

The contemporaneity of Clausewitz's concepts in Welcome Operation: Evidence and Current Relevance

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Summary: Currently, Venezuela is facing an intense migration process due to the serious political, economic and social crisis that the country is going through. As Brazil has approximately 1,486km of border with this nation, it has become a viable option to escape this crisis. Given this, the Brazilian State decided to make efforts through government actions, employing multiple actors, with the aim of mitigating its effects in the northern region of the country. Through ministerial directive no. 3, dated February 28, 2018, issued by the Minister of Defense, Welcome Operation was created, with the purpose of carrying out the humanitarian reception of Venezuelan immigrants in the State of Roraima. To put into practice the planning and execution of the operation, the Humanitarian Logistics Task Force (FT Log Hum) was conceived, which proposed to guarantee continuous and timely advice to the operational coordinator of the task force, through a state- largest group composed of members of the Brazilian Navy, the Brazilian Army and the Brazilian Air Force. This general staff is responsible for uniting the efforts of the federal, state and municipal governments with regard to emergency assistance measures to welcome Venezuelan citizens and for interaction with other international agencies and civil society organizations. The concept of friction is a central idea in Carl von Clausewitz's military theory, where he says that it is all the factors that make war more complex and difficult. These factors include, for example, the uncertainties of the battlefield, the unpredictability of enemy actions, limitations of material and human resources, logistical difficulties, fatigue and fear of soldiers, among others. Friction, therefore, is a constant obstacle that affects all military operations, making them more difficult, uncertain and risky. For Clausewitz, understanding and managing friction are essential to the successful conduct of war. Given this, the following research question arises: Where is it possible to identify Clausewitz's concept of friction in the context of Welcome Operation? The objective of the work is to present to the academic community the contemporary nature of Clausewitz's concepts, through two cases in Welcome Operation, in addition to, based on this case, promoting debates and discussions about other possibilities of friction in the same operation. To this end, the research begins with the presentation of the structure of Welcome Operation, addressing its basic axes of action, and based on this understanding, seeking information and analyzing numerical data, particularly on sheltering and internalization and then, the concept of friction in more depth. With these understandings, through the quantitative monthly graph of Venezuelans internalized, the moment of friction will be identified and the reason why the friction happened will be discussed. In this study, a methodological perspective will be followed with a qualitative research character, through methodological paths such as: description, case comparison, explanation of results, observation and interpretation. To conclude, this work seeks, through Welcome Operation, to ratify the contemporaneity of Clausewitz's concepts, since his ideas studied in the 19th century continue to be relevant and influential today.

Introduction

The issue of forced international migration has become a global issue in the 21st century. For different reasons on different continents, thousands of individuals have left their homelands in search of greater security and better living conditions. In South America, due to internal economic issues, the Venezuelan population has been systematically destroying their country. Destinations vary according to economic conditions, migratory networks and other attraction factors in neighboring countries on the continent and beyond. Brazil has become one of these destinations, with 2,199km of border with Venezuela (12.2% of Brazilian land borders) and a direct land access route, which enters the country through the city of Pacaraima, in Roraima (CRUZ, 2020).

The importance of Welcome Operation is not only for Venezuelans who enter the national territory, but also for Brazilians who live in Roraima, and has repercussions for the country in general. Guaranteeing border planning, the well-being of our nationals and providing humanitarian aid to those in need internationally is an effort that both safeguards national sovereignty and maintains the country's image, repairing nations. As an essential operation for the country, which has been taking place since 2018, it is important to reflect on the various challenges it faces on a daily basis (MATTOS et al., 2021).

Speaking of challenge in the context of a crisis, Clausewitz's concept of friction explains those factors that make "war" more complex and difficult. Carl von Clausewitz is a Prussian military theorist who lived in the 19th century and is considered one of the most important thinkers on war and strategy. His most famous book,

"On War," was published posthumously in 1832 and is still widely read and discussed today. Despite being written more than a century ago, many of Clausewitz's concepts and ideas continue to be relevant and influential in studies of war and international politics. His concept of "friction", for example, is still discussed in contemporary debates about the uncertainties of the battlefield, the unpredictability of enemy actions, the limitations of material and human resources, logistical difficulties, fatigue and fear of soldiers, between others (FRANCHI; RAMOS; FERREIRA, 2018).

Based on Welcome Operation, as an international reference of governmental action by the Brazilian State and Clausewitz, as a notable war theorist and military strategist, the following research question arises: Where is it possible to identify Clausewitz's concept of friction in the context of Welcome Operation? The objective of this work is to explain Welcome Operation to the academic community, highlighting its structure and its three pillars of action. Another intention of the research is to present Carl von Clausewitz, exposing some of his most expressive works, until arriving at his concepts, where it will be a list was made of the concept of Friction identified in Welcome Operation. And so, we seek to prove Clausewitz's contemporaneity and promote debates and discussions about other forms of friction present in the same operation.

Theoretical Reference

To understand the work, it is essential to study how the Welcome Operation maneuver was conceived, seeking information and numerical data, particularly about internalization, and based on this understanding, identify and discuss the presence of the concept of friction in some time of the operation in question. Welcome Operation is included in the list of subsidiary responsibilities of the Armed Forces, as provided for in Complementary Law No. 136. It constitutes the largest operation carried out by the Armed Forces in the context of welcoming Venezuelan immigrants. It is configured as a humanitarian, joint and interagency mission (CRUZ, 2021).

The Brazilian Army was defined as the main actor in the context of the Venezuelan migratory flow, as it finds support in its own nature, provided for in article no. 142 of the 1988 Constitution, as a permanent and regular national institution, which has capillarity and the ability to deploy resources in all locations in the national territory, being able to act in a subsidiary way to cooperate with national development and civil defense, in addition to having police power in regions considered border areas (DUARTE, 2019).

Operation Welcome was based on three fundamental pillars: the first refers to Border Planning, which consists of receiving, identifying, screening and immunizing immigrants entering the country. The entry points, initially, were in Pacaraima and Boa Vista, with the city of Manaus being added more recently. The second axis is Shelter, which consists of temporarily housing immigrants in order to provide conditions for integration into Brazilian society or even return to their country of origin. The third axis is Internalization, which consists of effectively integrating immigrants into Brazilian society through their installation in cities in all administrative regions according to their particular situations (CRUZ, 2020).

To achieve the research objective and facilitate understanding, this study was limited in the study of the internalization axis from its beginning until April 2023.

Internalization

Interiorization consists of integrating immigrants into Brazilian society in other States of the Federation, distributing this contingent in a balanced way, already having a certain destination for their social and economic inclusion. In this way, cities are sought that offer job opportunities, places in the educational system and housing so that immigrants can rebuild their lives in Brazil (CRUZ, 2020).

Its purpose is to avoid overloading the State of Roraima, which is unable to absorb such a large number of inhabitants in vulnerable situations. Relocating part of the contingent of Venezuelans, currently located in Roraima, to other states is essential to promote real conditions of socioeconomic inclusion for refugees, immigrants and their families in Brazilian society, in addition to relieving pressure on public services in that State. Furthermore, there will be an improvement in the conditions of employability and socioeconomic inclusion of those who choose to stay in the state and improved access to local public services (CAPELL; SILVA, 2021).

Despite the organization of emergency assistance measures to welcome Venezuelan refugees and immigrants in vulnerable situations, their large influx in Roraima has been permanent and uninterrupted, causing saturation in the capacity to provide services in the most diverse services in the state's cities. Added to this, it is notable that the state of Roraima and the cities of Pacaraima and Boa Vista are small in terms of population and have an economic situation with little dynamism. Thus, as the flow of immigrants increases, there is increasing difficulty in their socioeconomic integration in the state and in the regular provision of the public services they demand (health, education, social assistance, security, etc.), causing dependence on federal assistance actions, such as shelter and food, which are emergency in nature (CRUZ, 2020).

For the Armed Forces, the logistical transport function is most highlighted in this final stage of Welcome Operation, considering the movement of Venezuelans to the interior of Brazil by air, with a preponderance of the Brazilian Air Force, and by road, with a preponderance for the Brazilian army. The air mode is most used for traveling from Boa Vista and Manaus to the state capitals. From there, movements occur by road, taking immigrants to cities in the interior of these federative entities (CAPELL; SILVA, 2021).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the organization responsible for operationalizing internalization, based on a Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The criteria for internalization are: migration regularization, immunization, clinical health assessment and signing of the voluntary agreement. The priority is for immigrants residing in public shelters in Roraima (HONORATO, 2019).

By promoting the integration and reception of Venezuelan immigrants and refugees in different regions of Brazil, internalization becomes a fundamental stage in Operation Welcome. Although this axis presents logistical and socioeconomic challenges, it is an important measure to guarantee the dignity and protection of migrants and refugees, in addition to contributing to the construction of a more inclusive and supportive society.

Carl von Clausewitz

Carl von Clausewitz was a Prussian soldier who lived from 1780 to 1831. He participated in combats for his country, in addition to carrying out academic duties aimed at training personnel and doctrine for its army. During his life, wrote the compendium *Vom Krieg* (On War), a work that addresses his theory on war, the target of studies and discussions in universities and military academies for the world to the present day (LEONARD, 1988).

For an introduction to Clausewitz, it is essential to present his main concepts so that the reader understands the way he thought and can make the necessary connections to answer the question proposed by the research, making it possible to explore the military theory he developed and understand its historical relevance and influence on contemporary strategic studies.

An important aspect for understanding Clausewitz's theory concerns the predominant tendencies that make war a paradoxical trinity, which together make up the so-called Clausewitzian Trinity: violence, hatred and enmity; chance and probability; and reason and politics (CLAUSEWITZ, 1984).

Two other very important concepts in Clausewitz's theory of war are Center of Gravity and Friction. The first of them is understood as the central point of all power and movement, on which everything depends, being, therefore, against this point all energies must be directed, for the attainment of decisive results and success in operations (CLAUSEWITZ, 1984).

The concept of Friction is the only one that more or less contains the factors that distinguish real war from war on paper". It is synthesized by countless unpredictable incidents of small importance, which combine and reduce the general level of performance, but can, however, be overcome by iron willpower (CLAUSEWITZ, 1984).

The concept of friction is a central idea in the Prussian thinker's military theory. According to Clausewitz, friction is the sum of all factors that make war more complex and difficult than it may seem in theory. These factors include, for example, the uncertainties of the battlefield, the unpredictability of enemy actions, limitations of material and human resources, logistical difficulties, fatigue and fear of soldiers, among others. Friction, therefore, is a constant obstacle that affects all military operations, making them more difficult, uncertain and risky. For Clausewitz, understanding and managing friction are essential for the successful conduct of a war (FREITAS, 2013).

Methodological Framework

In this study, a methodological perspective will be followed with a qualitative research character, through methodological paths such as: description, explanation of results, observation and interpretation. Therefore, the techniques used include research capable of enriching and substantiating the topics to be discussed within the scope of the research, exploring the bibliography with sources based on specialized magazines, articles, the internet and academic works with data pertinent to the subject (VERGARA, 2009).

After gathering the collected data, interpreting results, identifying the concept of friction in Welcome Operation, reaching a conclusion about Clausewitz's contemporaneity in large-scale operations.

Result

Through a detailed study of the official website of Welcome Operation, it was possible to extract the following data on the number of Venezuelans internalized, from April 2018 to March 2023:



Source: (WELCOME OPERATION, 2023)

When analyzing the graph since April 2018, it is possible to notice a gradual and constant increase in the number of Venezuelans being internalized over the months. In February 2020, there was a peak of 3,110 people hospitalized, but in just two months, this number dropped abruptly to 1,004 individuals. Based on this change in pattern, the reason why this variation occurred will be discussed and analyzed, in order to conclude on the presence or absence of friction in this event.

Discussion

It is evident that the precipitous drop in the number of Venezuelans internalized is caused by the presence of COVID 19, which immediately led to the closure of borders and the beginning of restrictive movement measures. As a first factor, in February 2020, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro closed his border, discouraging the migration of its population, even with entry and exit via other routes, this restriction combined with fear of the virus, increased Venezuelan migratory fear (VAZ; AGUIAR FILHO, 2022).

A second aspect is about the slowdown in the economy, the Venezuelan's purpose in migrating to Brazil is the search for work and better living conditions for his family, the restrictive measures arising from COVID 19, increased unemployment, reduced the movement of people, once again discouraging the move towards Brazil.

The mobility limitation was not only for Venezuelans, but also for Brazilians, as the measures taken to combat the virus directly interfered with the entire internalization process, after all, shelters had to reduce their capacity, the number of flights was reduced, there was the need for tests for travel, in addition to the fear of transit homes about receiving more people (BARROS; SIMÕES; FRANCHI, 2022).

It is important to mention that, since the decision to be internalized is always made by the Venezuelan himself, all five types of internalization (shelter, family reunification, job vacancies, social gatherings and health problems) have been directly affected by the presence of the pandemic, which contributed to the significant reduction in the number of people hospitalized.

Conclusion

Through discussion of the results presented, it is possible to infer that friction was present in Welcome Operation on the occasion of the COVID 19 pandemic. It is possible to make this statement, as COVID 19 became a major obstacle that affected all modus operandi of the Welcome Operation, making it more difficult, uncertain and risky, exactly as Clausewitz described it, but in a war situation.

When Clausewitz states that the understanding and management of friction are essential for the successful conduct of a war, he confirms the conclusion of this research, regarding his contemporary times. After all, through the 100,000 Venezuelans internalized in Welcome Operation, until March 2023, it signals that all actors involved in coordinating the operation understood and managed the concept of friction by Clausewitz, called COVID19.

Therefore, currently, the concept of friction is applied in different contexts, such as in the planning and execution of military operations, in the management of crises and emergencies, and even in the daily activities of companies and organizations. The idea that things do not always go as planned and that it is necessary to be prepared to deal with unforeseen events and uncertainties continues to be relevant and current, confirming the timelessness of Carl von Clausewitz.

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