

C.D.E.F



Whatever the angle from which we look into the nature of wars of the 21st century, we have no choice but to acknowledge that the conduct of operations towards victory will be of a joint nature or will just not exist.

The Joint nature of warfare, as far as logistic support of forces, communications assets, global intelligence and general command and control are concerned, is now a reality. This reality is even more evident when we consider the maneuver of fires: from the air, the sea, soon probably from space, and as of yet, still from the ground.

This implies two conditions for land forces. The first one consists in the requirement for a joint contribution adapted for and integrated into all operations. This means optimal coordination and interoperability with other services. The second, and essential one, pertains to the specificity of land forces - the only force able to win and materialize the politico-military objectives of all our deployments - i.e. the establishment or re-establishment of a durable peace - the only force indeed, as this peace can only be achieved as it concerns populations who do not leave at sea, nor in the air, but firmly on the ground.

In this respect, although at the strategic and operational levels, it is unquestionable that the air and/or sea components can conduct determining operations (embargos, destruction of forces, attrition and even neutralization of industrial capacities), one must consider the ability of the land component capable of carrying out decisive actions not only at the strategic and operational levels, but also at the tactical level.

In fact, the adaptability, agility and flexibility of land forces guarantee compliance with the three principles that characterize present conflicts on a permanent basis; legitimacy of actions, gradation of effects, and collateral damage avoidance.

As such, the Army is the only force able to inscribe its operations over the longer term - the later is necessary for men and their history - in order to exercise direct influence over populations with discernment, a permanent concern for reversibility, understanding, and the ability to apply the proper amount of force. All of this within the framework of a wide multidisciplinary spectrum combining cultural, social, financial, economical, ecological and humanitarian aspects with military requirements.

Therefore, if only the land component has these essential capabilities, then they must be enhanced in order to better fulfill the strategic expectations of the political power. Taking into account the nature of the conflicts of this century - for which the end-state objectives often pertain less to conquest than to a conversion to democratic principles and pacification - it has now become obvious to the international public opinion that being reluctant to commit oneself on the ground, without real commitment toward the populations who are the only real victims and stakes of today's wars, is equivalent to nothing else but putting oneself on display.

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