom of action.**

Under these complex conditions, only land forces can ensure, with all the implied gradations, that their political use will remain adapted to the threat level. The intent is to maintain the level of

violence as low as possible so as to preserve the perceived legitimacy of the operation, and in the end, to create the conditions for peace. In fact, all that can be done to reduce the risk of irreversible damage, all the while preserving the integrity of the force, directly contributes to the legitimacy and the credibility of the operations that are necessary to win battles and enlist the support of the populations. It is the true guarantee for the commander to preserve a certain amount of freedom of action, but also the sine qua non condition to win future conflicts - that is to say, to win an enduring peace.

**We cannot conclude this challenging approach toward a XXI century army without addressing Europe.** We know that a European Union strategic concept for security has been in existence since December 2003. "A safe Europe in a better world", coupled with the creation of a 60,000 soldiers capability made up of several 1,500 strong combat units.

Actually, it appears that in the analysis and interpretation of this concept one may find the

general framework of this prospective treatise. This brings added value to several elements already well thought-out but which remain modest, incomplete and fragile. We must convince ourselves, unless we are basically pessimistic, that the construction of the XXI century French Army will most probably evolve in the midst of the European concert of nations. Therefore, it is pertinent to be well versed in the founding philosophy as it pertains to defense and security endeavors.

**As a preliminary conclusion to this initial and incomplete brainstorming, here are a few points and a notion worth mentioning.**

Operations ARTEMIS (Congo), CONCORDIA (Serbia-Montenegro), soon the EUROCORPS command of ISAF (Afghanistan), and the relief of SFOR units in Bosnia point to a European defense that is alive and evolving. It works in agreement with a European security strategy that became public at the end of 2003.

The drawing of this **European security strategy concept** was no small matter when one considers the basic foreign policy

divergences between European countries. It is no easy task to reach a common agreement concerning the defense of strategic interests in a Europe where, starting in May 2004, western nations and countries of the former Soviet Union coexist - some pro-Atlantic, while others possess a nuclear deterrence capability. Nevertheless, the basics of the European security environment were specified: the European Union's challenges, the main threats, the strategic objectives that were subscribed to, and their political implications.

We must make it clear that both the internal security and the external security of the E.U., as it relates to the **challenges and the main threats**, are intimately linked. In order to take them on, European countries must respond to the global challenges that can upset the security conditions, i.e. : globalization, conflicts, poverty, disease, and the competition for natural resources such as water and oil.

**Five threats facing Europe have been identified :**

- **Terrorism**, considered to be a "growing strategic threat" for Europe ;
- **The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction ;**
- **Regional conflicts ;**
- **The disintegration of nation states** and regional instability ;
- **Organized crime**, together with its external dimension.

All of these challenges and threats are a part of the European security environment. Even if they



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are focused on Europe, we cannot help but notice a significant convergence with the American strategic vision contained in its “National Security Strategy” (2002). In fact, the European document specifically addresses an axis of the good - “the European Union and the United States can constitute a formidable force to the service of the good in the world”, p.15 - matching George W. Bush’s axis of evil. In coherence with these threats, the E.U.’s first strategic objective is to meet head on the ones mentioned in the first part with all the tools available to the E.U., including the military option. This is about a Europe that cannot be satisfied with assuming no more than just its own defense (self-defense), but also that must have an expeditionary capability - precisely where the “E.U.’s first defensive line” is located.

The second objective is “to build security in our own neighborhood”, such as in the Balkans. “The credibility of our foreign policy depends on the consolidation of our accomplishments in this region”. Today, Europe’s objective is “**to be able to intervene autonomously in its neighborhood**”.

The settlement of the crisis in the Middle East constitutes another priority so as to guarantee European security. Finally, the E.U.’s last objective is to develop and defend international law and multilateralism - the core of international order. “Security can only be reinforced by confidence building measures and

the institution of armament control systems, tools that can equally contribute to the security and stability in our neighborhood and beyond”. Europe’s political implications emerge from these goals. This involves the specifics that the E.U. must elaborate and improve upon in order to fully satisfy the objectives discussed previously : the creation of military capabilities, the enhancement of cooperation with our partners, and the development of a coherent policy.

The E.U. must be “**more active**” in matters of crisis management and conflict prevention. This primarily concerns the political, military, and commercial aspects. “The E.U. must be able to act before the situation deteriorates, on our doorsteps ; when indications of the existence of weapons proliferation are detected ; and before emergency humanitarian situations occur”. In this regard, the E.U doesn’t reject the possibility to engage in preventive actions in order to face the threats we have described earlier, so as to “avoid more serious problems in the longer term”.

To this end, the E.U. must **develop its operational military capabilities** by focusing on providing more available resources, together with their better utilization. **Cooperation** with partners must be privileged - especially the transatlantic partnership, deemed irreplaceable.

Finally, the E.U. must improve its political coherence.

Yet again, the European strategic concept promotes multilateralism. This was presented as the E.U.’s primary objective leading to a more equitable world, safer and more united.

Here then, after the divergences on the Iraqi intervention that opposed some European countries to the United States, is a European strategy document that reminds us of the primacy of the Americano-European strategic partnership. This is illustrated as follows :

- A common strategic vision,
- Common threats and interests,
- A reaffirmed cooperation between both continents.

In the end, the aim of a European military capability is to contribute to peacekeeping operations, but also capable of intervention and pacification/stabilization (eventually developing into amplified Petersberg missions). Today, the E.U. affirms, in its strategic concept, to preserve the ability to conduct “preventive engagements”, including military. However, from reading Mr. Solana’s document, we still ignore (it is too early to tell) under what framework, unilateral or multilateral.

Regardless, the European Union finally has its own strategic vision. While this strategic concept document is prudent and consensual, some aspects still limit its intent and significance. But, although European defense is still far from being autonomous, still depending on the partnership with the United-States, it becomes more tangible with

each day. This takes into account the notable resolve of some “locomotive” nations such as France, Germany, as well as the United Kingdom. Moreover, facing today’s threats, Europe has become conscious of the fact that it cannot remain on the margins of the battlefield<sup>5</sup>.

*1 The Gendarmerie cannot be taken into account in this type of operation.*

*2 Coercition (Fr) - coercion - An action on a declared adversary to impose national or international will is a political choice. It can be deliberately decided or a result from an escalation from the violence-mastering mode.*

*3 Violence-mastering - Mastery of violence - One of the two operational action modes (the general manner of operating on a theatre of operations in order to reach one or several objectives selected at the strategic level)*

*in the current French doctrine (the other being coercion by means of force). Mastery of violence is an operating mode or course of action for the Land Forces, requiring the ability to conceive and conduct, in coordination with a number of diplomatic, economic, and media actions, military action aimed at the resolution and stabilization of a crisis situation. This mode combines measures of safety, confidence and even assistance measures, for those factions involved, as well as control. It might lead to constraints or coercion actions. The purpose of the strategic option of violence mastery is to prevent, contain and control the escalation of violence.*

*It implies that those actions cannot be directed to the adversary’s center of gravity without running the risk to drag the mandated force in a protracted conflict that the political leader is specifically trying to avoid.*

*4 This does not exclude the utilization of paramilitary forces, Gendarmerie, in expeditionary operations when the conditions on the ground and the need for this type of force are met.*

*5 “Le Monde”, Daniel Vernet, 13 March 2004.*



# To a new doctrinal approach for actions in built-up areas

Cities have always had a direct or indirect impact on military operations. Military history is strewn with sieges, defense or conquest of cities symbolizing the victory or the defeat of either adversary. However there is nothing new, military commanders always have been reluctant, at least initially, to commit units in these places “**Cities should be attacked only when there is no other choice, however it is the worst solution**” was a piece of advice given in his time by the Chinese theoretician SUN-TZU.

BY COLONEL DANIEL POSTEC, CREDAT

The environment complexity, the acuteness of danger, the almost impossible development of any maneuver not to talk about the importance of material destruction and of human losses make that this kind of engagement has always been and still is considered as particularly hazardous.

Now, at the beginning of this 21<sup>st</sup> century, if the analysis is still pertinent, however it is not a reason for the military commander to ignore or to turn down the possibility of that kind of engagement, quite the contrary ! Reasons for that are quite simple.

Urbanization is steadily increasing, 22% of the world's population were living in urban areas in 1950, that number will be 75% in 2010. As cities concentrate all powers, crises will be resolved inside them. Finally, the potential adversaries, aware of the technological superiority of the Western armed forces that they cannot oppose any more on pain of having their own forces destroyed, will be more and more tempted to use an environment that affords them some parity.

Here we are at the heart of the problematic issue put to our armed forces optimized for short and decisive fighting. The full and sustained engagement required by a urban environment is no more acceptable to countries the vital interests of which are not threatened and in addition no more possible in terms of feasibility for professional limited format armed forces. Considering the necessary adoption of new answers, the French doctrine therefore favors an indirect approach and a mastered use of force.

## The indirect approach

It is a matter of globally weakening the adversary by combining various actions during which the land forces will first make all efforts to isolate that enemy. In practical terms, the matter is to isolate him from the media, to discredit him in the eyes of the international public opinion, and to cut and deprive him of the support of his own population. At the same time, his communication means will be jammed and neutralized. Encircling maneuvers will prevent him

from receiving reinforcements, supplies and all kinds of support likely to enhance his military capabilities. Simultaneously, strikes within the whole depth of his disposition will aim at neutralizing his command centers, his service support and combat support units, in order to disrupt his disposition and to lessen his combat potential. Ultimately, the enemy decisive points will be attacked and destroyed by surprise and speedy actions.

## A mastered use of force

The approach would be missing something if a new concept of force employment was not added to it. Indeed, whatever could be the operating mode in which the land forces will set their action, violence mastering or force coercion, the ultimate success will always demand restricting as much as possible destruction and civilian casualties. Targets are then to be selected and attacked not only according to their importance but also to their accessibility or to the consequences induced

by their destruction. The operated armaments will be selected according to their effects and to their accuracy. In some circumstances, non-lethality of armaments will be sought for. Selected courses of action will obey the same logic giving priority to flexibility, to surprise and to speed. If combat actions are to last, they will be geographically limited and at the same time supported by environment control and population aid actions.

**To isolate, to attrit, to selectively destroy the enemy by using a mastered force strictly adapted to the wanted effects, here is in short the approach which, in the years to come, should enable the land forces to carry out operations in built-up areas while escaping the multiple enemy traps at the top of which are the risk of being involved in very long and painful operations and to be forced to escalation.**

# Cities are the way leading to peace

The seizing or the saving of cities have always played a key role in the outcome of armed conflicts :

- first of all because the power, national or local, is organized in the major cities ;
- but also because their geographical location often offers a decisive tactical advantage.

Besides, cities, where population is concentrated and concealment facilitated, have become the favorite place for indirect confrontations :

- either taking the form of spectacular terrorist attacks, such as those which took place in Paris, Tokyo and New -York ;
- or that of a daily guerilla, as in Israel or in Iraq today.

In this twofold context, the joint **framework undoubtedly offers new perspectives to the commander of an operation**, whether the case is to seize or to secure cities.

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BY COLONEL BAZIN, HEAD OF THE EMP 1 OFFICE/JOINT ARMED FORCES STAFF

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## To reduce a military resistance

From time immemorial, military commanders have been looking for a tactical solution to the “problem of cities” :

- by fortifying them in order to render them invincible ;
- by trying to have their opponents establishing inside cities in order to fix and “bleed” them ;
- by besieging them in order to obtain their surrender at the lowest cost ;
- by crushing them through brute force or, more rarely, by seizing them by ruse ;
- but also by bypassing them, when the threat or the interest were assessed as secondary ones.

Paris, Stalingrad, Dresden and Berlin, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Beirut and Sarajevo, Baghdad and Basra are good examples of these urban confrontations.

Nevertheless, if one puts aside the anti-city strategies, which fall under deterrence, and if the resurgence of a major conflict in Europe is to be considered as most unlikely, the analysis of recent crises opposing a coalition mandated by the international community to a “shaky” state clearly shows :

- that the capital still materializes the gravity center of the opponent ;
- that the mastering of some important cities still remains essential (seaports, airports, strategic crossroads) ;

- that cities are no longer an efficient safe haven or a sufficient obstacle in front of a joint force well protected and with a very much higher technological level ;
- that losses, military and civilian, could nevertheless be very important if the opponent demonstrated a strong resolution and organization ;
- lastly, that, corollary, western opinions ask for quick victories without heavy toll on their side but also amongst the population.

Within this context, land forces, which tomorrow will still have to be committed in built up areas, must **find, thanks to joint operations, the capability to dominate the situation right away, that is to say without being entangled in street combat.** Three objectives are directly contributing to that goal :

- first, **joint intelligence** must provide a real time awareness of the enemy, its location and movements, by day and night, but also of the terrain knowledge thanks to digitalized mapping in three dimensions and to an updated analysis as soon as peace time. This intelligence (imagery, electromagnetic, human) provided by all the land, air, space and even maritime sensors must be quickly processed and available down to the lowest possible employment echelons.
- then, **the engagement is prepared at operational level** by shaping the urban theater as the Americans did it in

Baghdad : suppression of ground-to-air defense, disorganization and partitioning of defenses by selective strikes, destruction or neutralization of communications, psychological weakening of the opponent (power, armed forces, population) thanks to information operations, infiltration of special forces, etc.

- last, **mutual support between components**, air-land or from sea towards land, must widen the possible answers to attrition direct or indirect threats against ground forces, immediately or within a very short notice, in order to limit phases of close-in combat. Therefore, we must take advantage of technological progress developed in terms of reactivity and accuracy : short loops, map-grid fires, autonomous smart ammos or using a terminal guiding system, etc.

But undoubtedly, beyond these classical considerations applied to cities, **a joint maneuver able to significantly destabilize the enemy must be developed.**

**Surprise, concentration of strikes on selected targets (political power, forces) coupled with the lightning of urban raids (forward forces, armor) through a logic of harassment coming from everywhere rather than frontal land confrontation, the immediate exploitation of any weakness detected in the opponents' disposition, intensive propaganda and preservation of populations, are then able to physically**

**and morally break up the opponent, to split his resistance by denying him the usage of his strong points, and forcing him to rapidly surrender. In addition, this tactic must be used from the beginning of the operation : to carry out combat operations in the capital and some key cities as soon as possible will contribute to outflank, and even to overwhelm the enemy.**

Driven back into cities, if he has not thrown in the towel before, thanks to an unpredictable joint maneuver, sound and implacable, which is striking the heart of his disposition, the enemy will see his capability to organize his direct defense, block after block, house after house, greatly reduced.

This joint strategy is mainly based on **full air superiority, integration of combat supports** between components, **on hardened** and well protected **land forces** to influence the situation, **on special forces** engaged in the depth, **on an expeditionary logistics** in order to follow the imposed pace, but above all on the ability to **master information and to control action in real time** enabling what, under different circumstances, would be considered as an excessive risk taken by the commander.

**These joint capabilities and know-how must be tested and developed** : doctrine, training and equipment must **integrate the urban dimension, from the operation commander down to all units** of the force. whether land, air, naval or special.



## To secure when facing non-military threats

Beyond the conflicts between armed forces, or in their immediate wake, still remains the requirement of ensuring the return to normal life. The children soldiers from Monrovia, the militias of Bunia, the Palestinian and Iraqi guerillas, the bridge of Mitrovica, the Afghan warlords clearly illustrate that point.

After war, we must **win peace, and, still often, resistance or terrorism become urbanized, especially if geography doesn't favor guerilla in the countryside.**

For land forces, traditionally more involved in this critical stabilization phase, it is the case of **inciting to peace and order restoration** : in fact, the public security is first of all the **matter of police forces and justice.** In addition, these actions must fall within the framework of a strategy associating **all the civilian players**, as the end of a crisis cannot be conceived without a development perspective, and consequently with a durable improvement.

In this context, the joint doctrine builds up from experience of the French forces in the field of violence mastering, but also from civil-military and preventive actions. This know-how, shared with some of our allies, the British coming first, is demonstrated by the multiple NEO (evacuation of nationals), stabilization or cooperation operations carried out during these

last years. However, in a prevention logic, that of first entry, it is the case of **going farther in terms of capability to master insurrectional situations**, in order to be able to :

- **conduct a large scale security operation aiming at** preserving, without delay, several thousands of Europeans gathered in the main cities ;
- **restore public order, most often jeopardized inside cities, in order to allow the rapid setting up of a humanitarian operation** placed under international mandate and conducted by regional forces.

In those two cases, one can find again **the interest of one joint action in the broadest sense, including strongly the "Gendarmerie", but undoubtedly at a lower "intensity" level, even if the force must have an undisputable coercion capability in order to have a deterrent effect.**

In addition, a particular attention must be brought to the perception of the coalition by public opinions, thus to the importance of a strategy based on effects.

Last, the recourse to armed forces should not be neglected, in the home

country or in overseas territories, for defense or security purposes, in their mission of third category forces ; since 09/11/2001, the organization of the "Homeland Defense" has again a legitimate importance in all western countries.

### In conclusion

*Tomorrow again, and probably more than in the past, cities will be the place for confrontations and force will have to be applied to gain victory or to restore order. On the contrary, it will not be acceptable that land units get stuck in street combat operations or find themselves taken as "hostages" even if their protection or their action capabilities are more and more reinforced.*

*In this sense the **joint maneuver becomes unavoidable** as, by nature, in cities as well as in open terrain, it is the one able to create the conditions of an operational superiority when facing an opponent confined to a more static land opposition, less powerful and often disorganized. Last, within the framework of a global crisis end-state strategy, conceived, financed and promoted beforehand, the joint force must, thanks to its deterring presence, directly supports the action of police forces and civilian players.*

*For the commanders and for the armed forces, it is the case of developing these new joint courses of action in order to impose and give life to peace, indeed with limited assets, but still preserving their freedom of action.*

ADC F. CHESNEAU / SIRPA Terre



# The combined arms dimension of actions in built-up areas

Although by definition a land force action is of a combined arms nature, this requirement becomes not only an imperious necessity since these forces are committed in built-up areas but it has also to be implemented at every echelon down to the lowest. There are three main reasons for that : the environment complexity, the global nature of the engagement, and the very characteristics of the actions.

BY COLONEL DANIEL POSTEC, CREDAT



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## The complexity of the environment

The diversity and the complexity of the physical and human environment are permanent features in built-up areas. They ipso facto entail multiple constraints making ineffective one single operational function and a fortiori a unit specialized in one single capacity. The combined arms organization of the committed forces makes possible first to meet the environment difficulties.

The resulting complementarity reduces weaknesses and greatly increases effectiveness. It is, for instance, the only one able to limit hindrances to

mobility, to overcome the difficulties for technical intelligence gathering, to widen the range of available weapons when taking into account their possible limitations, and to reduce the vulnerability of such and such function. Combined arms units are definitely meeting the difficulties of this reducing and constraining environment.

## The global nature of the engagement

Engagements in built-up areas are no more limited, far from that, to the mere conquest or defense of the city. One must control and master the human environment that becomes

a governing factor for the success or the failure of the operation. In this respect, the doctrinal changes, when recommending an increasing role of the indirect approach and the use of a limited and strictly adapted force, do increase, if needed, this necessary combined arms dimension of the engagement. As a supplement to their traditional combat capabilities units have to provide assistance or protection to populations, to consider the media aspects of the conflict, and to work along with the existing institutional bodies. Those requirements demand new capacities which suppose that appropriate cells exist within units.

## The characteristics of the engagement

The space compartmentalization, difficulties for communicating, the elusive and varied nature of threats require to give a large autonomy to the committed units. Henceforth, since these units might immediately take advantage of any

opportunity or efficiently respond to sudden changes in the situation, it is essential that they got, at least partially if not totally, the required capacities. Similarly, the necessary versatility of units and their ability to reversibility will be possible only through regrouping various operational functions within the same unit and responding to the same commander.

*Then if a combined arms approach proves to be essential for commitments in built-up areas, it should however come with a real upstream effort in matter of education and training.*

*As a matter of fact, coordinating in the field the various operational functions supposes that soldiers and, moreover, commanders at any level, are very well aware of the effects, constraints, and limitations of each function being implemented.*



# The land operational functions in built-up areas operations



PHOTOS : ADC F. CHESNEAU/SIRPA Terre



Regarded as “*a common coherence and analytical reference in the Army with the purpose of building up the forces necessary to successfully carry out the assigned missions*”<sup>1</sup> the land operational functions are not applied in the same way and with the same relative importance in built-up areas operations as they are applied in force coercion or in violence mastering courses of action.

In the following articles the main features of the 10 operational functions — when relative to built-up areas - are summarized. First these functions said as universal or integrated

*and air defense*), and eventually those relative to the environment (*operational communication and civil-military operations*).



1 TTA (FM) 901 - Land forces operations (Land forces employment doctrine).



(*command and control, telematics or CIS, intelligence, and logistics*), then the engagement ones (*contact, indirect combat, ground space management,*





# Command and control

At tactical command level, built-up areas require commanders able to demonstrate a great sense of initiative, to show more independence of mind than respect for discipline, and to be acting in close contact with the enemy without totally nor fully controlling the situation. Mastering information is crucial. It makes possible an ingenious and in synergy employment of all combined arms- or even joint- components of the maneuver. At strategic command level, built-up areas tend to scatter units, to break up attacks, to disrupt radio communications, to reduce the effectiveness of air combat support provided to combat units.

BY COLONEL ERIC ROUSSEL, CREDAT

## More static and heavier CPs

In built-up areas the maneuver of CPs is made simpler because of the relatively static character of operations, and by taking advantage of the existing infrastructure possibilities. However that near-stability is very much demanding in matter of protection. On the other hand, the multiplicity of active and passive, civilian and military, national and multinational actors implies new liaison requirements (liaison detachments, various contacts, or information and communication systems).

By way of consequence, to comprehend the human environment and the complexity of the urban environment at theater level as well as at the local one - what quite often is a condition for mission success - it is necessary to get available, within the CP, those personnel specialized in the following specific fields : civil-military cooperation, operational



communication, military police, political and legal matters. In case these specialists are not available or gathered, particularly at the subordinate echelons, the higher echelon must provide the information to the tactical commander in real time.

In addition, this higher echelon will be connected in real time with the interdepartmental and non-governmental (press agencies, more particularly) information services that are in charge of the concerned theater, in order to benefit from an enhanced reactivity to

the events, through the bias of an almost live and comprehensive information

## A decentralized and well informed command and control structure

In fact, concerning the command and control function, an urban area is a limited maneuver space that leads to deteriorating communication functions. Therefore operating in built-up areas requires simple planning and decentralized execution (compartmentalization results in relying a lot on low-level units'

business). Close-in - stress and strain generator, cause of high consumption rates and of heavy losses - demands reliable, not to say redundant combat service support and MEDEVAC planning. The concern not to alienate the population leads to minimizing

collateral damages and to permanently adapt ROE and troops' behavior.

The MEDO<sup>1</sup> decision making process remains valid and relevant, however the crucial importance of grid maps, plans, and photos, in matter of planning should be reminded.

<sup>1</sup> Operational decision elaboration method - estimate

# Telematics (CIS)

When information superiority is one of the main asset of armed forces and as towns are now becoming battlefields, the CIS problematic in urbanized areas is crucial. Since the need for reliable and performing communications is decisive in this context, the urbanized zone is constituting an unfavorable environment for the deployment of CIS systems and for the establishment of liaisons.

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## An unfavorable environment

In built-up areas, a multitude of masks are hampering radio electric propagation thus requiring the multiplication of radio relays. The direct view electro-magnetic waves must be positioned on the terraces of the highest buildings and then become vulnerable.

To these inescapable constraints is added a more important risk probability of jamming and interferences caused by the saturation of the electromagnetic spectrum by all civilian and military actors. Consequently the use of the spectrum and of the wave lengths necessary to command and control and

also to weapon systems implementation must be subject to negotiations with the local authorities whose needs might be a priority.

Besides, links to the CP are implemented in multi-store buildings and the technical equipment are often moved inside the premises. The assembling delays and the needs for cabling can rapidly prove prohibitive.

## The concern for establishing the liaison

In parallel with these difficulties, the information flows are more important particularly at the low tactical echelons. The urbanized combat takes on a "decentralized" nature and the concern for

establishing the liaison is more demanding for minds at all levels. In a dismounted and close combat, the use of navigation devices, the extra number of communications generated by movements and fires' coordination require communication means with extended capabilities.

## Better and better adapted CISs

The RITTA 2G partially meet the constraints of the urbanized zone. Its employment flexibility, the possibility to move its equipment away, the flow of its new generation electromagnetic waves make it a very flexible tool. Besides, the possible use of the existing telephone infrastructures with ciphering telephones is a non negligible emergency solution. The GSM or the local radio loop (BLR) can be favored in ciphered version. The PR4G VS4-IP, to be fielded from 2004, will constitute a major asset for fighting in built-up areas. This radio set permits to simultaneously transmit data and voice with a flow three times higher than that

of the versions used today. More, the FELIN<sup>1</sup> system will soon permit internal coordination within combat sections but also allow the access to map data bases or even to air pictures or satellite images of the sectors in which they move. Finally, the military adaptation of civilian application software (UMTS<sup>2</sup> technologies, UWB<sup>3</sup> employment) or the use of UAVs as communication relays might in the future solve the communications difficulties.

The conception and the implementation of the CISs in urbanized areas, an environment basically hostile to communications, are not something that can be improvised but that require a particular attention. Nevertheless it remains that the new information and communication technologies should be able to meet a majority of operational needs.

<sup>1</sup> FELIN : Infantryman equipped with integrated equipment and liaisons.

<sup>2</sup> UMTS : Universal Mobile Telecommunication System.

<sup>3</sup> UWB : Ultra Wide Band.

# Intelligence

Built-up areas offer much more surprise effect possibilities from the enemy side than open terrain. In addition, a large volume of environmental intelligence is required to enable the Force engagement. Last, knowledge and understanding of the opponent, declared or potential, are more difficult, especially within the framework of violence mastering. The Intel function must therefore organize itself to face this challenge.

BY COLONEL JEAN-FRANÇOIS COPPOLANI, CREDAT

## A permanent update of documentary intelligence

The need is first dealing with geographical and meteorological intelligence, a part of which is generally available before the engagement with documentary intelligence. But that need, especially in countries far from the homeland and poorly developed, requires an important updating work down to the very details : settlement, main roads, industrial sites, local resources, etc. without forgetting the possible consequences of combats That took place before the commitment of our forces (contingency obstacles, mined or trapped areas, destructions, new technological hazards etc.) However, the awareness of

human environment still remains paramount, whether for opposing forces or local populations, who might significantly remain present in the fighting area. In addition, built-up areas favor the deployment of third parties within the conflict (NGOs, international organizations, media), as soon as the conflict or the crisis becomes a long-lasting one, even in high intensity warfare. The force will therefore have to know and take into account the power and influence networks, whether economical, political, religious or others, official or underground, in order to maximize its efficiency and favor the acceptance of its action by the populations among whom it operates. These wide needs require enhanced research capabilities, all the more as

in the present state of technologies, the employment and implementation of technical sensors are difficult in built-up areas and give limited results. For example in these areas, “gray areas” are more frequent than in open terrain, especially for concealed matters. However, they remain necessary, and even essential in areas where human sensors cannot be deployed.

## Better understanding the environment thanks to human intelligence

In that case, human sensors play a decisive role, whether in direct visual reconnaissance - possibly facilitated thanks to optical/optronic assets - or through searching for conversational intelligence gathered from human sources in order to precise enemy disposition and intentions. Is it necessary to stress further that a good understanding of the environment in which the force operates, the will for direct contact - endorsing the risks involved -, and even a sympathy with its own environment are necessary in order to be

fully informed and to feel like “a fish in water”, as stated in a well known saying ? This human research action will not be limited to only military players, the cooperation with police forces or other services deployed on the theater being indispensable.

## Further improving the exploitation of intelligence in this demanding environment

The main difficulty, especially during stabilization or low intensity phase, is still the exploitation of intelligence, as well for the mass of information to be processed as for the difficulty of analyzing an opponent who doesn't fall within the rigid “Warsaw Pact” framework. If improvements pertaining to CIS systems and aid-to - decision applications will play a significant role to help G2 business, the development of a true intelligence culture as well as an improvement in our exploitation methods represent a necessary challenge for intelligence to become fully efficient in that demanding environment.



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# Logistics

The United Nations foresees that by the year 2025, 60 % of the world population will be concentrated in built-up areas and that 70 % of the towns will be located on coastlines. Therefore, as fighting in built-up areas will be the most probable commitment for our modern armed forces, that requires to adapt their logistic support. Besides, the complementarities and the interoperability of national logistics must be sought for especially in the field of logistic support from the sea.

BY COLONEL SEBASTIEN SEGARRA, CREDAT

## A decentralized support very close to units

Tayloring, partitioning and scattering the units lead to a larger decentralization of the logistic assets, notably as regards medical support and the soldier's life support. In this perspective, modularity and divisibility of the support assets must be sought for. The logistic deployments will avoid the town centers and will look for settlement in the outskirts enabling to deploy the means and to rapidly establish links with the units committed in the city. A fair balance between lightening the forward area and the autonomy of units must be found.

The pushed flows supply system is recommended. The logistic units intended to intervene in urbanized environment must receive armored vehicles and be equipped with communication and positioning systems. Convoy protection must be systematic. The overconsumption of food and water, of small arms ammunition,



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explosives and batteries must be taken into account in the calculation of the unit allowances and in the organization of the supply flows.

In the field of POL support, oil storage and delivery have a specific nature and require the highest strictness in their implementation and execution. The extreme harshness of the engagements and

the likelihood of important casualties imply the setting up of medical teams within the units, with armored vehicles permitting the relief and the rapid medical conditioning of the wounded before their evacuation.

## More assets dedicated to units' protection

The needs pertaining to terrain organization and to the protection of units

demand an important effort in the field of support to settlement and to environment protection. Besides, the engagement in urbanized areas requires the increasing use of materials and terrain organization means dedicated to the settlement and protection of units. The multiplication of observation and combat posts requires important needs for various materials and power production means.

## The population must be taken into account

Finally, taking the population into account seems mandatory in built-up areas operations when that commitment is staying in place (the most probable case). Therefore when conceiving CSS, the capabilities of the logistic units and the volume of the resources are to be accordingly planned.

This is very important in the fields of medical support, supplies (food and water) and support to settlement (networks restoration).

# The contact function

The features of actions in urbanized areas give to the contact function an undisputable major role. They also command it to reinforce or even to develop some specific abilities and capabilities.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JEAN-FRANÇOIS HACKENBRUK, FROM THE CREDAT

## A combined arms structure down to the lowest echelons

In order to ensure the complementarity of the mounted, dismounted and airmobile means, the employment of the contact units in built-up areas is systematically based on a combined arms structure of the units.

**In a context of violence mastering**, the engaged units apply themselves to master in a permanent and sustained way the urbanized environment thanks to a combination of static and dynamic complementary dispositions.

The dismounted elements ensure a permanent presence, based on decentralized dispositions down to the lowest echelons. The mounted units perform a dynamic surveillance on more extended areas. Finally, a reserve made of armored vehicles, infantry, engineers and helicopters performs a deterrent role and, if necessary, an intervention role against possible threats.

**Within a force coercion framework**, the infantry units are engaged in dense housing sectors, corresponding to the town centers and to the residential suburbs. In these closed areas, the infantry units, most of the time at company sub task force level, with tanks and engineers reinforcements, conduct the main action. Seizing and holding the assigned objectives are the actions which systematically illustrate their success.

The armored units are preferably employed in the approach area and in the outskirts where they can make the best possible use of their observation, firing and mobility capabilities. The armored task forces at battalion and company level must be systematically reinforced by infantry and engineer units to prepare, accompany and prolong their actions.

In the approach zone to the built-up area and prior to the main action, airmobile units can take part in the seizure of key

points or in covering the land component against potential threats. During the action, they are able to support the tactical task forces in the outskirts, to heli-borne infantry elements or to ensure emergency logistics notably for the benefit of the medical chain.

## Decentralized and targeted actions by day and night

The units of the contact function must develop polyvalence and reversibility. Changes in situation or in intensity obey neither progressiveness nor logic. Therefore the units must, without notice, adapt themselves to the evolutions and bring responses adapted to the threats.

**Within the framework of violence mastering**, they must develop their contact ability with the human environment and the different active or passive players of the crisis. These units must reinforce

their ability to crowd control, that is to say to react in a timely way to population movements that directly threaten the combat units or jeopardize the success of the mission. In the long term, this will be materialized through the mastering of specific processes and the use of non lethal armament.

**In situation of forces coercion** the question is to limit the collateral damages by privileging the accuracy of fires and the selective destruction of the actors of violence. The units in contact need to increase their capability to act non-stop and particularly by night in order to take advantage of night vision assets largely fielded into units. In any case, the collection of tactical intelligence must remain a priority. Being deployed in the field in contact with the adversary and the populations, the units can not only collect information but also confirm and clarify them, if necessary, by using force.

# Indirect fire support

BY COLONEL JÉRÔME DE TARLÉ, CREDAT

## A different employment, adapted to environment constraints...

**In forces coercion operations**, the action of major units (division or brigade) during a mission of conquest and/or defense of an urbanized area is inevitably a key point of the operation during which artillery must provide a main effort in fire support delivery. But, because of the protection that buildings offer to defenders in urbanized areas, the fire support effects are very much reduced. The usual artillery explosive shells, percussion or time fused, are not very efficient. The buildings' height as well as their spacing imply to resort mainly to high angle fires.

In spite of these constraints, the three traditional aspects of artillery mission (direct support of combined arms task forces, participation in the conquest of fire superiority and intelligence acquisition) remain applicable. But technical and tactical constraints will frequently result in favoring the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> aspects of the mission in offensive as well as in defensive situations.

**In a defensive situation**, the artillery mission, in connection with helicopters and Air Force, is to attack the enemy as far as

possible and to dissociate infantry from its combat supports, to slow down reinforcements' arrival, to divide them before they reach the outskirts of urbanized areas ; and inside built-up areas, its mission is to conduct fire support ambushes, to isolate and stop the opponent by means of demolitions. In direct support, to the benefit of the contact units, it is a matter of providing final protective fires consisting of mine delivery, smoke and explosive shells on enemy assaults, to blind or neutralize with time shells enemy observation posts or relays while destroying the areas that are abandoned to the enemy and setting fire to the ones from which we want to dislodge it. In an offensive situation, artillery's role is to conquer a corridor that would allow the crossing of the urbanized area by avoiding too dense areas of resistance, or to participate in that conquest by neutralizing enemy resistances, or even by controlling part of the the locality.

The two first cases differentiate by the size and the tempo of the actions to be conducted. Seizing a corridor implies speed in the execution. In that case, artillery intervenes massively on the corridor's flanks to isolate the objective.

In a more selective way, in direct support, artillery intervenes to solve temporary difficulties by setting in fire or even destroying enemy strongholds, by hampering as much as possible enemy's observation and liaison capabilities, by systematically attacking high points.

The conquest of an urbanized area is a long and expensive operation which requires from the force a significant effort and a lot of time. In this type of combat, one tries, zone after zone, to isolate the adversary, to weaken it and "to nibble it", and finally to launch the assault. Within this framework artillery seeks to isolate the objective, to deny any withdrawal as well as any reinforcement and to neutralize combat support elements. As enemy artillery is the adversary's only direct fire support with

limited possibilities for maneuvering and dodging, counter-battery operations take there a particular importance.

## and adapted to the opponent

**In violence mastering** situation, when the goal is to ensure or restore security in a territory disturbed by violent actions, field artillery plays its role within the trilogy : intimidation, warning, retaliation. Intimidation, because, due to its sole presence, and thanks to its means of acquisition and fire, it exerts definitely a deterrent effect over a potential enemy. Artillery, while remaining at distance, allows the firing of warning shots either by shooting at "empty" targets located in the vicinity of real ones or by firing at the target with non lethal ammunitions such as blank, smoke or illuminating shells.

In case of retaliation, then artillery shoots to brutally destroy one or several targets that are either meaningful or representing a threat to our own forces. And last, within the framework of its participation in intelligence collection, artillery, thanks to its COBRA counter-battery radar, allows the localization of belligerents mortars or guns firing at civilian populations.



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# Air defense

Air defense's role in built-up areas is, as usual, to ensure the direct protection of an area, a unit or a specific place and to take part in the attrition of the opponent's air assets. However, the specific context of MOUT<sup>(1)</sup> as well as the new types of threat raise real difficulties.

BY COLONEL BRUNO DUMAS, CREDAT

## A challenging environment

First, the environment is a real challenge for air defense since deployment, detection and firing possibilities are often limited.

In addition, many hot spots can disturb the IR detectors (monitoring, homing systems) and the establishment of signal communications can be rather difficult for coordination systems. Moreover the possible presence of population will require to take some precautionary measures to avoid collateral damages (aircraft, missile or part of missile crashes) and the possible activation of airfields in the vicinity could disturb the identification process (possible mistakes, reduction of the reaction time in case of doubt...).

## Different and new types of threat

If air threat operates within its usual employment fields, "asymmetrical"

actions using provocation (releasing of leaflets, flying over sensitive areas...) or suicide attacks are not to be excluded. Airplanes, which will avoid flying over a defended zone, will use preferably stand off ammunition. Helicopters could be committed there, but primarily if the land situation is not too unfavorable for them. Future threat will thus consist mainly in drones and cruise missiles which, since they have less constraints, will take advantage from that environment, as well as stand-off missiles and ground to ground rockets.

## The complementarities between air defense branch and anti-aircraft self defense is more than ever necessary

The traditional employment principles must be applied by setting up a deterrent and effective defense from the outside of the zone. Thus SAMM assets will be deployed in priority outside of built-up areas or in open

areas enabling them to ensure detection and fire. Their mission will be a zone defense one in order to compel the planes to fly at very low altitude and to counter the attacks at safety limit. SHORAD assets could be deployed downtown on high points to ensure specific point defense in order to supplement the disposition and to engage residual or less significant threat.

However, the size of such a zone and the multidirectional character of the threat could require many air defense systems whose action will have to be supplemented by the use of anti-aircraft self defense from all deployed units, and even by air-to-air helicopters.

Thus, the "urbanized terrain" as well as the potential threats do not put air defense assets in a very good situation to operate inside towns.

The complementarities with the anti-aircraft self defense will be even more essential together with the

adaptation of firing orders and ROE to take into account the surprise effect caused by the arrival of aircraft without notice and by collateral damages.

*1 MOUT : Military Operation on Urban Terrain.*

**Contrary to what was stated in Doctrine magazine #1, and as a consequence of a June 2003 Army staff decision, Roland system will not be upgraded and will be fully decommissioned in 2010. It will be timely replaced by an armoured version of MISTRAL system (MARS for Mistral ARmored System) in order to maintain forward units' protection capability.**

# The land space management function

The land space management function that includes engineers, DNRBC<sup>1</sup> and geographical activities, plays a paramount role to the benefit of actions conducted in urbanized areas, especially during combat operations. In addition, and whatever might be the scenario, it covers combat environment intelligence and safeguard-protection which are indispensable to the force.

BY COLONEL JEAN SERVEILLE, CREDAT

## Knowing and improving land environment in the three dimensions

Urban environment can be easily organized and improved in the three dimensions either by friendly engineer units or by enemy ones. That decisive action to the benefit of land maneuver forces is expressed through the creation of obstacles, booby traps, strong points, route opening, vertical and horizontal routes inside buildings, strongholds conquest, sewers reconnaissance, booby trap clearance, and infrastructure reconnaissance before using it later or before assault and destruction.

During stabilization phases, the engineers participate in force safeguard by creating observation posts and check points, by conducting protection actions, mine clearing, EOD, restoring and improving infrastructures necessary for the forces ; they participate as well in the restoration of normal life for the population, they even assist this population. Within this framework, they

act in particular on airports, railway stations, bridges, water, natural gas and energy supply networks, health and communication infrastructures and patrimonial sites.

## Actions that are more influenced by the population's presence

During combat operations, chief DNRBC advises the combined arms commander about protection measures to be taken in response to potential threats. In forces coercion as well as in violence mastering situations, chief DNRBC

provides specific intelligence about industrial compounds that could present a NRBC hazard for either the force or the population should they stop working properly or in case of sabotage or destruction. Geography is also paramount as it provides the physical, economical and human data necessary to the planning and conduct of operations and to weapons systems implementation. It participates in determining courses of action through terrain analysis, study of enemy avenues of approach, study of defensive points strengths and weaknesses, and through tri dimensional mapping allowing to take into account human dwellings at the right scale.

## More integrated than combat supporting down to the lowest levels

Actions in urbanized areas entail to break up the forces, a reduction of the distances, multi directional danger and imbrications of civilian population and combatants.

In order to face these problems, it is necessary to be reactive, to achieve an efficient force protection, a close deployment of combat support elements, and to acquire a good “*tri dimensional*” knowledge of built-up areas and enemy positions. Currently these requirements are not entirely met. Mapping coverage at an adequate tri dimensional scale is limited to specific areas and it must be constantly updated ; the actual use of buildings may sometimes be uncertain (Chinese Embassy or barracks). The Engineers and, in due course, DNRBC must be integrated down to the lowest level, within the infantry/engineer duo or within the tank/infantry/engineer trio in order to bring in solutions to the problems of mobility, counter mobility, expertise and protection, not to forget robotization.

<sup>1</sup> Nuclear, radiological, bacteriological and chemical defense.



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# Operational communication

The recent Iraqi conflict left a broad place to various forms of operational communication (COMOPS.) Contrary to other functions, the role, modes of action and techniques of COMOPS (which in France includes communications with the media, internal communication, local communication - roughly equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon Psy Ops - and public relations) hardly change when carried out in urbanized area.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL DANIEL FISCHER, CREDAT

## The same type of operational communication in urbanized area

It will always intend to convince and obtain adhesion of several categories of “*targets*” to a wide panel of goals ranging from the validity of the intervention to the right understanding of the actions carried out by the force, or to incite the opponents to desertion or capitulation. It also intends to be present and to inform, in order to ensure transparency with the media, to refute the opponents’ arguments, the negative rumors and unfavorable propaganda, and to take part in the morale support of the forces. Even if built-up areas are not very accessible and more dangerous, COMOPS will remain true to its principles of veracity and credibility in order to avoid mistrust and to arouse credibility in the short term, but also in the long run.

## But an indispensable special effort...

Whatever the type of conflict, the framework of

engagement, the attitude, etc, COMOPS will remain impossible to ignore and, for obvious reasons, will always be the focus of a specific effort in urbanized area. Even more within this framework, it remains (and especially local and media communication) complementary, interdependent and it interacts with the other “*combat support*” functions, among others CIMIC. It acts, in particular through information campaigns, within a prevention - deterrence - intervention framework, to reduce engagement duration and losses, while facilitating follow-on phases development. Its effectiveness in Basra in 2003, as well as its absence or notorious inefficiency during Russian engagements in Grozny, demonstrate it well.

## With important constraints for the units

Some questions can arise. In spite of its recent positive effects, is the imbedding of journalists to be avoided in the event of violent and attrition actions? Images of friendly losses as much as



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those of civilian victims and destruction, even the ones presenting search of dwelling as well as check and control operations are likely to erode public opinions support. The presence of journalists represents also an additional burden for the units (protection to ensure, risk of misunderstandings, intoxication and use by the adversary, syndrome of Stockholm, infringement to the Geneva conventions, bad media coverage of the prisoners, friendly blunders due to psychological stress). Will it be possible to anticipate and manage this potential conflict with the press? In front of the need for linking COMOPS to the

troops’ behavior on the ground, the British did not hesitate to patrol Basra wearing berets, even if it meant an increase of their vulnerability. Will one be always ready to take and assume additional risks? Last, how to reconcile the requirements for almost “*zero dead*” vis-à-vis a decided opponent very well imbricate with inhabitants in very densely populated areas, with the need for reducing engagements duration, the need to obtain a timely and credible COMOPS, as well as the conditions favorable to the follow-up of the coercive phase or the return of normal life in the city?



# CIMIC<sup>(1)</sup>

CIMIC is another function that supplements COMOPS within the environment framework. In urbanized areas, CIMIC keeps its usual role and has very little to do to adapt its actions to this specific type of engagement. It contributes to reach the expected final effect as well as to minimize negative collateral effects that are particularly frequent during combat operations in urbanized areas.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL DANIEL FISCHER, CREDAT

## Urbanized area : a most favorable ground for CIMIC

During humanitarian operations, whatever might be the mode of engagement of CIMIC : violence mastering or force coercion and whatever might be the opponent or the factions in place, urbanized areas remain CIMIC's number one ground of engagement.

CIMIC participates usefully in the planning pre-decision phase : preparation (evaluation, assessment of human environment and targetting operations for hard and symbolic high value targets), advices, anticipation, etc. and its role is not limited to actions of stabilization - violence mastering. It can act directly in NEOs plans, it can as well minimize the consequences that flows of refugees may have on operations, it can also facilitate the access to city resources, take part in urban damage assessment, provide information, organize refugee camps before their management is transferred to IO/NGOs, CIMIC can even use its

know-how during the stabilization phase before major fighting come to an end (the British used "CIMIC" to gain Basra's population even before seizing the city).

## Acting to the benefit of the forces but also to the populations

Although its mission is made more difficult within this type of environment, it provides liaisons that enable a better coordination between military and civilian actors (IO, NGO, agencies, local authorities), mainly established in town. It assists the force particularly by gaining and keeping urban and suburban population's approval of the force's action as well as a better perception of that force. It supports civilian environment (food, health, education, infrastructures, administration, security, justice, etc.) and national interests (assistance to corporate companies wishing to take part in rebuilding the economy and thus in the restoration of life in the city).

## CIMIC difficulties in force coercion operations

One of the CIMIC difficulties rests in the anticipation and implementation of support to civilian populations when coercion operations are not completed. Psychological and media impacts are certain and favoring reduced friendly losses as well as limited combat duration ; these impacts have as a corollary effect an increased exposure of our human and material assets, the same for the civilian organizations.

In addition, and because of the results that can be expected from CIMIC actions and thanks to the usual attitude of the population to demonstrate its impatience in front of the disorganization of the living conditions, the commander must absolutely dedicate military assets to CIMIC without hampering combat operations. And lastly, the taking into account of follow-on phases and the potential political and media consequences require from leaders additional capabilities of judgment and flexibility and

require from units which are already acting in a difficult environment more flexibility and reactivity.



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*1 Editor's note : In the French terminology, we use the "ACM" acronym standing for "Action civilo-militaire" as stated by our TTA 901 (FM). Since that function dealing with environment is evolving and considering the will to be more closer to NATO, ACM could soon be changed into "CIMIC" standing for "Cooperation civilo-militaire". Consequently, we will use that wording, more familiar to US speaking readers, throughout this article even there is some slight difference between the two terminologies US and French.*

# Training

## for actions in urbanized areas

**Preparing the engagements by considering the employment environment and not only operational functions allows to break away from the military branches divisions and above all it constitutes an efficiency multiplying approach.** To this purpose, the French Army staff decided to set up an organization in charge of “actions in urbanized areas”, responsible for describing what they believe the typical engagement to be and federating energies in order to prepare for it. It should, among other tasks, develop and federate teaching dynamics. As of now, it is possible to draft training objectives and to recommend the means to reach those goals while taking into account time management factors which constitute structural data for any professional armed forces.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FRANK NICOL, ARMY STAFF, OPERATIONAL TRAINING OFFICE

*Which objectives should be set to generate, in the future, skilled soldiers for actions in urbanized areas ?*

### UNDERSTANDING URBANIZED AREAS

It is a question of inculcating a methodology for understanding urbanized areas physical and human characteristics in each level of the hierarchy, whatever the branch. Knowing how to carry out a specific synthetic description of urban terrain and being able to identify the cultural dimensions that are involved, do facilitate the perception of the zone of action and contribute to determining risks and threats.

### AT EXECUTANTS LEVEL : TO ACQUIRE SPECIFIC AUTOMATISMS

Some examples can illustrate this requirement. Initially, **basic survival actions** must be taught to

each soldier. In the same way, **specific basic elementary actions** are to be taught to the “Professional Army” units. For the small infantry detachments, **immediate techniques of action** permit to practice meeting engagement at short distance. When taking into account the physical and human characteristics, firing in urban areas implies for everybody a **specific use of weapons**. But to carry out an action, it is necessary to know how to localize oneself and how to move, thus the techniques of urban navigation on main communication routes as well as inside major dwellings must be mastered. Moreover, if in open ground combined arms co-operation is required, in that type of closed terrain it becomes absolutely paramount and demands to promote **the concept of combined arms detachment which implies a complete melding**. These

two facets, and especially the latest, require a good **knowledge of combined arms procedures**.

### COMMANDERS MUST IMPLEMENT PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

Many principles of action are to be kept in mind. First of all, commanders have **to win several battles** : those of mobility, logistic autonomy, intelligence, safety, self control and **coordination**. Commanders must also pay attention to **work at their proper own level**. In addition, during all the conception work, commanders must keep in mind the idea of **public life future restoration** and **take care not to hurt the population**. In the spirit of the preceding principles, commanders must attempt to create “**mini-theatres of operations**” **within the urbanized area**. In any event, **the various command levels must develop their own situation comprehension and increase their capability**

**to grasp opportunity targets**. For that reason, they must learn how to simultaneously manage by day and night several decentralized combined arms actions while granting a real initiative to their subordinates for selecting assets and processes to be implemented in order to obtain the desired effects.

*How to reach the above mentioned objectives and achieve a proper training ?*

### AZUR

The Army staff is currently developing a **policy for teaching and practicing actions in urbanized areas named AZUR**. It consists, after having filled a doctrinal lack, to set up means and guiding principles. Thus, firing ranges adapted to FIBUA (fighting in built-up areas) are being developed and, adapted shooting training programs are being drafted. Combat training villages are to be upgraded,

the combined arms documents describing the specific know-how, the procedures and training pedagogies must be developed.

## CENZUB

**In 2006, the training centre for actions in urbanized areas (CENZUB)** will be the keystone of the combined arms units' training thanks to its organization, its staff of permanent experts and evolutionary concept. It will consist of three departments : an educational department ; a training department with automated training aid to be developed from scratch that will allow the conduct of missions by day and night at the combined arms task sub unit - company size - level (SGTIA) and then at battalion size level (GTIA) ; and last firing ranges adapted to combat in urbanized areas. The technical difficulties inherent to laser and confined surroundings as well as the selected training pedagogy will grant a major role to instructors, in particular during "hot wash up" in the field, followed by "replays". Follow on, indoor "A.A.R" (After Action Review) will be carried out after each execution of a major phase.

The main training goal will be the development of the SGTIA commander's intelligence of the situation

as well as his capability to grasp opportunity objectives by day and night. Making effort on tactical reflexion, CENZUB will constitute a genuine centre of expertise on actions in urbanized areas, and at the same time it will become the orthodoxy custodian for this type of engagement.

## ADDITIONAL MEANS RECOMMENDED

1. The fielding within units of **virtual simulation assets**, well related to urban engagement, would facilitate **the mastering of these procedures by small entities**. These training sessions would be followed by field exercises and live firing training.
2. **SITTAL'employment**, using adapted scenarios and pedagogy would improve the mastering of the fire opening process in accordance with established ROEs.
3. **employment of Simulation Ammunitions** (paintball type) with regular weapons would improve close combat training, especially inside buildings.
4. studying actual cases would prepare junior NCOs to take initiative thanks to a reasoned and sound approach of the employment environment (mission, environment).

5. The use of **"off the shelf" (paper) war games**, with adapted rules enables, as of now, officers and NCOs at company level to practice procedures and also to start a tactical reflection process.
6. **The use of JANUS simulation tool** (with a basic background view representing urban environment) facilitates **procedures** acquisition and, should well qualified instructors be available, permits tactical assessments.
7. **Urban areas located in garrisons vicinity** can be used as an illustrative support to implement urban area comprehension by the combined arms hierarchy at various echelons. In addition, it would be very wise to get in contact with civilian

organizations able to assist the military in getting a better understanding of what is a city.

8. **the study of scenarios "ready to use"** built from actual operations **feedback reports** that would be put on a future Army LAN (to be created) would facilitate the teaching of urban area warfare principles ; they could also serve as support for theoretical exercises dealing with planning and decision-making.
9. the drafting of an **interactive exercise book** based on actual combat in urban areas could facilitate combat company commanders' reflection.

1 Simulation assets for light weapons.



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*All of the above presentation stress that training to actions in urban areas is not limited to "kicking a door open". It belongs to the organization (described above in the introduction) to reinforce or not the outline that has just been presented. But, before that, it is necessary to think together to the effects that are to be achieved on urbanized areas. It is thus a question of filling a doctrinal gap by moving beyond the current branch thinking logic, which is sometimes restrictive since it is a question of reasoning about complex actions and environments.*



# The contribution of helicopters to land actions in built-up areas

In the light of the experience acquired by the coalition during operation IRAKI FREEDOM, French ALAT is backed up in its doctrinal choices about air mobility, the coherence of which can be stressed once again.

The fielding of new equipment and more particularly of the TIGRE in its HAP<sup>1</sup> and later its HAD<sup>2</sup> versions will constitute an efficiency multiplier for an Army aviation totally dedicated to the reinforcement of the Army operational capabilities.

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BY COLONEL CHRISTIAN DE CERTAINES, FROM THE ARMY AVIATION COMMAND

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## The helicopter, a true combat and maneuver tool and not only a simple flying platform

The airmobile engagement of the coalition benefited from an impeccable air superiority as well as from reliable and frequently updated intelligence. The efficiency of helicopters in their “fire” and “movement” functions has been optimum as long as they have been used in a tactical way i.e. as combat and maneuver tools, and not as simple flying platforms. The attack against the Medina division in Kerbala comes under this last case : a hastily prepared mission, on not very accurate intelligence about the enemy ; an action conducted without taking advantage of the surprise effect nor benefiting from any support ; a static deployment in a permissive zone. That mission in which 28 out of 30 APACHE helicopters were hit but all flew back home, was

interrupted and successfully renewed some hours later. The infiltration flight routes and the deployment and firing zones were then tactically chosen and the fire coordination was perfect.

Apart from this episode which occurred, as said, in two steps, the whole of the airmobile actions was unanimously hailed as a success by the American and British staffs. During the course of the operation, the US committed around four hundred helicopters which claimed some 860 destroyed targets for the attack helicopters, and around 40 for the Brits for more than 130 treated targets.

Therefore, a real tactical use of high performance helicopters fully satisfied the engaged land forces.

## The new capabilities offered by the TIGRE

By focusing to the only armed aircraft, it is possible to draw a parallel between the missions performed in

Iraq and the future capabilities expected from the TIGRE for tomorrow Army.

The direct support to the units in contact proved to be one of the most frequently used course of action, particularly for the conquest of towns in Iraq. In this type of operation in urbanized areas, by day as well as by night, the crews used guns and rockets to engage a large number of targets at short range.

When necessary, they dynamically fired their *Hellfire* missiles against the “hard” targets of the battlefield, target designation being performed from the ground or from the helicopters themselves.

The reference, for a combat helicopter, therefore remains its ability to act within the specific framework of forces coercion commitments, while developing abilities for reversibility suited to interventions coming under violence mastering

framework. The TIGRE will be able to efficiently intervene against “conventional” targets for an armed helicopter such as tanks or armored vehicles as well as against “cold” targets with high added value such as CPs, AD systems, logistic dumps, specific installations,... while managing the risks of collateral damages.

The “multi-purpose” nature of the attack helicopters is fully validated and the TIGRE, thanks in particular to its weaponry, meets therefore the needs of the Army.

## A significant advantage for the close support of units in built-up areas

The TIGRE HAP has been conceived for the optimum implementation of its 30 mm turret gun located under the nose of the aircraft. The caliber, the accuracy and the operating easiness of this gun are significant advantages for the engagement of the TIGRE in close support of troops in urbanized zones. In particular, the sighting of the gun is directed by the pilot’s helmet. Thus, he has just to look at the selected target and the gun is

automatically aligned on the desired firing axis. In addition to the gun, the non guided rocket weapon system of the HAP gives all its power to the air to ground support, wanted by the forces in contact. The capabilities of this weapon system will be reinforced on the TIGRE HAD with the implementation of guided rockets (a priori thanks to a semi-active laser solution). This new capability will permit to optimize the close support by combining power and accuracy but also by enabling the troops on the ground to designate themselves the targets to be destroyed.

Finally and above all, the TIGRE HAD will be fitted with a main destruction armament for the long range treatment of battlefield “hard” targets. This armament will multiply tenfold the added value of the aircraft during raids performed in the depth and during armed reconnaissance. It will also contribute to provide the troops on the ground, in urbanized or obstacles free zones, with fire support options at middle and long range.

- 1 HAP : Protection and support helicopter.
- 2 HAD : Destruction and support helicopter.



ADJ J.R. DRAHI/SIRPA Terre

***The French choice to make the TIGRE HAP evolve in the near future towards a new HAD version, even more “multirole and flexible” seems to be operationally perfectly justified. In addition to their mobility, the airmobile forces will have, around the year 2010, significant destruction and fire support capabilities. Integrated in battlefield digitization, they will thus be ready, by day as well as by night, to perform and protect the helitransport of one infantry battalion in operation, to carry out deep destruction raids as well as to perform all kinds of safety and intelligence missions within the framework of violence mastering or to conduct amphibious and RESCORT actions (safety part of SAR actions).***

## TO GET MORE INFORMATION

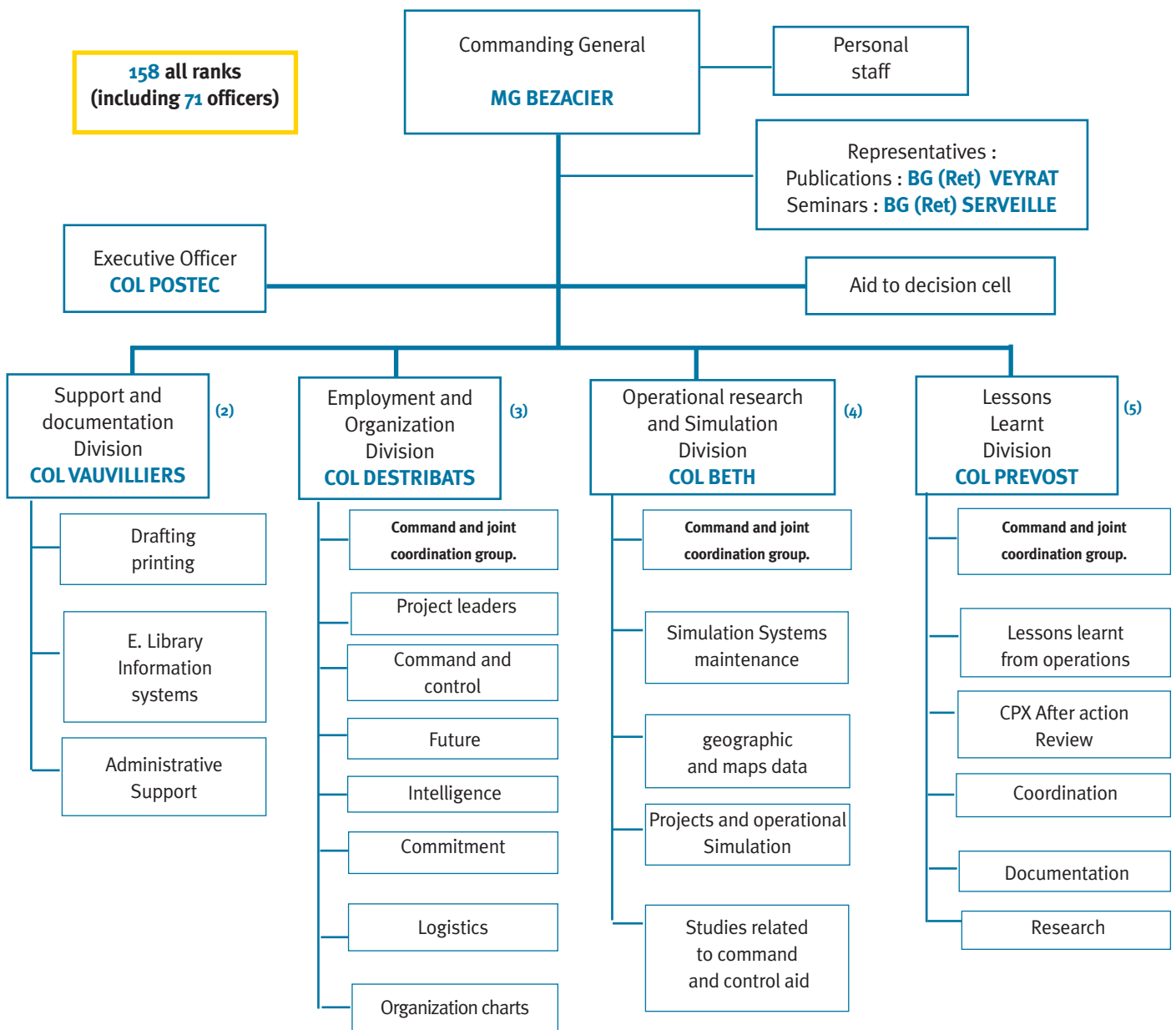
# About that topic, here is a list of manuals related to Combined Arms Task Unit level and above plus some other non exhaustive reference documents :

- Manuel d'emploi des forces terrestres en ZUB : TTA 980 (en cours de refonte)
- Mémento d'emploi des formations de l'ALAT en ZUB (document provisoire)
- Mémento d'emploi du Génie en ZUB (en cours de refonte)
- Mémento d'emploi des formations feux sol-sol (ART 405)
- Mémento d'emploi des formations défense sol-air (ART 414)
- Mémento d'emploi des SIC par les forces (SIC 956)
- Mémento du renseignement opérationnel des forces terrestres
- Mémento sur les structures du commandement en opérations (TTA 956)
- Mémentos sur le soutien logistique (MAT 101, SAN 101, TRN 101, CAT 101, SEA 101)
  
- **La guerre, la ville et le soldat de J.-L. DUFOUR, Odile Jacob, 2002.**
- **La ville et la guerre, sous la direction d'Antoine PICON, Les éditions de l'imprimeur, 1996.**
- **Le combat urbain, revue RAIDS n° 11.**
  
- [www.urbanoperations.com/](http://www.urbanoperations.com/).



**Effective on 1<sup>st</sup> July, the C.D.E.F.  
(Doctrine and Forces Employment Center)  
replaces the doctrine  
body of the C.D.E.S. (disbanded<sup>1</sup>)**

**Organization chart (broad lines)**



(1) The “Higher military Education” body now including the **CESAT** (Army Higher education Center), encompassing the Higher Staff Course (**CSEM**), the higher technical Course (**EMSST**) and the Higher reserve Staff Course (**ESORSEM**) together with the junior Staff College (**EEM**), will be placed under the authority of the Army Training Command.

(2) Regroups the documentation cell of the former CRD and part of the CDES Staff.

(3) Replaces the CREDAT.

(4) Replaces the CROSAT.

(5) Regroups the former CEREX and the research body of the former CRD.

# 40 COMMANDO ROYAL MARINES

## Operation JAMES

Preamble : by Major General JB DUTTON OBE, Commanding General Royal Marines and Commander United Kingdom Amphibious Force, late 3 Commando Brigade Commander in Iraq.

Once 3 Cdo Bde had secured the oil infrastructure on the Al Faw peninsula and the port of Umm Qasr, attention turned to the eventual operation that would be needed to take Basra. The Brigade was located across the width of the peninsula at its northern end on the outskirts of Basra, effectively isolating the town from the south east. The Iraqis made a number of attempts to break out south with tanks and armoured vehicles : these were defeated with close air support and artillery and then decisively by Challenger 2 tanks. During this period the information campaign was telling the residents of Basra that if they rose up, they would be supported. It was with the intention of giving substance to that claim that Operation JAMES was conceived. The purpose was to defeat the enemy and seize the area of the town centred on Abu Al Khasib, a sprawling relatively affluent suburb of Basra stretching from west to east along the southern bank of the Shatt Al Arab. In this article one of the company commanders from 40 Commando tells the story of the operation, which set the tone for the eventual relief of Basra.

BY MAJOR MATT JACKSON OC B COMPANY



British Army

Royal Marine Commando Units have, over the past 3 years, been re-configured into a new, and innovative ORBAT titled "Commando 21". The key reasons for this were firstly, to cater for the increased firepower and mobility assets that we receive by

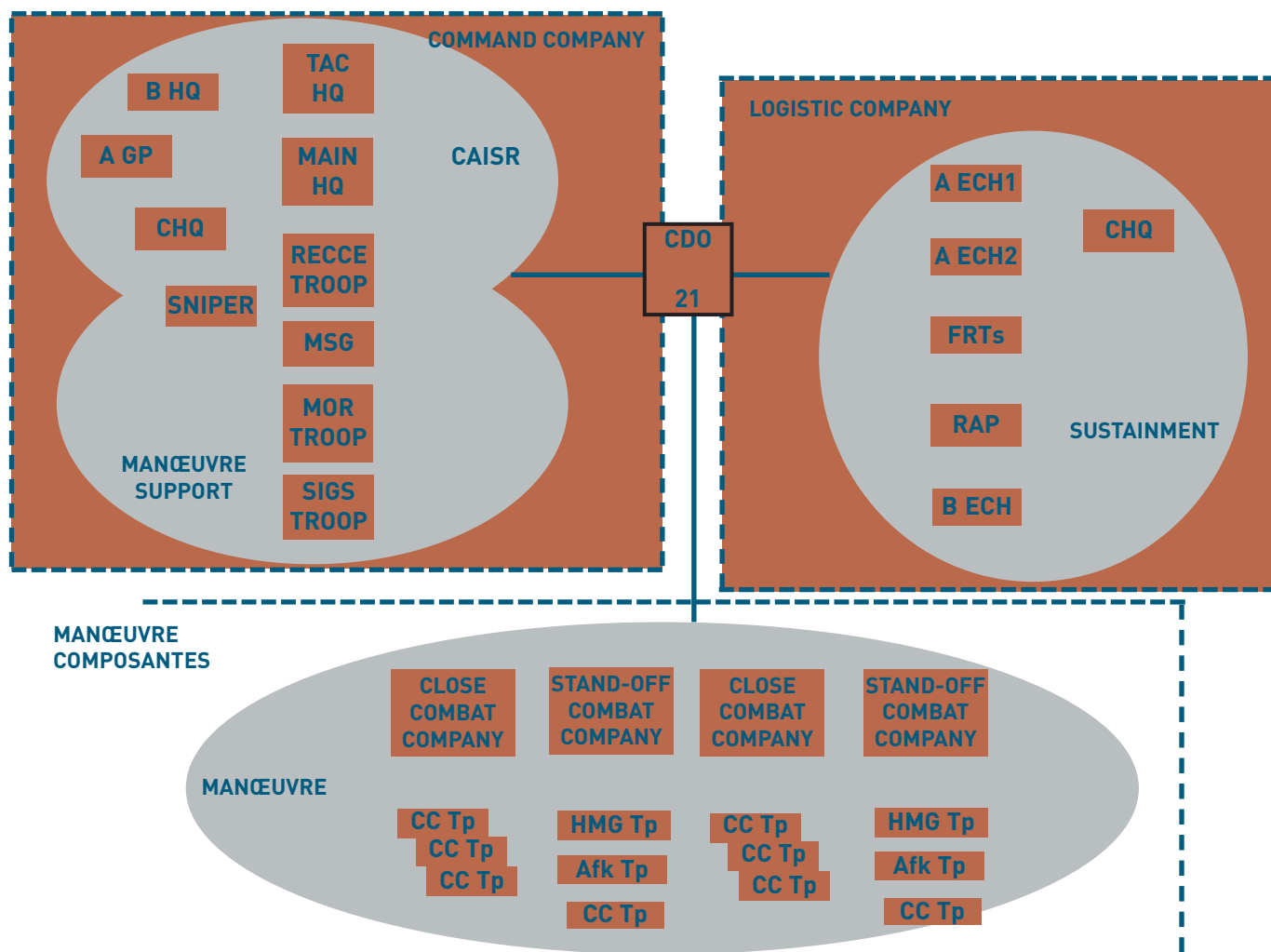
2 Close Companies (CC) (A and C Coys) and 2 Stand-Off Companies (SOC) (B and D Coys). The CC still consists of 3 Troops and a Headquarters, however, each of the 3 Troops have been augmented by a Manoeuvre Support Section (MSS), containing a 338 Long

2010, but secondly, to evolve as the first part in the stepping stone towards a maritime commando task force capable of conducting Amphibious Littoral Manoeuvre. The standard 3 Rifle Companies of old have been replaced with 2 types of "Manoeuvre Companies" ;

Range Rifle (LRR), a GPMG (Light Role) and a 51 mm Mortar. The SOC is more innovative, and consists of 2 Troops. The "close" Troop has the standard 3 sections, however, unlike the troops contained within the CC, it does not have a MSS. Fire Support Troop (FST), consists of 6 x MILAN (ATGW) and 6 x 5 HMG that can be task organised (TASKORG) to suit a given mission statement. There is also a Logistics Company and Command Company that contains a Manoeuvre Support Group (MSG) consisting of 6 x MILAN and 6 x GPMG (Sustained Fire), Recce Troop, Mortar Troop and Signals Troop. It also contains the Headquarters staff. (See wiring diagram below).

Following the initial landings on the AL FAW Peninsula (Op HOUGHTON) B Coy was re-tasked to conduct an urban

## Commando 21 : ORBAT



advance to contact in the area of Abu Al Khasib (AAK) in SE Basra named Op JAMES). Fire Support Troop was configured into 3 x Combat Teams, each consisting of 2 x MILAN and 2 x HMG, demonstrating flexibility through TASKORG. With a Close Troop from C Coy attached to B Coy, the 2 forward Combat Teams were supported by a Troop of dismounted infantry, with a third kept in reserve/echelon.

The attack involved a long approach march to the line of departure (LD) for a 0200Z H Hour on 30 Mar 03. 4 Troops first objective was "Dalmatian", (see schematic below) the first main bridge in the outskirts of AAK. As the men moved down the road towards the outskirts, the cry "mines!" was heard;

to the left of the road the wasteland was littered with Anti-tank mines. A short distance down the road, 4 Troop along with combat team two, came across a couple of suspect buildings and with enemy confirmed present, a LAW 94mm went flying into it followed by the 0.5 of one of the HMG. The advance continued.

4 Troop moved off to secure the bridge with Combat Team 2 in close support, Once there, the bridge was secured and the first objective complete. An HMG was now deployed on top of a roof covering subsequent objectives. Combat Team 3 along with 5 Troop came across to join the rest of the Company from the east, while Combat Team 1 came in from the west. Along with all this activity, the occasional ringing of a 120mm

shell from nearby Challenger 2s could be heard waking the Iraqi tank crews. Again, we moved forward. Not far up the road, (in the area of Brosnan 2) the point section encountered barbed wire across the road, and came under contact from a building up front. They returned fire towards the enemy position, including GPMG and Minimi. While 1 Section homed in on the suppressing fire, 2 Section moved across the road, quickly cleared a nearby building and occupied its roof for added fire support. A LAW 94 from 1 Section was fired and it smashed into the side of the enemy building. The assault had begun!

3 Section moved towards the bridge, and grenades were thrown into the top floor windows. With suppressive fire from 2 Section, they



jumped over a wall and threw more grenades into the building followed by bursts of automatic fire. However, the enemy had fled. Due to excellent training and positive target acquisition, no civilians were hurt and they were taken to safety. The section moved back and the Troop re-organised.

From the bridge, a Milan detachment moved forward to the front, to cover the advance. This was when a keen eyed Marine spotted an Iraqi soldier on his bike with an AK slung around his body. The unfortunate man was oblivious to the advancing troops. The section commander tried to halt his advance orally but to no avail, the soldier went for his rifle - a fatal mistake !

It was at this point that the Coy was split, 4 Troop and Combat Team 3 moved across the bridge to the adjacent road. The advance continued on two fronts, 4 Troop leading with Combat Team 3 in support and, on the other axis, 5 Troop supported by Combat Team 2. Combat Team 1 was in reserve.

5 Troop moved off covering all arcs ready for anything ! As a fire team (4 men) of the point section crossed over yet another bridge (in the area of Connery 3) they were suddenly engaged by enemy occupying a building across the river within the date palms. This isolated them from the remainder of their section. This team adopted the prone position to give covering fire. In text book fashion, a heavy weight of fire was put down whilst the isolated fire team popped smoke and peeled back over

the bridge to rejoin the rest of the section. In the following lull, enemy fire was identified further up the river and the HMG was deployed.

Under effective enemy fire and with no cover this gun team ran to get into position, and returned fire. The sniper was deployed, and, having been briefed that there were 3 - 5 enemy at a range of 285-300m, he moved, under fire, into a fire position. Ignoring the heavy weight of fire coming back in his direction, he set his scope and fired a number of rounds, killing at least one and injuring others. (The sniper was subsequently awarded a mention in dispatches).

Having dispersed the enemy into the date palms, the advance was able to continue. This was the chance 5 Troop C Coy had been waiting for as they were then able to bring the UGL (under-slung grenade launcher) into action. Round upon round landed in the date palms, sending mud and debris up into the air. The enemy had again retreated.

When Combat Team 2 reached the bridge they headed east for about 200m and went firm. Combat Team 1 then passed through and headed towards the eastern edge of the town link up with Brigade Recce Force (BRF). On patrolling along this road it was suddenly apparent that the locals were adopting a welcoming attitude as they came out of their houses to greet us. They carried on through the waves and smiles and reached the BRF, thus completing the important link up on the Eastern side of AAK.

## There were many lessons learnt :

- 1) Urban saturation had been achieved through the Commando Group plan. AAK was essentially enveloped by BRF to the East, by SDG to the West, with 4 Manoeuvre Companies moving from South to North to clear the enemy from the area, with Bravo Company on the Eastern flank.
- 2) Flexibility through TASKORG. The Commando had attached a Troop from C Coy to B Coy for the attack, proving intra-operability between the Companies.
- 3) The utility of a SOC in a semi-dismounted role had been proved. The all up weight of a SOC with first line scales of ammunition is in the region of 32,000lbs. This was moved with 6 quad bikes with trailers, 1 BV and by the Marines man packing considerable loads over a distance of approximately 25 kms in 36 hours, thus validating the training regime that we have in place at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines and proving the robustness of our men.
- 4) The HMG, despite purists challenging that it is solely an anti-materiel weapon, had demonstrated its utility in an urban environment for two reasons. Firstly due to its weapon effects, but secondly, and equally importantly, due to its sheer psychological value.

*In conclusion, the Commando attack conducted by 40 Commando Group into the SE of Basra was pivotal as it effectively destroyed the enemy's will to fight in our Area of Operations. Subsequently, both 42 Commando, and 7 Armoured Brigade Units were able to move into the main parts of the city the following day with little resistance, allowing, 9 days later, the shift from war fighting operations to stabilisation operations.*

## The battle of Nablus (3 to 20 april 2002) : Antiterrorist combat in a built-up area

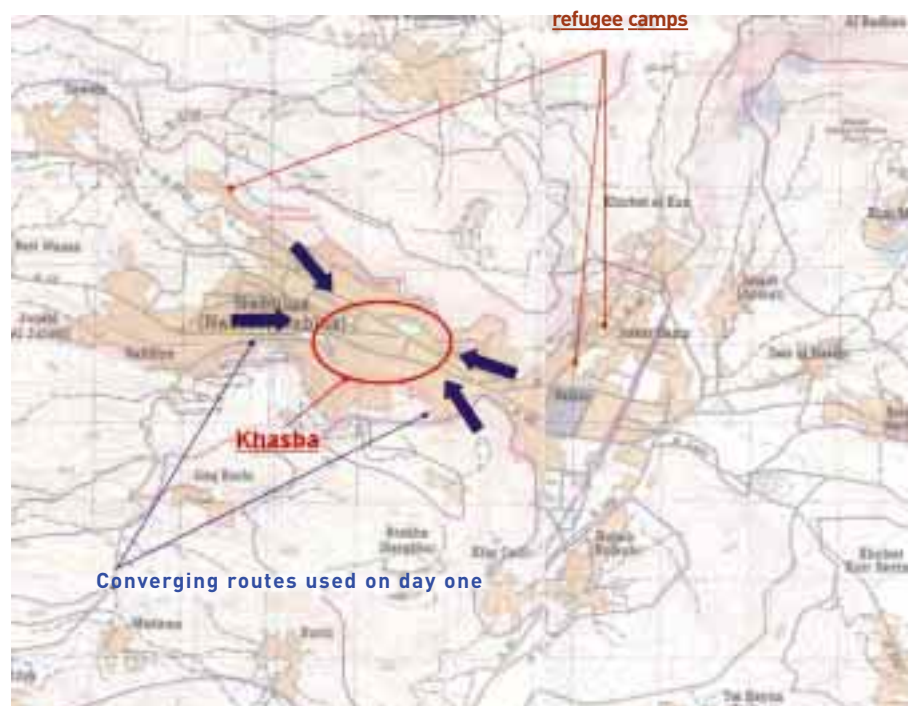
BY COLONEL BERTRAND BINNENDJIK, FRENCH DEFENSE ATTACHÉ AT TEL AVIV

### An offensive aiming at “eradicating terrorism” in a very unfavorable environment

After the beginning of Intifada in September 2000, violence became ever greater, essentially in the form of suicide attacks, indifferently carried out in the Territories or in Israel. From then on, the Israeli forces have been led to intervene more and more in Palestinian cities, although placed under the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority, in order to try to stop or neutralize activists thanks to hit and run police operations.

After the unprecedented wave of terrorist attacks during March 2002, which reached its peak during the evening of the most important Jewish religious celebration i.e. Pessah with a toll of 139 death, the Israeli government recalled 35000 reservists within 48 hours and ordered the chief of the armed forces to re-occupy all large Palestinian cities and to destroy the terrorist cells which were hiding there.

Especially known to be a stronghold of the Hamas Islamist movement, the antique city of Nablus will be the objective of the regional division encompassing an armored brigade and two prestigious infantry brigades ; the motorized airborne brigade and the Golani<sup>1</sup> mechanized brigade. With around 120 000 inhabitants, Nablus<sup>2</sup> is located in a very deep valley oriented east to west. Broadly speaking, the city is composed of



Nablus, recce on 05.01.2002 :  
• West Bank map scale 1/50.000°  
• Description of “Rampart” operation

three very distinct urbanized areas :  
three refugee camps located at the city entrances, with a very high density of population<sup>3</sup> and poor housing, then a more residential area with more spaced out houses crossed by large avenues, and last the historical heart of the city, the Kasbah, which spreads on the southern flanks of the valley and is made of an entanglement of houses built one on top of the other, with narrow and tortuous busy shopping streets in which it is very difficult to orient oneself, but favorable to defensive combat. Initially, the terrain advantage seemed to be in favor of the Palestinians.

## A police operation planned as a military action

The **mission** that had been given to the division was to “take control of Nablus and its Kasbah, to arrest or eliminate terrorists, to search weapons and explosives factories and to dismantle terrorist cells”.

The **operational concept** was aiming at “concentrating the enemy towards the center, by entering the city through converging routes, then to localize the terrorists cells and to destroy them thanks to concealed actions”.

After an a priori easy control of the camps and of the residential areas carried out by combined arms units, the execution phases planned for a complete surrounding of the Kasbah followed by a conquest, house after house, carried out by the two infantry brigades, aiming at simultaneously checking the identity of inhabitants and controlling or eliminating the pockets of resistance.

During the first hours of fighting, and because that operation was a big first for the Israeli armed forces, the military commanders were not able to define their enemy. In fact, the concerned intelligence departments, Shabak<sup>4</sup> and DMI<sup>5</sup>, were unable to assess who, among the Palestinian activists, would rise up in arms. The figures provided by these departments were ranging from 200 to 20 000 combatants, without any detail of nature or location ! It could be “official” Palestinian policemen, members of the Tanzim, armed militias coming from the Fatah, Yasser Arafat’s party, and hard-liner terrorists essentially belonging to the Hamas<sup>6</sup>. Under those conditions, Tsahal soldiers attacked blindly and groped their way along, at least during the first hours of the offensive. During the action, they will permanently benefit in real time from the INTEL support at strategic level (satellite) and tactical level (drones and helicopters).

The boundaries between the brigades as planned by the coordinating instructions were in fact a no man’s

land, orientated north-south, composed of two or three parallel streets with their lining houses and intended to avoid fratricide fires.

The same principle existed between battalions, at a lower scale, and was adjusted during action when a terrorist cell was spotted in this buffer area.

Lastly, drawing the lessons from the first operation ever carried out by Tsahal into a Palestinian camp six weeks before<sup>7</sup>, the soldiers were ordered not to progress using streets in order to avoid raking fires, which are a priori undetectable, very lethal and likely to block durably the progression of the forces.

### An original course of action : attacking like swarms i.e. “swarming”

Investing the city on April 3<sup>rd</sup> by combined arms units progressing along the main axes from the east and west city entrances practically met no resistance and on the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup>, the Kasbah was encircled. Curfew was imposed, the rest of the city was divided into squares and controlled by checkpoints essentially made up of armor. Observation points aiming at spotting pockets of resistance were installed in houses at the limit of the ancient city. The second phase could then begin.

Pioneering a process called “swarming” or attack like swarms by the Americans, the two brigade commanders ordered their battalions to invest the Kasbah on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup>. The first resistance was met at noon. In the evening, fighting spread to the whole of the Kasbah and was to continue without interruption till the 8<sup>th</sup>, when the Palestinians, completely surrounded, asked for the end of combats. Once refused by the Israeli Command, this request was accepted a few hours later. Then the activists showed up at the exit of the Kasbah to lay down their arms and surrender.

The Israeli forces could then search very carefully the old city, destroy underground explosive manufactures

and laboratories, collect weapons and ammo, as well as lots of documents for intelligence purposes.

In conclusion, the Israelis were confronted to about one thousand combatants<sup>8</sup>. They state that they have killed 74 of them during the action even though they had only physically found 54 bodies.

300 Palestinians surrendered and 480 taken as prisoners, the rest disappearing. On their side, the Israelis encountered 19 wounded and had one dead only, a captain, killed by a fratricide fire.

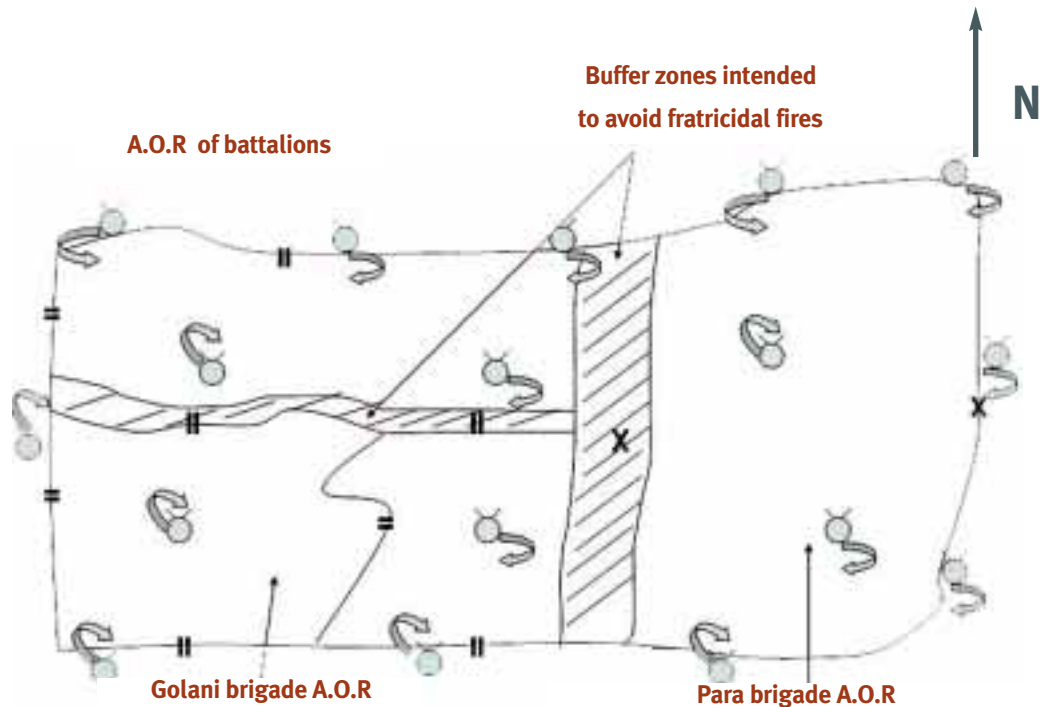
### An original combat operating mode in its conception and very useful in terms of lessons learnt

The Israeli operating mode was essentially based on three principles : constant search for **surprise** effect, **utmost decentralization** of combat operations, and permanent **creativity** by taking advantage of circumstances. Launched from multiple entry points, the infantry groups were moving along routes purposely non linear and rendered unpredictable for the Palestinians due to the house by house progression through walls, floors and ceilings. The noise resulting from wall drillings was rapidly concealed by detonations and the tumult of the battle, denying any localization by ear-listening. In every invested house, the identity of the inhabitants was checked immediately, using a telephone connection with the Shabak representative attached to the battalion, who had a direct connection to the central files. If the controlled individual was on file or if he had any relationship with a wanted person, he was then taken for interrogation.

When they had reached a position from which they were correctly overlooking one or more routes, and always keeping in mind not to use normal houses ‘openings, the Israeli soldiers drilled loopholes and prepared an ambush, waiting from five minutes to five hours for an enemy group to fall in the trap.



## Sketch of the IDF engagement areas in the Khasba on April 4<sup>th</sup>



Immediately after, the squad moved and set up another ambush a bit farther, always concealed from the Palestinians who never knew where the strikes were coming from. When a resistance pocket was spotted, the unit or platoon commanders mounted an operation to reduce it always favoring surprise.

To find one's position in the maze of the Kasbah, the Israelis used mapped vertical air photos, delivered by drones, and permanently updated at company level and disseminated down to squad leader level. Houses were numbered on the map, and even be shown in a particular color, in order to enable all the players to speak the same language and to get the right target.

In order to further increase the surprise effect, the Golani brigade even engaged some tanks in the largest streets of the Kasbah. The aim was to further increase the psychological pressure, to

dislodge a few resistances<sup>9</sup> and to deny some routes. As far as the recourse to helicopters is concerned, it was very limited, due to terrain configuration, which offered a very limited number of favorable firing angles. Only eight missiles were fired in the western sector, on houses located at the edge of the Kasbah and where activists had been spotted.

Last, and this is a crucial issue within Tsahal, the commander's place<sup>10</sup> : the brigade commanders spent their time visiting the units, both to encourage them and to keep close with reality. Then they went back to their CP, located outside the Kasbah to ensure the necessary coordination between the various units in contact. To illustrate the pragmatism of brigade commanders, it can be mentioned that on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> in the morning, the Para brigade commander gathered his battalion and company commanders even during the battle, to draw the lessons from the first days of combat and

further enhance the technique of mini-ambush set up during on-going operations.

As far as **lessons learnt** are concerned, the two brigade commanders first evoke the constant changing nature of combat, which supposes, to face it, a permanent intellectual **adaptation** and **creativity** capability in terms of procedures and operating modes.

In particular, they insist on the fact that they do not want to conquer the terrain as such, as this may be the case in high intensity warfare, but rather to track down the enemy **as soon as possible**, coming from **several directions**, where he is, forgetting any alignment, in order to prevent him from setting up any possible organization or getting his breath back. Here is a common principle to all scenarios : to impose one's will onto the enemy. To that end, the **surprise factor**, already evoked, plays an essential role.

*In conclusion,*

*according to the players of this combat, the Israeli militaries have written their doctrine during action, without any prejudice, and above all without being influenced by the high intensity combat doctrine, on which all their training was based on till the beginning of Intifada. But that latter compelled Tsahal to adapt, volens nolens, to the requirements of what may be called large-scale police operations.*

*After having gathered a maximum of intelligence data which would prove useful for the continuation of a long-term conflict, the Israelis withdrew to the Palestinian cities outskirts, to avoid further crystallizing of the population resentment showing solidarity with activists and also because they did not have the human resources to indefinitely hold the disposition that prevailed at the end of the operation Rampart.*



- 1 Respectively composed of three and two infantry battalions and each of them reinforced with an antitank company, an engineer company and a recce company. The Golani is equipped with the Achzarit infantry APC.
- 2 See attached map.
- 3 There are roughly 15 000 inhabitants in the Balata camp alone.
- 4 Homeland Intelligence Service.
- 5 Equivalent to the American DIA.
- 6 Armament only consisted in small caliber weapons, a few RPG7s and mines and buried booby-traps locally manufactured.
- 7 The Para brigade had invested the Balafa camp in February and had then improved the technique consisting in progressing

house after house by making breeches through party walls using electric saws or later with hammers when the thick walls of the Kasbah were reached.

8 Same at Jenine.

9 In order to limit as much as possible collateral damages or unnecessary destructions, tanks essentially used their machine-guns. When they were led to fire with their main gun, hollow-charge ammos were favored.

10 Traditionally, the Israeli commander must be at the heart of the battle, leading his men, whatever his level of responsibility. Presently, there is a debate within the IDFs about the validity of this approach.

## The capture of Baghdad

**B**aghdad, a 5-million-inhabitant town, was seized in five days (reconnaissance carried out by a battalion on April 5, exploitation of collected information and attack planning on April 6, attack carried out on April 7, defense against counter-attacks on April 8 and 9) by two tank battalions and one mechanized infantry battalion (2<sup>nd</sup> Bde/3<sup>rd</sup> ID), i.e. 975 soldiers with 88 MBTs and Bradleys. This fast victory with very few losses appeared as an easy operation, and by the way was largely covered by the media. According to some journalists, the city would even have been seized almost by chance, by a column, which would have wrongly been heading downtown instead of driving to the airport.

**F**acts were very different. The mission tasked to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade included an important risk. A lack of information on “the enemy in reaction”, or a wrong interpretation, put the brigade into a very tricky situation in the afternoon of April 7, compelling the brigade commander to make a decision between two equally appalling COAs : accepting to be encircled or withdrawing.

BY COLONEL G. MARTIN, CHIEF OF THE FRENCH LAND LIAISON DETACHMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

Initially, the American planning intended first to besiege the city, then to attack it with the airborne division. Taking advantage of the Iraqi commander inability to react to the American offensive's high momentum, General Blount, 3<sup>rd</sup> division commander, ordered his 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde to carry

out a raid into Baghdad to test and disrupt defenses, to collect information on the Iraqi disposition and to inflict a maximum of losses before beginning to besiege the town. In fact, the seizure of the regime's decision-making centers resulted into the end of any resistance two days after the raid.



US Army

Colonel Perkins, commanding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, selected a COA - rather close to the Russian one in Grozny. To launch armored columns into the heart of the city without taking care neither of the flanks nor of the rears as seizing decision-making centers would prevent any coordinated reaction from the Iraqi defense. But the enemy

reaction, though uncoordinated, was more stronger than envisaged. If according to the Intel assessments, the Iraqi army and the republican guard did not really defend the city, fedayees and Islamic volunteers were almost overwhelming the American columns by conducting suicide attacks after having encircled them.

On April 5, a battalion task force with 30-tank and 14-Bradley carried out a raid - of about fifteen kilometers - on highway 8 in the south-western suburbs of Baghdad to link up with the 1<sup>st</sup> Bde which had just seized the airport. Because of the engagements' confusion, some vehicles missed the exit towards the airport, and that event backed up the rumor of the city being



seized, following a route error... The outcome of the raid was reviewed the following day by General Blount and Colonel Perkins : one destroyed MBT, some damaged Bradleys, approximately 1,000 Iraqi combatants killed, no structured defense by the Iraqi army but fanatic fedayee and Islamic volunteer attacking with light weapons. Then general Blount ordered a second raid with the all 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde. Colonel Perkins suggested to keep his battalions in the city in order to exploit at best the psychological

hopelessly tried to move within RPG's and AK-47's firing range. But the American columns were immediately encircled. The Iraqi combatants attacked the American armored vehicles with explosive-stuffed cars, trucks and even buses. The brigade CP was obliged to ensure its own protection, several of its CP vehicles having been destroyed by missiles. BASs were also attacked and the medical personnel and even the chaplain had to defend themselves with their M16s.

the convoy succeeded in driving through and could, under fire, supply the battalions isolated throughout the city.

During the 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> night and the two following days, suicide attacks redoubled without really succeeding to disturb the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde's units. On 9, the regime collapsed and the Iraqi combatants vanished. Only 50 of them had been made prisoners. Thousands of them had died. If they had showed the same know-how - about MOUT (4) - as the Chechen combatants and commanders in Grozny, instead of persisting in suicide attacks, one could think that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde would have been placed in the same situation as the Russian armored tanks destroyed in a gigantic ambush in the center of Grozny in 1995 - or as the Rangers encircled in Mogadishu since they had wrongly assessed the enemy's reaction.

The main lesson learned from the capture of Baghdad is obviously the successful combat carried out by mechanized armored units in MOUT. With an identical COA, the American Army thus succeeded in seizing Baghdad, whereas the Russian Army was defeated in a bloody and humiliating way in Grozny in 1995. In a first approach, three explanations can be brought forward :

- the quality of American armored vehicles provided an excellent protection to tank-crews, which enabled them to cause considerable losses without suffering casualties ;
- the "COA" of fanatic but disorganized Iraqi combatants, appeared to be ineffective compared with the Chechen excellent tactics (laying mines or setting obstacles would have changed the course of the battle) ;
- Eventually, the town of Baghdad, with its large avenues, was somehow an easier terrain for tank maneuvering.



effect of the seizing of symbolic objectives, such as Saddam Hussein's palace, the headquarters of the Baas party, the July 14. bridge and the Rachid hotel. A contrario, the evacuation of these objectives just seized by US troops would have a disastrous media effect. He was authorized to remain in the city if the situation allowed it. On April 7, Colonel Perkins launched his three battalions throughout the city. Each battalion had MBTs, Bradleys, mortars, engineer combat vehicles and BASs (Battalion Aid Stations). Combat service support units were kept outside of the city. All the objectives were quickly reached with low casualties and some destroyed or damaged Bradleys, and that despite suicide counter-attacks carried out by Iraqi combatants, who

After ten hours of uninterrupted combat, the encircled battalions were short of ammunition and gas. Colonel Perkins had to make a difficult decision : to withdraw his battalions as long as they still had the capability to force the encirclement or to send them gas/ammunition supply vehicles without any escort through routes controlled by the enemy. He chose the second option-more risky and possibly most expensive in human lives but which would permit to avoid a siege and to shorten the war.

A six TTF (Tank Truck, Fuel) and eight ammunition-truck convoy endeavored to force its way through. Miraculously, only two TTFs and three ammunition-trucks were hit and exploded instantaneously. The remainder of

*1 Military Operation on Urban Terrain.*

# Cities and war

Forgotten under the dust of history and under the weight of nuclear deterrence, close and interactive between cities and war have however always existed through the very history of cities and their inhabitants. They are numerous and re-emerge with force and acuity through the medias, especially television, during recent conflicts. Beirut, Sarajevo, Grozny, Genine, Basra, Baghdad have brought to the public a sudden and brutal awareness of links binding cities and war, but only a purely factual interpretation.

In fact from time immemorial, cities have prepared, and even managed warfare thanks to large scale transformation processes such as urbanism, warfare economy, defense spirit of their inhabitants, the anti-city strategy from Carthage to Hiroshima, the numerous back and forth changes from the concepts of close defense and that of border defense from the *pax romana* to the re-building of the Paris defense walls around 1840.

Since the notion of built-up areas was eradicated from tactic exercise themes till recently, fortunately the militaries are once again considering cities : place of resources, of powers, accommodating a population which represents the stake of modern conflicts, but also the place of inexpiable violence, obstacles, danger and possible very long lasting engagement. Attractive and repulsive, cities endure war, but cities also generate war.

BY COLONEL JEAN SERVILLE, CREDAT

## Structuring effects of warfare upon cities

- From the Greek antiquity the concept of close defense of cities has been in opposition with that of border defense and has been continuously shaping the architecture of Greek cities. In fact upon their genesis, the archaic Greek cities, not only to mark their colonial grip but also to effectively ensure their security, are building defense walls. In the V<sup>th</sup> century BC these walls fell into disuse to the benefit of a doctrine based on the fighting readiness of armies, which led Agesilas, king of Sparta, while pointing at his troops, to state “*here are the walls of Lacedaemonia*”. Then during the Hellenic period, the never ending fights between cities and the arrival of powerful and more efficient machines of war compelled cities to build walls again. This scenario of back and forth changes is similar to that of the Roman *poliorcetic*<sup>1</sup>, Rome being a perfect example of this. Similarly during the Middle Ages, whose vanished ramparts give now place to our boulevards and to the city historic heart with a very concentrated settlement.
- The formation of the French kingdom and in particular the war against the Plantagenets marked the urbanism of numerous cities conquered, then re-founded by Philip Augustus,

the ancient ramparts of which were destroyed and then rebuilt in accordance with the king's plans. Melun, Bourges, Péronne, Compiègne were thus reshaped. Large-scale works also concerned Paris and some sections of the Philip Augustus walls are still in place.

- This policy of reshaping cities was implemented throughout all centuries, notably in Carcassonne or in Aigues-Mortes during in the XIII<sup>th</sup> century in order to turn these towns into state fortresses symbolizing royal power. Again and later in the XVII<sup>th</sup> century Vauban created bastioned fortifications, imposing a citadel often facing the city itself, some glacises and a well defined plan for new cities, which marked durably the life of the city and its today development.

## The inhabitants at war

- In the old days, cities, as centers of political, economical and religious powers, but also indispensable supply base for the armies, kept strongly alive the defense spirit. Cities were imposed by warfare a defense function that, for them, was vital. The history of the City of Metz from antiquity through the XX<sup>th</sup> century shows the surprising permanence of this function. Presently urbanism in many cities enables to understand the price that had to be paid for the



accomplishment of such a vocation. Sometimes this price was so high that it has called for sacrifices, patriotism and defense spirit. How is it possible to understand the voluntarism of the inhabitants of French Northern Cities and Eastern Districts in 1793 and even in 1815 if not due to the habituation to danger, to an accepted risk? How is it possible to explain the real fervor during the military commemorations in the cities of Eastern France, the fierce energy of London inhabitants, Berlin or Stalingrad to protect or rebuild their city and that of the German population during bombings in WW2? Cities in wartime crystallize the feeling of belonging to a community united for a vital interest; in adversity it generates what builds up a nation. Hence the importance for the military to win the battle of cities by winning that of hearts and minds vis-à-vis the population and the importance for civilian powers to eradicate the danger represented by no-law and exclusion areas of our present cities.

### Cities : logic of war

- Naval dockyards and harbors are indisputably typical examples of the very close links between cities and war. Toulon, old Phoenician harbor, Brest, sole remaining loyalist mole within a province supporting the Catholic Holy League, Le Havre (of Grace) founded in 1517, Brouage close to La Rochelle, now a quiet city but still to be watched as well as Rochefort created ex nihilo by Richelieu, have lived thanks to war and for war. The dockyard and the city are born and grow together united by the same pace. It is just the case to imagine the impact of hundred Queen

Mary 2 construction and maintenance over a period of 150 years for these maritime cities at that time.

- A second logic of war lies with the first large mass destructions which occurred during WW1 which led to the awareness of the requirement for partitioning cities in order to better separate industry from habitations. State and towns have contributed to the notion of urban planning favoring an economical and social development in a more harmonized way. Warfare urbanism between 1939 and 1945 led to the building of barracks, submarine bases, shelters, and also to the relocation in the countryside of plants, many traces of which can be seen in France and in Germany.
- The anti-city strategy is also another logic of war developed to its paroxysm in the contemporary period with the nuclear deterrence, but it had already existed for time immemorial as shown by the history of Troy, Tyre, Sidon, Carthage and the famous petition of Caton “*Carthago delenda est*”, but also of Dresden, Nagasaki and Hiroshima. The contemporary anti-city strategy has led to a terrific transformation in our minds. In fact, from time immemorial cities have always been defined as a safe haven and suddenly became an absolute unsafe place. During 50 years the paralysis of the nuclear status quo has led us to be accustomed to the nuclear urban catastrophe, and to indifference.
- A fourth logic of war or of conflict is that of the city as source of instability. If the population is the real stake of conflicts, it can become successively hostage or player, as shown by the events which took place in Budapest in 1956, and those in French cities in 1968, the urban guerilla confrontations in 1992 at Los Angeles or the numerous acts of urban terrorism.

***To conclude, close and interactive links have always united cities and war and the present layout of cities is a tangible evidence of that. During the unfolding of the history of cities, these links with war represented the driving factor of their settlement, economy, and urbanism, of their lives. As sheltering populations, stake of modern conflicts, cities will continue to build new links with war : indifference, middle age sieges such as those of Sarajevo carried out by the Serb militias, chaos and no-law areas, favored places for terrorist actions, goals for deterrence, strategic or tactical objectives. Whichever prism of perception is used, cities will always remain an essential objective for the armed forces.***

1 Art of besieging cities.

# Soldiers, cities and war

Confronted with the city in times of war, the soldier hesitates. If he accepts to besiege them, he is quite reluctant to fight inside towns. But large cities fascinate him. Conquering Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Rome or... Baghdad is more stirring than reaching a line drawn on a map. To get tasked to seize Moscow or Berlin, the German, Anglo-Saxon, and Soviet Generals hurried, intrigued, competed. “You are lucky!”<sup>1</sup>, de Gaulle said to Leclerc, on the eve of liberating Paris.

Soldiers’ hesitations towards built-up areas are from time immemorial : either the city is generally avoided during operations, or it is on the contrary placed at the core of the action.

BY MR JEAN-LOUIS DUFOUR, MILITARY CONSULTANT

## Avoiding cities

For a long time, soldiers wanted to destroy the opposing army in open country. Considering the place of cities during wars was not the main point. Sun Zi<sup>2</sup> advised against attacking built-up areas, unless having a fifth column to put them down without any combat. In Antiquity, fighting was not carried out in cities. Besieging a town was considered as coward<sup>3</sup>. War rather took place at sea or at the foot of city walls, opposing phalanxes, launched in a frontal, fatal but limited combat.

In the Middle Ages, war was a succession of sieges; major battles in the fields of the same name were exceptional and bloody<sup>4</sup>. With the advent of States in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, safety was spreading, gradually cities were said to be “open”, i.e. not defended. Only towns along borders were still fortified. The important thing consisted in having an army controlling the countryside, which could not thus be committed riskily into cities. It was the opinion of Frederick II : “attacks in built-up areas are so costly in lives that I made a rule to avoid them”<sup>5</sup>. On his side, Guibert stigmatized the French tendency

consisting in granting too much attention to fortifications<sup>6</sup>. Except when it controls a passage, a city is a trouble. It is just good for troops’ winter quarters<sup>7</sup>.

If Bonaparte gained his stars while besieging Toulon, he much more preferred the countryside, convenient to apply tactic’s principles, on condition that soldiers facing a city ignore its inhabitants ! When the Emperor exhorted his Generals not to let themselves be impressed by the Spanish insurrection, he invited them to handle a city as a terrain quite similar to others : “downtown, we do not commit ourselves in the streets, we occupy the houses at the beginning of each street, and we set up good batteries... Inside cities, it is necessary to make generals responsible for isolated men... No small groups ! Soldiers should only walk in five-hundred-men columns”<sup>8</sup>.

During WWI, cities were ignored with very few exceptions : Maubeuge, invested from August 27. to September<sup>9</sup>, 1914, Paris that Gallieni planned “to defend house after house”, Paris and London bombarded by the “heavy Bertha”, the German “Taubes” or Zeppelins. Far from the frontline, cities are not very vulnerable, the adversary is not there and there is no fighting inside.

A similar situation was observed during the Second World War. Notwithstanding Stalingrad, Berlin, and Breslau... fighting inside cities and for them is always absolute sacrilege, even in defense. On June 10, 1940,

“You are lucky !”,  
de Gaulle said to Leclerc,  
on the eve of liberating Paris.



“downtown, we do not commit ourselves in the streets, we occupy the houses at the beginning of each street, and we set up good batteries... Inside cities, it is necessary to make generals responsible for isolated men... No small groups ! Soldiers should only walk in five-hundred-men columns”.

Reynaud called Roosevelt for help : “ We will fight ahead of Paris, we will fight beyond the rears of Paris... ”, never inside! Leningrad was used by Hitler as a focal point ; von Leeb should not attack it. General Kesselring considered war for cities as uncertain ; he evacuated Roma, Sienna, and Florence without any combat ; Wiese, his alter ego in the South of France, did the same in 1944 with the cities of the Rhone valley. On March 31, 1945, Eisenhower warned Montgomery : he was not interested in Berlin ; his mission was to destroy the German army. Seven months earlier, this supreme commander let Leclerc seize Paris but he said, because the insurrection forced him to do so.

### A city as an “objective”

Even if Foch, Ardant du Picq, Bülow, Foch... and others often ignored cities during a war, such an attitude is not relevant. Clausewitz, a tactician, recorded them into enemy “unconscious resources”, to be taken into account in a second phase of the operations<sup>40</sup>. In cities, arsenals are operating, reserves gathering, railways converging. Sherman found in the Atlanta’s blaze a way of weakening the Confederates. A “get-through city” often shapes the maneuver, including logistics.

In June 1944, Bradley wanted Saint-Lo, an essential crossroads for his movements. As attacking the city “would cost him one division”<sup>41</sup>, he crushed it under bombs. Brest, Royan, Le Havre, Saint-Malo... Antwerp were destroyed to facilitate the Allies’ access to Atlantic ports. As a disciple of Douhet, an Italian, the US Air Force bombed the large German and Japanese cities in order to panic their inhabitants, to ruin war industries, and to discourage their governments. A waste of time and effort, except, in fine, when the vitrification of Hiroshima and Nagasaki prefigured the possible one of Tokyo !

Clausewitz was also a strategist for whom a city is sometimes this very “centre of gravity” which destruction or seizing means victory. In 1870, Helmuth von Moltke thought this way : “ Our objective - the enemy army - will most likely be achieved by moving to Paris ”. In 1914, Ludwig, his nephew, gave similar orders : “ Focusing most forces on Paris ! ”. But sick, isolated in his Luxembourg HQ, Ludwig von Moltke not longer held his Generals. These ones had a militarist vision of war. In order to better encircle the French Army, Von Kluck chose to present his flank to Paris...

Politicians consider cities with interest. When his Reich is at the top, Hitler had the swastika floating in eight European capitals. Stalin acted in order to seize Vienna, Prague, and Budapest again... and to be first in Berlin, against the will of Churchill. De Gaulle wanted Paris, that had become that “ free world’s magnet ”<sup>42</sup>, once the Allies landed in Normandy. He refused to evacuate Strasbourg, at least not “ without a major battle ”<sup>43</sup>.

Intra-muros engagements had strange consequences. In April 1943, the revolt of the Warsaw ghetto surprising the Wehrmacht settled the history to come for the Jewish nation. In 1968, the North-Vietnamese armies fail to seize Hue by force. It did not matter ! Hanoi had won. The pictures of GIs killed or wounded in street battles were about to impress the American people for a long time. Beirut or Sarajevo sieges were passionately followed on the screens of the whole world. Being spectacular, war inside cities questions public opinions.



ECPAD

## Conclusion

The city, as “center of gravity”, is actual. Kuwait City, Grozny, Baghdad are good illustrations of it. Today, and excepted the anachronism of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, war initially takes place on urbanized terrain. In the Balkans, all the names of battles were that of cities. Elsewhere, Brazzaville, Mogadishu, Monrovia, Freetown, Kabul, Jenine... illustrate this tendency. According to a recent report from the Rand Corporation, 237 out of the last 250 USMC commitments included actions in built-up areas. That would continue. For this, three reasons: a fast increase in urban populations, a quasi generalization of internal armed conflicts, and the fact that cities are the last terrain where courageous guerrillas can still face a modern army. As George Duhamel said, “the smell of world had changed”, that of war too. Armed forces must learn how to breathe differently!



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1 Charles of Gaulle, *Memories of war*, volume 2, *The Unit*, Paris, Plon 1956, p. 302.

2 6<sup>th</sup> century BC.

3 The Greek historian Polybius (202-120) criticized the king of Macedonia, Philippe V, for having been mad enough to have avoided any close battle and to have attacked the towns of Thessaly, Victor David Hanson, *The Western model of war*, Paris, Beautiful Letters, 1990, p. 40.

4 Philippe Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, Paris, PUF 1994, p. 207.

5 Reflection noted by Allain Bernède, in “Cities in war, a tactical and, or, strategic objective”, in *Symbolic cities*, Peace World Center, Verdun, 2003, p. 17.

6 Guibert, *General essay on tactics*, 1772-1790, Paris, Copernic, 1976, pp. 212 and following.

7 The whole imagination and determination of one Turenne is needed, to leave cities in full winter, to surprise and finally defeat the Germans in Alsace, during the 1674-1675 Winter, J.-L. Dufour, *War, cities and soldiers*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2002, p. 68.

8 Letter of the Emperor to Berthier and Murat, dated April 3, 1808, quoted by Andre Castelot, *Napoleon*, Paris, Perrin Academic Bookshop, 1979, p. 235.

9 “... (Berlin) is nothing more for me than a geographical place and, as such, does not interest me. My intention is to destroy enemy forces.” in *Memories by Marshal Montgomery, Viscount of Alamein*, Paris, Plon, 1958, p. 335.

10 K. Clausewitz, *Summary of the training provided by the author to SAR the prince of Prussia in the years 1810*; issued in appendix of the French edition of *The War*, Paris, 1851, T. III, p. 322; also see Fuller, *The conduct of war, from 1789 to today*, Paris, Payot, 1990, pp 61 and following.

11 Omar Bradley, *History of a soldier*, Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1975, p. 287.

12 Charles of Gaulle, mentioned op., volume 2, p. 289.

13 Telegram from General de Gaulle to General de Lattre, January 3, 1945, Charles of Gaulle, mentioned op., volume 3, p. 481.

# GROZNY:

## lessons learnt from a failure

While studies are being conducted about training forces in built-up areas, some remarks about Russian experience in Chechnya could bring additional food for thought. This article proposes a synthesis of the lessons learnt during the two major battles of Grozny when Russian courses of action, inherited from the Warsaw Pact, demonstrated their inadequacy vis-à-vis a resolute army which implemented courses of action specific to urban guerrilla warfare.

BY CAPTAIN HAICAULT DE LA REGONTAIS, CDES / CEREX

### The 1995 battle of Grozny, a failure of the Russian power ?

From the very start of the conflict, the Russians sought to seize the city forcefully, without ensuring a full blockade of it, by committing, with few accompanying infantry, columns of tanks which were blocked by enemy's anti tank fires. Aligning initially nearly 50 000 combatants, the Russians built-up heterogeneous units regrouping troops provided by both ministries of Interior and Defense. In front of them the Chechens, around 7 to 15,000 combatants, organized highly

mobile units, using fluid and decentralized tactics. These units were divided into companies of 75 men, themselves divided into platoons of 24 combatants, subdivided in decentralized three groups of eight men. These groups, the Chechen basic unit, usually included 3 infantrymen armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, 2 RPG anti-tank shooters, 2 machine gun shooters, and a marksman equipped with a Dragunov rifle. These highly mobile elements were supported by units equipped with recoilless guns SPG9, 82mm mortars, 14.5 mm heavy machine guns and some anti-aircraft weapons SA7-type missiles.

Confronted to the Russian course of action, the Chechens opposed ambushes and booby trapped the terrain, they withdrew to reappear elsewhere using an unpredictable and non linear modus operandi. Russians noticed that the boundaries between units constituted always weak points at tactical level and that they should not be only concerned by horizontal boundaries on the ground. In some cases, when the Russian were occupying buildings ground and first floors, Chechens used to seize and hold higher floors and sometimes the roofs. In order to find a protection against enemy's indirect fires and air power, the Chechens used to

# lessons learnt

stick closely to the Russian lines, at a distance ranging from 50 to 250 meters.

Adding to the confusion created by the fact that all belligerents were wearing the same uniform (the soviet army one), that “*hugging*” tactics compelled the Russians to stop air to ground and artillery fire support as becoming too fratricide. So war became the platoon and squad leaders’ business and that command level was in fact the less efficient amongst Russian forces. In addition, the imbrications of the civilian population, which often remained in place, with the combatants, prevented the

Russian from firing at the beginning of the combats. And last the conduct of operations has also been disturbed by the inability of the Russian forces to control those populations’ demonstrations, spontaneous or organized.

Mastering completely the terrain and having at their disposal the intelligence collected among the local population, the Chechen staff considered that priority must be given to the destructions of armored vehicles since they contributed to the Russian forces’ loss of morale. And thus the Chechen squads called “*tank killers*”

set up frightening ambushes. In front of the Russian armored units, the marksman used to kill the tank commander, the machine gun crew stopped the weak accompanying infantry while the anti-tank team attacked the tank. Groups of RPG shooters destroyed the first and last vehicles and then attacked the others one by one. Chechens used to choose firing positions that were located either high or low enough to be safe from Russian tanks and BMPs, hiding themselves in the basements, ground floors or on the roofs. When those RPG projectiles were arriving from various altitudes and directions, vehicles

commanders had problems to retaliate. In addition Russian infantry consisting of conscripts often refused to disembark and died in the BMP without even firing one shot. It is just like that, in 1995, during the first three days of fighting, that the Russian forces lost 20 tanks out of 26, 102 BMP out of 120 and six ZSU-23.

RPGs were the preferred weapon of Chechens, they used them in several amazing ways : as a mortar for firing at high angle over not too high buildings, as a sector weapon against advancing infantry forces, as an anti tank weapon or even as an anti aircraft one. In addition, the



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Russians were facing not only well trained and well equipped marksmen, but also excellent Chechen soldiers equipped with regular military rifles that require nourished and powerful fires to be neutralized. It is to be noticed that on both sides the fighters did not always wear protective equipment that was considered as being too much bulky for conducting swift actions. In all these combat actions, tracer ammunitions were not used because they would have revealed the firing position.

And last, movements were difficult due to Chechen's smartness and sophistication when using booby traps and mines, demonstrating there an excellent anticipation of the Russian's soldier's actions and reactions. It was difficult for Russians to make their forces fully aware of all the opponent's booby traps and mines.

### Russian tactics evolutions observed in 2000

At that time the Russians encircled entirely the city and did not leave any exit uncontrolled, thus denying the Chechens from any supply or from getting some rest out of the city, whereas the Russian troops in

contact were regularly relieved and trained within the framework of a preparation specific to urban engagement. The heavy organizations (divisions, brigades, battalions) were replaced by "operational task forces", infantry-heavy, flexible and more adapted to this type of combat. So, the forces were not anymore committed as heterogeneous units but as homogeneous ones within assault combined arms sub task forces consisting in three Infantry platoons supported by one tank platoon, a flame thrower platoon with 9 throwers, 2 anti aircraft guns (*Shilka or Tunguska*) used against snipers, mine-clearing tank, an engineer squad, a medic squad and a technical squad. At that time, units were employed according to their real specificity, like the Ministry of Interior forces that were in charge of securing rear areas or the Spetznaz who were sent beyond enemy's lines. Conscripts were not anymore sent to the frontline except those who had signed a contract to serve beyond conscription regular duration (*Kontrakniki*). In addition, there were less frontal assaults. Instead of that, Russian recce forces located the pockets

of resistance and then artillery or air forces attacked on call the targeted objectives. And last seizing the objectives was fulfilled by disembarked infantry. Grozny's conquest was conducted like that, in a more methodical way by dividing the urbanized area in several sectors. That operation lasted almost three weeks and the control of some districts changed hand several times. But the fact of favoring stand off combat, even if it entailed severe destructions in the city, brought the enemy's goal to failure as they had planned to glue Russian forces in a battle comparable to the 1995 one.

The MOD armed forces were rightly careful about RPG7 and kept, almost all the time, their armored vehicles outside of the city. Tanks and artillery occupied hillside positions above and around Grozny from where they fired at the city. Only one armored raid was conducted to conquer an important position in the city but it resulted in a bloody failure (about a hundred dead, 7 tanks and 8 IFV destroyed). From then on the various armored vehicles were used to support advancing infantry with fires. Within their deployment,

armored units always included anti aircraft guns (ZSU-23-4 et 256) as well as cargo vehicles equipped with 23 mm anti aircraft guns, able to shoot direct fire under negative angle of sight or to destroy Chechens anti tank units hidden in the floors of the buildings.

The Russians agreed to pay the price of blood for the conquest of Grozny and remind us that even if technology and a mastered art of warfare contribute to victory, they are not enough. Fighting depends in last resort on the soldiers' will to overcome stress, chaos and the extreme conditions of such operations.

Modern weapons make it possible to destroy enemy's logistic and military infrastructures while avoiding too heavy friendly losses, but what is their help, when, as in Chechnya, the enemy does not have infrastructures whose destruction could bring it to the negotiations table ? Fighting then becomes a combat of infantrymen against other infantrymen. It is there that both professional soldier and individual training become paramount, it is there that the Russian army revealed its major weak points.

## Lessons still valid ten years later...

### COMBAT OPERATIONS IN MOGADISCIO (JUNE 1993)<sup>1</sup>

In 1992, Somalia was sinking into anarchy resulting from clan struggles. Under the aegis of the United Nations, the United States, Italy and France carried out a military intervention named "Restore Hope". On May 4, 1993, after the departure of the US forces, this operation, renamed ONUSOM II, has been placed under direct UN command. The aim of this second UN operation in Somalia was to distribute humanitarian aid, to ensure a smooth running of the political transition and to supervise the cease-fire.

On June 5, 1993, in Mogadiscio, two bloody ambushes laid by general AYDIID's partisans, killed 24 Pakistani soldiers of the UN forces. From that time on incidents became more frequent in the Somali capital city leading to a pressing request from the UNISOM Force Commander, to send in a French tank company task force from the combined arms battalion of Somalia (BIAS), stationed in BAIDOA.

In this context, on June 17, a French detachment has been committed in a highly violent built-up area combat operation in an environment made particularly difficult because of an active involvement of the population in the confrontations. The various missions assigned to the French troops have been successfully carried out with an admittedly painful cost (four wounded in action, one of them very severely), however in retrospect it could seem miraculous. We had been lucky on that opportunity, even if luck is not the only explanation.

**EXCERPTS<sup>2</sup> FROM AN ARTICLE OF COLONEL PIERRE DE SAQUI DE SANNES, AT THE TIME COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> RIAOM<sup>3</sup> IN DJIBOUTI AND COMMANDING THE COMBINED ARMS BATTALION OF SOMALIA DURING THE ONUSOM II OPERATION<sup>4</sup>**

#### A FEW REMINDERS BEFORE INTRODUCING THE LESSONS LEARNT

##### The company task force

The company task force under command of a colonel, the BIAS commanding officer, with a tactical operation center was a reduced and heterogeneous detachment. It was made of one company from the 9<sup>th</sup> RCP<sup>5</sup> reduced to 2 VAB<sup>6</sup> platoons, 2 VLRA<sup>7</sup> platoons and one tank platoon (ERC)<sup>8</sup> from the 5<sup>th</sup> RIAOM, one engineer squad from the 17<sup>th</sup> RGP<sup>9</sup>, one combat service

support element from the 5<sup>th</sup> RIAOM including one first aid station, that is to say a total of about 200 men and 50 vehicles. On June 12 it had been reinforced with one Army Aviation detachment composed of 1 HLR<sup>10</sup>, 2 PUMA<sup>11</sup> one of them gun equipped, and 2 GAZELLE HOT<sup>12</sup> helicopters.

*The detachment could look not strong enough for a full colonel to take command. However three major reasons made it necessary.*

- The French authorities did not want, at any price,

*the company task force to be placed under command of any foreign detachment, would it be for any mission of secondary importance; the Pakistani and Moroccan units being commanded by colonels...*

- *The situation in Baïdoa was under total French control when, on the contrary, the UN forces were literally besieged in Mogadiscio, after suffering a real trauma with the bloody ambushes on June 5. Then I judged that I could*

*not be anywhere else. (...)*

- *The detachment's heterogeneity (...) was making it very difficult for a captain to assume command. (...). Without turning down the reasons for such an organization, it appears obvious that modularity has limits and that it would be dangerous to disregard them.*

##### Events before June 17

From June 10 to 16, the company task force has carried several missions in Mogadiscio

(evacuation of nationals, escorts, occupation and demolition of the antenna area of the "Radio Mogadiscio" station in support of a US intervention force, search of buildings, among other missions)

*Many and varied, those actions have had a key role in the June 17 success because :*

- *first, they have united the various cells of the detachment. Marines, paratroopers, enlistees, draftees,*

*all soldiers, from any origin and serving under any status, went to know one another and, more importantly, to trust each other. What is more, they all could put a face on each voice to be heard on the radio ;*

- *then they have made the detachment to significantly improve its cohesion in matter of tactical know-how, and that added to the success during these days, they initiated a feeling of strength, of self-confidence that were not there, at least not at such a level before ;*
- *finally it has been a week of training on the very combat field (...).*

### **The combat operations on June 17**

Three contingents (Pakistani, Moroccan, and French) were involved in the search operation in the AYDIID's residential area intending to locate his HQ and, as far as possible, to capture him. The French had to be ready to support the other ones contingents. The US intervention force, 1000 men strong, onboard offshore ships, could be committed, but on an American decision only.

From the beginning of the morning, the situation had been deteriorating. The Moroccans were trapped and were suffering heavy losses (among which their

commanding officer and his deputy, both killed in action). The Pakistanis, after they lost one officer, stopped advancing and initiated a withdrawal. Still traumatized by the early June ambushes, they did not want to take too much risk again. Therefore the Moroccans were left alone in an untenable position.

Simultaneously, the Somalians were engaging the French detachment that could not respond directly. Because, women carrying children in their arms were openly showing through the windows. Scattered all around a building, on all floors, they suddenly moved aside to let a sniper open fire very quickly, and then came back.

Although the French authorities had told the COMELEF general that the detachment should not take part in any offensive action, this one, because of the circumstances, agreed to our intervention to rescue the Moroccans. The company task force, deployed in two echelons (the ERC platoon, one VAB platoon with the battalion commander, and then one VAB platoon and one VLRA platoon) is successively committed, along the day, to extricate the Moroccans, to seize the building occupied by militia, and then to take over and to

search dwellings, to include the general hospital where the AYDIID rebel was supposed to be. 4 wounded only were to be reported.

### **LESSONS LEARNT**

#### **The MOB - To avoid the TRAP**

*There is the most important lesson from this operation. The technique used by the AYDIID's partisans was to surround the UN units with a noisy and exuberant crowd, of which a majority are women and children, demonstrating its dissatisfaction, or even its hostility, but without physical aggression. However the crowd was more and more pressing the cordons of soldiers, trying to seize some pieces of equipment (radio handsets, weapons, etc.)*

*Then the surrounded unit had to fire warning shots, and that triggered off a moment of panic in the crowd inside which snipers used to priority target the commanders of the attacked unit, commanders that they could easily identify during the "negotiation" phase with the crowd. Whenever possible the disposition used to be supplemented by snipers inside the buildings overlooking the ambush location.*

*In Mogadiscio, demonstrations were daily and often*

*unpredictable events. Not all of them ambushes, but it was impossible to know it for sure. Uncertain about the way to handle this problem, the UN units had dug themselves inside their perimeters. On June 17 the committed detachments were roughly aware of this course of action. The Moroccan Colonel and his XO paid with their life having tried nevertheless to persuade the crowd not to close with the troops.*

*As I had had a few days to think about this problem, I had taken some preventive steps :*

- *having all vehicles equipped with rolls of barbed wire (concertina wire) that could be instantly unrolled at a few dozens of meters away from the unit to avoid contact with the crowd at all costs.*
- *allocating a large number of offensive grenades to the detachment intending to disperse the crowd without losses ;*
- *giving up all command distinguishing features (rank insignias, guidons) to avoid, as much as possible any straight-away shooting at the units' leaders. This precaution, necessary though it could be, gets a very limited efficiency. In that kind of situation*



# Lessons learnt

men obey their chief only and he is the only one giving orders. Spotting him is child's play for the adversary.

These mere common sense measures have to be completed. Units likely to be committed in such a context, and I do not think that this kind of situation should be limited to Africa, must be fielded with specific pieces of equipment and in particular :

- blank rounds for armored vehicles. Mixing explosive and blank ammunition is still forbidden by field manuals, and though, on this day, with one or two blank rounds onboard each

armored vehicle, I certainly would have get the crowd to disperse quicker.

- grenade rifles for tear gas ammunition, one per squad, to be used in the same way as police forces do. This entails carrying gas masks at any time, any place...

- powerful loudhailers permitting, if needed, to be heard by the crowd without necessarily being identified.

To all these a radio equipment should be added that could be operated with very short antennas, so that the element commander is not straight-away pointed out for some hostile

action ... These few simple steps that would, in no way, turn a unit of soldiers into an anti-riot gendarmerie unit, would facilitate neutralizing that "first echelon" before facing, in a fully military way, the opposing second echelon.

However in my opinion what's new and crucial, should be to consider this course of action in the syllabus of our training schools. As a matter of fact, the raised questions deserve some attention. Barely one hour after the engagement began, I had already ordered the evacuation of three combat wounded and of two

more mentally shocked by the violence of the firings at their VAB. At which stage should I use the full range of my assets (guns, ERC, combat support Helicopters) to carry out my mission, with the risk of casualties among the civilian population, admittedly accomplice but not armed ?

I think that the answer will always rest with the commander in the field, and his men will obey whatever his decision. On the radio I had forbidden any firing at the men taking shelter behind women and children. One sharpshooter of mine succeeded in hitting one Somalian,

in the shoulder probably, who dropped his weapon and took refuge behind a low wall. Immediately a female run in to pick up the kalachnikov. The French soldier shot again, but at the weapon, just before the woman took it. (...). This "population" factor", that quite seldom takes more than one line in our schemes of maneuver and in our exercises, could very well necessitate a full paragraph in future crises ...

**To favor the offense and mass action**  
From my position (departure position), two possibilities were open to me to reach the Moroccan zone. Either to come back



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(...) into the sector hold by the Pakistanis, going through their disposition and engaging the enemy (...), or to rush right ahead (...), to get through the positions hold by the AYDIID's partisans and to fight from the open southern area (...) to enable the Moroccans to withdraw. From my location(...) I could see armed people rushing in (...) and I knew that I was to come in from the back, however right in the middle of the enemy's disposition. Nevertheless, as I had a good knowledge of the area, I have preferred using the surprise effect to risking to bog down in the Pakistani's disposition.

**Three factors proved to be decisive in my analysis**

The Moroccans had to be disengaged as soon as possible, as they suffered more and more casualties at every moment (five killed in action and forty five wounded). Now the first solution, if showing, on the paper, less risky, certainly required much more time. As I had no liaison with the Pakistanis or with the Moroccans, I feared blue on blue fires and a disorganization that could prevent maneuvering or even to take me into the trap where was caught this detachment that I had

to help. Via Lenin was favorable for my tanks to rush in, it was emphasizing even more the surprise effect and the psychological superiority carried by this course of action. That feeling was reinforced by the deterrent effect on the Somalians achieved by the ERCs and VABs equipped with air marking panels, what I could notice during the previous missions.

This choice proved to be the right one. All ten RPG rounds fired at the detachment missed their target. Admittedly we have been a bit lucky, but the speed of the move and the open field offered by the site, making the riflemen to show off, also have had a large part in the success. I only desperately missed an other one ERC platoon to support the second echelon. (...)

But sadly there was only one ERC platoon on the Somalian territory, the rest of the tank company, in Djibuti, not having been authorized to join despite the COMELEF's requests... It would have let me to increase the wanted mass effect. In fact each of both echelons was about ten vehicles and 80 men strong. I assessed this strength to be a minimum below which one should not



get because of the risk for the element to be quickly overwhelmed by the adversary, and more than anything else my soldiers to suffer a huge combat stress due to a feeling of inferiority in numbers or of isolation from the rest of the detachment. I had also mixed the echelons by integrating in each one one element from the 5<sup>th</sup> RIAOM (EVAT<sup>93</sup> and VSLOM<sup>14</sup>) and one from the 9<sup>th</sup> RCP (VSL<sup>15</sup> only). This merging of

young and more senior soldiers worked wonders. Nevertheless the experience and maturity of the EVAT played an essential part at the beginning of the action. With no doubt, they have been at the root of the success of the day.

**Managing the stress**

It was not necessary being a great strategist to understand that the outcome of this engagement was to depend on the men's

behavior only, would they be leaders or soldiers. So my concern has been to keep the stress at an acceptable level and to do so to maintain calm and confidence. In this field the radio plays an essential part. Not raising the voice on the radio net entrusted my soldiers with self-confidence, they were persuaded, even if it has not always been right, that I was in full control of the situation. Conversely this calm arose a

feeling of concern to the adversary who, though he could not understand our language, felt he was facing very strong guys. I am sure that an opposite situation would have had opposite results.

We were using our usual call signs (two-digits, color-number) what permitted the information to flow in real time and was minimizing the possibilities of errors in the understanding of orders. What is more, all loudspeakers were set at their maximum volume. Hearing familiar voices amidst the combat gave rise to a feeling of confidence, preventing a feeling of isolation, not to say of abandon, to appear. On the other hand I made a mistake when asking the doctor how seriously wounded

was a casualty because when he answered my question : "quite severely, he has been hit in the head, the bullet went through his helmet", the whole detachment could hear the sentence. I was sorry for my question but too late...

The PP39 radio set does not enable such external diffusion, contrary to the small Motorola type radio sets. In addition it is rather cumbersome, that is why the second one is better fitted than the first one to built-up areas operations. (...)

The second element, stress lowering factor, has been the outstanding attitude of our doctor and of his team. Three casualties of mine have been evacuated under enemy fire. The ambulance VAB driver

although wounded in the arm by a fragment (not that seriously indeed) fulfilled his duties until completion of the mission. The running in and out of the ambulance, the calm and professionalism demonstrated by the doctor put the soldiers' ... and their boss' mind at rest.

This very resolute participation of the medical corps made obvious to the soldiers that they would be rescued under any circumstance.

Finally the combat support provided by the army aviation detachment greatly exceeded the mere information field, although in this respect its support has been essential in particular to identify the suspect buildings to be searched and the open routes to use.

But the psychological support provided by the helicopters being permanently present over the detachment all along the day has been most significant. As them too were present on the radio net we were having them ready for support with their 20 mm guns and HOT missiles against any armed vehicle(...) likely to come in from any direction as reinforcement. They also could report information about any significant crowd movement. To me, they were the best guarantee against any nasty surprise. What is more, the huge risks taken by the crews on this day, counted a lot for the self-control and the fire discipline demonstrated by the troops on the ground.

- 1 Those events have already been the subject of an article published in the RETEX pullout # 4 inserted in OBJECTIF DOCTRINE (# 29 - **Fighting in built-up areas**).
- 2 Extracts from Col. de SAQUI de SANNES' original article are printed **in italics**.
- 3 Combined arms Regiment Overseas.
- 4 Major General de SAQUI de SANNES is the CDES commanding general since Summer 2003.
- 5 Translator's note : airborne infantry battalion.
- 6 Translator's note : Wheeled APC.
- 7 Translator's note : Light Reconnaissance and Combat Support Vehicle.
- 8 Translator's note : Combat Recce Vehicle.
- 9 Translator's note : Airborne Engineer Battalion.
- 10 Translator's note : Light Reconnaissance Helicopter.
- 11 Translator's note : Tactical helicopter.
- 12 Translator's note : anti-tank missile helicopter.
- 13 Translator's note : enlistees.
- 14 Translator's note : overseas volunteers for extended military service.
- 15 Translator's note : volunteers for extended military service.

## CONCLUSION

**This account is about one specific event only, in a particular context. All lessons reported do not so far apply to any situation.**

**However I shall select three points that should be unanimously agreed :**

- first I feel most important to give priority to homogeneity within units and at least never to split up a company-size unit ;
- then the priceless experience gained in tours or missions abroad should be retained as much as possible for as many units as possible. This French know-how, particularly in Africa, has quite a part in the fame of our forces ;
- finally, I feel essential to integrate in the training of our staffs what the role of the population is and how to manage stress.

**The combat operations in Mogadiscio have clearly demonstrated that, nowadays, in matter of crisis management it will not be always possible to commit our heavy weapons or to take advantage of our technological superiority, contrary to what happened in the Gulf War.**

**Again it is the high value of the men, leaders and soldiers, that will make the difference and their value will result first from their moral strength.**

# The "CAPAZUB"

## study about the capacities needed by a combined arms task force to be committed in built-up areas

Tasked by the Army Staff (EMAT/BCSF)<sup>1</sup>, from July 2003 to January 2004, the Army exercises and operations feedback and assessment Center (CEREX), acting as the leader for Army lessons learnt (RETEX), has carried out a study about **the capacities needed by a combined arms task force to be committed in built-up areas**. This study has been named "CAPAZUB". The outcome of the needed capacities is mainly based on lessons learnt by the French and also by foreign land forces. It deals with equipment and weapons systems in priority, but also with courses of action and task organization.

BY LCL RANDAL ZBIENEN, CEREX

### METHODOLOGY

Defined by the CEREX, the methodology adopted to gather the French military expertise in built-up areas has been to set up seminars of actors supported by means and processes<sup>2</sup> provided by the RGA SYSTEMES company. The foreign lessons learnt (mainly US, British, and Israelis) have been drawn from the current studies of the CEREX about the Iraqi Freedom Operation and about the second Intifada.

This study has been carried out through three main stages.

### Initial running

A steering group made up of the CEREX, of the body requesting the study (EMAT/BCSF)<sup>2</sup>, and of others involved in the process (CFAT<sup>3</sup>, DGA<sup>4</sup>, CREDAT<sup>5</sup>, EMAT/BPO<sup>6</sup>) met in July 2003

at the Ecole Militaire<sup>7</sup> in order to set the process to be adopted, to specify those people to be questioned, to work out questionnaires, and finally to decide on a schedule.

### Experience gathering

From September to October 2003, the CEREX supported by the RGA SYSTEMES company collected the various experiences of the selected actors, that is to say :

- a party of NCOs selected by the CFAT for matters at the "execution" level ;
- four parties of company grade officers for the "execution-conduct" level, that met in the Armor, Engineers, Infantry and Army Aviation branch schools (EAABC, ESAG, EAI, EAALAT) ;

- a party of former company commanders for the "conduct" level, gathered at the Junior Staff College ;
- a party of field grade officers for the "concept" level, at the Ecole Militaire.

At this stage, fifty experts of the operational functions at different levels have been consulted, all of

them having experienced operations in built-up areas. They have been questioned :

- about the **threats** (or hazards) that they had dread out ;
- about the **capacities** they were considering important to get in such commitments ;
- and finally, as a subsidiary, about the **courses of action** to

be mastered and about any possible **task organization** adaptations for fighting in built-up areas.

Their expertise was ranging from Beirut in the 80s, to the recent Kabul. Nevertheless, considering the commitment context of the French forces in recent decades, not that many among them





had had an opportunity to experience coercive operations in built-up areas. That's why, after all accounts have been collected, the foreign lessons learnt about offensive operations in Baghdad, in Basra, or even in the Palestinian Territories have been integrated by the CEREX in the study.

## Results analysis

On November 17, 2003, the steering group chaired by the CEREX, met again to set the policy on how to use the collected data. It has been decided that the prioritization of the **needed capacities** would be based on the threats (or hazards) mentioned by the actors.

Therefore the steering group first agreed that the threats' (or hazards') rating would be set according to two equally weighted evaluation systems :

- on one hand, the **unanimity level** of the various groups having been questioned about that threat (or hazard), with a principle that the more the threat (or hazard) is perceived by the various questioned groups and therefore by the various involved people committed in theater, the higher the priority should be set for this threat to be given a capacity response.

- on the other hand, **the EMAT<sup>8</sup> model analysis about micro-**

**threats**, considering how dangerous, how frequent, and how critical they could be.

Moreover, the steering group has focused its action at matching each identified threat to the most appropriate corresponding capacity responses able either to prevent, to reduce or to face it, even indirectly. Then by the end capacities to be developed (or acquired) have been prioritized according to the **number** or to the priority of the threats (or hazards) they met.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

### Priority threats

**42 threats (or hazards)** have been identified, and prioritized, during this survey : all of them dreadful to the questioned players, and all of them having had some effect on their contact engagement.

Depending on how dangerous, frequent, or how critical to the forces (or to France) they could be and even according to the level of unanimity of the working groups the threats have been classified into three levels :

- 14 threats **imperatively** demanding a response ;
- 15 threats requiring a response ;
- 13 threats calling for a response.

It is worth noting that 80% of the threats and hazards have been similarly prioritized in both assessment systems (RETEX/EMAT). Residual differences between both threat assessments mainly result from the fact that the French military have experienced nearly no important force commitment in urban areas for decades and that they have not (or quite seldom) been confronted with things like ambushes, Field or Air Defense Artillery fires.

On the other hand, they have appeared more sensitive to the hazards from population and crowd behavior. Anyway, the resulting prioritized threats and hazards are those identified through both assessment systems. Roughly it comes out of this final rating that constraints to be considered in priority are in that order :

- **ubiquity**, or even non-persistence **of the direct threats** to the force or to the population, asymmetrical attacks particularly (terrorist attacks, snipers ...) ;
- next, the danger that the **compartmentalization of the urban environment** represents on units' operations (physical isolation, communications break-down, supply flow disruption ...) ;
- finally, less significantly, the

danger induced by **intermingling with the population** (protests, collateral damages, legal and media constraints ...).

In addition, the **combatants' preparation** and their premature **wearing down** when committed in urban areas make up the prime matter of concern, even if they do not a priori call for proper capacity responses as such.

## The capacities

Core of the CAPAZUB study, the **117** identified **capacities** have been classified into four categories of decreasing priority according to the number and to the priority of the threats (or hazards) they deal with.

It appears that, among the capacities to be first acquired (30 capacities), two thirds of them are aimed at **reducing the constraints from the environment compartmentalization** through :

- setting up reliable **communications** among all participants (military as well as civilians) and making the necessary information (data processing) and the "common operational picture" quickly available to every level ;
- enhancing active and passive **observation, detection, and identification** (daylight and night observation assets,

radars, U.A.Vs, robots, left behind sensors...)

- **real time monitoring** of friendly units ;
- the establishment of a bi or tri dimensional **survey frame of reference** of the urban area.

Those results mainly stress that the improvement of the communication capabilities and of the environment apprehension are factors permitting to face a wider spectrum of threats and hazards. So they emphasize how pertinent the current studies are to spread within the land forces, down to the lowest level, the advances of the new information technologies (battlespace digitization). Other first priority capacities essentially consist in improving soldiers' and vehicles' **protection** against all kinds of aggressions (shooting, blows, stoning ...), without necessarily restricting their mobility, as well as in facilitating a **non-lethal neutralization** of individuals and groups.

Among the second priority capacities to be acquired (or enhanced) (33 capacities), almost half of them (16) consider active and passive means, aimed at meeting the urban hazards ubiquity and elusiveness. It is more particularly a matter of **pinpoint firing** from



attack helicopters, of saturation firing from fighting vehicles and of producing **area effects**. **Lasting** capacities similarly appear at this level.

Finally, the level 3 and level 4 capacities, because of the selected working process, are more specific : they often are in connection with one operational function only, or even with one particular weapon system. Nevertheless they could be essential to that weapon system, as for example, an automatic active protection for helicopters against ground to air missiles when there is such a threat.

**Courses of action to be mastered and task organization adaptation**

Besides, the questioned groups have been asked to express their opinion about the **courses of action** that should be mastered in built-up areas and about possible changes in the organization of a combined-arms task force.

Generally speaking, the specifics of a commitment in built-up areas brings out :

- a crucial need for training, combined-arms training in particular ;

- the necessary normalization of the frames of reference (doctrine documents).



CCH J.J. CHATARD/SIRPA Terre

It would be relevant to study particularly (according to the priority order of the concerns of the working parties) :

- crowd control (mentioned by 6 working groups)

- techniques of close operational intervention and operational firing (mentioned by 3 working parties) ;

- the pertinence, or even the adaptation of the American “force protection” concept (mentioned by 3 working groups) ;

- field defense operating modes in built-up areas (mentioned by 3 working parties) ;

- helicopter employment in built-up areas : information, reconnaissance, targeting, combat support of ground units, etc. (mentioned by 3 working groups) ;
- evacuation of

nationals from built-up areas (mentioned by 3 working parties) ;

- search procedures : housing, vehicles, individuals (mentioned by 2 working parties).

As far as **task organization** is concerned, beyond the quite anecdotal adaptation suggested, it should be noted that the primary concern of the participants is a necessary combined-arms nature of the units to be committed in built-up areas. In addition, a dissociation of the infantry or tank platoon does not appear as a taboo anymore : some consider reinforcing a tank platoon with a rifle squad or conversely, if required by circumstances, reinforcing an infantry platoon with one MBT, just as depicted by lessons learnt by foreign forces (Iraq and Israel). But once more,

applying this combined-arms character to task organization demands a prior mutual understanding, common procedures and interfaces, as well as some prior training.

**French land forces. Anyway, it should bring some food for thought to the current Army reflections about commitment in built-up areas, by capitalizing on the lessons learnt by actors.**

**By way of conclusion, the CAPAZUB study, even not resulting in revolutionary conclusions, contributes to normalizing the specific needs induced by the commitment of a combined-arms task force in urban areas. Moreover it is worth noting that most concerns of the questioned officers similarly appear in the foreign accounts that have been analyzed. Therefore we can hope that this heavy CEREX-lead study will facilitate the work of the bodies in charge with the operational and technical preparation of the**

- 1 *Translator’s note* : Army Staff /force system and development department.
- 2 *LTG Systems, Team Work Laboratories.*
- 3 *Translator’s note* : Land Forces Command.
- 4 *Translator’s note* : General Procurement Armament Agency.
- 5 *Translator’s note* : Army Doctrine Research and Study Center.
- 6 *Translator’s note* : Army Planning and Organization Department.
- 7 *Translator’s note* : Higher military. education Center - Paris
- 8 *Translator’s note* : Army Staff.

## Historical perspective

# The siege of cities in Antiquity

### WARNING

VARIOUS TERMS USED IN THIS ARTICLE MIGHT SEEM ANACHRONISTIC, THIS IS THE RESULT OF A DELIBERATE CHOICE FROM THE AUTHORS AIMING AT EASING THE UNDERSTANDING.

BY COLONEL FRÉDÉRIC GUELTON AND LIEUTENANT ANNE-AUORE INQUIMBERT, FROM THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT OF THE FRENCH ARMY



### Strategic-historic approach

During all Greek and then Roman antiquity, the “war” phenomenon, in the meaning given to this word by Gaston Bouthoul, has a central place which gives, 2 500 years after Pericles, pertinence and topicality to a thought about poliorcetic<sup>4</sup> i.e. the art of besieging cities. This reflection contributes to give prominence to the impossibility to separate a global event, the “urban war”, from its general context, the place of cities in antique Greece and Rome, and at the same time to highlight its constants in their dual tactical and symbolic dimension.

The importance of cities as centers of a human community regrouping political, economical and social functions clearly appears in Greece when Athens decides, in the

middle of the Peloponnesian war, to abandon the countryside to save the city. Gradually this political and strategic process is adopted by all Greek cities. De facto, cities become, more than the territory, the object of all covetousness, the objective whose fall marks the political victory in war.

The seizing of the city with the violence incurred during the siege, from surrounding to mercy (or sack) imposes military efforts so far unknown . Succeeding to the traditional “citizen-soldier” that was the hoplite comes a “mercenary-soldier” who accepts more “easily” than his predecessor the exacerbation of violence. War violence to which Rome substitutes, partially, a profusion of technical assets. The Roman “urban war” is characterized by a significant

development of dedicated “logistic” assets, as well as the recourse to earthwork techniques enhanced to a very high degree of perfection.

Two examples of sieges, one Greek and the other Roman illustrate the innovation efforts imposed by the complexity of the seizing of a city.

**The siege of the island of Rhodes in 305 B.C.**

The siege of the island and that of the city of Rhodes takes place after the Rhodians refuse to obey the Antigonides, supporters of the Macedonian general

Antigonus. Commanded by Demetrios, the Antigonides fleet attacks, during the first phase of the siege, the merchant harbor, which is not included into the fortification lines of the island. If Demetrios is able to land his siege machines on the island, the Rhodians manage to preserve a part of the harbor thus ensuring the continuity of their supplies.

During the year 304, combats mainly take place on the island, but here again the Rhodians manage to drive off the Antigonides and this, despite the material power implemented by Demetrios. Therefore, it is not

thanks to the victory of the besiegers over the besieged that the siege of the island of Rhodes is known for, but by the material and firepower implemented by Demetrios.

From the earthworks necessary for the employment of the *helepoles* carried out by nearly 30,000 workers to the employment of various catapults throwing arrows and cannonballs, with a useful range of nearly 200 meters, all of this gives a fundamental nature to this battle for historians. The *helepole* is the antique siege machine reference. “Fortified” and mobile wooden

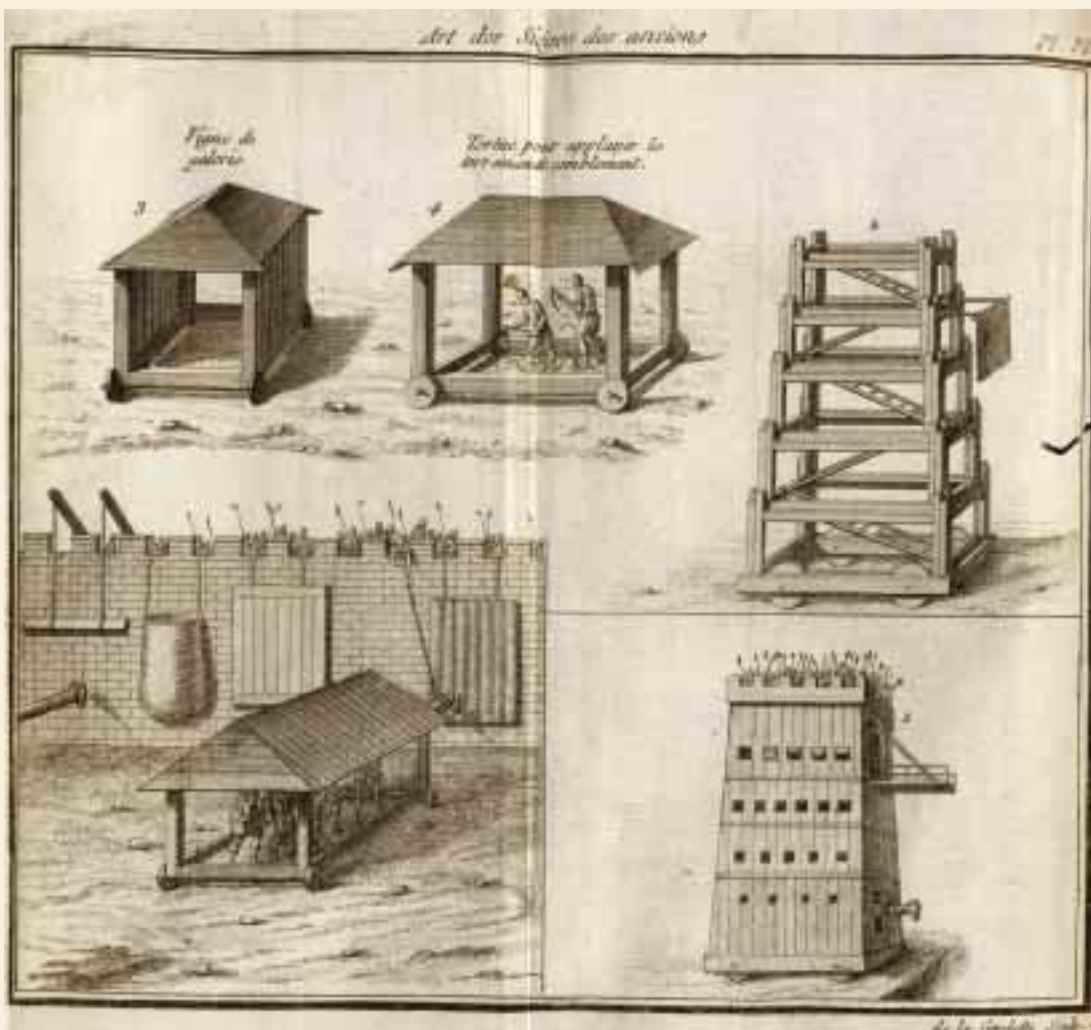
tower, it enables the besiegers to move close to the ramparts and then to seize the same ramparts thanks to a footbridge while being protected. The *ram*, which is composed of an “iron covered” beam hanging from a wooden structure, permits to make some breaches through the fortifications. Employed together *rams* and *helepoles* are often terribly efficient.

However, the *helepole* can be reduced to ashes. Thus, the Rhodians from the top of their ramparts set fire to several

*helepoles* using burning arrows or else create havoc in the ground so as to lead the siege machine to get stuck and, taking advantage of the mess, launch several successful counter-attacks. In fact, the “political-strategic” resolution of the Rhodians (grant of citizenship to slaves who have fought, economic support of the families of citizens killed in action, grant of a military equipment, etc.) as well as an outside support coming from Crete and Knossos have enabled them to beat off the assaults of Demetrios and of the Antigonides despite the material superiority of these last ones.

**The siege of Jerusalem by Roman general Titus in 70**

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., Judaea became willingly the “ally and friend of Rome” ; then, Rome ensured its protection as well as the security of the dynasty in place. However, in 63 B.C., the pacification campaign of the Eastern provinces carried out by Pompey, turned Judaea into a Roman colony. In 6, Judaea is annexed to the Empire. In order to enable Jews to serve in auxiliary troops, a population census is organized in 66. This measure leads to



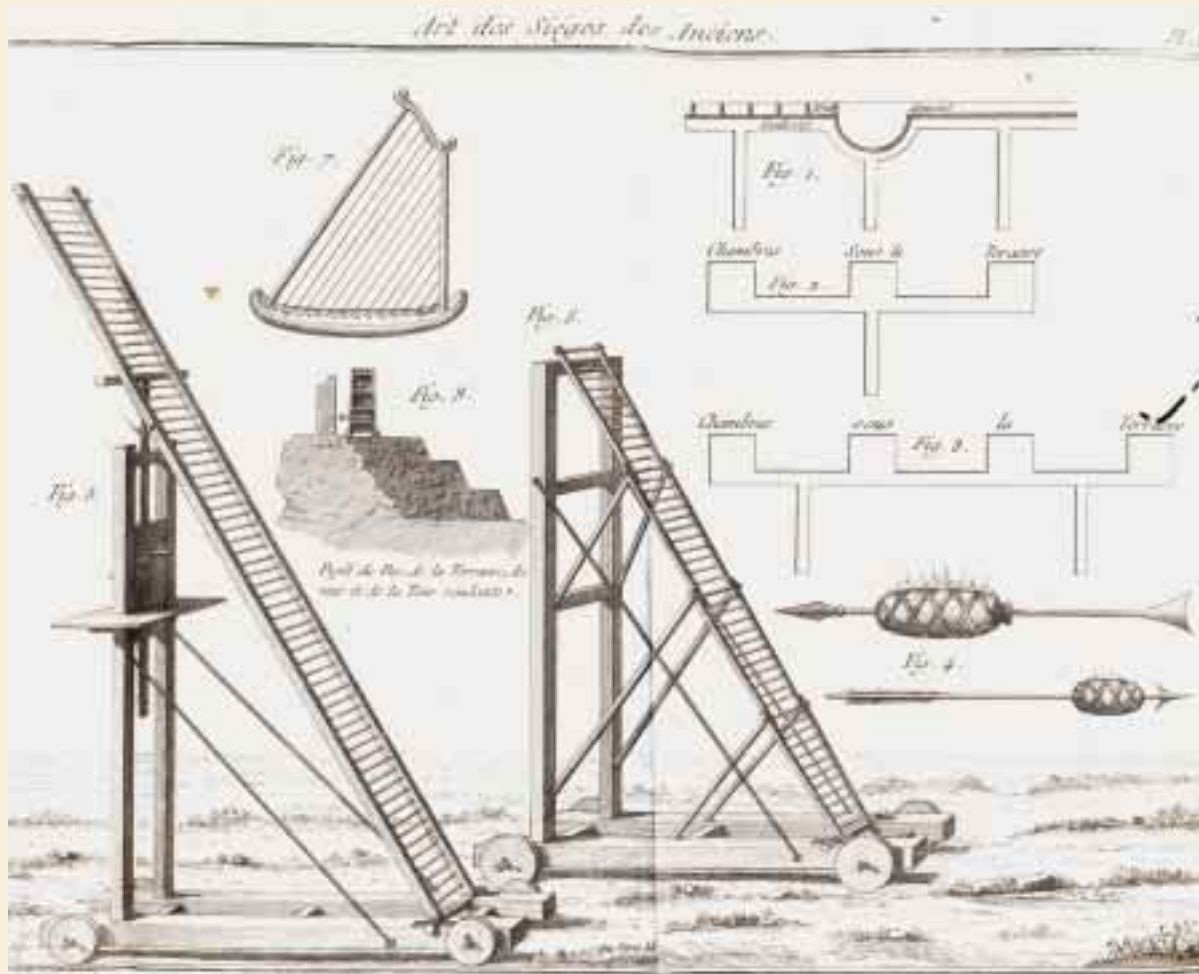
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the outset of a revolt crushed by general Vespasian's Legions. In 69, Vespasian, acclaimed emperor, returns to Rome and leaves his son Titus to take care of the last Jewish resistance bastion : the city of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem, that general Titus watches from Mount Scopus in April 70, is a vast fortress : three rows of ramparts come one after the other and deep ravines deny access to areas not protected by ramparts. After having studied the city during a long time, Titus decides to attack where the first rampart is the lowest. The four legions and the Roman auxiliary troops carry out earthworks in order to be able to employ rams and *helepoles*. The first rampart is taken and then destroyed by the Romans on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

The second rampart is defeated within 5 days, but Titus gives the order to preserve the city and its Temple. Taking advantage of this pause, the Jews launch a counter-attack and the Romans need an additional 4 days to retake and destroy the second rampart. The siege then enters a "psychological" phase during which general Titus tries to persuade the besieged to surrender. In vain, the Jews reject any



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compromise and manage to set fire to several helepoles and the four Roman legions which had settled beyond the first rampart are compelled to withdraw. Titus then decides to blockade the city whilst preserving his soldiers. He built a wall aiming at denying any supply to the besieged and simultaneously enabling his troops to carry out further earthworks. This is how a wall of roughly 7 km long is built over 3 days. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of July, the Jews launch an attack against the construction but the Romans drive them

back and reach the third rampart that they shake hard. Then, feigning a large-scale charge, Titus manages to push back the Jews against the ramparts of the Temple. Besieged and besiegers then fight hand-to-hand. After the failure of a new negotiation, general Titus is compelled to launch his assault against the very Temple he wanted to save.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 70, Titus orders the decisive assault and, using the rams, destroys the ramparts of the Temple. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 70,

Jerusalem is taken, destroyed and the population, who was not able to fly away is slaughtered. After having celebrated his victory, Titus leaves Jerusalem not forgetting to set up the camp for his X<sup>th</sup> legion in what remains of the city in order to secure its "romanity".

*1 Editor's note :  
pertaining to the art of  
besieging cities.*

***In those two examples, the end of the siege marks the end of the war. In both cases, combats show the requirement for both a "logistic" and strategic effort. They also show that the violence of "urban combat" and its resulting symbolic emotional power lead to a radicalization of behaviors that renders the return to quietness, peace and normal life extremely precarious.***



# Military operation on urban terrain (MOUT) : the pictures



**Military power and its applicability (modernity) in the XXI century - p. 4**  
*ADC F. CHESNEAU / SIRPA Terre*



**Cities are the way leading to peace - p. 13**  
*ADC F. CHESNEAU / SIRPA Terre*



**The contribution of helicopters to land actions in built-up areas - p. 30**  
*ADJ J.R. DRAHI / SIRPA Terre*



**Soldiers, cities and war - p. 45**  
*ECPAd*



**Lessons still valid ten years later...  
Combat operations in Mogadiscio (June 1993) - p. 51**  
*ECPAd*



# DOCTRINE



The CDEF badge represents the profile of the helmeted face of Athena, the beautiful and wise Greek goddess of war, symbolizing thought preparing for action. This profile stands out against a background oblong and vertical in shape divided in half with the blue of France in its upper part and red in its lower part.

Heraldic description :  
escutcheon in banner  
per fess azure and gules  
bust of Athena goddess  
helmeted and contournée  
Argent in abyss.

**Escutcheon** : The shield, on which all lines are drawn and charges delineated; the background on which coat armor is represented ; known in blazon as the field. (**Charge** : Anything occupying the field in an escutcheon).

**Banner** : A square flag, generally embroidered with the owner's arms.

**Per** = By (by the means of; by way of).

**Fesse** : A strip or band placed horizontally across the shield, occupying one-third of the field. Its diminutives are the bar, the barrulet and the closet.

**Azure** = Bright blue.

**Gules** = Red. This color on engraved escutcheons is represented by vertical lines.

**Contournee** [French]: Applied to a lion or other animal statant, passant, courant, etc, with its face to the sinister side of the escutcheon.

**Argent** = Silver : The silvery color on coats of arms.

**Abyss** : The center of an escutcheon. (For example, to bear a fleur-de-lis in abyss is to have it placed in the middle of the shield free from any other bearing).

**C.D.E.F**  
**Doctrine and Forces**  
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