

Military Review

THE PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL OF THE U.S. ARMY

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Cover photo: Soldiers assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Spartan, move toward an objective 10 September 2018 during a rehearsal for a combined live-fire exercise near Alexandria, Egypt. (Photo by Sgt. James Lefty Larimer, U.S. Army)

Next page: Soldiers assigned to the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, The Old Guard, place American flags at headstones 27 May 2021 at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. The more than fifty-year-old tradition known as "Flags In" is held annually to honor the Nation's fallen veterans. Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel helped soldiers place the flags. (Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)



2021 General William E. DePuy

Special Topics Writing Competition

This year's theme: "Contiguous and noncontiguous operations: pivoting to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command—the Army's role in protecting interests against adversaries who can contest the U.S. joint force in all domains."

Articles will be comparatively judged by a panel of senior Army leaders on how well they have clearly identified issues requiring solutions relevant to the Army in general or to a significant portion of the Army; how effectively detailed and feasible the solutions to the identified problem are; and the level of writing excellence achieved. Writing must be logically developed and well organized, demonstrate professional-level grammar and usage, provide original insights, and be thoroughly researched as manifest in pertinent sources.

Contest closes soon! Send in your entry by 12 July 2021!

- | | |
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| 1st Place | \$1,000 and publication in <i>Military Review</i> |
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| 3rd Place | \$500 and consideration for publication in <i>Military Review</i> |

For information on how to submit an entry, please visit <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/DePuy-Writing-Competition/>.



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Suggested Themes and Topics

Joint Operations

- Air/sea/land integration
- Joint/long-range precision fires
- Air and antimissile defense
- Joint forcible entry

Europe/Central Command/ Indo-Pacific Command

- Contiguous and noncontiguous operations
- New operational environment: adversaries operating in their "near abroad" (close proximity to own borders)
- Peer and near-peer adversaries contesting U.S. joint force in all domains

Cadets march to Michie Stadium for their graduation ceremony 22 May 2021 at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York. (Photo by Cadet Tyler Williams, U.S. Army)

Large-Scale Combat Operations/ Multi-Domain Operations

- Division as a formation
- Air and antimissile defense
- Deep operations
- Information advantage/military deception
- Field Manual 3-0—competition continuum (competition, crisis, conflict)
- Multi-domain task force
- Recon and security/cavalry operations
- Protection and security (air defense artillery, engineer, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, cavalry)

Other Topics

- What must be done to adjust junior leader development to the modern operational environment?

- What logistical challenges does the U.S. military foresee due to infrastructure limitations in potential foreign areas of operation, and how can it mitigate them?
- Defending against biological warfare—examination of the war waged by other than conventional military weapons
- Military role within interagency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural or humanitarian disasters
- What is the role for the Army/Reserve components in homeland security operations? What must the Army be prepared to do in support of internal security? Along our borders?
- Role of security force assistance brigades (SFAB) in the gray-zone competition phase drawn from experience of an SFAB in Africa or Europe





A group of Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC-B) students collaborate 27 April 2020 before conducting a fire direction simulation at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Students who were going through BOLC-B and Captains Career Courses would then participate in Project Athena and complete individual assessments focused on communication, critical thinking, and leadership skills during their program of instruction. (Photo by Sgt. Amanda Hunt, U.S. Army)

Project Athena

Enabling Leader Self-Development

Brig. Gen. Charles Masaracchia, U.S. Army

Col. Samuel Saine, U.S. Army

Dr. Jon Fallesen*

One of the most storied accounts of leader development in the U.S. Army involves senior leaders during World War II. The paths of leaders like George C. Marshall, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and George S. Patton kept crossing in the decades before they would organize, plan, and conduct the campaigns that led to Allied victory. All three were affected by the advice and mentoring of Fox Conner, who retired in 1938 as a major general. Eisenhower in particular credited Conner with awakening a passion for studying doctrine, strategy, and tactics. Conner, when commanding Camp Gaillard, Panama, recruited Eisenhower to become his executive officer. Conner's mission was to modernize the defenses of the Canal Zone. As he did with Patton and Marshall, Conner took a professional interest in developing Eisenhower. Eisenhower, who was not known for his scholarly prowess in his Abilene, Kansas, schools or at West Point (he graduated 61st overall and 125th in discipline out of 164 cadets in his class), experienced "a sort of graduate school in military affairs and humanities" serving under Conner.¹ Eisenhower often accompanied Conner during horseback reconnaissance of potential troop emplacements and movement routes. On these excursions, they had an opportunity for in-depth discussions on far-ranging topics such as Carl von Clausewitz, Civil War history, soldiers and their conduct, coalition building, and cross-channel operations.² Conner impressed upon Eisenhower that he had the potential to have a major impact in

the next war. Conner rekindled Eisenhower's interest in studying history and the benefits of purposeful study. With those interests and skills heightened, Eisenhower graduated first in his class of 245 at the Command and General Staff School on his way to becoming the supreme Allied commander during the invasion of Nazi-occupied Western Europe.³

Such dedication to leader development is needed now and for the years ahead with the return of great-power competition. The United States is in constant competition while modernizing to field a more lethal and intelligent fighting force in preparation for potential conflict. To prevail in large-scale combat operations, the U.S. Army must develop and field superior equipment, exercise proven and clever tactics, and leverage its advantage in leadership.

Today, the Army is at an inflection point where it is working aggressively through talent management initiatives to maintain that leader advantage. One set of initiatives focuses

Brig. Gen. Charles Masaracchia, U.S. Army, is the eighth director of the Mission Command Center of Excellence, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He has commanded at every level to include 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, and 3rd Security Force Assistance Brigade. He served as commanding general of Train, Advise, Assist Command-East and as deputy commanding general-operations for Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan. He holds a BS from Norwich University and is a graduate of the Army's Command and General Staff College and the Joint Special Operations Command War College Fellowship at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill Triangle Institute.

Col. Samuel Saine, U.S. Army, is the director of the Center for the Army Profession and Leadership. He received his commission from the U.S. Military Academy and is a career field artillery officer. His last assignment was as the field artillery assistant commander at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Saine has four tours in the Middle East including Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Qatar. He commanded a field artillery battalion and the 4th Battlefield Coordination Detachment at Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina, and Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. He attended the Command and General Staff Officers' Course and the Naval War College, and he was the Army chief of staff's Senior Fellow to Harvard University.

Dr. Jon Fallesen has served as the chief of leadership research, assessment, and doctrine of the Center for the Army Profession and Leadership since 2004. He has led the development of competency models, leadership handbooks, training aids, self-development modules, and doctrinal manuals. He holds a PhD in human factors psychology from the University of South Dakota. He previously served as senior research psychologist at the U.S. Army Research Institute and was an engineering psychologist at the U.S. Army Human Engineering Laboratory. **Fallesen is the primary author of this article.*

on self-development, whereby leaders can improve themselves in many ways. They can

- emulate what they observe the best leaders do,
- absorb lessons from the study of military history,
- engage in exchanges with their colleagues in arms,
- study books assigned in classes and from professional reading lists,
- seek stretch experiences and assignments,
- engage fully in the classroom, and
- serve dutifully across the various training and deployment assignments around the globe.

The Army highly values human development, whether in cadet preparation programs, demanding entrance standards, Army education, or individual and collective training programs. An Army officer can spend five times longer in professional training

compared to what corporations require of their personnel.⁴ Competitive investments in the development of human capital can help the Army maintain an edge over peer and near-peer threats.

Self-Development and Feedback

Years of practical experience in leader development have shown that to move from existing abilities to an improved state, people have to receive feedback, pay attention to it, and act on it. Feedback is essential for change, whether it comes from an individual's own insight or it is provided by someone or something separate from the individual.

Feedback in its simplest form is information about performance or abilities. It indicates what one does or is capable of doing, what one does well, and directions for improvement. The Army has long recognized that feedback plays an important role in development. The leader development model used in 2002 in Field Manual 7-0,

Training the Force, is one such example (see figure 1). Although the field manual itself

has been superseded, the model is especially relevant because it shows how assessment and feedback apply to all leader development domains.

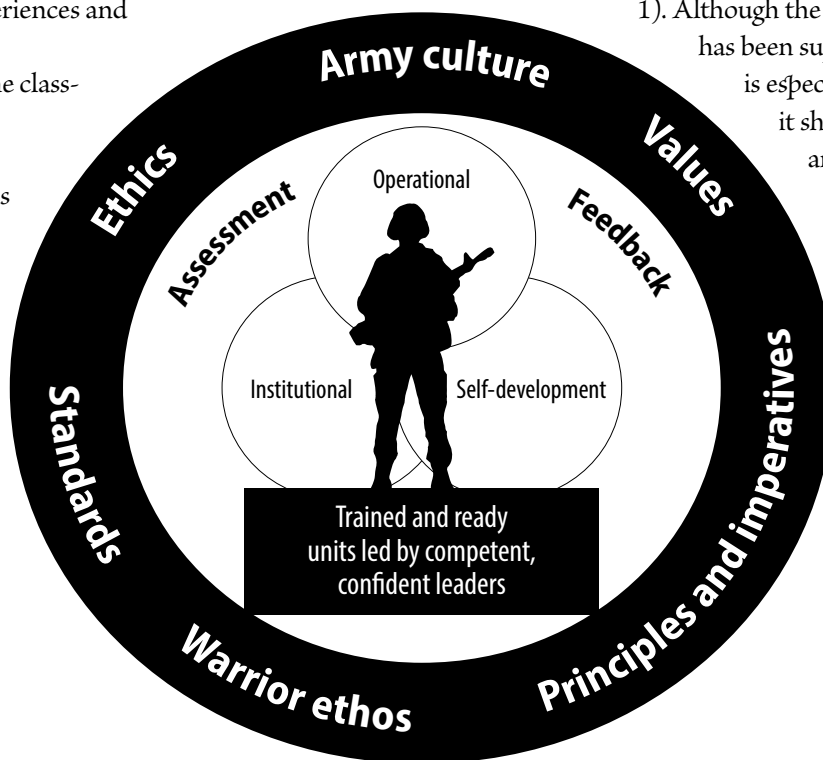
Assessment from observation, instruction, training, performance evaluation, and testing are all sources of feedback.⁵

Self-development is another tool appropriate for enhancing human capital. When faced with diverse operational settings, leaders draw on intellectual capacity, critical and creative thinking

abilities, and applicable expertise. Guided self-development will improve leaders' ability to prepare themselves and their subordinates for these challenges.

Self-development is the ultimate way to customize improvement to the needs of the individual. Individuals see the power in self-development, but many regret that there is not more time to engage in it.⁶ Therefore, one's available time must be used as efficiently as possible, and one way to focus self-development needs is through assessment and feedback.

In the summer of 2020, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and the Combined Arms Center implemented a new program of self-development that



(Figure from Field Manual 7-0, *Training the Force*, October 2002 [obsolete])

Figure 1. Army Training and Leader Development Model

seeks to reenergize the identification of leader basic strengths and developmental needs. The two main lines of effort in this program are assessment and improvement. A battery of standardized assessments was selected to coincide with each level of Army's profession-

strength and was known for inventing useful items leading to victory. Besides being divinely endowed with these characteristics, her strength came from dedication to wisdom. Just as Athena is known for helping other heroes, Project Athena is designed to

“Project Athena is designed to enable self-awareness and self-development so individuals become more effective leaders, whether that comes out in competition during the brigade and battalion command assessment programs or for any follow-on assignment.”

al military education (PME) system. The standardized assessments give leaders an idea of their level on a skill or set of behaviors and how that level compares to others in the Army. The assessments were chosen by Mission Command Center of Excellence's Center for the Army Profession and Leadership (CAPL) with input from stakeholders in the officer corps, warrant officer corps, and noncommissioned officer corps, and from Army civilian leaders. These assessments complement the physical fitness and warfighting assessments that are already a part of existing course curriculums.

The second line of effort—improvement through self-development—is the responsibility of the individual. Assessment and improvement work hand in hand. Feedback from assessments informs the leader of his or her strengths and potential blind spots; interpretation of the feedback guides where to improve.

Multiple learning resources have been created or identified and matched to the areas assessed by each standardized measurement tool. These are readily available at no cost to the individual and can be used anytime, anywhere via web access. The Army calls this program Project Athena.

Project Athena

Having a project name was important to provide a short handle to a multipart and already expanding program. The chosen label for the new self-development program, Project Athena, was selected because Greek mythology portrays Athena as a courageous goddess, respected for her clever and strategic approach to battle. She chose cunning over brute

help the soldiers of the U.S. Army to be disciplined in their development as warriors.

Project Athena is designed to enable self-awareness and self-development so individuals become more effective leaders, whether that comes out in competition during the brigade and battalion command assessment programs or for any follow-on assignment. Soldiers deserve leaders who are self-aware and humble enough to know where they can improve. In turn, soldiers follow self-aware and humble leaders who are committed to self-improvement.

The project rollout. Project Athena was developed to motivate and focus self-development for individuals. The standardized assessments measure leadership, cognitive abilities, communication skills, mental toughness, and interpersonal skills. These assessments improve self-awareness, guide self-development, and facilitate leader development in the operational force. The rollout of assessments began in the Maneuver Captain Career Course and all Basic Officer Leaders Courses-Branch in July 2020. The program expanded to include all Captains Career Courses in January 2021 and into the Command and General Staff Officers' Course in April 2021. Assessments have already started to be phased into classes in the noncommissioned officer professional development system and in the Warrant Officer Education System, and will be phased into the Civilian Education System starting in October 2021. Expansion across all Army cohorts are to be completed by the end of September 2022. Inclusion of U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard courses are planned for fiscal years 2022 and 2023.



Athena assessments. Athena has multiple parts consisting of commercial and Army-developed assessments, fact sheets, proctor training, feedback reports, interpretation guides, coaching guides, individual development plans, self-development tools, learning resource lists, institutional reports, and program evaluations. Sample feedback reports and assessment fact sheets convey information to anyone who wants to know more about the assessments and what they reveal to the individual.

Athena assessments are designed to guide a soldier's lifelong self-development and personal improvement. They are not "predictive" in nature; rather, they are designed for the benefit of the individual, not the institution. What each assessment covers varies based on the individual's level of PME. The assessments fall into categories of *personal*, attributes that tend not to be very malleable; *cognition*, which is a term covering all modes of thinking and mental activity; and *leadership*, which includes competencies identified in Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession*.⁷ There is no upper limit to how good anyone can be in any of these categories.

CAPL selected or designed the assessments and makes them available to Army schools. Trained

Soldiers take an exam 31 July 2018 at the Fort Knox Education Center at Fort Knox, Kentucky. (Photo by Master Sgt. Brian Hamilton, U.S. Army)

proctors at the schools administer the series of assessments. Proctored assessments provide a consistent message explaining the purpose of the assessments and facilitating access to the various vendor sites and the Army site used to deliver the assessments.

Assessed areas were selected based on factors that senior leaders observed to be important across a leader's career and what studies and doctrine validate as important traits and behaviors for any Army leader.⁸ The assessed areas focus on the capabilities of leaders to make critical decisions, communicate those decisions, set the right climate for teamwork, and learn. Each Army school across the PME continuum will continue to emphasize and assess warfighting and physical fitness in the ways most valuable to their specific branch, military occupational specialty, or echelon of leadership.

Athena assessments apply to Army leaders regardless of their position or assignment. The choice of assessments

and the procedures for administration of assessments are standardized so that a score for a second lieutenant in Fort Benning, Georgia, will have the same meaning as a score for a master sergeant assessed in Fort Bliss, Texas. Project Athena assessments rely on either commercial or U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command systems for presentation and collection. Schools can administer the assessments as long as there is a secure internet connection and test access codes have been provided to their proctors by CAPL. With their common access cards, students can access their personal feedback reports upon completion or at any later time.

Assessment sources. Selected assessments were chosen based on their ability to provide feedback on areas of interest to the Army. The commercial assessments were required to be scientifically valid, which means they had to truly measure what they claimed to measure. Commercial assessments with a prior history of use in the military were preferred to commercial assessments without. Some commercial assessments required a prepaid license that was arranged on behalf of all schools through a central procurement source. Other assessments that required no commercial license were chosen based on the area that they assess. Permission to use these assessments was arranged by CAPL on behalf of the schools that administer the assessments. A third set of assessments originated in the Army or were newly developed by CAPL scientists for Project Athena.

Assessment feedback. Feedback reports are available to individuals soon after they complete an assessment. The feedback reports provide the summary of the results of the assessment and help the

individual interpret what the results mean, what can be done with the results, and where to go to learn more about the assessed areas. Feedback reports can only be retrieved by the individual to whom the assessment report relates. Use and release of the feedback is controlled by the assessed individual. This point is central to the developmental purpose of Project Athena. The results cannot be accessed for administrative decisions or actions. This is especially important since many of the assessments require self-reporting. Protecting access to the results encourages the individual to be truthful without fear that something they report about their personal tendencies could be used by someone else. All of the assessments intend to stimulate reflection and awareness, even more so than providing a specific score. Other measures require the student to demonstrate his or her knowledge or skill in reading, writing, or critical thinking. The feedback results are as accurate as the degree of effort that the assessed leader puts into the assessment.

Preparing for Assessment

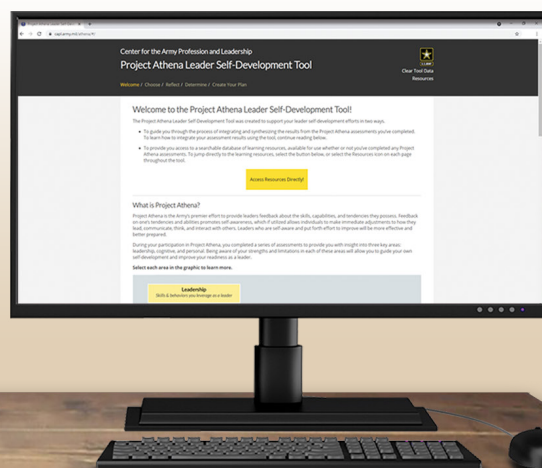
Personnel are challenged to ask themselves three questions when preparing to be assessed:

- Are you as good as you want to be or need to be?
- Are you willing to be completely honest with yourself while taking these assessments?
- Are you willing to put in the work to be as good as you have to be to lead our soldiers?

Among Eisenhower's various accounts of testing, every indication was that he took them seriously and put the work in to improve himself. He prepared diligently

Project Athena

Project Athena provides tools for self-assessments and guidance on formulating self-development programs for military officers, noncommissioned officers, warrant officers, and Army civilians. Access the Project Athena website hosted by the Center for the Army Profession and Leadership at <https://capl.army.mil/athena/#/>.



for the initial screening exams for military academies and for the official entrance exam.

Ike had put himself through a preparatory regimen for the Navy that remarkably resembled the one he would use for Leavenworth. He and a friend had requested and received tests from the Naval Academy and studied

individuals should first make a mental note of what they would like to do better or differently. Feedback should lead to improved self-awareness, revealing something that was previously hidden about themselves. Sometimes the feedback confirms what the soldier already suspected and adds more insight. The improved attention should generate an immediate intent to be different—more effective

“Students who are honest with themselves and aware of their strengths and limitations can work on improving themselves. The reward will be in gaining self-awareness, addressing areas for improvement, and finding ways to apply strengths.”

them assiduously in preparation for the naval examination. Fortunately for Ike, the Navy tests were similar to those he used for the later West Point entrance exam. Ike's former high school teachers also assisted by tutoring him in selected subjects. He was determined to make a good showing in all subjects.⁹

As for his low standing on discipline at West Point, Eisenhower wrote he did not think of himself as “a scholar whose position would depend on the knowledge he had acquired in school or as a military figure whose professional career might be seriously affected by his academic or disciplinary records.”¹⁰ Serving with Fox Conner taught him the value of disciplined study and self-development. At his Leavenworth course, he initially scored below his peers in the first set of graded exercises. He applied himself there too and put in additional effort, soon excelling in the hands-on preparatory school method and ended up as the honor graduate.¹¹

Like Eisenhower, students who are honest with themselves and aware of their strengths and limitations can work on improving themselves. The reward will be in gaining self-awareness, addressing areas for improvement, and finding ways to apply strengths.

Interpreting and Applying Feedback

There are several assessments in Athena that each student has access to, and a tool is provided to the individual to help combine the feedback into meaningful actions to take. Upon receiving and interpreting feedback,

in terms of attitude, thinking, or action. Sometimes feedback raises questions that the leader then seeks answers to. In these cases, the individual takes action to study more about a characteristic, how it is relevant to them, and how it is manifested in themselves.

With deeper understanding of a characteristic and the level of that characteristic in oneself, a natural pairing forms between current and desired levels. People who internalize a desire to improve continuously act to minimize the distance between their current state and how they believe they can be. Resetting a new image of oneself and taking conscious action to move in the desired direction leads to self-improvement. In some cases, assessment feedback will identify a strength that individuals can continue to apply and use to grow in their capabilities. In other cases, a shortcoming is identified from feedback and the steps to overcome it are so clear that the way to improve is also natural and automatic. For example, if feedback from a Leader 360 assessment indicates that subordinates do not feel they receive clear guidance, the leader can be more deliberate in providing guidance and seek confirmation that their guidance is understood. In still other cases, more careful reflection and planning are useful to accomplish the desired change. Self-awareness and self-development are not always a clear-cut process; however, across the variety of states and goals, assessment has a central and constant role to inform the depth and breadth of what is possible.

Project Athena recognizes that students already receive counseling on their academic and physical fitness performance from their small group leaders, instructors,

or advisors while in school. To help make the counseling more comprehensive, students can and should become mindful of their own Athena results and reflect and incorporate those into intentions they have for change. They can bring questions formed from the assessments to the counseling session, bring their own goals, or offer their feedback reports for the counselor to review. The student can summarize assessment findings or share insights with the counselor that the assessments have triggered. To help faculty, Project Athena provides coaching products to support counseling. A coaching guide, coaching card, and coaching video give guidelines on how to coach and counsel. Compared to discrete warfighting or supporting skills, the coaching for personal qualities, leadership abilities, and critical thinking takes a more exploratory approach. Leaders seeking to improve in these areas will need to commit time to discovering their abilities through questions, challenge, and self-reflection. The academic counselors can help this process of exploration by helping students better see themselves.

Leader Development Improvement Guide

The top resource for students, counselors, and leaders affected by Project Athena is the Army's *Leader Development Improvement Guide*.¹² Information similar to the guide is also in Field Manual 6-22, *Leader Development*, along with self-development guidance.¹³ The guide is organized according to the behaviors identified in the leadership requirements model (see figure 2, page 14). For each behavior, a table is provided that lists strengths, needs, causes, feedback, study, and practice. Strength and need indicators provide ways to self-assess based on one's own behaviors. These points can be used in addition to or instead of formal, standardized assessments like Project Athena provides. Once these are identified, individuals will want to consider the underlying causes of their actions.

With greater self-awareness, there are three subsequent actions for improvement. First, when greater insight is needed about one's behavior, the guide provides suggestions for garnering additional feedback to confirm or deepen understanding. Second, when more knowledge is needed about a specific skill or behavior, suggestions are provided on what to study to improve in that skill. The third is when there is sufficient self-understanding about a target behavior and there is enough understanding about why and how to perform the behavior but more

practice is needed. These three development actions can be taken in any combination, and an individual can go back and forth between the actions. This model assumes that learning is incremental and that self-understanding requires periodic reflection to improve one's abilities.

Athena and Individual Development Plans

Army schools help students prepare for continued growth after course graduation with a requirement for each student to develop an individual development plan (IDP). A review and discussion of the IDPs is a part of the end-of-course performance counseling process. For Athena, IDPs provide a specific way to continue momentum started by the assessment and reflection process. They lay out objectives, steps to take, and resources of import, and they provide adjacent space to make notes on progress toward goals. As leaders plan to pursue their interests and achieve their goals, the IDP can help identify a path to success, using or adjusting leaders' strengths to replace weaknesses or to supplant their shortcomings. IDPs provide a contract of sorts for what the individual is committing to do. The IDP will be carried to each individual's next unit of assignment and shared with a rater, senior rater, or mentor to inform and support future leader development efforts. IDPs are not equally effective for everyone. It may not be an enormous help for the most intellectually curious and natural lifelong learners. For some, motivations to improve are stronger and more dynamic and rapid than what is recorded on a form.

Resources for Improvement

The most important direct support that Project Athena provides is identifying resources for personal improvement. In the first few months of Project Athena, lists of self-development materials were assembled for each of the assessed constructs and amassed into a list of some five hundred available materials. The materials include self-development courses, books and audiobooks, videos, job aids, briefs, and interactive multimedia instruction modules. The pool of assembled resources cover more than fifty assessment constructs. The resources are available through web access and developed for the Army or are available through arrangement with the military. A tool is also available to help pinpoint resources from the set of five hundred that align with Project Athena assessment outcomes. The self-development tool gets updated

as more resources are identified.

This tool and the learning resources provide an opportunity for leaders at all levels to deepen their knowledge of and broaden their abilities around the areas assessed in Project Athena. However, this vast body of collected materials provides an opportunity that only brings value if individuals take the time to invest in themselves using the improved self-awareness that the assessments offer.

Conclusion

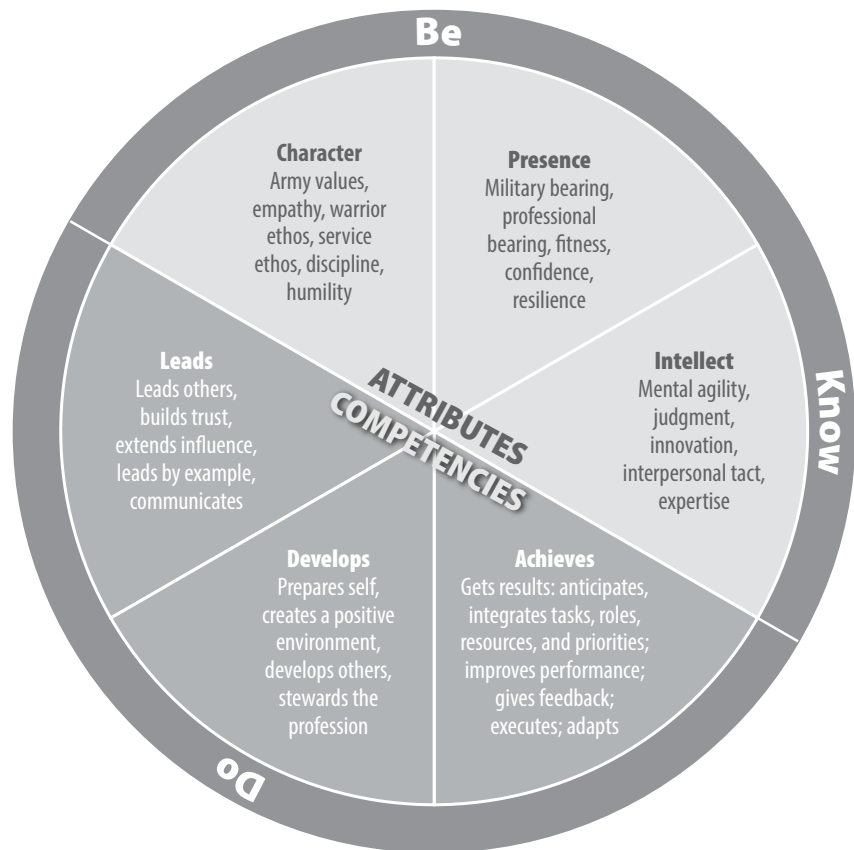
If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.

—Colin Powell¹⁴

Project Athena is a unique program in the Army because it helps individuals invest in themselves. There is no access to the assessment results for personnel administration and no impact on annual performance evaluation, academic evaluation, promotions, or assignments. The individual leaders own their results and control where their results go, or if they choose anyone to see them. Even though the information would be interesting to schools and small group leaders, the most valuable impact that the results have is for the individual. Many of the assessments depend on self-report of behaviors, tendencies, and beliefs. If confidentiality is not absolute, individuals will look at themselves as they want to be seen instead of how they actually are, and they will let those desired qualities color their assessment responses.

Another reason the results are confidential is because they indicate a temporary state. For example, upon knowing a result about themselves, leaders can decide to change immediately, and as the leader grows, the results will no longer be characterized by the assessment score taken in the past.

There is a way to maintain confidentiality of results while providing schools and the Army an idea of



(Figure from Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession*, July 2019)

Figure 2. Army Leadership Requirements Model

trends across multiple leaders. Aggregate reports, also called institutional reports, are produced by analysts within CAPL. These show what a collection of scores looks like. Aggregate reports on student scores and tendencies can be used to help Army schools better understand student strengths and weaknesses, identify overall trends, and restructure courses accordingly. The aggregation of results follows carefully defined rules about removing all individual identifiers and using minimum samples to protect classes and identities of individuals. Reports across schools help identify patterns of strengths and developmental needs at different career points and comparisons to other groups. The aggregate data also informs the administrators of which assessments are useful or where some could be decommissioned, replaced by another, or moved to another

important area. For example, if 90 percent of leaders are assessed as highly dependable and most of the remainder are moderately so, the time could be better spent on assessing and developing other areas than duty.

Another means of tracking the utility and value of assessments comes from formal program evaluation surveys and focus groups, where cadre and students answer questions about their experiences with the project. Course managers and program administrators also provide their observations and requests through their chains of command. Project Athena is a dynamic, growing program that is updated and refined over time.

The goal of Project Athena is to help Army leaders become the best version of themselves. The path starts by providing standardized assessments to augment existing assessments from which all Army leaders can learn more about their personal strengths and weaknesses and ways of responding to challenging or adverse situations. With greater self-awareness, leaders know more about what they can improve on and when to make those improvements in the near-term and across their career. The challenge is not always to get better at a skill but to be more

aware of how to use the talents that an individual has, when to be more thorough (e.g., critical thinking checks), when to rely on intuition, when to apply a strength, when to use a strength in one area to compensate for a weakness in another, or when to seek support from teammates.

Forward-looking research needs to be conducted to further develop assessments that provide the greatest developmental feedback in the areas of human behavior most responsible for effective leadership. The proof of Project Athena is in how well its assessments translate to creating more effective leaders. All soldiers deserve leaders who are self-aware and humble enough to know where they can improve or when they could use help from others. Soldiers deserve leaders who have come far enough in their personal and professional journeys to be effective before they accept the mantle of a command or leadership position.

Project Athena is reminiscent of the Army's 1980s slogan "Be all you can be." Project Athena looks to provide greater self-awareness of some basic abilities and to guide leaders' improvement to become the best leader that each can possibly be. ■

Notes

1. Mark C. Bender, *Watershed at Leavenworth: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Command and General Staff School* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1990), 12; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 187.

2. Carter L. Price, "Major General Fox Conner: 'The Indispensable Man,'" *Army War College Review* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 18.

3. "Army Years," The Eisenhowers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, accessed 14 March 2021, <https://www.eisenhower-library.gov/eisenhowers/army-years>; Bender, *Watershed at Leavenworth*, 47, 50.

4. Lorri Frefeld, "2019 Training Industry Report," *Training* (website), 6 November 2019, accessed 14 March 2021, <https://trainingmag.com/2019-training-industry-report/>. An Army officer can spend from two-to-three or more years in professional education settings attending the Basic Officer Leaders Course, the Captains Career Course, the Command and General Staff Officers' Course, and various other branch or functional area courses. The 2019 Training Industry Report states that corporate employees received 42.1 hours of training per year on average. Two years of training over a twenty-year career would be five times the corporate average.

5. Field Manual (FM) 7-0, *Training the Force* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002 [obsolete]).

6. Ryan P. Riley et al., *2016 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL): Military Leader Findings*, Technical Report 2017-01 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Leadership [CAL], 2017).

7. Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], 2019).

8. The Center for Army Profession and Leadership maintains validation on the Army leadership requirements model described in ADP 6-22. The original validation was documented in Jeffrey Horey et al., *A Criterion-Related Validation Study of the Army Core Leader Competency Model*, Technical Report 1199 (Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2007). The annual CASAL studies such as Riley et al., *2016 CASAL*, provide additional validation. Follow-up collections and analyses such as an undocumented 2018 study of leadership requirements for large-scale combat operations and 2016 and 2018 analyses of best predictive models also provide insight.

9. Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 105.

10. *Ibid.*, 12.

11. Bender, *Watershed at Leavenworth*, 44, 53.

12. CAL, *Leader Development Improvement Guide (LDIG)* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CAL, February 2018), accessed 25 March 2021, <https://rdl.train.army.mil/catalog-ws/view/100.ATSC/4F980832-1E35-4C5B-9DD8-D39849111457-1519242707165/MSAFxLDIGxOY1xx-Finalxx180131.pdf>.

13. FM 6-22, *Leader Development* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 2015), 1-4.

14. Colin Powell with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 198.

Understanding the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force

Strategy, Armament, and Disposition

Maj. Christopher J. Mihal, PMP

The People's Liberation Army Rocket Force (PLARF), formerly the Second Artillery Force, is the element of the Chinese military responsible for organizing, manning, training, and equipping the People's Republic of China's (PRC) strategic land-based nuclear and conventional missile forces as well as their supporting elements and bases. Any military planner involved in operations in the Asia-Pacific theater must have an understanding of this unique force as it presents a threat to its neighbors, specifically Taiwan, and maintains the ability to influence local, regional, and global military operations. The PLARF has been rapidly expanding and modernizing in recent years, concurrent with the PRC's evolving strategy regarding deterrence.

China's nuclear buildup is directly in line with the PRC's expanded view of the utility of nuclear weapons, and China's nuclear strategy is gradually evolving from a policy of minimal deterrence to a more active posture of limited deterrence.¹ While its nuclear arsenal is small compared to that of the United States, China fielded roughly 320 nuclear warheads as of 2020; China's nuclear arsenal is constantly upgrading, modernizing, and expanding.² Unconfirmed reports place China's nuclear arsenal



as somewhat larger than it publicly claims; several conventionally armed ballistic missiles allegedly have nuclear variants that have never been officially confirmed.³ However, these proposed nuclear variants may be disinformation or speculative.

Meanwhile, the conventional arm of the PLARF is the largest ground-based missile force in the world, with over 2,200 conventionally armed ballistic and cruise missiles and with enough antiship missiles to attack every U.S. surface combatant vessel in the South China Sea with enough firepower to overcome each ship's missile defense.⁴ The elevation from Second Artillery Force to PLARF—that is, elevation to a full-service equivalent to the army, navy, and air force—is indicative of China's increased reliance on missile forces at the operational and strategic levels.

Identifying the strategy governing the employment of the PLARF and demonstrating China's history of proliferation will explain how the PLARF fits into China's overall strategic vision. Identifying each of PLARF's missile systems will chart the location of each of China's approximately forty missile brigades and their probable composition to the greatest extent possible. Some recommendations are necessary for planning against the PLARF; there are weaknesses inherent in its structure and technology as the formation currently exists.

Strategy

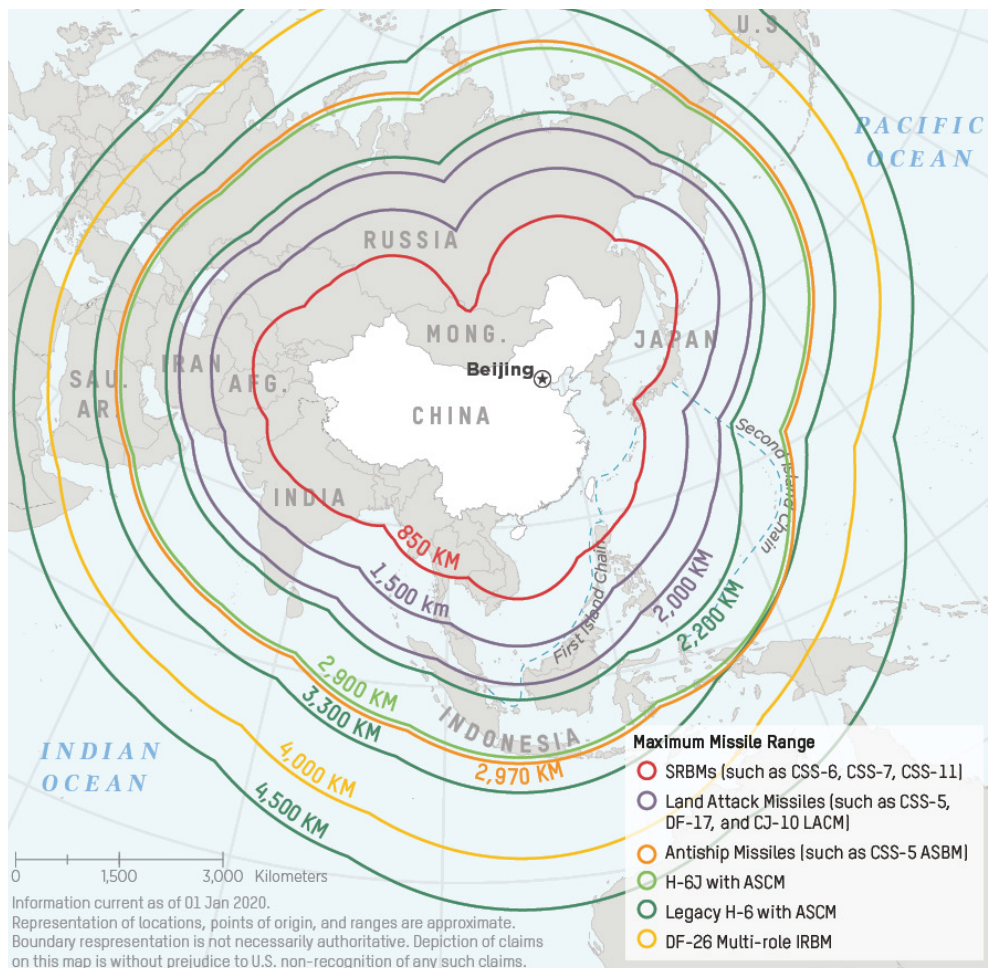
China's 2019 defense white paper identified that, while China has downsized the People's Liberation Army (PLA), it has expanded the PLARF because it "plays a critical role in maintaining China's national sovereignty and security."⁵ Chinese leadership views the PLARF as a significant contribution to "strategic balance" between China and its main strategic competitors.⁶ The PLARF fulfills several missions for China, including strategic deterrence, suppression of enemy air defenses, and "not allowing any inimical force access to Chinese space: land, air, or sea, and deny the enemy any space to fight a battle near the Chinese territory, including Taiwan and the first chain of islands [China's disputed island claims in the South China Sea]."⁷ The PLARF's near-term objectives include "enhancing its credible and reliable capabilities of nuclear deterrence and counterattack, strengthening intermediate and long-range precision strike forces, and enhancing strategic counter-balance capability, so as to build a strong and modernized rocket force."⁸ China is achieving these capabilities by simultaneously introducing new, more accurate nuclear missiles while drastically building up its conventional missile forces. Every year between 2002 and 2009, the PRC deployed approximately fifty to one hundred new ballistic missiles opposite Taiwan, with the number of missiles currently arrayed against Taiwan equaling at least one thousand.⁹ Additionally, China is making great strides in enhancing the accuracy of its missiles, with the circular error probable (CEP) continuing to shrink. (The CEP is a measure of a weapon's precision; it is the radius of a circle in which 50 percent of rounds are expected to hit.) The CEP for China's first nuclear missile, the DF-3A, was four thousand meters, while its newest intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), the DF-41, has a CEP of one hundred to five hundred meters—conservatively, an 800 percent improvement.¹⁰

The PLARF's main focus is on Taiwan and the South China Sea, but it also maintains capabilities against the Korean Peninsula, India, Russia, and the United States. Although growing at a much more moderate pace compared to its conventional missile arm, the PLARF's nuclear forces have been expanding in recent decades and are on track to double in size by 2030.¹¹ Crucially, China's nuclear arsenal could now survive a first strike from either the United States or Russia with enough capability remaining to retaliate.¹²

The PLARF's capabilities are expanding to counter both Taiwanese and U.S. systems; China has focused on antiship ballistic missiles like the DF-17, DF-21, and DF-26 to counter U.S. carrier groups and deny U.S. access to the region via land, air, and sea in order to inhibit the U.S. ability to assist regional allies.¹³ China's numerous short- and medium-range ballistic missiles are designed to overwhelm Taiwan's air defense, and China currently spends nearly twenty-four times what Taiwan does on defense.¹⁴ With more accurate CEP of its missiles, the PLARF is better able to target "key strategic and operational targets of the enemy," including reconnaissance, intelligence, command and control, electronic warfare, antiair and logistics systems to disrupt enemy supply, logistics, and defenses in preparation for a land invasion.¹⁵

The direct impact of China's missiles is disturbing enough, but also troubling is China's willingness to share its missile technology with other nations. Pakistan in

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(Figure from *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2020*)

Figure 1. Short, Medium, and Intermediate Ballistic Missile Ranges

particular has benefited from this stance, with every Pakistani solid-fueled ballistic missile constructed with Chinese assistance since the early 1990s.¹⁶ In 1981, China supplied Pakistan with CHIC-4 bombs—a potential delivery system for Pakistan's then nascent nuclear weapons program—and as much as fifty kilograms of highly enriched uranium, ten tons of natural uranium hexafluoride (a chemical compound that can be placed in centrifuges to produce highly enriched uranium for nuclear reactors or weapons), and five tons of UF_6 enriched to 3 percent, capable of producing uranium suitable for nuclear reactors.¹⁷ Possessing a nuclear capability requires two distinct but vital programs—a program to construct a nuclear warhead, and a program to design a delivery system for a nuclear

warhead. China has demonstrated willingness to assist other nations with both.

Armament

It is important to understand the varying missile systems fielded by the PLARF in order to devise adequate countermeasures. Each missile described below will include whether the missile is confirmed to be armed with a nuclear warhead, a conventional warhead, or if it is dual-capable; in other words, if there are conventional and nuclear variants of the same missile. China has an estimated 2,300–2,400 ballistic missiles in total, including about ninety ICBMs and approximately 320 nuclear warheads. More than half of China's nuclear capability resides in the PLARF; the rest are

either stockpiled or launched from submarines, along with a handful of nuclear gravity bombs for the PLA air force, specifically for use by the H-6K bomber.¹⁸

Chinese missile nomenclature is relatively simple to follow. All ballistic missiles of the PLARF belong to the Dong Feng (East Wind) family of systems and possess the prefix “DF” in their designation, while cruise missiles belong to the Hong Niao/HN (Red Bird) or Chang Jian/CJ (Long Sword) family of missiles. In keeping with PLA deception tactics, the cruise missile CJ-10 has also been designated the Hong Niao-2/HN-2 to confuse intelligence analysis.

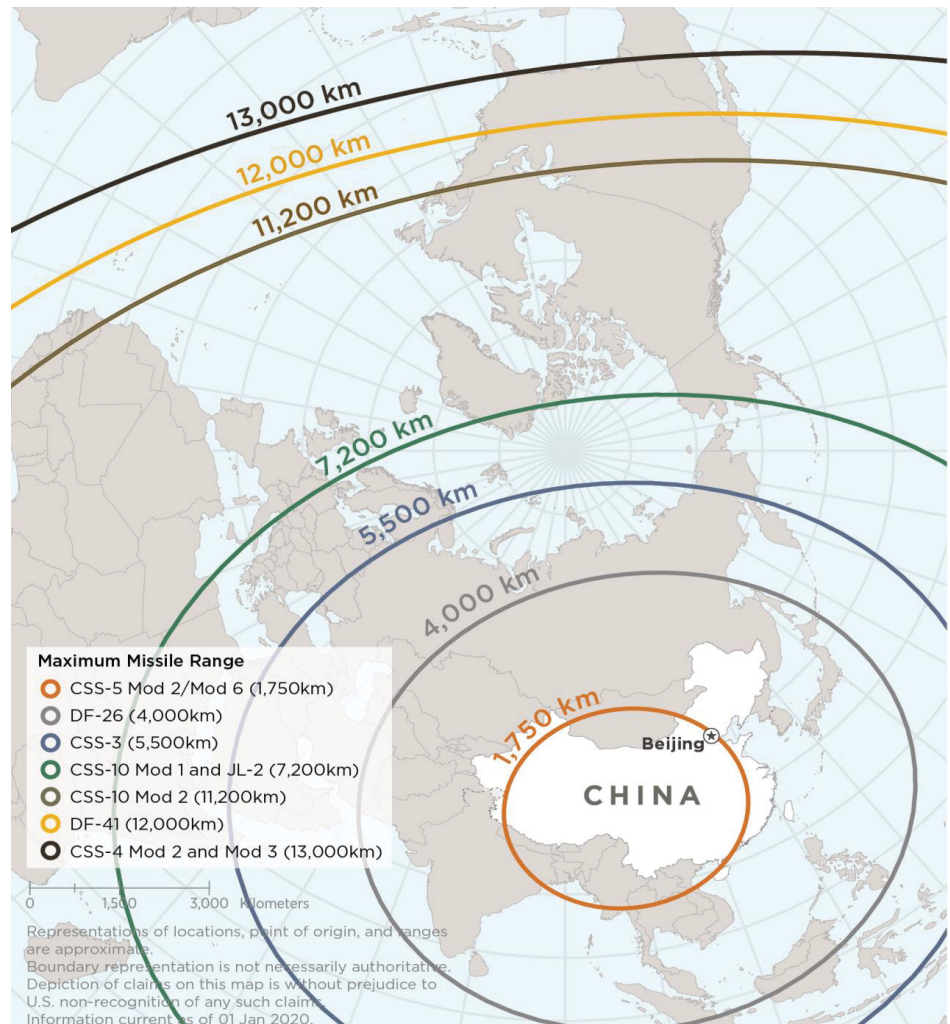
As the largest ground-based missile force in the world, the PLARF fields a wide variety of missile systems. Approximately half of these are short-range weapons

intended for use against Taiwan. Ground-based missiles fall into several categories based on type and range. PLARF missiles are organized into six classifications:

- Ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM)
- Hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV)
- Short-range ballistic missile (SRBM, range less than one thousand kilometers)
- Medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM, range between one thousand and three thousand kilometers)
- Intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM, range between three thousand and 5,500 kilometers)
- Intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM, range greater than 5,500 kilometers)

For reference, figure 1 (on page 18) and figure 2 demonstrate range bands of many of China's missiles.¹⁹ China's longest-range ICBMs—the DF-5A, DF-31A, and DF-41—could strike targets anywhere in the continental United States. Note that not all Chinese missiles belong to the PLARF; for instance, the DF-12 SRBM (also known as the M20 for the export version) may be used by the PLA and not the PLARF, as that weapon debuted in 2013 but has not been seen with any known PLARF units since.²⁰ The DF-12 may be based off of the B-611, a weapon system designed for the PLA to have integral long-range precision fires without the need to request theater PLARF forces.²¹ The following missiles will be identified first by their Chinese designation and then by their Western designation, if applicable.

CJ-10 or HN-2. Previously referred to as the DH-10 until 2011, the CJ-10 is the only cruise missile in the PLARF arsenal; other Chinese cruise missiles are under the control of the PLA Navy or PLA Air Force.²² As opposed to ballistic missiles, cruise missiles have a significantly lower trajectory and remain in the atmosphere for the duration of their flight time; this makes cruise missiles difficult to detect and intercept.²³ The CJ-10 is based off the Russian Kh-55, and purportedly,



(Figure from Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2020)

Figure 2. Intermediate and Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Ranges

reverse-engineered U.S. Tomahawk technology.²⁴ The CJ-10 has a range of somewhat over 1,500 kilometers, an extremely accurate CEP of five meters, and while conventionally armed, it could potentially carry a



nuclear warhead. These facts are mostly conjectural, and the total number of deployed CJ-10s is a mystery; the Department of Defense reported at least three hundred CJ-10 missiles as of 2020, but previous estimates vary from mid-two hundred to over five hundred missiles.²⁵ China has been extremely secretive regarding this weapons system, using numerous designations as well as intentional conflation with the DF-11 ballistic missile in numerous publications to further obfuscate the true nature of this system.²⁶ While China is no stranger to military deception, the deliberate attempts to hide the CJ-10's capabilities is unusual.

DF-4/CSS-3. A liquid-fueled ICBM carrying a 3.3-megaton nuclear warhead, the DF-4 is an older design that may be phased out in favor of the DF-31 or the DF-41. As is typical with older Chinese ICBMs, it is very inaccurate.²⁷ It is one of only two Chinese weapons systems with a megaton payload. The DF-4 is silo-based or cave-based, limiting its utility compared to the road-mobile ICBMs China has been recently fielding like the DF-31. As of 2020, there were only six DF-4s in the Chinese arsenal, further evidence the weapon is retiring.²⁸ As liquid-fueled missiles cannot store their fuel and thus must be fueled prior to use (a process that can take hours), liquid-fueled missiles are being retired in favor of solid-fueled missiles that can deploy instantly, increasing force readiness.

DF-5/CSS-4. Another liquid-fueled, silo-based ICBM, the DF-5 has much greater range than both the older DF-4 and new DF-31. The original DF-5, which is no longer deployed, could only carry a single one- to four-megaton warhead, while all three subvariants, the DF-5A, -5B, and -5C, are multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle (MIRV) capable. The DF-5A can carry three three-megaton warheads, the DF-5B can carry up to eight warheads, and the still-experimental DF-5C can carry up to ten warheads. The CEP of the newest variant is purportedly three hundred meters. Approximately ten of the DF-5 missiles currently operational are the DF-5A variant and ten are DF-5B variants.²⁹ The DF-5C is not currently deployed but may be in the near future.

DF-11/CSS-7. The DF-11 road-mobile, solid-fueled SRBM is the most numerous weapon system in the PLARF, with conservatively two hundred launchers and six hundred deployed missiles, and an upper estimate at over 750 missiles, with a range of six hundred kilometers.³⁰ China also has sold this weapon extensively to external markets as the M-11, with Pakistan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh confirmed to have purchased the missile.³¹ Over one hundred of China's DF-11s have been upgraded to the DF-11A variant, while a bunker-buster variant designated DF-11AZT has also been unveiled.³² Unconfirmed reports state that the DF-11 can carry small nuclear warheads of between two and twenty kilotons, or even a large, 350-kiloton warhead, but these speculations have never been confirmed and are not included in estimates of China's total nuclear forces.³³

DF-15/CSS-6. A solid-fueled, road-mobile SRBM, the DF-15 has three variants: the DF-15A, -15B, and -15C. The DF-15 is conventionally armed but purportedly the DF-15A can carry a fifty- to 350-kiloton warhead.³⁴ The DF-15 is also very numerous, with several hundred missiles and at least one hundred launchers in total, although somewhat fewer total missiles than the DF-11.³⁵ The DF-15 has a range of six hundred kilometers, while the DF-15A has a range of nine hundred kilometers and the DF-15B eight hundred kilometers.³⁶ The DF-15C is an earth penetrator and has similar range to the -15A and -15B.

DF-16/CSS-11. The DF-16 is China's newest solid-fueled, road-mobile SRBM and may replace the older DF-11s and DF-15s in the years to come. It can carry up to three MIRV warheads, though the nuclear variant is unconfirmed as it is with other Chinese SRBMs. China had twelve DF-16s as of 2017 and has added a second brigade since, leading to probably twenty-four DF-16s as of 2020.³⁷

DF-17 and DF-ZF. The DF-17 is a new solid-fueled, road-mobile IRBM. It shares some design aspects with the DF-16 but is most notable for its unique warhead, the DF-ZF. The DF-ZF is an HGV, a new type of warhead that combines elements of ballistic and cruise missiles, achieving supersonic speeds and thus immense

Top left: The Dongfeng-17 (DF-17), a hypersonic weapon used for precision strikes against medium and close targets, is displayed to the public for the first time 1 October 2019 during the National Day Parade in Beijing. (Screenshot of a China Global Television Network YouTube video)
Bottom left: A DF-26 medium-range ballistic missile displayed after a military parade commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the end of World War II 3 September 2015 in Beijing. (Photo courtesy of IceUnshattered via Wikimedia Commons)

kinetic energy. Powered by a scramjet, the DF-ZF can perform extreme evasive maneuvers to avoid enemy missile defense, unlike ballistic missiles that generally follow a predictable trajectory. Chinese commentators have stressed that the DF-ZF only will have conventional armament, but its nearest relative, the Russian Avangard HGV, carries a two-megaton warhead.³⁸ The DF-ZF also has an antiship variant undergoing testing.³⁹ Sixteen DF-17s appeared at the seventieth anniversary of the PRC military parade in 2019.⁴⁰

DF-21/CSS-5. China's first road-mobile, solid-fueled missile, the DF-21, is a medium-range ballistic missile with four subvariants: the DF-21A, the DF-21C, the DF-21D, and the DF-21E. The DF-21 has conventional and nuclear variants, with the nuclear variants, DF-21A and DF-21E, equipped with a 250-kiloton warhead, and there may also be an electromagnetic pulse warhead for the DF-21A.⁴¹ The DF-21C is the conventional variant and is primarily deployed against India. The DF-21D is designed as a "carrier-killer" with greatly increased accuracy.⁴² As of 2020, there are approximately forty nuclear-equipped DF-21A and DF-21E missiles and slightly more conventionally armed DF-21Cs and DF-21Ds.⁴³

Both the DF-21 and DF-26 (and possibly the DF-17) are worrying, because as both have confirmed conventional and nuclear variants, there is significant ambiguity when one is launched as to what type of

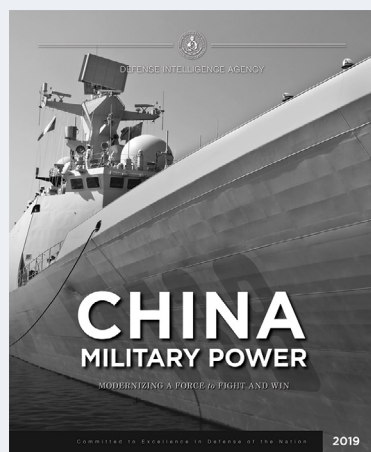
incredibly difficult and could lead to unwarranted escalation and/or tragedy.⁴⁴

DF-26. Another road-mobile, solid-fueled IRBM, the DF-26 is another dual-capable missile with both conventional and nuclear variants. With a range of about four thousand kilometers, the DF-26 is just shy of classification as an ICBM and will carry a similar 250-kiloton warhead to the DF-21. The DF-26 will likely supplant the older DF-3, with a similar range profile but greatly increased accuracy, deployment time, and the potential benefits of a dual-capable system.⁴⁵ There are roughly one hundred launchers and as many missiles for the DF-26, though the ratio of nuclear to conventional is not known.

DF-31/CSS-10. The DF-31 is a silo-based or road- and rail-mobile, solid-fueled ICBM. It is the most common ICBM in the PLARF arsenal. The ICBMs are solely nuclear-armed, with either a 250-kiloton or a one-megaton warhead. The CEP for the DF-31 is around three hundred meters, though the Chinese claim greater accuracy.⁴⁶ The subvariants are the DF-31A and the DF-31AG (sometimes called the DF-31B), both of which add MIRV capability with three-to-five twenty- to 150-kiloton warheads each. The PLARF currently possesses six DF-31 launchers, thirty-six DF-31A launchers, and thirty-six DF-31AG launchers for a total of seventy-eight missiles.⁴⁷

DF-41/CSS-X-10. China's newest ICBM, the DF-41, is solid-fueled and has both silo and road-mobile variants, with a maximum theoretical range of fifteen thousand kilometers. The DF-41 will likely replace older ICBMs in the Chinese arsenal and will carry either a single megaton warhead or up to ten MIRV smaller warheads. The development of the DF-41 in addition to the DF-31 and older ICBMs is leading intelligence analysts to assume China's ICBM force could increase to "well over 200 [missiles]."⁴⁸ Sixteen DF-

41s were present at the 2019 military parade, though there have only been unconfirmed reports of DF-41 brigades and their locations.⁴⁹



MilitaryReview

WE RECOMMEND

To view the Defense Intelligence Agency's *China Military Power: Modernizing a Force to Fight and Win*, visit https://www.dia.mil/Portals/27/Documents/News/Military%20Power%20Publications/China_Military_Power_FINAL_5MB_20190103.pdf.

warhead it carries and how to counter it. As there is little visually to distinguish the variants, especially once they are launched, ascertaining the threat becomes



(Figure from *Annual Report to Congress: U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission 2017*)

Figure 3. Chinese Theater Commands

Disposition

Overall PLA forces are divided into five theater commands, and each command has a distinct mission (see figure 3).⁵⁰ There is some confusion as to whether PLARF units in these theater commands report directly to the theater commander or are directly controlled by Chairman Xi Jinping and the Central Military Commission. Even if PLARF units are under direct control of the Chinese Communist Party, they undoubtedly have liaison and advisory relationships with the theater commands in which they share space, even if they are nominally independent of the theater command structure. For instance, PLARF units at Base 61 in the eastern Anhui Province almost certainly are

fully integrated into Eastern Theater Command plans for Taiwan. There are five PLA theater commands:

- Eastern Theater Command—responsible for Taiwan, Japan, and the East China Sea
- Southern Theater Command—responsible for the South China Sea and Southeast Asia
- Western Theater Command—responsible for India, South Asia, Central Asia, and counterterrorism in Xinjiang and Tibet
- Northern Theater Command—responsible for the Korean Peninsula and Russia
- Central Theater Command—responsible for capital defense and for providing surge support to other theaters⁵¹

Table. People's Liberation Army Rocket Force Bases, Brigades, and Armament

| Base number | Headquarters location | Brigade | Armament | Nuclear or conventional | Range | Yield | Notes |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------|----------|-------------------------|--------|------------|--|
| Base 61 | Huangshan, Anhui Province | | | | | | Eastern Theater Command area of responsibility (AOR) |
| | Chizhou | 611 | DF-21A | Nuclear | 2,100+ | 200-300 kT | |
| | Jingdezhen | 612 | DF-21 | Conventional | 1,750+ | | Possible DF-21A, which would make it nuclear-armed |
| | Shangrao | 613 | DF-15B | Conventional | 750+ | | |
| | Yong'an | 614 | DF-11A | Conventional | 600 | | |
| | Meizhou | 615 | DF-11A | Conventional | 600 | | Possibly replacing with DF-17 |
| | Ganzhou | 616 | DF-15 | Conventional | 600 | | |
| | Jinhua | 617 | DF-16 | Conventional | 800+ | | |
| | UNK | 618 | UNK | UNK | | | Rumored new brigade base |
| Base 62 | Kunming, Yunnan Province | | | | | | Southern Theater Command AOR |
| | Yibin | 621 | DF-21 | Conventional | 1,750+ | | Possibly DF-21A, which would make it nuclear-armed |
| | Yuxi | 622 | DF-31A | Nuclear | 11,200 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Liuzhou | 623 | CJ-10 | Conventional | 1,500 | | |
| | Danzhou | 624 | DF-21C/D | Conventional | 1,750+ | | |
| | Jianshui | 625 | DF-26 | Nuclear | 4,000 | 200-300 kT | May still use DF-21 |
| | Qingyuan | 626 | DF-26 | Nuclear | 4,000 | 200-300 kT | May still use DF-21 |
| | Jieyang | 627 | DF-17 | Conventional | 1750+ | | |

(Table by author; modified from Hans Kristensen and Matt Korda, "Chinese Nuclear Forces, 2020," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 76, no. 6 [2020]: 449–50)

Table. People's Liberation Army Rocket Force Bases, Brigades, and Armament (continued)

| Base number | Headquarters location | Brigade | Armament | Nuclear or conventional | Range | Yield | Notes |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------|----------|-------------------------|--------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Base 63 | Huailu, Hunan Province | | | | | | Southern Theater Command AOR |
| | Jingzhou | 631 | DF-5B | Nuclear | 13,000 | 5 x 200-300 kT (MIRV) | |
| | Shaoyang | 632 | DF-31AG | Nuclear | 11,200 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Huitong | 633 | DF-5A | Nuclear | 12,000 | 4-5 MT | |
| | Tongdao | 634 | UNK | UNK | | | Possible DF-41 Brigade |
| | Yichun | 635 | CJ-10 | Conventional | 1,500 | | |
| | Shaoguan | 636 | DF-16 | Conventional | 800+ | | |
| | UNK | 637 | UNK | UNK | | | Rumored new brigade base |
| Base 64 | Lanzhou, Gansu Province | | | | | | Western Command AOR |
| | Hancheng | 641 | DF-31A | Nuclear | 11,200 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Datong | 642 | DF-31AG | Nuclear | 11,200 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Tianshui | 643 | DF-31 | Nuclear | 7,200 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Hanzhong | 644 | UNK | UNK | | | Possible DF-41 Brigade |
| | Yinchuan | 645 | UNK | UNK | | | Rumored new brigade base |
| | Korla | 646 | DF-26 | Nuclear | 4,000 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Xining | 647 | UNK | UNK | | | Rumored new brigade base |

(Table by author; modified from Hans Kristensen and Matt Korda, "Chinese Nuclear Forces, 2020," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 76, no. 6 [2020]: 449-50)

Table. People's Liberation Army Rocket Force Bases, Brigades, and Armament (continued)

| Base number | Headquarters location | Brigade | Armament | Nuclear or conventional | Range | Yield | Notes |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--|
| Base 65 | Shenyang, Liaoning Province | | | | | | Northern Command AOR |
| | Dalian | 651 | DF-21A | Nuclear | 1,750+ | 200-300 kT | |
| | Tonghua | 652 | DF-21C | Conventional | 1,750+ | | |
| | Laiwu | 653 | DF-21C/D | Conventional | 1,750+ | | |
| | Dalian | 654 | DF-26 | Nuclear | 4,000 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Tonghua | 655 | UNK | UNK | | | Rumored new brigade base |
| | Laiwu/Taian | 656 | UNK | Nuclear | | | Rumored new brigade base, possible DF-31AG |
| Base 66 | Luoyang, Henan Province | | | | | | Central Command AOR |
| | Lingbao | 661 | DF-5B | Nuclear | 13,000 | 5 x 200-300 kT (MIRV) | |
| | Luanchuan | 662 | DF-4 | Nuclear | 5,500 | 3.3 MT | Might upgrade to DF-41 |
| | Nanyang | 663 | DF-31A | Nuclear | 11,200 | 200-300 kT | |
| | Luoyang | 664 | DF-31 | Nuclear | 7,200 | 200-300 kT | Possibly upgrading to DF-31AG |
| | Wehui | 665 | UNK, probable ICBM | UNK, probably nuclear | | | |
| | Xinjiang | 666 | DF-26 | Nuclear | 4,000 | 200-300 kT | |
| Base 67 | Baoji, Shaanxi Province | | | | | | Responsible for nuclear warhead stockpile, Western Command AOR |
| Total | | 40 total brigades | | 20 nuclear brigades | | | |

(Table by author; modified from Hans Kristensen and Matt Korda, "Chinese Nuclear Forces, 2020," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 76, no. 6 [2020]: 449–50)

The PLARF is divided into six “bases,” sometimes referred to as armies, each corresponding to a geographic area in China. An additional element, the Jinlun (Golden Wheel) Engineering Company, is stationed in Saudi Arabia and responsible for operating missiles including the obsolete DF-3 and newer DF-21 missiles and training of the Royal Strategic Rocket Force of Saudi Arabia.⁵² PLARF units are stationed at bases numbered 61 through 66; an additional base, Base 67, is where all of China’s nuclear warheads are stockpiled. Chinese nuclear warheads are maintained separately from their missiles during peacetime and do not leave Base 67. As the size of support units at Base 67 has not varied much in decades, this may be an indicator that China’s nuclear stockpile has not greatly increased.⁵³ While the PLARF itself has expanded drastically, with current personnel strength hovering around one hundred thousand, this seems to be primarily focused on the conventional arm of the PLARF and not the nuclear so far.⁵⁴

Each base with missile units has between four and seven missile brigades. Each brigade consists of a number of battalions or independent companies armed with a specific type of missile. Brigade subordinate units are either conventionally or nuclear armed, and the size of the subordinate unit varies greatly based on armament, with some conventional missile brigades containing thirty-six launchers with six missiles each, while mobile nuclear missile brigades possess between six and twelve launchers, and silo-based nuclear missile brigades may only have six or fewer silos/caves in total with one missile per silo. Furthermore, each brigade and battalion maintains multiple supporting units for both the missiles and the launchers.⁵⁵ These supporting units include a technical battalion, a site management battalion, a communications battalion, a technical service battalion, and an electronic countermeasures battalion.⁵⁶

As China’s exact missile totals and force structure are not public knowledge, the size and disposition of some units is conjectural. What is certain is that the majority of China’s missiles are short-range missiles such as the DF-11, DF-15, and CJ-10; over one thousand missiles of just these three types are aimed at Taiwan.⁵⁷ China has a total of 2,200 missiles that fall within the parameters of the now-defunct Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, and those missiles make up 95 percent of China’s missile inventory; almost half of these missiles are aimed directly at Taiwan.⁵⁸ The bases

and the corresponding primary armament of their subordinate brigades are presented in the table (on pages 24–26).⁵⁹ Unconfirmed reports also place a DF-41 brigade in the far northwest Heilongjiang Province near the city of Daqing; if true, this could be a new brigade under Base 65, though it could also be disinformation designed to hide true DF-41 deployment.⁶⁰

Conclusion and Recommendations

The PLARF represents a formidable force to enhance China’s military objectives, and one that is very foreign to U.S. military planners, as the last U.S. ground-based missile, the Pershing II, was retired in 1987 to comply with the INF Treaty with the Soviet Union.⁶¹ Seeing a capability gap in the forces of its two closest rivals, China seized an opportunity and has developed the largest ground-based missile force in the world. The PLARF is perhaps China’s most valuable current military asset as it provides China both offensive and defensive capabilities against a wide range of opponents as well as the inherent value of deterrence that nuclear weapons provide any nation. The intentional ambiguity of armament in weapons such as the DF-21 and DF-26 enhance China’s deterrence options and force adversary planners to develop a wide range of contingencies that may never be implemented. Despite these factors, there are weaknesses that U.S. planners should exploit in order to mitigate the threat posed by the PLARF.

First and foremost, China is geographically surrounded by enemies and potential enemies. Strengthening ballistic missile defenses in these nations will degrade the danger of overwhelming long-range precision fires at the onset of a conflict that the PLARF is designed to provide. Furthermore, although the PLARF is large, China does not possess vast stockpiles of missiles; in a protracted conflict, the utility of the PLARF will diminish rapidly. This is doubly true for the nuclear arm of the PLARF. China simply does not have enough nuclear missiles to warrant a nuclear exchange, though Chinese defense white papers of the last decade have stressed an “escalate to de-escalate” concept regarding nuclear employment.⁶² Such a strategy would involve using a very limited number of nuclear weapons, perhaps even only a single weapon, to force an opponent into negotiations rather than devolve into a general nuclear conflagration. Given the apparent lack of tactical nuclear weapons in the

PLARF, this seems illogical. Utilizing a nuclear weapon of several hundred kiloton or higher yield will only serve to escalate a conflict, and those are the preponderance of Chinese nuclear warheads.

Any U.S. military plan, whether on the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan, the South China Sea, or elsewhere, must factor the PLARF in its calculations. U.S. Army nuclear and counter-weapons of mass destruction officers would be invaluable at the operational level in the event of a conflict with a nuclear power such as China. Although typically assigned at the strategic level, these officers possess intimate knowledge of nuclear targeting and damage assessment that would greatly enhance the situational awareness of operational commanders. They would be able to assist operational Army commanders in preparing to operate in a nuclear environment and reacting to dual-use weapons.

Joint planners should refer to the Department of Defense's *Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept* and the 2018 *Nuclear Posture Review*, which both provide guidance on how to counter an adversary's nuclear and dual-capable forces.⁶³ Plans must integrate robust air and missile defense options at all levels to protect the force and degrade Chinese deterrence. U.S. home-based strategic missile defense is planned to increase from forty-four ground-based interceptors to sixty-four within the next ten years, while tactical and operational-level Patriot, Terminal High-Altitude Air Defense, and Aegis SM-3 air defense systems are receiving upgrades and will be procured in greater numbers per the 2019 *Missile Defense Review*.⁶⁴ Protection

will also be vitally important for mission command and logistics nodes, necessitating robust construction engineer units to harden these locations and electronic warfare units to conceal locations. Commanders should use intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities to identify PLARF assets and use either special operations forces or long-range precision fires, either integral or air support, to neutralize the threat these missile systems pose. ISR can also identify if a PLARF unit is a conventional or nuclear unit to permit the commander to react accordingly; the United States and Russia demonstrated technology using neutron detectors on helicopters to find nuclear weapons as early as the 1980s, and these could be modified for use in current ISR assets.⁶⁵ Finally, deception operations to fool Chinese targeters into striking false targets will yield immense benefits, because as noted above, the PLARF has a very limited reserve of missiles to draw from, and thus every wasted missile offers significant ability to degrade PLARF capabilities.

By fully integrating enablers, Army and joint commanders can mitigate the risk posed by PLARF units in the event of a conflict. The PLARF is a formidable but not invincible element of the Chinese military. As China continues to flex its muscles regionally, the United States must, at the strategic level, counter malign influences and strengthen legitimate ties. Should strategic deterrence fail and the United States enter into open conflict with China, combatant commanders must be prepared to counter the force-multiplying nature of the PLARF to ensure success in the operating environment. ■

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Tanks, fighting vehicles, and troops of Japanese Ground, Sea, and Air Self-Defense Forces march in front of viewing stands 23 October 2016 during the Armed Forces Day military parade at the Ground Self-Defense Forces Asaka training ground north of Tokyo. (Photo by Natsuki Sakai, AFLO via Alamy Live News)

The Impact of Base Politics on Long-Range Precision Fires

A Closer Look at Japan

Maj. Richard M. Pazdzierski, U.S. Army

It was crystal clear to me that the future and, indeed, the very existence of America, were irrevocably entwined with Asia and its island outposts.

—Gen. Douglas MacArthur

After withdrawing from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) in August 2019, the Trump administration believed it was better postured to close the “missile gap” with the People’s Republic of China (PRC), which rapidly modernized its ground-launched missile program over the past two decades. The Department of Defense (DOD) estimates the PRC now has more than 1,250 ground-launched ballistic missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers.¹ The United States, on the other hand, does not currently field any conventional ground-launched ballistic missiles or ground-launched cruise missiles in order to abide by the Senate-approved INF Treaty since 1987—a treaty that applied to the United States and Russia but not the PRC. U.S. defense circles are looking for ways to reestablish escalation dominance in the Western Pacific through long-range precision fires (LRPF), including new missile technology with ranges previously banned by the INF Treaty.

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Among the U.S. Armed Forces, the Army took a leading role in researching and developing new capabilities for militarily competing with the PRC by way of the fires warfighting function. Army leadership announced LRPF as the Army’s top modernization priority in October 2017. The LRPF cross-functional team (CFT) later confirmed that a new portfolio of strategic, midrange,

and short-range fires capabilities would begin fielding by 2023.² In addition to ground-based launcher and missile technology, the CFT is also analyzing the corresponding doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and policy solutions of the LRPF program when conducting capability-based assessments. Mission command and targeting solutions, for example, will also be essential for integrating sensor data into an efficient decision-making system and enable the Army’s future LRPF units to operate as part of a joint force.

While defense analysts continue to debate over the optimization of LRPF technology and doctrine, especially in the great-power competition with Russia, some of the unanswerable questions relate to the deployment of LRPF capabilities to the western Pacific. Compared to Europe, the maritime domain makes up a much larger proportion of the Indo-Pacific’s area of operations and complicates the battlefield calculus for the Army. Even if the Army is on a glidepath to develop successful new LRPF technology, questions remain as to where in Asia the United States will deploy such capabilities and whether LRPF platforms should be permanently based or expeditionary. Japan emerged as a leading candidate site for new U.S. LRPF capabilities due to the nation’s geostrategic position vis-à-vis China. However, the Japanese government has yet to indicate its willingness to accept a post-INF, U.S. missile posture on Japanese territory. While the Army’s materiel and doctrinal modernization efforts for LRPF are in full swing, Japan’s post-INF policy debate has just begun.

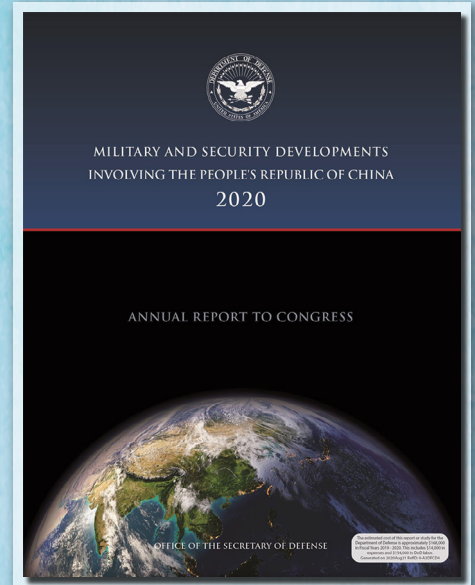
Both before and after the United States withdrew from the INF Treaty, numerous foreign policy and security commentators pointed out the potential diplomatic challenges associated with building up the United States’ ground-based missile forces in the western Pacific.³ Analyzing Japan’s defense modernization efforts over the past decade will better forecast its political will for supporting the deployment of U.S. strike capabilities. Japan’s domestic base politics impacted the security aspects of the U.S.-Japan alliance for many decades, particularly the operational efficiency of Japan-based U.S. forces and Japan’s own Self-Defense Force (SDF). Japan’s political culture surrounding military bases and exercises will likely have a significant impact on the Army’s ability to train, fight, and win with long-range precision strike capabilities intended to deploy to Japan.

Strategic Context

Since the end of the Cold War, the PRC gradually modernized its military through a strategy aimed at improving antiaccess/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities. Chinese strategists refer to these capabilities as part of the PRC's "counter-intervention operations."⁴ The superiority of the U.S. Navy dominated the seas since World War II and convinced Chinese defense planners to pursue an offset strategy that underscored high-technology warfare to counter existing U.S. strengths. The People's Liberation Army's (PLA) operational- and tactical-level objectives are now contingent on offensive capabilities designed to gain the military initiative and prevent opposing forces from entering the western Pacific battlespace. As a separate branch of the Chinese military, the PLA Rocket Force took control of China's strategic missiles in 2016 and assumed the PLA's primary responsibilities for nuclear deterrence and precision conventional strikes that are core components of China's A2/AD strategy.

The PLA's A2/AD capabilities did not evolve overnight. The U.S. military's operational myopia in the Middle East preoccupied much of the U.S. defense establishment with counterinsurgency operations instead of a conventional, near-peer threat. It was not until 2006 that the DOD's *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* pointed to China as having the "greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States."⁵ By the time the United States withdrew from the INF Treaty over a decade later, the PRC already boasted an array of formidable A2/AD capabilities including shore-based antiship missiles, unmanned aircraft, surface-to-air missiles, and long-range sensors. In the land domain, the proliferation of the PRC's ground-launched cruise and ballistic missiles shifted the western Pacific's security environment and altered the deterrence calculus facing the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Among the most stressing scenarios analyzed by U.S. military planners involves the PLA launching a missile strike campaign to coerce Taiwan into submitting to the PRC's political demands. In this scenario, the PLA would neutralize Taiwan's command-and-control network through an arsenal of land, ship, and aircraft-launched missiles while simultaneously threatening U.S. and allied forces to deter their entry into the conflict. The PRC positioned its LRPF to hold U.S. and allied ports, airfields, facilities, and personnel in key terrain of the Indo-Pacific region at risk, and the DOD recognizes that the PRC's current supremacy in ground-launched missiles



United States Strategic Assessment of the People's Republic of China

For those readers interested in learning more about the 2020 U.S. Department of Defense's assessment of the threats posed by strategic competition with China, your attention is invited to the *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2020*. This publication provides a summary of policy concerns and overview of key global initiatives guided by implementation of the *National Security Strategy* as it specifically applies to the People's Republic of China. To view this document, visit <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/01/2002488689/-1/-1/1/2020-DOD-CHINA-MILITARY-POWER-REPORT-FINAL.PDF>.



significantly threatens allied forces stationed in Japan during such a scenario.⁶ The PLA could engage targets in Japan to achieve air and maritime superiority during a localized conflict involving Taiwan.

Since potential enemies geographically surround the PRC, it seeks to avoid a long-duration conflict by accomplishing a quick, decisive transformation of its territorial claims. The greatest challenge for U.S. forces is building up combat power and rapidly counterattacking against PLA forces deploying from China's mainland. U.S. forces located outside of the western Pacific must traverse the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean to defend its allies and partners, and such long distances come along the associated problem sets of logistics and timeliness. When considering China's technological asymmetry in ground-launched missiles and U.S. challenges in moving combat power rapidly into the region, the PRC now has more confidence in its own conventional and nuclear deterrence as it seeks to protect its national interests.

What the U.S. Army Is Doing

In response to China's missile force improvements, the DOD is pursuing counterforce capabilities that can find, destroy, or disable the PRC's integrated A2/AD network. The INF Treaty's termination opened

new conventional deterrence options for consideration, and thus LRPf remains the Army's priority modernization effort. The PLA depends on strategic depth for its offensive assets' survivability, so allied long-range precision strike capabilities are necessary to offset the continental-based systems behind China's A2/AD network. Long-range strikes against actual transporter erector launchers are nearly impossible due to the launchers' mobility and concealability. Still, the Army's LRPf capabilities can instead aim to neutralize the PLA's command-and-control nodes, airfields, ports, air defense, and other stationary, war-supporting targets on mainland China. The Army's LRPf CFT is brainstorming solutions within an overall joint concept to attack the entire kill chain that enables the PLA's A2/AD network.

From a technological standpoint, the Army made notable progress in its LRPf program since emerging



as a modernization priority in 2017. In December 2020, the Extended Range Cannon Artillery system successfully hit a target seventy kilometers away during testing.⁷ The LRPF CFT expects to field the precision strike missile (PrSM) as a replacement for the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) in fiscal year 2023,

strategic range programs like the Strategic Long-Range Cannon are very ambitious and may never materialize as a program of record, but ground-based fires will endure as the Army's main modernization effort for improving power projection in both Europe and the Indo-Pacific.

“Instead of competing with the Navy or Air Force, the Army's long-range strike capabilities mean to complement the joint force, as ground-launched missiles offer several benefits over air- or sea-launched systems.”

with ATACMS currently the Army's longest-range surface-to-surface missile at three hundred kilometers.⁸ The PrSM will extend the Army's midrange missile range to five hundred kilometers and fire from the same launchers as the ATACMS. Within the midrange portfolio, the Army is also pursuing ground-launched antiship missiles to restore the Army's ship-killing capabilities that it once had prior to World War II. The Army successfully fired a Naval Strike Missile at a decommissioned ship from a Palletized Load System truck during the Rim of Pacific 2018 exercise.⁹ Unlike the PrSM or the Extended Range Cannon Artillery system, the antiship program has no exact fielding date as the LRPF CFT continues to improve the antiship missile's moving target capability.

In addition to new midrange surface-to-surface fires, the LRPF CFT is also advancing its long-range strike portfolio to hit targets at strategic ranges. The Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon will enter service as a prototype battery of four launchers in 2023, and this new system employs rocket-powered, boost-glide missiles that soldiers would fire from Army trucks.¹⁰ Another LRPF project receiving significant attention is the Army's Strategic Long-Range Cannon, which seeks to fire rocket-boosted projectiles at ranges over 1,500 kilometers.¹¹ The LRPF CFT acknowledges that

Instead of competing with the Navy or Air Force, the Army's long-range strike capabilities mean to complement the joint force, as ground-launched missiles offer several benefits over air- or sea-launched systems. Ground-launched platforms are much cheaper than missile-equipped destroyers, submarines, or aircraft. Ground-based launchers are also road-mobile and concealable and can serve as a more difficult target for opposing forces when compared to aircraft or ships. Army platforms could also be colocated near a stockpile of war-ready missiles and support longer-duration fire missions. The U.S. Navy lacks the capability to reload the vertical launch systems on its vessels, and this limits the number of land-attack missiles American ships can carry over water as these vessels must also carry antiship missiles and surface-to-air missiles (SAM) for self-defense.¹² U.S. aircraft face similar limitations in terms of payload, and reloading aircraft at airbases is more time-consuming than reloading a transporter erector launcher.

Perhaps the biggest advantage of the western Pacific's A2/AD fight is that ground launchers can be forward deployed as part of a pre-positioned LRPF network to avoid longer deployment times. Ground-based launchers forward deployed under a “fight tonight” readiness posture would do more to deter

Previous page: The U.S. Army conducts developmental testing of multiple facets of the Extended Range Cannon Artillery project 18 November 2018 at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona. From artillery shells to the longer cannon tube and larger firing chamber for the improved howitzer, the ammunition plant at Yuma Proving Ground has been instrumental in building multiple experimental formulations, shapes, and configurations for new propelling charges to accommodate improved projectiles. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Katherine Cottingham, U.S. Marines)

China from executing a surprise salvo attack than a strike force needing to deploy from Guam or Hawaii. If ground launcher units must deploy into the western Pacific from outside the first island chain, they would face the same threats that currently confront U.S. ships and aircraft operating in the Pacific's maritime and air domains.

From a strategic standpoint, forward-positioning ground-launched fires on allied territory offer other indirect ways of deterring China's ambitions to conduct a surprise attack. Forward-deployed LRPF capabilities could increase a U.S. ally's confidence that America stands ready against Chinese coercion while raising the standard for an ally's contribution to collective defense. As pointed out by Takahashi Sugio and Eric Sayers, ground-launched systems that put the PRC's interior at risk would divert the PRC's attention away from offensive capabilities and force greater Chinese investment into missile defense.¹³ Forward-deployed U.S. missiles could instigate an expensive arms race and pressure the PRC to deliberate an arms control regime, similar to how the Army's Pershing II deployments to Europe swayed the Soviet Union into INF Treaty negotiations during the 1980s.¹⁴

Ground-launched cruise missiles and ballistic missiles have the potential to restore the United States' escalation dominance in the western Pacific but only if such capabilities can be deployed to the locations that facilitate shorter deployment times, concealment, and the targeting of the PRC's rear-area forces with a high-level of accuracy. A former U.S. secretary of defense and other top DOD officials suggested Japan as an optimal deployment site for the Indo-Pacific's future LRPF units, but diplomatic efforts will be necessary to ensure such a strategy is politically feasible.¹⁵ To forecast how Japan's government and public will react to the Army's emerging technology discussed above, it is important to understand the politics surrounding Japan's own defense efforts to counter China's A2/AD bubble over the past decade, especially the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force's (GSDF) "Southwestern Wall."

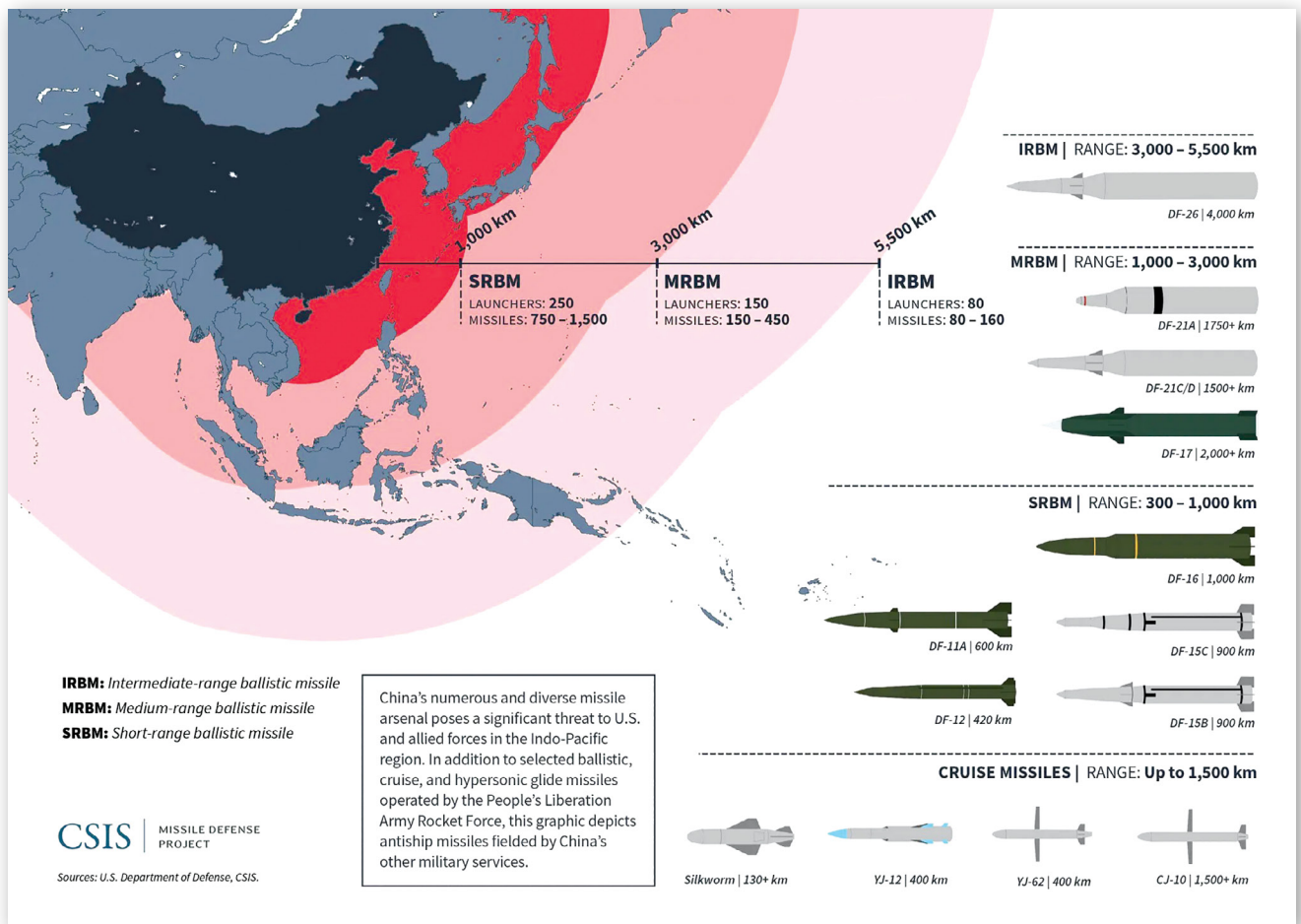
What Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force Is Doing

By the early 2000s, Japanese defense specialists concurred that Japan's geography was a critical part of China's calculus for achieving the long-term objectives

of its A2/AD strategy.¹⁶ The PLA's capacity to dominate the region's sea lanes of communication, seize PRC-claimed territories, and prevent allied forces from mounting counteroffensive operations is contingent on controlling key terrain in the first island chain and neutralizing allied combat power positioned on Japanese territory. In 2010, Japan's cabinet approved the *2010 National Defense Program Guidelines*, which stipulated how the SDF would replace its "Basic Defense Force" with a new concept called a "Dynamic Defense Force." The new concept aimed to deter threats to Japan's southwest islands by improving the SDF's surveillance, rapid deployment, and power projection capabilities.¹⁷ The 2010 guidelines reordered the SDF's overall mission priorities by moving "attacks on offshore islands" up to the SDF's second overall priority behind ensuring the security of Japan's sea and air space. Both priorities reflected the longer-term view of defending Japan's southwestern islands as part of an intense, A2/AD-like conflict situation that may occur among the United States, China, and Taiwan.

To improve the GSDF's power projection and surveillance capabilities to deal with new threats, the GSDF—one of the three SDF branches—reorganized its Cold War-era force posture by reducing troops stationed in Japan's northern region of Hokkaido and augmenting the GSDF's footprint on the southwestern islands of Okinawa. The GSDF established a new coastal observation unit on Yonaguni Island in 2016, which was the first new SDF facility constructed in Okinawa since the prefecture's 1972 reversion to Japanese sovereignty. Yonaguni is the westernmost edge of Japan and is located just 110 kilometers from Taiwan. In 2019, the SDF completed the deployment of other units to the islands of Miyako-jima and Amami Oshima. These two locations host newly formed SAM batteries of the Air Self-Defense Force and antiship cruise missile batteries of the GSDF. There is another set of SAM and antiship cruise missile batteries scheduled to deploy to Ishigaki Island sometime in 2021, which is the municipality with administrative jurisdiction over the Senkaku Islands. Japan's defense strategists hoped that these new SDF camps and ground-launched fires would create a "Southwestern Wall" and close the gaps among Japan's numerous undefended straits throughout Okinawa.¹⁸

In another line of effort, the GSDF has been investing resources into new transport platforms for



(Graphic courtesy of Missile Defense Project, "Missiles of China," Missile Threat, Center for Strategic and International Studies, last modified 16 July 2020, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/china/>)

China's Regional Missile Threat

rapidly deploying troops during a contingency. The GSDF formally established Japan's first amphibious rapid deployment brigade (ARDB) in 2018, which operates assault amphibious vehicles (AAV) based out of Camp Ainoora on Japan's southwest island of Kyushu. The GSDF also procured CH-47 JA and V-22 Osprey transport helicopters to support ground units' rapid deployment.¹⁹ The ARDB's primary purpose is to dissuade China from seizing Japan's remote islands during a low-scale conflict or gray-zone scenario where PLA troops or heavily armed PRC "fishermen" embark on Japanese territory. By approving plans to acquire new equipment such as the AAV7 and Izumo-class helicopter carrier, the Government of Japan (GOJ) seemed willing to test the Japanese public's acceptance

of defense policies previously considered off-limits and "too offensively" oriented.

Although the INF Treaty did not prohibit U.S. allies from developing their own ground-launched missile systems, Japan never seriously considered acquiring such capabilities during the 1990s due to its decades-long pacifist identity, constitutional renunciation of war, and conciliatory diplomacy toward the PRC. Japan's defense planners, nonetheless, gradually came to appreciate the importance of missile defense systems and stand-off firepower like the Type-12 ASCM, Type-02 SAM, and Patriot Advanced Capability-3 systems that are currently fielded throughout Japan. Similar to the U.S. Army, the GSDF is now exploring medium-range antiship missiles, standoff hypersonic weapons, and other

improved LRPF capabilities to offset PLA advantages in the ground domain.²⁰ Japan's politicians recently began debating whether the SDF should have the capability to wage attacks against enemy bases with missile launchers.²¹ U.S.-Japan security agreements traditionally left the SDF as the "shield" and the U.S. military as the "sword" responsible for offensive actions, but some

Camp Yonaguni did not begin operations until 2016. The seven-year deployment process was less a result of funding or construction timelines as it was due to a lengthy consensus-building process that featured Yonaguni's local government holding a referendum over whether to accept the SDF. Japan does not provide for any direct citizen participation in policy-

“ Japanese Defense Minister Kono Taro asserted that the Self-Defense Force's capability to mount a 'defensive first strike' against an enemy missile base would not violate Japan's pacifist constitution. ”

leaders in Japan argue that new missile technology blurs the line between offense and defense. In the summer of 2020, then Japanese Defense Minister Kono Taro asserted that the SDF's capability to mount a "defensive first strike" against an enemy missile base would not violate Japan's pacifist constitution.²²

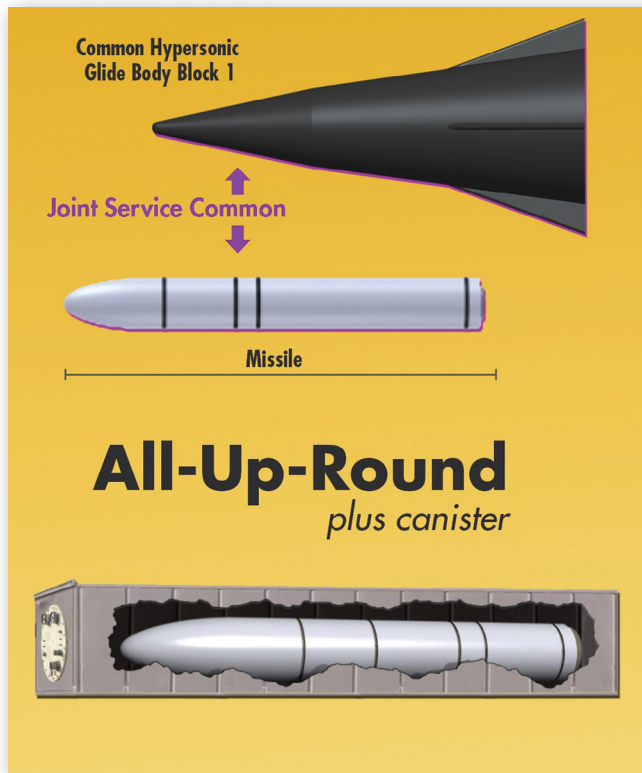
Japan's Political Will in the A2/AD Fight

At first glance, Japan's security focus on the PLA and the shifting of resources into capabilities previously considered taboo may suggest that the timing is right for deploying the Army's LRPF platforms to Japan. Like most symbolic representations, however, the vision of Japan's defense establishment "normalizing" in the post-Cold War era overstates the case of Japan's security identity evolution and fails to understand the interface between defense strategy formulation and force management implementation. Despite the movement of pacifist parties toward the ideological center of Japan's political system since the 1990s, base construction and military personnel operating near residential areas remain very contentious issues in Japan. SDF efforts to build up Japan's "Southwestern Wall" and deploy troops to new localities faced many political obstacles as Japan's central government engaged in consensus building for the local acceptance of SDF troops.

Although defense strategists within the SDF proposed deploying a new surveillance unit to Japan's southwestern island of Yonaguni as early as 2009,

making at the national level, but its local autonomy law outlines that citizen-initiated referendums can serve as an instrument for Japan's localities to influence policy. The pro-base faction won the vote during Yonaguni's 2015 referendum, but the fact remains that Camp Yonaguni may never have happened if the referendum vote did not go the GOJ's way. Japan's central government does not exercise eminent domain in pursuit of force management strategies, and it was mainly Japan's Ministry of Defense (MOD) that drove negotiations with Yonaguni's locals. There was little involvement by Japan's elected lawmakers over the promotion of Camp Yonaguni, and the MOD's public relations campaign focused more on the GSDF base's potential for economic stimulus instead of the importance of Japan's surveillance capacity in the East China Sea.

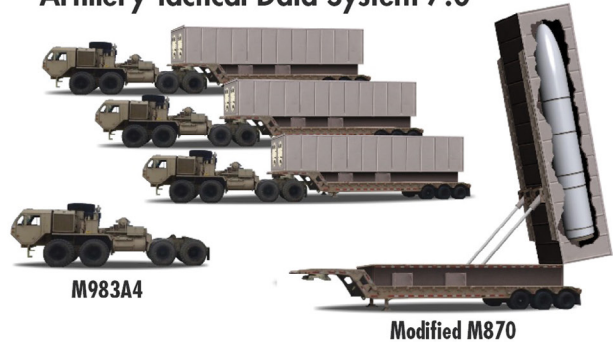
In Miyako-jima, the MOD faced similar challenges when embarking on consensus-building efforts to gain local acceptance of new SDF camps. Unlike Camp Yonaguni, the GSDF facilities planned for Miyako-jima embodied a more kinetic force posture of missile launchers and troops designed to engage the PLA in the island's surrounding waters. Antibase factions rendered such a force posture at the central government's willingness to allow Miyako-jima to become an adversary's target during a conflict scenario.²³ The MOD and pro-SDF civic groups, in turn, refocused their public relations campaign on a narrative disconnected from the China threat and more focused on the potential financial advantages of



Battery Operations Center



Block 1 integration: Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System 7.0



4 transporter erector launchers (TEL)
2 rounds per TEL

The U.S. Army's Rapid Capabilities and Critical Technologies Office is developing a land-based, truck-launched system armed with hypersonic missiles that can travel well over 3,800 miles per hour. Extremely accurate, ultrafast, maneuverable, and survivable, hypersonic missiles can strike anywhere in the world within minutes. These weapons will provide a critical strategic weapon to counterbalance hypersonic capabilities that Chinese and Russian militaries already reportedly possess. (Graphic courtesy of the U.S. Army)

SDF presence for Miyako-jima's stagnant economy. The MOD found many local actors willing to cooperate and compromise over the SDF's deployment when negotiations involved subsidies and pledges to construct public infrastructure.²⁴

Consensus-building efforts meant to implement force management plans often destabilize the U.S.-Japan alliance and capacity for the SDF to meet the operational objectives of centrally planned defense strategies. During Yonaguni's 2013 mayoral election, Yonaguni's antibase assembly members linked a U.S. military helicopter crash that occurred on Okinawa in August 2013 with the SDF's deployment plans to Yonaguni.²⁵ Controversies surrounding U.S. bases in Japan impact local sentiments toward a military presence in their municipality, so the MOD eventually promised Yonaguni's local government that there would be no joint U.S.-Japan military exercises on Yonaguni in exchange for local acceptance of the GSDF's coastal observation unit.

Japan's MOD faced similar challenges in ensuring the operational efficacy of a future SDF base in Miyako-jima, as opposition groups argued that the presence of missiles would violate local ordinances related to the storage of hazardous materials. Residents also voiced concerns over the future training exercises that Miyako-jima's SDF troops would conduct on the island. The MOD made several large concessions for Miyako-jima's mayor in return for a more supportive policy stance toward the SDF deployment, which included an agreement to select an alternate ammunition storage site despite the operational inefficacy of having GSDF troops separated from their missiles.²⁶ To address concerns about the base becoming "too kinetic," the MOD pledged that the ARDB would not conduct any training at Miyako-jima, and the SDF would refrain from using the island's ports as much as possible. There would also be no joint U.S.-Japan training exercises on the island, no heli-pad construction on the new base, and Camp Miyako's GSDF would conduct most of its training virtually.²⁷

During the SDF's "Southwestern Wall" buildup over the past decade, the majority of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) politicians were unwilling to devote significant political capital to promote the deployment of the SDF to new localities. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the executive leadership of conservative LDP politicians at the local levels of government did not automatically render a political

over the SDF's inability to deploy with mission-critical weapons—all suggesting that Japan's elected officials lack commitment over transforming defense strategy into actual defense force posture.

Japanese interest groups that are uneasy about worsening economic ties with the PRC exacerbate the GOJ's unwillingness to address base issues head-on. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) harshly criticized



(Graphic courtesy of the BBC)

Disputed Territorial Claims between China and Japan

environment that welcomed SDF presence. Open disputes over base politics can damage the LDP's party label, so the majority of politicians avoid taking a particular policy stance in the hopes that MOD bureaucrats negotiate internal differences out of public view. The LDP was willing to postpone SDF deployment plans during Okinawa's contested 2014 local gubernatorial election, and there was little pushback

Japan's new military facilities in Okinawa's southwest islands and the establishment of the ARDB.²⁸ The CCP similarly voiced opposition to the United States contemplating missile deployments to the western Pacific this past year.²⁹ After witnessing South Korea succumb to the PRC's substantial economic penalties for accepting the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system in 2017, Japan's business groups (*keidanren*) would likely oppose

any defense posture that risks deteriorating Japan's relations with the PRC, especially in a post-COVID world of corporate leaders desperate for an economic recovery.

It is also important to point out that Japan's contemporary base politics issues are not confined to Okinawa, as demonstrated by the GOJ's recent cancellation of deployment plans for the ground-based Aegis Ashore missile defense systems to the Yamaguchi and Akita prefectures. Japan's Aegis Ashore deployment faced strong opposition from local governments and residents of both localities, and the MOD ultimately justified the cancellation because of "technical issues."³⁰ In another setback for the MOD, Saga's local government rejected plans to deploy the GSDF's new V-22 Ospreys to Saga Airport as part of a support package for ARDB operations. The MOD was instead forced to deploy the Ospreys to Camp Kisarazu of Chiba Prefecture, which is over one thousand kilometers away from the ARDB's home station.³¹ In addition to being geographically separate from the Ospreys, the ARDB is also unable to find training areas for the brigade's AAV7 landing craft. Japan's locals are apprehensive toward ship-to-shore training exercises, which leaves the ARDB training irregularly at distant sites in California or the Philippines.

For U.S. forces stationed in Japan, there are too many examples of base politics impacting training and operations to expound upon in this article. Like the SDF, U.S. forces are also very constrained

in training opportunities as Japan's central and local governments impose restrictions to decrease the perceived risks and "base burden." For artillery units specifically, local municipalities often make

arrangements with the U.S. military over live-fire drills that prohibit night fire and limit the number of days U.S. forces can carry out training exercises each fiscal year.³² There are also significant financial costs involved as the GOJ pays direct subsidy payments to those residents in close proximity to artillery or aircraft. Overall, the above episodes indicate that gaining Japan's public support for ground-based offensive systems, despite the threats posed by the PRC's missile forces, remains politically challenging regardless of whether new force posture involves U.S. or Japanese armed forces. Allowing future American LRP units to make use of Japan's strategic terrain would almost certainly require the rectification



(Graphic created by author; adapted from Alexandra Sakaki, *Japan's Security Policy: A Shift in Direction Under Abe?*, German Institute for International and Security Affairs Research Paper, March 2015)

Japan's Southwest Islands in a Regional Context

and renormalization of certain Japanese norms in the sphere of base politics.

Implications for the Army and U.S. Strategy

From the U.S. perspective, the biggest diplomatic challenge of forward deploying a missile posture to Japan is overcoming Japanese fears of entrapment. Such fears envision an uncontrollable U.S.-PRC standoff and Japan's localities ultimately becoming targets during the PRC's A2/AD operations. The

infrastructure associated with the PLA's conventional missile force is often colocated with assets from China's nuclear force, which also implies a risk of escalation beyond conventional warhead exchanges if the allied response to China is not measured appropriately during such a scenario.³³ Many Japanese understandably do not want their territory to host LRPF platforms that would induce the PRC to abandon its nuclear no-first-use policy. During the Cold War, the United States faced heavy public opposition against deploying Pershing II missiles to Europe, and similar demonstrations could repeat themselves on Japanese soil if plans to deploy LRPF platforms to Japan formalize.³⁴ The United States does not specify whether its overseas systems and facilities are explicitly nonnuclear, and this strategic U.S. policy would further complicate efforts to alleviate any potential societal opposition to LRPF assets.

Japan's rejection of permanently stationed LRPF units would impact competition with the PLA at the strategic level while also imposing major constraints on the Army's ground-based fires at the operational level. Because ground-based launchers depend on mobility and concealability for optimal effectiveness, Army platforms would need permission to train throughout the Japanese countryside and scatter as necessary during times of alert. This is a tall order considering that Japan has limited amounts of terrain without population centers, particularly in the southwest islands. Ensuring the survivability of missile launchers during the initial stages of conflict also requires allied forces to have a distributed footprint, multiple decoy LRPF sites, a robust missile defense system, and the hardening of existing storage bunkers, airfields, and other key infrastructure. Expanding the military footprint and

hardening infrastructure in Japanese localities so dependent on tourism and agriculture could be politically untenable, as already revealed by the MOD's experiences in building up the SDF's "Southwestern Wall." Japan's own A2/AD network is a formal idea still fraught with legal and political implications.

The U.S. Army may need to assume that LRPF units will be expeditionary, even if the expeditionary model is not strategically or operationally optimal. Doctrinal and organizational solutions would need to identify how expeditionary ground-based fires could complement the other domains during an A2/AD fight to best deter PLA ambitions in the western Pacific. Policy solutions would need to address how U.S. capabilities, including the fires battle management systems, integrate with host-nation forces. Timeliness, again, will be invaluable for the Army to stay relevant in a fundamentally asymmetric geographic battlespace. Technological advances in long-range precision-strike capabilities can enhance conventional deterrence in a world of great-power competition, but alliance management issues and the inability for U.S. forces to operate effectively on allied territory could also have the reverse effect of emboldening the PRC. The CCP is certainly paying close attention to how the United States' post-INF missile capabilities will play out in Japan. We can all expect the CCP to be opportunistic toward any perceived weaknesses in the U.S.-Japan alliance, which is why the Army should design theater-specific and flexible solutions when pursuing its priority modernization effort. ■

The views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

Notes

Epigraph. Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

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The Evolution of Economic Compellence

Christopher Sims, PhD

Economic tools to protect national interests and to influence the behavior of other actors have long been used on the world stage. Tariffs, quotas, and embargoes are facets of punitive policy and hallmarks of the international arena. Such economic intrusion exists on a broad spectrum, ranging from restriction to interdiction and destruction, potentially imperiling the very existence of an adversary. Economic measures have also spanned the long bridge of strategy, having been conceived and executed both as a method to achieve a non-economic outcome and as an economic end of military, diplomatic, or psychological actions.

With such versatility, depth, and potency, it is of little surprise that the economic dimension of power is a preoccupation of both state and nonstate actors. Several contemporary leaders have invoked the disquieting specter of economic war as the core of strategy intended to defeat an adversary. After the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, Osama bin Laden observed that in

the confrontation with America, the “struggle is both financial and physical,” and to emerge victorious, it would be necessary “to strike the economic base that is the foundation of the military base ... to focus on attacking the American economy by any means available.”¹ In Venezuela, Syria, Russia, and Iran, officials have all raised the issue of economic war.²

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Although the international arena echoes to frequent invocation of the phrase “economic war,” the concept remains frustratingly amorphous. Existing interpretation cleaves economic activity in two, possessing a different character in war and peacetime. Regarding the latter, historian Tor Egil Følrand considers it “cold economic warfare”: sanctions as part of statecraft.³ These limits are unshackled by war. But this economic warfare, following Følrand, must be analytically distinguished from “military warfare,” which attacks the adversary’s military capabilities, not its economic resources.⁴ Other scholars view economic tools as part of a linear progression of policy existing between diplomacy and military violence.⁵

There are two potential problems in utilizing these approaches to national defense. Firstly, war and peace are hazardous notions. As the American diplomat George Kennan wrote in 1948, competition against peers is a “perpetual rhythm of struggle, in and out of war,” largely operating below the thresholds that are calculated to trigger a conventional military response.⁶ Secondly, military capability and economics are inter-related, since national power is a complex orchestration of different dimensions of statecraft. Viewing military violence as a departure from the application of economic instruments misses the myriad interrelations between approaches to implementing national power.

This rhythm requires innovation in the perception and application of national power at both the strategic and operational levels. Rather than bifurcating war and peace across the spectrum of struggle, the economic instrument should instead be characterized uniformly as one of “compellence.” In Thomas Schelling’s articulation, compellence involves an action that diminishes with alteration in the behavior of the adversary.⁷ Moreover, a deep understanding of the interrelation of facets of

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| 28980 | 28880 |  | دولار |
| 33750 | 33650 |  | یورو |
| 36400 | 35550 |  | پوند |
| 30500 | 29500 |  | فرانک سوئیس |
| 22400 | 21500 |  | دلار کانادا |
| 20000 | 19400 |  | دلار استرالیا |
| 4150 | 3850 |  | لیر ترکیه |
| 7900 | 7500 |  | درهم امارات |
| 3150 | 3010 |  | کرون سوئد |
| 3050 | 2900 |  | کرون نروژ |
| 4400 | 4200 |  | کرون دانمارک |

به علت نوسانات موجود در بازار، نرخ دقیق را از داخل

An Iranian woman checks a display board in a currency exchange shop window 29 September 2020 in Tehran, Iran. The numbers on the display indicate the near total collapse of Iran's currency, the rial, due to heavy economic sanctions imposed by the United States on Iran starting in 2018. As a result of the sanctions, Iran's gross domestic product fell dramatically through 2020, with a corresponding rise in inflation and unemployment, and police and military forces were called out to suppress the resulting nationwide civil unrest. However, irrespective of the challenge that sanctions have caused internally, Iran's government appears to remain undeterred in its objectives and was able to restart its nuclear program as well as expand its support for like-minded Shia insurgent groups in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and elsewhere. (Photo by Atta Kenare, Agence France-Presse)

national power is critical to achieving aims in foreign policy and preventing deleterious effects in the application of strategy. The historical record of economic warfare's evolution as a concept in U.S. defense planning crystallizes several messages to contemporary problems encountered in the execution of economic compellence.

From the British

The era of globalization at the end of the nineteenth century created a panoply of challenges and possibilities for states at the center of international commerce. This rapid expansion in the ratio of international trade to total global economic productivity led British Armed Forces to devise strategies that could weaponize the international trading system and compel antagonistic states through leveraging economic dependencies.⁸ The advent of World

War I ushered in a proving ground for the strategies that focused on military methods to restrict trade. The United States initially expressed concerns over the morality and legality of British methods of interdiction. But as domestic opinion shifted toward Britain, America proposed and adopted the *navicert*—commercial passports—an element of blockade that would thus be the primary tool of U.S. economic compellence in the war.⁹

In its aftermath, the economic dimensions of World War I were a lesson requiring the U.S. Armed Forces to institutionalize the conflict's lessons in order to orchestrate intelligently national economic, industrial, and military preparedness in any future extensive security emergency. In the interwar years therefore, the Army Industrial College, established in 1924, explored America's interest in the economic instrument to compel

foreign actors for this very purpose. Its study was included in the curriculum and defined as “the use of economic, military, political or other measures to injure an enemy’s economic support of his war effort, or a possible enemy’s economic potential for war.”¹⁰

In the shadow of Germany’s invasion of Poland, the 1939–1940 term saw the college prepare a series of studies on economic warfare. In 1940, an economic warfare

a centralized intelligence organization was needed to analyze the relationship between economy, military capability, and national will of both allies and enemies.

Many professional economists worked for the OSS at this time. Later, some of them would exert considerable influence on U.S. national security policy. One such economist, Walt W. Rostow, served as national security advisor to President Lyndon Johnson. During the war,

“Military capability and economics are interrelated, since national power is a complex orchestration of different dimensions of statecraft. Viewing military violence as a departure from the application of economic instruments misses the myriad interrelations between approaches to implementing national power.”

information section was established, emphasizing economic mobilization to support the war effort.¹¹ At the onset of World War II, the United States still conceived of economic warfare as industrial preparedness in support of armed forces, omitting the myriad ways in which economics are connected with the conduct of military operations. Integration of economic intelligence and planning to support the war effort was initiated gradually. A section was added to the Office of Administrator of Export Control in 1940, expanding to a research division that included an intelligence section in the Economic Defense Board, called the Board of Economic Warfare (BEW) after the Pearl Harbor attack of December 1941.¹²

In parallel, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), as the United States’ newly created independent intelligence body, undertook economic intelligence gathering and analysis in order to inform both the policy of the Joint Intelligence Committee and the Joint Psychological Warfare Committee. While the BEW was primarily concerned with imports and exports, the OSS was an institution focused almost entirely to study of the enemy. World War II mobilized civilians to the war effort, from manufacturing to the production of propaganda. In weaponizing society, civilians themselves became targets. And as society assumed a central role in military success,

Rostow worked for the Enemy Objectives Unit as part of the Economic Warfare Division at the American Embassy in London, which was staffed by OSS personnel trained in economics and with additions from the Board of Economic Warfare. The purpose of the Enemy Objectives Unit was to select targets in support of allied bombing. The unit focused on “the principles of concentration of effort at the enemy’s most vulnerable point and of prompt and maximum follow-through when a breakthrough was achieved,” and there was an “assumption that the broad objective of the strategic bombing offensive was to weaken the German war economy” through application of this “doctrine of warfare.”¹³

Rostow’s work in the OSS highlights the relationship between military instrument and economic effect. Interplay between these dimensions of conflict employed to achieve strategic success are at the heart of the effective exercise of national power. The total war against fascism—the onset of which for many was a strategic surprise in the wake of the war to end all wars—brought forth new conceptualizations of warfighting. In 1943, American historian Edward Mead Earle wrote about the economic foundations of military power to conceive of an interrelations between economic, political, and military strengths, and that national security strategy

increasingly required consideration of economic, psychological, moral, political, and technological factors.¹⁴ Upon the cessation of hostilities in 1945, therefore, both government and academic conceptualization of these linkages existed to lay the groundwork for an expansion of this nascent framework.

Against Communism

The economic fragility of European states and the emergence of the United States as the dominant world power in the aftermath of World War II led to the United States' expanding involvement in European affairs to establish a geographic bulwark against the encroachment of communism. The economic dimension of national power was now front and center of executive policy. The Truman Doctrine of 1947 and the Marshall Plan enacted a year later provided both framework and means to afford economic assistance to Europe in order to mitigate political disorder arising from social and economic instability.

Simultaneously, shortcomings in defense and intelligence identified during and after World War II led to refocusing and restructuring. The Eberstadt Report of October 1945 argued for economic factors to be given consideration in the articulation of national security policy.¹⁵ The National Security Act of 1947 formalized the requirement for a centralized national security organization to coordinate intelligence by creating the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).¹⁶ After the war, many economists that had worked in the OSS and the BEW had transitioned to the Centralized Intelligence Group, an interdepartmental body created by presidential directive in 1946.¹⁷ The creation of the CIA the following year afforded a permanent home. In that transition, a later CIA-sponsored assessment asserted that "our major economic intelligence units today grew out of the intelligence support for economic warfare in the last war."¹⁸ The United States had come late to formalizing intelligence as an arm of foreign policy, but preeminence on the world stage now meant rapid expansion.

The Hoover Commission of 1947–1949 recommended that through the National Security Resources Board, an economic warfare program should be created to buttress national security in peace as well as war, reflecting a need to consider atypical modes of warfare.¹⁹ In 1948–1949, the National Security Resources Board produced a

series of interagency studies on mobilization planning for foreign economic measures with the CIA spearheading intelligence. One such report defined economic warfare as "the use of economic, diplomatic, military or other measures to injure an enemy's economic support of his war effort or a possible enemy's economic potential" and outlined various punitive economic measures that constituted the term.²⁰ Despite an assessment of nonmilitary procedures for waging economic warfare, the report asserted that there are "no provisions for over-all coordination of current foreign economic measures in peace nor economic warfare in emergency and war."²¹

In 1949, the State Department produced the "Planning Study on Intelligence for Economic Warfare" that recommended the creation of an interdepartmental committee under chairmanship of the CIA.²² Diffusion of collection and purpose remained a central issue, as was highlighted in a CIA report written in response to concerns articulated in National Security Council Action 282 (NSC 282) of March 1950:

Foreign economic data are now regularly collected and analyzed by some twenty-two agencies of the Government ... This diverse flow of information has been generated to meet the operating or other responsibilities of these several agencies. Much of this information and analytic competence is relevant to one economic aspect or another of national security. Present *ad hoc* methods for consultation do not adequately provide for the mobilisation of the available data and analytic competence around security problems.²³

The CIA assumed responsibility for economic studies of the adversary which, through its newly created Economic Research Area, "became the focus of the Agency's research and analysis effort."²⁴ It was to immediately experience a "remarkable and perhaps excessive escalation" under the direction of economist Max Millikan.²⁵

Yet the problem articulated in response to NSC 282 was not immediately solved, and it remained the crux of effective application of economic power.²⁶ In 1954, a consultant's report on the "intelligence support for economic warfare" was provided to the assistant director of the CIA's Office of Research and Reports.²⁷ It defined economic warfare as the application "of all measures to impair an enemy's economic support of his war effort" and "economic defense" as those

measures employed in peacetime, with the difference being “largely legalistic and semantic.”²⁸ The study was unequivocal in arguing that economic warfare was part of a coordinated application of national resources where the aim “is to support the military objective by the strangulation and attrition of the enemy’s economy, and as stated above, economic, military, psychological and political weapons may be employed.”²⁹

The consultant’s report assessed that this protracted “struggle” against communist forces would be “fought with political, psychological, and economic measures, with or without military warfare. In such a continued cold war or in armed conflict, economic measures will play an important role” because of the Soviet bloc reliance on strategic imports.³⁰ An in-house CIA study considered that in economic warfare, all instruments of national power should be leveraged “to injure an enemy’s economic support of his war effort or a possible enemy’s economic potential for war” and thus the term is “defined in the light of its objectives, rather than the means employed.”³¹ Alive to the problem of clarity, the CIA study observed that the term “economic warfare” is “sometimes used to include all measures” for economic mobilization, “including procurement, production, foreign economic assistance, and all the economic aspects of war” but is “so broad as to have no specific application.”³²

Turning on a DIME

In 1958, the junior Massachusetts senator, John F. Kennedy, argued on the senate floor that “we should certainly use all elements of national policy—economic, diplomatic, and military” in the pursuit of foreign policy goals.³³ Identifying the problem of means and ends that had become conflated and confused, Kennedy asserted that “[w]ar is not so much an objective of foreign policy, as an instrument—a means of securing power and influence, of advancing a nation’s views and interests.”³⁴ For Kennedy, this was inducement through aid, or punishment through sanctions. Crucially however, he failed to see the link between domestic and foreign when he argued that there was an “exaggeration of economy” to the detriment of national security: there was too great a “willingness to place fiscal security ahead of national security.”³⁵

The deep-rooted problem of conceptualizing the interrelation of military and economic capability identified by the CIA in the early 1950s remained unsolved. Yet the

economic instrument, within the suite of governmental tools, remained paramount to the successful application of national power. Winning in protracted conflicts in which military encounters were only one aspect of the confrontation would require understanding the dynamics, and like the studies from the interwar years, effectively linking the domestic economy to foreign adventurism.

As the Cold War endured, effectively fusing instruments of power remained a principal problem of policy prescription. In a speech given in May 1981, William P. Clark, then President Ronald Reagan’s national security advisor, called for the identification and implementation of an innovative defense strategy that would fuse “diplomatic, political, economic and informational components built on a foundation of military strength.”³⁶ In application of this concept, Clark noted that “we must force our principal adversary, the Soviet Union, to bear the brunt of its economic shortcomings.”³⁷ The Soviet Union remains a salutary lesson in the import of understanding the economic dimension of national power. Its military expeditions as part of the Brezhnev Doctrine stretched the economic fabric of de facto imperial government so thinly that the thread would unravel.

Doctrine in the post-Cold War era has reinforced this division of national power into discrete pillars. While it enables comprehension of the components of power, disaggregation also stymies the possibilities that can arise from interrelation of effort. There are bloodless statements that lack actionable insights: the “instruments of national power” in Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations*, must be used in a “synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve national, multinational, and theater objectives.”³⁸ Doctrine defines the “instruments of national power” as diplomatic, informational, military, and economic, known by the acronym DIME; hinging operations to the strategic level, Joint Doctrine Note 1-18, *Strategy*, identifies that “these elements align to the major executive branches applying the power: the Departments of State, Defense, and Commerce, as well as the intelligence community.”³⁹ Stovepiping instruments in departments hinders even basic attempts to perceive the obvious interrelations between instruments.

Beneath such a broad interpretation in doctrine, analyses that are more practical are required. Optimization of DIME to prevent self-defeating consequences requires actionable articulation of a

whole-of-government approach to the application of tools to achieve aims on the international stage. The reductive approach of stovepiping inherent in assigning the instruments to particular branches of government masks the continual interrelation of the dimensions of national power, preventing effective application of economic tools in the warfighting domain. Scott J. Harr, writing previ-

the increasing costs of internal security, the increasing costs of military operations, and the growing strength of economic competitors.⁴²

To that end, much like other weapons, tools of economic compellence designed to achieve international objectives can have injurious effects upon the instigator. Al-Qaida is a principal exponent of utilizing enemy

“Economic warfare was part of a coordinated application of national resources where the aim ‘is to support the military objective by the strangulation and attrition of the enemy’s economy, and as stated above, economic, military, psychological and political weapons may be employed.’”

ously in *Military Review*, notes presciently a requirement for extensive coordination required between separate elements, and that while the United States views the four constituent elements as part of power, Russia perceives and applies them as instruments of war.⁴⁰

Domestic Fissures

The inevitable weakness in protracted and expansive compellence is the self-induced overextension that renders a state economy susceptible to shocks in the international system. After all, this was the original conceptualization by British military planners in the run-up to World War I, where the obvious interdependence and interconnectedness in the form of trade created brittle trans-state linkages such that effective weaponization of the economy could devastate the economy of military antagonists, precipitating loss of morale in the population and amply highlighting the interrelations between military, economic, and psychological aspects of state.

Exploiting the economic dimension of a society through induced overstretch is a hallmark of the strategy of America’s contemporary adversaries. To catalyze American overstretch arising from a perpetual war footing, after all, was the aspiration of al-Qaida ideologues: Abdel Bari Atwan has asserted that bin Laden’s successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri, relied heavily on historian Paul Kennedy’s *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*.⁴¹ According to the historian, past empires fell because of

actions in the international arena for potent gain.

The United States has applied a mosaic of economic actions in the international arena, some designed to reward and others, particularly sanctions, intended to punish and ultimately influence state behavior.⁴³ Implementation of sanctions is a hallmark of democracies—sanctions are of minimal detriment to domestic popularity and can highlight purpose and strength in foreign policy for electoral gain.⁴⁴

Yet economic compellence introduces force into the international arena. Whereas in one direction, sanctions are intended to constrain behavior in an adversarial actor, they can also function in the reverse direction, often as potent narratives of collective grievance. The punitive effect on the population means sanctions can often be counterproductive. Sanctions against Iraq are a leitmotif of bin Laden’s statements: in 1996, bin Laden accused the United States and Israel of “perpetrating the death of more than 600,000 Iraqi children because of the shortage of food and medicine which resulted from the boycott and sanctions.”⁴⁵ Economic compellence can effect enormous, indiscriminate violence, illustrating the central import of this pillar of national power and the necessity to consider second- and third-order effects upon implementation.

Trans-state connectivity has again amplified in the post-Cold War era, bringing possible innovations to the application of instruments. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* contained acknowledgment of

relationships that John F. Kennedy had failed to discern on the senate floor in 1958: that “the distinction between domestic and foreign affairs is diminishing. In a globalized world, events beyond America’s borders have a greater impact inside them.”⁴⁶

The accelerated economic globalization witnessed since the breakup of the Soviet Union has increased

in these confrontations is the viability of particular political systems as forms of government. Four findings have emerged from examination of the historical record concerning the evolution of economic compellence as an instrument of national power. Firstly, war and peace are unhelpful notions; instead, there is a broad spectrum of economic compellence conducted

“The problems encountered in the field of economic intelligence in both World War II and the Cold War have resonance because long struggles require a coherent and executable strategy that can be both articulated and sustained.”

the porosity of national borders to capital in a similar way to that era of expanded interstate trade at the end of the nineteenth century that ultimately led Britain to formulate strategies focused upon the weaponization of commerce.⁴⁷ Like the British then, the United States now must be alive to the myriad methods through which allies and antagonists can influence state behavior by applying economic tools to achieve national objectives internationally. Capital has a home. As South Korean economist Ha-Joon Chang noted, multinational companies remain national entities engaged in international enterprise.⁴⁸ Research and development is conducted domestically and leadership is largely drawn from the home nation, leading Chang to caution that it is a mistake to overlook the nationality of capital in the international arena.⁴⁹

Conclusion

States compel through economic intrusion to achieve objectives in the international arena. At stake

against the backdrop of perpetual struggle. Secondly, there is often confusion between ends and means in application of the instruments of power. Thirdly, interrelations between these instruments are complex but necessary to consider. Finally, failure to assess the implications of economic compellence can create serious unintended consequences.

The problems encountered in the field of economic intelligence in both World War II and the Cold War have resonance because long struggles require a coherent and executable strategy that can be both articulated and sustained. Agency roles must be integrated and aligned to a common objective. A principal requirement is to reassess the production and role of economic intelligence in defense planning. In taking cues from the Eberstadt Report in the aftermath of World War II, the creation of a multiagency commission tasked with developing unity of economic effort could prove pivotal in accomplishing strategic and operational objectives in the future. ■

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Winning the Deep Fight

Planning, Preparing, and Executing Aviation Attacks Out of Friendly Contact

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In order for the U.S. Army to be successful and win in large-scale combat operations (LSCO), divisions must win the deep fight, and Army aviation plays a critical role in achieving success in the division deep area. However, current Warfighter exercise (WFX) observations show that division and combat aviation brigade (CAB) headquarters struggle with the planning of Army aviation attacks out of friendly contact (deliberate attacks).¹ Division headquarters often lack a clear standard planning construct within their tactical standard operating procedures (TACSOP), that includes inputs and outputs, a planning timeline, an operational planning team, and clearly defined duties and responsibilities for deliberate attacks. Likewise, CABs bear significant responsibility for this problem. CABs generally fail to prioritize key staff relationships, fail to appropriately resource the division air operations and planning officer (G-3 Aviation), eschew their own targeting cycle, and fail to generate the proper outputs from the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process. Only by better understanding the duties and responsibilities of both headquarters and working together to develop a planning construct can the division and the CAB achieve success in the deep area and win in LSCO.

Context

Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, states, “The purpose of operations in the deep area is to set the condition for success in the close area or to set the conditions for future operations.”² Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-94.2, *Deep Operations*, reiterates this, stating, “Deep operations are combined arms operations directed against uncommitted enemy forces or capabilities before they can engage friendly forces in the close fight.”³ Division commanders have multiple capabilities at their disposal in order to achieve shaping or decisive effects in the deep fight, but this article focuses on just one method and offers recommendations for improvement: Army aviation attacks against enemy forces out of friendly contact (deliberate attacks) by divisions and CABs.

Deliberate attacks by Army aviation forces are critical to achieving success in the deep fight. FM 3-04, *Army Aviation*, states, “Army Aviation attack and reconnaissance units, maneuvering independently against an enemy force not in close contact with friendly ground maneuver forces, conducts hasty or deliberate attacks to divert, disrupt, delay, or destroy enemy capabilities before they can be brought to bear on friendly forces.”⁴ The employment of Army aviation throughout the depth of the division area of operation and the

A formation of AH-64 Apache attack helicopters from the 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, conducts a battalion training flight 19 May 2020 over Ansbach, Germany. (Photo by Sgt Justin Ashaw, U.S. Army)





ability to mass at a point in time and space provide an extremely lethal capability to achieve decisive effects in the deep area. Despite this capability, recent observations from corps and division WFXs show a continuous struggle to effectively plan and execute these high-risk, high-payoff missions.

A Division-Level Problem

It is critical to understand the role that both the division and CAB headquarters play in this challenging issue. The first and most critical step to ensure the success of aviation deliberate attacks is the acknowledgment that divisions are responsible for their planning and synchronization, with significant CAB input. ATP 3-94.2 states, “Deep operations require top-down planning with bottom-up refinement. While the division and corps headquarters are responsible for the overall planning of the operation, subordinate and supporting organizations actively participate in the planning effort.”⁵

Despite this, current observations indicate a lack of detailed planning at division headquarters and a shifting of responsibility from the division to the CAB

Capt. Greg Stoner (*right*), commander, Bravo Company, 2nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, briefs his flight plan to Maj. Robert Tyler (*third from left*), assigned to the 450th Tactical Helicopter Squadron, 1st Wing Kingston, 29 October 2015 during an air brief mission at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Canadian CH-147F and U.S. Army Black Hawks partnered to conduct a joint orientation flight for an air assault mission in support of Combined Joint Operational Access Exercise 16-01. (Photo by Capt. Adan Cazarez, U.S. Army)

level for most or all planning, which far exceeds the scope and responsibility of the CAB staff. This clearly reveals a lack of understanding of the critical responsibility for a division staff in planning and synchronizing these operations. When division headquarters fail to take ownership of the planning, what follows is a lack of intelligence collection, well-defined triggers, target fidelity, fire support coordination, and understanding of other required conditions for deliberate attacks to be successful.

Likewise, CABs must perform bottom-up refinement to assist division staffs with understanding their planning responsibilities and to provide aviation

expertise. CABs also struggle with generating a list of requests for information for the division staff, requests for collection, detailed airspace planning, and sustainment planning that is critical for refining the plan. However, there is much CABs can do in order to help bridge this gap, such as forging strong relationships with key division staff elements, placing the right officer into the G-3 Aviation position, improved IPB, and conducting their own targeting cycle.

Planning process. To better describe the planning of these operations, division and CAB staffs must develop a standard planning construct for deliberate attacks and incorporate it into the division TACSOP. Corps and division WFX show there is little understanding of the detailed planning required for such operations, which creates considerable friction between staffs when planning and executing deliberate attacks. When considering all that is written about the air assault planning process (another critical combined arms operation), these gaps become plainly evident. The air assault planning process consists of a clearly defined timeline (ninety-six hours), required meetings (e.g., initial planning conference, air mission coordination meeting, air mission brief), well-defined inputs and outputs, and clearly understood duties and responsibilities at echelon. ATP 3-94.2 and ATP 3-04-1, *Tactical Employment of Army*

Aviation, are large steps forward for deliberate attacks, but there is still a long way to go to improve planning for deliberate attacks. By developing a process and incorporating it into the TACSOP, divisions can help reduce friction and create shared understanding between the division and CAB staffs.

One recommendation that is nested in existing doctrine and best practices is the development of a deep operations planning team (DOPT). ATP 3-94.2 describes

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the DOPT as a “temporary grouping of trained and familiar planners that convene to develop a synchronized plan for a specific deep operation.”⁶ It clearly outlines the members of the DOPT—which consists of key members of the division staff, the CAB, and division artillery (DIVARTY) liaison officers (LNO)—and it places the responsibility of the planning and synchronization of deep operations squarely on the division staff, not the CAB. The CAB provides critical inputs and support when planning these operations; however, such operations clearly require resources that are well beyond the CAB level and scope to ensure successful synchronization. The G-35 Future Operations cell should take responsibility for the execution of this planning effort since it will usually fall within the future operations time horizon of forty-eight to ninety-six hours.

Since targets are usually identified for the CAB as part of the division targeting working group (TWG), the planning timeline must begin here, ideally at H-96 hours (see figure 1, page 57). At the division targeting decision board (TDB), the commanding general can approve the target and give guidance to stand up the DOPT to further plan the operation. The DOPT

should meet no less than every twenty-four hours as it continues to refine the plan and produces the required

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outputs. The DOPT, led by the G-35, will convene the staff, discuss the commander's guidance, verify the remaining planning timeline, and issue written warning orders and fragmentary orders as required. The DOPT

DIVARTY. The EXCHECK should be the driving document behind the rehearsal for and the execution of the operation. Production of the EXCHECK cannot be delegated to a subordinate unit. Center for

“Staff effectiveness depends in part on relationships of the staff with commanders and other staff. Collaboration and dialogue aids in developing shared understanding and visualization among staffs at different echelons.”

will likely plan several missions at once but will eventually conduct a deliberate handover briefing to the G-33 (Current Operations), which is approved by the division G-3. This handover must be a deliberate process and should be done in conjunction with or close to a mission rehearsal. At approximately H-24, the G-33 will assume responsibility for the plan and will execute the backbrief to the deputy commanding general-maneuver (DCG-M), a rehearsal, the required conditions checks to the DCG-M or commanding general, and the final go/no-go brief prior to execution.

Outputs. In conjunction with the above timeline, the outputs of this planning process must be clearly defined. The DOPT must produce an initial warning order, an intelligence collection synchronization matrix, an event template, priority intelligence requirements, airspace and fire support control measures, a suppression of enemy air defenses plan, a synchronization matrix, a conditions checklist, a go/no-go briefing, and a backbrief. The framework for the synchronization matrix, execution checklist (EXCHECK), go/no-go briefing, backbriefs, and rehearsals should all be written into the TACSOP for ease of planning.

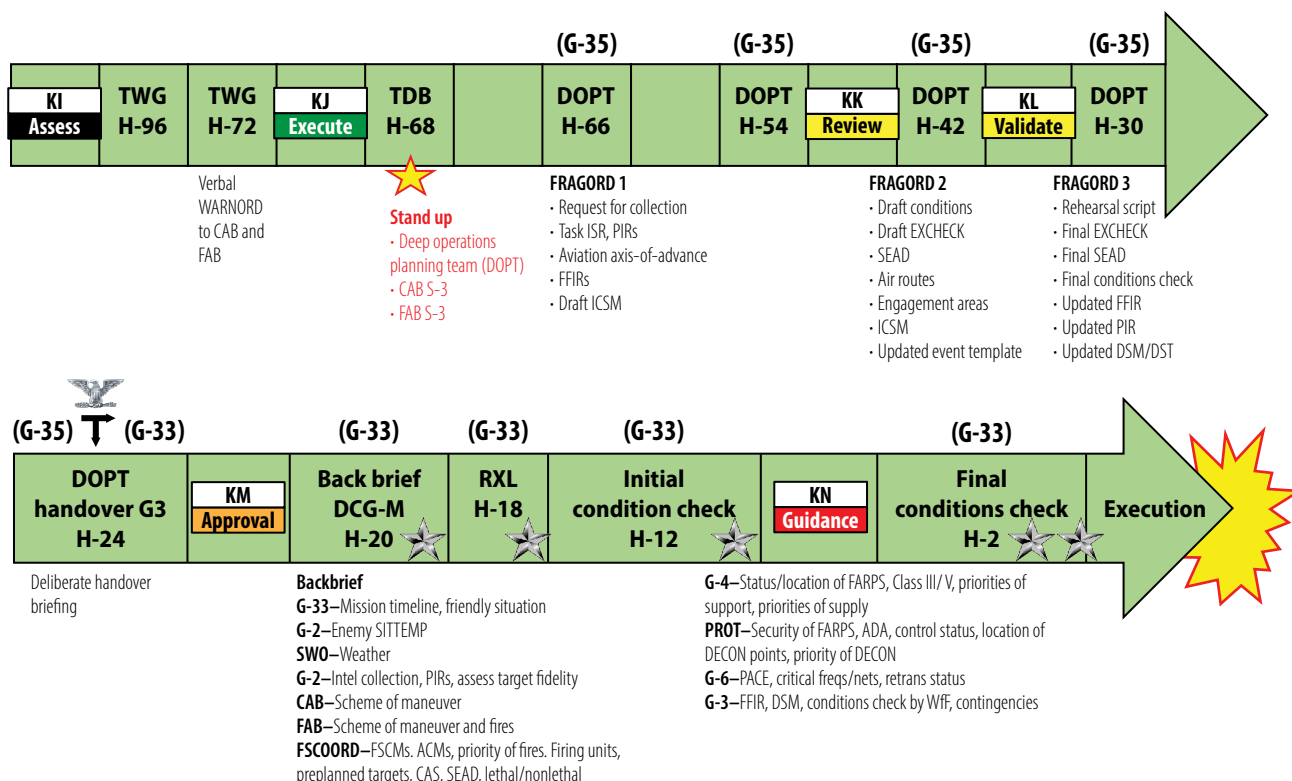
Of all these documents, the EXCHECK bears special mention. The EXCHECK is very commonly used in the detailed synchronization of an air assault, and it can play a very similar role for deliberate attacks. It is a forcing function for the detailed planning and synchronization of the timing necessary to execute complex division-level operations. The G-35 assumes responsibility for building the EXCHECK as part of the DOPT and solicits significant input from the rest of the division staff, the CAB, and the

Army Lessons Learned Handbook No. 18-11, *Deep Operations: Lessons and Best Practices*, provides examples of some of these products and outputs.⁷

Duties and responsibilities. In order to ensure efficiency in the planning process, it is critical for planning duties and responsibilities to be defined at echelon. The division staff will provide task and purpose, conduct initial IPB, and provide initial destruction criteria to achieve success. The division staff also provides and synchronizes resources for the CAB that are effectively beyond the CAB's scope such as intelligence collection for target fidelity, lethal and nonlethal suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD), priority of fires, and command and control. The CAB focus should be on conducting detailed aviation planning, including engagement area development, airspace control measures, the aviation scheme of maneuver, and more refined IPB. Figure 2 (on page 58) is one way for clearly designating responsibilities between the division and CAB staffs. Critical to this process is the exchange of LNOs between headquarters.

The Combat Aviation Brigade

CAB staffs naturally possess the majority of aviation expertise within the division. However, observations from WFXs show challenges with staff relationships between the CAB and the division pose a significant obstacle to shared understanding and communication in planning deliberate attacks. FM 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations*, states, “Staff effectiveness depends in part on relationships of the staff with commanders and other staff. Collaboration and dialogue aids in developing shared understanding and visualization among staffs at different echelons.”⁸



(Figure from "Targeting," Mission Command Training Seminar for Division Staffs)

Figure 1. Division Staff Planning Model for Deliberate Attacks Out of Friendly Contact in the Deep Area

CAB commanders and staffs must place a premium on relationships in order to further develop, shape, and increase efficiencies in these planning processes and increase understanding of aviation operations on the division staff. Recent WFXs indicate that the following staff and adjacent unit relationships must be strengthened in order to improve close coordination.

CAB fire support officer and DIVARTY relationship. The CAB fire support officer (FSO) is the intermediary between the CAB staff and the division fire support enterprise. One of the crucial roles for the FSO during planning and execution of deliberate attacks is the coordination of the SEAD plan. This often requires working with DIVARTY and division staff elements to synchronize both lethal and nonlethal SEAD assets. The FSO must ensure that all elements understand the entirety of the SEAD plan and what actions trigger its execution. The FSO can also enable more successful

operations by coordinating for the development of a quick-fire net/strike net to enable engagement of targets identified by aircrews, unmanned aircraft systems, or other fire support assets.⁹ The FSO and the targeting officer also play a role in coordinating with DIVARTY and the division joint air-ground integration center to deconflict airspace and fire support control measures.

CAB S-2 and G-2 relationship. The CAB intelligence officer (S-2) must develop close working relationships with the division G-2 section. It is essential to establish shared understanding of the operational environment and inform the CAB commander's decision-making process based on the threat. The CAB S-2 must find time in the battle rhythm to attend the G-2 analyst control element synchronization meeting. The S-2 should routinely speak with the division G-2 and deputy G-2 to maintain situational awareness, and more importantly, an understanding of the target list

Division

- Leads division-level operation teams (OPT) with combat aviation brigade (CAB) and division artillery (DIVARTY) participation
- Synchronizes all warfighting functions to support the attack and set conditions
- Provides command and control
- Synchronizes, resources lethal and non-lethal suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD)
- Selects ground for the attack
- Provides intelligence collection to achieve target fidelity
- Approves airspace coordinating measures and fire support coordination measures
- Coordinates transitions across boundaries if required
- Establishes destruction criteria
- Receives go/no-go and conditions checks
- Establishes required conditions for the attack
- Leads rehearsals and backbriefs
- Finalizes execution checklist (EXCHECK)

Combat aviation brigade

- Participates in division OPTs
- Participates in go/no-go and conditions checks
- Recommends required conditions for the attack
- Publishes written orders
- Provides risk assessment to division
- Conducts intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB)
- Selects initial engagement areas
- Updates situational template, event template, priority intelligence requirements
- Requests collection from division to achieve target fidelity
- Aviation concept of the operation
- Determines combat power and task organization
- Provides commander's intent, clear task/purpose
- Updates friendly force information requirement, builds decision-support matrix and decision-support template
- Updates synchronization matrix
- Contributes to EXCHECK
- Develops initial axes of advance or air routes
- Provides initial battle positions
- Recommends destruction criteria to division (if not provided)
- Coordinates lethal and non-lethal SEAD, close air support, priority of fires
- Coordinates, provides protection for forward army and refueling points (FARP)
- Determines Class V requirements ("missile math")
- Plans and synchronizes FARP support
- Leads/participates in rehearsals, backbriefs

Battalion/squadron

- Conducts and refines IPB with CAB S-2
- Aviation scheme of maneuver
- Refines axes of advance into air routes
- Employment methods (max destruction, phased, continuous)
- Refines engagement areas
- Refines battle positions and attack-by-fire positions
- Selects firing positions
- Direct fire planning
- Fire distribution planning
- Method of fire control
- Firing techniques
- Disengagement criteria
- Contributes to EXCHECK
- Troop leading procedures
- Provides liaison officers to CAB
- Builds aircrew products and kneeboard packets
- Participates in rehearsals and backbriefs as required
- Task organizes FARPs as required



(Figure from "Aviation Support to Division Operations," Mission Command Training Seminar for Combat Aviation Brigades)

Figure 2. Planning Duties and Responsibilities for Deliberate Attacks Out of Friendly Contact in the Deep Area

and collection focus for the division. As one of only two subordinate elements routinely focused on collection in the division deep area, the CAB S-2 must attend division collection management meetings/working groups to remain nested with priority of collection and focus for the division. This will allow the CAB S-2 to identify gaps in collection coverage for the CAB and submit requests for collection to division to answer priority

intelligence requirements that support the execution of deliberate attacks. The CAB S-2 should attend the division target decision board meeting when possible, as the G-2 will brief the most current enemy situation during this meeting to the division commander as well as the intelligence collection synchronization matrix. There will also be decisions and discussions about division collection efforts (by phase) and who (unit) has priority

of collection. The division will establish collection as far out as seventy-two to ninety-six hours to provide predictability for the brigades for collection assets. Key for the CAB S-2 is to develop the CAB intelligence collection matrix to help assess what level of collection is required at division's level to best support the deep fight.

can be effective, but the G-3 Aviation does not have the authority to synchronize operations or drive the staff for planning critical events. Only the G-3 can do this, and therefore a strong relationship from the CAB S-3 to division G-3 will go a long way with helping to eliminate this friction.



Combat aviation brigades must better shape and influence the planning and execution of deliberate attacks by conducting their own targeting cycle.



CAB LNO and division relationship. The importance of LNOs to a division headquarters is well documented yet rarely put into practice. Leaders often comment that “if it doesn’t hurt to give up that LNO, then it’s not the right person.” FM 6-0 recommends a brigade provide a major as an LNO to the division headquarters.¹⁰ Although this is rarely possible, the selection of an LNO is of paramount importance for forging effective relationships. CABs must consider their LNO to division as a force multiplier that can greatly enhance the reach and influence of the CAB, if appropriately resourced. The CAB should also consider senior aviation warrant officers for this position. Whoever is selected, the commander must effectively define the duties, responsibilities, and expectations for that individual. Commanders must take great heed in determining who does fill this critical position as “LNOs must have the commander’s full confidence and experience for the mission.”¹¹

CAB S-3 and division G-3 relationship. Much like a competent and trusted brigade aviation officer on a brigade combat team (BCT) staff facilitates a relationship between the CAB and a BCT, so can the G-3 Aviation for the division. However, this relationship was never intended to replace the need for an excellent working relationship between the CAB S-3 and the division G-3. The CAB provides a vital capability to any division. The CAB must be treated with the same level of importance as any of the other subordinate brigades. It is often the case that division G-3s, in an effort to prioritize limited time in a busy battle rhythm, understandably rely on the G-3 Aviation to perform critical coordination with the CAB. This technique

Likewise, the Aviation Branch and CAB commanders must take careful consideration when recommending aviation officers for the G-3 Aviation position. Although the position is specified for a lieutenant colonel, observations show this position is very often filled by aviation majors of varying experience levels. The preferences and priorities of the CAB and the division commander will play the biggest role in determining who fills this critical position. However, it is routine that aviation brigade- and battalion-level key developmental positions and brigade aviation officer positions take precedence over G-3 Aviation assignments. When this happens, it is not uncommon for a newly arrived Command and General Staff College graduate to be assigned to the G-3 Aviation position while waiting to begin their S-3 or executive officer time in the CAB. Many of these officers have never worked above the battalion level, much less at the brigade or division level. With the division as the unit of action under LSCO, it is paramount to ensure the assignment of the right officer to this very critical position. Having the wrong officer in this critical position induces considerable friction and only increases the burden on the CAB staff. Although there are competing requirements, CAB commanders must keep this in mind when making recommendations to the division commander for G-3 Aviation positions and consider assuming more risk elsewhere in the field grade slate. The G-3 Aviation must be a trusted and capable officer who can succeed on a division staff and be value added for the combat aviation brigade and division in LSCO.

CAB internal processes. Furthermore, CABs can improve deliberate attacks by improving their own

Purpose: Synchronize targeting priorities, collection assets, and planning efforts IOT anticipate emerging requirements, make recommendations to the commander, and ensure continued execution of both lethal and nonlethal targets.

Frequency: Daily

Duration: One hour

Location: Briefing tent

Proponent: CAB

Chair: BDE XO/S-3

Lead: BDE FSO/TARGO

Attendees: S-2 rep, S-3, plans, sustainment, protection, AMSO, IIA, SWO, AMD, CA, SJA, CBRNE, Bn Reps, PAO, S-6

Inputs: 24–96 hrs

- Enemy situation (by ATO cycles) (DECIDE)—S-2
- Targets tasked to support (DECIDE)—FSO, S-3
- Information collection plan (DETECT)—S-2
- Attack guidance matrix—FSO/TARGO
- Draft ACMs/airspace plan—ADAM/AMSO
- Current and draft FSCMs—FSO/TARGO
- Sustainment running estimate (as needed)—S-4/MEDO
- Maneuver plan—S-3

Outputs:

- TTLDAC for each new proposed TGT
- Developed COAs by time period
- Target assessments and refinement recommendations
- IC refinements
- Updated HPTL, proposed collection plan, proposed target list work sheet (TLWS), updated FSCMs/ACMs

Feeds: BDE CUB; BDE targeting board, DIV targeting working group

Agenda:

- Enemy situation for ATO cycle—S-2
- Maneuver plan for ATO cycle—S-3
- Weather and impacts on operations (SWO)
- FSTs for ATO (FSO/TARGO)
(Run four turns, assess past 24 ATO, review/refine next 24 ATO, validate next 48 ATO, develop concept sketch for next 72 ATO, CDR's guidance and initial nominations for next 96 ATO)
- Build TTLDAC
 - Target number (targeting)
 - Target location (targeting plots on map)
 - Trigger (NAI/TAI target is in and time it is being observed—sensor to shooter)
 - Observer (IC asset that is doing the observing S-2/radar)
 - Delivery system (assign primary and alternate shooter based on FSTs/FATs/AGM)
 - Attack guidance (weapon/eering from ATK ops/master gunner)
 - Communication: PACE
- Develop ACMs/FSCMs based on preplanned targets
- Develop sustainment plans
- Review changes to TLWS
- Go over due-outs and set deadlines for tasks

(Figure from "Targeting," Mission Command Training Seminar for Combat Aviation Brigades)

Figure 3. "A Way" for a Combat Aviation Brigade to Conduct a Targeting Working Group

internal processes. In particular, CABs must better shape and influence the planning and execution of deliberate attacks by conducting their own targeting cycle. Current observations from WFXs indicate that CABs are not conducting a thorough or complete targeting cycle that is effectively nested with the division targeting cycle. CABs often conduct a nondoctrinal version that leaves the CAB commander and staff ill equipped to provide inputs during the division targeting cycle and engage

with division personnel on targeting. A recommended way to alleviate this is for the CAB to conduct a TWG that takes place *prior* to the division TWG. The S-2, S-3, planner, aviation mission survivability officer, and FSO should all participate in the division TWG. This will allow better coordination and communication between the division staff and CAB staff, including more rapid responses to requests for information that will drive more detailed planning and synchronization. If time

precludes the conduct of a CAB TDB, then the CAB can save time by finding an alternate method to brief the CAB commander on the results of the CAB TWG and division TWG prior to the division TDB. This will allow the CAB commander to address any concerns and have an informed discussion about risk with the division commander. Figure 3 (on page 60) depicts a recommended quad chart for a CAB-level TWG.

Similar to targeting challenges, CABs are not producing the required intelligence products in order to successfully refine planning in support of deliberate attacks. CAB S-2s should be working very closely with the division G-2 in order to best understand the enemy threat and maneuver in the deep area and achieve maximum effects. Mission command training seminars and WFXs indicate that CABs often struggle with completing the required initial outputs of IPB (e.g., possible enemy courses of action, situation template, event template, named areas of interest overlay, intelligence collection synchronization matrix), and once operations begin, a lack of available time only makes it more difficult to complete these products, much less refine them. This largely occurs because CABs, like many units, delegate IPB to the S-2 section, while the remainder of the staff charges into the rest of mission analysis. This lack of a whole-of-staff approach in IPB leads to a lack of collective understanding of the enemy and terrain, and it slows down planning in subsequent operations. As part of a division, the CAB S-2 should

have just as much knowledge of the terrain and enemy in the deep area as the division G-2, with special focus on avenues of approach, mobility corridors, canalizing and key terrain, tentative engagement areas, and tentative aerial battle positions. CAB S-2s and the aviation mission survivability officer, through their detailed analysis, knowledge, and close working relationship with the G-2, should be proactively recommending targets to the G-2. They should be bombarding the G-2 with continuously refined priority intelligence requirements and requests for collection to validate the terrain and enemy courses of action where they seek to destroy the enemy and win the deep fight.

Conclusion

For aviation deliberate attacks to be successful, the division must take responsibility for the synchronization, detailed planning, and execution of deep operations. Establishing a deep operations planning team to conduct the detailed planning, create the required outputs and products, and synchronize the plan within the context of the division scheme of maneuver will help significantly. This will also help with other CAB challenges such as developing the CAB's targeting cycle that is nested with division and focusing the staff on IPB. In addition to this, ensuring the right officer is in the G-3 Aviation position and forming relationships with key division staff will play a significant role in improving these critical operations in LSCO. ■

Notes

1. The observations referenced by the authors in this document are from the authors and other observers, controllers/trainers at the Mission Command Training Center. Many are discussed in greater detail in the "Mission Command Training Program (MCTP) Key Observations" series, published annually by the Center for Army Lessons Learned.

2. Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], 6 October 2017), para. 1-150.

3. Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-94.2, *Deep Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, September 2016), 1-4.

4. FM 3-04, *Army Aviation* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, April 2020), 3-8.

5. ATP 3-94.2, *Deep Operations*, 3-8.

6. Ibid.

7. Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) Handbook 18-11, *Deep Operations: Lessons and Best Practices* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CALL, March 2018).

8. FM 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 5 May 2014), 2-3.

9. ATP 3-09.42, *Fire Support for the Brigade Combat Team* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, March 2016), para 2-41. "Quick-fire nets allow the observers to communicate with specific field artillery or mortar fire units. These kinds of communication arrangements enhance responsiveness. Communication planning should also include communications nets for the clearing of targets for air assets."

10. FM 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations*, table 13-1, "Senior Liaison Officer Rank by Echelon."

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Chasing the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence

A Cavalry Squadron's Business School Approach to Fixing Maintenance

Capt. Tyler D. Stankye, U.S. Army



The Army needs doctrine on organizational change, and it is a perfect time for that change. From brigades reorienting on new theaters of operation to squadrons and troops trying to improve their maintenance culture, organizations in the Army are consistently striving to change for the better. Currently, the Army is refocusing from counterinsurgency to large-scale ground combat operations against near-peer adversaries, but we are doing so without the doctrinal framework to support such a transformation.¹ If we look at existing doctrine, we find very little about instituting organizational change. Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession*, and Army Techniques Publication 6-22.6, *Army Team Building*, offer the Army's approach to organizational leadership, and the only substance on change is the Forming-Norming-Performing paradigm of team building.² The 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment (6-9 Cav), used both Kurt Lewin's Three-Stage Model of Change and John Kotter's Eight-Step Process for Leading Change to successfully change its maintenance program and win the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence (AAME) in 2020 while deployed to the Republic of Korea.³ Lewin and Kotter offer proven frameworks for organizational change that should be included in Army doctrine.

The Three Fundamental Stages of Organizational Change

The steps in Lewin's Change Model are three distinct moments that occur in lasting organizational changes. Consider a blacksmith forging a piece of metal. The smith heats steel to make it malleable (unfreezing), strikes it with a hammer to change its form (moving), and then dunks it in water to harden its new form (refreezing) (see figure 1, page 64).⁴ Though there are many substeps to each of the three steps, the blacksmith must follow this general order to make a quality product.

Unfreezing. Unfreezing is the initial stage that identifies needed changes and then removes institutional barriers to lasting change. At the end state of this stage, the organization should clearly understand the desired outcome and be primed to make the change.⁵

Moving. Moving is the stage in which the organization takes action to achieve the desired change after setting the conditions. The changes are not yet solidified, providing flexibility for adjustment. At the end state of this stage, the organization has instituted its changes and assessed their viability.⁶

Refreezing. Refreezing is the final stage in which all of the changes are solidified in the organization's culture. This stage ensures that systems, structures, and stakeholders mutually support maintaining the change. At the end state, the organization has galvanized the change with new structures to prevent reverting to the old way of doing things before the change was made.⁷

The Eight Steps of Organizational Change

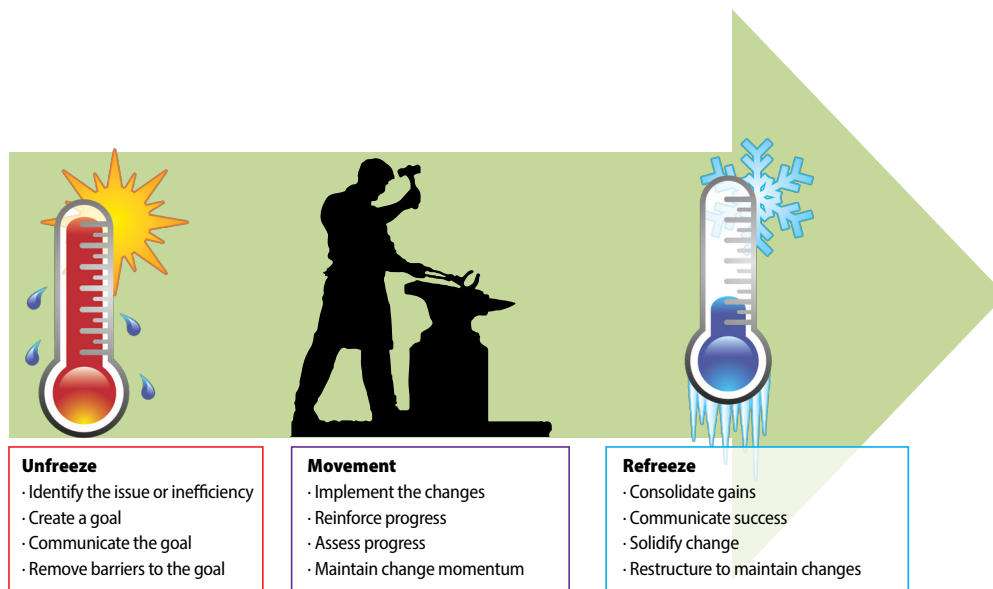
The next framework is Kotter's Eight-Step Process for Leading Change. When done in order and to completion, these steps create the unfreeze-move-refreeze cycle that generates successful change (see figure 2, page 64–65).⁸ 6-9 Cav used it to gain and maintain the necessary momentum to change its maintenance program while preventing the organization from reverting to its old ways of doing things before the change was made.

Establish a sense of urgency. A significant portion of an organization is actively involved in generating organizational change. It is difficult to motivate an organization that does not see the need for change. Individuals need to go beyond their normal duties to facilitate the change. Establishing a sense of urgency is the method for getting that extra investment of time and effort from individuals to accomplish the goal.⁹

Complacency motivates individuals to maintain the status quo since it is a comfortable trajectory. When complacency is high and urgency is low, it is difficult to gather a group with enough organizational influence to guide the effort and convince key individuals to spend the extra time communicating a vision of change. Even if a small, motivated group exists in a generally complacent organization, the early momentum will end before the change is complete.¹⁰

To increase urgency, leaders must identify the sources of complacency and then remove them or

Previous page: Sgt. Cody Fillinger (left) and Pfc. Matthew Chick, both of 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, work to repair the engine of an M1A2 Abrams 8 October 2019 at Rodriguez Live Fire Range, Republic of Korea. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob Kohrs, U.S. Army)

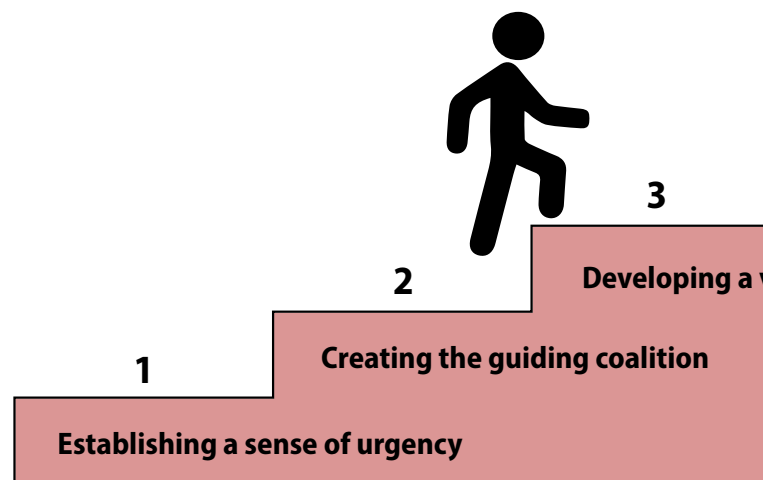


(Figure by author)

Figure 1. The Fundamentals of Organizational Change

mitigate their impact (see figure 3, page 66). Doing this requires bold action rather than a tepid approach; bold and potentially risky action creates a sense of urgency. Bold action makes individuals perceive the change as unavoidable and failure to change as catastrophic. Risk is unavoidable, and in the case of organizational change, prudent risk is required.¹¹ In 6-9 Cav, urgency was created when the brigade commander required all combat vehicles drive onto the boat to the Republic of Korea under their own power. He also required every vehicle shipped to have a “10/20 Book” (operator- and unit-level maintenance) that included the 5988E (the Equipment Maintenance and Inspection Worksheet, a digital record of vehicle faults), Army Oil Analysis Program report, and the full equipment status report (the report of all faults paired with order status and fault date) for the vehicle. This requirement set a tough but very visible standard. The 10/20 books provided the brigade commander’s inspectors with the official record of current faults, so they had a record to assess why the vehicle did not meet his standard. Achieving a 100 percent operational readiness (OR) rate in a short time is an incredible task that constrained resources. This left little room for dishonesty and prevented units from generating false OR rates by loading faults onto a single vehicle.¹²

make up the core of the organization with direct influence on the most soldiers. Leaders who have enough autonomy can succeed regardless of what is happening in the rest of the organization. These levels can usually circumvent resistance from higher echelons, but Army structure requires approval, even if tacit, from higher leaders. Urgency can either be initiated from the top or can be demonstrated to higher-level leaders in a way that convinces them to buy-in.



One of the most important aspects of successfully creating urgency is instilling it in the correct individuals.¹³ If the target of change is a squadron, troop, or platoon, then the key players will be the middle- and lower-level leaders at that echelon. For example, for a squadron-level change, it would be the troop commanders/first sergeants (middle level) and the platoon leaders/platoon sergeants (lower level), but urgency at even lower levels is always helpful. They

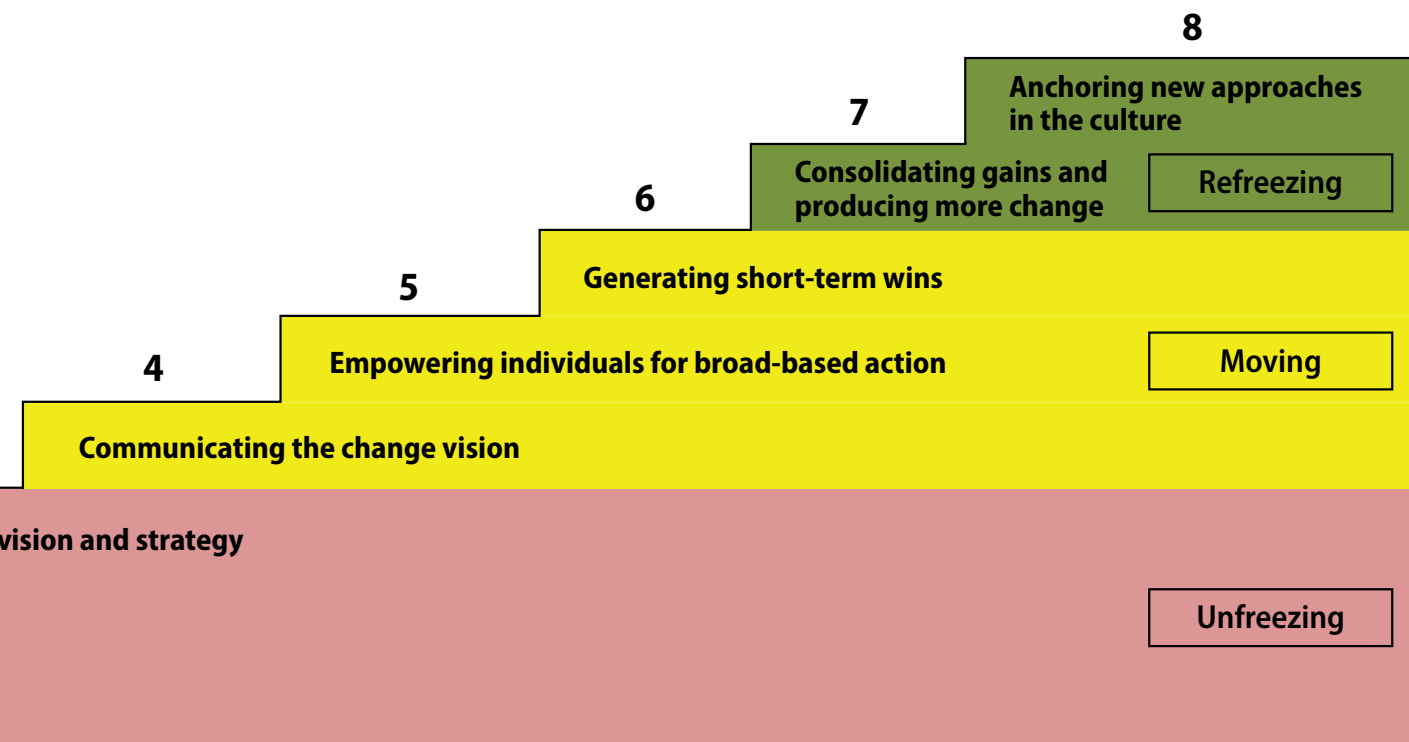
6-9 Cav nested the urgency from the brigade by tying the vehicle standard to all personnel evaluations down the entire chain of command. The squadron executive officer (SXO) made it clear that he would hold troop commanders and platoon leaders responsible if their vehicles did not drive onto the boat under their own power. It was now important to them. The squadron could not maintain the old laissez-faire approach to maintenance. Leaders were now accountable for their real OR rate since it would be obvious if a vehicle could not move under its own power.

Create the guiding coalition. Major change is difficult to initiate and sustain. On his or her own, no single leader can develop the right vision, communicate it to a large formation effectively, eliminate all the key obstacles, manage numerous change projects, and anchor the new approach deep in the organization's culture. A weak coalition is even worse; it is ineffective and is unable to influence the organization in the correct way. An organization needs a strong guiding coalition with the correct organizational influencers, trust, and a shared objective.¹⁴

Major transformations are frequently associated with a single highly visible individual. For example,

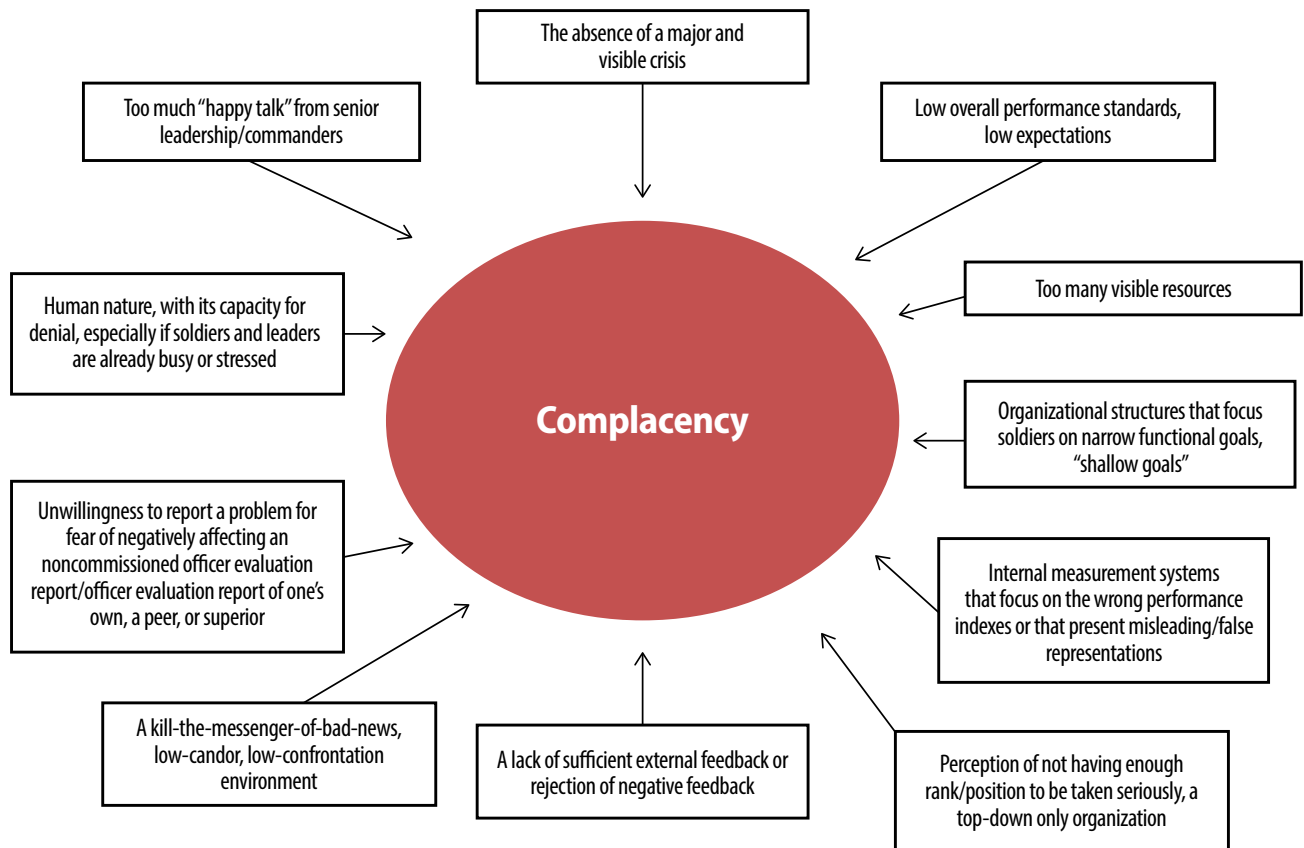
the SXO for 6-9 Cav changed the unit's maintenance program and led the unit to win the AAME in the large modification table of organization and equipment category, the first time in the award's history an active duty armored formation had won it. He knew a successful squadron maintenance program involved a large share of stakeholders and built a guiding coalition representative of the maintenance enterprise. He sold them on his vision and created a team that produced the Army's best large modification table of organization and equipment category maintenance program during a rotation to the Republic of Korea.

The second reason for a guiding coalition is that most senior leaders had their formative years during a different time focused on counterinsurgency, and they may not completely understand the current systems or the motivations of younger soldiers. The SXO was the first to admit he did not understand Global Combat Support System-Army (the Army's logistics and maintenance system) or the intricacies of armored brigade combat team maintenance requirements because he was raised with the legacy Property Book Unit Supply Enhanced (PBUSE) system in infantry and Stryker brigade combat



(Figure by author)

Figure 2. The Steps of Organizational Change



(Figure by author; adapted from John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* [Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012], 42)

Figure 3. Sources of Complacency

teams. He took three steps with his guiding coalition to mitigate his knowledge gap. First, he required the coalition to do all briefings off reports generated by the Army systems of record (equipment status report; ZPROSTAT; Army Oil Analysis Program reports; and test, measurement, and diagnostic equipment reports) so the entire coalition had access to the same records. Second, he brought outside experts to teach these systems to the coalition, empowering the coalition with knowledge and making it independent of his knowledge gap. Last, he asked for guidance from the rest of the coalition whenever he did not understand the systems. He displayed his strength of character through humility. He was a major asking lieutenants and sergeants how things worked and to solve problems at their level. It was effective at mitigating his knowledge gap by leveraging the coalition's collective expertise and by fostering cohesion through teamwork.

The guiding coalition requires the right mix of leaders and managers. Managers sustain processes and leaders create an organizational vision and inspire others. In change management, the managers keep the process under control while the leaders drive the change. They must work in tandem to drive and maintain the change process. A manager-heavy coalition will develop plans but lack vision, while a leadership-heavy coalition will have a lofty vision but lack the ability to take action to achieve it. It is also important to identify and avoid, or very carefully manage, those who have large egos and those who sow mistrust in the team. These individuals may be highly motivated, intelligent, and productive. However, they may use membership selfishly while degrading the credibility and trust within the team.¹⁵

6-9 Cav found the proper mix by building a coalition that included officers, a chief warrant officer, and

noncommissioned officers (NCOs). They had the officers with the vision and maintenance chief and mechanic sergeants who would manage the maintenance on the ground. The experience of the NCOs who managed the execution tempered the lofty ideas of officers. The warrant officer was the bridge between the two that ensured leadership and management.

Develop a vision and strategy. Vision is a picture of the future with some implicit and explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future. A good vision is one of three alternatives to breaking the status quo. The other two are authoritarianism—“Do it because I outrank you”—and micromanagement—“Do it like this and take these exact steps exactly how I prescribe them; it’s the only way to do it right.”¹⁶

The vision clarifies the direction of change by providing the end goal in a clear and concise manner. Clarifying the direction of change is important because soldiers cannot put in extra effort when uncertain of the direction. With a clear vision, understanding is easily transferred and decisions are simplified to one question: Is this in line with the vision? If not, inappropriate projects are identified and terminated.¹⁷

An effective vision helps coordinate various parts of the organization, supporting parallel planning and action. Without a shared sense of direction, interdependent people end up in constant conflict, and nonstop meetings consume motivation and resources. With the shared vision, interdependent people can work with some degree of autonomy and not impede each other.¹⁸ An effective vision has six characteristics:

- ♦ *Imaginable*: it conveys a picture of what the future will look like;
- ♦ *Desirable*: appeals to the long-term interests of soldiers, leaders, unit mission, higher leadership, and other stakeholders in an enterprise;
- ♦ *Feasible*: comprises realistic and attainable goals;
- ♦ *Focused*: is clear enough to guide in decision-making;
- ♦ *Flexible*: is general enough to allow individual initiative and alternative responses in light of changing conditions; and
- ♦ *Communicable*: is easy to communicate and can be successfully explained in minutes with little added explanation.¹⁹

6-9 Cav created a strong and concise vision that directly addressed its desire to improve the maintenance

program nested with the brigade’s vision for success. Its maintenance vision was that

6-9 Cav will be the best in the Brigade at sustainment. We will flatten communication by eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy, using only Army systems of record for sustainment reporting, and empowering Soldiers to own their maintenance. We will build combat power and leave the Korea Enduring Equipment Set (KEES) above a 90% OR rate. We will continually learn better ways to do things and win the AAME.²⁰

This vision was born from the original requirement from the brigade commander and evolved once the unit inherited equipment in the Republic of Korea. The vision was very clear and provided concise guidance on where the squadron should be at the end state.

Communicate the change vision. A vision becomes effective when it is communicated to the lowest levels and the enterprise develops a common understanding. Common understanding shares the sense of desirable change to motivate and coordinate the actions that generate change. Gaining this type of understanding and commitment drives the change at the lowest levels.²¹

Effective communication incorporates the vision in everything the organization does and says as an integrated marketing strategy.

There can be no inconsistencies between the actions of senior leaders and the direction of the vision. Subordinates perceive all actions as a communication of the change’s seriousness to leaders. If soldiers see action contrary to the desired direction, they will lose their motivation to pursue the vision. A brigade cannot declare its vision is to reach the best maintenance standards in the Army if the finance officer rejects orders for deadlining parts because those parts are expensive, nor can the squadron

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maintenance team move all faults onto a single vehicle to hide the actual state of the fleet.²² Soldiers see through this and will perceive the vision as futile. Leaders must also take the effort to be seen in the motor pool working on their vehicles, which communicates to subordinates that leaders are serious about change.

Communication must often happen and in meaningful volumes. Simply mentioning a change to maintenance culture during Monday formation does not cut it. Soldiers and subordinate leaders are flooded with routine information daily; the change vision cannot be a casual inclusion or it will be lost. It needs to be addressed daily. Discuss the vision at troop maintenance and training meetings. Post the vision in maintenance bays and in troop headquarters. The command sergeant major should ask about the vision during leader professional development and interactions with junior NCOs. Troop executive officers need to teach their platoon leaders about it during physical training. Leaders also need to tailor the vision's delivery to be received by its audience. All soldiers do not use the same jargon, so the vision must be communicated in a transferable way across all ranks and specialties.

If there are unavoidable inconsistencies between the vision and the actions of leaders, the leadership must acknowledge them, own them, and explain why to subordinates. Soldiers will always spot these inconsistencies, despite leaders' best efforts. Likewise, soldiers can see through a poor excuse if they hear one. This requires leaders to be honest when they cannot overcome inconsistency and to give a good-faith effort to overcome them. 6-9 Cav's SXO demonstrated this with his lack of experience in Global Combat Support System-Army and armored brigade combat team maintenance.

Empower subordinates for broad-based actions. Major internal transformation rarely succeeds unless many soldiers contribute, and soldiers cannot contribute if they feel powerless. Although steps one through four empower subordinates, step five is specifically designed to remove barriers to implementing the change vision. The four obstacles that step five attempts to remove are structures, skills, systems, and supervisors (see figure 4, page 69).²³

Organizational structure can be an incredible impediment to change if not adjusted to facilitate the new vision. The vision of a new maintenance program is hindered if the squadron does not adjust the organization's structure

to facilitate it. 6-9 Cav developed a new maintenance meeting that decreased bureaucracy with representatives from each branch in the maintenance enterprise to support the new system. It instituted a new training program to teach end users how to function in the program. The training taught stakeholders the process and introduced them to the technicians, so processes were executed at the lowest level. Reporting requirements were adjusted for the new inflow of maintenance requests and their completion status. The coalition facilitated crosstalk between stakeholders to shorten the time between a fault identified and the repair completed. Subordinate action was facilitated by the structural changes.

Skills in the organization varied greatly among individual soldiers. Soldiers who did not understand the maintenance flow slowed it down when they tried to participate in the process. Leaders fixed this problem through training. Whenever a knowledge gap was identified, 6-9 Cav brought civilian field service representatives or soldiers with expertise to teach lower-level leaders who then taught their soldiers. The guiding coalition took time at the squadron maintenance meeting to discuss lessons learned and share best practices throughout the organization. This ensured a lack of knowledge never caused repeated failures.

Organizational systems can encourage or discourage the change vision depending on the adjustments made after the vision is created. These include systems peripheral to the change. 6-9 Cav aligned its awards and evaluation systems to complement the change vision. When soldiers acted in line with the change vision, their leaders recommended them for awards for their effort. When they resisted change, it was reflected in their evaluations. They adjusted this peripheral system to support the vision and visibly demonstrate that the change was serious.

Lastly, supervisors can adjust to the change or resist it. Senior leadership took action to change their mindset to align with the vision. Refusal led to formal counseling, and evaluations reflected any inability to join the team. In the most severe cases, those who refused were reassigned to positions where they could not contradict the pursuit of the vision.

6-9 Cav's best example of an empowered subordinate was a mechanic sergeant who created the "Saber Scan" program. He identified that one of his biggest problems was that the squadron did not have enough

Formal structures make it difficult to act

A lack of needed skills undermine action

Soldiers understand the vision and want to make it a reality, but institutional barriers stop them

Supervisors discourage actions aimed at implementing the new vision

Personnel and information systems make it difficult to act

(Figure by author; adapted from John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* [Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012], 106)

Figure 4. Barriers to Empowerment

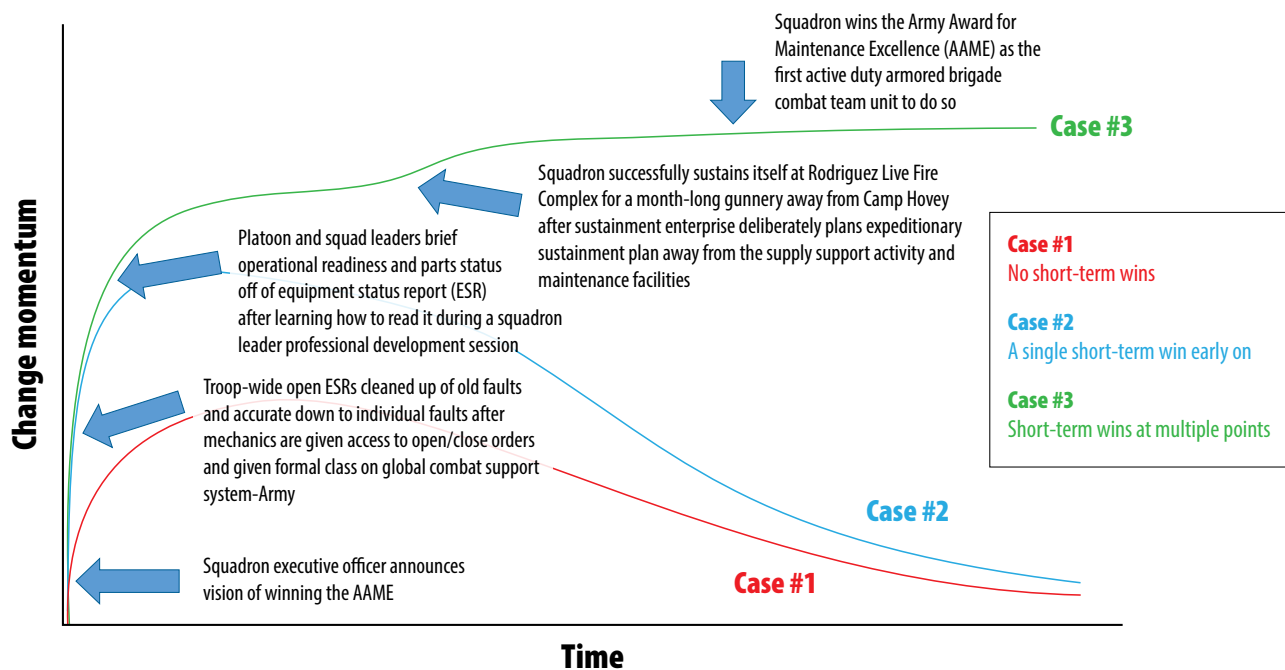
technical manuals (TMs) for each vehicle to have one. Empowered by the unit and leveraging his skill with technology, he created an online repository of the TMs' preventive maintenance checks and services portion for every squadron vehicle. The squadron military intelligence officer ensured TM portions complied with operational security guidance before they were added to the database. The sergeant then created a QR code sticker placed directly on the end item so soldiers had access at the point of use. This program is expanding to include other nonrolling stock.

Generate short-term wins. Change efforts must produce favorable results to proceed. An organization might charge ahead with a vision and a plan to remake itself but not produce any tangible results in a timely manner. Without such results, change dissidents make the case against change and kill the momentum of change. If a unit can produce small tangible wins

regularly, it has evidence to quiet dissidents. Each win maintains the momentum or increases it.²⁴

Major change takes time. The major change drivers will carry on regardless of the current status. Soldiers and leaders expect to see convincing evidence of success along the way. Dissidents require indisputable evidence to justify the costs of change. Engaging in a change effort without specific attention to short-term results is a risky strategy. Wins sometimes produce themselves, but often they require deliberate planning.²⁵

Short-term wins are both visible and unambiguous; subtle wins and close calls are explained away as such by dissidents. A short-term win is a result of action in general, not the action itself (see figure 5, page 70).²⁶ When 6-9 Cav fixed a majority of its vehicle faults, it was not a short-term win because it didn't have high visibility. When it drove 97 percent of its entire fleet seventy kilometers to the Rodriguez Live Fire



(Figure by author; adapted from John Kotter's *Leading Change* [Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012], 124)

Figure 5. A Visual Example of Short-Term Wins

Complex with only one breakdown instead of only bringing shooting vehicles and shipping them by truck, it achieved a short-term win because of how visible and unambiguous the accomplishment was.

To achieve these benefits from short-term wins, they need to be planned and cultivated. Achieving a win should not be a surprise but rather an affirmation of diligent preparation and execution. Leaders and managers need to work together to plan, execute, and highlight these wins en masse. They need to seamlessly plan them into their strategies in line with the visions.

Consolidate gains and produce more gains.

Resistance to change will never fully dissipate. Even when there is success early in the transformation process, dissidents resist change. As the change momentum grows, they become silent objectors waiting for their opportunity to make a comeback. They look for a momentary lapse in progress or motivation and attempt to hinder change efforts. Dissidents may attempt this when wins are celebrated, exclaiming that the effort was a success and is now complete or that the organization can slow down. Slowing down effort kills urgency and momentum.

They hope to end the effort before actual completion. Whenever rest is taken before a completed effort, critical momentum can be lost and regression follows shortly after. Once regression takes place, it is difficult to regain momentum as dissidents now have credibility and those who have bought into the vision find it hard to reinvest.²⁷

Instead of giving an air of culmination through celebration, organizations should acknowledge progress and keep the vision in mind (see figure 6, page 71). When significant tangible progress is made, the guiding coalition should meet to assess the situation for adjustments and new opportunities. A new project can be launched with the momentum from the success as the driver. It lends credibility to the effort and provides evidence that the transformation can continue successfully. Use a big success as a driver for more and new success, driving the process of change.²⁸

After moving the entire fleet to Rodriguez Live Fire Complex, 6-9 Cav capitalized on the success to attempt another change. Rather than functioning like garrison gunnery where the only training is for the firing crews, the squadron used the opportunity to train expeditionary

sustainment and command nodes. 6-9 Cav set up all of the combat trains and ran logistical convoys to and from the range for a month. Maintenance was done on-site at the unit maintenance collection point and the squadron main command post tracked progress. The combat trains command post coordinated all convoys and collected yellow reports through radio and joint capabilities release (JCR). Supply teams ordered supplies through very small aperture terminal (VSAT) and combat service support automated information systems interface (CAISI) systems. This forced the squadron to identify maintenance issues with ancillary equipment rarely used except in a field environment. They then used the expertise gained through vehicle maintenance to add ancillary equipment to the maintenance program. Using the opportunity to train field sustainment and command at the squadron level was a win in itself since units rarely take the time to do it.

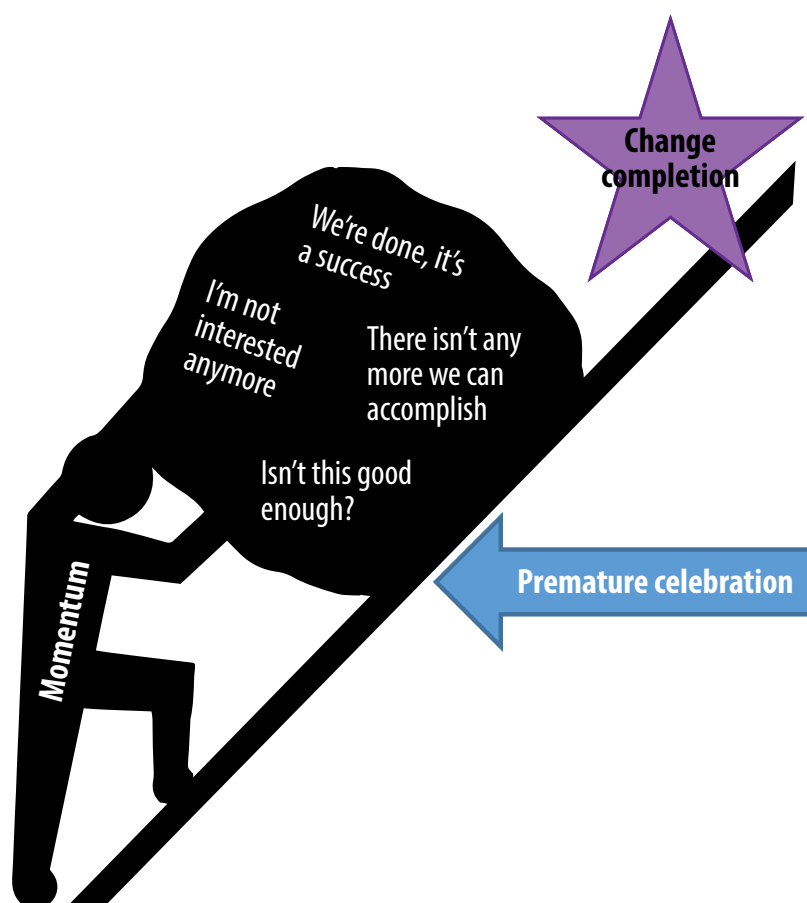
Anchor new approaches in the culture. Most would consider the transformation complete with no need to expend more effort after achieving the vision. This is true for creating the change, but it fails to build staying power for change. At this point, the change is superficial and requires constant upkeep from the guiding coalition to maintain it. But if the guiding coalition stops, either because members change positions or permanent change of station, the change cannot sustain itself. It regresses to the old norm that creeps back in. Though it happens slowly, it brings the organization back to the old status quo. To stop this regression and build staying power, the guiding coalition must anchor the changes into the organization's culture.²⁹

Anchoring the change into the organization's culture is a difficult task and is usually overlooked. It leads to more focus on structure and systems, while culture and vision are overlooked.³⁰ There are three important definitions (see figure 7, page 72) this step relies on:

- **Culture:** the sum of the norms of behavior and shared values among a group of soldiers,

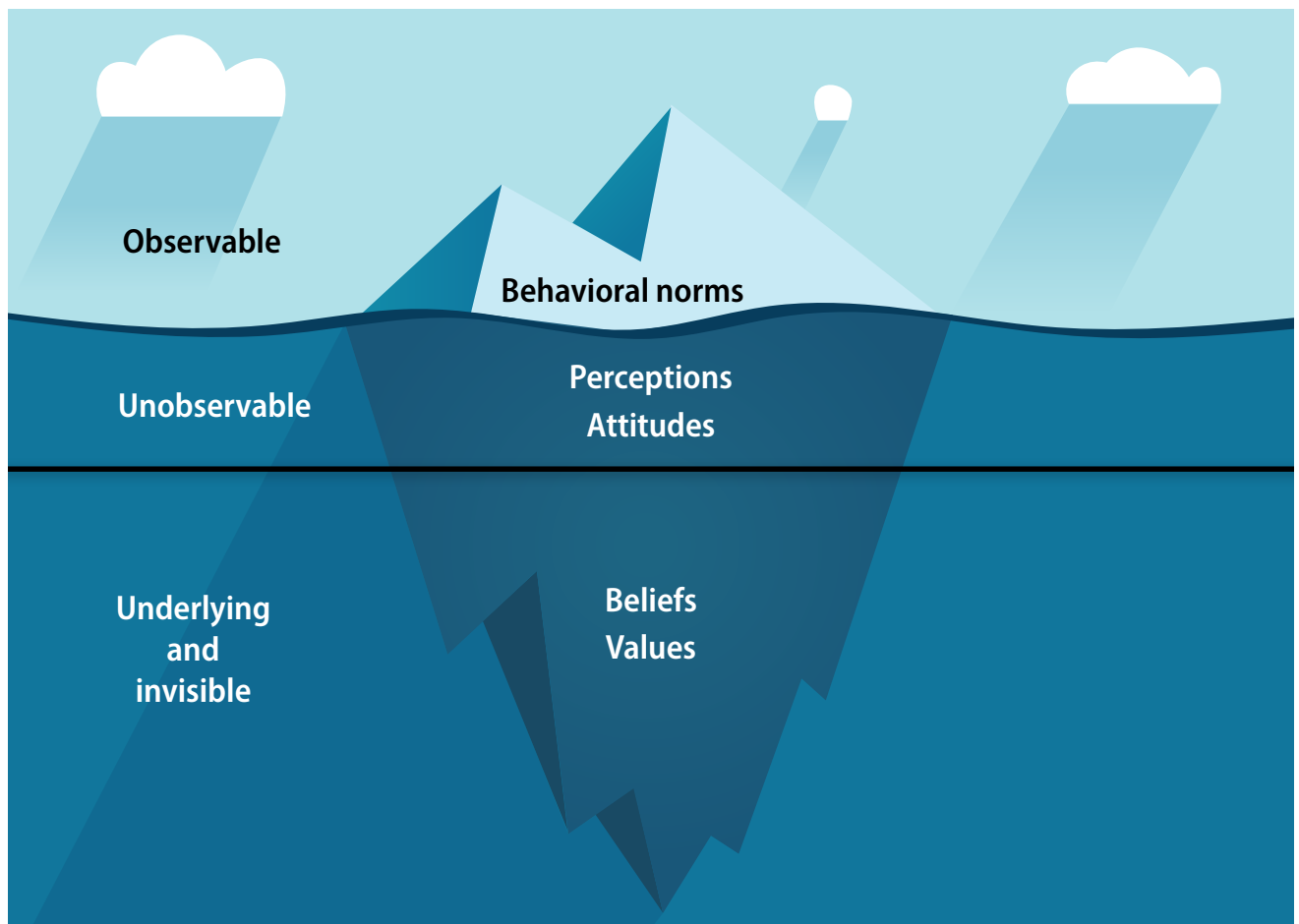
- **Norms of behavior:** common and pervasive ways of acting found in a group that persist because group members tend to behave in ways that teach these practices to new members, and
- **Shared values:** important concerns and goals shared by the majority of a group that tend to shape group behavior and persist over time even when group membership changes.³¹

Culture exists throughout a hierarchy.³² A brigade sets the overall culture, but it varies at each echelon below because lower echelons have specific roles that breed subcultures.³³ Subcultures, in the best case, align with the higher culture with variance due to its specific mission; at worst, the subcultures exist to spite the higher headquarters culture and are the result of arrogance or apathy. Regardless of the culture's level or location, it is important as it influences human behavior and



(Figure by author)

Figure 6. The Effect of Early Culmination on Momentum



(Figure by author)

Figure 7. Elements of Culture

decision-making, it can be difficult to change, and it is hard to address directly.³⁴ The shared values, which are less apparent but drive norms of behavior, are the most difficult to change.³⁵

New practices that are not compatible with the organization's culture can lead to regression. Efforts to change a brigade, battalion, company, platoon, or team that took significant investment to execute come undone when new approaches are not rooted in group norms and shared values. To counter this regression, leaders must diligently link the change into the organization's culture.³⁶

Cultural change should always come last in a transformation effort. This is because culture changes only after people's actions have successfully altered. The new behaviors produce some group benefit for a

period of time, and people see the connection between the new actions and performance improvement. This does not imply a leader should not monitor the culture during the other stages. Leaders who understand the old culture easily figure out how to influence the urgency level, create a guiding coalition with the correct people, and shape the vision to make it appealing. Subtle alterations in the culture start as soon as the transformation process begins, and these serve as a gauge for the progress of the change and the buy-in of subordinates who feed that culture.³⁷

6-9 Cav took three actions to ingrain its new approach into the organizational culture. First, it created a mandatory certification program for all incoming leaders and managers. These key individuals took position only after they were taught about the maintenance

flow and the basics of the Army's various maintenance reporting systems of record. These soldiers were evaluated on their knowledge and their ability to turn that knowledge into results. Second, 6-9 Cav included logistical knowledge requirements to their "Spur Ride" entry qualifications. Spur Rides are a historical rite of passage in the cavalry in which troopers demonstrate their skills in a series of tests. To qualify to participate in the event, troopers demonstrated the logistical knowledge commensurate with their rank in the unit's system. Last, 6-9 Cav held a large ceremony for the AAME and individual awards for maintenance achievements. They broadcasted this ceremony on Facebook Live and made attendance mandatory. Key leaders across the 1st Cavalry Division attended the ceremony to highlight the award's importance. The AAME ceremony

galvanized the accomplishment and dedicated the unit to maintaining its new program.

Conclusion

To effectively implement its organizational vision, the Army should adopt the Lewin and Kotter change management frameworks into doctrine. Lewin and Kotter have spent their careers researching how to institute effective organizational change, and their writings are easily transferable to Army organizations. 6-9 Cav demonstrated that these processes are effective by changing its maintenance program to win the first armored formation to win the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence. The squadron's success could be recreated across the Army if it adopted change management as a core competency using proven methods to create change doctrine. ■

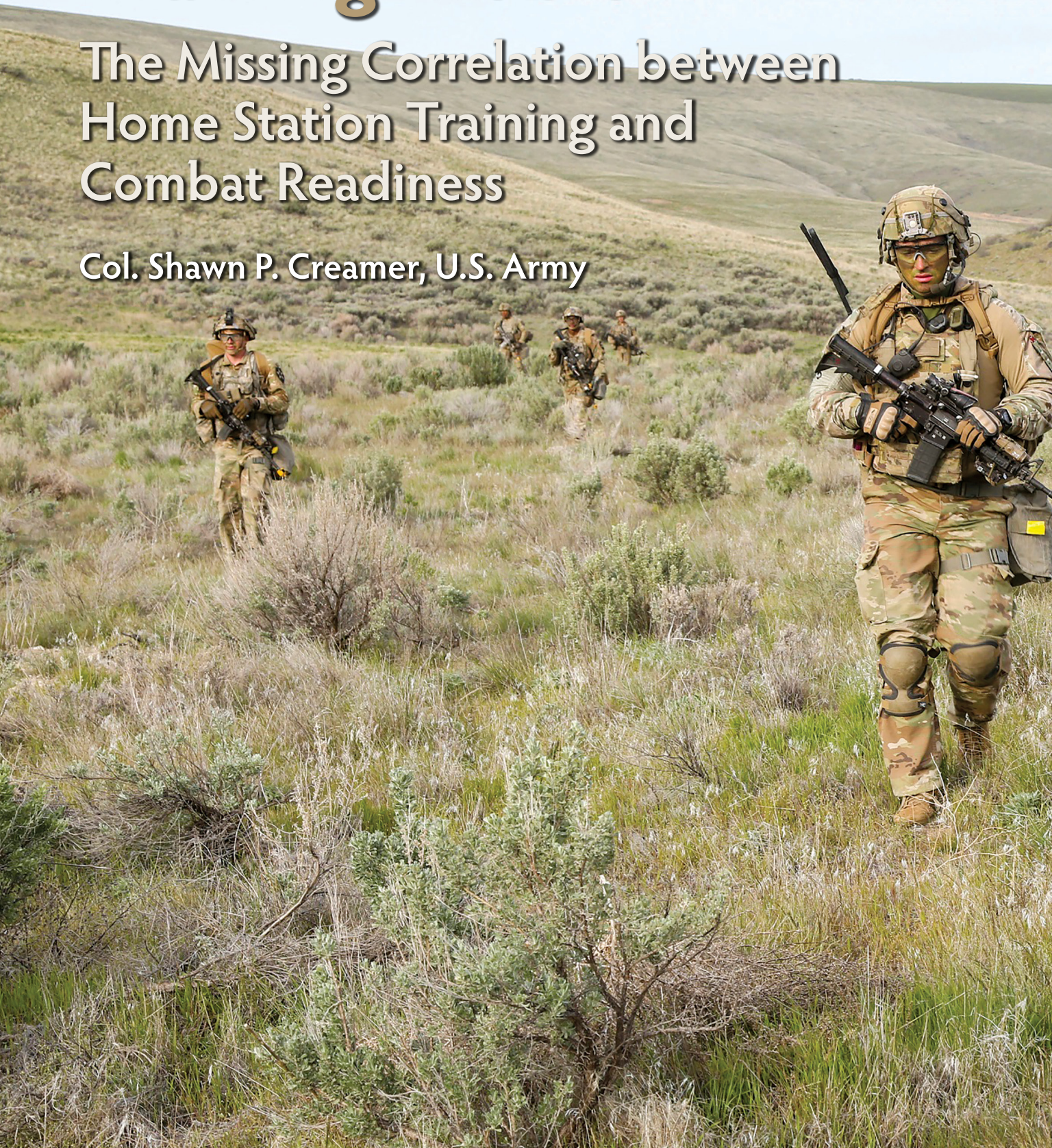
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14. *Ibid.*, 53–54.
15. *Ibid.*, 59–63.
16. *Ibid.*, 69–70.
17. *Ibid.*, 71–73.
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21. Kotter, *Leading Change*, 87.
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25. *Ibid.*, 123.
26. *Ibid.*, 126.
27. *Ibid.*, 138–40.
28. *Ibid.*, 150–51.
29. *Ibid.*, 153–56.
30. *Ibid.*, 156.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 1–2, 55–68.
33. *Ibid.*, 2.
34. Kotter, *Leading Change*, 156.
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37. *Ibid.*, 164–66.

The Army's Training Problem

The Missing Correlation between
Home Station Training and
Combat Readiness

Col. Shawn P. Creamer, U.S. Army



TRAINING PROBLEM

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, clear an objective 2 May 2019 during training exercise Bayonet Focus 19-02 at Yakima Training Center, Washington. (Photo by Spc. Angel Ruszkiewicz, U.S. Army)



The resumption of great-power competition and the focus by the U.S. Armed Forces on Total Force, multi-domain operations (MDO) accentuate the importance of developing and sustaining trained and ready ground forces before crisis and conflict. As the U.S. Armed Forces' primary instrument for delivering landpower, the Army plays a unique, irreplaceable role in the first days of any conflict, large or small. Total Army forces require strategic posturing and flexibility to support planned and unplanned operations as well as a pre-D-Day level of combat readiness to immediately transition to warfighting and win against a peer adversary who likely initiated hostilities.

The United States no longer enjoys primacy across the warfighting functions (WfF) on the contemporary multi-domain battlefield. And in large-scale combat operations (LSCO), U.S. forces likely will be locally over-matched quantitatively. These circumstances point to a future Army as "an unlikely instrument" as a member of

the joint team designated to protect America's national interests.¹

The United States faced a similar conundrum in the 1970s, which served as the major driver for the development of AirLand Battle doctrine and the accompanying equipping and training revolutions that realized it. The tandem development of doctrine, equipment, and training helped the United States gain a definitive advantage over its main threat, Soviet conventional forces. Similarly, the Armed Forces must develop the training and equipment to support the MDO concept.

There are flaws in the Army's

contemporary training methodology, and the Army is not producing formations that are trained and ready for LSCO against a peer adversary. Finding solutions to this problem is difficult, particularly with so many interests across the Army and the joint enterprise involved. However, while the solutions offered here are likely more aggressive than the institution is ready to accept at face value today, they are offered to initiate a dialogue on the hard decisions that must be made to get the Army moving toward improving combat readiness in its tactical formations. If the Army can come to accept that it really does have a problem, it can rise above parochial interests and become sufficiently motivated to find solutions as it did in the 1970s.

The Problem: Army Units Are Not as Combat Ready as We Think

Not that long ago, Army forces developed the core of their combat readiness at home station and did not rely on biennial combat training center (CTC) rotations to hone their ability to fight at echelon.² Army forces developed unit and leader proficiency as part of the Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP), primarily through multiday, multiechelon field training exercises at home station. Live-fire maneuver exercises were prioritized but were secondary to developing a unit's ability to operate as a combined arms team. Army units trained to a high enough level that they could rapidly integrate replacements and execute complex tactical tasks, sustaining a fight for days and weeks. They could do this because enough of each unit had developed a baseline of experience that it could not just perform but had an excellent chance of winning against a peer adversary.

However, due to operational demands placed on the force well into the second decade of the 2000s, the Army altered how it trained and developed combat readiness at home station. Three fundamental shifts occurred in how Army units were trained for most of the last two decades: training time was curtailed to protect weekends, individual and small-unit proficiency displaced multiechelon field training, and live-fire training became the preferred metric for determining readiness. The result was that the Army lost more than a decade of experience in decisive action combat readiness, and even though the focus is back on decisive action proficiency, our tactical forces display troubling signs of unfamiliarity in operating

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as a member of a combined arms or multi-domain team. Time is likely not going to solve the Army's decisive action combat readiness gap on an acceptable schedule. Moreover, there are four interconnected, training-related factors within the Army enterprise that, when combined, act as barriers to developing appropriate levels of decisive action combat readiness within tactical formations:

- a misplaced focus on lower echelon training,
- a lack of leader repetitions,
- a failure to stress warfighting functions at echelon, and
- an erosion of higher headquarter capabilities to support training.

Factor 1: Misplaced focus on lower echelon training. Army doctrine states, "Training is the most important thing the Army does to prepare for operations. Training is the cornerstone of readiness. Readiness determines our Nation's ability to fight and win in a complex global environment."³ Yet, despite the widespread understanding of the correlation of training to fighting and winning, the Army has set the bar for training and readiness too low. The Army has overly

Spec. Jonathan Duford, a flight medic with Company C, 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division, treats a simulated casualty 21 June 2019 during MEDEVAC simulation training at Simmons Army Airfield, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. (Photo courtesy of *The Paraglide*)

focused training metrics on individual benchmarks for deployability and the ever-moving gates for training proficiency at the squad level and below.⁴

Too low of a training focus negatively affects the Army's ability to deliver trained and ready forces to a joint force commander. Army forces must possess the proficiency necessary to sequence the WfFs within the joint force across time and space, and be capable of mutually sustaining operations at echelon and for its joint partners over the course of an extended battle or campaign.⁵ While no one disputes that Army units must adequately train the building blocks, too disproportionate a focus on the low end is unsound because squad-level proficiency does not equate to higher-level collective training proficiency across the WfFs. Perhaps it is better said using a sports metaphor: the

high stakes game of LSCO against a peer adversary is a team sport, and team sports require extensive live scrimmaging at speed for a team to chalk up a win.

In MDO, corps and divisions have a significantly more active warfighting role, closely resembling the functions they played under AirLand Battle. Yet, despite this, the brigade combat team (BCT) remains the Army's primary fighting formation, and to win against a peer adversary, the BCT must repeatedly train at echelon. Unfortunately, BCTs do not get the repetitions to be combat ready on a D-Day level. Therefore, presupposing the assertion that LSCO against a peer adversary requires combat readiness at the BCT level vice the current squad-focused paradigm, leaders, and not the common soldier, must deliver victory.

Factor 2: Leaders lack repetitions. Leaders and leader experience matter. Yet, the Army is not adequately developing its officers and noncommissioned officers to fight within the BCT. The Army, and its leaders themselves, are instead over-relying on the combat experience gained through the last twenty years of fighting small wars. These base-camp-centric small wars serve as the foundational experience for many of our leaders today. While small war experience is invaluable, it is a mistake to believe that this narrow experience will automatically translate into LSCO success against a peer adversary with less combat experience.

Leader experience is forged through study and practice, and a lack of study can be as detrimental to leader development as a lack of practice. Both study and practice are required in order for a leader to become a master in the profession of arms. The Army's professional military education program might be the best in the world, but without the requisite practice to reinforce what is learned in the schoolhouse, leaders will struggle in successive key and developmental opportunities if only afforded one or two opportunities to scrimmage live as they move up through the ranks. Repetitive practice built upon the foundation of study delivers mastery.

For almost twenty years, we have given our tactical leaders neither the opportunities nor the repetitions to operate their formations. The lack of decisive action foundational experiences, previously developed as a key component of the home station Army Training and Evaluation Program, has left our current crop of leaders inexperienced in both the science and art of decisive action warfare. Without adequate field time operating at echelon, Army tactical leaders struggle across the broad swath of decisive action tactical tasks, particularly over distance and at night. They perform poorly, muddling and bullying their way through when tested, often because the next level leader is just as inexperienced as those they lead. The institutional knowledge base inside

A Stryker Infantry Carrier Vehicle from the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, crosses a shallow river 19 October 2018 during Arctic Anvil 19 in Fort Greely, Alaska. (Photo by Pfc. Kahlil Dash, U.S. Army)



our tactical forces has atrophied significantly, leaving too few leaders to organize and lead the less experienced masses through basic, foundational decisive action tasks.

The core of our tactical leadership cadre, those the BCT relies on to pull the rest along, are too few in number, leaving our fighting formations unable to synchronize or sequence the Wffs to concentrate at the decisive point of a fight. This leader inexperience is manifested in our tactical units that are unable to support one continuous fight across repetitive ninety-six-hour time horizons. Highly complex tactical tasks such as wet-gap crossings and the deliberate defense are largely absent from training, and even when they occur, they are not executed with enough rigor.

In addition, our leaders are not adequately tested or stressed, for the most demanding collective training executed today largely consists of shorter duration and uncontested lane training. One of the major drivers justifying this shift to shorter duration lane training was our attempt to protect weekends. However, this disproportionate focus on lane training, particularly live-fire exercises, does not expose or prepare our tactical leaders for the hardships of LSCO. Lane training enables our leaders to “turn on” for short bursts but does not expose their fundamental weaknesses or their soldiers’ true fitness and stamina to withstand LSCO. Multiday, multiechelon field training exercises as part of a BCT expose real faults



in doctrine, in operating procedures, and in leaders, for the field exposes everything.

Factor 3: Failure to stress warfighting functions at echelon. Army formations have fundamentally evolved over the past twenty years from ana-

decisive action threat. In essence, when our tactical forces train, their MCISs largely communicate on a limited closed loop, absent of external stimuli to drive the Wffs. The nature of stimuli posited here includes enemy, host-nation, and civil consider-

“While ready access to enablers at home station is a major training barrier, the markedly smaller size of division and corps headquarters staffs constrains their active involvement in training brigade combat teams.”

log-based, legacy units that leveraged task-organized enablers to become digitally enhanced, modular formations with organically embedded enablers. When the Army instituted this transformational change, it failed to adequately reframe its training methodology to reflect the new structure. In short, the Army digitized the force with the integrated tactical network without adequately adapting the way it trains units collectively to develop proficiency. Army BCTs have lacked adequate stimuli for their mission command information systems (MCIS) to exercise the synchronization and sequencing of Wffs and replicate the stresses of a decisive action training environment (DATE). This lack of stimuli is absent in two forms, procedural and technical.

Procedurally, Army tactical forces lack practice operating at echelon at home station. This lack of practice, particularly at the battalion and BCT levels, limits collective use of the MCIS to stress upper and lower tactical internet networks and forces units to fight for communications at distance and across terrain through their primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency communication plans. Moreover, this same lack of stimuli limits the opportunities of our tactical formations to exercise their battle rhythms and work through echeloning command nodes to support a decisive action fight. This lack of procedural proficiency across the force is consistently identified as a major problem area for units when they train at a CTC.

Technically, Army tactical forces lack the necessary live, virtual, constructive (LVC) overwrap to stimulate the Wffs through the MCIS to replicate a

ations; adjacent unit dispositions; and higher headquarters demand signals. These technical stimuli all must be simultaneously filtered through multiple MCIS feeds, across multiple command and control nodes, then deciphered and analyzed to their key elements to enable commander decisions and deliver lethality at echelon. Without such stimuli, the BCT's Wffs are not properly tested, leaving our command nodes undertrained to synchronize operations in LSCO against a peer adversary.

Enhancing training through procedural and technical stimuli is underappreciated by the Army as a necessity to train our BCTs for LSCO. Most Army BCTs do not receive adequate stimuli at home station to adequately replicate a DATE, receiving this only at one of the three tactical CTCs. Even when Army units are fortunate to undergo a CTC rotation, they usually have but one chance over ten force-on-force days every two years to get it right, with little opportunity to retrain on deficiencies.

Factor 4: Erosion of higher headquarters capabilities to support training. Regular Army divisions and corps have suffered an erosion of capabilities over the last twenty years, hindering the Army's ability to deliver collective training at home station. The two most significant losses for these headquarters was the divestment of their organic enablers and significant manpower cuts. Combined, they left divisions and corps hollow, lacking the capacity and resources to adequately plan, prepare, resource and execute decisive action collective training for their subordinate battalions and BCTs.

Moreover, many enablers critical to a BCT's combat readiness are no longer under the division commander's control. Without ready access to the proper mix of enablers to replicate a DATE for their subordinate units, divisions have become ever more reliant on a reduced, overtaxed, and geographically distributed corps to execute home station battalion task force (TF) or BCT decisive action training.

In addition, as the Total Army lost force structure over the last decade, many key enablers critical to

four-day training periods in conjunction with weekends, and two weeks of annual training. Aggravating RC readiness are its posture—RC units are located where they can recruit and retain talent, with the soldiers and units in many cases distributed across several states.

While ready access to enablers at home station is a major training barrier, the markedly smaller size of division and corps headquarters staffs constrains their active involvement in training BCTs. Focused day-to-



Commanders of the 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), 25th Infantry Division, plan an assault 12 July 2020 during exercise Lightning Forge (LF) 20 at Kahuku Training Area, Hawaii. LF 20 is a home-station collective training event conducted to prepare 2IBCT for future operations and develop combat readiness as an IBCT. (Photo by Logan Smith, Department of Defense)

decisive action combat readiness now disproportionately reside within the Reserve Component (RC).⁶ Whereas the RC is very willing to train with its Regular Army teammates, there are timing, geographic proximity, and training readiness barriers that impair collaborative multicomponent training. Most significant, the RC is resourced for only thirty-nine training days annually, distributed across three- and

day on administrative, operational matters, and their own combat readiness, there is little leftover organizational energy for a division or corps to be actively involved in training their subordinate units. Senior leaders are not adequately sensitized to the dilemma facing division- and corps-level staffs or even the true state of combat readiness by BCT formations because there have been no catastrophic failures to date. The

absence of battlefield failure against insurgents or secondary military powers is not a barometer we should put much stock in to predict how prepared Army units are for battle against a peer adversary.

The previous paragraphs offer an ominous picture regarding the challenges the Army is facing in preparing its forces for LSCO. Failure to address the aforementioned training barriers will at some point likely manifest itself in tactical defeat on some future decisive action battlefield, resembling the Army's July 1950 performance in Korea.⁷ However, capabilities and resources currently reside within the Army to pursue solutions for delivering better, more combat-ready forces from home station.

Modernizing Home Station Collective Training

The Army has devoted considerable organizational energy to the development and promulgation of its MDO concept. MDO lays the foundation for the Army and joint team to deliver victory for the United States against peer adversaries. But, the Army has not measurably devoted similar energies to evolving its training methodology to deliver combat-ready forces to overcome

the complexities of MDO. The Army has relied too long on its three CTCs to train the BCT; however, the CTC program is not optimized to develop appropriate levels of combat readiness for our BCTs. Appropriate levels of combat readiness to execute MDO can only be developed at home station. Therefore, it is imperative the Army modernize its home station training program to improve the capability of our BCTs to execute MDO.

One such way to modernize and improve home station training for our BCTs while addressing the previously discussed four factors is to fully develop a collective training program of record similar to that provided to the United States Army Pacific (USARPAC).⁸ Called the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC), it could be replicated across the Army. The JPMRC is an exportable LVC collective training capability, scaled to support battalion TF or BCT force-on-force decisive action culminating training events (CTE) at their home stations or at other regionally proximate training sites.⁹ The JPMRC's LVC capability was originally built to provide the Army a mobile CTC capability. USARPAC repurposed the capability to one that modernizes the ARTEP from its analog foundation to one that is digitally enhanced and connected.



Since 2015, the JPMRC has supported twelve LVC-enhanced BCT CTEs for I Corps' six BCTs at training sites in Alaska, California, Hawaii, and Washington state. In addition to the aforementioned LVC-enhanced CTEs, the JPMRC supported one unenhanced BCT CTE in 2019.¹⁰ Moreover, as an example of JPMRC's versatility to scale to the needs of I Corps units, the JPMRC supported a battal-

ion opposing force, and to assist the senior trainer's exercise director in training his or her forces.¹²

The JPMRC further enhances the DATE for these battalion TFs and BCTs beyond the aforementioned external OPSGRP and exercise control enablers by providing an LVC overwrap, stimulating the MCISs and Wffs at echelon through its instrumentation system and tactical analysis facility capabilities. While the

“If the Army becomes sufficiently motivated, it can solve both fiscal and manpower resourcing challenges to improve the combat readiness of our brigade combat teams at home station.”

ion TF CTE as the program stood up operations in 2014, a BCT-level command post exercise in 2017, and a brigade-level command post exercise in 2020. Furthermore, USARPAC has consistently employed niche capabilities from the JPMRC across the Indo-Pacific in support of Army units as they trained with partners and allies. To date, the JPMRC has supported multinational exercises in Australia (Hamel), Japan (Orient Shield), Malaysia (Keris Strike), and the Philippines (Balikatan).

The JPMRC supports I Corps and its forces utilizing an “augment and enhance” operating construct. The JPMRC augments the designated senior trainer's staff, primarily at division headquarters, with planners experienced in the Joint Event Life Cycle process to assist in concept and scenario development, exercise planning, coordination, and preparing force-on-force decisive action collective training CTEs.¹¹ The JPMRC continues supporting the senior trainer's staff through execution, providing academies to train the opposing force, observer-controller/trainers, and tactical analysis facility personnel; an exercise control cell to control the exercise and meet the senior trainer's training objectives; and the core cadre for an operations group (OPSGRP) with a commander to control the observer-controller/trainers and the

above is uncannily similar construct-wise to capabilities delivered by the CTCs, the JPMRC is different in that it is a supporting arm, augmenting and enhancing a division headquarters with the senior trainer (division) responsible for and actively leading the training.¹³

The JPMRC is an existing proof of concept for delivering, from home station, better-trained, more combat-capable BCTs at marginal cost. While the quantity of force-on-force repetitions of I Corps BCTs and supporting units are on par with the rest of the conventional Army, I Corps' JPMRC-enhanced training venues more realistically stress units in a DATE, at echelon, and across the Wffs than any of those used in the Army enterprise outside of a biennial CTC rotation.

The JPMRC was not purpose-built for USARPAC. Rather, the JPMRC leverages the Army's already significant investment in the Exportable Training Capability Instrumentation System, an \$85 million deployable instrumentation system originally fielded to the National Training Center but never used. Moreover, the JPMRC was attached and later assigned to USARPAC's National Defense Authorization Act Title XI training support brigade to get the program off the ground in 2014; this is where the program resides today.¹⁴ USARPAC's training support brigade sources

Previous page: Soldiers of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, prepare an M58 mine clearing line charge 13 October 2018 during exercise Arctic Anvil 19 at Fort Greely, Alaska. (Photo by Pfc. Isaih Vega, U.S. Army)

the core of JPMRC's OPSGRP cadre and provides command oversight over its activities.

In fiscal year (FY) 2015, a total of 180 military and Department of the Army civilian (DAC) requirements were documented to support an OPSGRP scaled for battalion- and squadron-sized CTEs.¹⁵ Authorizations to support requirements have been slow to follow, with ten military authorized in FY 2016, followed by twelve DACs in FY 2017. JPMRC has grown to ten military and forty DACs authorized in FY 2020. To compensate for JPMRC's manpower shortfalls, Headquarters, Department of the Army, augmented the JPMRC with directed military overhires, while USARPAC has resourced additional manpower through troop diversion.¹⁶ In addition, the JPMRC is supported by ten full-time support contractors and augmented by up to an additional twenty support contractors during exercises.

The JPMRC has not yet achieved its programmatic end state, having achieved an initial operating capability in 2015 and with full operating capability (FOC) targeted for beyond FY 2024. Some programmatic fielding of FOC capabilities is still required, and the JPMRC's initial skeleton manning requires moving away from the ad hoc manpower solutions that have sustained it to date to something more permanent, including a recalibration of its manpower requirements to better reflect the FOC end state. While the JPMRC still has three or more programmatic years to mature, enough data and lessons learned have been gathered to conclude that the JPMRC's full potential to the wider Army is under-realized in terms of delivering pre-D-Day combat readiness.

Resourcing Modernized Home Station Collective Training

Should the Army decide to modernize home station training, one option to consider is to field a JPMRC-like, fully resourced LVC capability to each of the other three Army corps. In doing so, the Army can immeasurably improve the collective training proficiency and the combat readiness of its tactical forces. Army leaders will face constrained resourcing challenges and some difficult choices in how to harvest the resources to field this capability. To realize such a change as offered here, the Army must overcome the dogma of overly protecting popularized or long-standing but outmoded equities. However, if the Army

becomes sufficiently motivated, it can solve both fiscal and manpower resourcing challenges to improve the combat readiness of our BCTs at home station. Of the two resourcing challenges, fiscal resourcing is likely the most easily overcome despite the leaner budgets the Army operates with today, with manpower likely the more emotional decision to overcome.¹⁷

The Army is aggressively pursuing transformational capabilities to equip the force to execute MDO through the activation of Futures Command. Futures Command and its cross-functional teams thus far appear to be disciplined and measured, avoiding a repeat of the Future Combat System debacle when the Army gambled \$18 billion on its ability to simultaneously develop and bundle emerging technologies into hardware.¹⁸ However, of the cross-functional teams, the synthetic training environment (STE) line of effort, which is to serve as the bridge between hardware and soldier, is likely to fall short of expectations.

The STE is likely to underdeliver because, at its core, it is too aspirational to fundamentally transform and measurably improve Army training to justify the resources expended even now in the developmental phase. The STE places too much faith in leveraging costly, fast-paced technology, which will likely be outdated by the time it is fielded. Moreover, what the STE can do for the Army, in many cases, is more effectively achieved through repetitive, manual drills and field training.

The Army risks falling into a Future Combat System-like trap with the STE program by it becoming the latest Army technology infatuation, carried along by institutional momentum and sleek contractor-produced audiovisual aides but lacking objective metrics for what defines success. Therefore, slowing the development of the STE by taking a more measured, focused approach would better serve the Army to better link hardware with soldiers (at the right level) and deliver increased proficiency and capabilities. Doing so will allow the Army to repurpose some of the STE resources pulled from training accounts into actionable programs to address existing combat readiness training gaps outlined here with capabilities that have proven themselves. Even a modest cut to the STE's planned budget into the Program Objective Memorandum out-years would deliver an improved JPMRC-like LVC capability to the Army's corps.



Regarding manpower resourcing, fielding additional JPMRC-like LVC capabilities can be achieved by repurposing severely underutilized Army manpower within the CTC program. The Army should objectively face the fact that it has reduced internal demand from having a CTC postured in Germany. The Joint Multinational Readiness Center's (JMRC) time as a contributing member of the CTC program has passed, for there are no longer two Army corps, five divisions, and two cavalry regiments in Europe, where the JMRC would train fifty-six battalion TFs and squadrons annually.¹⁹ There are now just two forward-stationed BCTs left, with one programmed to restation back to the United States, leaving the JMRC a highly reduced, part-time CTC.

What justifies the U.S. Army to maintain JMRC's 1,501 soldiers and DACs in Europe to support the training readiness of the forces there, when the majority of JMRC's mission appears to be in support of NATO?²⁰ NATO, and the countries that make it up, are extremely valuable to America's national interests but are no more valuable than any of our other treaty allies or the combat readiness of our own forces. A

Col. Scott Mitchell (*talking with hands*), commander, 196th Infantry Brigade, Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC), describes operations of the facility to retired Army Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry and a group of distinguished visitors from Stanford strategic studies hosted by Maj. Gen. Charles A. Flynn (*left of Mitchell*), commander, 25th Infantry Division, 5 February 2016 during a visit to the JPMRC rotation and exercise Lightning Forge in Honolulu. (Photo by Rodney Jackson)

candid dialogue should evaluate if the JMRC, under its current utilization, is a sacred cow that should be culled for the betterment of the wider Army. The JMRC has all the manpower necessary to establish a collective training capability to modernize home station training as offered here to the Army corps, including the newly reactivated V Corps.²¹

Conclusion

The Army has developed and is embracing a new MDO warfighting concept, and it is further transforming its operating force's capabilities through Futures Command to realize and deliver MDO for the joint force. Yet, our training methodologies have

become overengineered, underresourced, and misdirected, putting MDO at risk. Furthermore, captivated by the success of special operations teams combined with a supreme faith in technology over the human dimension, the Army as an institution has banked its future success on focusing its training at the squad level and below. While lower echelon tactical proficiency has proven itself against terrorist and insurgent groups, the Army will find itself unprepared to meet a peer adversary on a multi-domain battlefield.

The JPMRC is an example of how the Army can generate better combat readiness for its battalions and BCTs at their home stations. Multiple

repetitions in moving and maneuvering tactical formations at echelon in LVC-enhanced, multi-day, force-on-force field exercises is a proven way to develop decisive action skills and experience in our company grade and field grade leaders, preparing them for the rigors of LSCO against a peer adversary. Replicating and fielding a JPMRC-like capability to the Army's corps is both necessary and achievable. The Army needs aggressive transformational change in its training methodology to get our soldiers, leaders, and units ready prior to the next D-Day, for as our current chief of staff of the Army says, "Winning matters!"²² ■

Notes

1. Paul Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations*, Leavenworth Papers 16 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute, July 1988), 6.

2. The Army's combat training centers and Army Training and Evaluation Program evolved out of the Army's post-Vietnam War reorganization and transformation, in tandem with the development and implementation of the AirLand Battle doctrine.

3. Field Manual 7-0, *Train to Win in a Complex World* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], October 2016), 1-1.

4. The constant rotation of personnel in and out of a squad through permanent change of station, expiration term of service, or involuntary separations prevents Army squads from generating and sustaining the kind of training proficiency proponents envision. Compared to special operations forces, conventional Army squads are composed of soldiers with a markedly decreased baseline set of skills and motivations, are resourced significantly less, and are encumbered with far more distractions other than training.

5. Army Doctrine Publication 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, July 2019), A-14. The Department of Defense has designated each of the military departments with executive agent (EA) responsibilities. The Army refers to the secretary of the Army's EA responsibilities as "Army support to other services." The joint force requires these Army enabling capabilities to function.

6. Jen Judson, "US Army Chief Says End Strength Will Stay Flat in Upcoming Budgets," *DefenseNews*, 16 March 2021, accessed 20 March 2021, <https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/global-force-symposium/2021/03/17/army-chief-says-end-strength-numbers-to-stay-flat-in-upcoming-budgets>; "Military: Military Personnel," *Global Security*, accessed 20 March 2021, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military>; Mark F. Cancian, "U.S. Military Forces in FY2021: Army," Center for Strategic & International Studies, 28 October 2020, accessed 20 March 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/us-military-forces-fy-2021-army>; Thomas W. Spoehr, "2021 Index of U.S. Military Strength, An Assessment of Military Power: U.S. Army," The Heritage Foundation, 17 November 2020, accessed 20 March 2021, <https://www.heritage.org/2021-index-us-military-strength/>

[assessment-us-military-power/us-army](https://www.usar.army.mil/Portals/98/Documents/AtAGlance_2017/Army%20Reserve%20At%20A%20Glance.pdf); Office of the Chief, Army Reserve, *America's Army Reserve at a Glance* (Washington, DC: The Pentagon, 2018), 11, accessed 20 March 2021, https://www.usar.army.mil/Portals/98/Documents/AtAGlance_2017/Army%20Reserve%20At%20A%20Glance.pdf; Lewis G. Irwin, *A Modern Army Reserve for a Multi-Domain World: Structural Realities and Untapped Potential* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and United States Army War College, October 2019), 30, accessed 20 March 2021, <https://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/3707.pdf>. In addition to the training consequences articulated in this article, Total Army balance has many significant operational implications for U.S. operational plans and its ability to timely react to unforecasted events. As an example, the Army Active Component end strength was 562,000 in 2010, but now sits at 486,000, adjusting brigade combat teams (BCT) structure from forty-five BCTs in 2013 to thirty-one today. The Reserve Component also lost end strength during the last decade, when it was reduced from 563,000 in 2010 to 526,000 today. Moreover, the Active and Reserve Components are out of balance, with the Army Reserve alone accounting for more than 80 percent of military information support operations and civil affairs capabilities; 64 percent of quartermaster supply and field services capabilities; more than 50 percent of transportation and medical capabilities; and 40 percent of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high explosive and information operations capabilities. These are just for the U.S. Army Reserve, so when U.S. Army National Guard enabling capabilities are added, the percentages of the Total Army contained within the Reserve Component are significantly out of balance to support rapid transition to hostilities, leaving the Active Army with major capability gaps on D-Day.

7. Roy E. Appleman, *U.S. Army in the Korean War: South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 1961); Thomas E. Hanson, *Combat Ready? Eighth U.S. Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2010); T. R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War: The Classic Korean War History* (Washington, DC: Brassey's Publishing, 1994).

8. HQDA Execute Order, "Transfer of the Exportable Training Capability Instrumentation System (ETC-IS) from United States Forces Command (FORSCOM) to United States Army Pacific (USARPAC)," Headquarters, Department of the Army, 14 March 2013.

9. Andrew Preston, memorandum, "Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC) Terms of Reference," Fort Shafter, Hawaii, 10 January 2020; *The JPMRC Group Cadre Concept White Paper* (Fort Shafter, Hawaii: Headquarters, JPMRC, 7 August 2020).

10. An unenhanced culminating training event (CTE) is an exercise without the live, virtual, constructive (LVC) overwrap. In this particular case, the JPMRC's instrumentation system was in-transit back to Hawaii after executing an LVC-enhanced BCT CTE in Washington state.

11. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Guide 3501, *The Joint Training System: A Guide for Senior Leaders* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 5 May 2015), 6–8, accessed 7 May 2021, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/Other_Pubs/cjcs3501.pdf. The joint event life cycle is the training event planning methodology, execution phase of the Joint Training System. I Corps' divisional headquarters referenced here and within this article refer to 7th Infantry Division (ID), 25th ID, and United States Army Alaska. Should JPMRC operations expand to support Army forces in the Republic of Korea under Eighth Army, 2nd ID would be added.

12. For JPMRC-supported BCT CTEs, the division commander/senior trainer typically designates one of their deputy commanding generals to serve as exercise director and oversee exercise execution and the attainment of training objectives.

13. The National Training Center and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) provided invaluable advice and counsel to U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) and the JPMRC during its development on proven methods to synchronize and deliver the LVC domains to tactical formations. While the JPMRC has moved away from its original concept of becoming like a combat training center (CTC), the CTCs continue to serve as a benchmark for delivering LVC-enhanced training to battalions and BCTs.

14. Title XI is the section within the National Defense Authorization Act, which provides the Regular Army its statutory requirement to support the reserve component. The Army's force for meeting its statutory commitments to the reserve component are provided through eleven training support brigades (TSBs), ten assigned to Forces Command, and one small TSB (approx. 25 percent the size of its sister TSBs) assigned to USARPAC.

15. Headquarters, U.S. Army Pacific, *JPMRC Concept Plan* (Fort Shafter, Hawaii: USARPAC, 28 February 2014); Michael B. Shaeffer, "Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC)" (information paper to Chief of Staff Army, Fort Shafter, Hawaii, 23 August 2016). The original fiscal year (FY) 2014 JPMRC operations group (OPSGRP) design proposal consisted of 248 military and

Department of the Army civilian positions but was later scaled back to 180 positions in FY 2015. The secretary of the Army approved an FY 2014 focus area review group recommendation to transfer military positions from U.S. Army Europe to USARPAC to resource the JPMRC operations group, and for the transfer to be formalized in the FY 2017–2021 Total Army Analysis. The transfer of military positions did not occur.

16. Spoeher, "Assessment of Military Power: U.S. Army." Moreover, the more than \$5 trillion stimulus response to the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to incur at best flatlined defense spending, more likely real cuts, particularly to the Army as hyper-competition in the Indo-Pacific realigns defense priorities to the other services.

17. At its height, Headquarters, Department of the Army, resourced thirteen directed military overhires (DMO) and USARPAC had forty personnel detailed on one-year troop diversion taskings. JPMRC DMOs are in the process of phasing out of the unit, while troop diversions have been reduced to seventeen personnel, mostly enlisted soldiers in the grades of E-1 through E-5.

18. Sebastian Sprenger, "30 Years: Future Combat Systems—Acquisition Gone Wrong," *DefenseNews*, 25 October 2016, accessed 10 March 2021, <https://www.defensenews.com/30th-anniversary/2016/10/25/30-years-future-combat-systems-acquisition-gone-wrong/>.

19. Anne W. Chapman, *The Army's Training Revolution, 1973–1990: An Overview* (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Office of the Command Historian and the Center of Military History, 1994), 25.

20. "W04QAA, U.S. Army Joint Multinational Readiness Training Center Table of Distribution and Allowances," 2 October 2021, accessed 20 March 2021, <https://fmsweb.fms.army.mil/>; "WJCUAA, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment Modified Table of Organization and Equipment," 16 October 2021, accessed 20 March 2021, <https://fmsweb.fms.army.mil/>. The Army's Force Management System Website (FMSWeb) documents 828 personnel authorizations for the JMRC operations group (OPSGRP), and documents 673 authorizations for the JMRC's opposing force (OPFOR), 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment.

21. Repurposing JMRC's 1,501 authorizations to build four JPMRC-like corps-level home station OPSGRPs would leave the Army more than eight hundred authorizations that it could recover and apply to other much needed operating and generating force requirements, including resourcing multi-domain task forces or returning much needed manpower back to its divisions, corps, and Army service component commands.

22. James C. McConville, "40th Chief of Staff of the Army Initial Message to the Army Team," *Army.mil*, 12 August 2019, accessed 10 March 2021, https://www.army.mil/article/225605/40th_chief_of_staff_of_the_army_initial_message_to_the_army_team.

"We Have Come a Long Ways ... We Have a Ways to Go"

Col. Dwayne Wagner, U.S. Army, Retired

During the Civil War, Frederick Douglass used his stature as the most prominent African American social reformer, orator, writer and abolitionist to recruit men of his race to volunteer for the Union army. In his "Men of Color to Arms! Now or Never!" broadside, Douglass called on formerly enslaved men to "rise up in the dignity of our manhood and show by our own right arms that we are worthy to be freemen."

—Farrell Evans, History.com

Little did Frederick Douglass know that Black Americans would continue to serve in every subsequent war for America and return home to face racism, bigotry, and second-class citizenship. So, when someone asks if the Army has changed regarding the treatment of Black or African American soldiers, I answer this question using the same phrase my father used in the 1960s and 1970s: "We have come a long ways ... we have a ways to go."

After answering this question, the follow-on conversation typically is reflective of the person's race. Black friends and associates spend more time trying to convince me that "we have a very long way to go" as they focus on the glass that is half empty: personal encounters with racism or bias, discrimination, or statistics tied to selection rates for battalion and brigade command or senior service college. My White coworkers or lifetime friends reflect on legal and cultural changes since the 1960s and believe that the Army "has come a very long way" in embracing Black Americans. Can both voices be right?

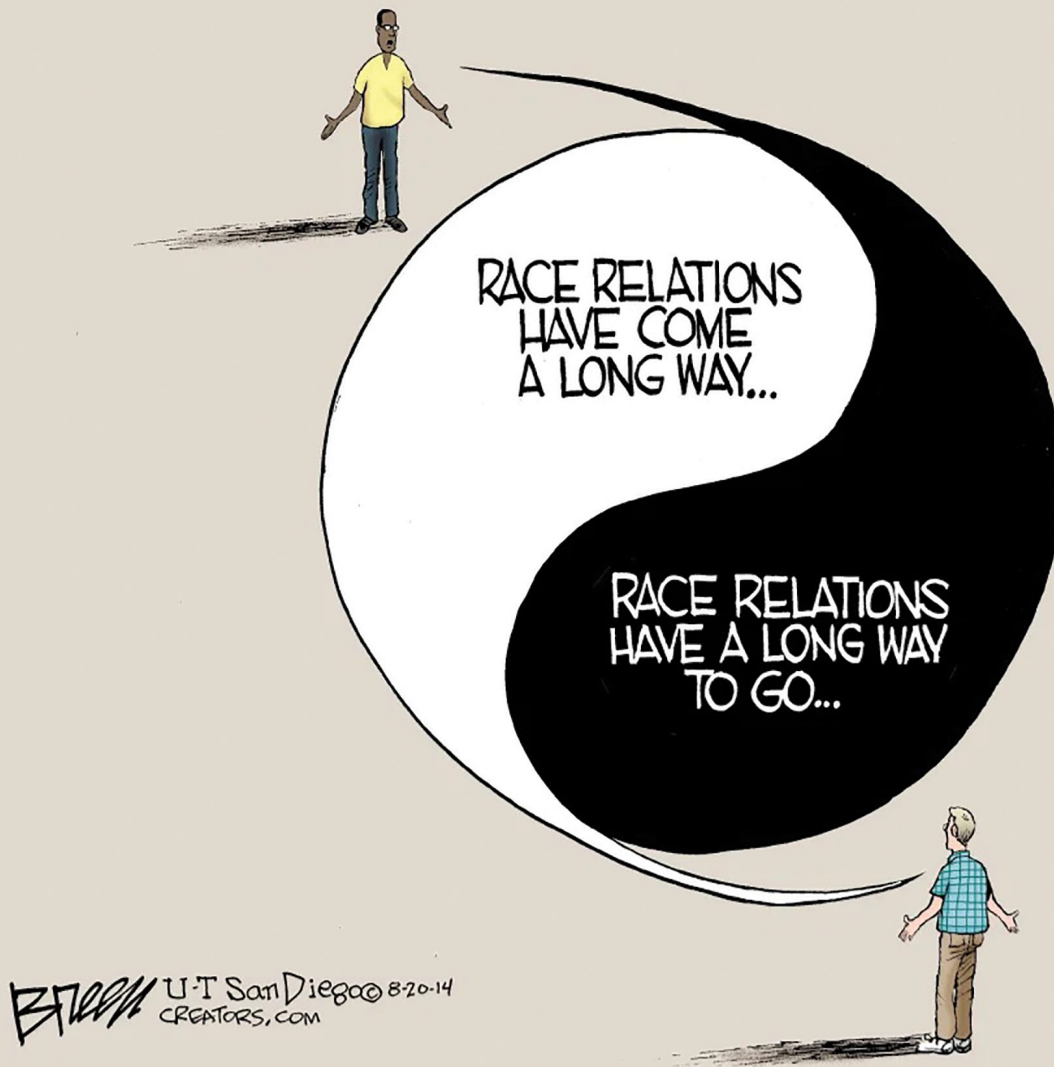
Each voice then asks, "How do we know when we are?" Let me use my journey since 1956 to try to respond

to both voices. As an Army officer (1978–2008), an Army civilian (2008–2021), and the son of a soldier (1956–1978), I have sixty-four years of watching Army race relations morph, sometimes forced by society and other times leading social change due to our Army values.

The 1950s: The Cold War and Desegregation

"President Harry S. Truman signed an executive order in 1948 ending segregation in the military and in the federal workforce. Executive Order 9981 said, 'There shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.' Truman's support of civil rights was an abrupt change from his early thoughts on the black community, as shown by many of his letters to friends and family that used racist language. He later changed his ways, writing a friend to say, 'I am not asking for social equality, because no such thing exists, but I am asking for equality of opportunity for all human beings and, as long as I stay here, I am going to continue that fight.'"¹

While Truman was struggling with decisions of race, my grandfather and father worked as sharecroppers in East Texas amid the virulent racism of the 1930s and 1940s. My father left sharecropping at the age of nineteen and joined the Army in 1949 because he had no other options as a poor African American man during this era. Our family land that belonged to his grandfather was stolen by Whites who used a rigged tax system to steal land from Black landowners. This was an institutionalized practice in the early 1900s through the 1950s, and some remnants remain today. The U.S. Department of Agriculture continues to address historical institutional



(Graphic by Stephen Breen, *San Diego Union Tribune*. Used with permission)

racism's impact on Black farmers today by establishing a program designed to compensate for historical discrimination. The Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program is part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and specifically includes Black farmers or families penalized by earlier institutional discrimination.

My father was later shipped off to Korea as an infantryman. The timing of his arrival (1950) dovetailed with Truman's executive order. My father integrated an all-White infantry regiment that was engaged in combat operations. His stories include (1) the company commander initially refusing to shake his hand, (2) the burning of his personal tent and belongings, and (3) the White soldiers who embraced him as an equal. So, through the prism of my grandfather and father—and Truman's executive

order—"race relations had come a long ways." Yet, in 1951, my father returned to an America that treated him as a second-class citizen: back of the bus; enter through the back door; housing redlining, employment discrimination; and do not make eye contact with a White man or argue with him in public. In 1951, we had an exceptionally long way to go in achieving racial equality within our Nation and the Army (a reflection of American society).

The 1960s: Vietnam and the Civil Rights Movement

From a legal standpoint, the 1960s marked a transformation of the realities of discrimination and political equality for Black people with the passing of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Act (1964 and 1965, respectively). The 1960s also marked the



Staff Sgt. Lucious Wagner, the author's father, talks on a desk phone circa 1950s while stationed at Kaiserslautern, Germany. (Photo courtesy of the author)

full engagement of the United States in the war in Vietnam. In support of this campaign to uphold democracy, Black soldiers continued the tradition of serving the Army with distinction.²

During the 1960s, we traveled from the West Coast to the South or from several points to Texas. We would stop at a gas station, my father would go inside and return, and we would depart without buying gas. At the time, I did not understand. Years later, I learned that my father would ask if he could use the restroom. If the attendant said no, my dad was not going to buy gas and give them money. As a military family member, I learned to only give money or business to people who treated me with dignity and respect.

The 1970s: Post-Vietnam and the Post-Civil Rights Era

Since its establishment in 1971, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) has been committed to using the full Constitutional power, statutory authority, and financial

resources of the federal government to ensure that African Americans and other marginalized communities in the United States have the opportunity to achieve the American Dream. The Caucus is chaired by Congresswoman Joyce Beatty. As part of this commitment, the CBC has fought for the past 48 years to empower these citizens and address their legislative concerns by pursuing a policy agenda that includes but is not limited to the following:

- reforming the criminal justice system and eliminating barriers to reentry;
- combatting voter suppression;
- expanding access to education from pre-k through level;

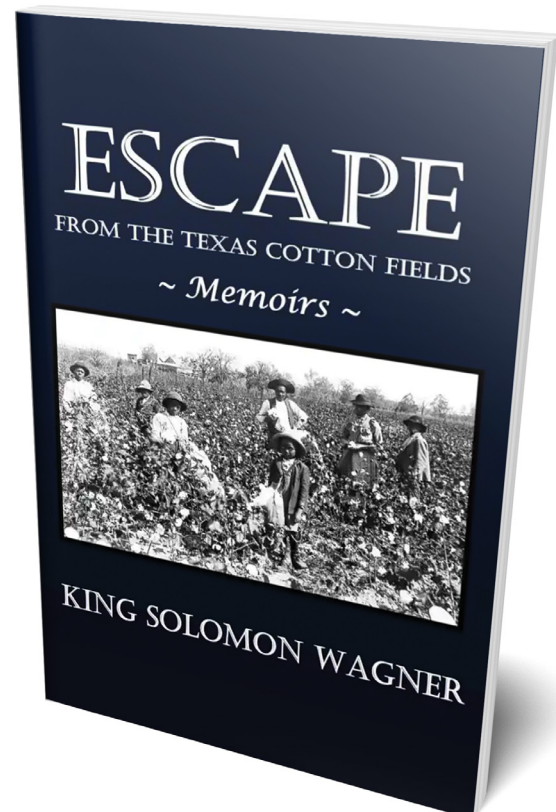
- expanding access to quality, affordable health care and eliminating racial health disparities;
- expanding access to technologies, including broadband;
- strengthening protections for workers and expanding access to full, fairly-compensated employment;
- expanding access to capital, contracts, and counseling for minority-owned businesses; and
- promoting U.S. foreign policy initiatives in Africa and other countries that are consistent.³

America was transitioning from a decade of civil rights when my father retired from the Army in 1970 at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, where he taught finance policy and procedures to second lieutenants. This man who integrated an all-White regiment in 1950 was now teaching White officers in 1970, and he was evaluating them. Toward the end of his military career, he had transitioned to loving America, warts and all, because he was seeing progress. My father prepared to move us from a relatively integrated military environment to the all-Black neighborhood of Oak Cliff in Dallas.

My family moved to Dallas in 1970. We lived in subsidized housing, received food stamps, and my dad attended college part time and worked two part-time jobs while raising six children. The six children later attended college (five lived at home), thanks to aid from the federal government and the state of Texas. Each became a future taxpayer. I learned that government has a role in providing short-term bootstraps for poorer Americans. My high school was over 90 percent White before busing and over 90 percent Black after busing. The Whites moved further out in the suburbs instead of attending school with me and other Blacks. I then learned that many Whites did not want to associate with me, an eye-opening discovery for me because of our military background. I was in high school Junior Reserved Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) from 1970 to 1974. Our senior naval

professor of military science was a White retired naval officer working in an almost all-Black high school. He cared about us, treated me with dignity and respect, and was willing to admit that my journey would be harder based on race alone.

I attended the lowest academically ranked high school in the state of Texas. In my junior year, despite my SAT scores and my 3.8 grade point average, my counselor told me to join the Army because I was not college material. She did not talk to me about junior college or trade school. At the time, I was naïve and impressionable, and I agreed with her; my father did not. My JROTC instructor urged me to live at home and attend a local college. Since my father was already a student at Bishop College, this made sense. I learned that my high school preparation would possibly be challenged based on scores on standardized tests. The only two White influencers in my life, my counselor and my Navy JROTC instructor, disagreed on my potential. The counselor did not see college in my future. My instructor did. After graduating, I wondered if she stereotyped me or honestly believed that the SAT score was accurate.



Book cover of *Escape from the Texas Cotton Fields* depicting the author's aunts and uncles in a cotton field in East Texas circa the late 1940s. King Solomon Wagner, the author's uncle, died in 2018. (Photo courtesy of the author)

I later matriculated at Bishop College, excelled in ROTC, and was elected student body president my senior year. I learned that an all-Black educational environment could nurture and inspire an academically disadvantaged Black student. While attending Bishop College, my ROTC professors, four graduates of HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities),

graduates. I learned again that some would use my educational credentials against me.

Circa 1983, I attended a nine-week military school, and my instructor (an armor lieutenant colonel) and I bonded. Lt. Col. Joseph T. Snow (now deceased) invested in me and talked openly about racism in the Army. As a White officer, he was witness to some of the blatant



Battalion command helped me understand that the Army was becoming less race conscious, while society continued to lag.



told me to attend a primarily White university for my graduate degree because my White Army bosses would discount my HBCU college education. I started my Army journey with imposter syndrome.

1980s: A Decade of Reorganization and Cold War Adventures

Meanwhile, civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and public figures like Mohammed Ali made the case that Vietnam was an example of a “race war” in which the White U.S. establishment is using colored mercenaries to murder brown-skinned freedom fighters. On the other side, there were men like Staff Sgt. Glide Brown Jr., exemplars of the fact that Vietnam was the first truly integrated conflict in U.S. military history. He was Black, the men he commanded were not, and that did not seem to matter. Though African American fighters had defended the United States since the earliest days of the Nation, and the military had officially been desegregated in the 1940s, segregation was still largely in practice in Korea. For the men to whom *Time* spoke, the numbers, which could also be read as the Black man taking the brunt of the war’s burden, were evidence of inroads being made.⁴

In 1981, while serving as a lieutenant at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, my boss, thinking he was complimenting me during a counseling, said, “Dwayne, as well as you write, it is obvious you did not attend a HBCU.” I replied, “Sir, Bishop College had 999 Black students and about fifteen internationals. It is a HBCU.” This former West Point English professor turned red in the face. He knew that I knew he harbored some bias regarding HBCU

and undercover racism. In 1985, he called and told me to apply for graduate school. I did. I was selected for a fully funded program and spent fifteen months at a primarily White university earning a master’s degree through a process that included a thesis, oral comprehensives, and written comprehensives. In October 2000, he attended my promotion ceremony to colonel. Snow was one of my mentors from 1985 until his death four years ago. I learned that my mentors would not always look like me.

From 1983 to 1986, I served at Fort Riley, Kansas. My commanders were outstanding: competent, fair, progressive. Both treated me with dignity and respect. I cannot say the same about the local Army Criminal Investigation Division (CID), who used a minor investigation of one of my sergeants to go after me for dereliction of duty. My commander and others were convinced that my race influenced the decision to charge me. Luckily, and thanks to my chain of command and senior leaders at CID headquarters, I was “taken out of the title block,” which effectively meant that CID recognized that the local office and the staff judge advocate made the wrong decision. Then, during the last three decades, and now, I am convinced that unconscious bias on part of the CID commander led to a very unusual decision to place a company commander in the title block for an administrative oversight.

My time in Kansas was mostly good, yet there were moments. I went to Manhattan, Kansas, to buy a car. The salesman said, “I have to call your first sergeant to make sure you are a good soldier.” Remember, I am an Army captain, in command of a company of 165 soldiers. During the phone call, I heard the voice on the other

end yell, “Why are you calling me about my company commander?” The red-faced salesman said to me, “Why didn’t you tell me you were a captain?” I replied, “Why did you assume I required vetting from a first sergeant?” I asked for the manager, who quickly apologized for his salesman. I did not buy from them. Several months later, while visiting a dining facility on a Saturday morning in civilian clothes, the sergeant pushed my money back and said, “Only officers pay surcharge.” I then pulled out my ID card and said, “Sergeant, why would you think I am not an officer?” He knew I knew that he stereotyped me. Again, I learned that some people used my race to label me.

In 1986, we moved to Huntsville, Texas. The Army gave me fifteen months to complete a fully funded graduate program at Sam Houston State University, known for its criminal justice and corrections programs. Living in Huntsville allowed me to re-see Texas, as I had been away for nine years. The school treated me well. My professors were great. Not so much the town. The following occurred while living in Huntsville from 1985 to 1986:

- I am cutting my lawn, and a car stops and the White driver says, “My yard is about the same size, what you charge?” I reply, “I live here.” The man drives off.
- My wife Edna answers the door. The man says, “Is the lady of the house in?” Edna says, “Who?” The man says, “Is the homeowner in?” Edna replies, “I live here.” The man walks away.
- I need to take a taxi home from downtown Huntsville. The Black cab driver gets my address and says, “Are you sure the address is right? We don’t live in that neighborhood.” As he dropped me off, he said, “Be careful brother, we ain’t supposed to live here.”
- Two months later, my lease was invalidated due to the homeowner not approving the contract I signed with the real estate company. We self-moved to an apartment. Others believe the owner learned that we were Black.

My graduate school assignment reminded me of the historical racism in Texas and that my job status, education, and socioeconomic position meant nothing. To many locals, I was just another “N-word,” a word I heard several times and pretended to not hear. The Army then sent me to the Mannheim Correctional Facility (Germany) for a graduate school payback tour of three years. From 1987 to 1990, I worked for two leaders (Monte Pickens and Joel Dickson) and met a third, Peter

Hoffman, who would influence my career, both short term and long term, in only positive ways. Lt. Col. Pickens ordered me to teach a college class to improve my briefing ability. I thought he was an ass. I later learned that he cared about me and was preparing me for my future. Hoffman later brought me to the Pentagon, taught me how to be an Army headquarters staff officer (with the aid of Bruce Conover), and later eased my move to one of the most prestigious jobs for a military police major: field grade assignment officer, Army Personnel Command. Again, I learned that my mentors and sponsors could be fair-minded White men who treated all well.

The 1990s: Operation Desert Storm and Army Downsizing

When the Army deployed for the Persian Gulf War in 1990, African Americans constituted 29.06 percent of the active force. As part of its efforts to rebuild after Vietnam, the service had made a strong commitment to equal opportunity. Much of the Army’s success during the war was the result of this commitment, the recruitment of high-quality personnel, better training methods, and a renewed emphasis on the importance and prestige of the noncommissioned officer corps. Leading the military during this war was the Army’s second African American four-star officer and the first Black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin L. Powell.

Four years after the war ended, Sgt. Maj. Gene C. McKinney was sworn in as the first African American Sergeant Major of the Army. Unfortunately, his tenure was cut short by allegations of sexual misconduct and his conviction at court-martial for attempting to obstruct the investigation into those allegations.⁵

While at the Army Personnel Command, I managed 636 officers: lieutenant colonels and majors. During a commanders’ conference attended by colonels and

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Company commanders from the 705th Military Police Battalion (from left to right), Capt. Laura Eckler Cook, Capt. Sheila Lydon, Capt. Eric Barras, Capt. Kolette Trawick, join then Lt. Col. Dwayne Wagner (seated) for a photo circa 1996 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. (Photo by Edna Wagner)

lieutenant colonels, I provided a field grade update. When the diversity slide was presented, I said, “During my first six months, none of you have made a by-name-request for a Black or female officer.” I continued and concluded the brief. At the break, I was surrounded by colonels asking me if I were calling them “racist.” I responded that minority officers needed mentorship and the right jobs for development for battalion command. I later learned that I had ruffled some feathers, and I did not care. Senior leaders like Herb Tillery, Bill Hart, Larry Haynes, Sharie Russell, and others had taught me that diversity was important.

Later, while working in a different personnel job, I was advised that the incoming one-star general was biased against Black officers, and I would not fare well. This one

star was demanding, rough, and did not suffer fools well. A year later, he top blocked me on an annual evaluation, gave me a general officer potential comment on the evaluation report, and placed me among his top lieutenant colonels. I learned to be leery of “he is a racist” rumors and to give each person a chance.

I still remember the day when the director of the Officer Personnel Management Directorate, a White brigadier general, chaired a meeting with the field grade assignment officers. We were responsible for managing the careers of Army majors and lieutenant colonels. There were about thirty-five of us, supposedly the cream of the crop as we represented our branches and functional areas. There were two Black officers in the room: a field artillery major who would retire as a lieutenant general

and me. When the general got to promotion selection rates, he said, and I paraphrase:

Black officers have suffered through generational, institutional, and personal racism. Some more than others. The SECARMY [secretary of the Army] and the CSA [chief of staff of the Army] are always going to first check to see the selection rate for Black officers. If we sense our Black officers are being treated fairly, we know all are being treated fairly. Black officers are the “canary in the mine shaft.”

The heads nodded up and down and my peers understood. They saw all the files. About half of them “got it.” The other half assumed that the system was fair, and we needed better Black officers. Society is (sometimes) judged by how it treats African Americans. The canary is slowly dying.⁶

The Army knew that racial discrimination was a factor. We had come a long way, yet we had a way to go.

705th Military Police Battalion, 1996–1998

In 1996, I took command of the 705th Military Police Battalion at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and was the first Black officer to do so. This was less significant because African Americans had been commanding battalions for decades, albeit at lower selection rates. My father ate breakfast at Pullman’s Restaurant in downtown Leavenworth on the morning of the change-of-command ceremony. Two tables away sat four local farmers. My dad said they were talking about the “Black lieutenant colonel taking command of the MPs [military police] and if he was qualified to do so.” My father ate his breakfast and remained silent and thought about his time in Korea (1950) and Vietnam (1968). He said nothing to the men. Three hours later, after the ceremony, he shared their comments with me. He believed that the Army had come a long way, since his son took command of a racially integrated formation. That same morning, I walked from my house to the ceremony. My mother-in-law, who was not familiar with the Army, whispered to my wife. I later learned that my mother-in-law was surprised to see White soldiers salute me. She lived in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and was conditioned to be subservient to Whites.

About six months into the command tour, my senior enlisted advisor, a man from Alabama, said, “Sir, I did not know you were Black until you arrived. We have

people in the battalion who served with you at Fort Sill, Mannheim, and the Pentagon, and I only heard that you would be a good commander. Sir, race relations are improving when NCOs [noncommissioned officers] focus on the man, and not his race.”

A year into command, a soldier brought his parents to my office to see me. The mother walks in and hugs my command sergeant major (CSM) and says, “Colonel Wagner, my son says you are a great commander.” My CSM, who is red-faced, points at me and says, “I am the sergeant major. HE is our commander.” The mom walks over and shakes my hand. No hug. After pleasantries, they left. Later that evening, the soldier returned, and apologized for his mother. I said, “You did not tell your mother that I was the Black man in the room or that I am Black.” The soldier said, “Sir, you are not Black. You are my commander.” Battalion command helped me understand that the Army was becoming less race conscious, while society continued to lag.

The 2000s: 9/11 and the Global War on Terrorism

The distribution of African Americans in the service by 2003 had developed in several unexpected ways. While the company grade officer percentage had risen to roughly a proportionate level, the percentage of field grade and general officers remained much lower. More surprisingly, the proportion of Black soldiers in combat specialties had declined significantly by 2003. This was in part due to the large numbers of Black women who had entered the service, and who were barred from holding such specialties. Other factors that have been suggested for this trend include higher Black unemployment rates that motivate Black males to select specialties that have skills easily transferable to civilian jobs, and family traditions of service in such specialties. Another suggested cause of this disparity is that a sizeable number of White males join not for a career or to obtain a marketable skill, but rather for the adventure and challenge provided by enlistment in the combat arms before continuing on with their civilian education and careers.⁷

In 1999, I was a lieutenant colonel, former battalion commander, and senior service college selectee, and I was awaiting the results of the colonel’s list. By all accounts, I was a competent and capable officer. I was an instructor at the Combined Arms Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, and I taught a seminar made up of twelve

captains, many of whom had not commanded yet and were learning how to be staff officers.

Historically, a staff group would coordinate a farewell social the night before graduation. If the students liked

and Staff School. All saw it as a testament to my ability to connect with the captain and a need for the captain to unburden himself. In 1999, an Army captain struggled with following a Black lieutenant colonel: we have a long way



Regardless of my audience or topic, I tried to provide the other voice or a perspective that the officer could not see, from my historical vantage point.



their instructor, she or he would be invited. If the staff group did not like their instructor, she or he would not know about the gathering.

Circa March 1999, my graduating staff group invited me to their graduation party. All twelve captains attended. We ate appetizers and drank beer, and they gave a gift to me and waxed eloquently about how much they learned during the six-week course. The vibe was positive. Incredibly positive. As the evening wound down, only five captains were left, all White males, and not uncommon at all.

One of the officers looked at me, started crying, and said, “Sir, six weeks ago when you walked into the classroom, I was disappointed, and I said to myself ... and, sir, please excuse my language ... ‘what is this f--king (N-word) going to teach me.’” The officer continued to cry. The four other captains were in shock and were waiting for my response. I said, “Go on.” The captain, through sobs, said, “Sir, I judged you based solely on your race and during the last six weeks I have learned more from you about leadership than any other officer I know.”

(Silence)

The captain continued, “Sir, I am from Mississippi and my parents are racist, and I have struggled since being in the Army with accepting Blacks and this course has opened my eyes with how much I need to change.”

I said: “(John), it took guts for you to reveal yourself to me in front of your classmates. I want you to confront your racism, reach out to others, and over time get better.” We then drank another beer and talked about life, Army, and world events. Later, two of the officers who witnessed the event asked if they needed to write statements. I said no. I saw the event as a life lesson for the captain.

The following day, I shared the event with a couple of peers and the director of the Combined Arms Services

to go. In 1999, a White officer confronted his own racism and wanted to get better: we have come a long way.

The 2010s: The Army and Post-Racial America?

The *Economist* called it a post-racial triumph and wrote that Barack Obama seemed to embody the hope that America could transcend its divisions. The *New Yorker* wrote of a post-racial generation and indeed, the battle-scarred veterans of the civil rights conflict of forty years ago seemed less enchanted with Obama than those who were not yet alive then. Amb. Andrew Young, a one-time aide to Martin Luther King, argued that former President Bill Clinton was every bit as black as then Sen. Obama.⁸

During the last twenty-one years, I was fortunate to serve as a colonel and sit on several selection boards, and as an Army civilian, to teach at a U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), interacting with the next two generations of Army leaders. Both allowed me to observe change within the Army.

From 2001 to 2008, while serving at the Pentagon and going in and out of Afghanistan, I spoke to hundreds of officers on many topics including race and diversity. The conversations with White officers typically focused on how race relations and diversity have improved, with leaders providing personal vignettes of success stories. Conversely, my conversations with Black officers focused on the relative lack of diversity or personal stories of racism, bigotry, discrimination, conscious bias, or unconscious bias. Regardless of my audience or topic, I tried to provide the other voice or a perspective that the officer could not see, from my historical vantage point. Too many White officers want to believe that the Army is post-racial, and we are all

green. Well, we are light-green and dark green. Too many Black officers sometimes look for racism and bias where it does not exist. We wake up in the morning, expecting to be treated differently, lesser. Well, sometimes we are treated with disrespect based on racism or bias.

Is there still a vestige or vestiges of institutional racism in the Army? Or are we seeing more personal racism, bigotry, and bias? I will use the centralized board process as an example. I believe that Army selection

boards tend to understand the process is as fair as it can be, based on my thirty years of conversations. However, most officers will never serve on a selection board, and in 2021, some still wonder if the process is fair to all.

With great fanfare, the Army recently decided to remove photographs from the board vote, rationalizing that the photo allows visual bias to seep into some votes. Yet, this knee-jerk reaction did not consider that bias occurs when the officer is rated in the operational force



Retired Col. Dwayne Wagner (*third from left, top row*) and other Command and General Staff College instructors of Team 11 pose for a photo in front of the college 24 May 2021 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army)

boards and the process we use to identify board members, vote the files, and produce a list is as fair as a paradigm can be. Yet, humans, who may be consciously or unconsciously biased, write the officer evaluation reports and decades later sit on the boards. Even with mechanisms for addressing board members who vote out of tolerance (outlier votes), if I am subconsciously biased, I may vote a file a tad lower or higher than the rest of the board members. Black officers who have served on

and the board simply votes the officer evaluation reports or quality of the file. I believe the board process is not as biased as some allude, and taking away the photograph may have an unintended outcome. Most board members are White males. My experience tells me that many understand historical or institutional bias and use the photo to self-reflect. Did the Black woman with the two highly qualified block checks and most qualified-level narrative receive the evaluation based on potential or unconscious

bias? For thirty years, I have talked to senior White leaders who knew that women and racial minorities were sometimes subjected to biased evaluations. Sometimes, not most times. These leaders appreciated having the photograph so they could have the whole picture.

Since 2008, I have interacted with CGSC students and officers attending the School for Command Preparation. The conversations typically align with the officer's tribal view. Whites typically believe the Army is a fair institution with minor race concerns. Black officers, in general, believe that the Army continues to fail to identify leaders who are racist, biased, or unfair.

CGSC instructors, historically the bastion of White males from the combat arms (maneuver, fires, and operations) or logistics, increasingly are teaching a diverse student body. The college struggles to be as diverse as some want, yet Black officers tend to shy away from teaching or serving in Kansas. In the mid-90s when I assigned officers to teach at CGSC, diversity was a direct outcome of the three-star commandant or one-star deputy commandant, as they interacted with the Army G-1 or Human Resources Command to demand or ask for minority instructors. Some cared more than others. Whether the 1990s or 2020s, leaders wanted diversity but only had so much control. Students wanted diversity, and most would choose not to come back because other career tracks were considered more competitive for selection to battalion command or promotion to colonel. Last, Assignment Interactive Module 2.0 provides one more dynamic to diversity, as each teaching department now controls who (branch, race,

gender, experience) they hire in a one-to-one match. If a department is made up of only White instructors, should the deputy director consciously look for Black, Hispanic, or Asian instructors?

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Circa 2013

Several vignettes:

In 1990, I was advised to watch my back as a CGSC student because the faculty had it out for Black students, but I was treated fairly and with dignity and respect. In 2021, some Black students continue to arrive to school believing that they may not be treated well based on race. Most are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. Few suffer true racism or discrimination. Yet, some deal with instructors who suffer from unconscious bias and allow race, gender, branch, or component to influence grading or reputation. How do I know? I talk privately to instructors in all departments who are trying to be fair and just. Conversely, students, who are not mine, share stories. In 2021, race is still a factor.

The United States Army War College
presents

Let's Talk, Session 1:
Race, Diversity, and Inclusion
When: 5 November 2020, 1300-1500
Location: Bliss Hall and Virtual
Details on the virtual connection will be published as soon as available

Panel Members

General (Ret) Vincent Brooks General (Ret) Carter Hann MG (Ret) Linda Singh MG (Ret) Ron Johnson COL (Ret) Chwayne Wright

Moderated by Dr. James Breckenridge, Provost, USAWC

An advertisement for the U.S. Army War College's "Let's Talk, Session 1: Race, Diversity, and Inclusion" that took place virtually and in-person 5 November 2020 at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army War College)

Several years ago, a videotape was made that would be used with all 1,200 CGSC students. While it was in draft stage, no one noticed that there were no Black participants among the crew of twelve. When I advised that our diverse student body would not appreciate the lack of diversity, I was met with two voices: “Dwayne, I see your point; we need to fix this”; or “Dwayne, I do not see your point; these are the twelve who volunteered.” Luckily, most were able to understand that the college would send a poor signal, and I made a recommendation to how we could add a Black member (not me). If I had not been asked to review the video, we could have produced a visual that could have been dismissive of our Black students. Faculty diversity allows identification of blind spots.

Are we too sensitive in 2021? Can an instructor give constructive feedback and not worry about the student alleging gender bias or racism? Can a student receive constructive feedback and simply trust that the instructor is only trying to provide professional development? I know instructors who shy away from tough feedback for Black officers in order to not be labeled a racist. I know weaker students who cannot handle constructive feedback and consciously look for the racial boogeyman. In 2021, race influences learning.

I have been incredibly pleased with the academic deans and directors at the CGSC. Both offices are sensitive to diversity, student perceptions, and faculty inclinations. I am comfortable knowing that a Black student going before an academic board is going to be judged by leaders who are conscious of potential organizational bias or faculty unconscious bias. I appreciated the director who called me to his office, showed me five photographs of who was

slated to be academically boarded, discussed each situation, and asked me if faculty bias contributed to only Black officers being identified in a three-month window. He cared enough to ask the question. Also, when I challenged another director about mentoring and diversity, he pulled out a folder with eight officer record briefs and talked to me about the three Black captains among them. This colonel knew their lives, spouses, and families and was involved in their next career move. Yet, another director, a fine Army officer and man, upon learning that the Army War College taught a diversity elective and CGSC did not, said, “I thought we were post-racial, Dwayne, and those days are over.” We met for coffee the next day. In 2021, senior leaders are sensitive to race as an influence.

In November 2020, I participated on a panel at the Army War College that focused on race, diversity, and inclusion. As I prepared for this venture, I thought about 1991 when my CGSC class of 1,100 students was ushered into the large auditorium to watch the movie *Glory*, and then we went back to our seminars to talk race relations. In February 2021, I was the guest speaker for the local Black History Month program. As I prepared for the presentation, I reminisced about doing the same program in 1997, where I voiced a hope that America would stop celebrating Black history, because it is truly American history. For both the panel and the presentation I said,

My grandfather's generation was voiceless.

My father's generation was very patient.

My generation is patient.

The next generation is impatient.

We have come a long way. Yet, we have a way to go. ■

Notes

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1. Kerri Wiginton, “History of African Americans in the US Military,” Stacker, 18 February 2021, accessed 7 April 2021, <https://stacker.com/stories/2729/history-african-americans-us-military>.

2. “Timeline of Events for African American Soldiers in the United States Army,” Army.mil, accessed 7 April 2021, <https://www.army.mil/africanamericans/timeline.html>.

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5. “The Army and Diversity,” U.S. Army Center of Military History, accessed 7 April 2021, <https://history.army.mil/html/faq/diversity.html>.

6. Author recollection, staff meeting at the Army's Personnel Command, circa 1994, Alexandria, Virginia. The command's deputy commanding general provided advice to field grade assignment officers.

7. “The Army and Diversity.”

8. Daniel Schorr, “A New, ‘Post-Racial’ Political Era in America,” 28 January 2008, in *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio, podcast audio, accessed 9 April 2021, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=18489466>.

U.S. Army, Toxic Followership, and the Balance of Responsibility

Maj. Ben Martinez Jr., U.S. Army

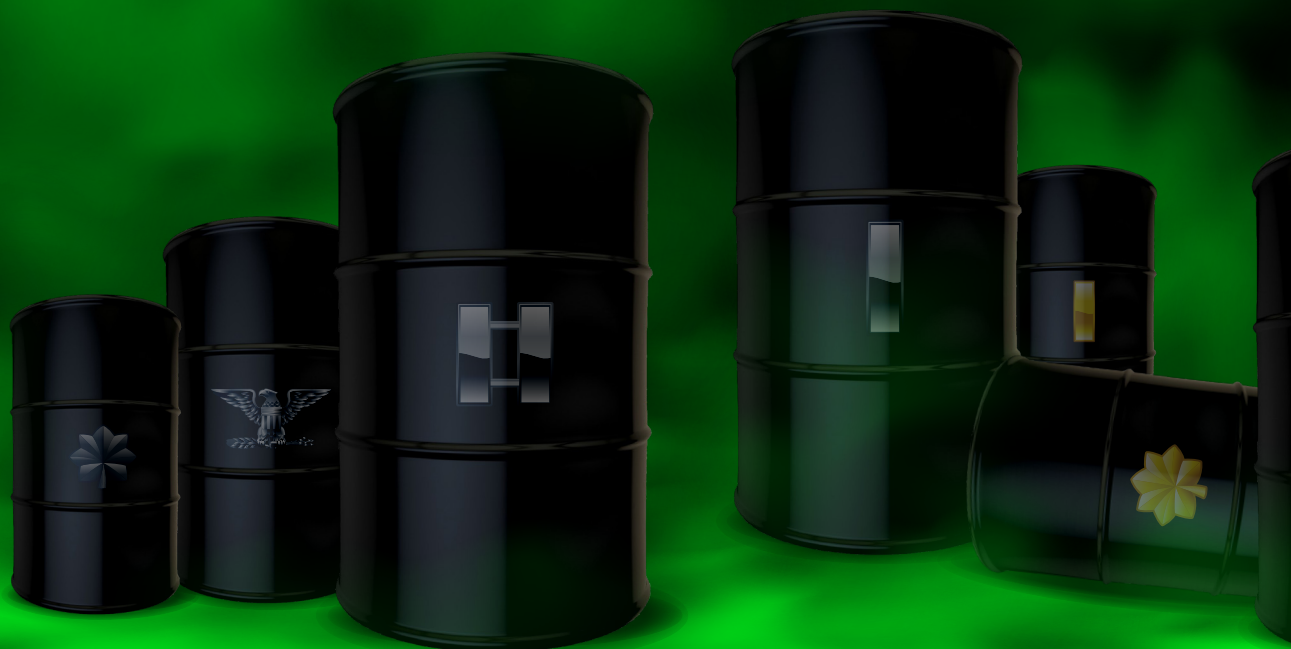
The role of the senior leaders was no longer that of controlling puppet master, but rather of an empathetic crafter of culture.

—Gen. Stanley McChrystal, 2015

In 1996, Marcia Whicker first coined the term “toxic leader” to describe bosses who harm rather than improve their organizations.¹ Since that time, “toxic leader” has become a part of every soldier’s lexicon. To explain the poor and unethical

behavior of some units, the Army scrutinizes the actions of leaders in those organizations, and the root cause is the same—toxic leadership.

Over the last decade, many senior leaders were relieved of command because the Army deemed them toxic.² From this viewpoint, the expression of unethical, poor behavior manifests through the follower, but the source of the problem is often the leader. These incidents create a perception that a leadership problem exists within the Army, but could there be cases where toxic



followership is to blame? Could the real problem be toxic followers? If so, what are the causes of toxic followership in the Army? Is bad leadership the primary reason for toxic followership? It is my experience that there are other elements outside of what a leader does or does not do that contribute to toxicity in Army organizations.

Framing the Problem

The Army teaches every soldier to be a leader. Over time, the words “leadership” and “leader” became synonymous, and a perception developed that to be a follower was not a noble endeavor and what mattered was to learn how to be a good leader. Thus, a newly minted Army professional begins his or her career striving “to provide purpose, direction, and motivation in order to accomplish the mission and improve the organization.”³ However, all leaders must learn to be followers as well. In order to truly be well rounded, leaders must be able to transition between leadership and followership.

As that Army professional continues his or her leadership education, he or she is taught lessons on organizational failures through historical vignettes. Classroom discussions ensue, and students invariably solve the organizational mystery and learn that the cause of the failure is toxic leadership. The takeaway is to learn how to be a good leader and how not to be toxic; these behaviors are how we improve the organization.

However, no matter how well-intentioned or how capable a leader is, there are instances where a follower’s bias causes that follower to work against a leader and, in so doing, harms the organization. There are also environmental factors outside the control of both a leader or follower that contribute to toxicity.⁴

To date, most research addresses toxicity from a leader perspective. Even when considering the aspects of the follower or environment, studies describe those perspectives as elements the leader uses to achieve leader aims. Most research studies do not see the environment or followers as potential sources of toxicity.

An example of this is Art Padilla, Robert Hogan, and Robert B. Kaiser’s study on the toxic triangle. In that

study, the authors describe the toxic triangle as “a confluence of leader, follower, and environmental factors that make destructive leadership possible.”⁵ The follower and the environment are not toxic, but they make it possible for the leader to be toxic. In this model, the follower assumes the role of passive acquiescence or active participant in the toxic behavior of the leader and therefore frees the follower of responsibility.



Why Only Leaders Are Viewed as the Cause of Toxicity

For as I take it, universal history, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at the bottom of the history of the great men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones ... all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result ... of thoughts that dwell in the great men sent into the world.

—Thomas Carlyle⁶

The “great man” theory of leadership helps explain why the focus of most research on leadership is from the perspective of the leader.

The current trend of laying responsibility for toxicity on the leader stems from the theory of the great man. The quality of the relationship between leader and follower; the conditions of the environment where the dyadic relationship operates in; failure or success; and toxicity or cohesion are all byproducts of the leader’s actions. We see this view in Army doctrine. Army Techniques Publication 3-21.8, *Infantry Platoon and Squad*, states, “The platoon leader ... is responsible for all the platoon does or fails to do.”⁷ In an Army platoon, success or failure falls solely on the platoon leader.

Current research on followership helps to balance the responsibility of leadership across all elements of the leadership triad and accentuates the need to study

leadership from all perspectives.

Leadership and Toxicity

The latest Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession*, introduces the term “counterproductive leadership” to describe a toxic leader and defines the term as “the demonstration of leader behaviors that violate one or more of the Army’s core leader competencies or Army Values, preventing

a climate conducive to mission accomplishment.”⁸

Competencies and attributes are what an Army leader should be, are what the leader should know, and are what a leader should do.

Violating any of the competencies and attributes results in counterproductive or toxic leadership. The Army helps us to further understand counterproductive leadership by defining it and providing examples (see table 1, page 103).⁹ With these definitions and examples, students of leadership have a clear way to help identify toxic leaders and associated behaviors.

“Follower-Sheep” and Followership

The traditional view of followers is that they are dependent on the leader, have no power, are passive, and are susceptible. The terms “follower” and “follower-sheep” are synonymous, and a label of follower-sheep means someone who blindly follows even if led off a cliff.¹⁰ This classic perspective carries with it a negative connotation, but followership theory has begun to change this view and has redefined what it means to be a follower.

Followership is not merely the actions of a subordinate who accepts and obeys the dictates of the organizational authority figures. Therefore, followership is not the same as following.

Following is impelled (consciously or unconsciously influenced) by actions of leaders.

Following is reactive. In contrast, followership is a priori choice (self-conscious) of the individual in the context of his or her relationship to the nominal leader.¹¹

Susan Baker’s review of the followership literature confirms that followers are more than just follower-sheep; followers exercise followership. She identified four main themes regarding followership and followers.¹² An adapted version of those four main themes suggests that (1) leaders and followers are roles, not innate dispositions; (2) followers exhibit behaviors that are in their self-interest; (3) followers and leaders both benefit from the leader-follower dynamic; and (4) followers and leaders are in fact in a partnership.¹³ It appears that followers do have power, are active, and make a conscious choice to exercise followership.

Followership and Toxicity

Merriam-Webster defines followership as “the ability or willingness to follow a leader.”¹⁴ The definition implies

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that followership is a competency or skill and that a person can be good or bad at followership. If true, how does one evaluate productive or toxic followership? What defines toxic followership?

In the article “What is Toxic Followership?,” Ted Thomas, Kevin Gentzler, and Robert Salvatorelli use Robert Kelley’s follower typology to describe toxic behaviors associated with each type of Kelley’s follower types. Kelley’s categories fall within two scales: the first measures independent, critical thinking, and the second measures active behavior. Five behavior types thus emerge:

- *Sheep* only do what is asked and no more. They are uninterested and fall under the passive and dependent, uncritical thinking category.
- *Yes-people* are similar to sheep, but their interest is in pleasing the boss. These followers are active and dependent, uncritical thinkers.
- *Alienated followers* are independent, critical thinkers but are unmotivated or disgruntled and therefore passive in their behavior.
- *Survivors* are in the center of both measures and focus on maintaining what they have; they will change behavior as needed to survive.
- *Effective followers* are ideal because they are well-adjusted and responsible. This type of follower is active and an independent, critical thinker.¹⁵

Thomas, Gentzler, and Salvatorelli believe that four of the five follower types exhibit toxic behaviors under certain conditions, and they relate the toxic behaviors to reasons for those behaviors and how those behaviors relate to the leader-follower dynamic (see table 2, page 104).¹⁶ In

Table 1. Counterproductive Leadership

| Behavior | Definition | Examples |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Abusive | Exceeding the boundaries of authority by being abusive, cruel, or degrading of others | Bullying, berating others for mistakes, creating conflict, ridiculing others |
| Self-serving | Act in ways that seek primarily to accomplish their own goals and needs before those of others | Displaying arrogance, taking credit for others’ work, insisting on having their way, displaying narcissistic tendencies |
| Erratic | Poor self-control or volatility that drives the leader to act erratically or unpredictably | Blaming others, deflecting responsibility, losing temper at the slightest provocation, insecurity, or being unapproachable |
| Incompetent | Results from a lack of experience or willful neglect. Incompetence can include failure to act or acting poorly | Unengaged leadership, being passive or reactionary, neglecting leadership responsibilities, failing to communicate expectations clearly |
| Corrupt | Violate explicit Army standards, regulations, or policies | Dishonesty, misusing government resources or time, creating a hostile work environment, Equal Employment Opportunity and Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention violations |

(Table by author; adapted from Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession*, 8-8)

the end, all of these toxic follower behaviors work against the organization, negatively affect morale, and place the “organization’s survival at risk.”¹⁷

The U.S. Army and Followership

U.S. Army doctrine states that leadership is the relationship between the leader, the led, and the situation.¹⁸

In addition, “being an effective follower requires the same attributes and competencies required to be an effective leader, although application is different.”¹⁹ ADP 6-22 mentions followership twice but does not define it, and it does not include a discussion on toxic followership or what toxic follower behaviors are. A gap exists in U.S. doctrine.

Follower Strategic Behavior

Birgit Schyns, Barbara Wisse, and Stacey Sanders identified that follower research follows two main points of view. The first is the follower-sheep view; the second is from the positive aspects of followers or focused on defining what good followers are.²⁰ Kent Bjugstad et al. write that the modern follower is not motivated by what the follower thinks the leader wants but by what the follower wants. However, “What if followers are guided by the wrong values, lack a moral compass, and compassion for others and use their positions as followers to pursue their own goals?”²¹

Schyns, Wisse, and Sanders’ research seeks to answer this question by focusing on the dark triad traits of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy (see table 3, page 105). These three traits prevent team building and negatively affect organizations when the follower’s desires are not in line with the organization or leader. Followers with these traits will work against the organization or leader if doing so leads to the achievement of their personal goals.

The dark triad is a constellation of three socially aversive, partly overlapping traits: narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. The three traits are all characterized by the tendency to influence others for selfish gains. They are associated with an instrumental approach to

Table 2. Toxic Follower Types and Behaviors

| Follower type | Interaction with leader | Toxic behavior | Reason for behavior |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| Survivor | Uses a leader to gauge the environment and adapts to it | Influences the leader to do the wrong thing | Maintain the status quo at all costs to maintain position |
| Alienated | Irreconcilable disagreements with the leader | Actively works to undermine the leader | Loses faith in the leader or system; believe they know better |
| Sheep | Blind followers | Engage in immoral, unethical, or illegal behavior | Diffuse responsibility; are merely following orders |
| Yes-man | Blind followers | Engage in immoral, unethical, or illegal behavior | Please the boss or organization to get ahead |

(Table by author; adapted from Ted A. Thomas, Kevin Gentzler, and Robert Salvatorelli, “What Is Toxic Followership?,” *Journal of Leadership Studies* 10, no. 3 [Fall 2016]: 62–65)

people and organizations, and they correlate positively with disagreeableness.²² Since leaders are the focus of toxicity, Schyns, Wisse, and Sanders posit that it is possible that followers who exhibit dark triad traits may be overlooked and might be getting away with their “shady strategic behavior.”²³ Additionally, by not considering these behaviors in subordinates, the opportunity to fully understand toxicity is missed.

The Toxic Triangle and Choosing to Follow

Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser introduced the concept of the toxic triangle. The authors recognize that leadership of any type springs from the interplay of an individual’s motivation to lead,

Table 3. Dark Triad of Followers

| Trait type | Definition | Red-flag behavior | Additional notes |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| Narcissism | Narcissists think that everything that happens around them—in fact, everything that others say and do—is, or should be, about them. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Showing behavior in ways that serve to promote themselves 2. Aggressive after negative feedback and devaluing feedback source 3. Treating members differently based on who adds value to their positive self-views | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appear to have a higher likelihood of being selected as leaders 2. Need to shine and outshine others |
| Machiavellianism | Characterized by cynical and misanthropic beliefs, callousness, a striving for agentic goals (e.g., money, power, and status), and the use of cunning influence tactics | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrating a self-oriented perspective with a “choose your battles” mindset 2. Actively engaging in behaviors that function to control others or minimize their influence 3. Making use of manipulation tactics to reach strategic goals | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In contrast to narcissists, they do not necessarily have to be the center of attention 2. They are also not impulsive (in contrast to psychopaths) and act in a calculating manner |
| Psychopathy | Characterized by a short-term focus, a penchant for lying, social disinhibition, recklessness, fearlessness, and bold behavior; can be perceived as charismatic due to their impressive management skills | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choosing competition over cooperation 2. Making fast decisions without accounting for the possible negative consequences 3. Bullying or criticizing coworkers to redirect attention | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are likely to make choices that make them look superior and others inferior 2. Impulsive decision-makers |

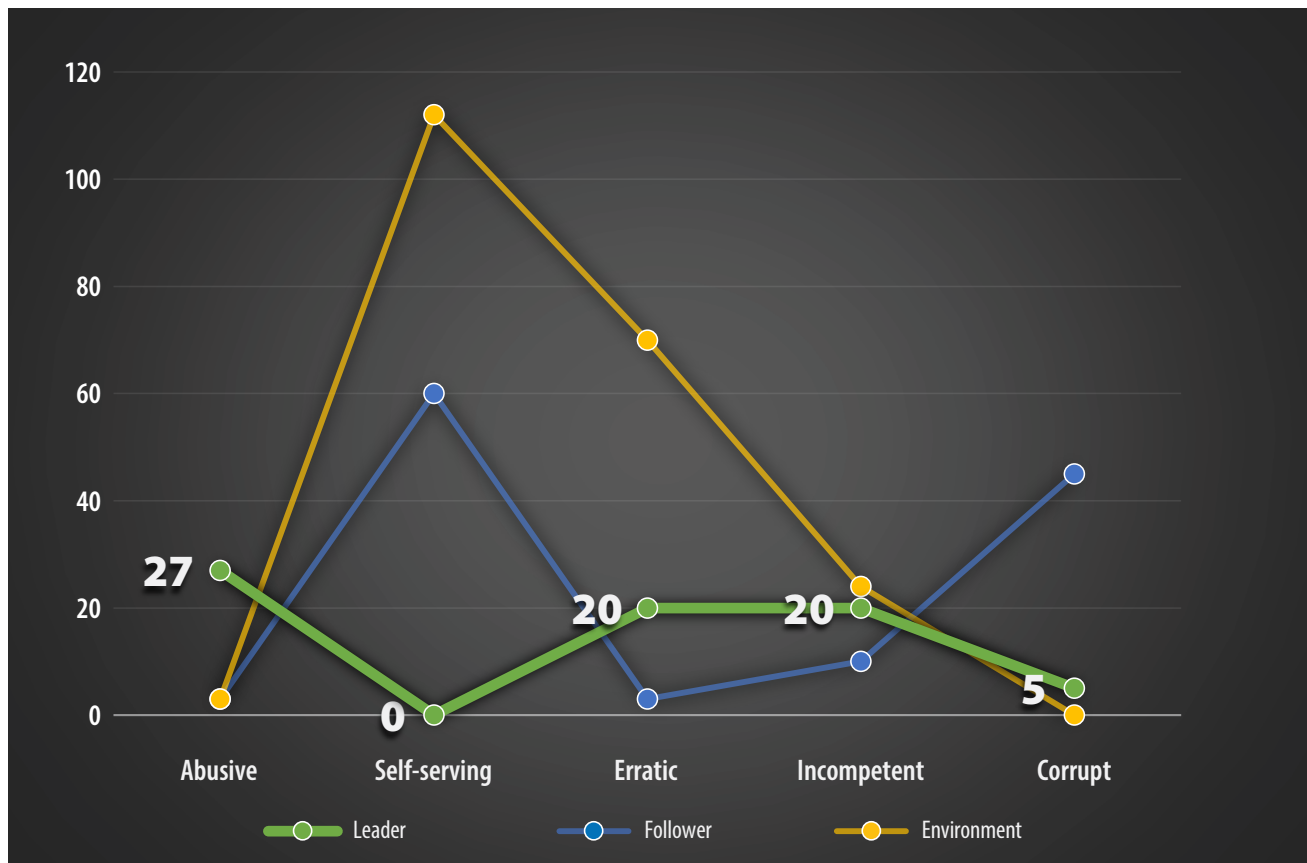
(Table by author; adapted from Birgit Schyns, Barbara Wisse, and Stacey Sanders, “Shady Strategic Behavior: Recognizing Strategic Followership of Dark Triad Followers,” *Academy of Management Perspectives* 33, no. 2 [May 2019]: 234–49)

subordinates’ desire for direction and authority, and events calling for leadership. This view is constant with a systems perspective focusing on the confluence of leaders, followers, and circumstances rather than just the characteristics of individual leaders.²⁴

The authors go on to describe each of the three domains. They describe the follower as either a confederate to the leader’s toxic behavior or a colluder to

the behavior, and the environment as supporting a toxic leader and not as a source of toxicity. Implied is that the leader receives a higher weight; the follower and environment contribute to toxicity only passively. Their model is top focused; that is to say, the leader is the only source of toxicity.

Raymond W. Cox III, Gregory K. Plagens, and Keba Sylla offer a different view on the follower’s role in this triangle: “Followers are in control of



(Figure by author)

Figure 1. Leader Data

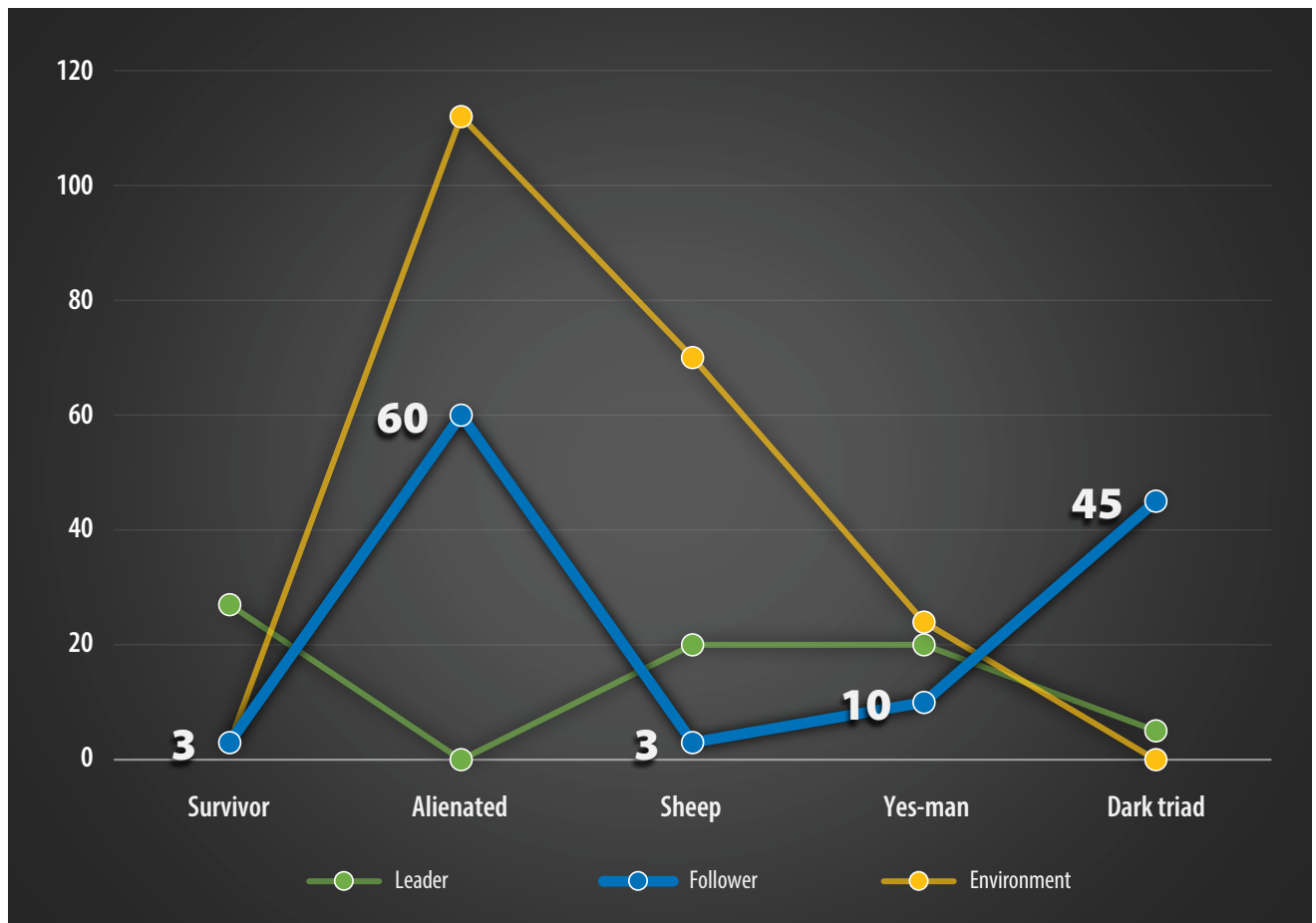
the situation by the choices made. Therefore, organizational success is in the hands of followers.”²⁵ The authors differentiate between following and followership. Following is synonymous with follower-sheep; followership, on the other hand, is a choice to act in a way that either contributes to or inhibits organizational success.²⁶ A follower will choose to behave positively if the power distance is accepted, the follower shares values with the leader, and the leader uses the appropriate leadership approach based on the followers’ needs (power distance in this context is defined as the imbalance of power between two people or entities).²⁷

Other scholars such as Ariel Blair and Michelle Bligh propose that followers would be less likely to exhibit active followership in an environment of high-power distance. They argue that certain cultures and societies are more open to follower dynamism

and a “greater range of acceptable follower role definition.”²⁸ One could say that U.S. society is less tolerant of power distance, and this would reflect in the members that make up the U.S. Army.

Second, followers interpret and react to leaders differently. A leader’s behavior may have one meaning for or effect on one follower and an opposite purpose or effect on another. Bjugstad et al. highlight that followers “look for leaders whose values matched their own.”²⁹ Their article identifies two categories of leader: task-oriented and interpersonal-oriented. If a follower is a task-oriented follower, he or she will relate to and see a task-oriented leader positively. If a follower is interpersonal-oriented, he or she will view the same leader negatively.

Third, Bjugstad et al. conclude that matching a leader’s style (participating, selling, delegating, and telling) to the follower’s style or category (alienated, exemplary,



(Figure by author)

Figure 2. Follower Data

passive, conformist, or pragmatist) will improve the leader-follower dynamic. They state, “Leaders should become more effective because their improved understanding of the follower-leader relationship.”³⁰

Although Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser’s toxic triangle is leader-focused, it is useful to us because the model introduces the idea that toxicity is a result of the interactions between leaders, followers, and the environment.³¹ Their triangle serves as a prism that students of leadership can look through, turn in different directions, and examine toxicity from different perspectives.

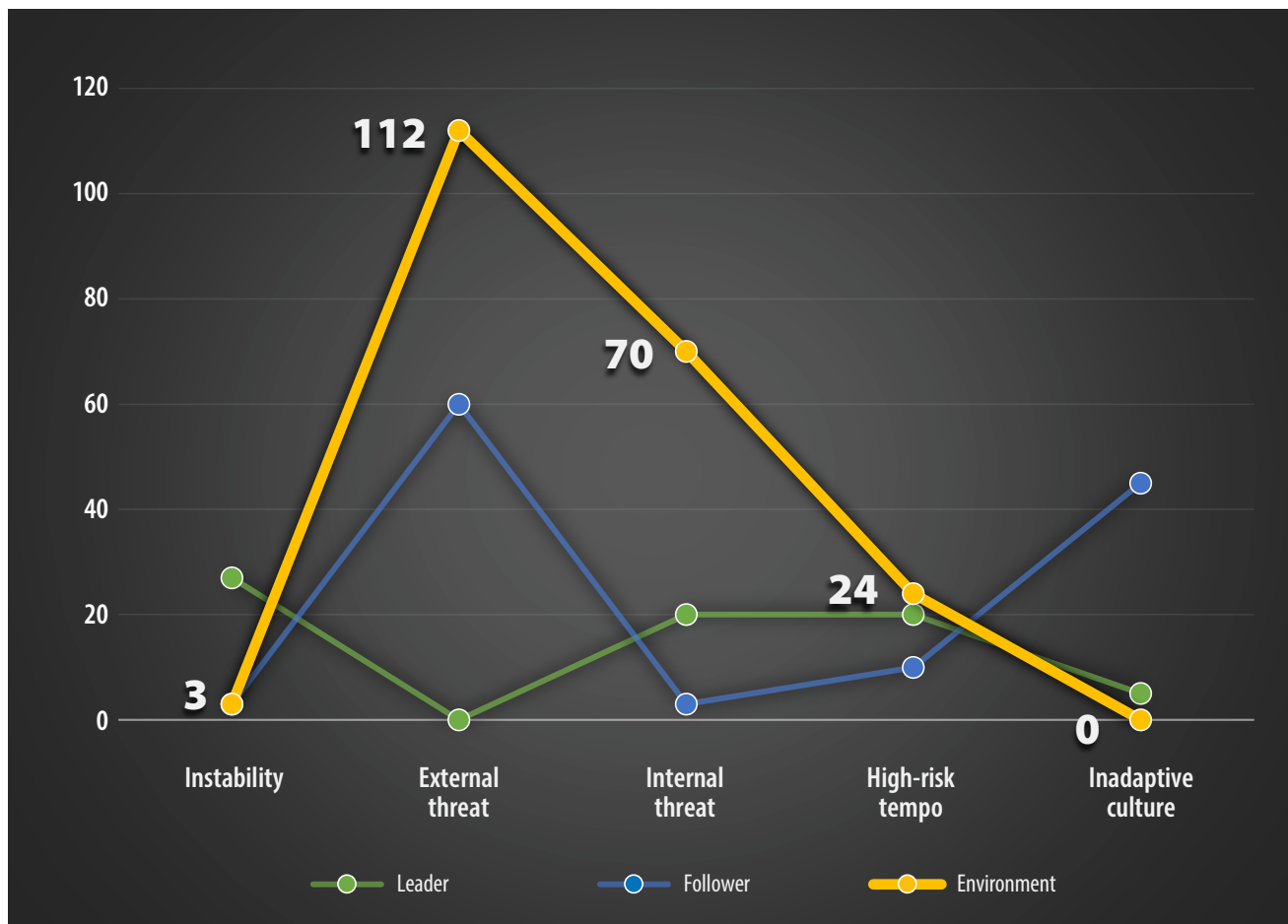
A Diagnostic Tool

When analyzing toxicity, it is useful to attempt to diagnose it. How does one take a systemic approach when trying to figure out where toxicity is coming from

and why? The literature does not identify a toxicity diagnostic tool a leader can use to help identify the source or to potentially identify red flags for each element of the leadership triad early enough to intervene and prevent the disintegration of a team. Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser’s toxic triangle offers a great start.

Data Collection

To answer the questions posed at the start of this article, I collected data from documentation evidence found in Jim Frederick’s *Black Hearts: One Platoon’s Descent into Madness in Iraq’s Triangle of Death*.³² The data was categorized based on Priori codes or toxic indicators. Using information from the literature review, I developed definitions and indicators for toxic behaviors for each element of the leadership triad (see figure 1, page 106;



(Figure by author)

Figure 3. Environment Data

figure 2, page 107; and figure 3).³³ I then used the case data to identify the frequency of toxic indicators for each element of the leadership triad.

I developed indicators to compare against the data in the case using the Army's definitions and associated behaviors for a counterproductive leader; Thomas, and Schyns, Wisse, and Sanders' descriptions of toxic follower behaviors and dark triad followers; and Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser's toxic triangle and other sources. I examined the data for the presence of all indicators and tallied the frequency of each (see figure 4, page 109).

Data Analysis

The study identified two leading causes of toxic followership in the Army. The first is *abusive and*

incompetent leadership. The actions of the leader can either mitigate toxic behavior in followers or aggravate them. Abusive or incompetent leader behaviors, in some instances, activate toxic follower behaviors.

The second cause is *external and internal environmental threats*. The environment, not bad leadership, proved to be the largest source of toxicity in this study and had the most substantial impact on follower toxicity. The unpredictability and constant presence of an external threat proved to be more than anyone could cope with and generated conditions for dark triad behaviors to surface.

Through the research, I observed that individuals are not easily categorized according to Kelley's and the U.S. Army's toxic leader or toxic follower typologies, respectively. A follower may demonstrate

alienated or sheep toxic behaviors, but the follower is not easily categorized as one or the other; however, their actions are. The focus on defining behaviors instead of defining individuals is crucial because behaviors can be modified.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to understand and describe the sources of follower toxicity. To accomplish this, I focused on describing sources of follower toxicity in Army organizations by examining leader, follower, and environmental toxicity to show how each element contributes to the phenomenon.

It is essential to recognize that toxicity is not something unique to leaders. The follower and environment play significant roles in contributing to

linked to the Army's leadership requirements model would help make an essential differentiation.

Future research could focus on the following areas:

- ◆ Defining followership within the context of the Army and reexamining the relationship between leaders and followers through the lens of followership theory
- ◆ Developing an Army followership requirements model that complements and links to the Army leadership requirements model
- ◆ Examining a differentiation between the leader and follower as roles and leadership and followership as behaviors both leaders and followers express
- ◆ Conducting a multiple-case study to confirm or deny the Priori codes identified in this study

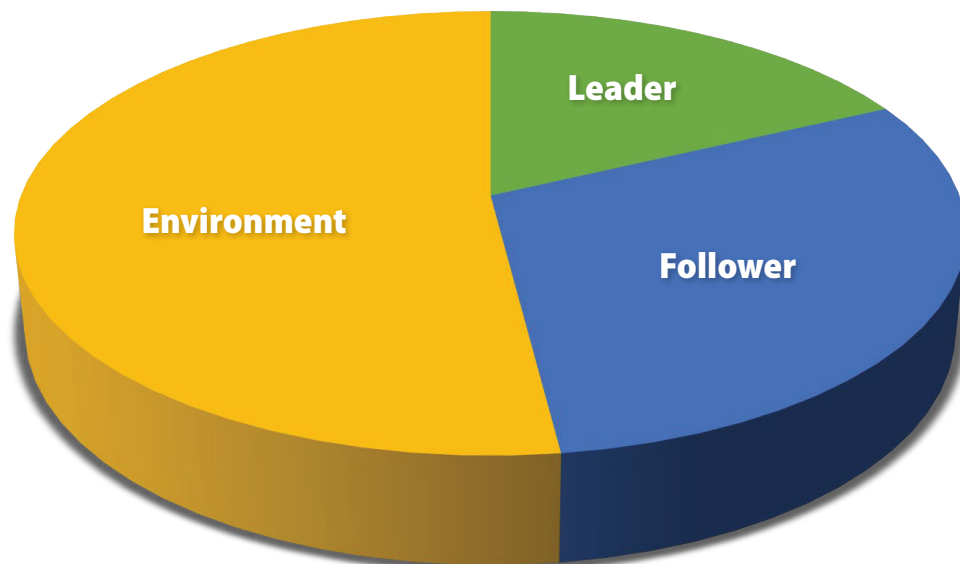
Army doctrine must expand beyond toxicity or counterproductive behaviors in leaders to include

followers and environmental factors. By focusing only on the leader, the Army misses an opportunity to attack toxicity from different angles, and a multipronged approach is more likely to have a more significant effect.

The study focused on each element of the leadership triad individually to identify sources of toxic followership. However, it became clear that all three aspects are inextricably linked, and this relational interplay is worthy of further examination. I found that toxicity is like a weed,

and if fed, the weed grows to strangle the organization. The weed feeds off toxic leader and follower behaviors and toxic environmental characteristics.

By understanding how leaders, followers, and the environment feed this weed, individuals at all levels can work to reduce toxicity, especially follower toxicity, in Army organizations. ■



(Figure by author)

Figure 4. Leadership Triad Contributions to Toxicity

organizational toxicity. Therefore, the Army should study followership and define the qualities of a good follower. ADP 6-22 states that “being an effective follower requires the same attributes and competencies required to be an effective leader”; this is not in line with followership theory.³⁴ A set of complementary attributes and competencies unique to followers but

Notes

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28. Blair and Bligh, "Looking for Leadership in All the Wrong Places."

29. Bjugstad et al., "A Fresh Look at Followership."

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31. Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser, "The Toxic Triangle."

32. Jim Frederick, *Black Hearts: One Platoon's Descent into Madness in Iraq's Triangle of Death* (New York: Crown/Archetype, 2010), 43.

33. Using information from the literature review, definitions and indicators were developed for toxic behaviors for each element of the leadership triad.

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The Ratification of the Treaty of Münster (1648), oil on copper, by Gerard ter Borch. The Peace of Westphalia was the result of two different treaties signed in 1648—one in Osnabrück and one in Münster—ending the Thirty Years' War and the Eighty Years' War. (Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Whose Rights Are They, Anyway?

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Modern international law came into existence at the end of the Thirty Years' War in Europe.¹ Horrified by the unprecedented

destruction of a series of wars over religion, European negotiators at Westphalia coined the phrase “*cuius regio, eius religio*.”² Literally translated, it means “whose



(Sources: Various German atlases and G. Duby, *Grand Atlas historique*, Paris, Larousse, 1997. © Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques [FNSP], or National Foundation of Political Sciences/Sciences Po, Cartography workshop, 2018. Map courtesy of Espace mondial, l'Atlas)

Europe after the Westphalia Treaties, 1648

Signed in 1648 by nearly all the European powers with the exception of England and Russia, the Westphalia treaties put an end to the Thirty Years' War between Protestants and Catholics. In addition to reshaping the territory of Europe, they laid the groundwork for the international system organized on the basis of sovereignty by virtue of which each political entity is recognized as being sovereign within its borders. This political model gave rise to the concept of the modern state, which holds the monopoly of legitimate violence over its territory and relies on a national army to ensure its border security.

realm, his religion." It could be loosely translated to mean, "No more interference in the internal affairs of other nations. We leave them alone and they leave us alone." The legal term for this principle is sovereignty, or the legal supremacy of a government over its actions and policies within its territory. As a practical matter, it meant that seventeenth-century governments in Europe were legally free to persecute their citizens for their religion without concern for international

repercussions. The goal of the Westphalia negotiators was to ensure that there would be no repeat of the Thirty Years' War or any similar struggle.

The principle of sovereignty would go completely unchallenged for over 250 years, until the end of the First World War. Before attending the peace conference at Versailles in 1919, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson delivered his "Fourteen Points" speech and revealed that the American negotiating position would

include demands that nation-states respect human rights and not use sovereignty as a shield for protecting their actions from scrutiny, criticism, or international action. Points ten to thirteen made Wilson's rejection of sovereignty plain:

X. The *peoples* of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the *freest opportunity to autonomous development*.

XI. Rumania [*sic*], Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and *international guarantees* of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

XII. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the *other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development*, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories *inhabited by indisputably Polish populations*, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity *should be guaranteed by international covenant*.³ (italics added)

Wilson was asserting the right of the international community to oversee the protection of the named ethnic groups from abuses, even from, or especially from, their own governments. While attractive as a principle, Wilson's concept of human rights possessed by groups set off a cycle of forced migrations, ethnic cleansing, and persecution that resulted in almost as many deaths in the two years after World War I as had occurred during the war's last two years.⁴ In a sense, the damage

Wilson wrought did not end there but simply went into abeyance to reemerge in the savage wars that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia. With all of the bloodletting in the immediate aftermath of Wilson's innovative international law proposal, it is not surprising that Europe soon insisted on a return of sovereign rights and the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of other nations.

The concept of state sovereignty, at least as established at Westphalia, had a short second career, however. The revelation of the Holocaust caused not only horror among Europeans at the end of the Second World War but also deep and abiding guilt. Rumors of death camps had emanated from Nazi-occupied Europe long before the end of the war. Irrefutable evidence of severe human rights abuses under the Nazis, the Italian fascists, and the Soviet communists, including other instances of mass murder, had appeared as early as the mid-1930s and had been almost completely ignored by Western leaders who used sovereignty as their excuse for inaction.⁵ A new dawn for human rights protection in international law appeared.

Human Rights Treaties

Among the first actions by diplomats in the aftermath of World War II were efforts to update and strengthen the Geneva Conventions, the first of which originally came into force in 1864.⁶ This first effort had asserted the rights of wounded soldiers. A subsequent convention, signed in 1929, had listed protections that had to be provided to prisoners of war.⁷ Both of these had been rudimentary attempts to use international law to protect human rights, and they were possible only because of their specificity.

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They protected individuals as part of narrowly defined groups under narrowly defined circumstances. Moreover, they were perceived as an elaboration of international law as it pertained to limits on warfare, which Europeans had accepted centuries before. Even this acceptance was based more on self-interest and the fear of retaliation for the mistreatment of wounded soldiers and/or prisoners of war than on a commitment to human rights *per se*.

Still, the Geneva Conventions established two radically new concepts for the international legal community. First, they were based on the principle that sovereign states were in fact answerable to the international community for actions taken against individuals. Up until that time, the only individual human beings protected by international law were diplomats and heads of state. Second, the concept of human rights was extended from the group rights asserted by Wilson at Versailles to the far more comprehensive concept of human rights for individual persons.

The Geneva Conventions were updated and strengthened after World War II, and two more conventions were added. A provision of the 1907 Hague Convention, guaranteeing protection for wounded sailors, was extended to all armed forces personnel on the seas. A vague mention of the rights of civilians in the Hague Convention became the Fourth Geneva Convention, “relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war.”⁸ Illustrative of the hesitation negotiators showed in embracing the concept of human rights, the Geneva protections still applied only to defined groups in defined circumstances.

The next major step toward an international human rights regime was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.⁹ The preamble called “recognition of the inherent dignity” a “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”¹⁰ It noted that “contempt for human rights [has] resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind” and later averred that human rights protection under the law “is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations.”¹¹ This last assertion significantly eroded the idea of sovereignty by linking human rights protection with peace, a belated admission that effective opposition to massive human rights abuses in Nazi Germany might have prevented World War II.

The Universal Declaration presented a long list of specific human rights, from freedom of speech to parental rights over their children’s education. However, it was a statement of principles passed by the United Nations General Assembly. As such, it was not legally binding on the signatories. Violators could be accused of hypocrisy but not of illegality. Even given the solely aspirational nature of the declaration, the prerogative of states to limit rights was also included. Article 29 notes, “Everyone has duties to the community,” and adds, “In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations *as are determined by law* solely for the purpose of ... meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society” (*italics added*).¹²

A government’s right to suspend rights was made much more explicit in the 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.¹³ Article 15, section 1, reads: “In time of war or other public emergency threatening the life of the nation any High Contracting Party may take measures derogating from its obligations under this Convention to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with its other obligations under international law.”¹⁴ The only rights that cannot be derogated are the rights to freedom from torture and slavery.

This section goes far toward negating the remainder of the treaty, and it certainly could not have given much comfort to enthusiasts for human rights at the time that it was signed. First, the treaty contains no definition of such key terms as “public emergency,” “threatening the life,” “exigencies,” or “strictly required.” A high contracting party is perfectly free to define such circumstances as broadly and as self-servingly as it wishes, subject only to the obligation that it “keep the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe fully informed of the measures which it has taken and the reasons therefor.”¹⁵ For that matter, even “war” is left undefined.

Second, the phrase “its obligations under this Convention” is seemingly innocuous but highly significant. The high contracting parties are legally permitted to enter into the treaty because they are sovereign states. As such, they have agreed to obligate themselves to respect and uphold the various rights listed in the treaty’s other articles, unless they invoke Article 15.



This language makes it plain that as sovereign states, they are the original and natural “owners” of the rights listed, and these rights are granted to citizens by the sovereign state. Thus, as rights granted by a state, they can be taken back by the state.

This concept of human rights is the opposite of the concept contained in the U.S. Bill of Rights. The first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution make it plain that the government of the United States is obligated to recognize, respect, and uphold rights such as freedom of speech and religion that the citizens already have and that they had, as human beings, before the Constitution was written or amended. The Declaration of Independence had stated the principle even more clearly, noting that human beings are endowed with rights “by their Creator.”¹⁶ One of the central arguments against including the provisions of the Bill of Rights in the original document was the prevailing view among the delegates to the Constitutional Convention that no reasonable person could fear that the American government would ever doubt the inherent nature of the rights listed in the Bill of Rights. Even if some future government did fail to acknowledge them, a second American Revolution would quickly follow.

After fleeing turbulence in the Ottoman Empire, Armenian and Syrian refugees wait in quarantine between 1917 and 1919 at an American Red Cross camp outside Jerusalem. (Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)

The great majority of global human rights treaties reverse the Constitution’s concept of the origin and “ownership” of human rights. The European Convention, for example, begins with, “[t]he High Contracting Parties shall secure to everyone within their jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined in Section I of this Convention.”¹⁷ Article 2 provides that “everyone’s right to life shall be protected by law,” but it does not comment on the origin of that right, and the phrasing makes it plain that neither the right to life nor any other right can be considered “unalienable.”¹⁸ Article 2 also grants exceptions to the right to life for the death penalty, for deaths incurred while making arrests or preventing escapes, or due to “action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.”¹⁹

The 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees seemingly protects stateless persons from

discrimination, saying in Article 4 that “[t]he Contracting States shall accord to refugees within their territories treatment at least as favorable as that accorded to their nationals with respect to freedom to practice their religion.”²⁰

But the same document stipulates in Article 9 that nothing in this Convention shall prevent a Contracting State, in time of war or other grave and exceptional circumstances, from taking measures which it considered to be essential to the national security in the case of a particular person, pending a determination by the Contracting State that that person is in fact a refugee and that the continuance of such measures is necessary in his case in the interests of national security.²¹

Once again, the apparent “rights” of refugees originate with the state and can be discontinued by the state.

The 1965 European Social Charter significantly expands the number of rights granted to citizens, including economic and financial rights as the right to “just conditions of work,” the right to vocational guidance, the right to social security, and the right to organize, among others. However, Article 30 repeats almost verbatim the language of the European Convention:

In time of war or other public emergency threatening the life of the nation any Contracting Party may take measures derogating from its obligations under this Charter to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with its other obligations under international law.²²

Again, the only accompanying obligation for the contracting parties is to keep the Council of Europe informed.

Other regional human rights treaties are equally vague on the origin of human rights. The 1969 American Convention on Human Rights, also known as the San José Pact, begins by “recognizing that the essential rights of man are not derived from one’s being a national of a certain state, but are based upon attributes of the human personality.”²³ This perambulatory clause was included at the insistence of U.S. representatives. But the pact still gives governments wide latitude in deciding when human rights can be “suspended,” a provision that reverts ownership of human rights to the nation-state. Article 27 states: “In time of war, public danger, or other emergency that threatens the

independence or security of a State Party, it may take measures derogating from its obligations under the present Convention to the extent and for the period of time strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with its other obligations under international law.”²⁴

The following section of Article 27 stipulates that even in times of “public danger or other emergency” the state may not suspend the right to a juridical personality, the right to life, the right to humane treatment, the right to a name, the right to nationality, and the right to participate in government. Under the same article, governments may not suppress freedom from slavery, impose *ex post facto* laws, or interfere with freedom of conscience and religion.

While this part of the San José Pact seems to protect a number of individual rights, even during a crisis, other documents seriously undermine the reality of that protection. The Charter of the Organization of American States, for example, prohibits nations from taking any action against a state that violates human rights. Article 15 of the charter, for example, contains unusually airtight language: “No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, *for any reason whatever*, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. The foregoing principle prohibits not only armed force but also any other form of interference or attempted threat against the personality of the State or against its political, economic, and cultural elements” (*italics added*).²⁵

Article 17 is even more comprehensive: “The territory of a State is inviolable; it may not be the object, even temporarily, of military occupation or of other measures of force taken by another State, directly or indirectly, *on any grounds whatever*. No territorial acquisitions or special advantages obtained either by force or by other means of coercion shall be recognized” (*italics added*).²⁶ Given these provisions, which were not superseded by the San José Pact, it is difficult to see what recourse an individual has if his or her rights are violated. The rights of the nation-states to internal sovereignty receive much better legal protection.

The 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights added a new dimension to the international law of human rights. It expanded the concept of rights to cover not only individual human beings but also groups of human beings.²⁷ While originally written

to protect the autonomy of ethnic and tribal groups in Africa, the language of the charter provides little comfort to those committed to the idea of inherent and unalienable human rights.

The African Charter contains an initially impressive list of individual human rights, including freedom of movement, the right to an education, the right to

[their] physical and intellectual abilities at its service,” to “preserve and strengthen social and national solidarity,” and to “contribute to the best of his abilities, at all times and at all levels, to the promotion and achievement of African unity.”³⁴ While the rights of individuals are balanced with purported duties, the rights of peoples are subject to no such restrictions.

“Even in times of ‘public danger or other emergency’ the state may not suspend the right to a juridical personality, the right to life, the right to humane treatment, the right to a name, the right to nationality, and the right to participate in government.”

“enjoy the best attainable state of physical and mental health,” the right to medical attention, and the right to “freely take part, in the cultural life of his community.”²⁸ However, the document is replete with assertions of the rights of states to make laws limiting rights. A guarantee of the right to liberty, for example, makes an exception for “reasons and conditions previously laid down by law.”²⁹ Other articles contain similar language: Article 8, “subject to law and order”; Article 9, “within the law”; Article 10, “provided he abides by the law”; Article 11, “restrictions provided for by law”; and Article 12, “in accordance with the law.”³⁰

When the charter switches from individual rights to peoples’ rights, however, such restricting language disappears. Article 19, for example, states, “Nothing shall justify the domination of a people by another.”³¹ No provision of law serves as an exception or justification. Article 20 uses words to describe peoples’ rights omitted in the articles on individual rights: “All peoples shall have the right to existence. They shall have the unquestionable and inalienable right to self-determination.”³²

Individual human rights are also limited by another innovation in the African Charter, a chapter devoted to duties. Article 27 warns that “the rights and freedoms of each individual shall be exercised with due regard to the rights of others, collective security, morality and common interest.”³³ Article 29 asserts the duty of individuals “to serve [their] national community by placing

Constructing Rights at Home and Abroad

Who then may vindicate the right to existence? In response, who defends the duty of security? As the international treaty context illuminates, how governing authority defines a right—collective or individual—informs the availability of a route and a remedy. In application, each approach poses unique challenges. Group rights may present unstructured overbreadth while simultaneously failing to deliver a concrete means of redress or a practical acknowledgment of sovereignty; individual rights may narrowly circumscribe both rights and sovereignty, generating conflict and strangling both in exceptions and duties. Conscious of these limitations, the international context highlights similarities and distinctions domestically, illuminating unique U.S. challenges to the future of defining the relationship between human rights and national sovereignty.

Constitutional Commitment to Individual Rights

Despite leading with a rhetorical acknowledgment of “We, the People,” the U.S. Constitution begins and ends its collective concepts there, with few exceptions. Distinct from the African Charter’s articulation of both individual rights and peoples’ rights, the closest operative constitutional parallel is the distinction between person and citizen; in either case, a singular



Endorois people celebrate the return to their land 18 May 2011 at Lake Bogoria National Reserve in the Great Rift Valley of Kenya. In the 1970s, hundreds of Endorois families were evicted from their traditional lands to create a wildlife reserve. (Photo by Denis Huot, Hemis via Alamy Stock Photo)

construction. In text and practice, an individual rights approach permeates American legal history. Particularly consistent through Chief Justice John Roberts' era, since 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court's interest in the structural and institutional value of an individual rights paradigm remains at the forefront of its interpretations.

The court's historic interpretation of constitutional rights and remedies begins from a practical and procedural support of individual rights. Article III of the Constitution establishes the judicial branch, limiting the Supreme Court's authority to preside over "cases" and "controversies." This core of the American adversarial process requires an aggrieved party to assert an individualized injury to sustain a reviewable case. In *Marbury v. Madison*, the Supreme Court first articulated the role of judicial review in relation to a private, individual right of action.³⁵ There, the court also carved out an exception for political issues that the judiciary lacks authority to interpret, excluding the political functions of other branches from judicial review. Further defining this principle, Supreme Court cases limit the ability to claim a right and pursue an action, absent a "concrete and particularized" injury that is "actual or imminent, not

conjectural or hypothetical" for which a judicial remedy is possible.³⁶ These individualized elements form the threshold doctrine of standing. Absent these elements, the American legal system is not empowered to consider violations of substantive rights in any form. Standing criteria are inherently individual and cannot be easily satisfied by collective generalizations. As such, the American judicial system's adjudication of all rights constitutionally begins from an individual paradigm.

Illustrating the specificity required by this individual rights approach, domestic courts routinely reject cases absent an actualized, articulated injury that produces standing. In *Clapper v. Amnesty International USA*, the Supreme Court rejected a form of collective rights strategy from a coalition of petitioners challenging the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Amendments Act of 2008 to the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act.³⁷

There, legal challengers were “attorneys and human rights, labor, legal, and media organizations whose work allegedly require[d] them to engage in sensitive and sometimes privileged telephone and e-mail communications with colleagues, clients, sources, and other individuals” under threat of government surveillance.³⁸ The court’s majority rejected its alleged injury of suspected surveillance and costs to avoid it as insufficient, nonspecific, and ineffective to confer individualized standing on the group. The rejection reversed a 2011 court of appeals decision in 2013. Consistent with an individual rights framework, the court requires specific allegations of a concrete injury; cumulative concern or speculation will not suffice. Significantly, the majority, including Roberts, asserts that this structural demand is fundamental to American government.³⁹

By comparison, the African Charter contemplates a broad range of possible petitioners and relationships to the ultimate remedy. From individuals and nations to nongovernmental organizations asserting rights on behalf of people or groups, this range of potential parties sharply contrasts the strict individual rights paradigm memorialized in U.S. standing limits. In *Centre for Minority Rights Development (Kenya) and Minority Rights Group International on behalf of Endorois Welfare Council v. Kenya*, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights applied the African Charter’s group provisions to define rights and remedies due the Endorois people, the vehicle for those claims was a case initiated by a nongovernmental organization on behalf of an unrelated group of persons.⁴⁰ Therein, the commission acknowledged the “debate” engendered by attempts to define peoples and indigenous populations, ultimately finding in favor of the nongovernmental organization, and by extension the land rights of the Endorois community. This expansive, unmanageable breadth of rights, through a collective approach, is not without consequence. While ultimately finding that Kenya violated provisions of the African Charter with respect to the indigenous group, the 2003 complaint was not adjudicated until the commission’s 2010 order. The attenuation between these dates for a single adjudication is not surprising; in a collective rights context, concrete specificity and practicality are necessary trades for this breadth.

Beyond the procedural threshold of standing and who can assert a claim, the Roberts Court has

overwhelmingly approached substantive constitutional interpretation from an individual rights perspective.⁴¹ In rejecting a collective rights approach to the Second Amendment, the Supreme Court reiterated its commitment to an individual rights framework in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, reasoning,

Three provisions of the Constitution refer to “the people” in a context other than “rights”—the famous preamble (“We the people”), § 2 of Article I (providing that “the people” will choose members of the House), and the Tenth Amendment (providing that those powers not given the Federal Government remain with “the States” or “the people”). Those provisions arguably refer to “the people” acting collectively—but they deal with the exercise or reservation of powers, not rights. Nowhere else in the Constitution does a “right” attributed to “the people” refer to anything other than an individual right.⁴²

Rejecting Washington, D.C., handgun legislation as unconstitutional, the majority reasoned that the Second Amendment “unambiguously” protects “individual rights,” not “collective rights,” in the same way individual rights and remedies are secured by the First, Fourth, and Ninth Amendments.⁴³ Dismissing the appearance of *people* and *militia* in the text of the Second Amendment, the court’s majority steadfastly and unsurprisingly maintained that this language can only create an individual right in practice. The court holds that the alternative, in a system designed for individual rights claims, would be no right at all.

As to both the procedure and substance of domestic legal interpretation, the Roberts Court remains consistently committed to a specific, individual rights framework of constitutional interpretation.

Individual Rights and National Security

In the international context, such as Article 27 of the African Charter, duties curtail and balance individual rights, while collective rights may escape this conflict analysis entirely. If the international context is instructive, the Roberts Court’s commitment to defining individual rights domestically can expectedly about government duties and limitations. Such contexts may require balancing state interests like sovereignty,



or carving more precise duties from the individual rights framework. The uncharted territory of domestic individual rights is at their intersection with government duties and interests. Examples of this intersection in the context of national security and detention are illustrative of this point.

Internationally, government laws and duties necessarily intersect with individual rights frameworks;

however, this is not a reason to abandon the individual rights paradigm in favor of a broad group construction. In *Good v. Botswana*, the African Commission applied an individual rights framework to reach a tailored remedy in a fraction of the time the commission required to navigate complex, attenuated collective rights assertions.⁴⁴ There, Botswana's President Festus Mogae ordered the deportation of Professor Kenneth Good,



an Australian national who published critical writings on government policy. Botswana's domestic courts promptly dismissed Good's appeal of the unreviewable executive order, resulting in Good's removal on fifty-six hours' notice and prompting his action

enduring institutional benefit of a specific individual rights paradigm. For example, in the 2004 and 2008 court decisions of *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld* and *Boumediene v. Bush*, the Supreme Court employed an individual rights approach to find that Guantanamo Bay detainees

“From national security and foreign affairs to migration, government duties in both the domestic and international context pose conflicts and overlap systems of individual rights.”

before the African Commission. Applying Articles 7 and 12(4) of the African Charter, the commission rejected Botswana's assertion that executive action evades all procedural processes under a sweeping national security justification.

In response, the commission intentionally reinforced the symbiotic relationship between a specific individual right and a robust acknowledgment of local laws and duties.⁴⁵ The commission effectively reasons that both are best served by centering adjudication in a specific, predictable system. To achieve this balance, the commission found in Good's favor but only to the extent that deportations must be executed within the specific, predictable, lawful process of the state, which included due process notice and the opportunity to be heard. In this holding, the individual rights system not only coexists with but also significantly reinforces the central importance of domestic law and institutions. Far from abandoning national institutions or denying an interest in national security and sovereignty, only a specific, individual rights paradigm aims to balance these coextensive realities in practice.

Likewise, the Roberts Court's approach to national security, foreign affairs, and detention cases articulates specific, individual rights balanced by government duties with an emphasis on institutional process. Mirroring the African Commission's individual rights reasoning in *Good*, the Supreme Court considers the

possess the individual right to habeas corpus.⁴⁶ Literally translated, “produce the body,” the right and remedy of habeas corpus petitions is limited to appearing before a judicial arbiter and receiving notice of the reason for detention. Much like *Good*, the Supreme Court considers singular habeas corpus challenges within the context of existing domestic law and institutions.

Since *Boumediene*, the Supreme Court has declined to certify many unanswered questions of national security, instead making district courts of appeal the final arbiter in the balance of rights, duties, and American institutional integrity. In applying the Roberts Court's precedent, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia employed an individual rights approach in *Al-Aulaqi v. Obama* and found the balance of state sovereignty weighed in favor of American political institutions. There, the district court rejected a petitioner's claims that U.S. officials unlawfully authorized the targeted killing of his son, a dual U.S.-Yemeni citizen in Yemen, who had alleged ties to al-Qaida. In a ruling consistent with the Roberts Court's balance of individual rights, the district court acknowledged both substantive and procedural arguments, declining to reach the merits of the claims, and instead focused on the procedural limits of government duties, relying on both the political question doctrine and standing:

Whether the alleged “terrorist activities” of an individual so threaten the national

Previous page: A Turkish soldier stands guard 21 September 2014 with several hundred Syrian refugees at a border crossing in Suruc, Turkey. Turkey opened its border to allow in up to sixty thousand people who massed on the Turkey-Syria border, fleeing the Islamic militants' advance on Kobani. (Photo by Burhan Ozbilici, Associated Press)

security of the United States as to warrant that military action be taken against that individual is a “political judgment[] ... [which] belong[s] in the domain of political power not subject to judicial intrusion or inquiry.” ... Because decision-making in the realm of military and foreign affairs is textually committed to the political branches, and because courts are functionally ill equipped to make the types of complex policy judgments that would be required to adjudicate the merits of plaintiff’s claims, the Court finds that the political question doctrine bars judicial resolution of this case.⁴⁷

The district court further considers the structural endurance of the American judicial system in declining to extend a limited and disfavored concept of “third party” standing for the parent of an adult child, absent an injury that “affect[s] the plaintiff in a personal and individual way.”⁴⁸ The dismissal is not a rejection of the individual rights paradigm; it is consistent with a specific exception for government duties.

In this narrow construction, the district court in *Al-Aulaqi* reaches the opposite decision of *Good* for the same reasons. In *Good*, the injury of deportation existed within national borders, subject to domestic laws and institutional process, while in *Al-Aulaqi*, the injury existed extraterritorially. Whereas a group rights approach overlooks the nuances of place, state sovereignty, domestic law, and institutional limitations, an individual rights paradigm in both cases allows for these considerations. Both cases balance individual rights in this way, preserving the centrality of domestic institutions at home and abroad.

The Domestic Future of Rights

With the addition of three justices under the Trump administration, a newly constructed Roberts Court has a host of challenges on the horizon to its individual rights framework. From national security and foreign affairs to migration, government duties in both the domestic and international context pose conflicts and overlap systems of individual rights. When confronted with such conflicts, one approach may be to loosen the Roberts Court’s commitment to individual rights by exploring a collective rights

approach. This argument obviates the need to confront these challenges directly, and keeps with the trajectory of international human rights treaties. However, the group rights paradigm runs counter to constitutional principles and presents an unchecked and unmanageable alternative that the Roberts Court has consistently opposed.

This landscape faces the newly constructed Roberts Court. When it does, in a departure from international trends, the court likely will continue to favor the specificity of an individual rights approach and its institutionalist motivations. The Supreme Court’s commitment to an individual rights framework will likely be tested in the near future. Three pending cases, in different procedural postures, including recently petitioning the Supreme Court, are presently before the D.C. federal courts; all consider whether individual due process rights inure to Guantanamo Bay detainees.⁴⁹ This specific, individual right is not yet defined with respect to government duties through the Supreme Court’s habeas corpus rulings. While undecided at present, the Roberts Court’s construction of a specific individual rights paradigm, as applied to those national security and detention cases, almost certainly foreshadows a similar outcome. Using the framework discussed herein, if certiorari is granted, the court is likely to approach *Ali v. Trump*, *Al Hela v. Trump*, and *Nasser v. Trump* with the same institutionalist individual rights analysis.⁵⁰ Predictably, the court will measure and temper its individual rights grant with the government duties and sovereign interests presented.

Ultimately, the Roberts Court is unlikely to deconstruct its own scaffolding of a specific individual rights system. Instead, the examples discussed in this article prove significant. While individual rights constructions may abut government decision-making, the Supreme Court will nonetheless stay the course and center specificity and process in its balance. Far from eroding respect for law, an individual rights paradigm centers institutional endurance. Informed by this greater context, an institutionalist Supreme Court will continue to advance an individual rights framework as it navigates new factual controversies. The Supreme Court’s domestic answer to the question, “Whose rights?” for now sounds like “Maybe yours, maybe mine, but definitely not ours.” ■

Notes

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Latvian Zemessardze, or National Guard, soldiers prepare to attack during a small-unit tactics exercise 7 June 2020 during implementation of the Resistance Operating Concept with NATO allies and partners near Iecava, Latvia. The Zemessardze are an all-volunteer force charged with protecting the Latvian homeland. Some units are mentored by U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Special Operations Command, Europe)

Survival in the Russian Occupied Zone

Command and Organization in Resistance Underground Operations

Col. Kevin D. Stringer, PhD, U.S. Army Reserve

With renewed U.S. national security focus on great-power conflict and competition, specifically with peer competitors China and Russia, a comprehensive understanding of unconventional warfare and related resistance operations becomes a significant objective for U.S. special operations forces (SOF) and the broader conventional land component. The U.S. Department of Defense explains a resistance movement as “an organized effort by some portion of the civil population of a country to resist the legally established government or an occupying power and to disrupt civil order and stability.”¹ A recent definition in the joint Swedish Defence University/U.S. Special Operations Command Europe *Resistance Operating Concept* offers a slightly different characterization for legitimate governments aiming to restore their sovereignty. The *Resistance Operating Concept* describes resistance as “a nation’s organized, whole-of-society effort, encompassing the full range of activities from nonviolent to violent, led by a legally established government (potentially exiled/displaced or shadow) to reestablish independence and autonomy within its sovereign territory that has been wholly or partially occupied by a foreign power.”² Using the Swedish variant for this article, resistance capabilities provide a sovereign nation an additional element of national defense that contributes to deterrence against an adversary, imposes real costs on an occupier, and sets conditions for the liberation of occupied national territory. A strategy of resistance coupled with conventional military forces can make a nation “indigestible” in the face of an occupation.³ A significant component for successful resistance operations is a survivable and sustainable stay-behind underground network.

While underground or stay-behind resistance networks are important considerations in all theaters, the European theater, with relevant European historical examples, demonstrates the need for a threatened state to articulate a clear national purpose for its stay-behind organization and establish a structured clandestine cellular network for the survivable core of its resistance effort. Russian forces or proxies currently occupy portions of sovereign Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, and the threat of Russian aggression and the resulting partial occupation of territory is a real concern for any state bordering Russia. For such countries, prudent national security measures require that resistance operations be integrated into national defense planning.

A better understanding of resistance activities will assist U.S. SOF and the U.S. Army in effectively supporting threatened allies and partners against peer adversaries. Particularly for the U.S. Army, this knowledge will aid in planning for liaison and synchronization activities with allied resistance underground networks to achieve campaign and liberation objectives.

Resistance Components and the Underground or Stay-Behind Network

According to U.S. doctrine, “the primary components of the resistance model are the underground, the guerrilla or armed force, the auxiliary support to the underground and guerrilla or armed force, and the public component.”⁴ While all resistance actors are equally important and should be planned for, there is no neat division between these components.⁵ Although each can operate with a mixture of clandestine, low-visibility, covert, and overt actions given this inherent fluidity, this article concentrates on the underground due to its centrality when occupier repression is extreme.⁶ This emphasis supports the assumption that in any occupation scenario, Russia will have an extremely capable repressive apparatus to include advanced network penetration capabilities.⁷ Additionally, the underground is probably the least understood or recognized element by the current U.S. SOF and Army communities.

The underground is “a cellular covert element within unconventional warfare that is compartmentalized and conducts covert or clandestine activities in areas normally denied to the auxiliary and the guerrilla force.”⁸ The underground aligns closely with the concept of a stay-behind organization as promulgated in the historical examples to be examined. While U.S. doctrine discusses a broad stay-behind resistance operation as “an operation in which indigenous authorities leave personnel and resources in position before, during, and after a foreign occupation to conduct anticipated resistance activities against the occupying power,” a more narrow European perspective promulgates that “stay behind organizations are secret networks organized by a state in preparedness for resistance activities during an eventual enemy occupation.”⁹ Like an underground, these networks are responsible for the overall command and control (C2) of a resistance under national government control.¹⁰ According to a joint special operations report, “The main

purpose of this organizational form is long-term survival in order for the movement to reach its desired political end state.”¹¹ These networks are not guerrilla or auxiliary formations but clandestine cellular entities that would form the fluid and survivable leadership core for the other elements of resistance in an occupied zone, especially in the Baltic, Balkan, and Nordic regions.

The National Political Objective and the Command-and-Control Conundrum in Resistance Operations

Already a challenge in conventional military operations, C2 of resistance elements by national authorities in occupied territory takes on added complexity. Not only is national governance potentially dispersed between a government-in-exile, a local administration under occupation, and a shadow government, but a plethora of friendly armed formations can exist simultaneously in an enemy occupied zone—residual conventional armed forces, special operations forces, territorial defense units, police, volunteer civilian groups, and even allied military teams. To master this situation, a national authority must provide guidance on the objective of the overall resistance and decide on the right balance between centralized and decentralized C2 for its stay-behind underground network.

Since resistance is ultimately a political activity, for nations vulnerable to Russian occupation, the common political objective is undoubtedly the restoration of the status quo antebellum; that is, the reinstatement of the legitimate government with all its previously attendant powers and full sovereignty over the entirety of its national territory.¹² Yet resistance alone cannot free a country. Historical examples make the strong empirical case that external intervention is necessary for liberation. This necessity implies that the resistance underground for any country occupied by Russian elements must survive long enough for NATO or coalition forces to mount a response.

For a typical resistance organization, a state will have to leverage different degrees of centralization/decentralization depending on the level involved. While a centralized C2 allows greater operational control, provides better coordination across dispersed elements, and increases alignment with pre-occupation national legal and policy frameworks for legitimacy, its construct creates high vulnerability. Adversary infiltration is the bane of any

resistance movement. The adept opponent can infiltrate an overly centralized organization, map its network, and in time, destroy it. Conversely, a decentralized approach places authority and accountability, within predetermined guidance, at the local resistance commander level. With proper compartmentalization, this decentralized organizational structure hardens the underground and other resistance components against adversarial penetration and allows rapid adaptation to dynamic local conditions. The disadvantage is that resistance elements are dispersed, and national leaders, potentially in exile, cannot mass capabilities or exercise governance on resistance forces for effect. Also, there is the risk that isolated resistance units exceed authorities or pursue their own objectives. Decentralization further requires a mission command ethos and maturity among subordinate resistance leaders who both understand and can execute the intent of their governmental authorities.¹³

Nevertheless, U.S. doctrine has historically favored decentralized command, and, in the case of compartmented stay-behind organizations, decentralization seems to be best practice since this arrangement provides the highest degree of security.¹⁴ This C2 exploration is relevant since a distinguished unconventional warfare expert, Derek Jones, noted that theories and postulations about effective resistance organizations without leadership are based on social movement theories that are not applicable in the real world, especially against highly capable state adversaries. He argues that a certain level of centralized leadership is necessary to develop an effective strategy and to articulate a common vision.¹⁵ His perspective is reinforced by the study

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Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare, which states that an effective underground needs concerted action from a centralized but protected command, while keeping its activities decentralized for security reasons.¹⁶ In the case of those countries threatened by Russia such as the Baltic or Nordic countries, the stay-behind underground network has to find the appropriate C2 balance for survival while maintaining pressure on the occupier and setting conditions for intervening forces to liberate the occupied territory. For this objective, the underground must be clandestine and cellular but with a degree of centralized control.

view to external support and intervention. Subsequent Cold War initiatives by the Swiss, Dutch, and Norwegian governments demonstrate the potential value of cadre-based clandestine cellular stay-behind underground formations to reduce vulnerability to adversary infiltration while maintaining national control.

The Estonian Experience in the 1940s

In June 1940, the Soviet Union occupied and annexed Estonia as part of the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that divided Eastern Europe into German and



The exiled Polish government meets in 1943 in London. Governments-in-exile can provide a sense of continuity in legitimate national authority and national identity, challenging those imposed by occupation forces. They must provide guidance on overall resistance efforts and decide on the right balance between centralized and decentralized command and control for their stay-behind underground networks. (Photo reproduction by Marek Skorupski, FORUM Polish Photographers Agency via Alamy Stock Photo)

Several historical examples help to frame a possible approach. First, the Estonian Forest Brothers experiences in both the 1941 Summer War and the subsequent post-World War II resistance period (1947–1950) reflect the challenge of balancing this centralization versus decentralization conundrum as well as having a realistic

Soviet spheres of influence. Estonians began a variety of resistance activities, and those fleeing into the countryside from Soviet internal security forces became the foundation for Forest Brothers resistance groups. These bands lacked a guiding central authority and an overall command structure, leading to weaknesses in

coordination, logistics, information sharing, and unity of purpose. Yet, this decentralized structure created ambiguity and provided a natural compartmentalization, making Soviet counterresistance efforts more difficult.¹⁷ Nevertheless, with no national guidance and no hope for an external intervention, these bands could not achieve the political goal to restore Estonian national sovereign-

ty, hence their structures only contributed to survival. was the German occupation legacy of World War II, the Soviet annihilation of the Estonian and other resistance movements in Eastern Europe, and recurring Soviet aggression. This latter belligerence was manifested by the suppression of the 1956 Hungarian uprising, the 1968 Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia, the 1979 Soviet assault on Afghanistan, and the 1981 martial law



Resistance alone cannot free a country. Historical examples make the strong empirical case that external intervention is necessary for liberation.



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When the Soviets returned in 1944 and reoccupied Estonia, the post-World War II Forest Brothers' movement faced the organizational dilemma of deciding between establishing a centralized or a decentralized C2 arrangement. Interestingly, Richard Saaliste, one of the prominent Forest Brothers leaders, rejected alignment with the already formed Estonian Armed Resistance Union based on its conventional organizational structure, which he viewed as premature without the prospect of Western armed intervention.¹⁸ The former condition was never met, and subsequently, Soviet internal security forces exposed the network that resulted in the destruction of the Armed Resistance Union. Saaliste instead chose a decentralized Forest Brothers organization, cellular in structure to longer endure Soviet repression, but in the end, his group also succumbed.¹⁹

A major problem for his organization was the viability of armed resistance in the absence of foreign intervention. Despite the failures of the Estonian resistance in both these periods, this vignette demonstrates the critical importance of the correct C2 and organizational design for a survivable resistance organization, especially an underground, to ensure its survivability until Allied intervention occurs.

Cold War Stay-Behind Organizations

The Cold War spawned several concepts for resistance, chief of which was the clandestine cellular stay-behind network. The impetus for these formations

crackdown in Poland.²⁰ Three countries—Switzerland, Netherlands, and Norway—provide valuable insights into these Cold War organizations.

Switzerland

In 1979, the Swiss government established the P-26 organization from a predecessor formation. As explained in the article “Building a Stay-Behind Resistance Organization: The Case of Cold War Switzerland Against the Soviet Union,”

Defense planners conceived of P-26 as a top-down, cadre-led structure rather than a broad, decentralized civilian resistance movement The government tasked P-26 with recruiting and training core personnel who could continue the fight after an occupation. The P-26 organized into three levels. The P-26 command staff consisted mainly of senior military officials on civilian contracts or secondment. On the second and core level, the cadre organization formed the secretive and well-trained nucleus of the resistance underground. This formation possessed a decentralized organizational model based upon the development of distributed clandestine cells. The third level would only have been recruited by the cadre organization if Switzerland had come under foreign occupation.²¹

As the foundation for an underground, the P-26 organized as a cadre-based clandestine cellular network, directed by the national government but hidden

by a front company and recruited from unobtrusive members of the population with no or limited ties to the military or police. P-26 was not a military unit but a Ministry of Defense civilian entity.²² Although not tested during the Cold War, the P-26 achieved a high degree of secrecy and security throughout its existence—it remained unknown within a democratic society for over a decade and its membership remains partially obscured even today. While this level of security is laudable, this situation is not comparable to the repressive environment existing during an actual occupation against a motivated occupier.

The Netherlands

Similarly, for more than forty-five years, the Dutch government maintained a stay-behind capacity derived from its World War II experience and the perceived Soviet threat. Originally, two initiatives emerged—the first designed for intelligence collection and the second to provide the nucleus for civil resistance in an occupied Netherlands.²³ Given coordination issues and friction between the two formations, the Dutch government amalgamated them and mandated a combined organization with an intelligence collection assignment and a psychological warfare mission to support the morale of the population in occupied territory. Structurally and like the Swiss, the Dutch stay-behind formation used a cadre-based clandestine cellular network design that could then set up a larger field organization in wartime. Under this construct, by 1990, the Dutch had a framework of sixty regions, managed by a thirty-person staff, with twenty-three regions assigned intelligence tasks.²⁴ Similar to the Swiss case, the Dutch achieved organizational secrecy during a peacetime environment through a compartmentalized network approach while maintaining effective governmental control. The Dutch underground arrangement was also not tried by actual occupation.

Norway

Given Norway's unique geopolitical position adjacent to the Soviet Union, already in 1945, Defence Minister Jens Christian Hauge expressed the need for a resistance network in the case of future enemy occupation.²⁵ Organized under the Norwegian Intelligence Service, the stay-behind network would conduct

both intelligence and sabotage operations against the Soviets. In 1952, Vilhelm Evang, head of the Norwegian Intelligence Service, articulated that “Stay Behind was first and foremost an instrument at the disposal of national governments wherever they might happen to be, and that its primary task was to form the nucleus for the recapture of temporarily lost areas.”²⁶ Like the Swiss and the Dutch, the Norwegian stay-behind element was a cadre organization during peacetime. It operated in all relevant districts. For example, the secret organization Rocambole, established from earlier stay-behind formations, consisted of fifteen five-man groups. These teams were organized as cadre, with only the leadership receiving training in peacetime and other members nominated but dormant until crisis. Once the Soviets occupied Norwegian territory, the established skeleton would expand to a much larger clandestine cellular network.²⁷ For almost five decades, this Cold War stay-behind network maintained a high degree of security, secrecy, and compartmentalization within a democratic society while remaining under positive government control.²⁸ It too was never tested in the crucible of occupation.

In retrospect, these three historical cases from the Cold War provide credible reasons to evaluate a cadre-based clandestine cellular network as the design of choice for a planned stay-behind organization within a national defense plan. This arrangement allows for state directed planning and preparation in peacetime while providing a potentially survivable and sustainable construct in an occupation scenario. Additionally, with a carefully orchestrated information release, public knowledge of such planning can contribute to deterrence and impact adversary risk calculations.

Challenges and Open Issues

While a hierarchically directed clandestine cellular network may be the best C2 arrangement for underground resistance operations as part of precrisis national defense planning against a foe with extreme repressive capabilities, network vulnerabilities may still exist. In reflecting on Middle Eastern counterinsurgency experience and its application to nonstate actors, a sovereign state should assume a Russian adversary will target the mid-level network operatives in all the resistance components—planners, financiers, trainers, recruiters, and cell leaders.²⁹ With this situation in mind,



the organizational designers must build survivability, redundancy, and protection into the overall resistance, especially in the stay-behind underground network. Best practice would indicate that in peacetime during national defense planning, C2 can be centralized and well controlled. When the occupation occurs, resistance organizations must change to a less centralized but directed cellular network structure in order to avoid adversarial penetration, co-option, or destruction.³⁰ While a cadre-based clandestine cellular stay-behind formation provides a solution, there are several challenges to be resolved and further researched.

First, there is a lack of expertise in establishing such organizations, and NATO and coalition counternetwork experience against al-Qaida, the Taliban, and the Islamic State undergrounds may not directly translate into setting up a survivable clandestine cellular stay-behind network against Russia. Second, the historical vignettes provided by Switzerland, the Netherlands,

Lithuanian resistance fighters (left to right) Klemensas Širvys-Sakalas, Juozas Lukša-Skirmantas, and Benediktas Trumpys-Rytis stand in the forest during the late 1940s. (Photo courtesy of the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania)

and Norway offer a potential path for exploration, but these undergrounds were never tested under live conditions during the Cold War. Third, the primacy of the underground in resistance operations may apply well in the unique geographical and demographical conditions of the Baltics and Nordics, but a more holistic view to resistance may be necessary in other locations like Georgia, Poland, Romania, and Ukraine.

Finally, if a relevant state establishes a clandestine cellular stay-behind formation as part of its national defense planning, then some thought needs to be given to connecting this organization to the broader resistance potential of the population. A sovereign

government intending to harness this inherent resistance energy in a loyal population must provide broad guidance on civil resistance and preparedness to the national citizenry prior to an actual occupation and link it to the stay-behind underground. An excellent example of this preparation is the Swedish government's official pamphlet titled *If Crisis or War Comes*, which it has distributed to the entire population. Within this document, the government explicitly directs that "if Sweden is attacked by another country, we will never give up. All information to the

effect that resistance is to cease is false."³¹ The next step is melding this effort to provide an amplifying effect to the clandestine cellular stay-behind organization to impose costs on an invader and win time until occupied territory can be liberated. In the end, the more that U.S. SOF and the U.S. Army understand about the complexities of resistance and the broader unconventional warfare realm, the greater effect they will have in supporting threatened allies and partners in peacetime preparation, during competition, and potentially in conflict. ■

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Soldiers skijour behind a small unit support vehicle (SUSV) 9 March 2017 as part of U.S. Army Alaska's Winter Games at Fort Wainwright, Alaska. The Army is in the process of replacing the SUSV, which has been in service for about forty years, with a family of all-weather, all-terrain vehicles. Replacement prototypes will be tested this year at the Cold Regions Test Center in Alaska. (Photo by John Pennell, U.S. Army)

Future Mobility

The Cardinal Principle in Northern Operations

Maj. Jari J. Karttunen, U.S. Army Reserve, Retired

Armies were like plants, immobile as a whole, firm rooted, and nourished by long stems to the head. ...

... [Their antagonists,] the rebels had the virtues of secrecy and self control. They had the qualities of speed, endurance

and independence of arteries of supply. And they had technical equipment enough to paralyze the enemy's communications.

—T. E. Lawrence

All arctic operations change into land operations even if they start airborne or seaborne.

—Alpo K. Marttinen

For U.S. and Canadian armies to comply with current northern operations doctrine, they must develop more mobile and less detectable ground forces. To control the vast and remote terrain of northern America, they will need fast forces with greater endurance and independence from petroleum supply lines. Waldemar Erfurth, in his post-World War II study *Warfare in the Far North*, stated,

Extensive pathless wasteland of the frontier region, the uneven terrain covered with loose rock and consequently passable only with difficulty, and negligible development of roads are not suited

to operations with large mass [of] troops mobility. Over broad stretches of country in many cases it is impossible to conduct operations involving large organizations, and in some instances, it is pointless.¹

He continued, "Fighting [in this type] of environment, must necessarily assume the character of guerilla warfare."²

The roadless regions covering

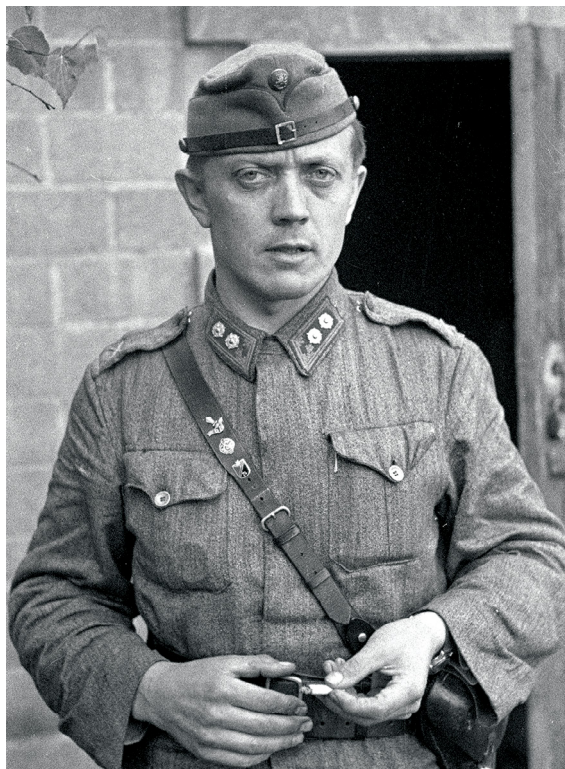
nearly two million square miles of arctic and subarctic America have many similarities to archaeologist T. E. Lawrence's Arabia. Both theaters still contain large trackless wilderness occupied by nomadic people who have relied on animal husbandry and hunting skills to move and to survive. Until the advent of combustion engine vehicles in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, human mobility in the Arctic and in Arabia was driven by the beating hearts of men and their domesticated animals.

Adapting to Changing Realities and Anticipating Changes in the Environment

The following fact-based assumptions support a requirement for faster and quieter off-road combat capability in the North American Arctic. The intentions described in the Chinese White Paper of 2018 and the ongoing Russian military deployments foreshadow future resource and trade conflicts in the Arctic.³ The Russian efforts follow a logical course as its arctic ice



(Left to right) Olavi Alakulppi, Erkki Lahdenperä, Juho Anttila, and Alpo K. Marttinen pose with a prototype of an ahkio under construction in 1948 at the U.S. Army Quartermaster Depot, Jeffersonville, Indiana. The ahkio was a versatile snow sled designed for transporting supplies in extreme cold-weather conditions. Marttinen was later the principal author of U.S. Army Field Manuals 31-70, *Basic Arctic Manual*, and 31-71, *Northern Operations*. (Photo used with permission by Col. Paavo Kairinen, U.S. Army)



An undated photo of then Lt. Col. Alpo K. Marttinen during combat operations in World War II (circa May-June 1944). On 23 June 1944, he received a battlefield promotion to become the youngest colonel in the Finnish Army. After the war, Marttinen joined the U.S. Army and later wrote an article for the December 1949 edition of *Military Review*, under the pen name Victor Suomalainen, detailing his wartime experiences, which was titled, "The Battle of Suomussalmi." To read this article, visit <https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p124201coll1/id/904/rec/3>. (Photo by Tauno Norjavirta, Finnish Army via Wikimedia Commons)

The Battle of Suomussalmi

By Victor Suomalainen, an eyewitness,
as told to
Lieutenant Colonel Arthur J. Peterson, Field Artillery
Instructor, Command and General Staff College

THE FINNO-RUSSIAN Winter War of 1939-1940, considered as a whole, offers an excellent example for the study of Arctic warfare. In this war, two armies met under the most severe subarctic weather conditions imaginable. One of them, the Finnish Army, was familiar with and trained in arctic warfare. The Red Army at that time, from a practical standpoint, had almost completely neglected preparations for warfare under such conditions. To a surprising extent, the Russians depended on their superiority of numbers and material strength to secure a victory over a weaker opponent. In spite of this superiority, the Russians suffered a number of serious reverses at the hands of the Finns, who, although inferior in strength, were equipped for and more familiar with arctic conditions. This knowledge of the arctic was used by the Finns to great advantage.

The Battle of Suomussalmi is considered one of the most typical battles of the Finno-Russian war. It was fought between 11 December 1939 and 8 January 1940. In this area, the understrength Finnish III Division surrounded and destroyed the Ukrainian 16th Division, and at the same time, with a small portion of their force, the Finns overcame the 44th Moscow Rifle Division from coming to the rescue of the beleaguered Russian forces. After finishing off the 16th Division, the Finns then surrounded and annihilated the 44th Division.

Firepower and Mobility

At the time of the Battle of Suomussalmi, there was a marked difference in the firepower of the Finnish and Russian divisions. The artillery firepower of the Russian Division was about three times that of the Finnish division, and that of its mortars and machine guns was about twice as great. The following table shows this comparative firepower. (The strength of a Russian division at that time was 12,000.)

| | Finland | Russia |
|--------------------|---------|--------|
| Artillery | 100 | 300 |
| Mortars | 100 | 300 |
| Machine guns | 100 | 300 |
| Heavy machine guns | 100 | 300 |
| Antiaircraft guns | 100 | 300 |
| Infantry | 100 | 300 |

The most important difference between the Russian and the Finns, however, was in the mobility of their troops. This was most noticeable in their ability to make cross-country movements. It was an accepted principle in Finnish division, that troops of all arms and services would be mounted on skis. Machine guns and mortars, together with their ammunition and tents for shelter, were transported by skis. These skis were also used by the wounded. Artillery pieces, and other heavy equipment, were transported on horse-drawn sleds. All were concentrated on the

recedes and makes Russia a coastal nation open to an ice-free northern sea. Rising expectations in economically liberated countries and a world population, which has doubled in the last half century, are also driving more competition for the natural resources in the arctic regions.⁴

Land access from the continental United States into North America's arctic regions remains limited to a few roads like the Alaska Highway. Absent a forward deployed, land combat force to defend against invaders, the isolated arctic coastal areas remain exposed to surprise invasion.

Any land operation to recover lost arctic areas needs to consider modern and World War II lessons, which demonstrate how dangerous ground action combined with air interdiction can be for road-bound forces. Quoting Maj. Gen. Bob Scales, "In Afghanistan the proportion of [U.S.] Infantry deaths at the hands of the enemy is even greater, 89 percent. Of those, more than 90 percent occurred within four hundred meters of a road."⁵ A highly explosive blow-down of forests will create even more obstacles for ground forces operating in forested terrain.

Recently, nation states have used covert operations and tactics to seize key terrain while avoiding culpability under international law. These masked operations

help countries deny attribution and manage the risk of involvement by potentially superior enemies. In February 2014, the world witnessed the covert Russian occupation of Russified Crimea and the neighboring anthracite and ore production areas of eastern Donets Basin. The Russian operation resembled Operation Rentier, which was conducted by the German army in June

1941 when it took the nickel mining area of Pechenga, Russia. The latter operation was preceded by covert German reconnaissance.⁶ Both operations seized coastal port areas near significant deposits of strategic minerals important to Russian and German war industries.

During World War II, Americans were forced to adapt to changing northern realities when Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, in his post-World War II book *Crusade in Europe*, commented about the prewar Louisiana maneuvers of 1941: "The efficiency of American trucks in the movement of troops and supply demonstrated so magnificently in the three years later in the race across France, was forecast on the roads of Louisiana in September 1941."⁷ He then included an excerpt from a War Department correspondence on 7 April 1942 (two days before the surrender of Bataan in the Philippines): "Lieutenant General John L. De Witt requested authority to issue 3000 rifles to the Alaskan Territorial Guard."⁸ Given the rapidly changing geographic situation in the North Pacific and Arctic, the above scenarios can echo again in the future.

The Russo-Japanese War during 1904 and 1905 may be used as an example of what the United States

can expect in a great-power northern conflict. In his memoirs published in 1951, Finnish Field Marshal C. G. E. Mannerheim observed that the Russians had to transport their army over five thousand miles on mostly single-track railway to the theater of war. In the first of his five wars, Mannerheim received his baptism by fire while leading Russian cavalry and covert Hunguz mercenaries in a losing contest over the Port Arthur-Mukden Railroad. U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt eventually mediated the Treaty of Portsmouth to end the war in 1905. In Mannerheim's words, "[America ensured] the stability of the Far East, which lasted for the next 30-years."⁹

The Early Development of U.S. Army Northern Operations Doctrine

Before assuming that the American military is resourced to successfully maneuver in arctic and subarctic terrain, a review of the written and oral history of the original authors of the Army's northern doctrine is needed. Very few, if any, currently active soldiers have experienced mortal combat on tundra or in taiga. It can be assumed that peacetime training rarely simulates actual conditions like the ones experienced by the Cold War-era authors of the U.S. Army's northern operations manuals. The credibility of these arctic

combat veterans has a gravity supported by actual results.

In 1947, Finnish Army officers joined the U.S. Army after they were implicated in a secret plan to organize and equip a guerilla army against a possible Soviet occupation of Finland. These Finns were assisted in their legal entry and initial enlistment by U.S. Army Assistant Chief of Staff Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer and former Office of Strategic Services Chief William J. Donovan.¹⁰

Maj. Jari J. Karttunen, U.S. Army Reserve, retired, served with the 7th Infantry Division (Light) and in various active and reserve Special Forces assignments. He retired from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) after working in the field, national headquarters, and the Commissioner's Office of Anti-Terrorism. He represented CBP in the Department of Homeland Security's post-Katrina Incident Management Planning Team and as an assistant attaché in Afghanistan.

Col. Alpo K. Marttinen served as the principal author of U.S. Army Field Manuals 31-70, *Basic Arctic Manual*, and 31-71, *Northern Operations*, published in October 1951.¹¹ He was assisted by Col. Erkki Lahdenperä, Col. Eino Lassila, and Lt. Col. Olavi Alakulppi.¹² Declassified, arctic ground combat lessons authored by the late Marttinen are archived at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Alakulppi, as a quartermaster branch officer, was the most highly decorated of the group. He received the U.S. Bronze Star, Finland's Mannerheim Cross, the German Gold Close Combat Clasp, and the Iron Cross 2nd Class.¹³

As a master sergeant under the nom de plume "Victor Suomalainen," Marttinen wrote an article for the December 1949 edition of *Military Review*.¹⁴ During the Finno-Russo Winter War, he had been the thirty-year-old chief of staff of the Finnish 9th Infantry Division at the Battles of Suomussalmi and Kuhmo. Marttinen had prepared and signed many of the operations orders during the division's victories over the Soviet 44th and 54th Rifle Divisions and the 163rd Infantry.¹⁵ During the battles, he effectively directed Finnish guerilla battalions to find and isolate the Soviet divisions and annihilate Soviet Col. Vjatseslav Dmitrievitch Dolin's ski brigade near Kuhmo. In the summer of 1944, Marttinen's 61st Infantry Regiment, using decisive artillery support, stopped the Soviet 97th Corps north of Viipuri, Finland, a city now known as Vyborg, Russia. As a result, Marttinen was telephonically promoted in the field by Mannerheim, becoming the youngest colonel in the Finnish Army.

Marttinen's 1952 report, "Comments on the Present Capability of the U.S. Army for Arctic Warfare," continued to hammer home that the U.S. Army was road-bound and subject to quick destruction by Soviet ski divisions. He emphasized the following:

- Actual war will decide which force is ready to win in the Arctic.
- All arctic operations change into land operations even if they start airborne or seaborne.
- The cardinal principle for arctic and subarctic land operations is mobility. The one with superior mobility sets the combat tempo in space and time.
- Inferior forces with greater mobility can, and have, overcome superior protection and firepower in the Arctic.¹⁶



In the report, Marttinen added that American mechanical ingenuity had improved arctic mobility [to a point beyond animal-borne transportation]:

Recent development of light over the snow and small amphibious vehicles has reached promising levels of capability. The new, smaller, off-road vehicles have reduced dependency on the limited arctic and subarctic road networks. They have also facilitated the greater dispersal of friendly forces in order to avoid enemy detection and fires. These new, off-road mobility means must be capable of carrying or towing enough soldiers, with shelter, heat, food, and fuel [energy,] along with ordnance to conduct operations in the arctic elements. ... Smaller detachments can now mass and disperse even faster than before.¹⁷

His views posed questions for future arctic combat leaders: Are the past observations still valid today? What improvements have been made to help arctic vehicles evade and/or deceive an adversary's sensors? Is current ground battle doctrine founded on historically sound facts and assumptions about arctic and subarctic warfare? Do northern operations doctrines

An advancing Soviet T-26 tank moves against Finnish forces on the eastern side of the Kollaa River 17 December 1939 during the Battle of Kollaa in Finland. (Photo courtesy of Finnish Wartime Photograph Archive via Wikimedia Commons)

have to be appropriately and jointly revised for modern multi-domain environments?

Arctic Land Mobility

Mobility is defined in the U.S. Army's manuals as a cardinal principle for victory in northern operations.¹⁸ The prevailing climate and terrain help defeat unprepared forces when they are cut off from supply lines. Ground transportation networks in a trackless arctic—when interdicted by turning movements, guerillas, and air forces—give northern warfare its uniquely lethal character. Conventional turning movements have been the primary way of defeating road-bound and heavier forces in the tundra and the taiga. Modern technology may supersede that technique in the future.

Lahdenperä was a relentless advocate for better off-road mobility and innovation, perhaps owing to

his experiences fighting the Germans near Rovaniemi, Finland. On 13 October 1944, after a nightlong march through boreal swamps, Battle Group Kurenmaa (consisting of three light infantry battalions) cut the Ranua-Rovaniemi Road behind a German rear guard. Two battalions commanded by Lahdenperä moved south along the road to attack the encircled Germans. In a surprise move, a German armored force counterattacked along the road from Rovaniemi. The Panzer wedge struck the rear of Lahdenperä's unit and scattered it off the road and into the surrounding woods. The Germans were able to evacuate their rear guard in a thirty-vehicle column, albeit with four truckloads of dead and wounded. The Germans then destroyed and mined the road behind them. Lahdenperä's unit would enter Rovaniemi three days later. One of the decisive reasons for the failure to cut off the German rear guard was the lack of munitions due to delayed supplies that were dragged through the swamps by horse-drawn travois.¹⁹

Experiences in war have shown that relatively slow and logistically light forces can move on foot through the boreal swamps and muskeg of the tundra without getting bogged down. Yet, these units lack the organic ability to carry enough supplies to sustain operations against enemies with heavier combat power.

In his June 1960 *Military Review* article, Lahdenperä commented:

An example of endless experimentation and testing without standardization is the search for a perfect over-snow vehicle which would be suitable for reconnaissance and communication, and have a limited cargo carrying or towing capability. If the ground pressure of a vehicle is very low, the carrying or towing capability

is limited. If this capability is increased too much, the vehicle becomes a through snow vehicle or perhaps an "under-snow" vehicle. It is possible that the tests conducted will not produce a "perfect" vehicle soon. Therefore, we should have one test vehicle standardized and made available for training. Training of drivers and mechanics in the [northern tundra, forests, and swamps] is more important than small differences in machines.²⁰

Exploit Fleeting Opportunities through America's Strengths, Human Ingenuity, and Enthusiasm

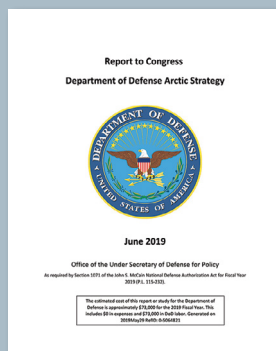
The popularity of off-roading and a robust motor racing culture continues to create obvious advantages for recruitment of qualified North American operators and mechanics. A large percentage of North American resources including people, technology, and industries are concentrated in the midwestern United States and southeastern Canada. These areas remain ideal as support areas for the private and public development of silent, electric off-road capability and capacity.

Training and development carried out by off-road enthusiasts in the northern states can also more economically prepare recruit-cohorts for a changing arctic terrestrial environment. The climate and terrain in northern states are seasonally similar to the subarctic environment and can help innovation and adaptation.

Innovation

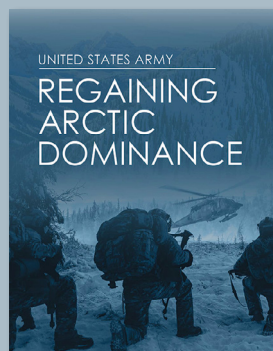
The production of relatively quiet, electric-powered, all-terrain vehicles has growing potential. As a catalyst,

selected arctic light cavalry, infantry, and Special Forces units need to be equipped with standardized prototype electric amphibious vehicles. Innovation derived from field testing can then take place at forward modification sites, as was done during World War II.



To view the *Report to Congress, Department of Defense Arctic Strategy*, June 2019, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, visit <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jun/06/2002141657/-1/-1/1/2019-DOD-ARCTIC-STRATEGY.PDF>.

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Soviet equipment and fallen soldiers cover the landscape 1 January 1940 after a Finnish Army ambush at Raate Road, Suomussalmi, Finland. (Photo courtesy of the Finnish Wartime Photograph Archive via Wikimedia Commons)

Small hydrogen storage and fuel-cell generators using available resources such as water, wind, and wood to charge batteries can supplement energy needs for troops operating independently in the Arctic. Adapting fast aircraft to drop supplies to mobile ground teams will increase the marginal utility of the planes into the future. Modular energy packages can also be pre-positioned and cached according to mobilization plans.

Swamp mobility and logging for corduroy roads has also evolved in the Gulf states of the southern United States.²¹ Combining the resources of the southern and northern states by unifying swamp and over-the-snow mobility innovation can help advance the common defense in the subarctic areas.

Manufacturing Power

The North American industrial base can take advantage of recent improvements in electric amphibious vehicle technology. Battery-powered, all-terrain vehicles are now relatively quiet and produce smaller electromagnetic signatures than their gas-powered variants. Smaller, remote hydrogen generation and storage sites continue to evolve

through entrepreneurial efforts and promise an untethered energy capability for arctic residents. Locating the design, testing, and development sites near underutilized bases and automotive factories will facilitate rapid modification, assembly, and deployment of vehicles.

It will be a tall order to create enough small off-road vehicles that move quieter and faster with greater endurance in the trackless arctic wilderness. Yet, it must be done in order to deter adversaries from raising the strategic stakes in the resource rich and environmentally sensitive northern regions.

Although mobility is only one element of combat power, its relative effect is magnified in the remote and less populated north. History and combat proven doctrine demand that future arctic soldiers need to be properly equipped and trained with the best off-road maneuver resources that a nation can produce.

The Alakulppi Caveats

As vital as the need for advanced arctic mobility may be, its proponents must also allow for cautionary views. Perhaps none are harsher than those stated by Alakulppi during a 1988 interview with the author. As he reminisced about his combat experiences against both Soviet and German forces in Lapland, he included the following thought for future arctic soldiers: "War is the hardest game one can engage in."²² He warned against reckless mobility after witnessing a German ambush of Finnish bicycle scouts in October 1944, calling the action "the kind only the Germans could devise."²³ He added, "If you fall in love with the saddle, you will die in the saddle."²⁴

Acknowledgment

U.S. Army Maj. Stephen T. Uurtamo's legacy lives in this article. In March 1948, then a captain, he translated and edited the original drafts of the Army's northern operations doctrine.²⁵ In December 1950, Uurtamo died in captivity after he was captured by Chinese communist forces near the Chongson River in North Korea. In June 2018, Uurtamo's recovered remains were interred at the Arlington National Cemetery.²⁶ Ironically, perhaps with Soviet advice, the Chinese communist forces used off-road envelopment tactics against Uurtamo's 2nd Infantry Division that were similar to ones Marttinen had orchestrated against three Soviet divisions at the Battles of Suomussalmi and Kuhmo a decade earlier. ■

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21. Merriam-Webster, s.v. "corduroy road (n.)," accessed 16 February 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/corduroy%20road>.

22. Olavi Alakulppi, interview with the author, March 1988, Petersburg, Virginia, photographs on file with author.

23. *Ibid.*

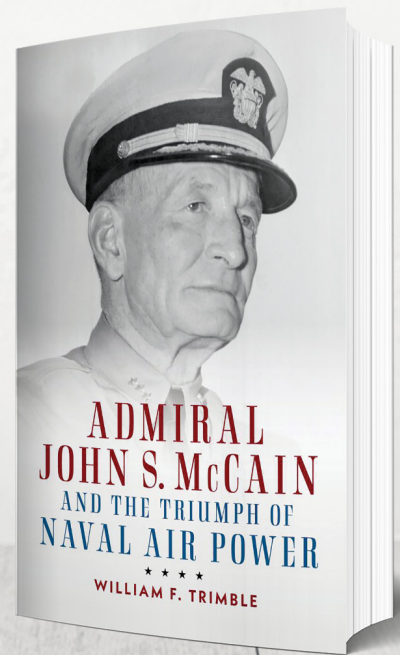
24. *Ibid.*

25. Tuunainen, *Marttinen*, 226.

26. Don Babwin, "Chicago Soldier Killed in Korea Finally Being Laid to Rest," Associated Press, 17 June 2018, accessed 2 February 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/8a7bdb7b792742069a0cd869f7b-6f2be>.

Admiral John S. McCain and the Triumph of Naval Air Power

William F. Trimble, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2019, 416 pages



Lt. Col. John H. Modinger, PhD, U.S. Air Force, Retired

Adm. John S. McCain was a highly accomplished sailor and later an aviator in the Second World War who served directly under Adm. William “Bull” Halsey, Third Fleet commander in the Pacific theater of action. Under the guidance and direction of McCain and many other notable naval flag officers highlighted in *Admiral John S. McCain and the Triumph of Naval Air Power*, “naval air power, organized into multicarrier task forces, evolved from a tactical supplement to the battle fleet dedicated to sea control and protecting sea lines of communication into an independent strategic striking force.”¹

Today, McCain’s story is not well known due to the passage of time and the fact that his grandson, the senior senator from Arizona who first came to the attention of most Americans with his release from the “Hanoi Hilton” at the end of the Vietnam War, eclipsed him in contemporary times. Of course, John McCain (the senator) was also the son of yet another admiral who commanded in the Vietnam War. There are three generations of Naval Academy graduates in the family, two who attained four-star flag rank and the last who attained high political

office and ran for president. Now, having cleared that up for those who may have been confused given the identical names (save the suffixes Sr., Jr., and III), on to William Trimble’s work.

McCain’s early military career coincided with the emergence of America as a global power. As an ensign, he joined the Great White Fleet while it anchored in Manila in 1908, halfway through its fourteen-month global cruise that began at Hampton Roads, Virginia, in December 1907 under the watchful and pride-filled eyes of Theodore Roosevelt. In the ensuing decades, he held a variety of operational and staff positions that allowed him to appreciate the internal workings of the Navy bureaucracy and navigate through it. He became an influential innovator in the evolution of naval aviation later in his career, particularly with regard to long-range

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reconnaissance aircraft, which would be invaluable in the Pacific theater given its expansiveness.

While McCain was not an early airpower advocate, he had witnessed airpower's evolution and could envision a future where it became the heart of the fleet. In 1935, as a captain staring retirement in the face in the not-too-far-off future, he could not see flag rank as a

with more good decisions than poor ones. He was a hero and an open-minded leader during peacetime and wartime; he was respected and liked by those who served under him—though not always an easy task given the plethora of difficult decisions that have to be made in the pressure cooker of compressed timelines, imperfect knowledge, death, and destruction.



While McCain was not an early airpower advocate, he had witnessed airpower's evolution and could envision a future where it became the heart of the fleet.



possibility unless he could somehow snag a plumb operational assignment—a battleship, or maybe a carrier. Recognizing the potential efficacy of aircraft within a future naval context and resigned to the fact that without a bold move, continued shore duty postings would torpedo any hope of attaining flag rank, he decided his best odds were within the aviation community; thus, he cast the dice, petitioning for reassignment to Pensacola, Florida, for flight training.² It helped greatly that he knew power brokers in Washington like Adm. William Leahy, who could waive the age limit for him. In training, he was not a great pilot but did “well enough.”³ Despite his late arrival to aviation at age fifty-two in 1936, his hard work and determination paid dividends, earning him the respect of many who later served under him.⁴ It also was essential to his command of the USS *Ranger* in 1937, the Navy's first carrier built for the expressed purpose of launching aircraft from the outset.⁵ In some ways, his advanced age when coming into aviation was a blessing in that his seniority and postings in Washington provided him with ample bureaucratic and political connections to effect innovation and change at a time when aviation was already undergoing significant evolution.

As the title of the book implies, this is a story about John S. McCain and the advancement—and eventual triumph—of naval aviation against Japan. In that sense, this is not a full-fledged biography but rather the story of a prominent Navy admiral against the backdrop of momentous events. His leadership stints were, arguably, a mixed bag, not quite as spectacular or error-free as some other titans, but solid,

As is so often said, “Timing is everything.” While McCain's timing was propitious in many respects, it was off in one notable instance. By March 1942, there were only three operational flattops in the Pacific—*Lexington*, *Enterprise*, and *Yorktown*—each the centerpiece of a numbered task force. Fortunately, the newly constructed *Hornet* (CV 8), completing its trials, would soon be available to augment Adm. Chester Nimitz's carrier force. It was, at the time, under Adm. Marc Mitscher's Task Force 18. As luck would have it, McCain, then commanding an aircraft scouting force in San Diego, had recently spoken with Nimitz, who was impressed enough that he planned to have McCain take over the fledgling Task Group forming on *Hornet*, though he had not informed McCain of his decision yet. Nimitz duly informed Adm. Ernest King, chief of naval operations, about this, only to be informed the next day (13 March) that the *Hornet* and Mitscher were set to rendezvous with Halsey and *Enterprise* to form a combined Task Force 16. At a loss as to the purpose of this, Nimitz would only learn, almost a week later, that both the *Hornet* and *Enterprise* were critical to a highly risky and secret plan to strike Japan with Army B-25 bombers. In all likelihood, McCain never knew how close he had come to getting a carrier task force command in 1942.⁶

By the end of March 1942, Roosevelt had approved a plan to divide the Pacific into two separate commands with Gen. Douglas MacArthur in charge of the Southwest Pacific and Nimitz overseeing the “Pacific Ocean Areas.” As it became apparent that Japan's next move would likely be in MacArthur's

area of operations, King and Nimitz looked to leverage McCain's aggressiveness and experience to corral the chaotic collection of planes, ships, and bases in the region. He would have to do so on a very under-resourced basis, since the European theater would get priority; operations such as the Battle of Midway would only exacerbate his austere situation.⁷ To make matters worse, his long-range reconnaissance assets, despite new technology like radar and access to ULTRA intercepts, depended on adequately trained operators, which were in short supply. Intelligence gleaned from ULTRA, while illuminating the strategic situation, often had far less value in terms of immediate operational concerns. McCain later expressed his frustration saying, "In the late spring of 1942, there was, literally, no intelligence worthy of the name."⁸ When the dust settled, despite hiccups, McCain's time in the Southwest Pacific was praised, and he was deemed worthy of consideration for future task force command at sea, but Washington called first, specifically the Bureau of Aeronautics (BuAer), in October 1942.

With a mind-boggling budget of \$1 billion in 1942, BuAer was an important entity in the global fight, but it struggled to loosen itself from a peacetime Navy culture, according to a damning report prepared by an external consulting firm. What was needed, per the report, "were experts who knew how to run large organizations, more often than not executives recruited from the business world."⁹ McCain was dropped into this situation. Part of the problem stemmed from the fact that as the war went on, production requirements grew. For example, eleven more fast carriers and at least seventy more escort carriers than previously estimated were produced and needed to be outfitted not only with aircraft but also trained pilots.¹⁰ BuAer had to manage all this. Additionally, spare parts, reliability, and modification (based on frontline experience) issues plagued the Navy, reliant as it was on commercial companies like Grumman. Oversight (or the lack thereof, actually) had become a major problem. "Not only did McCain have to do a juggling act to adapt aircraft production to constantly evolving combat requirements, but he also had to make decisions about ... entirely new weapon system[s] that, while promising, could divert much-needed resources and personnel from existing programs."¹¹ In August 1943, McCain became chief

of naval operations for air where he would serve for a year, though all the while he longed to be in the action.

Befitting his performances in Washington, McCain got the nod for what he craved: task force command. However, taking command was not that simple. McCain had come to understand he would assume command of Fast Carrier Task Force Pacific in August 1944, Mitscher's billet with Fifth Fleet. When Fifth Fleet transitioned to Third Fleet under Halsey, King had decided to split the carrier task force command. Mitscher would stay on as the commander of the newly established First Fast Carrier Task Force Pacific and McCain became commander of the Second Fast Carrier Task Force Pacific, both part of Task Force 38 in Halsey's Third Fleet.¹² Essentially, McCain would get more hands-on experience, temporarily commanding Task Group 38.1 under Mitscher. McCain chafed under this arrangement; he was senior to Mitscher but subordinate to him in this operational environment. He was convinced Mitscher had orchestrated this development and was upset about it, but despite a plea to Nimitz, he could do nothing about the arrangement. Mitscher would retain carrier task force command through the Marianas Campaign and the beginning of the next phase in the Pacific offensive.¹³ Interestingly, McCain, in trying to confer with Mitscher about the new arrangement and his mentorship of sorts, was bluntly thwarted by the latter, evidently dismissed by Mitscher as a usurper.¹⁴

As he settled into command, albeit not exactly the one he had envisaged, McCain became more proficient and comfortable. But before long, things were to get much more intense. The chief of naval operations had eventually agreed that Luzon was better than Formosa as the next objective in the march to Tokyo. As such, in preparation for the Leyte invasion, Nimitz directed Halsey to provide cover for the landings but also included the charge "in case of opportunity for destruction of major portion of the enemy fleet is offered or can be created, such destruction becomes the primary task," to which Halsey replied, "My goal is the same as yours—to completely annihilate the Jap fleet if the opportunity offers."¹⁵ This would be infamously remembered as a nuanced but critical misunderstanding between the two. This was exacerbated by the fact that, due to split commands (MacArthur and Nimitz), all direct communications

had to be routed through Nimitz and MacArthur, delaying responsiveness. While the Battle of Leyte Gulf went down as the largest sea battle of the entire war and a tremendous American naval victory, it was also the setting for a debacle that could have ended with a huge disaster at the amphibious landing zones where Halsey's forces had largely vacated the area in pursuit of a decoy fleet. Having sprinted north in pursuit of a Japanese deception, Halsey received a chilling but also infuriating message from Nimitz: "Where is Task Force 34? The world wonders."¹⁶ Halsey raced back south but was not able to close in time. Fortunately, Adm. Thomas Kinkaid's force of escort carriers, "tin cans," and such managed, against all odds, to stave off defeat.¹⁷ In contrast to Halsey, McCain received significant praise for his actions, especially in the Battle of Formosa (Taiwan).

Later, there would be real errors in judgment, primarily on Halsey's part, in avoiding (or trying to

avoid) two different storms that wreaked havoc on Third Fleet with significant damage to ships and loss of life, for which McCain would take some serious heat and blame as one of his senior commanders. Even McCain's detractors conceded he "had a creative mind," and noted he was "more of an adaptive and tenacious puzzle-solver seeking practical solutions to immediate problems."¹⁸ He also embraced "jointness" long before it became so highly valued in military circles.

In a tragic twist of fate for someone who had labored so hard to defeat the enemy and enjoy the fruits of victory, McCain would ultimately be at the signing of the armistice in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945, only to die one day after arriving home in the United States.

While so much of McCain's storied career must be synthesized (or skipped) here, the details await the reader's discovery in this well-written text, filled with wonderful pictures and useful maps. The book is well worth the reader's time investment. ■

Notes

1. William F. Trimble, *Admiral John S. McCain and the Triumph of Naval Air Power* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2019), 3.
2. Regulations required that anyone seeking to command an aircraft carrier had to first earn their wings, or at least go through a less-rigorous aviation observer course.
3. Trimble, *Admiral John S. McCain*, 30.
4. He was just six months younger than William "Bull" Halsey who had earlier earned his wings and become the oldest officer to do so at Pensacola.
5. Previous carriers had been something else (or designed as something else) prior to conversion.
6. Trimble, *Admiral John S. McCain*, 54–55.
7. At least in the short term; later, though, following the United States' victory at Midway, this would actually ease resource constrictions given the removal of any threat to Hawaii or the West Coast.
8. Trimble, *Admiral John S. McCain*, 63.

9. *Ibid.*, 107.
10. *Ibid.*, 114.
11. *Ibid.*, 117.
12. Whether Third Fleet under Halsey, or Fifth Fleet under Spruance, the ships and most of the personnel remained the same; this rotation basically took place every six months.
13. Trimble, *Admiral John S. McCain*, 154–55.
14. Per Trimble, Mitscher remained in his sea cabin and did not greet McCain when he arrived onboard, a very unprofessional and demeaning thing to do that reflected poorly on his legacy.
15. Adm. Chester Nimitz, as recorded in Trimble, *Admiral John S. McCain*, 164.
16. *Ibid.*, 177–78.
17. Affectionate name sailors bestowed upon destroyers—thinly armored and lightly gunned but fast.
18. Trimble, *Admiral John S. McCain*, 288.



Colonel Ralph Puckett Jr.

MEDAL OF HONOR

KOREAN WAR

President Joseph R. Biden awarded the Medal of Honor to retired Col. Ralph Puckett Jr. in a 21 May 2021 White House ceremony for Puckett's actions during the November 1950 Battle of Hill 205 in Korea.

Then 1st Lt. Puckett, commander of the Eighth Army Ranger Company, led his unit in an attack to secure Hill 205 in the vicinity of Unsan, Korea, in advance of the 25th Infantry Division. During the attack, Puckett intentionally ran across an open area three times to draw enemy machine-gun fire, enabling his unit to locate and destroy the machine gun and seize the hill.

The fifty-seven-man company repelled five enemy counterattacks that night from a force nearly ten times its size and supported by intense mortar fire. Puckett was wounded by a grenade during the first attack, but refused evacuation. Instead, he directed "danger close" artillery fire to repel the enemy assaults and repeatedly left his position to check on his soldiers and redistribute ammunition. Puckett again intentionally exposed himself to enemy fire to identify the position of an enemy sniper.

Puckett was unable to get artillery support to fend off a sixth assault, and the enemy overran his unit. He was seriously injured by two mortar rounds and ordered his men to leave him behind. However, two of his Rangers refused the order and

evacuated him to a secure position at the bottom of the hill. There, despite his injuries, Puckett again directed artillery fire on the enemy at the top of the hill.

This was the first time Biden has awarded a Medal of Honor. In his remarks, the president said, "Korea is sometimes called the 'Forgotten War.' But those men who were there under Lieutenant Puckett's command—they'll never forget his bravery. They never forget that he was right by their side throughout every minute of it."

South Korean President Moon Jae-in also attended the ceremony. Moon added his thoughts: "Colonel Puckett is a true hero of the Korean War. With extraordinary valor and leadership, he completed missions until the very end, defending Hill 205 and fighting many more battles requiring equal valiance. Without the sacrifice of veterans, including Colonel Puckett and the Eighth Army Ranger Company, freedom and democracy we enjoy today couldn't have blossomed in Korea."

Puckett was an inaugural inductee into the Ranger Hall of Fame in 1992, and was the 75th Ranger Regiment's first honorary colonel from 1996 to 2006.

You can read more about this great American on the Army's Medal of Honor website at <https://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/puckett/>.





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