



Napoleon 2030- Old military *Maxims* for new high-end war fighters

By LEUT Aaron D. Scott

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Introduction

This article introduces the maxims, or principles, of military actions as seen by French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) and brings them into a High-End War Fighting (HEWF) and Force 2030 context. Examining such principles can lead to a deeper understanding of the art of preparedness, posture and manoeuvre, which can enable a numerically inferior force to crush a much larger enemy. When examined against modern naval warfare, and the HEWF challenge, they provide a fresh reminder that old military maxims can still be relevant to new HWEF- now and into the future.

Maxim I

The frontiers of states are either large rivers, or chains of mountains, or deserts. Of all these obstacles to the march of an army, the most difficult to overcome in the desert; mountains come next, and broad rivers occupy the third place.

In his first maxim, Napoleon introduces the challenge of marching an army through different environments. Not only would each environment have presented different challenges for logistics and lines of communications, but also in how the army prepared for battle and how they sought to overcome their enemy. Though a navy is designed to operate on “broad rivers” and oceans where logistics and communications are consistent, the operating environment still plays a crucial role in determining the success or failure of naval action. From a strategic perspective, the environment influences how a state may be defended – for example, land or sea borders requiring fortification or the establishment of treaties.

At an operational level, the environment is a factor when deciding the main composition and supporting elements of a force, as well as influencing the timing of decisive actions, such as avoiding monsoon seasons for surveillance missions in tropical regions. Lastly and probably most importantly, are the tactical day-to-day environmental considerations that provide difficulties that most naval war fighters have the greatest level of interaction with.

Tactical environmental considerations involve more than ensuring the weather is noted every hour. Whilst the environmental considerations, which contribute to ballistics for long and short-range gunnery firings, are somewhat regularly discussed, there are other highly crucial element of the engagement sequence that often are neglected.



Napoleons retreat from Moscow

All radiofrequency energy is in some way affected by the weather and therefore constant manipulation of radar equipment is crucial in optimising performance and increasing chances of target and threat detection. This is a task, which should be carried out regularly, and as the environment changes, not simply at the change of a watch. Advanced Refractive Effects Prediction System predictions are a guide and should be regularly updated and validated to maximise a sound indicative guide to radar performance. Likewise, Action Information Organisation picture compilation from visual sensors such as Gun Direction Platform crews and Electro-Optical Tracking Systems will be greatly influenced by environmental considerations such as fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rainstorms,

sandstorms or other similar causes. All of these difficulties must be overcome to increase the probability of tactical success.

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Sonar equipment and torpedoes are also significantly influenced by environmental conditions. This influence goes beyond the delineation of deep water or shallow water operating environment and must take into account the layer depth, movement within the water column, effects of the seabed type, and biological noise such as from the morning or evening chorus. Regular study and briefing of the guidance contained in tactical publications regarding environmental effects should be undertaken to ensure that all operators could manipulate equipment settings to increase sensor and weapon effectiveness.

Maxim II

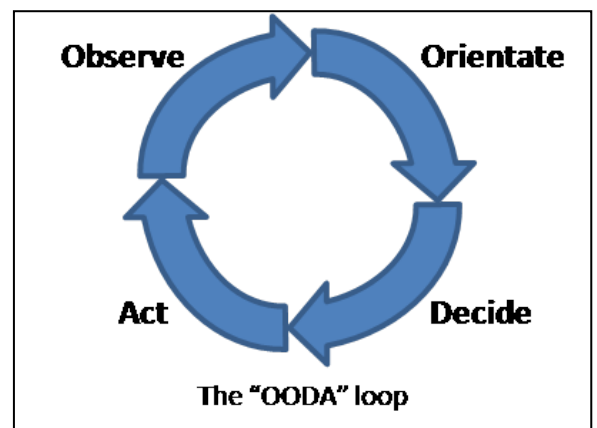
In forming the plan of a campaign, it is requisite to foresee everything the enemy may do and to be prepared with the necessary means to counteract it. Plans of a campaign may be modified, ad infinitum, according to circumstances -- the genius of the general, the character of the troops, and the topography of the theatre of action.

Planning for the enemy's most likely course of action is crucial, however, it still may not capture, or only capture in part, the course of action undertaken. Only through comprehensive and dynamic planning taking into account all enemy courses of action can appropriate measures to counter them truly be established.

In considering an adaptive peer adversary, who may hold a technological advantage, the plan must be rigid enough to provide clear decision points and objectives to friendly forces, whilst being flexible enough to adapt to the different courses of action available to the enemy. An example of a simple mechanism through which plans can be modified and built upon according to a rapidly changing situation is the OODA loop. Developed by the United States Air Force pilot and military strategist, Colonel John Boyd, the OODA loop is a mechanism that suggests decision making is a recurring cycle of Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act. Observation involves taking in raw data from all sources; Orientation is applying experience to determine what is occurring in the situation presented; Decision requires the course of action to be selected from the available options; Act requires the physical playing-out of decisions. Once the action has been taken, its effectiveness on how the operating environment has been changed must be observed and evaluated, thus closing the OODA loop cycle.

By reducing the time interval between each stage in the OODA loop, the Observe, Orient and Decide processes can occur more frequently, allowing faster and more calculated actions to be taken and thus increasing the level of influence on the environment. The cyclic nature of the OODA loop ensures an ability to revisit the plan thus allowing it to be modified and added to. Furthermore, through the filtering of the Orientation stage, Napoleon's inclusion of personnel factors "genius of the general" and "the character of the troops" also play a role.

An example of the effectiveness and flexibility of the OODA loop cycle can be made within the realm of Project Ares, the regeneration and development of Strike Warfare (this includes Land and Maritime Strike) capability in the RAN. A certain land strike mission requires the employment of the ship launched Harpoon Block II missile against a dynamic and Time Sensitive Target. Intelligence sources provide raw target information (Observe) which is filtered against previously observed pattern-of-life information (Orient). A decision to utilise the Harpoon Block II missile, rather than air-launched laser-guided bombs, is made (Decide) due to the time-sensitive nature of the target and, upon



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receiving the order, the ship launches the Harpoon (Act). The effectiveness of this action is then observed to decide whether further strike action is required.

Maxim III

An army that undertakes the conquest of a country has its two wings resting either upon neutral territories or upon great natural obstacles, such as rivers or chains of mountains. It happens in some cases that only one wing is so supported, and in others that both are exposed.

Navies are not exempt from the constraints, which limit freedom of manoeuvre. International and State laws concerning territorial boundaries provide legal obstacles to the manoeuvrability and operability of a fleet. Likewise, natural boundaries, such as littoral or shallow waters, limit the available area within which manoeuvre and posturing can occur.

Whilst conducting such littoral or coastal passages consideration should be given to the fact that although part of the force may be naturally screened from a particular sea-borne threat, other threats may be more prevalent due to their requirement for land basing or support.

Within a fleet, screening of the High-Value Unit/Mission Essential Unit is vital if own force advantages are to be maximised and disadvantages minimised to avoid exploitation by the enemy. The Fleet should always be appropriately formed based on the predominant threat, and Mission Commander's objectives.



Dual ESSM Firing from HMAS Sydney

If the threat is predominantly sub-surface, the screen should take into account such considerations as natural oceanography, fixed-wing and organic assets available, the coverage area achievable through organic sensors given environmental conditions, known enemy tactics, and limiting lines of submerged approach. Similar screening considerations should be given to surface threats; however, the resultant formation may be remarkably different based on the Commander's objectives and alternative methods of detecting and locating the enemy, such as passive Electronic Warfare emission cross fixing.

For air threats, the appropriateness of screening must take into account the capabilities and limitations of platform types before orientating the defence according to the threat sector. There has been ample and recent guidance and instruction regarding the employment of ANZAC and Adelaide class frigates in the Air Warfare battle and this should dictate which units are used in which roles. Orientating the defence will depend on the number of units available, as well as the type, diversity and proximity of the threat. The rapid nature of the Air Warfare battle requires the force to be pre-postured in preparation for an attack, rather than in response to an attack.

Where friendly forces are only partially able to counter the threat and are therefore required to leave a "wing" exposed, consideration should be given to altering the Emission Control of the force to mask this weakness or the establishment of adequate defensive measures which ensure an attack is withstood until the main force can be re-directed to counter the source of the threat. Such techniques were used by Napoleon in the Napoleonic Wars to defeat numerically superior armies who were attacking multiple axes.

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