

# VISIÓN CONJUNTA

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## OUR ICON

Our icon is the famous Rubik's cube decorated with the colours of the Argentine flag and the coat of arms that identifies the *Estado Mayor Conjunto de las Fuerzas Armadas Argentinas*. We have elected this ingenious mechanism for our journal as it is the visual representation of the complex joint actions.

The image shows the challenge to combine in a harmonic way the elements that are part of the Armed Forces to achieve an efficient use of military instruments.

The proper use of the forces allows to set, at the same level, the coat of arms of the *Estado Mayor Conjunto* which implies a mental process to combine variables in a very complex setting.

In order to be successful as to the situation raised, it is necessary to have a broad mindset that allows to have a general perception of the target to be achieved; this defines our "joint perspective".



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By Jorge Osvaldo Sillone



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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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General Federico Sidders<sup>1</sup>

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**H**igher education aims at Access to knowledge. Therefore, in line with the National University System, we have started the second part of the year with the project “Institutional Digital Repository”, based on Law No. 26899, Creation of Open Access, Own and Shared Institutional Digital Repositories.

This project tries to respond to the need to safeguard intellectual production of professors, students and collaborators and to share it with the community. This technological tool will allow to promote exchange of knowledge and experience about challenges faced and to be faced by the Armed Forces at MERCOSUR AND UNASUR levels, promoting scientific and technological cooperation actions in the international context.

As regards exchange with joint level military institutions, we received the visit of the Director of the Strategic Studies Military Center from Italy, of the director of the Fueakdw from Germany and the Director of the Joint Staff College from Peru. We have signed memoranda of understanding and cooperation with the purpose of promoting exchange of academic and research projects, among other aspects.


Aiming at thought and action, during October, we have developed the seminar for professor- researcher updating and we had speakers from the Ministry of Defense, the University Policies Office from the Ministry of Education,

the National Inter- University Council and the Scientific and Technological Promotion National Agency from the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Scientific research is one of the pilots of universities of excellence. Therefore, we have carried out the seminar with the purpose of updating knowledge of our professor- researchers and encouraging those who are interested in getting that expertise.

In relation with intellectual production of our professors, we have finished the Rules of Engagement collection with Volume III “Las Reglas de Empeñamiento, el uso de las armas y la autodefensa”, which refers to a current issue as regards authorizations and prohibitions for the use of force by the Armed Forces in the missions assigned to them. This is important for consultation by professor- researchers, students, specialists and forces in operations.

As for the 100th anniversary of the May Revolution, we have carried out the Seminar “Argentina and the Great War 1914- 1918”. Different topics about the war and its impact were developed. It was held in eight sessions by the Army Staff College, the Navy Staff College and the Air Force Staff College.

Last, as we mentioned in our last edition, we started the process for having permanent professors with the purpose of assuring quality and stability of our faculty, thus promoting educational quality. 

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1. Director of the Joint Forces Staff College

# SPEECH MADE BY MAJOR JOSÉ MARTINEZ DURING THE 164<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF GENERAL JOSÉ DE SAN MARTÍN

**B**oulogne Sur Mer, north coast of France over the English Channel, Saturday August 17th, 1850, 3pm. He was a victim of long and severe pain and at the age of 73, General José Francisco de San Martín y Matorras died.

Boulogne Sur Mer, north coast of France over the English Channel, Saturday August 17th, 1850, 3pm. He was a victim of long and severe pain and at the age of 73, General José Francisco de San Martín y Matorras died.

The Liberator had important roles in history. This is why it is important during this event and in this academic context to make a note on his strategic thoughts and their application to the cause of American independence.

In order to understand his work, it is necessary to remember the main aspects of his professional training and the situation that the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata were going through while he was making his plans.

It is widely known that after being born in the City of Yapeyú, San Martín moved to Spain with his family. There, he joined Murcia Regiment as cadet in 1789 when he was 12 years old. By 1791, San Martín received his baptism by fire with his origin unit fighting against the Moors in the north of Africa. His military professional experience continued growing, especially during the war between France and Spain.

It was during this period that, after his outstanding performance, he was promoted. As lieutenant in Murcia Regiment, a new stage in his military training started: combat at sea, on board of Spanish Navy ships during actions against England. This fact is, for most San Martín's

historiographers, the military experience that helped him design a sea- land plan for the Peruvian Independence.

If we also consider his participation in the war of Spain against Portugal in 1801 and 1807 and in the so- called "Independence War" against Napoleon when he came back to his mother country in 1811, the then Lieutenant Colonel San Martín had served for 22 years and experienced six wars.

It is important to add the sound cultural background he acquired during his endless reading and study activities to his military training. His patient activity of collecting books resulted in a personal library of almost 800 books that went with him to Chile and, then, to Peru during the campaign.

The military and political situation of the territories that, until May 25th 1810, were part of the Viceroyalty of



*We can see his unbreakable faith in the cause he fought for; his persistence, his sacrifice and clarity of thought who made him an outstanding person. This is our tribute from this simple vocational dedication place and be his legacy part of our present and future.*

the Río de la Plata was dangerous. The lack of awareness from the authorities of the Spanish Courts places these provinces in a situation of rebellion, an intolerant situation for the Spanish authorities.

The border with Paraguay was considered safe although it did not acknowledge the successive governments of Buenos Aires. However, Montevideo was increasingly worrying. Its geographical closeness and the support of Portuguese military forces to Spanish authorities in Montevideo implied both a threat and the possibility to get reinforcements from Spain. In Chile, the 1810 September Revolution, which was not already consolidated, made a Spanish intervention possible.

The main threat obviously came from Upper Peru. The need of Spain to recover its former colonies led to various campaigns, between 1810 and 1815, with North-South direction, with uncertain military results that did not make significant changes.

This scenario encouraged San Martín to carry out actions that, due to his military experience and background, were necessary for the independence of the nations involved.

Is this the reason why he came back to the country where he was born? Within this organized frame of action, he proposed the plan, called Continental Plan by history, to his Supreme Director.

This plan, which was a model in its essence and, even more, during its execution, was very valuable as it could change all ideas that up to that moment were implemented to strengthen the purposes of the May Revolution.

After only five years of the independence of the

Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, the first San Martín's troops entered the city of Lima. The Peruvian people, gathered in the main square, heard from the General: Peru is, from now on, free and independent due to peoples' will and the justice of their cause...

His liberating campaign ended in this way. However, the following events in his country made it impossible for the General to be present in a place where his compatriots were at fight. Therefore, in February 1824, together with his daughter Mercedes, he went to Europe rejecting all offers for government positions, honor and economic awards.

An austerity life took him through different places in the Old Continent until he set up in Paris. But, in 1848, revolutionary movements in that city made him leave to go to London. Because of his health condition, he stopped in Boulogne Sur Mer, a few kilometres away from Port de Calais.

There, after having fought with his sword for his ideas with unconditional dedication, the Liberator rested until he died. He was a soldier who acted according to his strong ideas and even waiving unthinkable things.

Officers from friendly countries who honour us with your presence: You, as the rest of the people present here, are witnesses of the value that Liberator General San Martín represents for the Independence of America.

We can see his unbreakable faith in the cause he fought for; his persistence, his sacrifice and clarity of thought who made him an outstanding person.

This is our tribute from this simple vocational dedication place and be his legacy part of our present and future.



# POWER AND PREPARATION FOR WAR

The “Great War” was the first milestone of confrontation of systems during which, in the setting of the conflict, all factors that have been present throughout history coexisted: the prevailing philosophical conception, the exercise of power, technology, research and technological- scientific development, the impact of military capacity as the exercise of power and international relations

KEY WORDS: BALANCE OF POWER / MILITARY CAPACITY / INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS / ALLIANCES / EVOLUTION OF WAR

By Jorge Osvaldo Sillone

## INTRODUCTION

One of the intellectual efforts that must be made to understand any war under analysis consists in understanding the dynamics of the power of the nations involved in war. In this way, we can interpret the logic of the period and appreciate actions avoiding the risk of taking concepts of the present to this historical fact.

In 1815, with the defeat of Napoleon, a political power cycle during which monarchies exercised this power started in Europe. This situation remained like that for almost 100 years, up to the end of World War I when republican power systems appeared in Europe.

In this article, we will make a brief description of each of the main countries involved in World War I, explaining their power relations and their attitude in light of the intricate evolution of alliances and conflicts before the great conflagration.

We will make an analysis of the characteristics of the formal political power and their support to the military power of their country, which was typically expressed in the approval of military plans and allocation of resources.

Simultaneously, we will describe the dependence and compliance by military authorities (command and planning bodies) with relation to political power in order to understand the feeling of threat that each nation had, how they got ready to face it and whether there were restrictions imposed to conduction.

From the beginning of history, there are threats and risks that all societies have to face. Those who could reduce and/or eliminate them had the key to success.

The evolution of the art of war teaches that the defense of society can be carried out by having a correct strategic vision and, therefore, the preparation of all systems, including its military instrument with a proper budget and time for training as well as proper equipment to be properly used within the framework of operations planned.

*From the beginning of history, there are threats and risks that all societies have to face. Those who could reduce and/or eliminate them had the key to success.*

This premise is normally complemented by a simultaneous and correct activity of diplomacy which carries out its action during a crisis according to the vision of the country within the world power of its times.

Within this framework, the system of international commitments and alliances has a vital role as foreseeability is an essential factor when time and arguments vanish.

It is necessary to explain that the concept of joint operations did not exist at that time but, of course, experience provided the basis for them to be carried out during the 20th century.

Moreover, the existence of combined operations was clearly seen in the exercise of diplomatic obligations, but this was not due to a proper use forecast. These criteria can be clearly seen in operations carried out by the British Expeditionary Force (BEF)<sup>1</sup> and, then, in 1917, with the arrival of US soldiers in Europe (France).

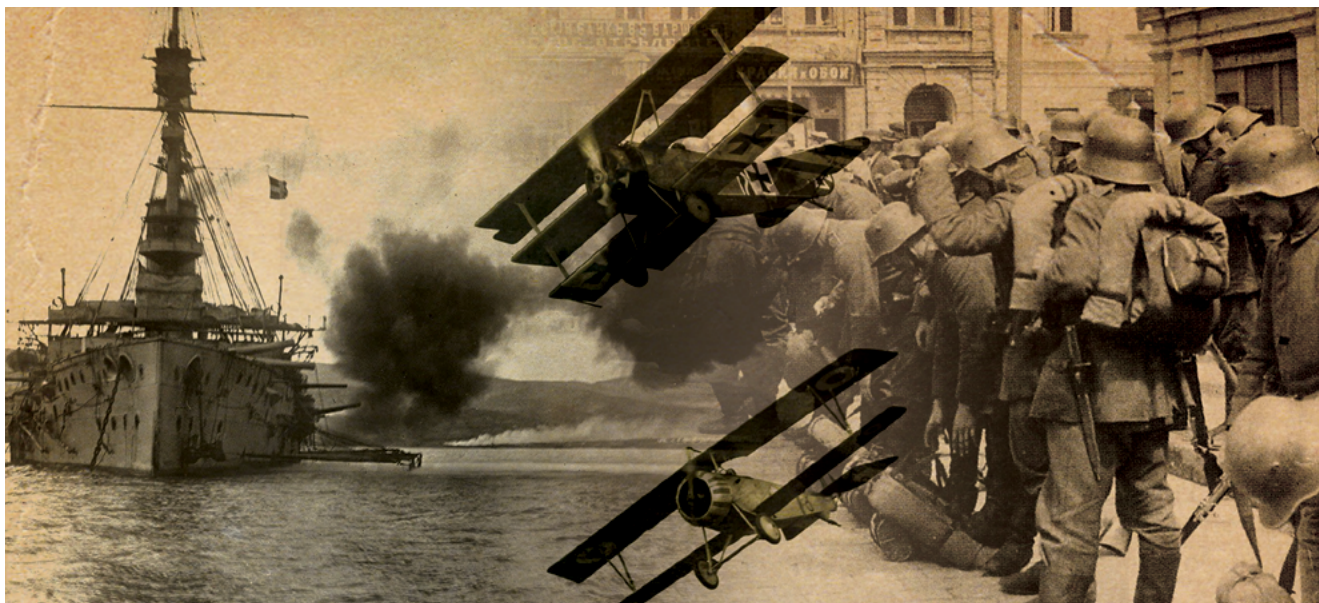
## CONTEXT PRIOR TO CONFLICT

We can see, throughout the European history prior to the beginning of the Great War, some events, contexts, actions and alliances that had an impact on it:

- › The Prussian successful victory in the 1870 War<sup>2</sup>.
- › The intricate diplomatic relationships among European nations during the pre-war period and their secret pacts
- › The economic and political trends that prevailed in Europe since 1871 when the Second German Empire appeared as a great power.
- › The strong nationalist spirit that was extended throughout Europe in the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, the economic and political rivalry among the different nations and the militarization process as well as the vertiginous arms record that was a characteristic of international society during the last 30 years of the 19th century<sup>3</sup>, as from the creation of two systems of alliances that were confronted.
- › Colonialism, materialized by the European presence in Africa, coexisted with military expansion<sup>4</sup>.

1. BEF: British Expeditionary Force

2. Luvaas Jay states that: "The Prussian- French war was a dividing line or an important aspect for both military history and diplomacy. The main military thoughts came from Berlin..." Then, he gives organizational details that justify his thought: "The size of the infantry company in neighbouring armies increased in order to be similar to the German organization of 250 men that had served as basic tactic unit in 1866 and 1870. It was adopted by Austria- Hungary, Russia, France and Italy. The United States adopted it in 1901 and England in 1913." Published in: *Teoría y práctica de la guerra, Pensamiento y Doctrina militar europea, 1870-1914*., Volume 596; Book I; Círculo Militar, Buenos Aires; 1968.



In light of these risks and threats that European nations faced, they adopted foreign and domestic policies between 1871 and 1914 that increased the possibility to have a conflict:

- › They had permanent armies with a significant number of troops and optimized enlistment conditions, training, equipment and mobilization in times of peace.
- › They increased navy tonnage in significant proportions with respect to resources available in prior decades.
- › Great Britain, influenced by the development of the German Navy which began in 1900 and which improved its fleet during the Russian- Japanese War (1905).
- › The long- range navy weaponry was strengthened based on the war experience which took place between Russia and Japan (1905).
- › The work of staffs was optimized so that they could be able to make mobilization plans and to use combat power in a precise way so that they can be in line with technological- scientific advances and their influence on military operations.
- › The number of troops to be used on the battlefield was something new and represented a new challenge for concepts of military application. Maneuver and

fire, together with the concept of logistic support were complexities that only had the reference of the French- Prussian War in 1870, during which mobility, promptness and support of troops due to the territory preparation and the use of trains, were more than the ideas that were current at that time.

- › The work of diplomats was more important during this period as the different European states made alliances with other powers so that they did not become isolated in case of war. This attitude led to an increase in the possibilities of a generalized conflict. Therefore, two hostile military alliances arose: the Triple Alliance, formed by Germany, Austria- Hungary and Italy and the Triple Entente, formed by Great Britain, France and Russia.
- › As from the creation of these military political blocks, this moment was known as the period of “Armed Peace”. In this context, as Europe was divided into two systems of hostile alliances, any change in the political or military situation in the continent, Africa or any other place may cause an international incident.

These measures had an immediate reaction in the intricate map of European relations. The consequences of this may be summarized as follows:

- › Risk existed between 1905 and 1914 as there were several international crisis and two domestic wars which could cause an extended war in Europe.
- › The first conflict took place in Morocco, where Germany fought in 1905 and 1906 to support the country in its fight for independence and to avoid French and Spanish domain over the area. France warned Germany that it would start war against it but the problem was solved

3. Belgium got independent from the Netherlands in 1830; the unification of Italy finished in 1861 and the unification of German, in 1871. However, nationalist conflicts were still not solved in other areas in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. This caused stress in the regions involved and among different European nations. One of the most important nationalist lines, the Pan- Slavism, had an important role in the events before the war.

4. Author's note: The increase of manufactured products in European nations which grew as the Industrial Revolution evolved made it necessary to have raw materials outside the European continent; therefore, the commercial and military expansion was the combination that was used.

at the international conference which took place in Algeiras (Spain) in 1906.

- › The Balkans Peninsula was the setting for a new battle in 1908 boosted by the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria- Hungary. Among the different types of Pan- Slavism, there was the Panserbianism, which was a movement for the creation of a Greater Serbia, the purpose of which was, among others, that the region could take the southern area of Bosnia and this is why the Serbians would declare a war against Austria. No campaign was started as the Serbians would not start a fight without the support from Russia which was not in capacity to take part.
- › In 1911, a new crisis started in Morocco when the German administration sent a warship to Agadir to protest against the French attempt to get domain over this area.
- › Italy, as great powers were worried about the conflict in Morocco, declared war against the Ottoman Empire in 1911, with the purpose of annexing the region of Tripolitania, in the north of Africa. Given that Germany was forced due to its national interests to build relationships with the Ottoman Empire, the attack by Italy weakened the Triple Alliance and encouraged their enemies.
- › The 1912- 1913 Balkans Wars increased the interest of Serbia to get control of the areas of the Austria- Hungary Empire which was inhabited by Slavs. This increased mistrust from the Empire to the Serbians and caused in Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire some desire for revenge after their defeat in those conflicts.

*The evolution of the art of war teaches that the defense of society can be carried out by having a correct strategic vision and, therefore, the preparation of all systems, including its military instrument.*

- › Germany, as a consequence of the Balkan conflict, formed an army with more men.
- › France rearranged its defense situation by extending compulsory military service from two to three years in times of peace.
- › Other European nations followed the example of these powers and decided to increase budget to military expenses.

These international events caused tension among great powers and there could have been confrontation. This did not happen as it was possible to prevent an escalation of proportions.

Because of this, in light of the event that took place in Sarajevo (1914) and the subsequent claims, there was no reason to suspect there would be a war of proportions. Time would show that this was not so.

#### POWERS AND THEIR PREPARATION FOR WAR

In 1914, none of the nations which were later involved, wanted a widespread war. The one that was in the least



George V, King of England



Nicholas II, Tsar of Russia



William II, Emperor of Germany



Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg and General Helmuth Johan von Moltke

interested was Russia which was under Tsar rule and recovering from its defeat against Japan in 1905. There was a thought, desired rather than affirmed, that this Balkan conflict in Sarajevo would only be the third Balkan war.

We will now describe the context of the political and military reality and the view that each country had as regards a future confrontation. We will include the names of the authorities in charge of that and the reasons that led each country to war in a context in which, based on the grounds previously mentioned, any event could have been the cause of confrontation<sup>5,6</sup>.

An important detail to understand this period in Europe is to know that the main actors of this battle, the ruling monarchies, were relatives of each other. George V, king of England, William II, emperor of Germany and Nicholas II, Tsar of Russia were brothers.

However, this family relation could not save this delicate situation as the interests at stake of each power were more important than it.

This aspect of power is essential as the murder in Sarajevo gave place to informal communication among the kings which took place simultaneously with diplomacy work, but war machinery was ready to explode.

## GERMANY

William II (1859- 1941) was a descendant of Frederick William of Prussia and of Princess Victoria of England and cousin of the Tsar of Russia. In 1888, he became emperor. He defended sovereign monarchy and would receive the support of conservatives against the opposition from radicals and socialists.

*As from the creation of the Triple Alliance, formed by Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy and of the Triple Entente formed by Great Britain, France and Russia, this period is known as Armed Peace.*

In order to carry out actions as regards foreign policy, Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg (1856- 1921) was the Chancellor. General Helmuth Johan von Moltke (1848- 1916) was initially Chief of Staff.

The motivation to enter war was to support an ally, Austria. With this, it was possible to unbalance French power and, therefore, reduce its potential. Also, it would be possible to make it difficult for Russia to expand to the straits of the Black Sea and extend their own borders at the expense of the existing Russian borders over the Polish territory and other regions where German peoples lived (this motivation still existed during World War II). Finally, it would dispute supremacy over the industrial, commercial and colonial power with Great Britain.

Within this framework, the formal political power and the German Staff authorities agreed on purposes and achievements for the country. There was a need to expand international trade and to extend borders. The difficulty was that they had little maritime capacity while their enemy, England, was superior.

In order to achieve those goals, in the European context, Germany had to be an unconditional ally of the Austria- Hungary Empire and be ready in military terms for future events.

The following were the ideas for the military- political action:

- › To be aware of the concept of nation in arms, in which the national potential is subordinated by the purpose of war, if necessary. Plans were developed and carried out by Earl von Schlieffen with the premise to combat in two

5. Hobsbawm, Eric; *La era del imperio*, 1875-1914; Editorial Planeta, Buenos Aires; 1998. "The international atmosphere seemed to be quiet. No chancery expected a conflict in June, 1914 and, for many decades, murders of public figures had been frequent. First, nobody was even interested in the fact that a great power could launch an attack against a bothering and unimportant neighbor as the Austria- Hungary attack against Serbia by the end of July of that year seemed to be. "Until the end of his life, Gavrilo Princip, the murderer of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, he could not believe that his insignificant action would have caused the world to be on fire".

6. Author's note: Princip was a member of the Serbian group Young Bosnia (Mlada Bosna) that supported the unification of Bosnia and Serbia.



fronts and, thus, to cause power to be capable of winning in said conditions.

- › To be confident in their military power after having evaluated their potential enemies, France and Russia which, although they were powerful in terms of number and force, they were thought to have different strategic weaknesses.
- › To have modern weapons and a doctrine adapted for strategic needs. Germany had taken the experience of recent wars:
  - › Anglo Boer (South Africa; the first of these wars took place from December 16, 1880 to March 23, 1881) and the second one took place from October 11, 1899 to May 31, 1902).
  - › Russia- Japan (from 1904 to 1905). The conflict of interests was presented to design their area of influence in Manchuria, Chinese province, and to get power over the Korean Peninsula. The victory of Japan turned it into a power in the East and the defeat of Russia meant the beginning of the political and social crisis that led to the Revolution in 1917.

German predictions of a war were subject by their geographical settlement and history. As it was in a central position in the European continent, it could only see success if they made a rapid and short campaign in order

*German predictions of a war were subject by their geographical settlement and history. As it was in a central position in the European continent, it could only see success if they made a rapid and short campaign in order to finish it by the end of the year 1914.*

to finish it by the end of the year 1914. The risk was that they had to combat simultaneously in two fronts: In the East, against Russia and in the West, against France. This reduced their logical possibilities and expectations to succeed based on the capacity to support war operations.

With these essential conditions, the Plan<sup>7</sup> updated in 1897 by Earl Schlieffen<sup>8</sup> and readapted in 1905 was taken into consideration using the well-known military resource from Prussia regarding manoeuvres by inner lines.

The strategic manoeuvre consisted in an attack materialized in a quick movement through Belgium and making encirclement of the defensive settlements of the French army to leave them caught in Lorraine (in the east of France), before the Russian could move all their troops. This part was key to succeed.

As it can be observed, the assumption of movement times for Russian troops is the condition for the whole German manoeuvre as its efficiency and speed depended

7. German troops had to conquer Belgium, to make encirclement through the West, circling Paris, conquer it and change front to defeat enemy forces.

8. General Alfred von Schlieffen, Earl of Schlieffen was Staff Officer in Prussia during the France-Prussia war in 1870. After the German unification which was completed by the victory during that war, he was Chief of Staff of Germany between 1891 and 1905.

upon the possibility to make the feared Russian capacity materialize in the West.

This assumption became the true Achille's heel of all the war for Germany as its Plan was not flexible.

The strategic key for Germans in its planning was the proper use of time and the Belgium neutrality to take advantage of their superiority that would give them the strategic surprise of the manoeuvre which was not foreseen by the allies in the European north. The purpose was to defeat French troops in the West and then take all this effort to the East in order to defeat the Russians. As it may be seen, prediction caused to have a forced view of the future.

All of this planning was supported with adequate preparation of the German territory which was crossed by railways that transported troops and logistic support of great volume with a speed that had never been seen before.

Political support came when the Plan was approved and resources were assigned to the fulfillment of forecasts with the purpose to make Germany greater.

### Austro- Hungarian Empire

At this moment, the emperor of Austria and king of Hungary was Franz Joseph I (1830- 1916) who was, in 1914, 84 years old and was Commander- in- Chief. The nominal command of the land and sea forces was exercised by his brother, General Archduke Friedrich of Austria as the one who commanded operations was the Chief of Staff.

His nephew, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand (1863- 1914) became, in 1896, the heir after a series of death events in the Habsburg family and had a great influence on the Empire.



Emperor Franz Joseph I and General Franz Conrad von Hotzendorf

*Russia, apart from having a commitment with France and England, had interest in the Balkans over which it sought supremacy as well as in the East. The greatest motivation to enter war was eliminating Austrian influence over the Balkans and to make Germany weaker so that these nations could not oppose to its expansion in the area and straits (Bosphorus and Dardanelles) that would assure its outlet to the Mediterranean Sea.*

The Empire had General Franz Conrad von Hotzendorf (1852- 1925) as Chief of Army Staff who had incorporated and transmitted a military doctrine similar to the one of his allies training his officers almost in the same way Germans did. During war, he commanded operations.

This was an empire that fought for its difficult existence. Its motivation to enter war was to maintain their domain over the Balkans.

In 1908, it had annexed Bosnia- Herzegovina. Its outlet to the Adriatic Sea also had difficulties.

Its inner front had serious nationality problems due to its heterogeneity which made it difficult to integrate and consolidate political power.

The alliance among Serbia, France and Russia, in the European context, was a risk for its supremacy in the region.

War, in this setting, was considered a certain possibility to solve these problems.

The Army had three separate and autonomous forces which, in operation, acted under a unique command: The Imperial and Royal Force, the Hungary Royal Army and the Austria Imperial Army.

There were eleven nationalities and a greater number of languages in these forces. Also, they had soldiers of different religions: Roman Catholicism, Orthodox Catholicism, Protestantism and Islam. These heterogeneous elements made it difficult to conduct operations. In spite of this, it was considered an efficient military instrument which was subordinate to the emperor.

In order to mobilize and gather these officers, Austro-Hungarians had seven railways that allowed transport



with certain restrictions. Two of them were double railways and, among the simple railways, some crossed Carpathian Mountains connecting with the Russian border.

Strategic targets of the Austro- Hungarian Empire referred to the absolute domain of the Balkans and the restriction of Italy regarding territorial ambitions for which they would have to conquer the kingdom of Serbia and, therefore, neutralize Pan- Slavism movement that was becoming greater, giving rise to the annexation of that country to the Empire and to the opening of other ways to have access to the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea.

### Great Britain

During the kingdom of Victoria (1819- 1901), there was an industrial, cultural, political, scientific and military change that gave identity to Great Britain as an empire. She was the last queen of the House of Hanover.

King George V (1865- 1936), grandson of the Great Queen, who during the Great War changed the name of the royal house which changed from Saxe- Coburg to Windsor, was important during War as he visited English troops in France.

The Foreign Affairs Secretary was Sir Edward Grey (1862- 1933). He was mediator during the Balkans crisis before World War I and tried to prevent Germany from becoming part of the conflict. He was responsible for the secret treaty by which Italy became part of the ally. Once war started, Grey discouraged allies from

signing negotiation or peace agreements with the enemy separately. On December 5, 1916, he resigned.

The motivation to enter war was to try to keep a political balance in continental Europe. An eventual victory of central powers put it at risk.

Its insular position reduced military risks that central powers implied.

In 1914, its military potential was of 160,000 men of the British Expeditionary Force.

The British military force was at sea. Its fleet was the most important one in the world and it prepared for a traditional action in its history: a continental siege.

A distinctive aspect in its group of officers was that they had origin and education in common and they were encouraged by the same intransigent loyalty and

### Jorge Osvaldo Sillone

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patriotism. In general, they had war experience in colonies.

The Anglo- Boer War changed doctrine and equipment.

Its land officers based their capacity in organizations of colonial experience, distributed in Africa and the Middle East.

It prepared its participation with land officers by sending the British Expeditionary Force to the continent.

The military instrument had the total support from the British monarchy. The main context of these times was marked by the industrial revolution during which military supremacy meant territorial power over distant places with exploitable natural resources.

## France

At that time, the president of this nation was Raymond Poincaré (1860- 1934) and the first Chief of Staff was General Joseph Joffre (1852- 1931). General Ferdinand Foch (1851- 1929) shaped the doctrine of extreme offensive.

The reason to enter war was to recover from the defeat in 1870 and to recover Alsace and Lorraine as well as to reduce the capacities of Germany as a nation so that it does not become a threat.

Taking the guarantee offered by England to Belgium<sup>9</sup>, the French government and the Staff did not think that it was possible to apply the Schlieffen Plan. Therefore, predictions by the French defense based their strategic ideas on a defensive attitude reinforcing buildings between the Swiss and the Belgian borders.

The defeat during the French- Prussian War had important consequences on the French military spirit. Doctrines were revised and concepts were modified.



President of France Raymond Poincaré and Chief of Staff General Joseph Joffre

***The United States declared to be neutral at the beginning of the war for many reasons. American foreign policy had the characteristic of isolation and the grounds of Monroe Doctrine, based on taking care of American sovereignty in its continent and to have it under its influence.***

There was a belief that defeat was the result of the lack of efficiency and competence that led them to create the Ecole Militaire Supérieure in 1878, to make a reform of Staff in 1880 and to increase the interest in military education. In this reform, the main issue was the study of the principles on how to conduct operations.

Its military preparation was aimed at recovering lost territories.

President Raymond Poincaré stated in 1914: *I do not see any other reason for the existence of my generation that is not the hope to recover our lost provinces.*

After a series of plans, France put Plan XVII in practice in August 1914. This plan stated the following:

- › Improvement of railways in order to finish them in 1916
- › Law to accelerate mobilization
- › Extension of military service to 3 years
- › Preparation of plans that can operate in two different theaters of operations: one in the north- east region and the other one in the region of the Alps.
- › The ideas in 1870 were seen in the cases the enemy movement was slow and in the fact of having enough time to make movement, concentration and to transport contingents to places of combat by using the existing railway which was built in a transverse way to make the execution of different variations possible.

German speed and movement were not foreseen at any moment.

## Serbia

The king of this country was Peter I Karadjordjevic (1844- 1921). He had little participation during the conflict. A

9. The Treaty of London of 1839, also known as the Convention of 1839, was signed on April 19, 1839. Under this treaty, European powers (United Kingdom, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia and the Netherlands) officially acknowledged independence and neutrality of Belgium. Upon the insistence of the United Kingdom, article VII set forth that Belgium would be neutral and, therefore, signatory parties would have to keep that neutrality in case of invasion.



Great Duke Nicholas Nikoláyevich and Vittorio Emanuele III

visit to the troops in 1915 when he was already 71 years old was recorded. His last public appearance was on December 1, 1918 when he was proclaimed King of the Serbians, Croats and Slovenians. He died in Belgrade in 1921 when he was 77 years old.

As Prime Minister, Nicolás Pasic (1845-1926) led the government during the whole war period. His main achievement was to keep the interests of Serbia in light of the world context and to appear as a leader, in 1918, of the new state: Yugoslavia.

The motivation to enter war was the expansion of their

territory over the basis of the annexation of Slovenian peoples that were part of the Austro- Hungarian Empire and, therefore, create the “Greater Serbia”.

For the fulfillment of this goal, it was necessary to be “out” of the Austro- Hungarian Empire. This scenario was possible with the support from Russia to carry out this separation.

Serbia had a strategic position and a nationalist orientation aimed at its Slovenian origin which resisted any type of dominance by Austria- Hungary. It wanted its own outlet to the sea and also the domain over the region that had been changing at the expense of nationals and foreigners who were interested in the continuing elimination of the Ottoman domain over it in a diverse and troubled group of nations.

### Russian Empire

Tsar Nicholas II (1868- 1918), cousin of the German emperor, was the last tsar of Russia. He was in charge of the Empire since 1849 until his abdication in 1917.

The Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich (1856- 1929), General and relative of the tsar and also, until he became Commander of the Military Region of Saint Petersburg, gave great political support to the tsar when neutralizing conspiracy against him.

Russia, apart from having a commitment with France and England, had interest in the Balkans over which it sought supremacy as well as in the East. The greatest motivation to enter war was eliminating Austrian influence over the Balkans and to make Germany weaker so that these nations could not oppose to its expansion



in the area and straits (Bosphorus and Dardanelles) that would assure its outlet to the Mediterranean Sea.

The power of the Tsar was questioned as the origin of the revolution<sup>10</sup> was present in the Russian social minds.

Anyway, the Army, which was the greatest in Europe had 1,200,000 men, and was, therefore, the most powerful Army at those times. It had an endless number of human resources which turned this conglomerate into a fearsome organizational giant in Europe.

The weakness of this military organization was that it was obsolete and that it had limited pace both because of means available and the little infrastructure of the country.

In the international context, it is worth mentioning that it protected Serbia since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It tried to keep the flag of Pan- Slavism high.

The Russian- Japanese war, in which Russia was defeated, led to a better interpretation of modern war, therefore, the Army evolved and had modern and mobile weapons. The problem was the preparation of the groups of officers and petty officers as well as of them with the soldiers. Moreover, the most important weakness was the chain of command as power was exercised by favourite men close to the Tsar, a situation that was privileged on top of technical skills.

On November 6, 1917, the Bolshevik revolution broke out and Lenin came to power in Russia. In December, the new government asked for an armistice to Germany and hostilities ended. On March 3, 1918, Leon Trotsky, on the side of Russia and general Max Hoffman, on the side of Germany, signed the Brest- Litovsk Treaty to put an end to war on the Eastern Front.

*At the end of this war, the world was different. Great Britain was dominant and the United States entered the world of great powers with its weapons and with the aid of Great Britain. Colonialism started to disappear and the first world attempt to reach mutual understanding with the creation of the League of Nations, an international organization aimed at regulating relations among States and keeping peace.*

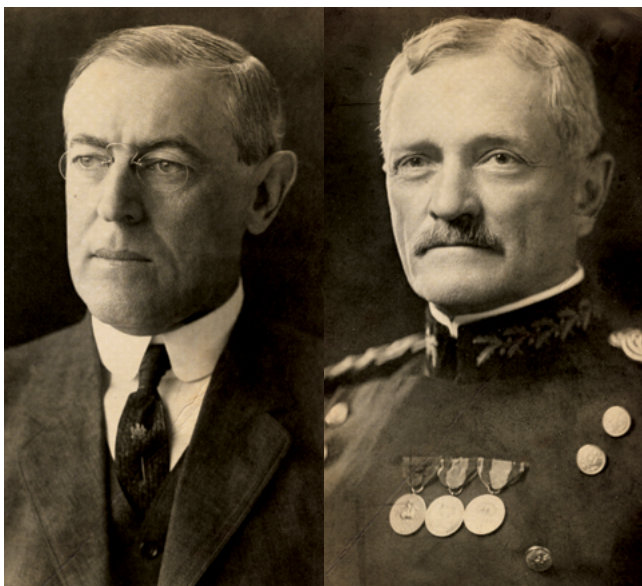
### Belgium

This country remained neutral relying on the support that England had committed to under the 1839 Treaty. The German government had informed on August 1, 1914 to the Belgian government about their intention to cross France through its territory<sup>11</sup> in order to prevent the French from using this route to attack Germany. Belgian authorities refused to allow German troops to enter and resorted to the countries that signed the 1839 Treaty -under which neutrality from Belgium was guaranteed in case of conflict in which Great Britain, France and Germany were involved- so that the provisions stated in said Treaty would be fulfilled.

### Italy

Vittorio Emanuele III (1869- 1947). His full name was Vittorio Emanuele Ferdinando Gennaro Maria di Savoia-Carignano and he ruled this nation between the years 1900 and 1946. He came after his father, Humberto I, in 1900 when he was killed in Monza. During the Great War, he annexed Trentino and Alto Adige, regions with Italian population and ruled by Austria.

General Luigi Cadorna (1850- 1928) was the Chief of Staff during the Great War. He led the war during the



Woodrow Wilson, president of the United States and General John P. Pershing

10. In February 1917, the Romanov dynasty fell and the Bolshevik Revolution succeeded. Tsar Nicholas II abdicated and a new ruling class from all types of political groups came to power. In Russia, there was double power: one temporary government and a popular and revolutionary force, the "soviets" which took power at factories and workshops and that had the support of the Russian public opinion.

11. Castro B. Santiago; Revista Militar No 290; Chile, Strengths; p. 215. (From the memorial of the Chilean Army, January 1917), Argentina, Buenos Aires, March 1917, it states that this determination was not temporary, urgent, hasty, but it was stated in documents and books of those times".

first thirty months of the battle although, in theory, the commander in chief was King Vittorio Emanuele III. He solved a difficult military problem that was to combat in a front with mountains of more than 700 kilometres long.

He neutralized Austrian attacks in Trentino during the spring of the year 1916. He conquered Gorizia (in August, 1916) and got victories in Asiago and Baensezza (1917). All of these Italian successful events were neutralized by the movements of Austrian and German troops at the beginning of the autumn of 1917. However, he was known for his defeat in the Battle of Caporetto (October 24, 1917), which had a negative impact for Italy.

Italy remained neutral until May 23, 1915 when it breached its pact with the Triple Alliance to satisfy its territorial ambitions and declared war to Austria-Hungary. It entered the conflict based on the promises in the Treaty signed on April 26, 1915 in London.

These territorial promises were about:

- › Recovery of Italian- speaking territories which were under Austria- Hungary ruling
- › Great part of Dalmatia
- › The region of Adalia in Turkey in the case the Ottoman Empire would be distributed
- › Distribution of German colonies in Libia and Eritrea

### United States

Woodrow Wilson. President (1856- 1924). In the election campaign of 1916, he used neutrality as argument. However, in 1917, he was forced to breach his promises of neutrality in light of the submarine attacks against navigation in the Atlantic Sea and fear of an alliance between Germany and Mexico to snatch territories from the United States.

General John J. Pershing was responsible for training in the territory of this country and for the conduction of American Expeditionary Forces in Europe.

President Wilson and War Secretary Newton D. Baker, gave Pershing almost unlimited authority. In fact, Baker said he would only receive two orders: one to leave and one to come back. *The decision about when his command or any of its parts was ready for action lied in you*<sup>12</sup>.

For the analysis of the US case, it is necessary to extend it until 1917 when the US entered war.

The United States declared to be neutral at the beginning of the war for many reasons. American foreign policy had the characteristic of isolation and the grounds of Monroe Doctrine, based on taking care of American sovereignty in its continent and to have it under its influence.

War affected this country as regards commerce through the Atlantic Sea due to the maritime block that the British had imposed in order to cause trouble to the Germans.

COUNTRIES OF THE ENTENTE	MILITARY SERVICE	PERMANENCE IN RESERVE	ARMY AND RESERVE TROOPS (1914)
France	3 years	22 years	4.017.000
Great Britain	7 years(*)	5 years	975.000
Russia	3 1/2 years	22 years	5.971.000
Romania	-	-	290.000
Serbia	-	-	200.000
Belgium	-	-	117.000

(\*) Professional troops

COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL EMPIRES	MILITARY SERVICE	PERMANENCE IN RESERVE	ARMY AND RESERVE TROOPS (1914)
Germany	2 years	28 years	4.500.000
Austria- Hungary	2 a 5 years	23 years	3.000.000
Italy	-	-	1.251.000
Turkey	-	-	210.000
Bulgary	-	-	280.000

In this country, the fact that the British withheld vessels was seen as an outrage, thus breaching international law provisions. However, the worst situation was that, apart from that, they seized goods and, above all, documents such as the log book or itinerary and could, therefore, find out with whom, when and under what conditions they negotiated vessels all around the world.

Also, German submarine war affected trade with the British Islands as several American load vessels were sunk or captured. With the sinking of Lusitania, Americans threatened to break diplomatic relations with Germany and to take revenge.

As regards economy and finance, they were clearly in favour of the ally as, with war, trade with Germany was reduced and almost disappearing while trade with the British increased.

With respect to financial aspects, allies were dependent on Americans as Washington gave war credits between 1916 and 1917, thus forecasting a worldwide future leadership at the end of the conflict.

12. Odom, William; *Training of American Expeditionary Forces*, 1917/18; Military Review; January/ February 2001; p. 21

13. Author's note: intervention experience

Security issues were the reason why they entered war as security was affected by submarine war. Also, they expected to prevent German supremacy in Europe.

It declared war on January 31, 1917. At the beginning of February, it had already broken diplomatic relations with Germany and in April, it requested Congress to vote in favour of the declaration of war which was approved by a great majority.

In 1917, war had not suffered great changes. Battle was stuck in a breakeven. But, since Russia withdrew and the United States entered the battle in the Western front (May 3), the static and known trench war became imbalanced.

Since May 3, 1918 when Germany put an end to operations in the Eastern front because Russia surrendered, it put efforts in the Western front but it could not get the desired success as the US forces in the region caused a military power imbalance.

Events took place more rapidly and on September 29, Hindenburg and Ludendorff carried out negotiations with allied powers so that Germany could request armistice.

On October 3, the new German administration requested armistice and, based on pre-arrangements, October 29 was the last day of military operations of World War I.

## WAR DECLARATIONS

### 1914

**JUNE 29.** Murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife by a Bosnian student who was member of the secret society "Unification or Death"

**JULY 6.** Germany guaranteed support to Austria

**JULY 23.** Austria-Hungary sent a 48 hour ultimatum to Serbia demanding its intervention in the murder investigation and punishment

**JULY 25.** Serbia responded stating that its national sovereignty was breached and ordered partial mobilization. This event led to the breaking of diplomatic relations and partial mobilization of Austria-Hungary. Russia decided to support Serbia

**JULY 29.** Austria-Hungary declared war against Serbia

**JULY 31.** Austria-Hungary ordered total mobilization. Germany sent an ultimatum to Russia to stop total mobilization and another ultimatum to France requiring neutrality

**AUGUST 1.** Germany mobilized its army and declared war against Russia

**AUGUST 3.** Germany declared war against France

**AUGUST 3/4.** Turkey signed an agreement with Germany and declared armed neutrality

### Germany invaded Belgium

**AUGUST 4.** England sent an ultimatum to Germany requiring it to respect Belgian neutrality. This declaration is equivalent to a war declaration

**AUGUST 6.** Serbia declared war against Germany and Austria-Hungary against Russia

**AUGUST 23.** Japan declared war against Germany

**NOVEMBER 2/5.** Russia, England and France declared war against Turkey

As from that date changes took place faster. On November 9, William II of Germany abdicated and was exiled in the Netherlands; on the following day, the new German administration was formed, it became a republic and on November 11 armistice was signed.

## FINAL CONCLUSIONS

In the evolution of the art of war, the "Great War" meant the start of an acceleration process that took place during the 20th century regarding substantial aspects of classical ideas about war, the formation of groups of officers and petty officers and the equipment of individual combatants and of officers, petty officers and soldiers.

The "Great War" was the first confrontation of systems in which in the conflict scenario, all factors that have always been present in history coexisted: technology, research and technological scientific development, military capacity projection as exercise of power and international relations.

The heroic combatant of the last twenty years gave place to the anonymous one, the one from the trench and mobilized masses. The appearance of the machine gun, planes, tanks, the great destruction capacity and other war instruments gave more depth to confrontation and involved civil peoples in a massive way.

The horror of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear war (CBRN) had, in this period, origin due to the use of gas as an element of combat and psychological pressure over the enemy without making any difference between civilians and military men.

Weapons and arms systems evolved as to lethal nature with the purpose of separating combatants and producing more destruction effects.

At the end of this war, the world was different. Great Britain was dominant and the United States entered the world of great powers with its weapons and with the aid of Great Britain. Colonialism started to disappear and the first world attempt to reach mutual understanding with the creation of the League of Nations, an international organization aimed at regulating relations among States and keeping peace.

As it did not have authority to enforce its decisions, this organization failed and could not prevent a new world war (1939- 1945).

Last, it is worth mentioning that war is almost always a political responsibility in which the military instrument is only a sector of society that is technically organized based on previsions and orientations which, throughout time, has been adopted by politicians to face threats and opposite interests that affect the society to which they belong.



The author highlights the “unprecedented operation” carried out by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons which, together with the United Nations, has supervised this effort and international cooperation phase intended to take weapons of mass destruction out of Syria.

KEY WORDS: CHEMICAL WEAPONS / SYRIA / TERRORISM / UNO / DESTRUCTION / CONFLICT / DEADLINE

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By **Omar Locatelli**

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## SOME HISTORICAL FACTS

Since the 1980's Syria has been one of the countries that supports terrorism according to the US Department of State. However, the Syrian government states that they only allow for the opening of “press offices” of those radical organizations, mainly from Palestine, that call for resistance against the Israeli occupation of Palestine territories.

After the 9/11 event, the United States have called Iraq, Iran and North Korea the “axis of evil” and said that they were responsible for the main terrorist actions in the world carried out with the use of different types of actions and weapons.

As from January 2003, the famous Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from the United States mentioned Syria, Libya and Sudan as countries interested in acquiring or expanding secret arsenals of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) without specifying of which type.

On April 10, 2003, the Deputy Secretary for the Control of Armament and International Security, John Bolton, said it was a great opportunity for Syria to get involved in the elimination of Weapons of Mass Destruction that was being carried out in the Middle East region taking advantage of the alleged successful military operations of the United States in Iraq for their destruction.

The Syrian threat to use weapons of mass destruction has always concerned the West. However, it was considered as a last resource destabilizing option until civil war in Syria<sup>1</sup> broke out in the regional context and in the western interests.

## FEARED USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

After more than two years of civil war in Syria, on August

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1. Locatelli, Omar; “Small Wars lead to Big Wars”; *Visión Conjunta*, No. 9, year 5; 2013

*The Syrian threat to use weapons of mass destruction has always concerned the West. However, it was considered as a last resource destabilizing option until civil war in Syria broke out in the regional context and in the western interests.*

21, 2013 at 2am, rockets with Sarin gas were launched from a bridge over the highway that connects Damascus (capital of Syria) with Homs (third major city) and from the Sironex factory in the neighbourhood of Qabun over the neighbourhood of Ghouta, which is in the suburbs of Damascus, an area where rebels were supported with the purpose of neutralizing an alleged entrance of 300 troops command (trained by the United States in Jordan) to attack Damascus with tanks, mechanized tanks and aircraft. The attack, apart from having caused the death of 1428 people (of which 526 were children) and 3600 injured people, showed the international community that the problem of chemical weapons, which was allegedly controlled, was still present and the greatest danger was that it was not possible to know who had the trigger.

Because of Russian influence, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov, on September 9, Syria signed and ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention that sets forth the production, storage and use of chemical weapons. It also established the solution that if an international control over chemical weapons in Syria is established, attacks will be prevented and we will immediately start to work in Damascus.

#### THE DESIRED AGREEMENT

On September 13, the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov and the UN mediator for the conflict, Lakhdar Brahimi, met in Geneva together with groups of weapon control officers. On the following day, Syria committed to destroy its chemical weapons by signing an agreement negotiated by the United States and Syria.

The multinational mission aimed at destroying them would be supervised by the UN Security Council and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and should be finished before June 30, 2014. The staff of the mission would be shared between both organizations. The initial step agreed by the Syrian government implied the destruction of 22 of the 33 places declared as used for the production and mixture of precursor agents that are part of chemical weapons. Meanwhile, the rest lies within an area still controversial.

The essence of the approved destruction Plan implied that the Syrian government would be responsible for the movement of chemical materials in controlled motorized columns (1) from the stores protected in Syrian territory to the port of Latakia (2) where they would be loaded to the Italian port of Gioia Tauro (3) and from there be loaded to the US vessel (prepared for that) Cape Ray, (4) to be later destructed at sea.

In the port of Latakia, main precursor agents are separated from the secondary ones. The main precursor agent called “priority chemical product”, Isopropanol, is loaded to a Danish vessel which then waits in international waters for each additional shipment before its eventual sail setting to the Italian port of Gioia Tauro containers. A similar operation for chemical products that are less hazardous with “industrial quality” was carried out with a Norwegian vessel.

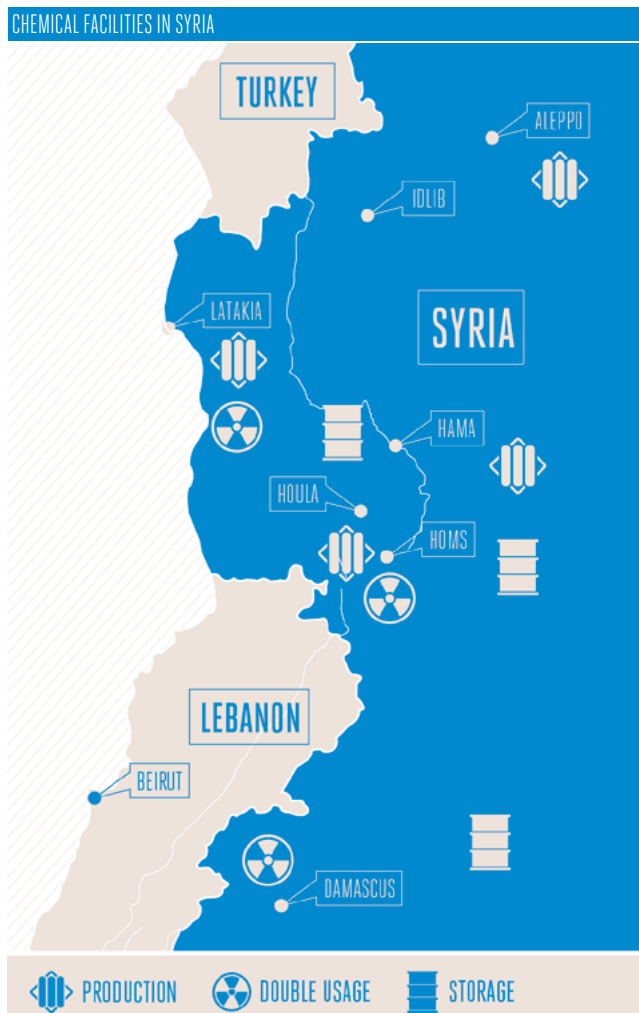




The United States take part with vessel Cape Ray MV with the main responsibility of making the hydrolysis process which implies the breakdown of chemical agents with hot water to be later neutralized with sodium hydroxide<sup>2</sup>, using caustic soda or bleach<sup>3</sup>. Degradation is carried out in international waters in the Mediterranean Sea. In spite of the deadline, the US vessel kept mooring in the Spanish port of Rota until all priority chemical materials would have left Syria.

The vessel is an old container ship (launched in 1977) which was equipped with two mobile hydrolysis systems and which cost about 5 million dollars, developed in 2013 by an area of specialized research of the US forces. The two titanium reactors of the Cape Ray can process from 5 to 25 tons per day, depending on the purity of the material under treatment. The complete procedure may take up to 90 days and will generate 1.5 million gallons (5.7 million litres) of waste. A great part of the effluent would be even more hazardous but of a toxicity level that may be eliminated by a normal specific industry.

The mobile hydrolysis system, developed by the Pentagon and known as Field Deployable Hydrolysis system is designed to convert chemical agents into compounds that cannot be used for military purposes by mixing it with water and other chemical products and



then heating them. It is usually used to neutralize a great amount of chemical precursors in a rapid way before the Syrian government could restore its arsenal of chemical weapons.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) assured that the degradation manner did not imply that any type of chemical product would be spilled into the sea. The final product, a highly diluted liquid, but still slightly toxic, would be transported to a commercial center for waste disposal that has not been identified. The vessel of 198 meters length has been equipped with additional security measures and air filters to carry out the procedure with total security. To the 35 members of the crew, it was necessary to add 63 people to meet special needs of the vessel and increase security.

The United Kingdom would also degrade the main precursor agents in its specialized plant in the port of Ellesmere, in the south of Manchester. Destruction would be carried out in Veolia facilities, in the city of Cheshire.

2. At room temperature, sodium hydroxide is a crystalline white solid with no odor that absorbs air humidity (hygroscopic). It is a manufactured substance that when dissolved in water or neutralized with some acid material, it liberates a great amount of heat that may be enough to burn combustible materials.

3. Bleach is the name used for a variety of substances that in water solutions are oxidant, frequently used as disinfectant, bleaching agent and, in general, as organic matter solvent.

Germany has committed to burn neutralized sulphide waste of the Cape Ray in government facilities in Munster, belonging to the Lower Saxony. In spite of the initial German rejection to accept chemical weapons on its soil, the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Frank- Walter Steinmeier, said that the country had decided not to excuse from its responsibility.

Also, the United States assured that the greatest part of effluents and secondary chemical products will be processed in Port Arthur, Texas, in a plant that was previously used for the destruction of its own chemical weapons.

#### INITIAL OPTIONS OF THE PLAN

The dates initially scheduled were:

- › December 31, 2013: Initial deadline for the withdrawal of precursor agents of chemical products from Syrian territory, called “Priority One”.
- › February 5, 2014: Initial deadline for the withdrawal of less hazardous precursor agents of chemical products from Syrian territory, called “Priority Two”.
- › June 30, 2014: Deadline for the destruction of the whole chemical arsenal of Syria.

The initial plan approved by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons required that the 1,300 tons of the main chemical component would be out of Syria before the end on December, 2013. The rest of the components called priority two had to get out of the territory before February 5, 2014.

The approval of the plan took place on November 15, when Albania rejected to collaborate with the United States after Norway had reacted in the same way. In spite of the initial rejection, both Norway and Denmark offered vessels to take precursor agents out of Syria. Belgium

and France also rejected to participate by saying that destruction should take place in Syrian territory.

In one of the first announcements, the joint mission assured that the Syrian government had reached, on November 1, the date set for the destruction of its production facilities and load of chemical weapons.

The head of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Ahmed Uzumcu, presented on December 17 the detail of plans for the destruction of more than 1,200 tons of chemical precursor agents. Surveillance inspectors checked the inventory of Syrian chemical weapons and confirmed the deactivation of the whole manufacturing equipment in 21 places, also informing that the destruction of facilities was being carried out.

Russia has also confirmed that it would provide security to transport and load within Syria using special containers and decontamination equipment supplied by the United States. Moreover, China supplied ten ambulances and survival equipment. Finland offered immediate response equipment. Denmark and Norway agreed to supply vessels that transport precursor agents and those that provide security. Russia and China offered to give naval security to transport to the Italian port, especially adapted to receive and transfer chemical load to the US vessel.

#### FIRST INCONVENIENCE

In spite of the initial plans of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to eliminate the most toxic agents before the end of the year and the rest by mid-February, these plans were delayed by a mixture of legal, environmental and security challenges. However, Denmark, Italy and Norway confirmed the shipment of



El buque Cap Ray MV en donde se realizó el proceso de hidrólisis.



Proceso de hidrólisis desarrollado dentro del buque.

*The mobile hydrolysis system, developed by the Pentagon and known as Field Deployable Hydrolysis system is designed to convert chemical agents into compounds that cannot be used for military purposes by mixing it with water and other chemical products and then heating them.*

resources capable of transporting chemical products, as no country had allowed for their destruction in their own territory. In order to avoid the problem, officers of Obama administration analyzed the possibility to prepare an auxiliary vessel of the US Navy, the Cape Ray, with mobile hydrolysis units.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons confirmed, on October 31, that Syria had completed the functional destruction of critical equipment for all the facilities for production, mixing and filling plants of chemical weapons turning them inoperable.

On December 3, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, expressed his great concern for the security of international inspectors that would supervise the destruction and elimination of chemical weapons in Syria and warned that an increase of confrontation among Syrian combatants would be a risk for their lives. He expressed his concerns in a letter to the UN Security Council in which he gave new details about the international plans for the elimination of the arsenal of Syria. He mentioned that the joint mission, integrated by 15 experts of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and 48 members of the UN, was getting ready on the field for the last and most dangerous stage of the operation: transport of a great amount of chemical agents through a war zone to the Syrian port of Latakia, where they would be sent outside the country.

#### THE TRUE BEGINNING OF THE OPERATION

The first shipment of 16 tons of priority chemical products left Latakia on January 7, 2014 in a Danish commercial vessel accompanied by vessels from Russia, China, Denmark and Norway. Once in Gioia Tauro, 560 tons of Priority One material, including sulfur gas and DF, the precursor agent of sarin, were transferred to the Cape Ray vessel so that, when sailing in international waters, could carry out neutralization by hydrolysis.



Sigrid Kaag, encargada del control de la misión.

The second load of chemical weapons was exported by ship on January 27. Anyway, the slow elimination and delayed domestic transport in Syria could not make it possible to comply with the initial deadline for the most hazardous precursor agents. At the same time, this increased concern due to the threat that some other deadline would not be complied with in less than two weeks.

On January 31, the Head of the UN chemical weapons surveillance body urged Syria to accelerate the elimination of its chemical weapons, a day after Washington accused the Syrian government of causing a deliberate halt in the elimination of weapons in order to acquire more negotiation power and, in a new complaint, of not complying with the commitment to destroy the 12 facilities that manufacture them. Syrians lost the first deadline set for December 31 for the elimination of the most hazardous toxins and, before missing the second deadline set for February 5, they also received a warning call.

At the same time, the Russian government, through its Foreign Relations vice minister, Gennady Gatilov, told RIA (the Russian news agency) on February 4 that Damascus authorities were planning a "great load" to complete the shipment of their chemical weapons outside the country on March 1 which was delayed more than one week.

#### FRAGILITY OF DATES AND ASSIDUITY OF DELAYS

On February 21, the Syrian government found another delay until mid-May for the export of its arsenal of chemical weapons and to destroy 12 facilities that manufactured ammunition before. The intention was to breach the deadline set for March 15 for the destruction of 12 facilities for chemical weapons manufacture, seven reinforced hangars and five subterranean structures

alleging that the action was onerous. Moreover, the Syrians proposed to deactivate the facilities but not to destroy them.

Diplomatic sources said, on February 26, that the last Syrian commitment to transport most of the chemical products left to its Mediterranean port of Latakia would be on April 13. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said that the fourth expedition which had mustard gas, had left Syria that day, urging Damascus to “keep the drive” in the shipment of chemical products. It also explained that shipment from two places, where security measures were scarce, would be delivered in Latakia on April 27 as there had been two attacks to the vehicles that transported the load.

The responsible for the Mission Surveillance, Sigrid Kaag, announced on March 4, that about a third of the material of chemical weapons from Syria had been removed or destroyed. She also stated that Syria had agreed to accelerate and intensify its efforts to remove chemicals in a new period of 60 days. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons stated that Damascus had already delivered more than six shipments of toxic agents confirming that two more were sent to the port of Latakia.

Two weeks later, on March 19, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons explained that two shipments, including some of the most lethal chemical products of the reserve were presented on March 14 and 17 in the port of Latakia, where they were transported to the cargo ships, totaling 10 shipments exported until that moment which are 45.6 per cent of the total. According to the announcement, about 29.5 per cent of precursor agents called Priority One, including the total amount of sulfur gas, had been destroyed. 82.6 per cent of precursor agents of Priority

*Ahmed Uzumcu, president of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said proudly that never before a whole arsenal of mass destruction weapons had been eliminated from a country that has internal armed conflict, adding that this could be carried out under a strict deadline.*

Two, which are not necessarily toxic but are ingredients for lethal gases and sarin agents had also been eliminated.

The revision of the schedule, that required the end of the shipment by the end of April instead of February 6 as it was set, came after Syria had lost the renewed schedule in an effort for destruction which was questioned worldwide. In this respect, Syria proposed to seal facilities but leave them intact, while the United States required the destruction arguing that otherwise they could reactivate.

On the following Wednesday, March 26, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons stated in a report to the United Nations that the total percentage of chemical substances that were eliminated or destroyed rose up to 53.6 per cent and that Syria committed to eliminate all chemical substances of its territory by April 13, with the exception of those that were in areas “that are currently inaccessible” which they estimated could be eliminated by April 27.

A spokesman of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Michael Luhan, announced on April 4, that Syria had delivered a lot of chemical weapons materials for export and destruction abroad for the first time in more than two weeks, showing a delay that increased concern about the preparation and capacity to comply with the recently extended deadline.

With the pressure of the deadline set for April 27, this Organization informed on April 18 that Syria had sent another shipment of toxic agents for destruction abroad, therefore the program would be complete in 75 per cent.

In the report, they explained that the 16<sup>o</sup> shipment to the port of Latakia was of eight containers, including those of Priority One. This was the third one in less than two weeks, which showed an acceleration of Syrian shipments in an attempt to compensate long delays, thus, the deadline set for the beginning of February to finish the process was missed. Beyond the recent increase in the speed of deliveries, it seemed unlikely that Syria would be able to finish this action before the revised deadline set

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for April 27, but there was the possibility to revise it some time later. The comment made by a spokesman was that the most important thing was that “we will soon be able to announce that all chemical agents have been eliminated.”

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons presented, on April 22, a new press release stating that almost 90 per cent of chemical substances had been withdrawn from the country and there were only two or three shipments left, adding that lot 17, reserve of chemical elements, had been delivered.

Sigrid Kaag said on April 27 that although the Syrian government had agreed to complete the delivery or destruction of its chemical agents; in fact, 92.5 of the arsenal that was destroyed was loaded and there has been significant progress to eliminate the 7.5 per cent left. However, it did not specify which chemical agents he referred to as “left”.

On May 8, Kaag announced that arsenals of chemical weapons from Syria that had not been taken yet, which were 8 per cent (about 100 tons), was still inaccessible as it was stored near an area under the power of insurgents. Moreover, he specified that experts in elimination would have less than one week to take material out once there was access to the place near Damascus. Material mentioned was 5 containers of the most hazardous substances and 11 containers of other chemical agents necessary to manufacture weapons.

#### THE TRUE BEGINNING OF THE END

The US Pentagon through a spokesman announced on

May 20 that Syria was starting to move the reserve of chemical weapons left. This piece of news followed a great announcement made by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons about the fact that this country had destroyed its whole declared arsenal of isopropanol, a main precursor agent for the production of sarin gas.

Now 7.2 per cent of the material of chemical weapons from Syria is still in the country and waits for the rapid elimination of destruction from now on. The Joint Mission urges Syrian authorities to carry out this task as soon as possible, said the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons of the United Nations in a press release.

On June 5, Sigrid Kaag called both the international community and the Syrian government to ensure that the last 16 containers of hazardous chemical products would be immediately withdrawn from the country. He added that safety conditions in the area under dispute, not far from Damascus, have been very volatile. He also mentioned that getting the last containers in the Danish and Norwegian vessels is very critical and asked for help to dominant nations. Last, he said that Syria would not comply with the deadline set for June 30 but that the joint mission was waiting to be completed and to deliver the work left within a short period of months.

A Norwegian load vessel which carried around 500 tons of chemical weapons from the Syrian government arsenal set sail on June 7 towards Finland and the United States. However, correspondents say that the

fight and threat of attacks by rebels have seriously delayed the elimination of weapons.

On June 23, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons announced that Syria delivered its materials left to be destroyed abroad and this was an important achievement for a country that was at war. However, it did not mention that Syria was free from all chemical weapons as the verification was not complete and reminded Syrian authorities that they had not destroyed a dozen facilities used for the manufacturing of ammunition.

Ahmed Uzumcu, president of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said proudly that never before a whole arsenal of mass destruction weapons had been eliminated from a country that has internal armed conflict, adding that this could be carried out under a strict deadline. Sigrid Kaag, who was responsible for the mission, showed enthusiasm.

#### DEADLINE NOT COMPLIED WITH AND PROPHETIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apart from the fact that Syria delivered the last container in time, its repeated delay in the transport of remaining chemical products caused the deadline set for June 30 for the destruction of chemical substances as agreed to be lost. This is due to the fact that, as from that moment, it would be necessary to have from two to four months for all products to be treated in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea to make them not hazardous.

It could be foreseen that statements made by the veteran mediator of the UN, Lakhdar Brahimi, about Syria being a “failed state”, similar to Somalia and the conflict extending beyond its borders would not be true. The Western side did not want his predictions with

*The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons confirmed, on October 31, that Syria had completed the functional destruction of critical equipment for all the facilities for production, mixing and filling plants of chemical weapons turning them inoperable.*

respect to the fact that although the UN Security Council was not interested in Afghanistan, a small, poor and far away country, one day this surprised them, Syria was even worse!

The fact that the Syrian government did not have chemical weapons makes it possible to solve some tactical doubts although they become strategic when balancing the following options:

- › Sunni opposing rebels may be able to defeat government troops as these do not have a fearful manner to favourably unbalance conflicts.
- › President Bashar al- Assad, showing strength of his military instrument, still without chemical weapons may defeat rebels and then legitimate his new 7- year presidential term.
- › If Sunni terrorist rebels of the ISIL, in their expansion to create a caliphate with parts of Syria and Irak, impose themselves over Syrian rebels and troops loyal to Assad and can split territories of both countries, this would be worse.

When closing this chapter on conflicts by mid- 2014, at least one of the hegemonic powers of the region, Russia, which keeps supporting the Syrian government and which has always vetoed most of the resolutions issued by the Security Council, it is for the first time aware of the existence of more terrorist threat which could, apart from affecting both parties, consolidate and split territories. The vice minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Ryabkoy, stated this in an appeal to the United States and Europe, aimed at taking “serious” steps to fight terrorism and warning about the threat over several Middle East countries and their corresponding regional extra support.

It is time for both disarming chemical threats and unifying western interests of all countries involved so that they can coexist with the real peace needs of the Syrian people Insha’Allah (may God want).

› REFEREED ARTICLE



Ahmed Uzumcu, president of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

# MARTÍN GARCIA'S CAMPAIGN TO MONTEVIDEO IN 1814<sup>1</sup>

From specific to joint actions

This article is an analysis of the events that took place in the City of Buenos Aires and Montevideo during the times of the colony and subsequent times, taking into account the strategic importance of land and naval actions that resulted in the fall of Montevideo in 1814. Also, the first steps to joint operations and their effectiveness could be seen.

KEY WORDS: VICEROYALTY OF THE RIO DE LA PLATA / INDEPENDENCE / ADMIRAL BROWN / NAVY CAMPAIGNS

By **Marcelo Tarapow**

## REGIONAL CONTEXT IN THE AMERICAS

After centuries of Hispanic dominance, freedom words were pronounced almost simultaneously in different parts of the American continent. It may be said that at the beginning of the 19th century, Spanish territories were formed by the Viceroyalties of New Spain, New Granada, of Peru and of the Río de La Plata. We could say that the Captaincy General of Chile was also dependent from the Viceroyalty of Peru and had its government house in Santiago de Nueva Extremadura. Sea trade was limited to two ports of Spain, which were Sevilla and Cadiz and four in America: Cartagena, Veracruz, La Habana and Portobelo, in the territory of Panama.

New Granada had its capital in the city of Santa Fe (today, Bogota) and its emancipator movements were temporarily defeated after the re-conquest of these territories by Ferdinand VII of Spain in 1815. Independence came in 1819. A similar situation took place with New Spain, with its capital in the City of Mexico where emancipation came in 1821.

Our Viceroyalty was created on August 11, 1776 and had its capital in Buenos Aires. The territories of Alto Peru were added to the territories dominated by the Río de La Plata and this increased its value due to the products from the north, especially those obtained from mining.

A few days later, on August 9, the Naval Station was created in Montevideo, a place not only for the royal fleet, but where there were also the Army troops.

The division of central powers, political and administrative power in Buenos Aires and military and economic power in Montevideo, was enough for both cities to grow full of disputes and suspicions. This situation of having two branches of power did not respond to a fanciful reaction but to three main reasons: from the geographical point of view, Montevideo had a better port; from the military strategy, it was necessary to have a stronger military presence to dissuade new expansion Lusitanian and English intentions and from the political point of view, Buenos Aires was the place where the main routes to the interior of the territories of the Río de La Plata converged and where the most influential personalities resided.

In 1777, Viceroy Pedro de Ceballos arrived in the Río de La Plata to be the head of the Viceroyalty with a fleet of five ships, seven frigates, and ten smaller ships which

1. The Argentine Navy gives the Navy Combat of Montevideo a special value. For this reason May 17, 1814 was the date selected to celebrate its anniversary, and there are still important navy actions between Martín García and San Nicolás.



"Ataque y toma de la Isla Martín García", José Murature. Author's note: This image is oil on canvas and is exhibited at the Museo Naval de la Nación (Argentine Navy Museum). Circa 1865.

*At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Spanish territories were formed by the Viceroyalties of New Spain, New Granada, of Peru and of the Río de La Plata.*

accompanied almost 100 ships with 9,000 men of the Army and an important amount of military equipment.

Some years later, in 1796, through a Royal Order, Marine Brigadier José de Bustamante y Guerra was distinguished as Military and Political Governor of Montevideo and Commandant of Vessels of the Río de La Plata. On our side, there was only the Captaincy of the Port of Buenos Aires which was in charge of sub- Lieutenant Martín Jacobo Thompson who only had one ship with a cannon.

After the events of the May Revolution and in light of the Buenos Aires rebellion, Spain decided in January 1811 to appoint Montevideo as the capital of the Viceroyalty, turning it into the "Gravity Center" in operational terms.

The first siege of Montevideo started on May 18 when the Battle of Las Piedras took place during which José Gervasio Artigas showed his bravery and leadership and ended on October 20, 1811 when the armistice was signed.

This battle has more strategic than tactical value because, when it took place, General Belgrano had been defeated in Paraguari and Tacuari, in January and March, respectively. After this, the disaster of Huaqui in the territory of Bolivia took place. Moreover, under the command of the Maltese Juan Bautista Azopardo, the first Fleet of the United Provinces of the Río de La Plata, which included schooner "Independencia", the brigantine "25 de Mayo" and the sloop "Americana", tried to cross Paraná river to support Belgrano. Near San Nicolás de los Arroyos, on March 2, 1811 it was defeated in spite of its bravery, especially the Commandant's bravery. This combat was the baptism by fire of the Argentine Navy.

It is worth mentioning that the revolutionary spirit of the Río de La Plata had been halted there. Artigas' victory was key for the liberty cause. This first siege failed as river communication lines were under total control of the Royal, not only in the Río de La Plata, but also in the Paraná and Uruguay rivers, therefore, supplies to

*Proceedings in the year 1814 started on March 9 with the deployment of ships. Brown had two purposes: to take the Martin Garcia island and to destroy the Spanish navy force or, at least, part of it.*

Montevideo were never totally stopped. Some authors say that the action was not politically supported.

An agreement between Elío and Saratea ended with the withdrawal of troops and the acknowledgment of the authority of the former over the Banda Oriental<sup>2</sup>. In practice, this fact turned into problems in the *criollo*<sup>3</sup> army. On the one hand, Rondeau went to Entre Ríos and, on the other hand, Artigas went north starting the Exodus of the Uruguayan People, another sign of his prestige and leadership. However, the armistice signed may be understood as an exchange for time and people. The monarchists recovered territories to an extension of what now is the province of Entre Ríos while the *criollos* tried to reorganize the cause in the theatre of operations. Independence would not be reached if there was a Spanish bastion in Montevideo.

It was for this reason that not so later, in October 1812, the second siege and fortress to the City started and in Montevideo with an uncertain scenario. Intermittent fights, non- decisive siege and lack of coordination with Buenos Aires were the features of its beginning. The victory obtained by San Martín in San Lorenzo was a great motivation for the liberty case. However, the theatre of operations was huge and a few months later news about the defeats of Vilcapugio, in October, Ayohuma, in November 1813 and the Spanish advance over Chile from Peru arrived.

### NAVY CAMPAIGN IN 1814

At that time, Buenos Aires left the triumvirates and chose the directorates. Gervasio Posadas, as the new Supreme Director of the United Provinces of the Río de La Plata and with the advice of Larrea and Carlos María de Alvear,

became aware of the fact that the efforts over Montevideo were not effective and exhaustion was felt in the lines. With the main support of an American businessman called Pío William White, in January 1814, a new fleet was ordered to be formed.

After a selection of candidates, it was under the control of Willima Brown who would put his Irish flag in the Hercules, a small frigate of 40 metres of length and 8 metres of beam.

The main purpose was to block the port of Montevideo and close the siege carried out by the army. But Brown analyzed the situation and decided that in order to comply with this purpose, it was necessary to conquer Martin Garcia island, a key element for the control of the estuaries of Río de La Plata and Paraná as well as trade. This island had a Spanish garrison with several pieces of artillery and feet troop. Moreover, he received the support of a fleet under the command of Captain Jacinto



"Almirante Guillermo Brown" [Admiral William Brown]. Author's note: This image is oil on canvas, exhibited at the Army Staff. Circa 1937

2. Banda Oriental was the name of the South American territories east of the Uruguay River and north of Río de La Plata, comprising the modern nation of Uruguay, the modern Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul and some parts of Santa Catarina. It was the easternmost territory of the Viceroyalty of the Río de La Plata.

3. *Criollos* were a social class in the hierarchy of the overseas colonies established by Spain in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, especially in Hispanic America, comprising the locally born people of confirmed European (primarily Spanish) ancestry.



"Combate del Buceo, 17 de mayo de 1814", Roberto Castellanos. Author's note: This image is oil on canvas, exhibited at the Military Navy College. Circa 1925

de Romarate Salamanca, a great strategist and naval officer who would become some years later the Ministry of War of Spain.

Proceedings started on March 9 with the deployment of ships. Brown had two purposes: to take the Martin Garcia island and to destroy the Spanish navy force or, at least, part of it. After cruel combats which produced severe damage to Brown's vessels, an important number of casualties and after a successful amphibious disembarkment on March 15, it was possible to take control of the island without destroying the royal fleet. Spanish vessels avoided the final combat and being direct witnesses of the loss of land, they went north through Uruguay river.

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Brown, in spite of having lost two commandants of his ships and suffered serious damage, thought about going to block Montevideo as he saw that the Spanish fleet was damaged and did not have provisions. In this way, it would be possible to attack the vessels that were in the Banda Oriental fortress before these two forces could join again. However, the Commandant of the criolla Fleet received the order from the government to take all Romarate vessels with the idea of eliminating any possibility to create a threat from the rear and then concentrate all efforts over Montevideo. Commodore Brown did not agree to the order and decided to comply with it in part. He sent part of his fleet under the command of Thomas Nother, possibly knowing that Romarate fleet would not resist as it did not have provisions. The fog of war was present in this action as Spanish vessels were supplied from land.

The end was not favourable for the criollos that faced them near Arroyo de la China. Again, the change of people for space and time was favourable for Brown as he advanced over Montevideo and the Spanish vessels never got together again. Nother, another commandant, died during this action.

The fleet of the United Provinces, after getting some provisions and repair occupied positions in front of the

On May 14, the royal fleet under the command of Captain Miguel de la Sierra set sail to confront Brown but the lack of strength of the wind limited battle and delayed the main actions until the 16th. Knowing the depth in the area and after a brave action, Brown was able to break the enemy army attacking it without pause until they withdrew. Afterwards, during the following day, he was able to corral them on the same coast in front of the people from the place, being able to defeat them completely in a combat that was decisive for the emancipation cause. The criollo navy effort achieved their goal and they now imposed their control over the sea and rivers.

## FINAL COMMENTS

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Going a little further over the lessons learned, at the time of planning an operation, nobody thinks of an effort of only one force. It is common to hear talk about joint and combined action. However, it has been several years that reality made it necessary to talk about a more complete and complex structure, as the multi-agency is. If we make the problem simpler, this is the evolution of the traditional armies in which a group of soldiers was assigned missions of security, rebuilding roads and bridges, removal of debris, support to civil population. A multi-agency organization is flexible and allows to act efficiently in an armed conflict, in a peace mission or during the aftermath of a natural disaster. This is the road we have taken.

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## DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTINCTIVE COAT OF ARMS AND HERALDIC MEANING

In the center, there is the emblem of the Estado Mayor Conjunto de las Fuerzas Armadas.

The background has a chess that shows the Military Art in white and light blue, the colours of the Argentine flag. Blue means justice, enthusiasm, loyalty and truth; and white means purity, integrity, obedience, firmness, surveillance and eloquence.



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*“To train students in the exercise of conducting at Operational Strategic level and in the development of the functions of the Chiefs of Staff at the Operational Strategic and Military Strategic levels in the framework of joint and joint- combined actions in order to optimize the use of military instrument of the Nation and to train professionals interested in National Defense through the development of post-degree education courses, research projects and outreach activities”.*

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