

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

U.S. Army General Orders, No. 92, dated 23 December 1921, reorganized the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, into a new school that in time became the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. That same order directed the school to establish “a publication monthly of the titles and brief synopsis of leading news items of military value to the instructors of the school.” In a 1922 report, the commandant, Brig. Gen. H. E. Ely, made note of the progress of the new publication describing it as having a uniform size, six by nine inches, and containing digests of selected articles and documents, as well as reviews of books and magazines received in the library. Reportedly, the school then printed and distributed six hundred copies of the first edition of the publication. In time, this publication would eventually be named *Military Review*.

For the next twelve years, the publication provided school instructors and students detailed summaries of works on military matters gleaned primarily from foreign magazines and journals, news reports on international developments, military books, and other sources. These summaries promised to complement the courses at Fort Leavenworth but in retrospect, resemble what today’s military students might recognize as a rather large and complex commandant’s reading list.

However, characterizing the early editions as merely reading lists is very misleading as to the true character of the summaries produced. A survey of the content of any of these early editions reveals a truly impressive amount of research behind the reviews. Though its focus was on identifying sources of a military nature, compilers of the review did not restrict themselves to exclusively military subjects. Instead, they sought out material that treated a wide range of subjects that promised to assist faculty and students develop a broader understanding of the global operating environment of the time. Consequently, the review included summaries of works on politics, religion, economics, philosophy, engineering, and history among many other topics.

Those works were found mainly in British, German, and French publications, but periodically, the compilers of the review pulled material from Russia, Poland, Brazil, Turkey, and India, among others. Sifting through and selecting recommended works from the vast amount of material available at the time must have been exhausting tasks for the editors.

In the December 1933 edition, the review included the first original article titled “Conduct of a Holding Attack.” The author was a student at the Leavenworth schools named J. Lawton Collins, who would later serve as VII Corps commander during the Normandy invasion and chief of staff of the Army during the Korean War. Unfortunately, in 1933, many of the school’s senior leaders thought that Lawton’s article violated operational security. Consequently, copies of that issue were recalled and three pages of the article excised before the issue was again made available, a dubious start to the publication of original analysis. Ironically, this incident illuminated the need for an official Army venue to publish original thought to stimulate discussion and debate among military professionals on important topics in a somewhat open forum. The publication, which in 1939 became officially known as *Military Review*, has since included original articles written by both military and civilian authors. Today, while *Military Review* periodically reflects the origins of the journal by republishing material taken from other sources, the vast majority of its content is original.

Over the decades, this journal has published thousands of articles, many of which introduced new concepts and provoked discussion. The topics in discussion were often unique to each era through which the U.S. Army was passing as it evolved from a small standing force that swelled with conscripts in times of emergency to its transition to a volunteer Army that eventually would become the world’s preeminent land force. Importantly, *Military Review* has not shied away from discussion of how broader social issues have affected the U.S. Army. For example, it was

among the first military venues to publish articles on how women should be integrated into the Army, to include the combat arms, as well as discussions of the evolving state of race relations within the force.

Each article in *Military Review* is thus a sampling of the times in which it was written, reflecting evolving thinking and attitudes in a range of dimensions (political, social, economic, technological, etc.) as world events and technological advances reshaped global society and with it the character of the operational environment. The rich collection of articles in *Military Review* offers concrete examples of information and opinion inside the Army across a spectrum of decades providing a unique repository of nuanced detail, much of which is from the prospective of junior participants in the major issues of the day.

As the editorial staff considered how best to depict a century's worth of thought in *Military Review*, it decided that the best way was to let the articles speak for themselves. Thus, the articles have been selected under the assumption that they reasonably represent each decade from which they were drawn as much as any single article is able. Moreover, though general officers and other luminaries published articles in *Military Review* over its history, the staff has chosen to use this issue to highlight contributions from the far more numerous junior contributors whose ideas and analysis were the mainstay of the journal over the last century. This was done with the conviction these contributors offer detailed insights into the opinions and views that prevailed within the Army in the era they were published.

The articles selected for this issue capture the evolving landscape on which the U.S. Army operated

and the ideas that these challenges inherent in a changing environment generated. Several articles illuminate technological change in the Army, from reliance on horse-drawn systems and horse cavalry to the use of mechanical vehicles, tanks, aircraft, and nuclear weapons. Other articles such as Lt. Col. George S. Patton's "Why They Fight" and Gen. Donn A. Starry's "To Change an Army" are emblematic of the thought that evolved within the U.S. Army during the Cold War. After the 9/11 attacks, *Military Review* became a major venue for discussion of counterterrorist and counterinsurgency operations. The blunt critique of the U.S. approach to counterinsurgency in Iraq by British Brig. Nigel R. F. Aylwin-Foster illustrates the character of the discourse in *Military Review* during the Global War on Terrorism. Finally, as diversity and inclusion emerged as critical points of debate with the U.S. defense community, *Military Review* provided a platform for authors like Col. (Ret.) Dwayne Wagner, whose article "We Have Come a Long Ways ... We Have a Ways to Go" offered keen insights into racial dynamics within the Army and reached a broad audience.

As we celebrate its 100th birthday, it is important to highlight *Military Review* as one of very few officially supported military publications that welcomes submissions from military members of all ranks as well as non-military contributors. The journal's mission of enabling and fostering discussion and debate on matters critical to the Army and its soldiers is its paramount strength. And in this role it continues to serve the U.S. Army as a unique and invaluable institution.

—Editor