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Staff

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

Good Morning Gentlemen: For the past 6 days we have been working on an estimate of the situation. We studied the estimate and worked on an estimate for the illustrative problem. Yesterday you made a decision - now you have seen the staff solution decision and we are ready to go ahead and develop the plan. This morning I want to talk to you about the development of the plan.

Actually the Development of the Plan is a development of a plan of action or as Sound Military Decision calls it the solution of subsidiary problems. When a commander is developing his plan he may not yet be sure which form he will use for his directive. We can say that the development of the plan can be used to develop a plan of action for an operation plan, an operation order, a campaign plan or an outline plan.

In many respects the development of the plan is a continuation and refinement of the planning accomplished during the estimate of the situation. It begins with the commander's decision and it ends when that decision has been expanded into a complete plan for action which can be quickly transposed into a directive. In accomplishing this development the commander and his staff will draw on the facts established during the estimate and on ideas and mental concepts formed. The previous speakers have all emphasized the cyclical nature of planning. You go round and round, and keep going over the

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subject as many times as you have time to do it, so that your plan will be as good as you can possibly make it within the time allotted. The development of the plan continues the cycle.

You may wonder how much work is required in the development of the plan. There is no set answer to that question. The development of the plan may require a great deal of work or may require very little work. In each case the situation must be considered and the time which the commander has available is taken into consideration. In some tactical situations the decision may be transposed directly into a directive, the commander or his TBS talker picks up the voice radio microphone and issues the directive to the command. In other cases, and practically always at theater level, the development is a long and involved process. Each of many subordinate subsidiary problems must be worked out in detail. In large operations this can take many months of methodical work before completion. Decisions by high level commanders usually concern operations that are so extensive and complex that no single ordinary individual can possibly grasp all the details, nor unaided effect timely solutions to all the new problems emanating from the decision. You will remember that in the first talk I told you that the estimate of the situation was used so that average commanders could get excellent results by study and a methodical, logical approach to the problem so that we would not have to depend

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upon brilliant geniuses such as Frederick the Great. Right now let's go ahead with the nine steps in the Development of the Plan and approach it from the viewpoint of the commander.

Development of the Plan (Visual Aid)

1. State the decision.
2. State assumptions, if any.
3. Determine component operations.
4. Determine tasks to accomplish component operations.
5. Organize forces to perform tasks.
6. Assign tasks to sub-commanders.
7. Solve command problems.
8. Compile information for subordinates.
9. Prepare commander's final concept.

First I'd like to review to make sure that we're clear on some terms. By "operation" I mean the military action required to gain the objective of a campaign or a battle. The next term is "mission", which can be said to be a concise declaration of the action to be taken during the entire operation by the over-all command. It includes the purpose. It indicates the end or the objective to be attained for completion of the operation. As LCdr. Smith explained, you could say that the mission is the task of your command together with its purpose.

The commander's decision (VA) is the first point of departure to the development of the plan, when coupled with

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the purpose it constitutes the commander's general plan for action and indicates:

1. the objective to be attained by the force as a whole;
2. the method or means by which the objective is to be attained; and
3. the reason why the objective is to be attained.

There will rarely be any necessity for the commander himself further to appreciate the decision. However, it's important that the commander should see that his staff is briefed on the decision at this point in order to insure a full and common understanding of the basic elements of his plan. It's important that staff officers coming into the planning process at this phase, during the development of the plan, thoroughly appreciate the decision, because while the staff officers who have assisted the commander in the estimate will have come to an understanding while the estimate was being prepared, anyone coming in late must study the problem so that he will understand and appreciate it the same as the other people who have been working on it longer.

The commander should list any assumptions (VA) which he made during his estimate of the situation in order to develop the plan and proceed on the same set of assumptions the decision was based on. Any new assumptions which are made during the development of the plan should be either made or approved by the commander and added to the list of assumptions which influenced the decision. The assumptions are a

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point in our planning process at which in the past there has been considerable misunderstanding, sometimes disagreement. Most of this disagreement I think can be attributed to the overlapping functions of an operation plan and an operation order. We know that an operation order is a directive that contains no assumption. In other words it deals with a situation that is known to exist. It deals with a real situation. An operations plan on the other hand is a directive prepared to meet contingencies. It is prepared for use at some future time when and if certain conditions, usually stated as assumption, develop. The plan does not necessarily have to include assumptions. Assumptions denote conditions or situations which must obtain or exist at the time of the operation. The plan is based on assumption as well as facts. (VA)

"ASSUMPTIONS ARE CONDITIONS PRESUMED TO EXIST IN ORDER THAT A PLAN MAY BE COMPLETED AND WHICH MUST BE FULFILLED IF THE PLAN IS TO BE VALID."

Since the plan is designed for use at some date in the future it is essential to visualize the future conditions. Assumptions are also used as the basis for decisions. Assumptions are not guesses nor conjectures. They are statements of situations visualized, as a result of knowledge of certain facts, and the knowledge of conditions that must exist, in order that the plan will be workable. The best in judgment and experience in military planning staffs is required to best visualize these conditions in the future and to state the assumptions. Once firm, assumptions are

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accepted as facts for planning purposes. If a situation develops not visualized in the statement of the assumptions a new estimate is required. A new estimate requires a new decision. The chain of events continues in that new plans will usually be required because of a new decision. Should the validity of the assumption not be firm, alternate plans in addition to those which otherwise would have been made in the original plan, must also be made, to cover the conditions which are not considered firm. Assumptions limit the field of action. They define the situation. They restrict the plan. They should be few in number. They should be worded to describe conditions that will exist, and they should be worded accurately. Two examples of assumptions are taken from the operation plan from the Okinawa operations, they are as follows:

"THAT THE SEIZURE OF IWO JIMA IS COMPLETED AT A SUFFICIENTLY EARLY DATE TO PERMIT AVAILABILITY OF FIRE SUPPORT UNITS AND CLOSE AIR SUPPORT UNITS FOR THE ASSAULT IN THE NANSEI SHOTO" and second, "THAT ASSAULT SHIPPING AND SUPPORTING NAVAL FORCES ARE PROMPTLY RELEASED FROM LUZON OPERATIONS."

Those assumptions stated conditions under which the plan was intended to be used. Had those conditions not obtained then certain changes in the plan would have been required. You would have ^{had} /to review your estimate if alternate plans had not been prepared.

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You could make an assumption about enemy forces. This is frequently done in order that a plan may be completed. If the assumption does not obtain in this case, the commander is usually ready to issue an alternate plan. Occasionally during World War II you used to see an assumption in a plan which stated that it was assumed that the forces would be attacked by enemy aircraft while enroute to the objective. Now this was not a valid assumption, because if the assumption was found not true it did not invalidate the plan. In this case the commander apparently wanted to warn his forces that they might be attacked. The assumption should have been omitted.

Commodore Harwood, RN, in command of three British cruisers in the South Atlantic early in the last war received information that the German pocket battleship Graf Spee was sighted off the west coast of Africa. In his estimate of the situation he concluded that the Graf Spee was proceeding to Argentina. Thus he adopted the assumption they were headed for the River Platte and he prepared his plan on that assumption. Fortunately his assumption turned out to be correct and the Graf Spee was brought to action.

Now suppose the assumption had turned out to be incorrect. In that event that particular plan would not have resulted in the interception of the Graf Spee. Obviously, Commodore Harwood was either prepared to accept the consequences of the Spee's escape or he had an alternate plan

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for bringing them to action at a later date. I have never seen the alternate plan but I understand that there was one.

Perhaps you have wondered whether an alternate plan is necessary when a plan is based on an assumption. I do not think that an alternate plan is always immediately necessary when a plan is based on an assumption, because sometimes the very nature of the assumption which you make is such that you would have time to prepare alternate plans if the situation which you assume you are facing does not occur. Each case of whether alternate plans are required is something that the commander should look at very carefully and determine himself based on the facts at that time.

After listing his assumptions the commander must determine the component operations required to carry out the (VA) decision. A component operation is a partial course of action which will, when carried out, contribute to the accomplishment of the objective of the commander's decision. Each component operation is initially determined by the recognition of a subsidiary objective to be attained. For example, in an amphibious operation certain specifically defined component operations when grouped compose the entire operation. They could be listed as follows:

1. Obtain required intelligence, i.e., the EEI. (Explain)
2. Movement and deployment of forces.
3. Protect own forces.
4. Isolate the objective.

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5. Gain the objective.
6. Provide logistic support.
7. Provide for security and deception.
8. Arrange for adequate communications.

There may be and usually are others. The commander assisted by his staff must determine what these other component operations are. You cannot depend upon a check-off list. You must think. Look at the problem as a whole. The cyclical process of planning, going over the whole picture again, will help you in determining the component operations. For any campaign or battle these component operations must be analyzed and a compilation of these made by the planning staff.

Next the planning staff must determine what are the (VA) tasks to be performed in the accomplishment of each of these component operations. To continue the discussion let us take for example the procurement of the required intelligence in an amphibious operation. The following must be performed:

1. Information of the water over which the amphibious force will move when approaching the objective must be gathered.
2. Assure that there will be adequate searoom for force.
3. The water lying off the beaches will be investigated to determine whether or not it is mined or hides

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underwater obstacles.

4. Assure that suitable anchorages are available - including adequate holding ground.
5. The conditions of the beaches themselves must be learned.
6. Data for tide tables and beach gradient profiles must be procured.
7. The condition of the beaches above the high water mark must be determined.
8. The defensive constructions or emplacements behind the beaches must be plotted.
9. In order that the scheme of maneuver may be supported logistically, the exits must be examined to ensure their adequacy.

There are many others. In other words, it will be mandatory that all intelligence concerning the beaches effecting the operation must be gained.

We have just listed tasks under one component operation. This must be done for each component operation. Now I want to emphasize that check-off lists are no substitutes for thinking. In each case you must look at the situation which faces you and make sure that you have determined all of the tasks under each component operation. In solving component operations each component operation should be stated in terms of its objective. Sub-divide the objective if necessary in order to arrive at lesser objectives capable of being accom-

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plished by a more closely related group of tasks.

You must next consider the forces which will be available and determine the most efficient method by which they may be employed in the accomplishment of objectives. This will normally be a matter of applying doctrine and professional knowledge.

It might be good to note at this point that rooming arrangements have been made so that student's knowledge will supplement each other and you will be able collectively, in a large room or a group of small rooms, to have the knowledge necessary to solve the problems.

Next you determine in groups the specific tasks which must be accomplished in order to accomplish the secondary objectives. This first grouping of tasks is primarily by objectives to be accomplished, and secondarily by the types of forces required. Prior to development of the task organization and assignment of tasks it will be necessary to regroup and consolidate tasks. For example, all the tasks appropriate for aircraft from the fast carrier task force should be grouped together. Other tasks would be similarly grouped by the types of forces required for their accomplishment. For example gunfire tasks, screening tasks, landing tasks, etc.

You cannot make a final and complete feasibility and acceptability check on tasks until all of the tasks have been determined, the task organization drafted and tasks assigned to subordinate commanders. However, at this stage

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of the development the commander should have a sufficiently accurate concept of the forces available to avoid the listing of individual tasks which are obviously not feasible or not acceptable.

As a final check in the determination of tasks, the commander will make a comparison of subsidiary objectives and their associated tasks in order to insure that accomplishment of each group of tasks will accomplish the objective to which that group of tasks relates.

As the commander and his staff proceed with the development they will face new problems. These must be recognized and sound decisions must be made as to the courses of action which will be followed. Some of these problems could possibly require a complete estimate of the situation, although more usually the complicated problems are solved by making a staff study of the problem. Some of the problems posed by component operations may be readily recognized when the component operations are first determined. Other problems may not be apparent initially, but will be discovered later during the determination of tasks. For example the mere accomplishment of an important task may present an unexpected problem, or there may be a problem as to timing, or to selection of the best of several methods for its accomplishment. Finally, when all the necessary tasks have been determined and the force requirements computed, it may develop that requirements will exceed the availability of forces and logistic means. If

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so the whole development will have to be re-examined and the problem resolved:

1. By a new solution which promises to accomplish the objective of the decision with forces available.
2. By accepting a calculated risk, or
3. By obtaining additional forces.

Let's examine for a moment the degree of detail required in solutions to component operations. At any level of command the component operation should always be resolved in enough detail to check the validity of the following statement prior to writing the directive:

1. All problems which should be solved at this level of command have been recognized and satisfactory solutions achieved.
2. The basic objective will be accomplished if all the subsidiary objectives are accomplished.
3. The subsidiary objectives will in turn be accomplished if all of their associated tasks are accomplished.
4. The determined tasks are feasible of accomplishment with the forces available and acceptable as to costs or consequences.

In connection with step 4 it might be noted that final decision as to feasibility may be deferred until after the task organization and task assignments have been completed. When an operation requires a high degree of coordination of the force as a whole, the commander's directive will neces-

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sarily deal with some details, which might otherwise properly be left to the discretion of the subordinate commanders. Operations of the type we have been discussing (for example amphibious operations) will require a relatively high degree of detail in the solution of component operations. During the development of the plan they may require early decision as to how important tasks will be accomplished. In such cases the advantages which are utilized in the initiative, knowledge and advice of subordinate commanders may be achieved by concurrent planning. Through this technique subordinates may be permitted to recommend or determine the details of component operations which they are to conduct and the superior will be able to provide the necessary coordinating details in his directive; but without restricting the initiative of the subordinate commanders by first determining and then directing them how to accomplish assigned tasks.

This might be a good time to take a moment and discuss concurrent planning. Concurrent planning is simultaneous planning at more than one level of command or simultaneous planning within several staff divisions. Concurrent planning within a staff is normal. When a commander is ready to give his staff his preliminary concept, he sometimes calls the subordinate commanders in so that they can be briefed at the same time. After the briefing the subordinate commanders are able to brief their own staffs and start them on the same

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problem. The staff of the subordinate commander then by direct liaison with the other staff is able to give the special knowledge of the subordinate commander to the senior commander. While concurrent planning is very important because it gives an opportunity to check feasibility simultaneously at two levels of command, the greatest gain is the great saving of time. The subordinate commander by solving his problems at the same time as his boss does, is able to issue his plan at practically the same time. This naturally involves a great deal of coordination.

When concurrent planning is not practicable the commander's staff must test the feasibility, acceptability and suitability sufficiently to determine that the subordinate commanders will be able to carry out the assigned tasks with the forces allotted them.

Sometimes when subordinate commanders will not have adequate time for development of plans, the superior commander may have to determine a great deal of the "how" for his subordinate commanders, and subsequently to assign narrow tasks or predetermined courses of action. Naturally, knowledge of and confidence in the abilities of subordinate commanders may influence the over-all commander as to the degree of completion of the solution of component operations. It also follows that this same consideration will influence the commander in his assignment of tasks to sub commanders.

Having considered the component operations and the

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forces needed to accomplish each and the phases into which the entire operation can be broken down, we next consider forces available and proceed with the formation of the task (VA) organization. In reality we create several task forces, task groups or task units, as appropriate. Before proceeding further we should discuss briefly the following principles of organization:

PRINCIPLES OF TASK ORGANIZATION (VA)

1. Group Forces
 - a. For related tasks
 - b. Of like type
 - c. For control
2. Decentralize
3. Change organization to fit tasks

By giving considered weight to each principle much of that which might appear to be in conflict may be eliminated by the planning staff. The last principle is perhaps the most important. It must be emphasized that the plans must be flexible and the forces must be tailored to fit the tasks rather than the tasks be divided to fit an existing organization.

The task organization is completed only after a careful analysis of all the factors that have been discussed.

Concurrently during the consideration of these factors the planning staffs have been considering the forces that are going to be available or that are becoming available. They carefully list the number of ships available by types, the number of troops, the number and types of aircraft. This examination is carried on in sufficient detail that the staff is familiar with the force available. At this stage in the planning the allotment of forces should be firm. These forces must be arranged in to the task organization. Again let me remind you, you must tailor the forces to fit the task.

Having determined the tasks necessary to accomplish the component operations and organized the forces to perform these tasks, you are now ready to assign the tasks to the appropriate forces. Actually, this is the formalization of paragraph 3 of the directive. The planning group has already determined the component operations and the tasks that must be performed to accomplish these operations. They have outlined the task organization and its component parts. There only remains the assignment of a particular task to a particular element that's been designed to perform that task. If it should appear at this point that sometimes the tasks do not go too well with the organization, it would seem that you should again go over the tasks and organization and make sure that the organization fits the tasks. Considerable adjustment may be necessary between organization and tasks before all tasks are assigned.

It might be well to note here, that when the commanders of units of the force are available they should be brought into conference by the planners in order to gain the commander's ideas of the capabilities and limitations of their commands. They can assist in the actual development of the plan and will have gained much information for themselves for its future execution.

For similar reasons the logistic planners should at all times be kept abreast of what is in the minds of the operation planners in order that they may test the logistic feasibility. I'm particularly conscious of this subject because I was a logistics planner and I can assure you that it's much easier for all hands - for the operations planners and the logistics planners, if the

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logistics planners know what's going on before the operations planners get too far. This way they can sometimes prevent the wasting of time on something which is not feasible logistically. Also, often times in logistics planning it's necessary if you want to make something feasible, to have considerable lead time. If you find out operations planners are considering a certain line of approach, you can take the necessary steps, if you have the time, to make it feasible. Whereas if you find out at a later period, often there is insufficient time remaining to arrange things so that it will be logistically feasible on the date desired. Top priority must be given to the coordination of supply matters. Likewise the communication requirements must be arranged for and given adequate attention so that the commander will have the control of his forces which is necessary. (VA)

In unilateral operations the matter of command and control is frequently simple. However, in joint operations it's nearly always complex and in combined operations it is exceedingly complex. Command and control matters should be set forth clearly in the plan. If there are to be shifts in the command during the operations, these shifts must be stated exactly. There must never be any question as to who is in command and from whom the others in the force take orders. Should the command and control problems be complex, this matter may warrant an annex to the plan. There is no fixed form or formula for command relationships. This was borne out by the many forms of commands that existed during World War II. Coordination of the efforts of

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subordinates is one of the most important responsibilities of being a commander.

At this point in the development, the commander should review the entire plan in order to insure that all the matters requiring coordination are being recognized and the responsibilities and procedures for obtaining coordination have been set forth in clear terms. Each subordinate commander should be able to obtain a clear understanding of his responsibilities for supporting other commanders and the assistance which he may expect from other commanders and the procedure for obtaining it. We might note again the cyclical nature of the planning process. Here we run through the plan again for a specific reason.

Also, at this point the commander must determine the coordination necessary with friendly forces. This may have been prescribed by higher authority, or if not, the commander must review it, see what coordination is necessary, and prescribe the necessary coordinating measures. In addition to the basic command relations and coordinating measures you should also note at this point the location of the commander, the designation of second in command, his location and the future changes in location of both.

The communication plan should be reviewed at this point to determine if it is adequate for all foreseeable contingencies taking into consideration the tasks and the organization.

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Determine when the plan is to be effective, the time and the date, or the conditions under which it becomes effective. (VA)

Now, we are ready to compile the information for subordinates. This is the information which subordinates will need to know in order to conduct planning and/or to carry out assigned tasks. In operation plans and orders it will appear in paragraph one of the directive. (Incidentally the same type of information that would be included in an operation plan or order may be appropriate also for a campaign plan or outline plan.) Under the general situation which will eventually be paragraph one of the operation plan or order there should be a summary designed to assist the subordinate commanders in obtaining an appreciation of the general picture as seen by the issuing commander. It may be appropriate to include:

1. The general plan of own immediate superior or other higher echelons in the chain of command depending upon security requirements.
2. The mission of the commander may be included if it is not to be completely covered in paragraph 2 of the directive. Now this could occur under circumstances in which a commander was issuing an operation order that would accomplish just part of his mission and he wanted to explain his whole mission to the force that was getting the order that would only carry out a subordinate part of his over-all mission. In this case paragraph 2 of the directive would just cover the immediate task and

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paragraph 1 would describe his over-all mission.

Now the object of this paragraph (paragraph 1 of the directive) is to enable subordinates to gain a clearer visualization of the relationship existing among the several objectives envisaged by the higher command. Also at this point you might include a concise summary of the enemy situation if it has an important bearing on your own general plan.

The paragraph on enemy forces should be divided into appropriate sub-paragraphs in order to deal separately with enemy land, sea and air forces. You should include only that information of the enemy which has a direct bearing on your own general plan. When significant changes have recently occurred or are occurring it may be appropriate to provide an additional sub-paragraph headed, "Trends". In this paragraph you could inform the subordinates that the enemy is reinforcing, withdrawing, redeploying or installing new fixed defenses. For large operations the enemy forces paragraph would be so long that it would be advisable to place the required information in the intelligence annex. In this case paragraph 1.a. is restricted to just a summary of information on enemy forces.

The next sub-paragraph of paragraph 1. of the standard directive form - paragraph 1.b. - on friendly forces is important because here are shown the friendly forces which are not a part of the task organization but which will play a part in the operation with which you are concerned, or are operating in the general area. When the missions of these friendly forces closely tie in

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Security Information

with our operations and result in complexities, information of these friendly forces and their tasks is usually contained in the appropriate annex. It should be noted that this paragraph should be restricted to significant information on forces not listed in own task organization.

Significant information is that which may be required in order to gain a proper general understanding of the operation or to provide for timely recognition of other forces which may be encountered, or to provide for coordination with other friendly forces. It is recommended that significant information be listed in the following sequence:

1. Operation of forces which are not included in own theater or basic command organization.
2. Operation of friendly forces which are a part of own theater or basic command organization, and
3. Significant changes (either actual or planned) such as increases or decreases in combatant strength, and the activation or inactivation of ports, facilities, naval air bases, and such similar items.

In paragraph 1.c. you will want to list the assumptions as they will appear in the directive. It is a good idea to review them again at this point in the development. (VA)

The final step in the development of the plan is to prepare the commander's final concept of the operation. This step is not listed in all lists of steps in the development of the plan, however, I think that it is a good thing to consider it at this

RESTRICTED
Security Information

point. Commander Brown will cover a concept annex in his talk on Thursday, but at this point I want to go over a little bit about a concept of operations so that when you are developing the plan you will be able to cover your concept properly. A concept is a brief concise summary of how the operation as a whole is visualized by its commander. The concept is based on facts and on conditions at the time of the operation. It is valuable to staffs and subordinate commanders because it assists in crystallizing the ideas of how the operation is expected to develop and progress. The formal written concept is usually issued only at the top levels of command and then only when the complexity of the operation is great. It's not always formally prepared but is always considered by the staff, and is used by the commander as a basis for briefing his staff or subordinate commanders. It should be remembered that it's not reliable unless it has been completely tested. Included in the content of the concept of the operation are usually a statement of:

1. The mission
2. Designation of major units of the force
3. Mounting points of major units
4. Phases of the preliminary operation
5. The supporting operations
6. The attack
7. Tactical exploitation
8. The development of the objective
9. Command relationships

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The concept is never binding unless specifically so stated in the plan or other directive.

A plan should be developed systematically and logically. In conclusion let us go over the suggested steps in sequence. The staff planning group should: (VA)

State the decision

State the assumptions, if any

Determine the component operations

Determining how each component operation is to be performed

List the tasks in each of the component operations

Consider the forces needed to perform these tasks

Consider the forces available

After analyzing all of the above, organize the available forces into the task organization

Assign the tasks

Determine and assign command and control relationships

Compile information for subordinates

Prepare commander's final concept

Commander Brown will cover the directive the day after tomorrow. Before closing let us remember the plan is for use of subordinates. It should be clear, concise, thorough and simple. As a test, the planners should place themselves in the position of the subordinate commander, carefully consider the plan, and ask themselves some questions. When the commander is using this test himself it is also good to ask a reliable subordinate to also apply the test.

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1. Do I understand my mission
2. Do I have the necessary means
3. Have I been given adequate leeway
4. Do I understand who gives me orders and to whom I turn
for help
5. Do I have the information necessary to adequately in-
struct my subordinates

and if the answer to all these questions is in the affirmative
then the chances are that the development of the plan is sound.
You are ready to write your directive.