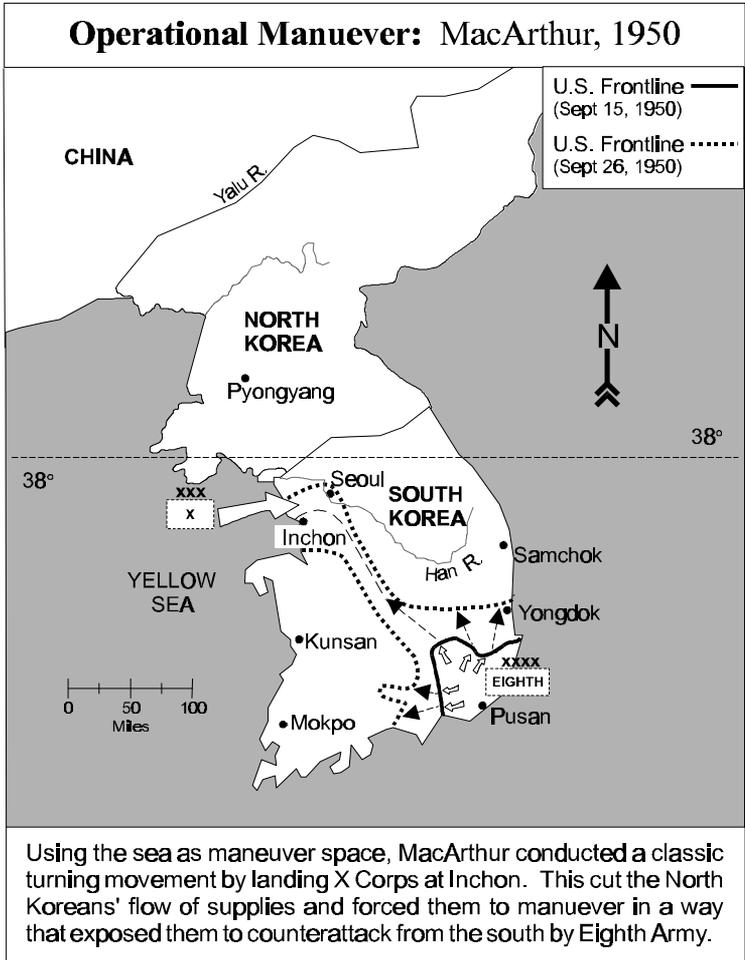


the situation and the results of campaign activities. We must prepare to function or even thrive in an environment of uncertainty and to make decisions despite incomplete or unclear information. A clear statement of intent that is understood throughout the force, flexible plans, an ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances, and the initiative to recognize and seize opportunities as they present themselves permit us to generate tempo and perform effectively despite uncertainty.

### **Maneuver**

Maneuver is the movement of forces for the purpose of gaining an advantage over the enemy in order to accomplish our objectives. While tactical maneuver aims to gain an advantage in combat, operational maneuver seeks to gain an advantage bearing directly on the outcome of the campaign or in the theater as a whole.

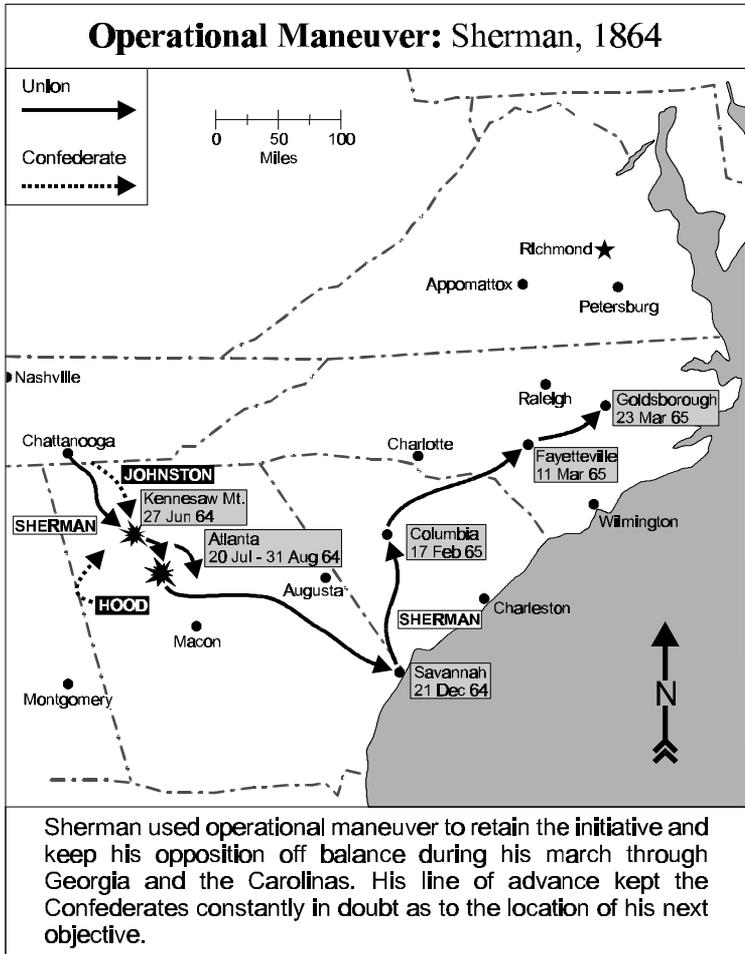
A classic example of operational maneuver was General MacArthur's landing at Inchon in 1950. (See figure.) The bulk of North Korea's army was well to the south, hemming the U.S. Eighth Army into the Pusan perimeter. Using the sea as maneuver space, MacArthur conducted a classic turning movement. By landing X Corps at Inchon, MacArthur threatened the enemy's lines of communications and forced the overextended enemy to shift fronts. This maneuver not only cut the North Koreans' flow of supplies and reinforcements but also forced them to move in a way that exposed them to a counterattack from the south.



Operational maneuver allows us to create and to exploit opportunities. It affords us the opportunity to develop plans which employ multiple options, or branches.<sup>19</sup> A branch plan helps us to anticipate future actions. Operational maneuver provides the means by which we can assess the situation, determine the branch which offers the best opportunity for success, and implement the decision. By skillful use of branches, we add to our flexibility and speed.

General Sherman's campaign in Georgia in 1864 illustrates the use of operational maneuver to retain the initiative and keep the opposition off balance. (See figure.) During his march through Georgia, Sherman ingeniously sought to keep his opponent constantly on the horns of a dilemma. His line of advance kept the Confederates in doubt whether his next objective was first Macon or Augusta, and then Augusta or Savannah. Sherman was ready to take whichever objective conditions favored. Campaigning through the Carolinas Sherman repeated this approach—

so that his opponents could not decide whether to cover Augusta or Charleston, and their forces became divided. Then after he had ignored both points and swept between them to gain Columbia . . . the Confederates were kept in uncertainty as to whether Sherman was aiming for Charlotte or Fayetteville. [Finally, when] he advanced from Fayetteville they could not tell whether Raleigh or Goldsborough was his next, and final, objective.<sup>20</sup>



If tactical maneuver takes place during and within battle, operational maneuver takes place before, after, and beyond battle. The operational commander seeks to secure a decisive advantage before the battle is joined by rapid, flexible, and opportunistic maneuver. Such action allows us to gain the initiative and shape the action to create a decisive advantage.

The operational commander also uses maneuver to exploit tactical success, always seeking to achieve strategic results. The commander must be prepared to react to the unexpected and exploit opportunities created by conditions which develop from the initial action. By exploiting opportunities, we create in increasing numbers more opportunities for exploitation. The ability and willingness to ruthlessly exploit these opportunities often generates decisive results.

Our ultimate purpose in using maneuver is not to avoid battle, but to give ourselves such an advantage that the result of the battle is a matter of course. In the words of Liddell Hart, the *“true aim is not so much to seek battle as to seek a strategic situation so advantageous that if it does not of itself produce the decision, its continuation by a battle is sure to achieve this.”*<sup>21</sup>

If the classic application of maneuver is movement that places the enemy at a disadvantage, then superior mobility—the capability to move from place to place faster than the enemy while retaining the ability to perform the mission—is a key ingredient of maneuver. The object is to use mobility to

gain an advantage by creating superiority at the point of battle or to avoid disadvantageous battle altogether.<sup>22</sup>

Operational mobility is the ability to move between engagements and battles within the context of the campaign. It is a function of range and sustained speed over distance.<sup>23</sup> Patton recognized the importance of distinguishing between tactical and operational mobility when he wrote: “Use roads to march on; fields to fight on . . . when the roads are available for use, you save time and effort by staying on them until shot off.”<sup>24</sup> If the essence of the operational level is deciding when and where to fight, operational mobility is the means by which we commit the necessary forces based on that decision.

An advantage in operational mobility can have a significant impact. In the Second World War in the Pacific island-hopping campaign, the Allies used operational mobility that allowed them to shift forces faster than the Japanese. The result was that Japanese forces were cut off and allowed to wither while the Allies consistently moved towards the Japanese home islands to bring them under direct attack.

Although we typically think of shipping as an element of strategic mobility, it may be employed to operational effect as well. In many cases, an amphibious force can enjoy greater operational mobility moving along a coastline than an enemy moving along the coast by roads, particularly when the amphibious force has the ability to interfere with the enemy’s use

of those roads. The same use can be made of airlift. Such an advantage in operational mobility can be decisive.

### **Fires**

We employ fires to delay, disrupt, degrade, or destroy enemy capabilities, forces, or facilities as well as to affect the enemy's will to fight. Our use of fires is not the wholesale attack of every unit, position, piece of equipment, or installation we find. Rather, it is the selective application of fires to reduce or eliminate a key element, resulting in a major disabling of the enemy system. We use fires in harmony with maneuver against those enemy capabilities, the loss of which can have a decisive impact on the campaign or major operation.

During the conduct of the campaign, we use fires to shape the battlespace. By shaping, we influence events in a manner which changes the general condition of war decisively to our advantage. "Shaping activities may render the enemy vulnerable to attack, facilitate maneuver of friendly forces, and dictate the time and place for decisive battle."<sup>25</sup> Through those actions, we gain the initiative, preserve momentum, and control the tempo of the campaign. Operation Desert Storm provides an excellent example of a successful shaping effort. Our extensive air operations destroyed facilities, eliminated the Iraqi navy and air force, reduced the effectiveness of ground forces within Kuwait, and shattered the enemy's cohesion. An elaborate deception plan also confused the Iraqis as to the size and location of ground attacks while intense psychological operations helped undermine their morale. The end result was an

enemy who was both physically and mentally incapable of countering the maneuver of Coalition forces.

Campaign planners must analyze the enemy's situation, keeping in mind the commander's mission, objectives, intent, and our capabilities available for employment. We seek to target those enemy vulnerabilities that, if exploited, will deny resources critical to the enemy's ability to resist.<sup>26</sup> These targets may range from military formations, weapon systems, or command and control nodes to the target audiences for a psychological operation. However, the nature of these targets is situationally dependent and is based on an analysis of the enemy and our mission.

### **Intelligence**

Intelligence is crucial to both the design and conduct of the campaign. Intelligence underpins the campaign design by providing an understanding of the enemy and the area of operations as well as by identifying the enemy's centers of gravity and critical vulnerabilities. During the conduct of the campaign, intelligence assists us in developing and refining our understanding of the situation, alerts us to new opportunities, and helps to assess the effects of actions upon the enemy. Intelligence cannot provide certainty; uncertainty is an inherent attribute of war. Rather, intelligence estimates the possibilities and probabilities in an effort to reduce uncertainty to a reasonable level.