

Coalition Warfare

Coalition Warfare:
An Anthology of Scholarly Presentations
at the Conference on Coalition Warfare
at the Royal Danish
Defence College, 2011

Edited by

Niels Bo Poulsen, Kjeld Hald Galster
and Søren Nørby

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P U B L I S H I N G

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PREFACE

Readers will hardly be surprised by the assertion that the warfare of various post-Cold War ‘coalitions-of-the-willing’ has drawn much attention over recent years. However, we may also notice that associations of nations fighting, or preparing to fight, for common causes are no novelty.

Multi-national co-operation in fields as costly and as fateful as war depends on considerations and caveats concerning political purpose, risks, mutual trust, national wealth and pride, compatibility of military forces and a glut of intangible forces and effects characterising human interaction. Thus, this anthology includes scholarly research papers describing coalition warfare past and present from the perspective of commonalities and differences materialising across history.

Since the end of the Cold War – or perhaps rather since fighting ceased after World War II – western and westernised liberal democracies have not fought major wars for reasons of survival. Moreover, they have rarely waged war alone. With the exceptions of colonial and post-colonial wars, as well as the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan 1979-89 and the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, wars of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have been mandated by the UN and conducted as coalition enterprises led by an alliance or a great power. This has boosted legitimacy and eased the burden on the individual nation participant’s treasury, but at the same time it has brought about a plethora of novel hitches and challenges. Amongst these are the complications of multi-national military collaboration in general, and those stemming from cultural dissimilarities in particular. Coalition warfare, therefore, is fraught with inherent pitfalls of a cultural nature.

The reasons given for entering war-time coalitions or alliances have differed from time to time – and, more often than not, the true reasons are at odds with those publicised – but the crux of the matter has always been state security, and still is today. While the dangers from terrorism and other trans-national crimes are abiding key concerns in the first decades of the third millennium, throughout centuries past various other phenomena have been the prompters of decisions to join multinational coalitions.

However important the war aims, and no matter how many advantages coalitions bring to those fighting together, disunity and defection of allies

is an abiding risk. The key threat to a coalition is disintegration. Throughout history, this has happened over and over again – because of tempting offers from the opponent, decline of zeal, sheer exhaustion of resources and manpower, or simply because the war has taken a turn prohibiting continued fighting for one or more coalition partners. In 1813, Denmark and Saxony defected from the Napoleonic cause because the opposing coalition had pushed the French armies so far west that defence of own territories became incompatible with staying with the Emperor. In 2007, the UK and Denmark withdrew from the coalition-of-the-willing in the Basra Region of Iraq, although it could be argued that the desired end-state had still not been achieved. Similarly in 2010, the UK, Denmark and various other coalition partners chose to announce that they would no longer have combat troops in Afghanistan from 2015 onwards.

Coalition warfare is a complicated matter subject to frictions and surprises as much as any other kind of warfare, but it is a politico-military reality that remains of importance to historians as well as politicians and military commanders. This reality is what this anthology endeavours to scrutinise.

Niels Bo Poulsen
Royal Danish Defence College, 2012

BIOGRAPHIES

Captain Ivan Cadeau is an army historian at the French Ministry of Defence's historical section. His field of expertise is the French army in World War II, the War in French Indochina and the Korean War. With a PhD in history, his dissertation was entitled *Army Engineers during the French Indochina War 1945-1956: a lack of means and a lack of knowledge*. He teaches at the War College and other military and civil institutions and regularly conducts staff rides, especially on the Battle of France, May-June 1940 and the Battle of Monte Cassino. He has written several articles (such as 1954-1956: the Departure of the French Expeditionary Corps in the Far East) and books (such as *The French Battalion in the Korean War* and *Souvenirs and Documents of the Military Heritage, 1940*). He recently published and introduced the Ely report in a book entitled *Lessons Learned from the Indochina War*. He also recently published a book on the battle of Dien Biên Phu and completed preparations for another book to be published in 2013 on the history of the Korean War.

Patrick William Cecil, MA, is currently completing his PhD programme in History at The University of Alabama, USA. His dissertation examines Colonial Pennsylvania's security culture of restraint and its various forms from the 1630s to 1770s, and is tentatively entitled, *An Experiment in Peace: Colonial Pennsylvania's Security Cultures and the Breakdown of Restraint*. Focusing primarily on military and naval history, supplemented by two American history testing fields and a European non-testing field, his interests include American and British military history and foreign relations, coalition warfare, Quaker history, and sport in military infrastructures and coalitions.

Professor, Dr Douglas Delaney is the author of *The Soldiers' General: Bert Hoffmeister at War* (2005), which won the 2007 C.P. Stacey Prize in Canadian Military History. His latest work, *Corps Commanders: Five British and Canadian Generals at War, 1939-1945* (2011) is a collective biography of senior leaders in the First Canadian Army during the Second World War. A retired infantry officer with over 27 years of service, Dr Delaney is a past Chair of the War Studies programme and Professor of

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Paul M. Dover is Associate Professor of History at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, USA. He is the author of numerous articles on the diplomatic and cultural history of late medieval and early modern Europe. He is also the author of a historiography textbook, *The Changing Face of the Past* (2013) and the editor of a forthcoming volume entitled *Secretaries and Statecraft in the Early Modern World*.

Dr Kjeld Hald Galster is a senior researcher (now retired) of the Royal Danish Defence College and visiting senior lecturer at the Saxo Institute, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. He was educated at the University of Copenhagen, St Catherine College Cambridge, the Royal Military College of Canada/Collège Militaire Royal du Canada, the Royal Danish Defence College and the Royal Danish Military Academy. He has published on military history and defence policy, the most recent titles being: *Danish Troops in the Williamite army in Ireland, 1689–91: For King and Coffers*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, December 2011; *The Face of the Foe: Pitfalls and Perspectives of Military Intelligence*. Kingston, Ontario, Canada: Legacy Books Press, 2010; The Debate on Denmark's Defence, in Herman Amersfoort and Wim Klinkert, Eds. *Small Powers in the Age of Total War, 1900-1940*. Leiden: Brill, 2011; and Collective Security: National Egotism in Harold E. Raugh, Ed., *End of Empires: Challenges to Security and Statehood in Flux*. Bucharest: Military Publishing House, 2010.

Jesper Gram-Andersen is the creator and curator of The Royal Life Guards Museum in Copenhagen, which was opened in 1978. For ten years, he was a teacher of military history at the Royal Air Force Academy, Denmark and for 23 years editor of *The Guards Magazine*. Moreover, he has been military commentator on live television on various Royal occasions. Jesper Gram-Andersen has been a full-time and part-time infantry officer (Guards), and as a staff officer during the Cold War his main occupation was combat intelligence. As a UN officer, he was Staff Officer Operations with the Danish Contingent during the war in Cyprus in 1974. He held various staff appointments on Partnership for Peace exercises. Finally, he was chief of evaluation at the Army Operational Command Denmark's final mission training of the Danish contingents for international operations. He has published several books and articles (in Danish) about the regiment, including *The Royal Life Guards 325 years 1658-1983*, *Life Guards Barracks and Rosenborg Parade Ground 200 years 1986* and *The Royal*

Life Guards 350 years 1658-2008 (6 volumes). He is also the author of *The Army Corps of Zealand* (NATO: COMLANDZEALAND) (2000), *Danish Armed Forces Centre for Physical Training and Education 200 years 1804-2004*, published by the Royal Danish Defence College, and co-writer of *For Peace and Freedom in 50 years – Home Guard Region VI 1949-1999* and *Garrison Churchyard – Copenhagen* (1998). From 1980 to 1985, he was the editor and co-writer of three volumes about *Barracks and Other Military Establishments on the Zealand Group of Islands and Bornholm*. Of major articles to be mentioned are *Foreign Powers' view of the Defence of Denmark before and Including World War I* (2004) and *British Artillery at Copenhagen in 1807* (2007). Other subjects are military music, biographies and the World War I fortifications of Copenhagen.

Professor, Dr Andrew Lambert is a British naval historian who is currently Laughton Professor of Naval History in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. After completing his doctoral research, Lambert was lecturer in modern international history at Bristol Polytechnic from 1983 until 1987; consultant in the Department of History and International Affairs at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich from 1987 until 1989; senior lecturer in war studies at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst from 1989 until 1991; senior lecturer in the Department of War Studies at King's College London from 1996 until 1999, then Professor of Naval History from 1999 until 2001; and then Laughton Professor of Naval History,[1] and Director of the Laughton Naval History Research Unit.[2] He served as Hon. Secretary of the Navy Records Society 1991-2005 and is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Lambert's work focuses on the naval and strategic history of the British Empire between the Napoleonic Wars and the First World War, and the early development of naval historical writing. He has written works on important nineteenth century naval historians, including William James and Professor Sir John Knox Laughton, after whom Lambert's chair in Naval History at King's is named. His most recent books are *Admirals: The Naval Commanders who Made Britain Great*, Faber and Faber (2008), *Ship: A History in Art & Photography*, Conway Publishing (2010), *Franklin: Tragic Hero of Polar Navigation*, Faber and Faber (2010). *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia 1853-1856*, 2nd edition Ashgate Press 2011, and *The Challenge: Britain versus America in the Naval War of 1812*, Faber & Faber 2012.

Dr Matthew S. Muehlbauer received his PhD from Temple University in 2008, where he was a University Fellow. His academic specialties are colonial America and military history, with research that focuses on seventeenth-century New England. His article 'They... shall no more be called Peaquots but Narragansetts and Mohegans: Refugees, Rivalry, and the Consequences of the Pequot War' was published in the journal *War & Society* in 2011, and he is currently writing a textbook with David J. Ulbrich on U.S. military history for Routledge. In addition to the Conference on Coalition Warfare, he has presented before the Society of Military History, the Organisation of American Historians, the International Society of Military Sciences and the Transatlantic Studies Association. He has taught for a number of American institutions, including the United States Military Academy and Rutgers University.

Dr Thomas Heine Nielsen is a senior lecturer of Ancient Greek at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. He graduated in Ancient Greek in 1992 with a thesis on the speeches of Herodotus. He has been employed by the Copenhagen Polis Centre (an international research centre devoted to the study of the ancient Greek city-state culture. His doctoral dissertation *Pollan ek polion: The Polis Structure of Arkadia in the Archaic and Classical Periods* was submitted in 1996 and was published in an enlarged version as *Arkadia and its Poleis in the Archaic and Classical Periods* in the *Hypomnemata* series by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht (Göttingen) in 2002. He has authored or co-authored chapters (on Arkadia, Triphylia, East Lokris, Sikelia, Italia and Kampania, Thessalia and adjacent regions, and Rhodos) of the huge *Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, published by Oxford University Press in 2004 and of which he was co-editor. In 2000-2003, he was a Special Lecturer at the Department of Classics, University of Nottingham. Since August 2003, he has been a senior lecturer in Ancient Greek at the Section of Greek and Latin at the Saxo-Institute, University of Copenhagen. He is secretary to the Danish Xenophon Society, a member of the Editorial Committee of the on-line periodical *Aigis*, and a consultant in Ancient Greek matters for Museum Tusculanum Press. His current main interests are: interaction in the Hellenic city-state culture, the Panhellenic sanctuaries including athletics, Ancient Greek warfare and Ancient Greek religion. In 2003, he was awarded the Silver Medal for young scholars by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

Dr Adam Schwartz is a research fellow at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. He graduated in Ancient Greek in 2001 with a thesis on Aristotelian constitution types. During his time at the Section of Greek and Latin at the Saxo Institute, University of Copenhagen, he has lectured and researched on several aspects of ancient history, including Greek military history, and published extensively on the subject in both Danish and English. His revised doctoral dissertation *Reinstating the Hoplite: Arms, Armour and Phalanx Fighting in Archaic and Classical Greece* in the *Historia Einzelschriften* series by Franz Steiner Verlag (Stuttgart 2009) is an investigation of the nature of hoplite fighting and phalanx tactics. He has contributed to the forthcoming volume *Men of Bronze: Hoplite Warfare in Ancient Greece*, edited by Curtis Easton and Donald Kagan (Princeton University Press: Princeton (2013)). He is a member of the Editorial Committee of the on-line periodical *Aigis*, and General Secretary of the Nordic Plato Society.

Dr Arthur ten Cate is a military historian and senior researcher with the Netherlands Institute of Military History in The Hague. He has authored five books on contemporary Dutch military history, amongst them publications on Dutch peacekeeping operations in the Middle East and the Balkans, as well as a Ph.D. dissertation on international intervention in the Bosnian War of 1992-1995. Ten Cate's latest research is on the Dutch participation in stability operations in Iraq in the aftermath of the 2003 war (resulting in a book published in 2010), and on Dutch Special Forces operations in the post-Cold War era, with a focus on Afghanistan. A book on this subject was published in March 2012. A book on Iraq was published in the autumn of 2010. ten Cate is also an editor of the web application *Encyclopaedia of International Operations* (www.defensie.nl/nimh). He gives frequent lectures at the Netherlands Defence Academy and universities and is a reserve officer (rank of major) in the Royal Netherlands Army. ten Cate was deployed to Afghanistan three times, most recently in 2009 as Commander's Historian, Regional Command South in Kandahar.

Dr Thomas Vogel is a serving army lieutenant-colonel and a senior fellow at the *Militär-geschichtliches Forschungsamt* (MGFA; Military History Research Institute) of the *Bundeswehr* (German armed forces). His doctoral dissertation on Medieval History was submitted in 1994. In 1997, Dr Vogel joined the MGFA in Potsdam as a permanent member of its staff. As a project manager and co-author, he created three large touring exhibitions entitled *Military Resistance against Hitler and the Nazi-*

Regime, History of the Bundeswehr from the Beginning to 2005, and History of the Armed Bundeswehr Missions Abroad. Dr Vogel has been busy with historical research including the compilation of and comment on letters and diaries of *Wehrmacht* army captain Wilm Hosenfeld, an eye witness of the German occupation system in Poland during World War II. The book was published under the title: *Wilm Hosenfeld: Ich versuche jeden zu retten. Das Leben eines deutschen Offiziers in Briefen und Tagebüchern*. [W.H.: I try to Save Everybody. The Life of a German Officer in Letters and Diaries] (Munich: DVA, 2004). Secondary appointments made Dr Vogel a member of the editorial staff of both historic journals published by the MGFA: *Militärgeschichte. Zeitschrift für historische Bildung* [Military History: Journal of History Education] and (since 2004) *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift* (MGZ) [Journal of Military History]. Recently, Dr Vogel has shifted into the Institute's Department for Historical Research, where he is now working on military integration in war coalitions during the period of both world wars.

INTRODUCTION

KJELD HALD GALSTER

History and general considerations

Coalition warfare has been practiced for thousands of years. Sometimes the results have been complete disaster, as for the Greeks at Thermopylae 480 BC, and at other times the results were unequivocally successful, as with Wellington's victory at Vitoria, 1813. Post-Cold War interdependence amongst many developed and developing countries contributes to making this the modern recipe for successful warfare. But the successful outcome henceforth depends on careful mixture and adjustment of key ingredients. These include mutual trust, command relationships, doctrine, technology, organisation, training, personnel and equipment strength, and cultural relationships.¹

There is no *vade mecum* for coalition warfare – no commonly accepted and everlasting doctrine. Every coalition will be different in purpose, character, composition and scope; but there are some basic commonalities that will confront any coalition commander. Obviously, part of the basis on which we may form a template doctrine is historical experience. History plays such a dominant role in understanding the enduring aspects of warfare that modern commanders continue to study the battles of the ancients in order to understand the challenges of the present.² Thus Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War* remains a classic example of the interactions between politics and war. Yet, for the most part, historic perspectives tend mainly to facilitate analysis of the actions by the commanders who led victorious coalitions – Marlborough, Prince Eugène of Savoy, Napoleon and Foch – but the key to success does not lie with

¹ Willie J. Brown, USMC, *The Keys To Successful Coalition Warfare: 1990 And Beyond*. From internet, URL <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1991/BWJ.htm> accessed 11 August 2010.

² Paul T. Mitchell, *Network Centric Warfare and Coalition Operations: The New Military Operating System* (Oxon: Routledge Global Security Studies, 2009) p. 3.

personalities alone. A doctrinal foundation must be based on methods. Many, but certainly far from all, coalitions are merged hurriedly in crisis or conflict and, thus for obvious reasons, may not provide an unfailing model upon which a doctrine may be founded.

The technological limitations of coalition networks will themselves be aggravated by the political nature of coalitions and their management. Coalitions are largely about scarcity, either in terms of actual resources or political legitimacy. Scarcity is relieved through sharing influence over policy, and the willingness to share is a function of how interdependent coalition partners are. In the age of American military primacy, then, influence will be tightly restricted to the very few partners who are able, willing and trusted to make meaningful contributions to US operations.³

Being a lead nation of multilateral coalitions presents a challenge that is compounded by the need for doctrine to conduct joint operations in a combined environment. Four elements coalesce to achieve success in a war of coalition: agility, which calls for maintaining balance and force in shifting situations while striking in fleeting windows of opportunity; initiative, which means dominating the terms of battle and thus depriving the enemy of that same option; depth, which considers every dimension of war and envelops the entire spectrum of events across time and space; and synchronisation, which applies combat power both at the optimum moment and in the right place while controlling a myriad of simultaneous actions. The mutually supportive operations at El Alamein, 23 October 1942, and Torch, in November 1942, may serve as examples. To a military observer these four notions seem to emphasise the special importance to coalition warfare doctrine of the principles of offensive, flexibility and concentration of effort. Nonetheless, apparently no commonly accepted doctrine for coalition warfare exists today. Any multinational operation will require planning by all the participants, interoperability, shared risks and burdens, emphasis on commonalties, and diffused credit for success.⁴

³ Ibid., p. 5

⁴ The considerations on doctrines for coalition warfare are largely based on Robert W. Riscassi's article *Principles for Coalition Warfare*. From Internet, URL http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/jfq0901.pdf accessed on 11 August 2010.



Dano-Afghan collaboration (photo by Major K.V.F. Ahlefeldt-Laurvig who was Force Protection mentor to Garrison Support Unit of 3rd Brigade, 215th Corps)

Political aspects

Since antiquity, coalition warfare has been a part of the history of war and an abiding element in power politics. From the wars of the Delian League, 478-404 BC, to the most recent anti-terror operations in Afghanistan, coalition warfare has made significant contributions to the defence of values and security cherished by coalesced groups of nations.

Alliances are not friendships, although the Austro-German coalition in the First World War, as well as the Anglo-American in the Second, were based on assumptions of common values that were genuinely believed to be true at the time and therefore carry historic weight. Nevertheless, all coalitions are entered into for motives of self-interest, usually for self-protection.⁵

While over the last century coalitions and alliances have tended to be of a long-lasting nature, coalitions of the 17th and 18th centuries were

⁵ Paul Kennedy, *Military Coalitions and Coalitions Warfare over the Past Century*, in Keith Neilson and Roy A. Prete, Eds., *Coalition Warfare: an Uneasy Accord* (Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983) p. 3.

only for the duration of a single war or even broken during it when *raison d'état* so suggested.⁶

In the 19th century, Britons who feared for the future of the empire and who saw world tendencies through Darwinian spectacles, sought alliances in two forms. The first was to attempt an imperial defence coalition, to attach the largely self-governing Dominions to the common cause, a notion perceived with scant enthusiasm by Canada as well as South Africa. The second form was a willingness to contemplate alliance with another great power – with Japan in 1902 and, less formally, with France and Russia a few years later. Thus British statesmen, too, sought the dual security that they believed a coalition offered: aid from partners in the event of hostilities; and a pledge to assist partners, whose defeat by a mutual foe might be disastrous to their own interests.⁷

In the mid-twentieth century there was a very threatening coalition of authoritarian regimes, the Axis Powers. While the actual degree of intimacy and shared aims may be questioned, the fact remains that they appeared to pose a combined menace and to be working with each other.⁸ Once hostilities actually broke, out it became apparent that that war could not be fought and won by a single state or empire and, thus, during the Second World War it dawned upon politicians of both warring sides that coalition warfare was the single most essential answer to their needs. Hence, from March 1941, a prolonged period of wartime coalitions and peacetime alliances began. That date was particularly significant because it marked the passing of the Lend-Lease Act in the US Congress, by which the British Empire got access to vital resources provided by the US, without which the empire would slowly have ceased to fight. Before the military alliance between Britain and the US, there was already an economic coalition; and at the first Churchill-Roosevelt summit at Placentia Bay in August 1941 – and even before that, at the ABC Conference – there was the first understanding of a joint strategy.⁹ It is true, of course, that there were significant political, almost ideological, differences between the British Empire and the US over India and the Asian colonies, and over the policy towards Nationalist China. There was also the famous long-lasting dispute over the Mediterranean strategy 1942-44.

⁶ Ibid., p. 4

⁷ Ibid., pp. 5-6

⁸ Ibid., p. 11

⁹ Ibid., pp. 11-12

Military aspects

Doctrine and strategy

While the expression ‘coalition’ signifies the outcome of a political agreement among two or more states to co-operate in war, in NATO parlance – at the military level – the proper term for what is happening on the battlefield is rather ‘combined operations.’ We know that joint operations represent significantly greater complexity than single-service operations. In combined operations, the ‘joint’ difficulties are still prevalent, but with the added complexity of two or more contributor nations’ armed forces co-operating, all of whom bring their separate orientations and proclivities to the practice of warfare, the challenge grows.

In order to overcome these challenges a coalition must operate to a common doctrine to take advantage of commonalities and reconcile the differences. Moreover, doctrinal incompatibility will always be a source of friction.¹⁰ The doctrine is the sum of fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.¹¹ But there are more requirements that are equally important: the professional language in which coalition forces communicate, the battlefield missions, control measures, combined arms and joint procedures as well as command relationships. To achieve the full synergic effects of joint combat power, the war fighting doctrine must be common to all arms. In the absence of a commonly understood doctrine, planning and execution of military operations become extraordinarily difficult. Yet, approaching a commonly agreed doctrine can be a dreary political task – *eine politische Durststrecke*.

A strategic concept is ‘the course of action accepted as the result of an estimate of the strategic situation. It is a statement of what is to be done in broad terms sufficiently flexible to permit its use in framing the military, diplomatic, economic, psychological and other measures that stem from it.’¹² Agreement on strategy is the foundation for coalition action. It is derived from policy agreements between contributing nations and must be detailed enough to shape the direction of the upcoming campaign, yet sufficiently broad to allow full exploitation of the capabilities of individual national forces. An example of disagreement on this point might be found

¹⁰ Gal Luft, *Beef, Bacon and Bullets: Culture in Coalition Warfare from Gallipoli to Iraq* (no place: Gal Luft, 2009), p. xvi

¹¹ NATO AAP-6(S)

¹² Ibid.

in Churchill's peripheral strategy vs. Roosevelt's centralist approach to the War in Europe. The development of an effective military strategy is difficult even when military action is national, and it is far more trying in a coalition. Strategy is designed to accomplish political objectives. Because of its proximity to policy, it will be the point of reference for gaining consensus between military and political leaders. Consequently, it is also most likely to be the centre of controversy in both political and military spheres. Rarely do nations enter a coalition with identical views on ends to be achieved. As coalition partners increase in number, conflicting objectives and additional political constraints are added to the conundrum. The coalition commander must walk a taut line between accommodating and compromising, yet preserve the ability to achieve military decision. At the same time, it is important to realise that in coalitions the will is strongest when the perception of threat is greatest. As conditions change over time, so may the will and objectives of participating nations. Coalition strategic formulation is difficult also because of the sheer mass involved in the effort. Strategy involves the merging and co-ordination of nearly every element of multinational power to accomplish military objectives. It may require insights into different national industrial capabilities, mobilisation processes, transportation capabilities, and inter-agency contributions, in addition to military capabilities. It must bind all these together with precision and care. It operates on the tangent edge of international relations and diplomacy and must seek congruency with these forms. It addresses issues as weighty as the end-state to be achieved and as mundane as the rules of engagement to be applied at each stage of operations. In coalition operations, strategy is the level of war where international politics and bodies are coalesced into a unified approach. The ability to design an effective military campaign will depend on concord on the military strategy. At the operational level, disagreements that occur are generally among military professionals; but there are, of course, political ramifications also to be considered. The campaign must be phased in concurrence with the availability of combat power, as it is generated from multiple national sources. The campaign plan should also provide the basis for defining and recommending national contributions. Unless this is done and provided to the various national authorities, the combined commander will end up with a force composition that is not rationalised towards operational requirements. The campaign plan has the integrating effect of serving as both the driver for force requirements and the schedule for generating those assets. The campaign plan is the instrument that synchronises all elements of combat power. It provides combined commanders with the vital understanding to link operations, battles and

engagements to the coalition's strategic objectives. It is the tool of co-ordination of the various activities with a view to achieving the end-state laid down in the strategy. It must address a variety of choices concerning the approach to warfare – offensive or defensive, terrain- or force-oriented, direct or indirect approach – and in so doing, becomes the instrument for the actual application of force.

Planning

Within a coalition, a common planning process is essential. The degree to which national commanders and staffs understand and are able to participate in planning, impacts on the time required to plan and the sharing of knowledge of every component of operations.

The common planning process should facilitate unity of command, which is the basic precondition for ability to integrate coalition forces. Unity of command is the most fundamental principle of warfare, but the single most difficult principle to gain in combined warfare. The strategic disagreement between the Francophile Churchill and the Anglophobe de Gaulle is a daunting example of the opposite. Unity of command is dependent on many influences and considerations. Coalition partners are often strict about preserving their operational independence.¹³ Because of the severity and consequences of war, relinquishing national command and control of forces is an act of trust and confidence that is unparalleled in relations between nations. It is a passing of human and material resources to another nation's citizens. In a coalition, it is achieved by constructing command arrangements and task-organising forces to ensure that responsibilities match contributions and efforts. Command relationships between national commanders should be carefully considered to ensure that authority matches responsibilities. It is cardinal that compromises do not overshadow war fighting requirements.

Training

The first priority in generating coalition combat power from a conglomeration of nationally separated units is to train, emphasising the fundamental commonalties outlined earlier. Only through training will combined units master and sustain collective war fighting skills. As the coalition is brought together, staffs and commanders must adapt rapidly to the units and processes in the fighting organisations being formed. The

¹³ Luft, *Beef, Bacon and Bullets*, p. xvi

impediments and sources of friction become clear at once. So, frequently, do the solutions that must be applied.

Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence

Applying the combined doctrine – the doctrine of the coalition – relies on a Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence architecture, in modern military lingo C⁴I, which is supposed to integrate the joint forces of all coalition partners. Indeed, while continuing to improve capabilities for collecting, analysing and disseminating intelligence, managing the vast amounts of information upon which decisions are made, and incorporating more and more computer aids into the battlefield decision and execution processes, a coalition requires all partners to be in the electronic loop. Unless we maintain ability to share with, and in turn receive from, all coalition partners, our battlefield will not be as seamless as we wished it to be and significant risks will materialise. However, achieving integrated C⁴I within a coalition comes with a number of caveats. First, there is the language barrier. Communication problems are amongst the primary sources for tension, confusion and inefficiency in multinational forces. While spoken and written language is a vehicle to convey ideas, desires and feelings, it is also the main source of miscommunication.¹⁴ In the 17th and 18th centuries, French was the *lingua franca* spoken by all officers and diplomats. Similarly today, English and, in some cases, French are the preferred languages used by military staffs when engaged in coalition warfare, and translation into national languages happens at the lowest tactical or combat levels only. Tactical integration – and therefore command and control, i.e. C² – of ground forces is difficult to achieve; and it might be attained most rapidly by early integration of some tactical units.

Fundamental considerations are the factors of mission, enemy, terrain, troops and time available on the battlefield. This will dictate the alignment and missions of variously equipped and talented forces on the battlefield. Lightly armed forces can perform in military operations on urbanised, densely foliated or mountainous terrain, heavy forces in more mobile environments, airmobile or motorised forces in virtually any terrain.

Research into coalitions and networked collaboration is particularly intense on professional educational programmes, notably military staff courses, higher command course equivalents etc. While there is a great

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 11

variety of themes amongst papers tendered by military students, many of them writing on issues concerned with their personal experiences of coalition warfare participation, there seems to be a general concern that Network Centric Warfare, driven by the US' keenness to integrate information technology into its operational concepts, threatens the cohesion of coalition operations. Such challenges to coalitions posed by information technology appear to exist at all levels of warfare.¹⁵

As America's principal military partner, the UK appears to have a strong interest in keeping pace with US military developments. However, even with the third-largest military budget in the world (at least until the recent cuts in military expenditure by the Cameron government), according to Swedish SIPRI the British worry about not being able to keep pace with the United States. This clearly puts the problem of coalition interoperability into stark contrast, because if the British cannot keep pace, who can?¹⁶

Network-enabled capabilities offer decisive advantages through the timely provision and exploitation of information and intelligence to enable effective decision-making and agile actions. It argues for creating a system that can exploit the latent power that exists between the seams of all three services, thus enabling successful joint fires and an ability to engage time-sensitive targets. Indeed, expropriating many of the terms from Network Centric Warfare, it argues that network-enabled capabilities will enable decision superiority through shared situational awareness within task-oriented communities of interest that exploit collaborative processes in a single information domain.¹⁷

Logistics

Logistics management of coalition forces is a matter ultimately dependent on a wide variety of factors. National arrangements, host nation support agreements and equipment compatibility are but a few. Some coalition forces will enter the coalition with the intention and means to provision themselves. In these cases, coalition control may be no more than a need to coordinate; or, providing ports of entry, offload capabilities, storage sites, and routes and means for pushing sustainment forward. Others will arrive with the need for more extensive support. This may be solvable through bi-national agreements from one member nation to provide

¹⁵ Paul T. Mitchell, *Network Centric Warfare and Coalition Operations: The New Military Operating System* (Oxon: Routledge Global Security Studies, 2009) p. 53.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

support to another, or may require active coalition management. As a rule, actual execution of tactical logistics support to alliance members should be decentralised. At the coalition headquarters level, the focus should be on measuring the requirements of executing the campaign plan, providing advance estimates of these requirements to national units, and ensuring that proper controls are in place to de-conflict and permit movement and processing of combat power to units.

Constraints

Culture

Any coalition is brought together by partner states, each with its individual cultural background, language, history, norms and sensitivities of political or religious natures. The level of exposure of military organisations to other cultures in the pre-coalition stage determines their ability to minimise cross-cultural tension with fellow coalition partners.¹⁸ Nevertheless, partners disparate in one or more respects, are prone to occasional clashes of interests as well as to differing views on and approaches to strategy and operations. Their strategic interests are rarely identical, their ways of fighting and commanding may differ considerably, as may their view on international treaties and agreements, and each of them will strive to preserve their operational independence and identity of their troops.¹⁹

Understanding the behaviour, norms and sensitivities of partners of dissimilar cultural backgrounds is a precondition for smooth co-operation and seamless interoperability within a coalition, and it goes without saying that the more used a military is to co-operating with foreign partners, the easier it will adapt to fighting alongside new ones. The more educated its members are as to the world beyond their own borders, the more painlessly they mingle with foreign colleagues. The challenge in this field is gaining awareness with respect for the differences – and there is a growing recognition of the need to analyse them in order to make sure that due respect is paid and misunderstandings and embarrassment are avoided. Thus, different cultures mean different doctrines and disparate approaches to planning and execution of operations.

Casualties, ‘friendly fire,’ collateral damage and respect for human life are prominent domains where cultural models differ to the detriment of coalition co-operation. A society’s religiosity determines to a large extent

¹⁸ Ibid., p. xvii

¹⁹ Ibid., p. xvi

its ability to stomach casualties. Militaries from societies with a high sensitivity to casualties are likely to reflect their sensitivity by relying on firepower and air power, a reluctance to engage in high-risk operations, conservative training programmes and an adherence to often-exaggerated safety standards in the daily life of the troops. This can cause tension regarding certain ethical and moral issues applicable to military life, such as rules of engagement, treatment of civilian populations in enemy territory, environmental issues, the use of certain types of weapons, torture, abuse and treatment of prisoners of war.²⁰ The USA appears willing to tolerate casualty figures considerably higher than do most coalition partners, which is, of course, part of the explanation of why the Americans operate more daringly than do the British or the Danes.

The American criticism of Montgomery's cautious and thoroughly-rehearsed operations in Europe in 1944-45 has a parallel in that of Anglo-Danish counter insurgency in Afghanistan's Helmand Province disclosed by Wikileaks 2010. In December 2010, American as well as Afghan decision-makers were quoted for severe criticism of the British strategy, resource allocation, risk avoidance and allegedly poor ability to create security in the Helmand Region.²¹ The fear of casualties is the cause of significant operational restrictions on what European coalition partners will permit their ground forces to do once they are deployed.²² Moreover, this is true not only as far as own troops are concerned, but equally as much as to the opponent. To most European powers, it is *sine qua non* that casualties amongst the opposition be minimised and civilian fatalities be avoided. This leads to differing rules of engagement and dissimilar handling of hostile combatants, human shields and prisoners-of-war.

Not only are doctrinal prescriptions and ethical standards rarely identical, partners normally emphasise the display of independence and sovereignty of their own forces. Since they have to collaborate, this is a challenge, which must be addressed. In 1815 at Waterloo, Blücher and Wellington attacked along converging, though clearly separate, axes, making it possible for the Prussians to claim victory in their own right.

The need to reconcile diverse cultural traditions or religious practises is illustratively exemplified by the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857-8. The major cause of resentment that arose ten months prior to the outbreak of the rebellion was the General Service Enlistment Act of 25 July 1856. Until then, men of the Bengal Army had been exempted from service overseas.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 17

²¹ The Guardian, 3 December 2010, 'Wikileaks cables expose Afghan contempt for British Military.'

²² Mitchell, p. 115.

Specifically, they were enlisted only for service in territories to which they could march. Although the Act required only new recruits to the Bengal Army to accept overseas deployment, serving high-caste sepoys were fearful that it might eventually be extended to them. There were also grievances over slow promotion caused by the increasing influx of British officers. The final, and – in terms of cultural differences – most decisive controversy was over the ammunition for the ‘New Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifle.’ To load the new rifle, the sepoys had to bite the cartridge open. Many Sepoys believed that the paper cartridges were greased with lard (pork fat), which was regarded as unclean by Muslims, or tallow (beef fat), being an abomination to Hindus. On 27 January 1857, the East India Company ordered that all cartridges issued from depots were to be grease free, and that sepoys could grease them themselves using whatever lubricant they might prefer. This, however, merely caused many sepoys to be convinced that the rumours were true and that their fears were justified. Hence, the Sepoy Rebellion started on 10 May 1857 and was to last until the signature of a peace treaty on 8 July 1858, at which occasion the Crown took over from the East India Company sole responsibility for British interests in India, including all military matters.

It is, thus, obvious that conciliation of cultural and religious differences must be overcome to achieve optimum collaboration by coalition partners and that a lead nation will go out of its way to accomplish precisely that. However vague the common cause, however few the shared values; sensible coalition partners will hardly let irrelevant factors like ethnic or devout sensibilities stand in the way of completion of the military enterprise upon which they have embarked.

Coalition partners and dominance

In any coalition the lead nation will hold considerable sway over strategy, campaign plans and the roles of lesser contributors. During the Napoleonic Wars, there could be no doubt that France was such a dominant coalition leader. On the opposite side – although various other great powers did have a say in coalition war policy – Britain, for the simple reason that she was paying the most, eventually came out as the *primus inter pares* – or first among equals – in the final battle at Waterloo as well as in the rearrangement of the European political layout in the immediate aftermath.

Similarly, during the war between France and the German states in the late nineteenth century, Prussia took the obvious lead being not only the victor of two previous wars – i.e. one against Denmark in 1864 and another against Austria in 1866 – but also demographically and economically at the

forefront of German industrial and political development. Although this did not happen without protest from various South-German, Catholic principalities and kingdoms, notably Bavaria, the Prussian dominance was generally accepted as a precursor of German unification, which eventually came about with the coronation of Prussian King Wilhelm as German emperor in 1871.

From the end of the Second World War onwards, the USA has been the dominant power of most formal as well as many less regulated coalitions. This was generally the case in the Korean War, 1950-53, in the post-French-Vietnam War, 1955-75, and during the Cold War, 1947-91. Even in conflicts fought by coalitions not including America, the US has been able to wield considerable influence on their duration, termination and outcome. This happened in the Suez crisis in 1956 and, to some extent, in the various Arab-Israeli Wars.

After the end of the Cold War, the re-unification of Germany and the re-definition of NATO's role, many things have changed and – as we saw in the bombing campaign in Libya in early 2011 – US lead is no longer a given. While NATO partners were generally supportive of the US after the atrocities of 11 September 2001, agreeing to the UN-sanctioned action in Afghanistan to eliminate the Al Qaeda menace, there was no unison in 2003 when the American Bush administration tried to persuade old as well as potential allies to back their war in Iraq. Severe divergence emerged between the United States and some of its major allies, notably France and Germany, indicating a decline of American hegemony. Unlike 1956, when the US was able to force France and Britain to back down over Suez, in the post-Cold War environment of 2003, Washington was unable to mollify partners and make them adapt their policies to American needs. Indeed, as the dispute went on, each side became more intransigent.²³

The downside of coalition warfare

Coalitions have their advantages and their downsides – or, as Churchill put it in 1942, 'in working with allies, it sometimes happens that they develop opinions of their own'. While the obvious benefits include burden sharing, increased legitimacy and, frequently, strategic and operational gains (such as access to resources, encirclement of the opponent and large reserves), the drawbacks also loom on the horizon. Amongst them are differing war aims, disagreement on contributions, cumbersome decision-making processes, *prima donnas* amongst the commanders, differing sensitivity to

²³ Ibid., p. 19.

casualties and troubles arising from uneven access to the information technology on which today's network centric warfare is based.

It is obvious that the decision-making process of a single power with its own well-rehearsed command system runs a lot more smoothly than that of a coalition, where commanders of different backgrounds and traditions have to go out of their way to avoid misunderstandings and secure agreement amongst themselves and with their individual capitals. Thus in Kosovo in 1999, when NATO fought the army of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia in order to stop atrocities being committed between the opposing sides, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic was able to engage military forces greatly superior to his own, because he enjoyed the advantage of being a unitary actor confronted by a complex coalition of powers only loosely held together by a broadly defined common objective. Moreover, NATO fought under considerable constraints, which the Yugoslav forces did not share. Intense political pressure was applied to minimise casualties (friendly, enemy and civilian), curtail attacks on local infrastructure, and put an end to the ongoing ethnic cleansing. The tensions between NATO's wartime objectives were a product of the tangled negotiations that ultimately brought the alliance into the conflict. Because of vetoes by Russia and China, there was no Security Council mandate in place, nor was NATO able to agree internally on a single legal basis for the war. Thus, each force-contributing nation applied its own legal and political justifications.²⁴

Today, coalition warfare is largely conducted by lead nations possessing an overwhelming capability as far as information technology-based command and control systems are concerned: the US, Britain, France and a few more perhaps. If smaller coalition partners wish to co-operate at a par with their lead nations, they must adapt to the highest possible degree. They must be able to find their role in the triangular relationship amongst Network Centric Warfare, information release and coalition strategy. Coalition partners not possessing optimum Network Centric Warfare capabilities will be sidelined.²⁵

Many factors combine to hamper coalition interoperability. Cultural factors, as we have already seen, can make serious hindrances if partners are not willing to – or capable of – adopting a common working language or if they do not share views on operative imperatives such as planning, timeliness and training standards. Similarly, national pride, tradition and ethical differences may stand in the way of effective co-operation.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 27.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 119.

However, among the more tangible matters there is always a risk that incompatible equipment or doctrinal disparity may cause a coalition to malfunction.

While the disparity between the US and the rest of the world is partly a product of the Americans' own design (in order to reinforce their unipolar military status), in its turn it creates growing problems for the US' own operations.²⁶ American military units are so lavishly equipped that few other countries – except perhaps Britain and France – are willing to do likewise. This leaves the Americans in the situation they probably wanted to avoid, namely that of having to bear the overwhelming majority of operational costs themselves. Some smaller partners have, nonetheless, chosen to follow suit technologically, but at the expense of numbers. While Denmark today has armed forces that are at a technological level almost as advanced as that of Britain, over the last decades the force structure has shrunk to a level allowing hardly more than one battalion at the time to be deployed on overseas missions.

A coalescence of nations

Although there have been coalitions that have failed, as the Central Powers eventually did in World War I, the concept has stood the test of time due to viability, resilience and flexibility. Thus, as this concept has developed, coalition warfare is no longer just a matter of fighting a common enemy; it is a coalescence of nations that, of necessity, transcend national core values and beliefs to facilitate positive outcome of a common cause.

As nations continue to rely upon one another for the provision of security as well as for trade and technological progress, the importance of establishing coalitions becomes more critical by the day.²⁷

For a fuller account on the phenomena of coalition warfare, you might wish to see Kjeld Hald Galster *Crucial Coalition: Anglo-Danish Military Co-operation and the Message of History*. Kingston, Ontario, Canada: Legacy Books Press, 2012.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 117.

²⁷ Paul Kennedy, "Military Coalitions and Coalitions Warfare over the past Century" in Keith Neilson and Roy A. Prete, Eds., *Coalition Warfare: an Uneasy Accord* (Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983) p. 11

SHIFTING ALLIES, ENEMIES, AND INTERESTS: THE FLUIDITY OF COALITION WARFARE

PATRICK WILLIAM CECIL

On 1 March 1848, Henry John Temple, the Viscount Palmerston, spoke in the House of Commons: “We have no eternal allies and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and these interests it is our duty to follow.”¹ With revolution spreading through Europe, Palmerston warned that Britain always ought to seek her true interests of stability on the European continent, security on the seas and economic expansion, and that allies and enemies of a state shift according to the winds of change. Palmerston’s discussion on Britain’s interests, allies and enemies centres on the topic of coalition warfare. In basic terms, a coalition is an agreement between multiple entities to achieve a common purpose. When composed of a multiplicity of members, coalitions become complex relationships as differing viewpoints and interests must find balance with each other and the common purpose behind the alliance. This dynamic can extend well beyond the realm of war into such fields as politics, economics, religion and our everyday lives.²

In discussing coalition warfare, it is necessary to remember that ‘coalition’ itself can have multiple meanings and different interpretations within the context of war. These varying methods all seem to rest upon the idea of interests, yet even interests themselves are divisive and fluid. The historiography concerning coalition warfare demonstrates that the term

¹ Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, *Speech in the House of Commons on foreign policy* (1 March 1848), quoted in John Bartlett, *Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations*, 17th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2002), 417.

² This historiography paper, first presented at the “Conference on Coalition Warfare from the Early Modern Era until Today” hosted by the Royal Danish Defence College and the Danish Commission for Military History in May 2011 in Copenhagen, Denmark, retains the same message presented at the conference along with some minor edits for publication, as well as incorporating the points brought up by colleagues in the question and discussion period following the paper’s presentation.