Military Review

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THIS WE'LL DEFEND

Military Review

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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

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General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

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to the Secretary of the Army
2509801

Soldiers represent various chapters in the history of the U.S. Army. (Illustration by Dale Cordes, Army University Press)

ARMY UNIVERSITY PRESS

This We'll Defend

Our Promise to America

This year, our Army celebrates a major milestone. For two and a half centuries, the Army has answered the call to defend this Nation. Our motto, "This We'll Defend," is more than just words—it is why we exist and our promise to the American people. For 250 years, as the world changed and the battlefield evolved, our promise has not wavered.

America's Oldest Institution

The Army's origins date back to before we were even a country. In the spring of 1775, the shot heard around the world at Lexington and Concord led to fighting between colonial militias and British forces. But to secure our independence, the country needed one collective, professional force.

On 14 June 1775, the Second Continental Congress resolved "that six companies of expert riflemen be immediately raised in Pennsylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia; … and join the army near Boston, to be there employed as light infantry, under the command of the chief Officer in that army."[1]

With this act, the Continental Army was born, transforming disparate colonial militias into a unified force under national authority. Since then, American soldiers have stood ready to defend freedom.

The Army's history is a story of selfless service in defense of our Nation and its values. It is also a story of adaptation—from the battlefields of the Revolution and the Civil War to the beaches of Normandy and the islands of the Pacific, from the frozen hills of Korea and the jungles of Vietnam to the mountains of Afghanistan and the dusty streets of Iraq. Every generation of soldiers has faced new threats, and every generation has overcome those threats.

A Legacy of Adaption and Transformation

The Army's ability to adapt and transform is one of the key reasons it has remained the world's premier land force for 250 years.

During the Civil War, the Army introduced repeating rifles and used railroads and telegraphs to coordinate and move troops and supplies. In World War I, the Army shifted from trench warfare to combined arms operations, incorporating tanks, artillery, and air.

World War II saw the Army grow to over eight million soldiers, mastering amphibious warfare in the Pacific and conducting the largest waterborne landing in modern history at Normandy.

The Army continued to innovate in Vietnam, pioneering helicopter warfare to rapidly deploy troops into battle. The Gulf War showcased the effectiveness of precision strikes and maneuver warfare, resulting in a quick, decisive victory.

In response to the 9/11 attacks, the Army adapted to counterinsurgency and urban warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Note

1. Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789*, vol. 2 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1905), 89–90, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/ll/llscd/lljc002/lljc002.pdf.

Over the years, we have proven that the ability to transform is just as important as the ability to fight. The challenges of the future will be different from those of the past, but no matter the challenge we will always adapt, overcome, and win.

Transforming for the Future

Today's Army is the most capable and lethal force in the world. Our adversaries are evolving, and we must stay ahead. That is why we continue to transform. We are transforming in contact, meaning we are adapting and innovating even as we continue to meet current threats.

We are investing in the right capabilities to ensure our formations are more lethal, more mobile, and more survivable. This includes uncrewed and counter-uncrewed systems to expand our reach and counter emerging threats, electronic warfare systems to dominate the electromagnetic space, and a next-generation network that integrates more easily across echelons and shrinks our command post footprint.

Being ready to fight and win is about more than just having the right equipment—it's about having disciplined, well-trained soldiers who can operate in any environment, under any conditions, against any adversary. The American soldier is the most skilled and disciplined warrior on the battlefield. We live a culture of warfighting and excellence because that is what the American people expect and what our mission demands.

Our readiness is bolstered by our families and loved ones. Their unwavering support allows us to focus on the mission, knowing we have a strong foundation at home.

This We'll Defend

As we celebrate this milestone, we remember the sacrifices of previous generations and honor their legacy by continuing to serve with courage and integrity. We honor them by always staying ready.

In an era of rapid change, our focus remains clear: warfighting, delivering combat-ready formations, continuous transformation, and strengthening the profession. For 250 years, the Army has been America's force of decisive action. That will not change. We do not pick our fights, but when called, we will fight, and we will win. ■

We are the United States Army, and This We'll Defend.

Randy A. George
General, U.S. Army
Chief of Staff

Michael R. Weimer
Sergeant Major of the Army

Enter the U.S. Army's premier writing competition!

2025 General William E. DePuy Special Topics Writing Competition

This year's theme: "The challenges of planning for security in a world that is increasingly borderless, multicultural, and economically interdependent."

Developments in modern technology, changing global demographics, increasingly complex economic ties among nations, and the speed and ease of population mobility have dramatically highlighted factors that now must be considered and dealt with to achieve success in modern conflicts. The age of empires that overtly built on the assumption that some states had a natural Darwinian entitlement for military conquest of other states viewed as racial or cultural inferiors has largely disappeared. However, while the age of empires is arguably over, the myths of empire remain. Different permutations of the same instinct to pursue imperial ambitions, but in a different guise, appear to remain powerful underlying elements of aggressor ideologies, nationalism, racial animus, some forms of organized religion as well as international economic and criminal cartels of one stripe or another. It is also a key impetus for resurgent revanchism, a state posture seeking to retaliate against other states for perceived historical wrongs that animates the desire to recover lost territory.

The intent of this year's DePuy competition is to identify by close examination where such factors strongly influence today's operational environment and to identify specific strategies to either mitigate their influence or provide solutions for exploiting them to achieve the accomplishment of strategic objectives. A few examples of such possible topics are provided below. These are provided primarily to encourage authors to identify on their own the most salient of any of a myriad of other such topics relevant to the theme.

- How are China, Russia, and the United States viewed by the populations in Central and Southern Africa as each nation competes to exploit Africa's natural resources? How are they viewed by the international community with regard to their presence in Africa?
- Does racism, tribalism, ideology, and religion play a role in China, Russia, Iran, and other states where conflict has emerged or is emerging? How do they manifest?
- Does regionalism, racism, ideology, or history play the most prominent role in Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific region where increasing tensions and potential for conflict are emerging? How do they manifest?
- How much influence do cartels of different varieties and international business conglomerates have on foreign policy dealing with the U.S. military deployments overseas? Do such entities view themselves as virtual independent nations without an obligation of loyalty to traditional nation states?
- What long-term impact would a large-scale war (non-nuclear) between China and the United States have on their mutual economies? Impact on the world order?

Competition opens 1 January 2025 and closes 31 May 2025

1st Place: $1,000 and publication in *Military Review*
2nd Place: $750 and consideration for publication in *Military Review*
3rd Place: $500 and consideration for publication in *Military Review*

Prize money contributed by the Association of the United States Army

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

Happy Birthday, United States Army

Col. Andrew Morgado, U.S. Army
Director, Army University Press

On 14 June 2025, the United States Army celebrates its 250th birthday. Created by an act of the Continental Congress, ten newly formed companies marched to Boston to reinforce an amalgamation of New England militia fresh from their fight at Lexington and Concord. The "Continentals" from Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, when joined with their northern compatriots, created a new entity and marked a new phase in the conflict with the mother country.[1] This was a defining act of unity thirteen months ahead of the formal Declaration of Independence and the birth of a new nation.

This simplified origin story introduces several enduring themes of our Army's history. Among these are the unifying role of the Army as an institution, the culture of service and readiness, and most importantly, the centrality of the citizen-soldier to our identity. Gen. Creighton Abrams famously remarked, "People are not in the Army, they are the Army."[2] It is in this spirit that we dive into the archives of *Military Review* to find an article that commemorates the greatness of our Army by touching on the sources of its enduring strength. Col. Richard W. Whitney penned "A Fighting Heart for the Army's New Look" in April 1955.[3] Whitney emphasized the role of leadership and morale in maintaining the fighting capability of the Army. It is the spirit of the soldier that allows an army to fight, survive, and win.

To understand why Whitney's article and message is important, we must place his writing in its historical context. The mid-1950s was an inflection point in our Nation's and Army's history. As the leading member of a worldwide coalition that defeated the Axis powers, the United States was the most powerful nation on earth. In fulfilling this new role as the world's superpower, it maintained the largest standing peacetime army in its history.[4] This Army helped stabilize postwar Europe and fought back the North Koreans and Chinese to preserve the Republic of Korea. Despite these victories, dark clouds loomed.

In 1955, both new and familiar tensions bubbled to the surface. Key among them was President Dwight Eisenhower's "New Look" strategy. Facing a $9.9 billion deficit, Eisenhower advanced a strategy to pull forces back to the continental United States and rely on America's nuclear arsenal to serve as the main deterrent and central component of our defense.[5] The New Look was bitterly opposed by Gen. Matthew Ridgway, first as supreme Allied commander Europe and then as chief of staff of the Army. Ridgway and his fellow service chiefs expressed concern about the physical and morale ground America would cede by its absence from Europe and elsewhere. What role did the soldier play in this new strategy?

While one challenge came from above, the other emerged from below. The new-style citizen-soldier

was also coming to grips with the prolonged exposure to military service and its worldwide commitments. This concern manifested itself immediately following the end of the Second World War. Common to every postwar demobilization in American history, the desire to leave the service at the conclusion of hostilities was acute. The Army, spread around the world and strapped with occupation and reconstruction duties, was hard pressed for manpower and reluctant to immediately demobilize. The citizen-soldier and the American people could not reconcile the purported security needs with their intense desire to get soldiers back home.[6] Congress, attuned to the displeasure of their constituents, pressed the administration to study the problems of demobilization and investigate the reports of unfair treatment of enlisted soldiers in the process. And so, the Doolittle Board was born.

Mentioned by Whitney almost in passing, he identifies the Doolittle Board as almost a hindrance.[7] Anyone studying the Doolittle Board will recognize that nearly all the board's recommendations are part of today's Army.[8] Despite Whitney's disdain, the Doolittle Board identified the necessary components of a large standing Army of citizen-soldiers and what would become an all-volunteer Army. This included more and better training for officers, better food, fair leave accumulation, awards equity, and a fair, transparent legal system that ultimately became the Uniform Code of Military Justice.[9] Whitney and his generation represented the beginning of a transition period for our Army.

Whitney may not have been right about the effects and enduring legacy of the Doolittle Board, but he accurately captured some of the many strengths of the American soldier and Army.[10] Whitney's remedy for rebuilding the Army during its demobilization woes focused on a few key elements. First and foremost, good morale requires good leaders who know their soldiers and develop a mutual respect and confidence.[11] The Army, as an institution, enables and reinforces good leadership by emphasizing its history and lineage, focuses on building teams, invests in education, drives realistic training, and engages the citizenry to understand and invest in its Army.[12] Any Army leader today would recognize these points as axioms in our modern approach to leading and caring for soldiers.

The United States Army is a product of America. Citizens comprise its ranks. It represents the very best of who we are. It serves a key role in protecting our freedoms. We, the current generation, must perpetuate its legacy. Happy birthday, United States Army. ■

Notes

1. Army News Service, "Continental Congress Authorizes Army," Army.mil, 15 April 2016, https://www.army.mil/article/40562/continental_congress_authorizes_army; John W. Peabody, "The Army's Heritage as a Coalition Force," *Military Review* 73, no. 1 (January 1993): 21–26, https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p124201coll1/id/461/rec/9.

2. James T. Hirai and Ken Summers, "Leader Development and Education: Growing Leaders for the Future," *Military Review* 85, no. 3 (May-June 2005): 86–95, https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p124201coll1/id/171/rec/6.

3. Richard W. Whitney, "A Fighting Heart for the Army's New Look," *Military Review* 35, no. 1 (April 1955): 3–17, https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p124201coll1/id/757/rec/10.

4. Kevin P. Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing Discipline: The Doolittle Board and the Post World War Response to Criticism of the United States Army" (master's thesis, Duke University, 1983), https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA128437.

5. Robert Davis, *The Challenge of Adaptation: The US Army in the Aftermath of Conflict, 1953-2000* (Combat Studies Institute, 2008), 16, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/combat-studies-institute/csi-books/davis.pdf.

6. Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing Discipline," 88.

7. Whitney, "A Fighting Heart for the Army's New Look," 9.

8. Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing Discipline," 90.

9. Ibid., 91.

10. Whitney, "A Fighting Heart for the Army's New Look," 9.

11. Ibid., 8.

12. Ibid., 17.

January 31, 2025

Pathways to Becoming a Transformational Leader

The Army demands leaders who can not only achieve mission success but also inspire, develop, and transform their teams. Transformational leadership, grounded in Army doctrine, focuses on fostering an environment where individuals reach their highest potential and contribute to the mission with commitment and innovation. My expectations are to utilize the following tenants for developing Transformational Leaders:

Build Trust and Foster Shared Understanding (ADP 6-22)
Central to transformational leadership is the establishment of trust and a shared purpose. Effective leaders demonstrate integrity, uphold Army Values, and create a climate of trust. This environment allows subordinates to express ideas, collaborate openly, and contribute with confidence.

Lead with Vision and Purpose (ADP 6-0)
Transformational leaders must articulate a compelling vision that aligns with Army goals and mission objectives. Leaders should communicate intent clearly, empowering subordinates to act with initiative and creativity.

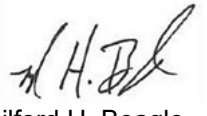
Adapt and Embrace Change (ADP 7-0)
The nature of our mission requires leaders to be adaptable and resilient. Transformational leaders are proactive in seeking new approaches, valuing innovation, and empowering their teams to think critically.

Develop and Mentor Subordinates (FM 6-22)
Leader development is at the heart of transformation. A transformational leader prioritizes their team's personal and professional development, ensuring that each Soldier and Civilian is equipped with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to tackle current and future challenges. This focus on growth fosters an environment where team members strive for continual improvement and innovation.

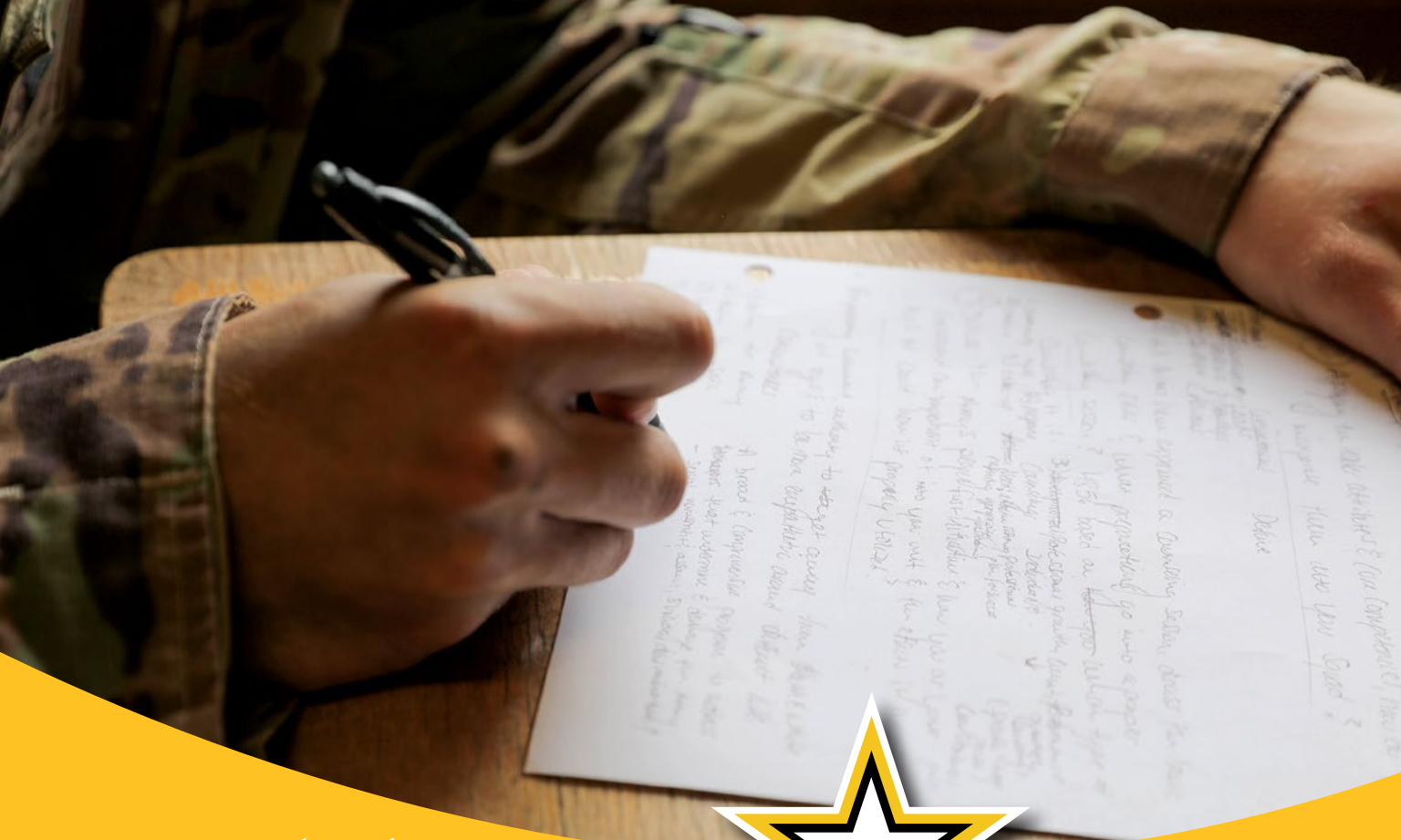
Inspire Motivation and Foster a Positive Culture (ADP 6-22)
Leaders should inspire and motivate others by setting high standards and maintaining a positive attitude. Transformational leaders show genuine passion for their work and convey this enthusiasm to their teams. Recognizing and celebrating successes, whether big or small, helps build a culture of motivation and shared pride.

Demonstrate Empathy and Understand Your Team (FM 6-22)
Empathy is a crucial quality in transformational leadership. Understanding and addressing the needs, concerns, and aspirations of subordinates leads to stronger bonds and improved morale. By demonstrating empathy, leaders show that they value their Soldiers not just as members of a team, but as individuals.

Transformational leadership is not merely a leadership style but a comprehensive approach to fostering an environment where Soldiers and Civilians are inspired, motivated, and empowered to excel. Through unwavering commitment to warfighting proficiency and readiness, we will uphold the integrity of our institution and enhance the lethality of our force, ensuring the Army remains a dominant force on the battlefield.



Milford H. Beagle, Jr.
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Commanding



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A Fighting Heart for the Army's New Look

Colonel Richard W. Whitney, *General Staff*
Executive, Office of the Comptroller of the Army, Department of the Army

Editor's note: *This article first appeared in the April 1955 edition of* Military Review. *The article is presented in its original style, unedited by our staff.*

The views expressed in this article are the author's and are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the Command and General Staff College.—The Editor.

As we stride breathlessly and enthusiastically from the age of atomic weapons into the thermonuclear era, let us pause just long enough to devote some overdue consideration to our greatest potential weapon—the morale of our fighting soldier. Without this weapon all others are impotent. If we devote the same measure of effort to developing this weapon that we expend in developing others, we shall be invincible. Is that worth pausing for? If you agree that it is, then join me in some soul-searching and watch out for the chips, because we shall let them fall where they may.

Each officer and noncommissioned officer in today's Army who deserves the title of leader or commander carries in the upper strata of his mind a constant awareness that the morale of his subordinates is the key to success in any military endeavor. Recognizing this, he strives, within the limits of his capabilities, to improve morale. All too frequently his efforts are remedial rather than preventative. In many cases his capabilities are restricted by inadequate training and experience or by his lack of one or more of the principal attributes of a successful leader. Often the morale of his troops is influenced by conditions which are beyond the leader's control.

Morale and Esprit

My purpose is to examine those agencies, activities, and conditions which influence the morale of the soldier, and which are within our Nation's ability to control, in order to evolve recommended measures for improving the standard of morale in our Army. Combat is the real test of a soldier's morale, and so it is toward the attitudes and reactions of the fighting soldier that my treatment of this subject is oriented. Nevertheless, my approach is influenced by the fact that a soldier's behavior during the ordeal of combat can be greatly influenced by the attitudes he acquires before he arrives in the combat zone. Because the two are so highly interrelated and interdependent, it is impractical to talk about morale without also discussing esprit de corps. How does morale compare to the other elements which go to make up the might of a nation's army? Napoleon paid tribute to the importance of morale by proclaiming, "In

The Army must eliminate from its precombat training and orientation programs all of the nonessentials which detract from our principal objective of ensuring the battle-readiness of the individual and the team

war, morale conditions make up threequarters of the game; the relative balance of manpower accounts only for the remaining quarter." The great military leaders of more recent warfare appear to support Napoleon's theory. Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery has stated, "High morale is a pearl of great price. The more I see of fighting, the more I am convinced that the big thing in war is morale." His colorful contemporary, General George S. Patton, Jr., said, "My theory is that a commander does what is necessary to accomplish his mission and that nearly 80 percent of his mission is to arouse morale in his men."

Innumerable examples could be cited wherein an upsurge of morale and esprit has turned the tide of battle or predetermined its outcome. Tolstoy, in his *War and Peace*, very aptly pays tribute to these intangible weapons which so frequently represent the balance of power in battle.

In warfare, the force of armies is the product of the mass multiplied by something else, an unknown "x." Military science, seeing in history an immense number of examples in which the mass of an army does not correspond with its force, as in which small numbers conquer large ones, vaguely recognizes the existence of this unknown factor, and tries to find it sometimes in some geometrical disposition of the troops, sometimes in superiority of weapons, and most often in the genius of the leaders. But none of these factors yield results that agree with the historical facts. "X" is the spirit of the army, the greater or less desire to fight and to face dangers on the part of all the men composing the army, which is quite apart from the question whether they are fighting under leaders of genius or not, with cudgels or with guns that fire 80 times a minute.

Leadership

Leadership is the greatest single influence on morale. Let us teach all potential leaders how to exercise that influence.

Even the most cursory examination of the causes of high or low morale among combat troops reveals the predominating influence of the leader on morale. **Our service schools continue to emphasize the technical rather than the human aspects of combat leadership training.** Leadership must encompass an acute awareness of all elements—tangible and intangible—which affect the morale of troops. What is more, leadership must embrace the capability of dealing with all of these elements in order to improve the morale of troops. In addition to providing inspiration by means of personal example, the combat leader must provide understanding, a respect for the dignity of the individual, security, relief, justice, body comforts, training, and an almost unending list of contributions which directly influence morale and esprit. Therefore, it follows that we who would be leaders must be taught not only what a leader is, but what he must do and how he can do it. Nearly every official act of a leader during combat influences morale directly or indirectly.

No single condition, agency, or activity possesses the potential of exerting direct, immediate, and widespread influence on morale and esprit which is possessed by the combat leader.

I am confident that our top commanders and the custodians of our personnel records will agree with me that a complete inventory of qualified combat leaders in the Army or its Reserve components is an impossible task. I am equally confident that they will agree that the supply—could it be established—does not, nor ever will, meet the demand. True, we can point out a relatively few among all ranks who have proved their leadership qualifications. Others have attained a hold on this distinction by a single feat or through the medium of publicity—some deservedly, others perhaps not. But where the true combat leader is most sorely needed, where his influence is the greatest, and where he is needed in the greatest number, the shortage is the most acute. I refer to the lower echelons of the combat elements where the influence of leadership on the soldier, who is undergoing his greatest ordeal, is the most direct.

Colonel Richard W. Whitney served in Europe with the First Special Service Force during World War II. He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College (1948) and of the Army War College (1954). He was a member of the faculty at the Command and General Staff College from 1948 to 1951. From 1951 to 1958, he was assigned to the Far East with the 24th, 25th, and 14th Infantry Divisions and as Chief of the Intelligence Division, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G2, Army Forces. He is presently Executive, Office of the Comptroller of the Army, Department of the Army.

Many officers and noncommissioned officers assigned in recent years to positions of leadership in combat have demonstrated their technical and tactical proficiency. However, a far smaller number displayed any degree of awareness of their power to influence morale and how to wield that power. Many of the latter would have been outstanding leaders had they possessed a knowledge of the rudiments of human leadership and an intelligent respect for the human factor.

The mere fact that our great American combat leaders in recent wars have stood out in such sharp focus is not only a tribute to them, but also a startling revelation that their number was small in proportion to the American forces involved. Perhaps even more startling is the fact that the demand for good combat leaders could not even be satisfied in the localized Korean conflict. If the deficiency was so acute for such a limited engagement, how painful will it be in any future global war? Nevertheless, with the present human resources available to the Army, we can increase significantly the output of both acceptable and outstanding combat leaders if we approach the training problem realistically.

Training

One certainly cannot say that the average senior Army officer, who is in a position to make or influence decisions, policies, and plans, is not acutely aware of the importance of training in leadership and of the value of high morale among troops. But it can be claimed that little more than lip service is paid to these highly important and related matters in our Army school system and unit training programs. Leadership and morale are unquestionably subjects which, based on psychology, do not appear to fit smoothly into the orderly and practical regimen of military training with such ease as do rifle marksmanship and close order drill.

Many of my contemporaries feel that we acquired in combat an understanding of a soldier's attitudes and reactions and how to influence them. How complete our understanding is we cannot know. The fact remains that we acquired this learning the hard way. And so have thousands of officers and noncommissioned officers in recent years learned about the human factor in the harsh atmosphere of combat. Much of this knowledge has been acquired at great cost to the individual, to the Army, and to the Nation. How much better armed would be our country if its military leaders of all ranks went into battle forearmed with this vital knowledge?

The following thesis governed teaching at the Canadian School of Infantry during World War II:

War is won by morale, fire, and movement in combination. They must, therefore, be studied together. Morale, which expresses itself in the aggressive spirit, is the only motive power in the face of the enemy—at least in a forward direction—that the war machine possesses. Without it, tactical conceptions are just academic wishful thinking, for they will not be implemented on the battlefield. Without it, your men will not move forward. The maintenance of our morale and the breaking down of that of the enemy, therefore, requires to be our first task. …

Now, let us examine briefly the emphasis placed on morale and leadership in the training of combat leaders in the United States Army. More officers are trained at The Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia—to occupy positions of leadership in combat—than at any other Army school. The present Program of Instruction for the Infantry Officer Candidate Course reveals that out of a total of 968 hours of instruction, only 18 are devoted to the subject of "Military Command and Leadership." Only in this brief period is any instruction directed specifically at morale and leadership—and part of this time is given to such remotely related subjects as "Public Information" and "Problems of Training." Although other periods of this 18-hour block are indirectly related to the combat situation, only 2 hours are devoted directly to "Command and Leadership Problems in Combat."

By way of comparison, the same program assigns 24 hours to instruction in "Drill and Command," during which the student is taught close order drill of the platoon and how to develop a good command voice. It is perhaps facetious—yet nevertheless pertinent—to recall that one of our greatest combat leaders—General Patton—attained that distinction more as a result of his devout interest in the individual soldier than as a result of his good command voice.

The Infantry School Program of Instruction for the Associate Infantry Company Officer Course allots 12 hours out of a total of 660 to "Command and Leadership," while 29 hours are given to personnel administration and 37 hours to logistics.

The 1,496-hour Infantry Officer Advanced Course allocates 20 hours to "Command and Leadership," as compared to 37 hours for personnel administration.

Admittedly, a military leader must be proficient in the technical aspects of his profession. He must know weapons, their characteristics, capabilities, and limitations. But more important, he must know men, their characteristics, capabilities, and limitations if he will be a leader in every sense of the word. Ask a few questions—as I did—of officers who have led in combat; ask them what proportion of their time during combat was devoted to the morale, esprit, and welfare of their men as compared with other activities. Without exception, the proportion is far greater. Ask them, now that they are out of combat, if they have since thought of measures they could have taken—but did not—to improve morale and esprit on various occasions. The only answer I received was "yes." Why must we learn the hard way and often too late?

Finally, ask them if anyone has ever solicited their opinions, experiences, and solutions relating to morale problems in combat. The answer is "no."

The Army is remiss in its failure to assemble and use the volume of valuable morale and leadership lessons available in the experiences of combat veterans.

The Army's research agencies spend large sums of money in conducting studies of vital interest to the service. But there is very little evidence that the Army has ever initiated research in the field of combat troop morale. We constantly seek new weapons and new methods for waging war. To this end we spend millions of dollars annually in research, development, and testing. Yet, we all but ignore the fact that the weapons and methods we seek can be no more effective than the men who must employ them.

Type of Training

Instruction in morale, esprit, and leadership in all Army service schools and unit schools must be given the emphasis it deserves, from the standpoint of time allotted, direction of effort, and quality of instruction.

Such instruction must be oriented toward combat. Combat is the end toward which all activities of the Army are oriented—directly or indirectly. A more equitable allocation of time to these subjects can be attained by a redistribution of time among other subjects in the curriculum. Such a redistribution can be based upon a survey among experienced leaders to determine where emphasis is improperly placed. Find out from them how much time and effort they have devoted to the various activities and duties in which they have received instruction. Determine from their testimony whether they spent more time in morale activities than in filling out personnel forms or in exercising their command voices. Also find out which of these activities contributed most to the successful accomplishment of their missions.

Training in morale, esprit, and leadership should not be restricted to the junior officer, officer candidate, or noncommissioned officer. New lessons are learned from each conflict and even during peacetime. As an officer advances in the Army and proceeds from combat to noncombat assignments, his knowledge of the human aspect requires refreshing against the day when he will again assume the role of combat leader. It must also be remembered that as an officer advances to higher command, his influence on the soldier is exercised more and more indirectly through his subordinate officers. All too frequently, in our ardent attention to the morale of the soldier, we are prone to overlook the morale of our subordinate officers. Morale is contagious, be it high or low. In a unit, morale and esprit depend greatly upon confidence in the leader. Thus, good leadership involves not only the influencing of enlisted men, but of all subordinates. Therefore, the highest commander must possess the same attributes as the good junior leader and must apply them throughout the chain of command.

Nor should training in morale, esprit, and leadership be restricted to the combat arms. The human factor is present in all Army activities and, more important, in any future large-scale conflict, modern weapons will extend the battle area so that more and more of our support personnel will be subjected to the stresses and morale effects of the combat environment. Not all of our potential leaders in the Army enjoy the advantages of formal training in one or more of our service schools. Therefore, this instruction must be injected into our unit training and our unit schools such as we choose to call "leader schools" or "noncommissioned officers' schools."

The Human Factor

Having determined the fair amount of time to be devoted to these "human factor" subjects in our

training programs, what are the next steps in establishing a realistic and profitable course of instruction? The first task is to assemble the wealth of available instructional material pertaining to morale and esprit which exists in the form of surveys, texts, and in the experiences of combat veterans.

During World War II, a civilian and military group in the Troop Information and Education Division of the War Department undertook an extensive, worldwide survey of the attitudes and reactions of individual American soldiers and junior leaders and the effects of these attitudes and reactions on unit accomplishments. The volumes of this survey, together with such valuable texts as S. L. A. Marshall's *Men Against Fire*, possess a store of proved facts and recommendations relating to the human factor in warfare. Here are men who, with adequate time and singleness of purpose, have recorded the information which we in the Army need. However, this is not enough. Still unrecorded and unevaluated are the thousands of experiences, situations, solutions—good and bad—conclusions, and recommendations which rest in the memories of soldiers of all ranks from Korea and World War II. We must act before these memories fade.

Operations Research Office should be charged immediately with undertaking a comprehensive survey and study designed to assemble, in usable form, the mass of information relating to morale, esprit, and leadership which is possessed by combat veterans of all ranks in the Army.

This agency, with the wholehearted assistance of our service schools and major commands, can do the job if given the priority this project demands.

Next, from this recommended Operations Research Office study and from other recognized works on these subjects, we must glean all pertinent facts, conclusions, and recommendations and use them as the basis for a realistic and profitable course of instruction for all leaders and potential leaders of all ranks and branches in the Army.

What must a leader know about the human factor in combat? I shall not attempt, in the limits of this article, to answer that question completely. But, among other things, he must learn how soldiers react to various combat stresses and what can be done to prevent or minimize adverse reactions. He must learn that men can actually fall asleep in the middle of an intense fire fight. He must be acquainted with the attitudes of thousands of World War II soldiers and junior leaders before, during, and after combat and how these attitudes were reflected in the accomplishments of their units. Believe it or not, this knowledge is available.

The potential leader should know that thousands of Korean combat infantry veterans chose as the most significant common denominator of a good fellow squad member that "he contribute to unit motivation in such ways as shouting encouragement during a fire fight or by joking or singing when things looked dark."

The student must also learn the value of respect for the individual soldier and his dignity; that discipline in today's Army is based upon mutual confidence and respect between leader and subordinates and is not purely a manifestation of authority. He must learn the meaning and application of morale courage. He must learn the indices of changing morale and how to recognize them. He must be given the advantage of the thousands of actions already taken by imaginative and resourceful leaders in combat to improve morale and esprit and to provide motivation. These are only a few isolated facts that a future unit leader could employ to ensure the most effective training, orientation, and organization of his unit for combat and he should acquire this knowledge before he assumes his first command.

Such courses of instruction, to be interesting, must avoid the technical. It is not necessary for us to learn what mental or physical processes, glands, or brain cells cause a soldier to react in a certain manner to a particular stress, depressant, or stimulus—leave that to the scientists. We must start with the accepted facts that a soldier does react in such fashions and learn how to prevent or counteract unfavorable reactions and how to stimulate desired reactions. Such courses of instruction should make liberal use of the panel type of instruction, inviting veterans of all ranks—including both the leaders and the led—to participate in free discussions.

The final step is to ensure that improved instruction in morale, esprit, and leadership is made available to all units for use in unit training in unit schools. Service schools should be charged with providing lesson plans or brochures to all field units.

Much of the petty criticism and resentment directed at the Army today—both privately and publicly—finds its source in former soldiers who served under one or more leaders who apparently lacked an understanding of the human factor. How much of this aftereffect of

war could have been avoided had our leadership training and our general knowledge of and respect for the human factor been adequate? I believe we could have avoided the harmful effects of the Doolittle Board and other measures aimed at "democratizing" our Army. Sound leadership training of our present and potential officers and noncommissioned officers will be a major step toward restoring the prestige and authority of our junior leaders which is a sorely needed measure.

Esprit de Corps

A boost to the esprit de corps of Army units is a boost to the morale of each team member.

There is no need here to develop the value of esprit de corps to the building of an effective fighting unit. High esprit in a unit will often overcome the individual morale problems of its members. Esprit is nothing more than a manifestation of confidence of men in each other and in their leaders. The indices of high esprit are pride in the unit, its history, its achievements, and its outstanding members. Here is the real team spirit which is by no means peculiar to the Army or to any military organization.

In all wars, esprit has caused many units to do more than their share. And in these units have been individuals whose morale was impaired but who, nevertheless, did their share because of their loyalty to the team. Unit pride among infantrymen has most frequently and lastingly centered itself in the regiment; among artillerymen, armored troops, and engineers in the battalion, The development of high esprit is a constant objective of the commanders of such units because it pays off in battle just as it pays off on the football field. To the individual soldier, the sense of belonging to such a team, enjoying the association and respect of its members, and sharing in its history-making achievements, is both motivation and morale stimulant.

Shortsighted Army policy over the years has prevented our attaining the optimum of morale and esprit in our combat units, first, by failing to preserve our famous fighting units and their traditions; second, by an impractical approach to the problems of combat rotation and replacement; and, third, by failing to provide the combat arms soldier with a home in the Army and a sense of belonging.

Seldom, if ever, at the outbreak of a war, have we known which of our units would become involved. Naturally, it fell to the lot of those units closest to the flame, or in the best state of preparedness, to strike the initial blow. Right from the start, the harried commanders of these units have had to face the problem of developing esprit and intense pride in the unit—usually among men who had just joined the unit to bring it to fighting strength. Losses among these units have been filled by individual strangers who, in many cases, have never heard of the unit before joining it. In battle there is little opportunity to inculcate these strangers with pride in the unit, its history, and its achievements.

Many of our famous fighting units—those with long histories of prideful achievement—have been inactivated for long periods of time between wars or during wars, or isolated in some inconspicuous assignment in the Zone of Interior. It sometimes appears that misguided economy or administrative convenience has ruled our heads and our hearts.

The Army has belatedly recognized the harmful effects of individual rotation on both the soldier and on the combat unit he joins. It has recently developed the 4-man team replacement package and is striving toward unit replacement by platoons. There is still much more that the Army can do without prohibitive cost in manpower and dollars.

Every soldier, from his recruitment to his discharge, desires to be identified with a unit—and a famous one, if possible. The Army can and must provide the combat arms soldier with a home in the Army. The British Army has adhered to this principle of esprit under economic restrictions far more austere than ours. They have also adhered to the principle of maintaining their famous fighting units in active status through the centuries. Their units are steeped in tradition and battle honors and identified by distinctive dress, insignia, nicknames, colors, and mottos. All officers and other ranks of the combat arms are members of these units as long as they are in the British Army and their unit's history becomes a part of them just as they become a part of the unit. The examples of British unit esprit in battle need no recounting. I do not imply that American units have never developed unit esprit in battle. I simply point out that a British unit goes into battle with a ready-made esprit.

Here is what we can do to improve unit esprit and morale in our fighting units. **First, the Army should activate and perpetuate as many as possible of the**

famous old fighting units of each of the combat arms, even at the expense of eliminating newer unit designations.

George Fielding Eliot points out that: *The strength of an army—its soul for that matter—resides in its fighting units. The central objective to which all planning at the highest level should be directed is the production and preservation of these fighting units; the regiments and separate battalions of infantry, artillery, armored troops, and engineers upon whose prideful performance in the hour of peril the safety of the nation is staked.*

We should not leave these units lying in mothballs or on the shelf as we have the famous 3d Infantry Regiment, *The Old Guard*, which has escorted live and dead dignitaries at our Nation's capital, while newer units with far less tradition have added battle streamers to their colors in Korea. Let us capitalize—as the British have done—on the traditions and color of these old units. An administrative problem to be sure, but esprit de corps will ring up the profits in combat.

Let us put combat rotation and replacement on a fair and realistic basis by holding the replacement package at the 4- or 6-man team, by extending the tour of duty in the combat zone, and by more frequent rotation of units into reserve.

We have already eliminated the "orphan of the storm"—that bewildered individual combat replacement who wanders homeless and friendless through our impersonal replacement pipeline. The 4- or 6-man replacement team is the best answer. Unit replacement by squad or larger unit will never fill the bill. First, losses in combat will disrupt any unit rotation procedure and adversely affect morale. What can you do with newly joined members of a unit due for rotation which will be fair to them and fair to others? Second, any commander will immediately leaven a newly arrived unit with combat veterans. This, too, will preclude smooth operation of the unit replacement program. Since the squad is the smallest tactical unit and most frequently the basis of patrol action, it, too, must include men with battle experience. It, therefore, follows that the 4- or 6-man team is the largest which can be integrated into a fighting command without disturbing orderly rotation procedure and without requiring a redistribution of combat experienced personnel.

Rotation is a necessary evil. It provides the combat soldier with a horizon. It protects his morale against that feeling of inevitability which pervades the mind after a prolonged period of combat. This is the feeling that "sooner or later, I'm going to get it." However, we have gone overboard in our rotation policy to the extent that tactical efficiency of units has been impaired. The most practical answer is to increase the over-all period of duty in the combat zone and, at the same time, provide as frequent rotation of units into reserve as the situation will permit. We have not always done the latter at each echelon of command.

The Plan

It is within our present capabilities to give every combat arms soldier a permanent home in the Army—and one of which he can be proud. The plan I shall discuss in relation to the infantry applies equally to the other combat arms. Simply stated, it is this. **Every combat arms soldier—officer and enlisted—should be permanently assigned to a unit which has both a home depot and an overseas, or "combat-ready" element.**

For every infantry division and regiment overseas or scheduled for overseas movement, there should be a training division and regiment with the same numerical designations in the Zone of Interior. Soldiers should be assigned to these regiments in their 4- or 6-man teams after completing basic training. In the home depot of the regiment, along with unit training, they will be steeped in the traditions, history, ceremonies, and other martial color which is a part of their regiment. The home regiment will furnish replacement teams as required to its overseas element. Thus, the combat replacement would travel with his teammates to a fighting unit of which he is already a member and in which he already has pride.

Upon return from combat, the veteran will rejoin his home unit, either in a training role, for processing, or for reassignment to a staff or branch immaterial job elsewhere. In all future troop assignments he will serve with his own regiment. He will always wear its insignia. These regiments will not draw personnel from one particular region of the country. Experiences of National Guard units in World War II revealed the effect of heavy battle losses from one locality. Rather, these regiments will be filled with a cross-section of the country's manpower, both geographically and qualitatively.

I recognize that such a plan is not foolproof. There will be occasions when unusually heavy losses by the

overseas unit cannot be satisfied by its home depot. Therefore, it may be necessary to establish at least one independent training division at home to meet such emergencies and possibly to meet the requirements of independent units or newly formed units and task forces.

Motivation

American society has shirked its responsibility for providing proper motivation to the future soldier.

There is a fine but distinct line which separates the motivating factor from the morale stimulant. Motivation provides man with the will to do something he would not otherwise do or to do that thing with greater enthusiasm than he would otherwise do it. In battle, it is the force which makes him keep moving and—on occasion—to do more than his assigned duties demand. On the other hand, the morale stimulant simply makes adversity more bearable. The man who is strongly motivated has few morale problems. For example, the man who fights to avenge his brother's death at the hands of the enemy is far more immune to combat stresses and morale depressants than the man who lacks strong motivation.

It is well within the capabilities of the Army to provide morale stimuli to its soldiers—even in the battle area. The capabilities of the Army to provide motivation to the soldier who is about to enter battle are far more restricted. It is within the capabilities of American society and civilian agencies to stimulate the morale of the fighting soldier before and during combat. **But more noteworthy is the fact that it is well within the capabilities of our social institutions to provide motivation to our fighting men before they enter battle and even before they enter the Army. In the exercise of this last capability, we Americans have failed.**

It is indeed a lamentable commentary upon our American educational system, our news media, and particularly upon American parental guidance which General Omar Bradley, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, expressed in the following words:

Despite the opportunities for free education that exist in these United States, too many young men come into the Army appallingly ill-informed on the issues and crises that warrant their service. American education has failed to give many young men an alert appreciation of their liberties and a consequent explanation of their obligations. We have taught our young people how to plunder our resources, how to get jobs, how to get rich. We have neglected to tell them that democracy is a 2-way street—that with its benefits comes the necessity for also giving service.

Is it not the mission of American education to prepare the child and adolescent to become a useful citizen in a democratic way of life with an awareness of his privileges and his obligations? If so, American education has not accomplished that mission. In this generation, millions of young men found that the way of life for which they had supposedly been prepared, took them to battlefields all over the world. The Army did all it could in the brief time allowed to prepare them. Our educational institutions did not do their share in the preparation. I am pointing the finger at our educational institutions, our news media, and particularly at American parental guidance. In the foreseeable future, more millions of men and women will find themselves in the Armed Forces, perhaps not in battle, but preparing for battle. Our social institutions must accept their share of the preparation.

Our children—as soon as they are capable of absorbing such knowledge—must be taught the underlying basis of our country's foreign policy and its associated military policy. If the comic book technique is the most effective media, let us accept it—some of our churches already have. I do not propose that our schools and informational media glorify military service. However, I do propose that they treat it with the respect that it deserves and demands. A course in current affairs which treats with foreign and military policies, current defense activities, and the aims and activities of hostile governments should be required in all high schools and higher educational institutions.

Our annual defense appropriations are the greatest financial burden borne by the American public. Economy measures are constantly applied with public support to lessen that burden. And yet, a part of these appropriations are used by the Army to teach the new soldier "Why you are in the Army" and "Why the Army is in Korea." This teaching must be conducted in the already too-short time available for training the new soldier in his job. Furthermore, his reaction is most frequently, "So what? I'm in the Army. Why tell me now?" Why should the Army, under a decreasing budget, foot the bill for society's failure?

I recommend that our new Department of Health, Education, and Welfare be charged with the task of bringing our educational institutions into line and assisting them to discharge their full responsibilities under a Democracy. I further recommend that the Army having the most to gain start the ball rolling by soliciting the aid of the other services, news media, the President, the Congress, and the churches in order to ensure the strongest possible unified support of this project.

With the natural American favoritism for the underdog and a natural militant resentment toward "our guys getting pushed around," our young people, if given the facts of the matter, will enter the military service already equipped with their basic motivation and orientation. And those who do not enter the military service will provide the military with a more unified, active, and co-operative support from the homefront.

The Army can no longer afford to pay for society's failure to provide the soldier with his basic motivation and orientation. But it was a natural development, in the face of society's failure, that the Army should undertake the basic orientation and motivation of the recruit. However, it has been established beyond question that the recruit—already in the Army and reconciled to the fact that he must train to fight—is primarily interested in how to get on with the job and how to survive while doing it. Army leaders bemoan the fact that too much of the average soldier's time is spent in the pipeline—which includes training—and that the time is too short during which he is available for gainful employment in the job for which he is trained. Yet we have been carried away by our Troop Information Program to the point where it detracts needlessly from gainful training and employment. **Precombat orientation and motivation of the soldier is dissipated by our effort to teach him too many nonessentials.**

The Stouffer survey—conducted during World War II by the Army's own Troop Information and Education Division—arrived at the following conclusion based upon thousands of interviews and questionnaires:

… the American soldier [was] typically without deep personal commitment to a war which he nevertheless accepted as unavoidable. … in general, he gave little concern to the conflicting values underlying the military struggle. Although he showed a strong but tacit patriotism, this usually did not lead him in his thinking to subordinate his personal interests to the furtherance of ideal aims and values. The core of the attitude among combat men seemed to be that any talk that did not subordinate idealistic values and patriotism to the harsher realities of the combat situation was hypocritical and a person who expressed such ideas was a hypocrite.

S. L. A. Marshall, in an interview, stated that he personally conducted tests among groups of recruits to determine where their primary interests lay. He attempted to stimulate their interest by references to such subjects as the basic issues of the war, what benefits the soldier can obtain from the Army, and the coming USO shows. He concluded that never was there a single spark of interest in these matters.

But as soon as a sergeant walked in and set down a mortar or a machinegun, they immediately came to life, crowded around the weapon, and started asking questions. These men knew why they were in the Army and were interested in nothing but how to learn the job they were going to perform.

Marshall stated that he conducted these tests to prove to senior officers that the emphasis in our orientation of the recruit was wrong and based upon a misconception of the average soldier's aims and interests. "But," he said, "these officers appeared unconvinced."

Has the Army paid any heed to these experts? Let us look at another report. In 1949, a committee appointed by the President examined the Army's Troop Information and Education Program in the field. The findings of this committee were unanimously laudatory. Here is a bit of supporting testimony from the committee's report to the President:

One of our staff reports, commenting on an exceptionally fine discussion group held by a young paratroop platoon leader, had this to say:

'It was obvious that this was an exceptional officer who had built up a close relationship with his men, many of whom were uneducated and not very alert. Nevertheless, it was a treat to see the way they stood up and discussed foreign trade *(sic) with him. He showed an exceptional knack at eliciting comments from the men, coaxing them, wheedling them, ordering them, but in the end gaining a general agreement on the value of* foreign aid *(sic) and stimulating them to a continued interest in related topics.'*

It was obvious that here was a young officer who was developing his capacities for leadership through his participation in the Information and Education Program.

Let me say first, that any officer who can order the interest of his men is indeed exceptional. And without intent to take unfair advantage of what may be an editor's oversight, I will wager that many of these men knew not, nor cared, whether they were discussing foreign trade or foreign aid. The "coaxing, wheedling, and ordering" is proof of that. But what is more important, this report included hearty indorsements of the program by many senior commanders but not one opinion of a soldier subjected to the program.

A troop information program which runs the gamut from "Tibet, the Roof of the World" to "Customs and Traditions of the Turkish Navy" is not a program which develops motivation or in any way prepares the soldier for battle. War is a pretty grim business and men preparing for war are aware of that. They know that their principal job will be to kill and destroy. Our training mission is to teach them to do this job efficiently and quickly and to survive while doing it. Proper motivation and high morale will ease their task and the training task. They come to us with potentially strong motivating forces such as self-pride, the desire for approbation, pride in their country, design to win, a willingness to go "all-out" to keep from letting the rest of the team down. These are the same forces that have driven them since childhood and have continued to drive them through high school and college football. These are the motivating forces which our troop information programs and our basic and unit training programs must seek to develop.

The principal bulwark of fighting morale is confidence—confidence of the soldier in himself, in his teammates, in his leaders, in his own weapon and those weapons which support him. Only by intense and concentrated training and association can this confidence be developed to the desired degree that will sustain the soldier in combat. It is in the interest of the quality of the finished soldier, rather than in the interest of economy, that we should seek to eliminate all deviations from this objective.

I subscribe to the contention of S. L. A. Marshall who believes that in the recruit's earliest training, we must give him the facts of life—give him an understanding of the battlefield, more realistic training. Cut out the lectures on national policy and strategy, tactics and logistics of high command. Give him "the simple details of common experience on the battlefield. Substitute reality for romance." The soldier must be given some idea of the loneliness, the fears, the stresses and morale depressants he will encounter in combat and he must be taught how to counteract and minimize them; in this way they will come as no surprise and he will be better able to control them.

In short, the Army must eliminate from its precombat training and orientation programs the "long hair" discussions, the "flag-waving," and the other nonessentials which detract from our principal objective of ensuring the battle-readiness of the individual and the team.

External Relations

Now, more than ever, we need a wholesome relationship between the Army, the public, the Congress, and the press. Never in history has any organization been subjected to such a volume of day-to-day critical analysis as our Army. Never has any organization had so many living former members who, by virtue of their brief membership, have qualified themselves as experts in the policies and affairs of that organization. Never has one organization influenced the lives of so many in a way which has resulted in sacrifice and deprivation. Furthermore, no single organization has ever before absorbed more of the tax dollar. Lastly, never in history has criticism been so one-sided. Is it any wonder, therefore, that the Army's public relations program has long been a defensive program? Have the critics ever stopped to consider the impact of their blasts on morale in our Armed Forces—even among troops in combat? Have they ever considered that the morale of the leaders they attack can influence by contagion the morale of the troops these leaders command?

A servant—who is permitted no right to retaliate—can be publicly browbeaten for a limited time, beyond which the results can be nothing but dire. Our military leaders are public servants who must accept criticism from Congress and the press but who cannot criticize in return. Here is what one civilian official thinks about this unfortunate condition and its effects. Former Assistant Secretary of the Army, James P. Mitchell writes:

Nothing affects the morale of our soldiers more than a feeling that the Army and the uniform are not held in esteem by the citizenry. Any action by any of us that leads to that conclusion strikes at morale and thus at efficiency. Such an approach should not inhibit healthy criticism

which, in a democracy is natural, expected, and necessary. However, there is a very definite line between healthy, intelligent criticism, and castigation of those who, for want of a better term, are called 'the brass.'

As a result of the present unwholesome relationship between the Army, the Congress, and the press, Army prestige, discipline, and combat morale have suffered.

The very nature of Army organization, its mission and activities, the source of its support, dictate Army policy as one of receptiveness to criticism. Our lawmakers—as the spokesmen of the public—possess the greatest authority to criticize. Within the Army, we try to adhere to a policy of criticizing subordinates in private. Obviously, criticizing a leader in the presence of others—including his subordinates—not only shows disrespect for the individual, but also affects adversely his morale and that of his subordinates. Public criticism of our military leaders and their activities by Congress and the press cannot help but create food for thought and conversation throughout the ranks of our Armed Forces. It cannot help but weaken morale as well as the very structure of military discipline which is based upon mutual respect and confidence between soldier and commander.

Oftentimes such criticism is founded upon misinformation, insufficient information, or no information. It need not be directed at a particular leader to have an ill effect. For example, a public reference to "the plush living enjoyed by Officers in the Tokyo area" does not help the morale of the tired and dirty rifleman in his Korean foxhole. Yet, such utterances are made without thought of their full effect and often without respect for the facts. I am certain that many such statements would never be made if the spokesman gave due consideration to the over-all effect.

I know of no other bodies wherein we can find men who are more conscientious or more dedicated to the welfare of our Nation than in our Congress, among the press, and in the officer corps of our military services. Surely here is the basis for a mutual and healthy respect which is all that is needed to iron out differences of opinion in an atmosphere of friendly and inconspicuous co-operation. I do not mean to propose that Congressmen or the press be gagged or that these three agencies conduct all of their liaison under a cloak of secrecy.

I only suggest that certain matters—which can have a far-reaching and harmful effect upon morale and discipline or upon the prestige of a military service—be discussed on a "leader-to-leader" basis toward a constructive solution. Furthermore, this relationship, to be practical, must be bound by a written code of ethics.

You may ask, "Who must make the first move toward establishing this relationship?" The answer is, *he who possesses the most moral courage*. Obviously, the Army has the greatest need for such a relationship and-if no one else makes the first move—we in the Army must muster the moral courage to make it. Such a relationship may occasionally require a Congressman to subordinate political aspirations for the good of national security. It may frequently require a columnist or correspondent to "tone down" an exciting story by presenting both sides of the issue. It may even, on occasion, require a military leader to jeopardize his future by standing his ground in the face of opposition from the Congress or the press. But when I look at the caliber and integrity of our top military leaders, our leaders in Congress and in the world of journalism, it is inconceivable to me that such a relationship cannot be established. This relationship with the spokesmen of the public and the informers of the public is essential if we are to expect unified public support of our military ventures, an acceptance by the public of its obligations, and a healthy respect for the military services.

It is time for the Army's public relations program to shift from the defensive to an aggressive selling campaign.

Public apathy and resentment toward the military and its activities is largely due to the lack of a sound, imaginative, and aggressive public relations program in the Army. The recent report of Admiral Womble's committee stated in part:

There is ample evidence of a lack of understanding on the part of the people concerning the necessity for implementing our present national military policy. It appears that a portion of this unfavorable attitude stems from the recent conduct of hostilities in Korea. Certainly these hostilities were conducted without the degree of public support afforded to two preceding worldwide conflicts.

The morale of the fighting soldier demands that his trials and sacrifices he recognized and appreciated. The esprit of the Army demands unified public support. Public apathy or resentment cannot only lower morale

in the combat zone, but it can also influence military planning and thereby determine the course of a war.

I have already criticized Congress and the press for their share in the responsibility for this condition. The Army also deserves its share of the criticism. **Our Army public relations program must leave its defensive positions and enter upon a sound and aggressive educational campaign designed to present timely and complete "facts of life" to the public and to enlist its unified support of military programs and of individual units.**

We must not depend so heavily on the press and public officialdom to "sell our product" and to unite the public behind our policies and programs. The Army draws capable men from every walk of life. Certainly this provides the capability of establishing and maintaining a promotion and merchandizing program equal to or better than that of any business or industry in the Nation. We cannot admit that our product is harder to sell when to date we have done little more than attempt to defend that product. It is time we directed our sales effort at the public which elects the Congress instead of devoting our major selling effort to the Congress.

Let us go to work on the public. If they are apathetic, it is our fault. A soldier in a combat unit in Korea wrote to his hometown explaining that his platoon was trying to help an orphanage. The entire town pitched in enthusiastically to help in this project, and it was not a one-time proposition. A lasting and friendly liaison was established between a small American town and a small fighting unit in Korea. There are hundreds of similar instances from the Korean conflict alone. Can we justly accuse such a public of apathy? If one soldier can stir up such unified local public support, what could the Army do if it tried? Why not approach our cities and towns and invite them to "adopt" overseas units as some have already done?

The American soldier, by nature, is a champion of the underprivileged. Even in the combat zone he will give his pay and his spare time to a worthy cause. The public which produced this soldier has the same heart and soul. Fraternal, religious, and business organizations would cheerfully handle the administrative burdens of such a project. Here, I believe, is one suggestion which would start the ball rolling toward unified public support, higher combat morale, and a warmer international relationship and one which might also take some of the burden of foreign aid and rehabilitation off the Army and other Government agencies.

Needless to say, I have spoken for myself. Many of the ideas expressed herein are by no means original. Many of the issues which I have treated are somewhat sensitive and controversial. But let me say that my morale has been partially sustained by the fact that never—during my career in the Army—have I been restrained from expressing my opinion on any controversial issue within the limits imposed by good taste and security classification. ■

It is of the utmost importance that everything possible be done to create an atmosphere conducive to the maintenance of a career military service, clothed in dignity and honor, which will be attractive to the highest type of young American. Nothing is more detrimental to the service than a feeling among its personnel that they are held in low esteem by their fellow citizens. Any action which fosters such a conclusion strikes at the tap roots of our security.

—Secretary of the Army Robert T. Stevens

Fortifying Operational Readiness in the Pacific

A Strategic Blueprint

Brig. Gen. Eric Landry, Canadian Army
Lt. Col. Cynthia Holuta, U.S. Army
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Maj. Benjamen Kochheiser, U.S. Army

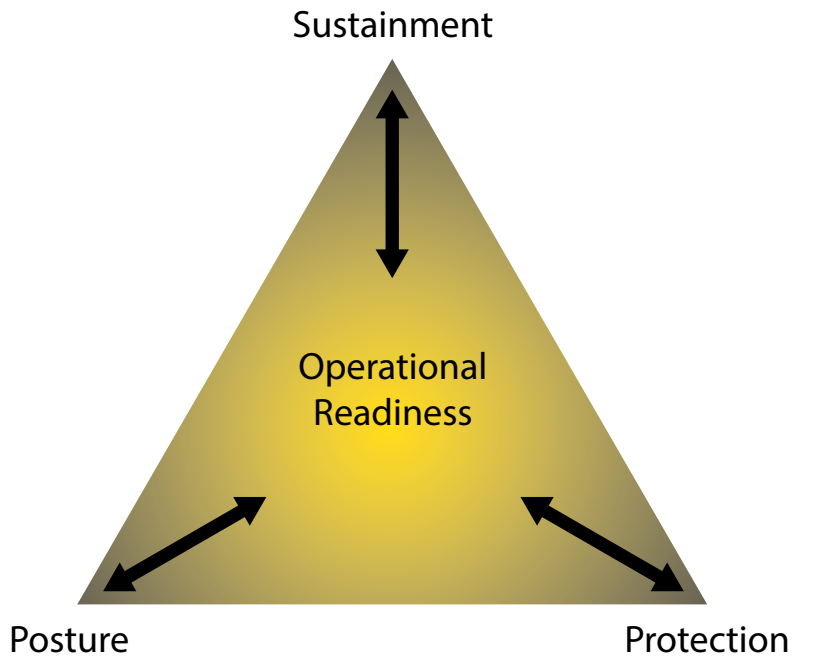
The Battle for Manila in February and March 1945 was one of the most harrowing and significant conflicts of World War II, marking a pivotal moment in the Pacific theater. Following the liberation of the Philippines from Japanese occupation, American forces, alongside Filipino guerrillas, faced fierce resistance as they fought to recapture Manila. The monthlong battle devolved into intense street-to-street fighting characterized by widespread destruction and civilian casualties. Using similar guerrilla tactics employed by Hamas against the Israel Defense Forces in Gaza today, the Japanese defenders, entrenched in fortified buildings linked by tunnels, were fighting amongst the local population and inflicted heavy losses on the advancing Allied forces.[1] Despite the challenges, American troops eventually prevailed but at a staggering cost of both military and civilian lives. The Battle for Manila highlighted the complexities of operations in the Indo-Pacific and the challenges of readiness for operations.

The U.S. Army gleaned crucial lessons on operational readiness from the Battle for Manila. The need for meticulous planning and coordination became paramount, as the chaotic nature of urban environments demanded precise intelligence, communication, and maneuverability. It underscored the importance of integrating infantry with armor and artillery support, as well as utilizing air and naval assets effectively to neutralize fortified positions and minimize collateral damage. The experience also emphasized the necessity of capturing key political and critical infrastructure locations that were essential for the population to survive.[2] The battle highlighted the imperative of humanitarian considerations in military operations, creating an impetus for strategies that prioritize civilian safety and minimize the impact of conflict on noncombatants. These lessons ultimately contributed to three key considerations when planning the liberation of Manila: protecting friendly troops and civilians, posturing thirty-five thousand army troops to land and fight, and sustaining operations.[3] Protecting friendly forces and civilians required limiting heavy bombing, employing newly developed aerial delivery, and improving artillery and infantry coordination. Posturing a large quantity of ground troops required prioritizing the capture of seaports, and sustaining operations for long periods required creative employment of newly developed vehicle platforms. Ultimately, the Battle for Manila became a pivotal case study for future military planning, shaping doctrines and practices that continue to influence warfare strategies to this day.

Medics assigned to the 37th Infantry Division give plasma to a soldier wounded during a battle inside the walled city of Intramuros, a sixteenth-century Spanish fort, on 25 February 1945 in Manila, Philippines. (Photo courtesy of the Ohio Army National Guard Historical Collections)

The Indo-Pacific region, America's First Corps' main operations area, has long been a focal point for global geopolitics, presenting both opportunities and challenges for the U.S. Army.[4] Drawing on historical lessons, contemporary strategies, and future outlooks, fortifying operational readiness in the Pacific necessitates a comprehensive approach. "Winning the First fight is critical."[5] As U.S. Army Gen. Andrew Poppas stated, "This comes down to foundational readiness."[6] Tactical readiness is routinely built both within the United States and through Pathways operations; however, qualifying and quantifying operational readiness is more complex.[7] For the purposes of this article, operational readiness is defined as the ability of Army forces to efficiently execute operations and conduct campaigns in collaboration with combined joint forces.[8]

The challenge of achieving operational readiness in the Indo-Pacific can be managed through the framework defined in Gen. Xavier Brunson's "Three Kings of the Pacific": protection, posture, and sustainment.[9] Each of these pillars makes an important contribution to any military's operational readiness. Each of them is closely nested in U.S. Army doctrine, and each of them face unique challenges in the Indo-Pacific.[10] Therefore, establishing the right balance among these three pillars is at the heart of the problem—noting that the "right balance" may indeed be a deliberate imbalance in one or more pillars. Moreover, given the noncontiguous archipelagic operational environment, each pillar can often be in competition for resources and prioritization. This tension is the challenge of operational readiness, one that requires consistent



(Figure by authors)

Figure. The Operational Readiness Triad

assessment and management and is the heart of managing I Corps' operations.

The Tension of Operational Readiness

The three pillars both contribute to and detract from operational readiness. The amount to which they do so is always changing based on the environment—a large portion of which remains outside of the U.S. Army's control but within its ability to influence. Importantly, the three pillars are often in competition with one another as improving one can often degrade another. For example, an aggressive posture for command and control in the First Island Chain, protected across all domains from adversaries, could extend the lines of communication and create a sustainment vulnerability in a contested logistics environment.[11] Conversely, addressing this challenge by focusing on protecting the lines of communication that sustainment is reliant upon could weaken the protection of forward nodes because it dilutes the efforts of the joint force's finite protection resources.[12] Lastly, prioritizing protection and sustainment by staying in the third island chain (Hawaii and Alaska) or at the home station operations center could seriously alter I Corps' contribution to deterrence. Each of these options may be suitable, dependent on the operational environment (OE).

To truly understand I Corps' operational readiness requires a constant assessment of where I Corps sits within what the authors define as the operational readiness triad (see the figure). Taken a step further, such an assessment must be compared to a broader I Corps' OE assessment to enable effective adaptation and decision-making. Yet this cannot be achieved without first appreciating the pillars of operational readiness in both isolation and as they relate to one another, and the means to measure them.

Protection

Protection is the "related tasks and systems that preserve the force so the commander can apply maximum combat power to accomplish the mission."[13] Protection is achieved through technology as well as the employment of forces, which makes it a multidomain (and even multiagency) problem. Therefore, while only part of the equation, investment in modernization and innovative technologies is paramount for protection. Prioritizing the development and deployment of advanced systems such as long-range precision fires, next-generation combat vehicles, and resilient communication networks fortifies the Army's ability to deter aggression and defend against evolving threats. Beyond investing in and developing antiaccess/area denial capabilities and advanced missile defense systems, and given the significance of cyber threats, enhancing cyber capabilities and information security measures is crucial. The U.S. Army must continuously fortify its cyber defenses, conduct regular assessments, and invest in training to counter cyberattacks that could compromise operational readiness and information integrity. Cyber defense measures must be bolstered to safeguard critical infrastructure and networks from sophisticated threats. Developing such multidomain protection capabilities not only improves the obvious protection of the U.S. force but also the interests of critical partners and allies across the OE.

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) member Lt. Col. Koishi Hiroshi (*center*) briefs U.S. Army soldiers and JGSDF members about supply routes and resources during a bilateral sustainment brief on 10 December 2023 during Yama Sakura at Camp Sendai, Japan. As a part of U.S. Army Pacific's Operation Pathways, the Yama Sakura exercise is the first U.S. Army, JGSDF, and Australian army command-post exercise based in Japan. For over forty years, this exercise has demonstrated a continued commitment by both the United States and Japan to work together as dedicated allies in support of the U.S.-Japan security treaty and for continued peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. (Photo by Spc. Nolan Brewer, U.S. Army)

The distributed nature of the fight in the Indo-Pacific region significantly influences protection strategies through several key aspects and demands innovative approaches to protection that leverage geography, advanced technology, and tactical deception. Military assets are spread across multiple islands and maritime zones, reducing vulnerability to concentrated strikes. This dispersion complicates an adversary's targeting efforts and increases the survivability of forces by enhancing the ability to evade detection and engage from unexpected positions. The region's varied geography, ranging from dense jungles to remote islands, offers natural concealment that makes it harder for adversaries to locate and target these assets.

To minimize detection, U.S. Army forces must utilize low-visibility communication methods and minimize emissions from radar and electronic systems to avoid electronic warfare tactics employed by adversaries. This should be reinforced by emitting false signals or deploying decoys to mislead enemy sensors, making it challenging to distinguish between real and fake targets. Since it is increasingly used for reconnaissance, protecting against space-based observation is also critical. This includes employing tactics to obscure thermal and radar signatures. Developing capabilities to counteract or degrade adversarial satellite surveillance (e.g., antisatellite weapons, electronic warfare) is essential to maintaining operational security and ensuring the effectiveness of dispersed forces.

In the Indo-Pacific region, I Corps is likely to operate over numerous islands separated by hundreds of kilometers that may be sovereign territory to one or more other nations. This renders the protection of I Corps and the management of rear areas a complex endeavor that requires deliberate integration into operational planning and the employment of forces. While I Corps is expected to receive additional

enabling units such as maneuver enhancement brigades under direct command, it must also leverage the theater-level capabilities provided by flanking formations in the joint operational area. Further, multinational cooperation in such an environment is near essential for protection, which poses possibly both the biggest challenge and benefit for I Corps.

As briefly described, technology and force employment have key roles to play in protection and operational readiness. Both occur over a relatively long term, compared to how swiftly changes in the OE can occur, and their effects can be somewhat intangible. As such, measuring their impacts is often a complex endeavor, and the impacts of changes are never certain. Despite this constraint, the following areas are a valuable means to build and assess I Corps' protection as it relates to operational readiness.

To overcome the absence of a NATO-like alliance in the region, I Corps must develop and expand the network of allies and partners created at the strategic level. Participation in multinational forums and conferences such as the Land Forces Pacific and the Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference enhances operational readiness in the Indo-Pacific region by promoting information sharing, standardization of practices, joint training exercises, and strategic partnerships. These engagements contribute to a more cohesive and capable multinational force prepared to address diverse security challenges across the vast expanse of the Indo-Pacific region. These forums facilitate extensive information sharing among participating nations where insights on regional security challenges, emerging threats, and best practices in defense strategies are shared. This collective knowledge helps nations in the Indo-Pacific region to better understand each other's capabilities and intentions, fostering trust and collaboration.

Another way to indicate progress for better regional protection is the identification of capability gaps that exist in partner nations. Discrepancies or deficiencies in capabilities can be identified early on, enabling collaborative efforts to address these gaps through training programs, equipment upgrades, or shared resources. Military planners can better coordinate joint operations by allocating responsibilities based on capabilities, conducting joint exercises that target specific training objectives, and refining operational procedures to optimize combined efforts. For this reason, I Corps keeps an extensive record of its partners' training objectives during Operation Pathways exercises.

Lastly, and linked to the identified capability gaps, is the development and deployment of advanced technologies, including satellite communication systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, and cyber defense capabilities contributing to a safer region. By integrating these technologies into exercises, forces can test and refine the employment of innovative equipment and systems, ensuring they are prepared to leverage technological advantages in operational scenarios. Further, the lessons learned from multinational exercises go on to inform future training priorities and operational concepts, thereby creating a positive cycle of improvement. This iterative process enables military forces to remain agile and responsive; as well as capable of adjusting tactics, techniques, and procedures based on real-world experiences and feedback from partner nations. As shall be seen, such multinational cooperation in the pursuit of protection also positively contributes to force posture.

Posture

Establishing an effective posture in the Indo-Pacific begins with strategic alignment. Nations in the region need to define clear objectives and priorities that are considered within the OE, particularly against emerging and evolving threats, regional dynamics, and geopolitical complexities. A strong posture involves proactively approaching regional actors by acknowledging the diverse nature of challenges, from territorial disputes to emerging technologies, within the Indo-Pacific. It also involves maintaining a visible and persistent presence. Rotational deployments of troops to key locations in the region such as Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Guam reinforce deterrence and readiness. This presence not only demonstrates dedication but also facilitates a prompt reaction to emerging threats and fosters operational preparedness in advance, all the while establishing and fortifying strategic footholds and promoting compatibility with regional partners. Strengthening expeditionary capabilities enables rapid response and agility to address emerging threats. According to Adm. Samuel Paparo, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the forward bases and rotational joint force provide persistent, combat-credible presence throughout the western

Pacific. "This is the most effective way the military can demonstrate our commitment and resolve to competitors, deter aggression, and assure allies and partners."[14]

Developed by U.S. Army Pacific, Operation Pathways stitches together a series of over forty army-to-army joint exercises into what is described by retired Gen. Charles Flynn as a campaign for good.[15] I Corps participates in most of these exercises, which have evolved from bilateral to multilateral and have grown in scope, scale, and realism, enhancing technical, procedural, and human interoperability.[16] These events are significantly increasing concepts of credible deterrence based on a highly trained, properly equipped, quick-response force.

Organizing a tailored force structure is crucial. It involves deploying assets strategically to address specific threats and maintain a credible deterrence. The creation of the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center allows the brigades of I Corps to generate tactical readiness while training with allies and partners in the environment that also enhances operational readiness. These forces can then be projected on various Pathways exercises where the readiness generated can be applied. This contributes to deterring adversaries through threat-driven cooperation using a mix of air, naval, and ground capabilities augmented by cyber and space forces, which are orchestrated to respond swiftly and effectively. The exportable nature of the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center enables allies and partners to benefit from world-class technical and tactical expertise during specific exercises designed to meet their needs and conducted in their home countries.

Deterrence, through the activities highlighted above, also contributes to protection. However, the significant number of exercises within Operation Pathways also strains the testing and deployment of protection technologies given such technology's finite nature. Further, deploying and testing protection technologies with partners and allies through Operation Pathways can be a difficult sustainment task due to the near constant movement of personnel and equipment across the Indo-Pacific to support the training objectives. Additionally, while widespread deployment of personnel enhances posture, it is difficult to achieve task-organized protection for multiple task forces that are tailored to the specific nature of a multinational exercise and not necessarily the current OE. These simple examples serve to highlight the importance of building and assessing posture both of itself, but also how it relates to protection and sustainment. Therefore, senior leaders need a thoughtful approach to building metrics to gauge the U.S. Army's posture in the region.

The international exercises comprised in Operation Pathways build operational readiness by applying tactical readiness generated in the continental United States. They provide opportunities for diverse participation in realistic training scenarios. These exercises incentivize military forces to be well-prepared, adaptable, and interoperable, ready to respond effectively to the

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Army mariners discharge vehicles on the beach via the causeway ferry as part of a joint logistics over the shore (JLOTS) operation during Talisman Sabre 2023 in Bowen, Australia, 31 July 2023. JLOTS demonstrates the critical capability of bringing vehicles and equipment to the shore in austere environments or when port facilities are unavailable. Talisman Sabre is hosted by Australia and the United States with multinational participation, advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific by strengthening relationships and interoperability among key allies and enhancing their collective capabilities to respond to a wide array of potential security concerns. (Photo by Maj. Jonathon Daniell, 8th Theater Sustainment Command)

complex security challenges of the region and beyond. Therefore, increased desire for international participation in Operation Pathways exercises is a sign of success. Diverse participation allows for interoperability testing and fosters relationships between allied and partner nations. As more countries join these exercises, the opportunity for joint operations and collective defense strategies grows, improving operational readiness.

Any enhancement in the complexity and the realism of these exercises is a measure of progress. By incorporating scenarios that mirror operational environments and threats, military units can practice decision-making under pressure, coordination with allies, and adaptability to evolving situations. This realism incentivizes forces to better prepare themselves to handle complex and dynamic scenarios in real-world situations. While the clear demonstration of operational results remains difficult, the aggregation of multiple tactical successes can be a good indicator of improvement in the OE.

While it is cheaper, simpler, and less resource intensive to train in the continental United States, the Indo-Pacific region offers diverse geographic and environmental conditions ranging from tropical islands to open ocean expanses. International exercises in this region allow forces to train in varied conditions including littoral environments, coastal waters, and deep-sea operations. This diversity prepares military units to operate effectively in different climates and terrains, enhancing readiness for a wide range of potential mission scenarios. Since I Corps typically deploys forces west of the International Date Line nine months of every year, troops are likely to be well postured when the security situation deteriorates from competition to conflict. However, such posture—and protection—places a burden on sustainment, something particularly acute for the Indo-Pacific given the vast geographic region and maritime zone it encompasses.

Sustainment

Sustainment is "the related tasks and systems that provide support and services to ensure freedom of action, extended operational reach, and prolonged endurance," and it forms the backbone of operational readiness.[17] Investment in resilient infrastructure and logistics is paramount. Robust bases, ports, airfields, and supply chains, which enable rapid response and sustained operations, are lacking in many countries of the region, further hindering self-sustainment and our ability to self-deploy inside the theater of operations. Emphasis on modernizing and expanding these facilities promotes the mobility and resilience of forces, enabling seamless coordination and support during operations. Coordinating reception, staging, onward movement, and integration for large formations requires sophisticated logistics management, and the need to integrate forces from different branches and allied nations adds layers of complexity. Differences in protocols, equipment, and command structures can slow the process and create friction. For this reason, I Corps is exploring several options to posture expandable command-and-control nodes and logistical hubs to enable a timely and efficient response during crises. I Corps is also rehearsing drawing and employing the Army pre-positioned stocks to gain efficiencies and accelerate timelines. This approach will reduce reliance on vulnerable supply lines to enhance the Army's ability to sustain operations for extended durations.

Moreover, the need for continual movement to avoid detection and to respond to evolving threats necessitates a high level of readiness and logistical support. This perpetual movement strains supply lines and requires flexible resupply operations. Maintaining supply lines across vast distances, especially in contested environments, is risky. Disruption to these lines can severely impact the sustainment of forces, making it crucial to establish redundant routes and methods. For example, infantry support vehicles must be able to navigate various terrains, from urban areas to rugged landscapes. However, many vehicles are optimized for specific environments, limiting their operational flexibility in diverse settings and the logistics of transporting and sustaining these vehicles can become cumbersome, particularly when rapid mobility is required.

Sustained readiness requires continuous technological advancements. Investment in research and development for innovative technologies, such as AI, unmanned systems, and advanced cyber capabilities, is crucial. These innovations enhance operational effectiveness, providing a competitive edge in the dynamic Indo-Pacific theater. As stated by Lt. Gen. Jered Helwig, former commander 8th Theater Sustainment Command, the sustainment warfighting function has been positioned to rehearse those key theater opening capabilities that will be required in time of crisis.[18] The experiments carried out during Exercise Talisman Sabre 23 have revealed the considerable efficiency gains that can be achieved through the utilization of new capabilities like joint logistics over the shore and joint petroleum over the shore. These findings are not specific to the Indo-Pacific region since they have direct relevance to the ongoing mission in Gaza.[19]

Adequate resourcing and long-term planning are vital for sustainment. Consistent budget allocation, prioritizing future capabilities, and prudent resource management enable the Army to maintain its readiness posture while investing in future technologies and capabilities that align with evolving threats in the Pacific. Building resilience and adaptability within joint interior lines is essential. Flexibility in operational planning and readiness to swiftly adapt to evolving threats or unforeseen challenges is crucial in a contested logistics environment. Resilience is cultivated through diversification of supply chains, reducing dependencies, and developing redundancies to mitigate potential disruptions.

One of the best ways to assess how sustainment has evolved in the region is to notice the drastic changes to standardization and interoperability. As stated earlier, multinational forums promote discussions on standardization of procedures, equipment interoperability, and joint operational planning. By aligning standards and practices, participating nations can enhance their ability to conduct combined military operations effectively. This interoperability is crucial for responding swiftly and cohesively to regional crises or threats. Since the U.S. Army will never operate alone in the region, better interoperability is directly linked to sustainment. The ability to share parts, fuel, or ammunition creates unequivocal efficiencies. By monitoring and evaluating the performance of partner nations on sustainment operations, military commanders can assess the level of interoperability achieved. Therefore, the ability to

build strategic partnerships also has a great impact on sustainment. By fostering closer ties and mutual understanding, the foundation for deeper security cooperation, diplomatic engagements, and shared responsibilities in maintaining regional stability and security can be implanted. Through demonstrating transparency in tracking and sharing training accomplishments, nations foster a collaborative spirit and strengthen bilateral and multilateral relationships.

Interoperability can also be noticed through shared use of infrastructure. Breakthroughs are accomplished when national command posts move from separate locations to a common base, to a common building, to a common operations room and eventually become true multinational headquarters. Trust and confidence in each other's capabilities are crucial for effective coalition operations, crisis response, and shared security responsibilities in the region. Participating nations practice coordination and crisis response mechanisms through Pathways exercises. This includes communication protocols, joint planning processes, and mutual support arrangements during humanitarian assistance, disaster relief operations, or other crisis situations. By regularly exercising these aspects, countries can streamline their response capabilities and improve their ability to work together seamlessly in times of need.

Way Forward

Making a deliberate choice about where I Corps balances its posture, protection, and sustainment against the environment is critical. The perfect solution is not achievable in the short term—if ever—and necessitates careful and ongoing assessment and management of operational risk through the perspectives of protection, posture, and sustainment. Doing so includes deliberate decisions on how and where to commit the finite resources the U.S. Army has to the Indo-Pacific theater to maintain operational readiness. I Corps' operational assessments process, which ultimately manages the corps' campaign plan, is the means to both deploy and manage resources and capability and critically seek to understand the operating environment. Building readiness necessitates multilateral collaboration.

To ensure its protection, I Corps continues to grapple with managing a noncontiguous rear area and continues to iterate solutions. The latest iteration includes experimenting with the creation of a deputy commanding general for protection through its road to Warfighter Exercise 2025, a computer-based, force-on-force training exercise. The main role of this general officer was to synchronize and coordinate the rear area operations across all domains and demonstrate an example of how adaptable task organization is a way of overcoming the complexity of rear area management.

Strengthening alliances and partnerships among regional and global stakeholders fosters collective security. However, I Corps must make a deliberate effort to facilitate sharing the decision-grade information it produces. This is accomplished by stopping the overclassification of intelligence and improving access to our command-and-control systems. I Corps will continue to forge and fortify partnerships with regional allies and stakeholders to bolster collective security and interoperability. Regular joint exercises such as Talisman Saber, Yama Sakura, Salaknib, Cobra Gold, and Freedom Shield serve as vital mechanisms to improve coordination and readiness among our treaty allies. Conducting these joint exercises, sharing intelligence, and capacity-building initiatives as part of Operation Pathways enhances the ability to operate seamlessly in the region.

Other theater events, such as the Indo-Pacific Motorized Forum, one of I Corps' newer initiatives, also brings together partners and allies every year to share lessons learned and best practices in employing mechanized forces across the region. The first two iterations have been held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, and I Corps held 2025's event in Thailand. Active participation in multilateral forums and bilateral dialogues enables the U.S. Army to uphold international norms, promote stability, and counter common threats and adversaries. Adequate resourcing and prudent budget allocation are imperative for sustained readiness. Long-term investment in defense capabilities, maintenance, and personnel training increases preparedness against evolving threats. Efficient resource management and procurement processes optimize spending while maintaining operational effectiveness. Unlike other indicators that are less tangible, the funds allocated from the Department of Defense toward our operational readiness in the region are easy to understand. But we must be mindful of the importance of evaluating outcomes

A Philippine Army Special Forces operator assigned to the 28th Infantry Battalion searches for opposing forces during a Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center-Exportable (JPMRC-X) exercise at Fort Magsaysay, Philippines, on 7 June 2024. This iteration of JPMRC-X marked its first deployment to the Philippines. JPMRC-X will enable and assist the Philippine Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines in building combat training center locations within the Philippines. JPMRC-X is a Department of the Army initiative consisting of a deployable package of personnel and equipment designed to support training exercises across the Pacific. (Photo by Spc. Carleeann Smiddy, U.S. Army National Guard)

rather than solely focusing on inputs. Therefore, an exhaustive analysis of the indicators outlined above will provide the subjective metrics required to evaluate operational readiness.

Operational empathy for the U.S. Army in the Pacific refers to the approach to understanding and incorporating cultural awareness, social sensitivity, political insight, and humanitarian considerations. This concept recognizes the importance of empathy in building relationships, fostering trust, and achieving mission success in diverse and complex environments. Overall, operational empathy enhances the U.S. Army's effectiveness by fostering positive interactions with local populations, building partnerships, and promoting stability in the Pacific region. It goes beyond traditional military objectives to encompass broader goals of diplomacy, cooperation, and sustainable development. For example, when senior leaders of I Corps oversee multinational exercises, they need to spend more time developing relationships with upcoming senior leaders of partner nations than time observing company live-fire exercises. As a graduate of the U.S. Army War College, Brig. Gen. Eric Landry has developed a wide network of international Fellows who have all been identified with high potential within their own militaries. He intends to use that network for his engagements across the Indo-Pacific region to build trust. I Corps could also augment the demand signal on the local country teams to build a clearer common operational picture. As the regimental sergeant major of the Regular Australian Army, Warrant Officer Kim Felmingham said, "In times of crisis, you can surge personnel, equipment and funds,

but you can't surge trust."[20] Therefore, leaders at all levels are responsible for applying operational empathy and building trust with allies and partners now to be ready when a crisis occurs.

Conclusion

The U.S. Army's and America's First Corps' focus on building operational readiness in the Pacific demands a tailored strategy to address regional challenges and maintain a credible deterrence. As we celebrated the eightieth anniversary of D-Day this past year, the Army must dedicate the proper amount of training and resources toward the Pacific theater despite competing demands. The United States and its allies were surprised in the Pacific during World War II because the attention was on Europe. We cannot make that mistake again. Operational readiness in the Pacific mandates a forward-looking and adaptive approach rooted in historical insights. By prioritizing protection, bolstering posture, and ensuring sustainment while cultivating partnerships and engaging strategically, the U.S. Army can effectively fortify its operational readiness in this pivotal theater. Adequately measuring our level of operational readiness will inform our actions. Adherence to these multifaceted strategies not only safeguards American interests but also contributes to regional stability, prosperity, and partnerships. The Pacific region is currently facing an unprecedented level of uncertainty and threat. We cannot afford to "waste" the current crisis and seize the opportunity to build on the current momentum to increase our operational readiness. Just as historical campaigns shaped the Pacific's significance, a proactive and resilient Army remains paramount in navigating contemporary challenges and future uncertainties in this crucial region. ■

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Strengthening the Backbone

Reexamining the Operational and Strategic Role of Today's NCO

Maj. Eric T. Kim, U.S. Army
Maj. Mathew Rigdon, U.S. Army
Command Sgt. Maj. Edward A. Cummings, U.S. Army

Why do noncommissioned officers (NCOs) have limited roles in the strategic and operational planning process? To answer this question, one must go back decades to Samuel Huntington's argument in his seminal work *The Soldier and the State*. He argued that officers were "managers of violence" while likening enlisted soldiers and NCOs to tradesmen, perpetuating a gap in opportunities between officers and enlisted soldiers that persists to this day.[1] Officers and NCOs are equally culpable on this issue. Most fellowships and broadening opportunities are open to officers; qualified NCOs are seldom considered. This preference for officers has also diminished the role of NCOs in civil-military relations, which may partially explain the growing civil-military gap and the American public's unfamiliarity with the role of the NCO. In addition, NCOs have not established a culture that values staff experience, which in turn contributes to the reluctance of some officers to consider NCOs as assistant managers of violence. This last point is especially acute on senior Army and joint staffs, as some NCOs may have billets on the staff but no description as to their specific role. Unfortunately, Huntington's relegation of NCOs to the tactical level of war is often a reality in the Army today.

The NCO corps has evolved into a profession capable of handling the management of violence. Officers' reluctance to accept NCOs as assistant managers of violence may also be the reason why NCOs have limited billets on strategic and operational staffs and limited broadening opportunities. This is problematic as it contributes to the growing gap between the tactical level of war and the operational and strategic levels. The expertise of senior NCOs, developed from decades of warfighting experience at the tactical level, is underutilized at both the operational and strategic levels. After all, tactical knowledge is an essential link to strategic and operational planning. NCOs should be recognized as assistant managers of violence to support a military strategy that is dependent on preparing and executing complex multidomain operations. The link between NCOs and officers at the operational and strategic levels can be strengthened by opening more broadening opportunities, creating additional billets on operational and strategic staffs, or, at the very least, providing specific expectations and descriptions of existing billets for NCOs. Furthermore, it is worth defining a role for NCOs in civil-military relations as this will contribute to bridging the gap between the NCO corps and the American public. Perhaps a clearer, more defined image

Senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Ramón Colón-López dials in from the Pentagon to share his experience with staff NCOs of U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM), NORAD/U.S. Northern Command, and other surrounding units during a senior enlisted advisors NCO development course on 27 May 2022 at USSPACECOM in Colorado Springs, Colorado. (Photo courtesy of Command Sgt. Maj. Edward A. Cummings, U.S. Army)

of the NCO corps and its role in the military will stimulate future recruitment of soldiers who aim to become professional NCOs. With a new, clearly defined role, we can replace the outdated Huntingtonian definition and change how roles and responsibilities are taught in officer and enlisted professional military education.

NCOs Are Professionals and Assistant Managers of Violence

In *The Soldier and the State,* Huntington argued that expertise, responsibility, and corporateness distinguished the officer corps as a profession with the management of violence as its central skill. He made a clear distinction between officers and enlisted personnel, describing the enlisted profession as a vocation and trade and thus specialists who were the applicators of violence.[2] Huntington's description of enlisted soldiers may have been valid in the Army of the post-World War II era as most drafted service members likely did not have the same dedication and commitment as officers who chose to make the military their profession. As illustrated in *The American Enlisted Man,* Charles Moskos described the enlisted man during World War II as one who lacked commitment to the war effort and sought to wait the war out.[3]

Post-World War II, the NCO corps lacked the institutions and systems necessary to retain and improve on expertise built during the war. Although there were early versions of NCO professional development in the Army training program beginning in World War I, the modern professional and educational development of NCOs originated with the Noncommissioned Officer Education System in 1971.[4]

A facet of professionalism that was well established post-World War II was the corporateness of the NCO corps. The earning of stripes through evaluations, the traditions of the NCO corps, and even the bitterness that NCOs held against some officers were early

Sgt. Maj. Khalia Jackson, operations sergeant major, 74th Troop Command, works along side Col. R. Brian Deaton, chief of staff for the District of Columbia National Guard in Washington, D.C., during the sixtieth presidential inauguration on 19 January 2025. At the request of civil authorities, National Guard service members provide critical support such as crowd management, traffic control points, CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear) response, civil disturbance response, and sustainment operations. Their expertise and collaboration with interagency partners helped ensure a safe and peaceful transition of power during this event. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Tyrone Williams, U.S. Army National Guard)

evidence of a uniform, corporate body.[5] The establishment of a noncommissioned officer academy in 1966 allowed specially selected recruits to advance directly to their first unit as a sergeant and is further evidence of a selective system that reinforced the corporateness of the NCO corps.[6]

Today, the NCO corps takes professional responsibility over equipment, training, and leadership of its soldiers. For example, sergeants and staff sergeants in armored units are responsible for a few million dollars' worth of equipment as they sign for tanks, items associated with the tanks, weapons, optics, and other special equipment. Furthermore, senior NCOs are more highly educated than in the past, with more than 59 percent of senior NCOs entering the U.S. Army Sergeants Majors Course in 2022 with a bachelor's degree or higher.[7]

Discussion

A possible explanation for why NCOs lack roles on strategic and operational staffs is that officers write and influence doctrine. Therefore, it comes as little surprise that responsibilities for planning at the strategic and operational levels are officer centric. NCOs are not included in planning strategic and operational missions because of a low number of billets for NCOs on strategic and operational level staffs, and they do not hold the pen that defines their role. At the operational and strategic levels, NCOs primarily serve in the signal, intelligence, and sustainment roles. NCOs are the collectors of data, executors of tasks, and internal trainers of the organizations and are seldom consulted prior to making decisions. Often NCOs stay within the comfort zones of their specialty or service rather than branching out to other areas. Many operational or maneuver NCOs are not afforded staff opportunities at the operational and strategic levels until they are selected for a senior

enlisted command position. Commanders have long trusted the counsel of their senior enlisted advisors, but staff primaries or directors at the operational and strategic levels do not have enlisted advisors due to a lack of billets. For example, of the approximately 1,200 military billets on the joint staff, there are approximately 150 NCO billets with only one official senior enlisted advisor billet. Directors do not have senior enlisted advisors to assist with developing policy.[8]

Furthermore, the exclusion of NCOs in most civil-military relations scholarship and in formal decision-making processes can be somewhat self-inflicted, as NCOs are often uncomfortable in articulating their thoughts at the strategic and operational levels due to a lack of experience and education in working above the tactical level of war. Much of this is attributed to the culture of the NCO corps in which there tends to be an aversion to staff assignments. NCOs make up just under 40 percent of active-duty service members and lack roles on strategic and operational staffs.[9] There are limited broadening opportunities for NCOs, and those broadening opportunities such as staff positions are not highly regarded and possibly considered risky.

Current broadening opportunities for senior NCOs are insufficient in preparing them to advise commanders on strategic and operational decision-making. Out of fifteen broadening opportunities in the Army's FY24 Broadening Opportunity Program Catalog, only two broadening opportunities—the congressional and White House fellowships—are available to NCOs.[10] Outside of the broadening opportunities in the catalog, NCOs are not considered for the Joint Chiefs of Staff internship. Additionally, NCOs have opportunities to teach academic courses and military science courses at service academies and ROTC programs but are not offered dedicated time and resources to pursue advanced degrees. NCOs have access to the Training with Industry program and have exclusive access to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (SGM-A) fellowship, which provides sergeants major the opportunity to earn a master's degree in education. As we see here, the only routes to earn graduate degrees through broadening programs are through the SGM-A fellowship and the congressional fellowship. Evident in this cursory analysis of opportunity programs is that NCOs do not have nearly the breadth and depth of opportunities as officers to broaden their thinking, pursue higher education, and adequately prepare for strategic and operational staff assignments.

There are potentially significant implications to military effectiveness and recruitment given a continuing absence of the role of NCOs in civil-military relations and in planning phases of strategic and operational level decision-making. First, an absence of the role of NCOs in the strategic and operational levels of war may degrade military readiness and effectiveness. As the backbone of

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the military, the NCO corps is an essential link between the tactical level of war and the operational and strategic levels of war. Military readiness and effectiveness are enhanced through the harmony among the three levels of war. A scarcity of NCOs at the strategic and operational levels of war results in more disharmony between tacticians executing current operations and the strategic and operational staff planning future operations. In other words, without an increased presence of NCOs at the strategic and operational levels, strategies may fail due to a lack of understanding of tactical capabilities at the strategic and operational levels. Through their decades of service at the tactical level, senior NCOs are often the source of wisdom and common sense, which is invaluable to tactical operations but also necessary for the proper planning of strategic-and operational-level operations.

Secondly, the traditional role and identity of the NCO corps as selfless servants may partly account for a growing gap in civil-military relations. The gap between American society and the military exists partly because the very values that define the U.S. military—such as selflessness, discipline, and humility—are discordant with societal values such as individuality, liberty, and fame. A 2023 National Opinion Research Center–*Wall Street Journal* poll found that only 10 to 20 percent of survey respondents identified patriotism, community involvement, religion, and having children as very important compared to the 50 to 70 percent just twenty-five years earlier.[11] If this sample size included only veterans and military service members, we may see higher percentages valuing patriotism, community involvement, religion, and having children, further highlighting the gap between the military and society. There are fundamental differences in values between civilians and military service members that account for a gap in civil-military relations. This civil-military gap is acceptable as the values of the military, exemplified daily in the NCO corps, allow for the security and prosperity of the civilian population.

Policy Recommendations

To more fully recognize NCOs as professionals able to serve at the highest levels of command, the Army should consider several changes to current policies to address the need for a more educated NCO corps. This need is based on the increasing complexity of the modern battlefield that requires senior leaders to have a broad knowledge on topics ranging from international relations to the impact of emerging technologies such as AI and robotics. Just as changes to federal policy and technology in the past necessitated adjustments to Army policy, so too should the Army of today adapt our force to meet the challenges of tomorrow. This begins with increasing opportunities for our senior NCOs.

The first change the Army should make is to create more cross talk between the Army's SGM-A and the Command and General Staff Officers Course at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Due to physical constraints on housing and space on Fort Leavenworth, it is likely not feasible, at least in the short term, to collocate the two schools. The ingrained history of the respective schools at their current locations also argues against moving either one. Instead, each school should modify its curriculum to highlight areas of cooperation between officers and NCOs during the military decision-making process and other planning processes. The schools could also exchange faculty for guest lectures to familiarize officers and NCOs with their counterparts' respective roles on the staff. This may help officers better understand how NCOs can contribute to staff planning while giving NCOs confidence to take a more prominent role in operations planning. These lectures could also take place virtually, possibly even pairing small groups at the SGM-A with those at the Command and General Staff Officer Course. Finally, as part of culminating exercises, each school could exchange a small cohort of leaders to take part in staff planning exercises that furnish additional opportunities for cooperation between officers and NCOs.

More cooperation between these two schools would help clarify the role of the NCO on the battle staff and prepare NCOs to contribute to planning efforts in operational and strategic staffs. It may also help change a culture that is averse to serving on staff, creating instead an NCO corps that views staff time as integral to long-term success in their careers rather than relegating it to the "officer lane." The desired effect of eliminating this stigma and demonstrating the worth of the NCO as an active participant in the planning process is to make the transition to more senior staff roles less of a culture shock, building the necessary confidence for more active involvement.

Gen. Gary Brito (*left*), U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command commanding general, listens as Staff Sgt. Michael Jackson, an instructor with the Petroleum and Water Department, explains how he thinks the students benefit from using the Digital Training Enablers on 22 March 2024 at Fort Gregg-Adams, Virginia. (Photo by Ryan Sharp, U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command)

This process can begin in earnest at the SGM-A or even on battalion staff.

The second recommended change is opening all or most broadening opportunity programs to NCOs. This would positively impact the quality of our senior NCOs and prepare them to better serve as senior leaders within our military. If the Army expects NCOs to serve at the highest levels of command and staff, it should make them eligible for broadening assignments currently only available to officers. It is important to note this recommendation does not suggest reserving slots for NCOs but allowing qualified NCOs to apply. This change would open more fellowships and advanced educational opportunities to NCOs in the grades of E-7 and above. While there are many options for officer fellowships, those for NCOs are somewhat limited and do not include those that would enable them to effect strategy. While we acknowledge that officers making high-level decisions should be afforded the majority of fellowship opportunities, we argue that some of these billets should be opened to senior NCOs on track to impact national security decisions through service on senior staffs or in advisory roles to general officers.

Finally, the number of billets on strategic and operational staffs for NCOs should be increased and their roles on those staffs more clearly defined. Most members of operational and strategic-level staffs do not clearly understand the role of an NCO on the staff. While it is understood that officers drive the planning process, they also seek the advice of NCOs to test planning assumptions, analyze feasibility of the plan, and ensure that plans evolve into action. A limited role for NCOs on staff hinders the staff's overall effectiveness. Pairing staff primaries and directors with senior enlisted leaders may bridge the gap among the tactical, operational, and strategic levels and further develop senior enlisted leaders who are better prepared to advise combatant commanders and chiefs of staff. In

conjunction with the educational opportunities, we argue that creating more billets on these staffs would provide valuable insight from NCOs that may be lacking at the upper echelons of strategic planning.

Many of the changes to policy suggested here will be moot, however, without also incentivizing NCOs to pursue these opportunities. This involves considering how time spent on staff as an E-7 or E-8 can contribute to promotion and opportunities for advancement. The goal is to see service on tactical staff as desirable and impactful, making later transition to operational and strategic staff easier. It also involves marketing these opportunities so that enlisted leaders who are interested in planning and strategic thinking can take advantage of staff experiences at the earliest possible time in their careers. This is also an issue among the officer corps and may be more pronounced among NCOs as staff assignments are usually considered less relevant to their careers. This fact speaks to the culture within the enlisted ranks and their view of serving on staff at any level. Like junior officers, there is an understandable desire among NCOs to remain in direct leadership roles of soldiers. The goal of these policy recommendations is not to dissuade NCOs from serving as senior enlisted advisors at the tactical level but to encourage long-term contributions of the "Army's backbone" to the defense of the Nation.

Conclusion

In a session of the House Armed Services Committee, Michael Grinston, the former sergeant major of the Army, stated that one of the reasons many young Americans were dissuaded from service was that they did not want to "put their life on hold" while serving as enlisted members of the military.[12] This highlights the difference in opportunities afforded to officers and NCOs in the military. We are not suggesting that there needs to be parity in opportunities. Rather, we argue that given the complexities of warfare and civil-military relations today, NCOs should be afforded more educational and broadening opportunities to better prepare them to be senior enlisted advisers in multidomain operations.

Finally, practitioners and scholars should pay special attention to the role of senior NCOs at the operational and strategic levels. How can they better serve on operational and strategic staffs and advise commanders in multidomain operations? Do senior NCOs play a role in civil-military relations and, if so, how can they contribute to bridging the gap between civilians and service members? Perhaps a renewed focus on the NCO corps may provide growth to the backbone of the armed forces that is necessary to prepare for the future ahead. ■

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Operational Myopia

A Fatal Fallacy

Col. Daniel Sukman, U.S. Army

"A concept is an idea, a thought, a general notion."
—Gen. Donn Starry

The joint force lacks a unified theory of success for the strategic level to war. Recent conceptual work in the joint community is producing a joint warfighting concept and joint concept for competing, which respectively focus on battle and actions before the onset of crisis and conflict. Moreover, each service is developing theories of victory independent of each other and independent of the joint community. Conceptual production from the services includes multidomain operations and distributed maritime operations, both of which center on battles at the operational level of war; while this is necessary, it is not sufficient. Without a unified and overarching strategic approach to war, the joint force is accepting the same risk as Napoleon Bonaparte in the early nineteenth century, the Germans (twice) in the first half of the twentieth century, and to an extent, the same risk the United States took in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Current State of Strategic Concepts

In 2012, the joint staff produced the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (*CCJO*). This concept provided a strategic vision for the military to become a globally integrated joint force. Under the guidance of then–Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey, the *CCJO* recognized that the future of war would encapsulate enemies and adversaries who operate across combatant command boundaries and in all five domains (air, land, maritime, space, and cyberspace).[1] The joint staff continued with the publication of the 2019 *CCJO*, which maintained the central idea of global integration to guide the joint force in a strategic approach. The 2019 *CCJO*, while still the apex of joint concepts, is insufficient, as operational-level concepts such as the *Joint Warfighting Concept* (*JWC*), the Army's multidomain operations conceptual work, and the Marine Corps' *Force Design 2030* are now past the substance of the 2019 *CCJO*.

Similarly, the U.S. Army published the *Army Capstone Concept* nested under the *CCJO* in December 2012. The central idea of the *Army Capstone Concept* was operational adaptability, meaning the Army understood the requirement to respond to a multitude of missions from humanitarian assistance to counterinsurgency to large-scale combat operations.[2] Further, this strategic-level concept advanced the idea of the pivot to the Pacific by advocating for a rebalance of the force to the Asia-Pacific region.[3] The concept then described three components of the central idea of prevent, shape, win; a strategic idea of how the Army would operate in campaigning through crisis and in conflict.[4] With a strategic-level concept, the Army effectively provided a vision to the service on priorities and a focus of the force for the ensuing decade. However, since 2012, the U.S. Army produced additional operational-level or operating concepts without writing a new capstone concept.[5]

Today, the best example of strategic-level thinking in concepts is the U.S. Marine Corps' *Force Design 2030*. This concept leads with the foresight and description of the overarching purpose of the Marine Corps. Through defining the strategic purpose, the Marines can better define its future force structure, enabling a divestment of current capabilities deemed no longer required for the future force.[6] *Force Design 2030* is a decisive measure by the Marine Corps. It is concept driven, and experiments and war games validate the conceptual work. It includes innovative ideas such as "stand in forces."[7] *Force Design 2030* may be the best conceptual work since Gen. Donn Starry's AirLand Battle.

The Elusive Light at the End of the Tunnel. U.S. special operations service members conduct combat operations in support of Operation Resolute Support in Southeast Afghanistan, April 2019. Resolute Support was a NATO-led mission to train, advise, and assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and institutions. Initial euphoria among U.S. leadership at the collapse of the Afghan Taliban government in 2001 produced a false sense of confidence that the conflict could be brought to a decisive conclusion leading to rapid stabilization of Afghan's government, economy, and social order. After twenty years of limited operational and tactical success and failure to achieve its strategic objectives, the United States was compelled to admit defeat and withdraw from Afghanistan in 2021, leaving the country in the hands of a renascent Taliban. (Photo by Sgt. Jaerett Engeseth, U.S. Army)

In the July 2023 edition of *Joint Force Quarterly*, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Mark Milley, introduced the *JWC* as the guiding light for the joint force. Throughout his article, Milley uses the German Wehrmacht in the interwar years as the ideal for military transformation, using the concept of blitzkrieg as the method for Germany overrunning Europe.[8] The flaw in Milley's analysis is the focus on the operational level. While he acknowledges the overwhelming might of the United States and its allies, he fails to consider that blitzkrieg worked in relatively smaller theaters of war. Further, strategic choices on the purpose and structure of the German armed forces led to its ultimate demise; centering a military on the survival of a political regime bent on genocide and world domination is not the best strategic choice for a military organization. The joint force must look beyond battlefield victory and avoid the fate of Germany's Schlieffen Plan in World War I and the subsequent blitzkrieg in World War II.

Surprisingly, the best place to look during the interwar years for innovation is the United States and each of its services. The U.S. military, under the leadership of officers such as Gen. George Marshall, was able to link institutional preparedness to strategic and operational readiness. Marshall understood the necessity for large-scale infrastructure to support millions in uniform, and the requirements to conduct large-scale collective training and exercises before sending a drafted force into combat. Further, the strategic leadership of the

American military was intellectually prepared through strategic-level wargames and the writing of strategic-level war plans such as the colored and rainbow plans.

The tenets of the *JWC* outlined in the *Joint Force Quarterly* article include such ideas as expanded maneuver, information advantage, resilient logistics, global fires, and pulsed operations.[9] Achieving these tenets on a future battlefield will surely raise the chances of success for a joint force commander but is insufficient for thinking about the tenets of the future joint force at the strategic level. A strategic-level concept should broaden the aperture of tenets beyond victory in battle and center on how the joint force will attain victory in war to achieve the strategic ends of the Nation. The operational-level ideas presented in the *JWC* must connect to ideas that would lead to strategic victory and protection of the Nation's enduring interests. Pulsed operations and global fires may destroy targets and win battles but will not by themselves win a war.

Historic Lessons

Focusing on initial battles at the operational-level war is a recipe for failure. The next strategic concept should offer ideas on how the joint force can enable victory over a sustained time frame. History suffers no shortage of examples where peer and near-peer adversaries come into conflict expecting a short war, only to be surprised when the war is not decided by Christmas. Examples include the Peloponnesian War to the Hundred Years War, the British and French wars in the late eighteenth century, the U.S. Civil War, the two world wars, the French and American wars in Vietnam, the Unted States in Iraq and Afghanistan, and, more recently, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Napoleon was a master of tactics and operations, but his failure to understand the strategic level of war led to his downfall. Napoleon's brilliance at the operational level led to a series of successes early in his reign. However, according to Sir Lawrence Freedman, Napoleon's insistence on punishing former adversaries combined with his inability to form effective alliances or coalitions drove the French army into strategic defeat.[10] Successful strategies are those that combine generalship with statesmanship.

Looking at the German army in the lead-up and fighting of World War II is a poor example to choose from for future concepts. While German innovation was effective at the operational level in a specific theater of war, the strategic purpose of the German military could never lead the nation to victory. Effective combined arms operations and air-to-ground coordination were certainly useful in winning battles, but designing an army to occupy foreign nations and exterminate populations, while using race, religion, and ethnicity as a method to exclude people from the ranks, was a surefire method to lose a war. A military built for tactical and operational success can still meet strategic failure.

Without the right strategic approach, winning a series of battles will not translate to victory. In his book *The Allure of Battle*, author Cathal Nolan describes what he calls "the illusion of short war."[11] One of his broad examples include Napoleon, who, according to Nolan, had a genius for the operational level of war but not the strategic. Napoleon did not center his strategy on coalition building, nor did he ever consider the broader impacts of a long war of attrition. Nolan then aptly describes how the Germans, in the lead-up to World War II, failed to learn the lessons of Napoleon, the four-year-long slog of the American Civil War, and the German strategic errors of the First and Second World Wars. As the Germans learned, fighting against the world on multiple fronts with nominal allies tends to be a poor strategic approach.

Major wars are not the only wars that tend to last longer than expected. The United States found itself in protracted wars in Vietnam in the 1960s, and in Iraq and Afghanistan in the first two decades of the twenty-first century. In these protracted wars, the U.S. Army was not prepared for a long-term fight and had to redesign its force structure from a division-centric force to a brigade-centric force. Moreover, to fight on two fronts for over a decade, the Army redesigned the composition of each brigade to create additional brigade combat teams that could be used as rotational forces in combat. The Army then split the brigade

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Pfc. Carl Baden and Pfc. Arcadio Carrion of Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, lay in the mud waiting for artillery to knock out the .50 caliber machine gun bunker that has them pinned down in a tree line at My Tho, Vietnam, on 4 April 1968. (Photo by Spc. 4 Dennis J. Kurpius, 221st Signal Company)

combat teams from organic division headquarters for respective deployments, complicating forward command relationships. This occurred during the peak of ground operations in Iraq and is one of the many ways the Army was unprepared for a prolonged war. These operational-level decisions occurred in a space where there was a dearth of coherent and unified strategic theories of victory.

A Strategic Concept

In Super Bowl LI, the Atlanta Falcons stormed to a 28–3 lead late in the third quarter only to fall to the New England Patriots in overtime.[12] The Kansas City Chiefs won Super Bowl LVII on a last second field goal and again in Super Bowl LVIII with a touchdown in overtime.[13] Like these football games, how wars end is more important and more impactful than how they begin. The joint force must look beyond the first battles and develop a strategic concept that carries the force in peacetime, through crisis and conflict, and onto victory in war. This strategic concept would describe a future strategic environment, the conditions of a future war, link the strategic level to the operational and the institutional levels of war, and most importantly be in the open for leaders throughout the joint force and the American public to discuss and iterate on.

Describing the anticipated future strategic environment is a critical part of any concept. As concepts tend to look out anywhere from ten to fifteen years in the future, an effective strategic concept would be enemy or adversary agnostic. While operational-level concepts that focus on battle can be orientated on specific adversaries, the next strategic concept should have the range to cover any adversary, not just the five problem sets of the current joint force.[14] Overly focusing on a particular enemy can result in missed opportunities to succeed

as the joint force reacts to real and perceived threats rather than being proactive and forcing adversaries into reaction mode. The farther one looks to the future, the more uncertain said future will be. A strategic concept developed in the late 1980s focused strictly on the Soviet Union would have wildly missed the mark, leading to its irrelevance.

In addition to describing the future strategic environment, an effective strategic concept will describe the purpose, roles, and composition of the future joint force. This description would detail the types of missions the joint force must be prepared to conduct ranging from large-scale combat operations to strategic deterrence, humanitarian assistance, day-to-day competing, and providing the Nation's elected leadership with a range of options at the onset of a crisis. In detailing the composition of the joint force, a strategic concept would identify current trends on eligibility for service and the trends of a more diverse population in uniform.

There are historical lessons for a force failing to understand its central purpose or role, notably the Pentomic Army of the 1950s. During this time, the U.S. Army focused its efforts on nuclear war and an environment characterized by nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles. With this environment as the central focus, the Army, according to Andrew J. Bacevich, moved away from its core task. Conventional warfighting capabilities were sacrificed in favor of high-altitude air defense and intermediate-range ballistic missiles.[15] Misidentification or failing to identify a central purpose of the military or a service leads to a force unprepared for the next war.

Today's operational-level focus of concepts often focuses on the major combat operations of a future war. Starry once described operational concepts as "a way to describe how you think you're going to fight the war and then force the technology to produce the equipment, force the system to produce the organizations, force the training system to support training necessary to support the operational concept."[16] The prolonged wars in Iraq and Afghanistan display the failed logic of a focus on operational-level thought at the expense of all else, as postcombat operations proved to be the decisive phase of the war.[17] Untested and unverified concepts such as shock and awe, rapid decisive operations, and effects-based operations, while sound in a vacuum, were unable to lead to a successful war termination.[18] A strategic concept would consider and include all phases of a war from mobilization through major combat operations to postcombat and occupation.[19] Operational-level concepts nested beneath should then focus on each individual phase.

An effective strategic-level concept would describe a strategic environment that considers the institutional aspect of the force. This strategic environment would also account for limitations imposed upon the joint force. For example, the joint force should recognize and forecast such institutional aspects like expected end strength; the organizational design of the force (will there be a cyber force?); and what education, training, and exercises will resemble. As joint concepts include input from each of the services, the benefits of a generally agreed-upon future strategic environment among the services would create coherence in capability development and force design.

The strategic environment would also account for limitations (what the joint force must and must not do) imposed upon the joint force. Fighting as part of a coalition is perhaps the most important element of strategy, arguably the most important limitation, and has been so since the Peloponnesian War.[20] Moreover, since the First World War, the American way of war included allies and partners in each conflict. Former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford characterized allies and partners as the joint force's strategic center of gravity.[21] For example, while senior military leaders tend to look for first-mover advantage in times of crisis and conflict, the nature of the U.S. political system favors an operational-level second move to gain and maintain strategic-level legitimacy. This legitimacy often aids in coalition building at the expense of an initial operational- or tactical-level advantages. This next strategic concept should include a centrality of allies and partners.

The next strategic concept should account for how the joint force will conduct a protracted war that lasts for months, to years, to decades. A war against a nation with advanced capabilities such as China will also mean a war against a nation that can reconstitute capabilities. This reconstitution will include manpower, as we are witnessing Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and further include reconstitution of major air, land, maritime, and space combat platforms. As today's concepts and strategies call for a force with greater lethality, there is a dearth of senior leaders

calling for a joint force with more endurance.[22] This endurance will include the reconstitution of capabilities to include the production of tanks, airplanes, and various munitions; the development of new software and other cyber capabilities; and the launch of new satellites and other space-based capabilities. A war against a near-peer or peer adversary will be a test of both endurance and long-term will.

Troopers of 2nd Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, ride in an H-34 helicopter during training at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, on 27 January 1957. The 101st was one of the first divisions to transition to a Pentomic organization. (Photo courtesy of the National Archives)

Wars between great powers tend to be protracted wars. A concept that acknowledges a protracted fight would encourage service-level concept writers to consider the implications of how each service would contribute to this type of war. More than operational-level warfighting ideas, institutional ideas on manpower, personnel policies, and mobilization would emerge. These ideas could then undergo experimentation in the same way operational-level warfighting concepts undergo strict scrutiny. Acknowledging the institutional impacts and contributions to a future war can be just as decisive as the operational.

The professional development and education of leaders along with ideas on how the joint force can learn as a complex organization is a vital institutional piece of a strategic concept. The strategic environment is more than the geopolitical environment and the evolution of new and emerging technology. The intellectual capabilities of leaders at every echelon can define what nation has a decisive advantage in the future. Strategic concepts should address the necessity for joint force leaders to outthink and outplan future adversaries.[23] Intellectual readiness can be the outcrop of solutions generated in a strategic concept.

An undervalued aspect of a strategic concept is the unclassified nature of the document. Just as the *National Security Strategy* serves as a tool of strategic communication, so should a strategic concept that describes the role of the U.S. military. An unclassified strategic concept serves as a message to all U.S. citizens, the men and women who will serve in the military, and America's allies and partners. In a similar way, the initial Field Manual 100-5, *AirLand Battle,* served as a form of deterrence, communicating to the Soviets that the United States knew how to win, and a strategic concept would serve as a message to today's enemies and adversaries that the U.S. military will be ready in the present and in the future.[24]

Conclusion

The power of concepts is how they force leaders to think about the future. The joint force must look beyond the operational level of war. This starts by ending the lionization of the Wehrmacht and German innovation in the interwar period. Idolizing a military that failed in war and led the world into a global conflagration, and whose purpose was to maintain a regime

bent on genocide and world domination, is a worldview that must be put to rest. Should World War II be the example to look at for strategic-level thought, then the United States and its senior leadership in said war provides the best enduring example.

Future strategic concepts, however, do not have the luxury to assume that defeat in early battles is acceptable. When facing a peer adversary, and one who can outpace the joint force in manpower and industrial production, the operational level of war will maintain standing. Preserving the force while attriting enemy capabilities at the operational level will amplify or hasten victory just as failure at the operational level can hasten defeat. Thus, joint and service operational-level concepts necessarily must nest under overarching strategic concepts.

The joint force is on the path to operational excellence and strategic drift. The development and experimentation of operational-level concepts will certainly aid the joint force in winning battles but risks losing a war. War is more than the outcome of individual battles or the outcome of multiple battles, but the vision and ability to execute long-term operations even after the battle is won. ■

Notes

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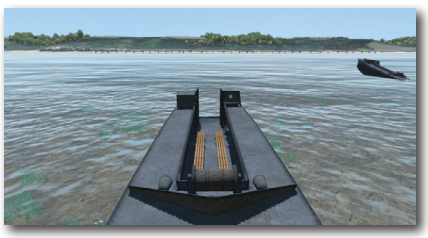
Normandy
Virtual Staff Ride

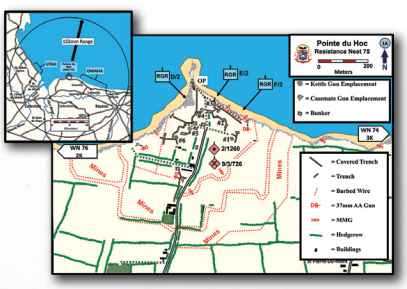
Normandy virtual staff ride products are available for download from the Army University Press website. This study focuses on the American side of the invasion to include the airborne assault, Omaha and Utah Beaches, Pointe du Hoc, and a study on sustainment and the artificial harbors. Materials include instructor notes, participant read aheads, and the virtual terrain. These products will enable organizations with access to Virtual Battlespace 3 to conduct their own virtual staff ride or to conduct their own professional development sessions without the terrain.



Omaha Beach

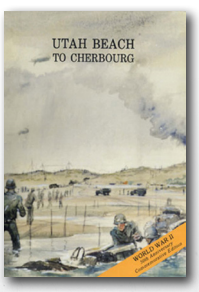
German Defenses

Brecourt Manor



Instructor Material

Virtual Staff Ride



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https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Educational-Services/Staff-Ride-Team-Offerings/

Omaha Beach, 6 June 1944 (Photo courtesy of the National Archives)

No Future for an "Indispensable" Service

The Challenges of Resource-Constrained Army Transformation, 1945–1950

Maj. Spencer L. French, U.S. Army

In November 1945, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, noted that "in the conditions we had during the campaigns in Africa and Europe, the service [provided by the Army Tactical Information Services] was indispensable. For the present, we should plan for its continuation."[1] Within a year of his statement, the U.S. Army had mothballed its information services. Instead of building on World War II lessons, from 1945 to 1950, changes in the Army's roles and missions, fiscal and personnel constraints, and the lack of institutional champions interrupted the Army's planned transformation of its information security and management missions. Upon the outbreak of the Korean War, the Army attempted to rapidly complete the transformation that had been halted, with uneven success. The Army's experience during this period underscores the challenge of following through on transformation efforts in the context of postconflict realities. Today, as the Army transforms many of its more technical functions and organizations in the aftermath of the Global War on Terrorism, it is experiencing a shortage of high-quality talent, competing mission sets, and fiscal constraints, much like it did from 1945 to 1950. Like the Army of the mid-40s, it is reorganizing missions, organizational constructs, and divisions of effort at echelon to meet both anticipated future and current requirements. Unfortunately, like its predecessor, the Army of today risks unintentionally creating new capability gaps if transformation is stalled or left uncompleted due to resource shortfalls. As the Army transforms, it must carefully consider the significant challenges inherent in resource-constrained transformation and the potential for failure.

World War II Information Security and Management

During World War II, the U.S. Army viewed the monitoring of friendly communications to maintain battlefield situational awareness, monitoring of friendly communications to maintain information security, and monitoring enemy communications to obtain communications intelligence (COMINT) or "radio intelligence" as related functions. The U.S. Army employed dedicated elements specifically to manage information, monitoring lower-echelon radio nets to identify information pertinent to field army decision-making and ensure the information was accessible to decision-makers in a timely manner. Several organizations performed the mission during World War II, but after the war, the U.S. Army referred to them collectively as Army Tactical Information Services

Staff Sgt. Peter Dwyer (*second from left*) from the Development Detachment, Signal Corps Engineer Laboratory, gives walkie-talkie maintenance instructions to Cpl. Robert Main, Sgt. Albert Hill, and Cpl. Benedict Cicero at the Japan Signal Service Battalion, 8047th Army Unit, at Yokohama, Japan, on 30 January 1952. (Photo by U.S. Army Signal Corps, courtesy of the National Archives)

(ATIS). The U.S. Army, during and after World War II, also employed elements to monitor friendly radio networks, document violations of information security procedures, and address potential compromises. Radio intelligence represented the third pillar of what the Army viewed as interrelated capabilities that could and should be performed interchangeably by signals corps personnel. Unsurprisingly, the Army fielded official and experimental units tasked to perform these roles, often employing them interchangeably and in multiple roles.[2] By the end of the conflict, the Army had acquired a great deal of practical experience from observing the performance of this variety of units operating in multiple roles across the Mediterranean and European theaters.

During the conflict, various organizations often performed overlapping roles related to the three functions. The Army fielded a signals intelligence (SIGINT) service section and one or more associated radio intelligence companies at field-army level and several corps-level signal service companies, which conducted COMINT collection and radio security monitoring.[3] Signal Corps doctrine also directed all Signal Corps personnel to aid in COMINT and security monitoring when not otherwise occupied.[4] The organization and doctrinal construct of the SIGINT service, radio

Members of the 3151st SIAM Company, Seventh Army, work in a staff information and monitoring (SIAM) operations room in Vesoul, France, on 29 September 1944. (Photo by U.S. Army Signal Corps, courtesy of the National Archives)

intelligence companies, signal service companies, and Signal Corps as a whole reflected the prevailing view in the early 1940s that radio operators could and should conduct a variety of monitoring roles.

In 1943, the Army began creating staff information and monitoring (SIAM) companies, based on best practices developed by the British in 1940, to conduct security and information monitoring.[5] Commanders quickly recognized the value of SIAMs in enabling common situation awareness and reducing latency in reporting during periods of battlefield fluidity such as the Anzio beachhead linkup and the drive on Rome.[6] Fifth Army also experimented by adding liaison officers to the SIAMs who provided short supplementary liaison reports.[7] Future SIAMs followed this basic model of liaison and radio intercept. The creation of the SIAMs reflected a belief that a single organization could conduct security monitoring and information monitoring.

Due to the manning shortfalls, not all field armies received a SIAM before commencing combat operations. As a result, Third Army converted a mechanized cavalry group into its Army information service based on the SIAM model.[8] Third Army's information service conducted the same liaison and information monitoring mission as the standard SIAMs but did not conduct radio security monitoring.[9] The Army information service, like the SIAMs, also performed well in fluid situations such as the pursuit in France in August 1944. Gen. George S. Patton credited his Army information service for allowing him to maintain the initiative during the pursuit by giving him superior battlespace awareness.[10]

European Theater Lessons Learned

Combat in Europe provided several lessons learned regarding best practices for managing and securing information codified in the General Board of the European Theater at the war's end. Firstly, security monitoring observably reduced communications security violations and secured information from the enemy. Secondly, information monitoring and liaison enabled rapid, well-informed decision-making. Thirdly, units could only successfully perform one mission at a time. These lessons informed a set of recommendations for postwar Army force structure that would, in the board's thinking, enable the Army to outcompete its peer adversaries in battlefield understanding and decision-making.

While the Army historically had seen the various monitoring functions as linked, practical experience in World War II had shown the benefit of differentiating these information-related functions. The theater board noted specifically that "a separate unit should be established for obtaining tactical information," and that signal security should be performed by "special units organized for that purpose."[11] This was primarily because signal service companies tended to focus on COMINT to the exclusion of security monitoring, and SIAMs tended to neglect security monitoring for information monitoring and liaison.[12]

With Eisenhower's emphatic support, the board also provided specific recommendations on how the postwar information management mission should be organized. The board specified that the Army should create an ATIS company within each field army with elements at the army, corps, and division levels. The army-level detachment and company headquarters would consist of a major, a captain, three first lieutenants, enough radio operators to dedicate one to continuously monitoring each corps and the army group, an operations sergeant, and other support personnel.[13] The ATIS elements at the corps and division levels would consist of enough code clerks to operate continually, a highly capable staff sergeant, a radio repairman, and a radio with a range of two hundred miles. The element would be led by an "intelligent, personable, energetic, persistent and completely reliable" captain with staff experience.[14] This structure and its significant investment of quality equipment and personnel reflected the importance placed on the capability.

The theater board recognized that Army force structure at that time did not include dedicated security monitoring elements. Consequently, the theater board unanimously recommended that the Army establish a dedicated security monitoring company for each field army. This company would consist of sufficient personnel and equipment to monitor at least 5 percent of the field army's frequencies, enough to ensure discipline amongst radio operators and identify systematic security issues.[15] While the board did not specify the equipment and personnel required by such a company, the requirement for expensive radio receivers and trained personnel to operate such a company would have been very high.

Army 1945–1947: Demobilization, Changing Missions, and Fiscal Constraints

Immediately following the Japanese surrender, the Army was challenged by rapid demobilization, new postwar missions, and waning budgets in the context of a new nuclear era. Faced with the challenge of maintaining sufficient capacity to accomplish its various postwar noncombat missions, the Army was forced to make difficult choices regarding which capabilities to retain and which to eliminate or deprioritize. The creation of the Army Security Agency in 1945 ensured the security monitoring mission would fall under an organization that championed its interests but prioritized strategic COMINT over tactical security monitoring. The split of the security monitoring and information management missions, recommended by the theater board, left ATIS without an institutional champion. These trends resulted in the elimination of ATIS from the postwar active Army and the deprioritization of the tactical security monitoring mission by 1947.

Between 1945 and 1947, the Army radically restructured from a multimillion-man combat organization to a force of less than a million primarily focused on occupation, territorial defense, and training. While the size of the Army drastically shrank, the variety of missions it was expected to conduct increased. The Army was tasked simultaneously with occupation duties in two separate theaters, providing for the territorial defense of the continental United States, retaining the capability to conduct expeditionary operations to secure U.S. interests globally, and maintaining its ability

to train and mobilize in the event of a general conflict. The Army reorganized units from combined arms formations into constabulary forces to support the increased emphasis on occupation duties. Consequently, the requirement for the types of units that enabled information management and security decreased.

Information Management: 1945–1947

Following the 1946 reorganization, Army Ground Forces (AGF) assumed responsibility for the training and tactical command of ground forces based in the United States and stood up six territorial armies organized to coordinate the training and readiness of subordinate forces. However, these territorial armies were not organized as combat formations like their World War II predecessors.[16] The only true "combat" force envisioned within the Army after the war was the "Strategic Striking Force," later known as the "General Reserve." The original 1945 plan called for two corps—a total of 115,000 soldiers—but the final approved plan in 1947 included only one corps of two divisions.[17] The General Reserve theoretically had a mission that would require information management services, but manpower constraints prevented establishing an ATIS company within the General Reserve. As the Army scaled back the force structure of the General Reserve, the theoretical requirement for an ATIS company evaporated.

The AGF was challenged to maintain sufficient capacity to cover its various defense and mobilization readiness missions. By June 1946, the Signal Corps' end strength had dropped to fifty-six thousand officers and men, less than one-sixth of its strength the year prior.[18] The AGF as a whole had a shortage of fifteen thousand officers.[19] In short, the Army faced a shortage of the experienced staff officers and radio operators required by ATIS. Consequently, the AGF had to make difficult decisions. To meet its requirements the AGF announced its policy in 1946 that it would "hold to the principle that special units should be kept to the minimum, and that standard combat units, properly organized, disciplined, and led, can learn quickly to perform special tasks."[20] The following year, the War Department reorganized the SIAMs, placing a few remaining companies in the Army Reserve without any personnel or equipment assigned.[21] Retaining combat force structure was the priority to enable the Army's rapid mobilization in the event of a conflict. Consequently, "special units" like the SIAMs were moved to the Army Reserve where they could be filled with personnel and equipment in the event of a general mobilization. The AGF made the assumption that at least in the initial phases of a conflict, a core of well-trained "standard combat units" could make do performing these "special tasks," like information management, for which they had not been designed or trained. With no active-duty force structure, equipment, or even assigned reserve personnel, this effectively marked the end of ATIS.

Information Security: 1945–1947

Immediately following victory in the Pacific, the consensus within the War Department held that few foreign powers were interested in collecting against tactical U.S. military communications; likewise, the United States had little requirement for tactical COMINT collection. Thus, the rapid demobilization of the Army following the conclusion of hostilities resulted in the elimination of most of the Army's tactical COMINT collection capability and the deactivation of virtually all security monitoring elements.[22] The remainder were transferred to the newly established Army Security Agency (ASA). Demobilization left these elements and the ASA at less than 36 percent of its authorized enlisted end strength and 86 percent of its authorized officer end strength by October 1945.[23] Progressive cuts to the Army budget and end strength in 1946 and 1947 forced the ASA to make difficult decisions regarding allocating its limited resources. In line with the U.S. assessment of the strategic situation and its resource constraints, the ASA prioritized strategic fixed-site COMINT collection over maintaining tactical COMINT or security monitoring capability. This decision reflected the overall U.S. assessment that war was not imminent, that future conflicts would be fought in the air, and that the Army would have time to raise new forces at the start of a new conflict. As a result, by the end of 1947, nearly all tactical COMINT and security monitoring elements had been demobilized.[24]

The end of the conflict and the establishment of the ASA also ended the Signal Corps' responsibility for security monitoring and information monitoring to enable decision-making. In essence, this marked the

next phase and the latest defeat for the Signal Corps in a struggle dating back almost fifty years between it and the Military Intelligence Service over the boundaries among intelligence, security, and information.[25] In mid-September, the War Department began administratively transferring COMINT and security roles from the Signal Corps to the Military Intelligence Service within the War Department. On 28 October, the chief of the Military Intelligence Service officially notified the commanding generals of the theaters that all SIGINT and signal security personnel and units would henceforth fall under the ASA.[26] The decision split the three functions of monitoring between two different services. Ensuring the communication of priority information remained, as it always had, within the Signal Corps' mission. However, securing information from enemy compromise and SIGINT collection now fell under the ASA and the Military Intelligence Service. This decision comported with the theater board's recommendation to separate the information management and security functions. That recommendation and the decision to place all security monitoring elements under the ASA effectively broke up the SIAMs. This meant they would not become part of the postwar force structure and effectively left the tactical information services without an institutional champion, making their mothballing substantially easier.

New Emphasis on Readiness, Information Security, and Monitoring: 1948–1950

As the strategic rivalry with communist powers intensified in late 1947, it became painfully evident to the Army and the new Department of Defense that the Army could not perform its general function of "prompt and sustained combat" against a potential Soviet adversary, even in a nuclear context. This led to a reconsideration of how the Army should secure and manage its information. However, the continuing emphasis on occupation duties and perennial budget and manpower shortfalls left the overall dynamic unchanged from previous years. Over half of the U.S. Army remained organized for and employed in overseas occupation duties, and one-third of its budget supported relief efforts. Only one-eighth of its budget was earmarked for new equipment, and a declining percentage of personnel scored in the higher mental categories needed to fill out the highly technical information-related fields.[27] This meant little room for growth in new, highly resource-intensive missions.

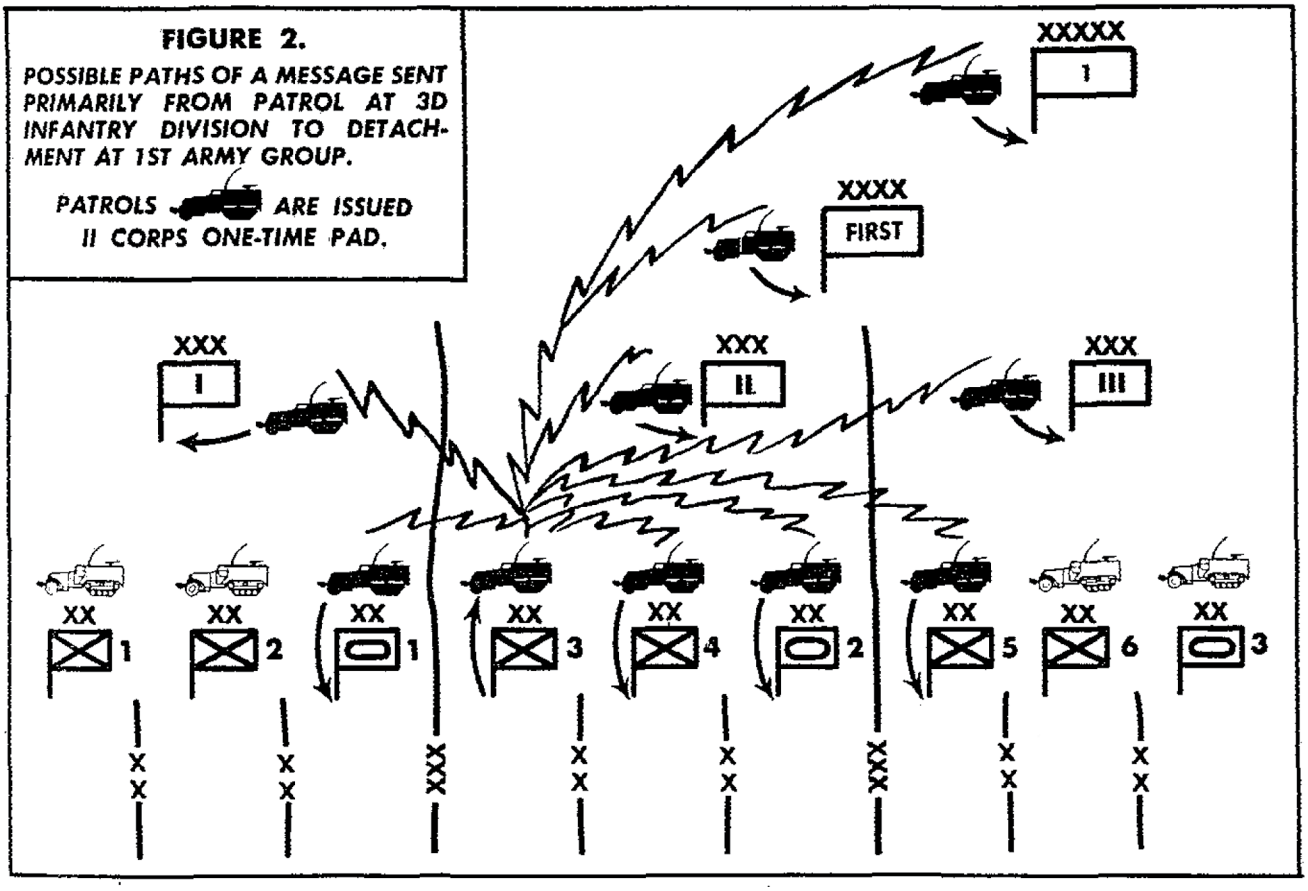
Information Management: 1948–1950

The growing concern over the possibility of ground combat with the Soviet Union in Europe may have contributed to a brief reexamination of the Army's approach to information management but did not ultimately result in the fielding of active tactical information services. In the August 1949 edition of *Military Review*, John S. D. Eisenhower argued for the continued utility of ATIS, particularly in the types of mobile and intensive future ground combat the Army envisioned.[28] Eisenhower had served in a SIAM in Europe in 1945 and had been a member of the theater board that recommended the continuation of ATIS after the conflict.[29] Yet, despite his prominence as Eisenhower's son, there is little indication that the younger Eisenhower's article sparked a more extensive discussion of returning ATIS to the active force within the Army.

In response to greater agency emphasis on tactical field support, the ASA considered designing a communication reconnaissance company in April 1950 that included security monitoring and "staff information monitoring" missions, effectively resurrecting the old SIAM model.[30] However, this would have represented an expansion outside ASA's mission and was contrary to the recommendations of the theater board. Consequently, the company was not adopted, and the ASA pursued creating pure tactical security monitoring companies. Thus, despite continuing to recognize the potential requirement for elements dedicated to performing information management tasks in future ground combat, resource constraints and a lack of an institutional champion with the mission to conduct information management stymied progress.

Information Security: 1948–1950

Beginning in mid-1948, the ASA began to pivot toward reemphasizing tactical-level support and security monitoring. The creation of the strategic-focused Armed Forces Security Agency and the separation of the United States Air Force Security Service from ASA in 1948–1949 gave ASA both the opportunity and institutional imperative to refocus on more



An example of a staff information and monitoring communications structure. (Figure from John S. D. Eisenhower, "The Army Tactical Information Services," *Military Review* 29, no. 5 [1949]: 34)

tactical support and "mobile" missions. Yet ASA's efforts through the end of 1950 fell woefully short of implementing the best practices identified in 1945, partly due to a continuing stagnation in end strength and budget.[31]

Starting in July 1948, the ASA began receiving increasing demand from Eighth Army stationed in Japan for mobile tactical COMINT and security monitoring support. ASA had no mobile COMINT or security monitoring formations in its inventory. Still, as a gap-fill measure, the ASA ordered the 50th Signal Service Detachment in Japan to begin communication security monitoring in Far East Command as a "semi-mobile" unit.[32] This would prove to be a remarkably prescient and vital step, as the 50th Signal Service Detachment would be the only security monitoring element initially available for deployment to Korea in mid-1950.

In response to the requirement for additional tactical support, the ASA began training select elements to perform a mobile communications security mission and participated in its first tactical exercises starting in late 1948. From 1949 to 1950, the 60th Signal Service Company at Fort Lewis, Washington, served as the agency's test bed for mobile field support. In the summer of 1949, the company began preparation to transition from fixed-station missions to training for mobile COMINT collection and security monitoring missions and assignment as part of the General Reserve.[33] Yet, the company only finally reached its full strength of 242 enlisted personnel in November 1949 and did not begin its mobile collection training until March 1950.[34] Reflecting the Army's lack of emphasis on tactical monitoring, most of the assigned equipment had been in long-term storage since 1946 and was in poor repair.[35] The changes in the 60th Signal Service Company represented the first attempts to encourage innovation within the tactical security monitoring mission since World War II. Yet, manpower and equipment shortfalls inhibited its operations and experimentation. ASA tactical elements also remained

undifferentiated during the period, with its signal service companies tasked to perform both COMINT collection and security monitoring.

Eighth Army's request importantly demonstrated the clear lack of force structure needed to provide tactical signal security support to field armies in combat. With a clear requirement, ASA sought to change this with the design of Table of Organization and Equipment (T/O&E) 32-500 in January 1950. The plan called for a communications reconnaissance group at the Army level and dedicated intelligence and security monitoring companies at the corps level.[36] Communications reconnaissance companies (security) were tasked with providing full twenty-four-hour per day coverage of corps and below radio circuits.[37] T/O&E 32-500 was remarkably similar to the recommendations in the theater board of 1945; however, ongoing personnel shortfalls within the agency and the continuing requirement to maintain fixed sites initially prevented the establishment of these organizations before the start of the Korean War.[38] Also, simply redesigning the company did not yield the practical understanding of how it would work—that had atrophied.

Capability Shortfall in Korea

Once hostilities commenced in Korea, ASA dispatched detachments from ASA-Pacific to Korea with Eighth Army as a stopgap. While they were not explicitly trained for tactical security monitoring, they helped close the short-term security gap. Eventually dedicated tactical security monitoring elements were deployed, but they had to be created from scratch, and lessons about their employment relearned. Ultimately, it wouldn't be until over a year into the conflict before the Army deployed fully mission-capable communications security monitoring elements. On 25 August 1950, the 50th Signal Service Detachment was alerted for deployment and arrived at Pusan on 2 October.[39] This small detachment, consisting of only two officers and thirty-five enlisted soldiers, monitored Eighth Army radio nets from 3 October 1950 to 5 April 1951.[40] This element helped reduce Eighth Army radio procedural discrepancies from 7.38 discrepancies per minute in December 1950 to 1.7 per minute in March 1951 and COMSEC violations from a peak of 438 to 158 per day over the same period.[41] The intervention of this small, low-density organization resulted in a significant return on investment and operational-level outcome.

While the 50th Signal Service Detachment served as a temporary security monitoring measure in Korea, the ASA formed a new dedicated security monitoring element under T/O&E 32-500: the 352nd Communications Reconnaissance Company (Security). The company authorized eight officers and 152 men but had no personnel or equipment assigned until 8 October 1950 and only began to reach full manning by mid-December 1950.[42] Development of operational procedures for the company also progressed slowly due to equipment shortages, personnel turnover, and shortfalls in qualified technical personnel.[43] The ASA, Eighth Army, and the 352nd also struggled to define precisely how the company should be employed operationally. The company initially trained and organized itself to embed monitoring teams at the division and regimental levels and establish its company headquarters and analysis section at the corps level. Instead, Headquarters ASA Pacific determined that it would be necessary to embed teams at the corps level and maintain the company headquarters and analysis element with Eighth Army Headquarters.

ASA's annual history opined that confusion regarding the organization and operational methods of the company "resulted from the fact that the company represented a new idea, and its operation in the field could not be clearly visualized in detail."[44] In fact, this organization did

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Lt. Gen. Thomas Hickey (*right*), U.S. Army Forces in the Far East deputy commanding general, inspects the 50th Signal Battalion, XVI U.S. Corps, at Camp Sendai, Japan, on 16 February 1954. He was accompanied by Maj. Gen. Samuel T. Williams, XVI U.S. Corps commanding general (*not shown*), and Lt. Col. E. O. Lindner (*second from left*), 50th Signal Battalion. (Photo by U.S. Army Signal Corps, courtesy of the National Archives)

not represent a new concept. The company largely mirrored the proposed structure recommended by the theater board in 1945. The lack of detailed organizational procedures reflected the Army's failure to establish such organizations in the intervening five years rather than the creation of an entirely innovative construct in 1950.

The first elements of the 352nd arrived in Korea in late February 1951 and began handover with the 50th Signal Service Detachment in mid-March. By 7 April 1951, turnover was complete, and the 352nd assumed operational responsibility for security monitoring of Eighth Army in Korea.[45] In total, the ASA field elements provided progressively higher quality and quantity support to Eighth Army over the first year of the Korean War. Security monitoring efforts markedly decreased communications security violations as the ASA fielded more dedicated security monitoring elements. By the end of the conflict's first year, the ASA was fielding dedicated security monitoring organizations similar to those envisioned at the end of World War II. The initial shortfall in communication security in the opening phases of the conflict can be attributed in part to the inability of the Army to innovate within the security monitoring mission during the intervening years between World War II and the Korean War.

Eighth Army did not possess ATIS at the outset of the Korean War and never reestablished it, likely contributing to poor performance during the opening phases of the conflict. In early 1950, Eighth Army possessed none of the requisite resources to create an information management organization, even if it had

elected to do so. The Army as a whole did not field organizations dedicated to managing information, and there is no indication that Eighth Army considered creating one from existing organizations like Third Army did in World War II. This may have been mainly because Eighth Army suffered from significant shortages of officers with the requisite staff skills and combat experience described in the theater board.[46] Similarly, it lacked trained noncommissioned officers capable of serving in ATIS, with over one-third of its sergeants possessing "below average intelligence and having only a grade-school education."[47] Furthermore, Eighth Army lacked the communications equipment necessary for such an organization to conduct its mission.[48] Therefore, Eighth Army went into combat without an existing ATIS and lacked the requisite resources and operational concepts to build one. The lack of an existing ATIS likely contributed to poorer performance during retrograde operations during the summer and then again during the fall of 1950. During the delay and retrograde operations, Army elements often struggled to maintain situational awareness of the overall disposition of friendly units and the location of the forward line of troops. In addition, the rapid pace of movement and intermixing of forces often led to confusion and an inability of Army elements to form a cohesive and mutually supporting line of defense against the Korean People's Army and later Chinese People's Volunteers.[49] Combat operations in World War II strongly indicated that tactical information services greatly enhanced the ability of Army elements to maintain situational awareness in fluid situations. It is probable that ATIS could have performed a similar function and mitigated some poor information management during the high tempo delay and retrograde operations in 1950.

Conclusion

Postwar mission changes, resource constraints, and lack of institutional support played an important role in inhibiting innovation within information management and security missions following World War II. The lack of a clear adversary and combat role for the Army reinforced the natural inclination within military organizations toward inertia. When faced with resource shortages, the Army invested in its core capacities at the expense of innovating in the information management and security realms. As internal reorganization and redistribution of missions within the Army played out after the war, ATIS was left without a clear institutional supporter, fell through the bureaucratic cracks, and expired. In contrast, the information security mission survived in a reduced form within the newly reorganized ASA. While these decisions allowed the Army to retain the necessary capacity to mobilize rapidly in the event of a conflict, they left the Army unable to perform information management and security missions at the start of the Korean War.

World War II experience allowed the Army to develop new innovative organizational and doctrinal concepts for information management and security in the postwar years. Yet, the proposed organizations, like dedicated security monitoring companies and ATIS, promised to be highly manpower and equipment intensive. Demobilization and budget cuts imposed substantial constraints on the Army. Shortly after the end of hostilities, the Army faced an overall manpower shortage and a particularly acute talent shortage as its ability to access high potential and skilled manpower evaporated with the halt in conscription. Consequently, the Army was forced to make difficult decisions regarding where to invest its limited fiscal and manpower resources.

Facing resource constraints and an unpredictable year-to-year budget, the Army repeatedly decided to invest in retaining capacity rather than developing new information management capabilities. The AGF specifically worked to maintain combat forces at the expense of specialty units like ATIS. The lack of field Army-level headquarters requiring information security and management services in a peacetime "occupation duty" Army meant there was no short-term requirement, even though it was acknowledged that such a requirement would likely be present in the event of a large-scale conflict. Thus, the desire to seek cost-effective solutions that fulfilled core Army missions, particularly in the short term, contributed to the Army's decision to defer the transformation of its management missions.

Similarly, budgetary and manpower shortfalls forced the newly established ASA to choose where to prioritize its efforts. Given the strategic requirement for COMINT and the lack of short-term tactical security monitoring requirements, the ASA prioritized fixed-site COMINT collection up to 1950. The ASA

applied additional resources to the problem in 1949 and, by 1950, was beginning to innovate with the development of T/O&E 32-500. However, the lack of resources and the delay in developing dedicated security monitoring organizations meant that the ASA entered the Korean War with no organizations fully formed to take on the role.

The creation of the ASA provided the information security mission with an institutional champion that directly reported to the War Department (later the Department of the Army), but the information management mission was left without one. This lack of institutional support left ATIS vulnerable in the postwar resource-constrained Army. Given that the proposed ATIS would comprise both Signal Corps personnel and staff officers from the combat arms branches, the tactical information services occupied a place between branches and staff sections. Without a vested interest in the concept, no branch, Army command, or staff section was incentivized to prioritize its development in a resource-constrained environment. The transformation of the Army's security and intelligence missions after the war had the direct and unintended consequence of leaving the information management mission behind. When the Korean War erupted, there was no base upon which to rebuild the capability.

Implications

Overall, the experience of the Army's information security and management missions from 1945 to 1950 underscores the difficulty and inherent risks associated with executing transformation in the context of constrained resources and changing mission sets. The Army should remain conscious of the fact that as responsibilities are redistributed across organizations and echelons during transformation, new gaps may emerge. Capabilities that lie at the seams between organizations or missions are at particular risk, however critical they may be, of being deprioritized, particularly when resources are scarce. Consequently, transformation initiatives can inadvertently open new capability gaps.

The Army also cannot automatically assume, as it did in the 1940s, that "standard units" can perform critical specialty functions necessary during conflict. While the Army must maintain a credible tactical force capable of conducting current missions, disproportionately underinvesting in missions essential for operational- or strategic-level success risks failure in large-scale combat. Similarly, underinvesting in smaller specialty missions can also have an outsized effect on these low-density elements. When considering the current talent shortage, the Army should consider where it invests this most critical of resources and make a coherent decision about maximizing the return on that investment.

The Army should also view with some skepticism the assumption that it can complete transformation efforts once the manpower and budgetary spigots are turned on during conflict. Mobilizing and building out understrength units has its own challenges, but it is arguably significantly more difficult to build out new elements from scratch. Assuming that even the concepts for these organizations and the underlying structures for mobilizing them exist, paper units have no organizational experience or institutional knowledge. Experimental units or others repurposed for the role can be called upon to fill the gap. However, those lacking permanent personnel or equipment and accompanying doctrine may find it challenging and time consuming to transition in conflict.

Transformation is difficult even when mission requirements are uniform, resources are plentiful, and organizational roles and responsibilities are well understood and enduring. Transformation requires overcoming institutional inertia and coherently orchestrating the various doctrinal, materiel, personnel, and other factors. It often requires some degree of experimentation to explore how different parts of a broader transformation enterprise interact once deployed. All of these challenges are multiplied manifold when resources are scarce, mission requirements are diverse, and organizational roles and responsibilities are in flux. The example of the Army information management and security missions in the 1940s suggests that there is likely no simple solution to the complex problem as all investment strategies carry risk, and the choice of foregoing transformation entirely will almost certainly invite defeat in future conflicts. Most likely, the Army of today may be forced to realistically consider where it is willing to see its transformation endeavor or current missions fall short and carefully ensure that it does not open any new gaps while transforming that it cannot reasonably expect to fill quickly. ■

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Exploring Mental Models in Finance

How the Psychology of Money Assists Thinking About War and Strategy

Capt. Stein Thorbeck, U.S. Army

When it comes to victory in war, the intellectual concepts you hold in your head really, really matter.

—Dr. Michael Neiberg, Chair of War Studies, Army War College

The development of realistic physical maps through advances in cartography greatly increased capacity to think practically about how nations could wage wars.[1] The ability to examine

realistically the arena in which nations fought presented a new level of planning capability that cemented strategy well within a sphere of cognition and foresight that had not been previously enjoyed. Commanders and political leaders could use these new mental models to conceive likely avenues of approach, lines of supply, and cover and concealment to enable advances when mobilizing for war.

While the arena is physical, our interpretations are not. Cartography is helpful to the extent it assists in perceiving at scale. Academic disciplines offer a type of cartography, and these disciplines provide their own set of maps. How might a strategist with a life sciences background differ from an engineer in fighting a war? Would their instrument of war be viewed as an organism or a machine? Where one searches for adaptation, malleability, and changes in the strategic ecosphere, the other focuses on problems of efficiency, function, and breakdown.[2] Neither is "better" in an absolute sense, but each could offer an advantage if used at the right time.

In this article, I explore war as an investor might think about it. That is, I use the psychology of financial behavior as a lens to examine war strategy in three areas. This lens could be useful to leaders looking to increase strategic effectiveness, yet it is only one in a long list of possibilities. Any academic field can offer insight and strength of decision to senior leaders. The purpose of this article, then, is to inspire rising leaders to aggressively seek new connections and paradigms from disparate academic disciplines to improve their thinking about war and build strategic acumen.

The Arena—On the Similarity of War and Finance: Finance as a Strategic Map for Uncertainty

No other human activity is so continuously or universally bound up with chance. And through the element of chance, guesswork and luck come to play a great part in war.

—Carl von Clausewitz[3]

I'm going to tell you everything you need to know about the stock market: nobody knows nothin'.

—Jack Bogle, founder of Vanguard Investments[4]

In book one of *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz makes the case that no other human activity such as that offered by a game of high-stakes poker may simulate war's robust cocktail of human emotion, risk, chance, and behavior control.[5] Although Clausewitz's analogy delivers its intended insight, a better analogy would account for risk across a longer period of time. In 1832, when *On War* was first published, the Frankfurt Stock Exchange may not have been first in mind for the student of warfare. But time is an extremely important component of war, and man's behavior in dealing with it cannot be simulated well in a game of cards. If Clausewitz were alive today, he might revise his previous statement to instead compare war to the modern stock market.

Where poker may leave a beaten gambler frustrated, investing for one's future is played for keeps. The human element is more pronounced, and the consequences are more severe, making more potent the parallels drawn. Moreover, by accounting for the aspect of time, insight can be gleaned from discussions of risk, endurance, impatience, and self-defeating behavior. The game of cards lasts hours, but the game of investing, like war, is measured in years and decades.

Comfort with, not control of, the uncertain is what separates the successful strategist from the herd. Lawrence Freedman, Oxford's Professor Emeritus of War Studies, conducted an exhaustive historical and cross-discipline search for strategic principles and found that "[successful] strategies were not so much a means of asserting control over situations but ways of coping with situations in which nobody was in total control."[6] For Freedman, there is a premium on understanding one's immediate environment and remaining cool-headed enough to adapt to it. How the strategist behaves in a particularly dynamic moment yields success or failure in the next phase of a continuously unfolding drama.

Similarly, in *The Psychology of Money*, author

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Morgan Housel asserts that winning in the financial world is more dependent on how one behaves than it is on how smart one is or in how much they know.[7] Fear induces us to make premature (and usually poor) decisions, whereas greed skews our ability to evaluate objectively as we thirst for unsustainable returns. Yet investors can improve their chances of success by (1) tailoring appetites and thinking long term, (2) building room for inevitable error, and (3) diversifying potentialities. These three approaches provide useful models to assist understanding of war and warfare. Let us now begin our exploration with the first, found in man's penchant for "more."

Three Areas of Comparison: The Allure of Battle and High Investment Returns

Wealth hastily gotten will dwindle, but he who gathers little by little will increase it.

—Proverbs 13:11[8]

The proverb quoted above represents an archetype of truth for any field. Success seems to come, or more accurately, success seems to stay with those most able to control their appetite for more of it. Should war be any different? Whoever can take the slow and deliberate path to consolidating gains—those most able to walk the boring path of the turtle—are poised for success in investing and probably so in war. Clausewitz hails Frederick the Great as the ideal strategist, but not so much for his prowess in tactical maneuver:

> Are we to be beside ourselves with admiration at the fact that the King wanted first to attack Daun's right flank, then his left, then his right again, and so forth? … what is really admirable is the King's wisdom: pursuing a major objective with limited resources, he did not try to undertake anything beyond his strength, but always just enough to get him what he wanted. This campaign was not the only one in which he demonstrated his judgement as a general.[9]

Housel believes "the hardest skill in finance is to get the goal post to stop moving."[10] Clausewitz, in praising the Prussian king, highlights this same and rarest of traits in war. The desire for decisive battle is the desire for high return. It is the false promise of glory that continues to draw men to their ruin. This search for quick and decisive victory in war appears to be an often-fatal flaw. Military historian Cathal Nolan's epic work *The Allure of Battle* examines this inclination toward decisive war throughout time and finds the idea is no less than a "short war illusion."[11] From Napoleon Bonaparte's misreading of Borodino to Germany's 1914 invasion of France; from Adolf Hitler's Barbarossa campaign of 1941 to American hopes for swift victory in Afghanistan and Iraq, all descended into an attritional warfare that eluded prewar planning. As sure as man's search for quick riches, so appears the Western strategist's search for his next Cannae.[12]

Napoleon's thirst for annihilation at Borodino is worth highlighting as a salient example of allure for high returns gone awry. Although the *Grande Armée* eventually achieved a tactical victory, it was one Russians had no intention of accepting. Here, Russian resources showed an astounding ability to continually provide options for Tsar Alexander I. The option to refuse a loss may be as much of a luxury as any could hope for, and it can only exist in correlation with one's ability to steward resources. This unfortunate occurrence for France spelled the beginning of Napoleon's end, who in 1812, risked it all. Unable to get the goal post to stop moving, he yearned for the highest "return" of his yet undefeated career, only to be beaten by a humbler enemy satisfied with more modest returns. Time and patience really are two of the universe's most formidable warriors.[13]

Consolidating gains continuously must be thought of in the same way the investor thinks about compound interest. Enabling time and patience to work their strategic magic requires a certain kind of mind. Yet the patient mind is not a personality trait, and endurance in war is not simply a matter of grit; it is enabled by possessing more options than one's enemy. Where all options are spent, there can be no patience. Therefore, increasing one's ability to maintain options prior to reacting is the premium currency in chaotic strategic environments.

Let us consider another analogy. The ability to generate income can be thought of as an offensive operation, while guarding one's current assets and controlling expenses are akin to a defense. If one wanted to become a billionaire today, one must play a very aggressive offense. Yet, if one wants to become a millionaire, still "winning" by most people's standards, one may adopt

Napoleon I (*seated at left*) watches the fighting during the Battle of Borodino on 7 September 1812. This bloody battle was part of the French invasion of Russia during the Napoleonic Wars. The *Grande Armée* was eventually victorious, but it failed to achieve Napoleon's desire for the Russian army's complete destruction and allowed the Russians to successfully retreat. (Vasily Vereshchagin, *Napoleon I on the Borodino Heights*, 1893; painting courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

a strategy of "not losing"; that is, having an adequate offense while playing tremendous defense.[14] The likelihood of success of the very aggressive approach is de minimus whereas the other is closer to a repeatable formula. Resource-rich rivals like China and Russia are historically aligned with the millionaire's path of prudence and patience.[15] The important question then for the would-be strategist is not how to achieve victory, but at what scale do we consider a win a win?

With the above discussion on returns and risk-seeking in mind, one may ask whether a strategy of not losing is preferred to a strategy of winning. With finance as our lens for war, we likely arrive at an answer that mirrors Nolan's findings on what has worked most often. The Western way of war may be too historically aligned with a view of strategy resembling the billionaire's path to wealth.[16] In examining this tendency of civilian and warrior leaders alike, Nolan concludes, "The idea of decisive battle will always be more alluring than winning by attrition … yet exhaustion of the enemy has in modern times more usually achieved political ends in big wars fought among great powers, which suggests that more humility is needed."[17] If it is humility we need, then we must admit to ourselves that we have no idea what is coming next—and operationalize that admission with a margin of safety.

Enduring Friction and Chaos with the Margin of Safety: Planning on Your Plan Not Going According to Plan

Was Napoleon unique in his bloodthirst at Borodino? Probably to some extent yes, and most will never rise to lead a continental army to find out for

sure. But reasonable people fall victim to the same human dynamics in finance that befell the French emperor. All must learn to protect themselves from our own penchant for "more." Deliberately building in room for error assists in the fight against chance, fear, greed, ego, and envy. In *The Psychology of Money*, Housel discusses the importance of holding excessively large sums of cash. From a purely mathematical standpoint, this strategy is irrational. It carries high opportunity costs and inflationary risk. However, its real "return" is in its ability to enable sleep—thereby creating conditions for invested assets to stay invested (endurance) for the long haul. J. P. Morgan once explained this critical idea in his advice to a worried investor that he should "sell down to [his] sleeping point."[18]

Behavioral economists Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky demonstrated that people become either risk averse or risk seeking based on how they understand threat. Kahneman writes, "When you pay attention to a threat, you worry—and the decision weights reflect how much you worry. Because of the possibility effect, the worry is not proportional to the probability of the threat."[19] With limited perceivable options we are more prone to worry, and thus more apt to make costly mistakes.[20]

Humans are not necessarily risk seeking or risk averse in proportion to a reward's expected value. Instead, our behavior toward risk is relative to perceived chance of loss. The military strategist should quickly see the applicability in war and battle estimates. The battle becomes every bit as much about protecting the mind from perceptions of absolute loss as it is about facing down a formidable opponent. Maintaining a significant margin of safety is a needed component to tame our susceptibility to unreasonable levels of risk-seeking behavior that would otherwise occur.

A store of savings becomes a defensive asset to guard against temptation to "re-task" invested equities, which can have dire consequences if gains are to consolidate and compound. This margin of safety is a behavioral control mechanism and hedge against surprise. In *The Intelligent Investor*, author Benjamin Graham argues that the purpose of the margin of safety is to "render unnecessary an accurate estimate of the future."[21] While he was speaking specifically about purchasing securities at a heavy discount, the concept of leaving room for error is widely useful. Frederick the Great, Clausewitz's favorite resource-minded king, used to keep up to 330,000 tons of grain and three years' worth of troops' salary in silver reserves.[22] It is this critical room for error that enables flexibility, options, and decision space. Housel advises that endurance in investing comes from planning for the "gap between what could happen in the future and what you need to happen in the future."[23] By planning for this gap of uncertainty and thinking about what kind of bridge is required to cross it, strategists find a conceptual framework to prime the mind for reason. A commander armed with room for error is likely to behave differently than a commander fighting near the limit of his capability.

> Humans are not necessarily risk seeking or risk averse in proportion to a reward's expected value. Instead, our behavior toward risk is relative to perceived chance of loss.

U.S. Army Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, defines endurance as "the ability to persevere over time throughout the depth of an operational environment."[24] Endurance-minded leaders consider their assets, and more importantly, the replacement of such. What makes this tenet so important for the investor and strategist is in thinking how to prepare for surprise to prevent being completely wiped out. Surprises are dangerous not just because we are ill-prepared to respond, but they are dangerous psychologically because they skew perception about what options remain on the table.

While the all-volunteer approach to our military is a cornerstone of the Nation's defense strategy, wars are not usually won by volunteer armies. They are waged by nations at the expense of current and future resources

taken from the economy.[25] We should strongly consider how historically rare it is that a nation's standing army and current munition stores have ever been enough to achieve decision in war. It was this uncomfortable historical truth that led former U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) commander, Gen. William DePuy, to state categorically that "wars are won by reserve officers and draftees."[26] During World War II, American leaders were unsure if its ninety divisions would even be enough to defeat Axis powers, leading to significant debate over whether such a "small" force could present a reasonable threat.[27] Today, we have a tiny fraction of the same force and arguably do not possess the infrastructure to mobilize on a grand scale if ever needed.[28]

Thinking of the margin of safety like an investor also highlights modern portfolio theory as a helpful paradigm. But instead of stock and bond ratios, we can think about optimal ratios of combatants forward to noncombatants at home in the productive economy. We can think of ratios of reserve troops to active standing troops, or numbers and sufficient locations of military entry processing stations, scalability of officer education curriculums, and rapid generation of junior leaders. Modern portfolio theory helps explain how endurance-minded investors weather the inevitable setbacks and surprises of life. Each of these examples could provide *margins of safety* for the supreme commander. From 1812 to Barbarossa to perhaps today, Eastern strategists have demonstrated competence in planning for their plans to not go as anticipated. Our war planners must recognize that standing militaries are not representative of a country's total war-waging capability. How well would our war portfolio weather the storm of large-scale combat operations (LSCO)?

In sum, thinking about systems and infrastructures designed to build room for error in a broad strategic context is helpful to assist leaders maintain a mindset capable of true endurance. The margin of safety is a vital mental model that can be applied to physical and nonphysical resources alike. Having a margin of safety to carry one through during the search for a new golden goose is the critical cushion of compounding. Importantly, it enables a degree of comfort in risk acceptance and a willingness to accept failure to enable disproportionately powerful events to take hold. The margin of safety is built for a "range of potential outcomes, and endurance lets you stick around long enough to let the odds of benefitting from a low-probability outcome fall in your favor."[29] Creating conditions for these outcomes leads to our third financial model.

Diversification of Failure and Maneuver Warfare

In the field of statistics, a tail event refers to an outlier, which is anything living at the extreme ends of a normal distribution—the standard bell curve. While the probability of occurrence of a particular value at either end may be small, the probability that outliers occur is not. And these tails can have a deceptively large influence over the whole, especially when time is taken into account. For example, one market research study used the returns on the Dow Jones Industrial Average during the period from 1900 to 2013 to compare a buy-and-hold investor to someone that missed only the five best trading days of each year. Each dollar of the buy-and-hold portfolio became $290 in 2013, whereas the other portfolio doomed each dollar to less than a penny.[30] By staying invested throughout the highs and lows, the buy-and-hold investor was able to benefit from the exponential gains of a few companies that dramatically changed the scope of the whole average's performance. People can be wrong much of the time, but by casting a wide and patient net, across assets or time, one can still come out far ahead by enabling participation when tail events occur.

Venture capital is built around this concept. Instead of attempting to purchase the most lucrative needle in the corporate haystack, these probability-minded investors choose to invest in a large group of start-up businesses—the haystack. Even if most companies are losers, they are positioned to gain from outlier companies in an outlier market when an outlier event brings outsized earnings potential. Investors in index funds benefit from the same principle. By purchasing a well-diversified basket of potential, the patient investor with a moderate appetite for risk is set to capitalize on the tails.

Tails apply to the world of ideas just as well. Netflix's CEO, Reed Hastings, has an operating philosophy that actively encourages failure to increase the odds of producing the next monster hit series. These are not just words. His management team measures Netflix's overall show cancel rate, and counterintuitively, Hastings gets worried when his shows aren't getting canceled at

a *high enough* rate.[31] By promoting a high cancel rate, he creates space for his team to get aggressively creative. It only takes one runaway success to more than make up for previous lost production costs. Hastings understands the math and value behind outlier events and builds his strategic approach accordingly. This is a powerful paradigm to consider for the military. Actually, it is the essence of maneuver warfare.

Consider B. H. Liddel Hart's description of nature to describe the concept of maneuver:

> If we watch a torrent bearing down on each successive bank or earthen dam in its path, we see that it first beats against the obstacle, feeling and testing it at all points. Eventually, it finds a small crack at some point. Through this crack pour the first driblets of water and rush straight on. The pent-up water on each side is drawn towards the breach. It swirls through and around the flanks of the breach … thus nature's forces carry out the ideal attack.[32]

This extraordinary passage describes how the repeated "failures" of each droplet serves a greater purpose in facilitating a tail-event at some unknown point. Considered to be one of the greatest military strategists of the twentieth century, Hart does not describe the "ideal attack" as a careful sequence or master plan. He describes instead a real-time unfolding exploitation of previously unseen opportunity. Just so, picking individual stocks in an attempt to get rich is a loser's game. Victory in investing, just as in war, is not about how clever one is. It is about adjusting oneself to chaos and probabilistic thinking and enduring long enough to find the breakthroughs. While maneuver warfare often deals with the tactical, strategic leaders must be able to think this way. Their ability to create environments for action while balancing resources to stay in the game will benefit from the tails that inevitably occur.

The Cynefin Model, a framework for responding to various environments, demands action first in chaos—often in direct opposition to first instinct, which prioritizes understanding. If the outlook is uncertain, one should act, sense the environmental response, adjust, and repeat.[33] This is what maneuver warfare is supposed to address, yet in the chaos of strategic uncertainty, how confident are we that leaders are comfortable operating this way? General officers failing to make the cognitive leap from tactical thinking to operational and strategic competence is an identified problem.[34] The drive for certainty and fear of risk spells the healthy retirement portfolio that never was. By demonstrating an unwillingness to accept even moderate risk, so many are unable to win their golden years. Perhaps this is our undoing in strategic leader development as well. In asking what strategists could learn from those more astute in probability management and risk tolerance, such as the venture capitalist, tech CEO, or more commonly, the everyday index investor, we come to understand maneuver in ways that bring depth to the concept. It is appropriate behavior in chaos and fog.

Yet, where are officers trained to think deeply about risk? The Army's *Officer Evaluation Report Support Form* describes the core attributes and competencies of the successful military officer in over 2,500 words.[35] There is only one mention of risk, and even then, in reference to decreasing risk to balance the welfare of subordinates.[36] Field Manual 3-0's chapter on leadership in LSCO correctly discusses the conceptual importance of risk and uncertainty acceptance for senior leaders. But this is a fantasy if our officer development system contains a minimally articulated evaluation structure to match this need. If war is like navigating the investment market, then this omission when describing the attributes of our best players seems odd. To harness failure, we need to actively plan for it. In Housel's words, we need to plan for our plans to not go according to plan.[37]

Conclusion—A Question to Explore

In this article, we examined the usefulness of financial mental models to assist strategic leaders. While this may be useful for its own sake, the author really hopes to inspire readers to aggressively seek new mental models to assist in thinking about any aspect of the modern arena we call LSCO. We discussed the virtues of tailoring expectations to reasonable rates of return over time, building room for error through stewardship of resources to tame the mind and plan for the certainty of uncertainty, and thinking probabilistically through a diversification of potentialities to create conditions for "tail -like" events to occur. We remember Clausewitz's assertion that war is most like a game of cards. The field of investing may better embody his intention due to poker's omission of time.

Here, we arrive on an interesting question to consider. If war resembles enduring the market, how

should we choose the best players to lead us? Both operational environments are fundamentally human endeavors, and the above concepts have been shown to be successful in fighting man's propensity for greed and fear. Therefore, would high net-worth individuals, those proven adept at resource management and wealth accumulation, make better strategic leaders? At the very least, could there be a place for demonstrated financial acumen in strategic leader development?

Famed historian Michael Howard once stated that military leaders find themselves in a bit of a predicament. They are mostly unable to practice their craft in a setting that brings real consequence. He offered a thought exercise to imagine a surgeon going his whole career operating only on training dummies. Where else can military leaders train their mind? Imperfect as it may be, he suggested these leaders study history.[38] To rival the stakes of fear, greed, courage, ruin, and glory, this article suggests one more possibility. The strategist well versed in investment theory and personal finance finds an inexhaustible source of education for the mindset required in the waging of wars. With both fields weighing so heavily upon the same psychological maps, we are left wondering whether adeptness at one translates to skill in the other.

In closing, I leave only the summative descriptions of sound investors and generals, offered by two of the greatest minds in each field. Ben Graham describes the intelligent investor: "In the world of securities, courage becomes the supreme virtue *after* adequate knowledge and a tested judgement are at hand."[39] Clausewitz describes the military genius: "Two qualities are indispensable: first, an intellect that, even in the darkest hour, retains some glimmerings of the inner light which leads to truth; and second, the courage to follow this faint light wherever it may lead."[40]

In the next war, what intellectual concepts will you hold in your head? And which will you have the courage to use to find that glimmer of light? ■

Notes

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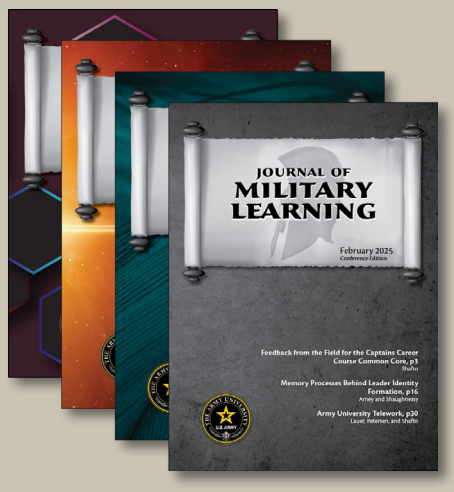

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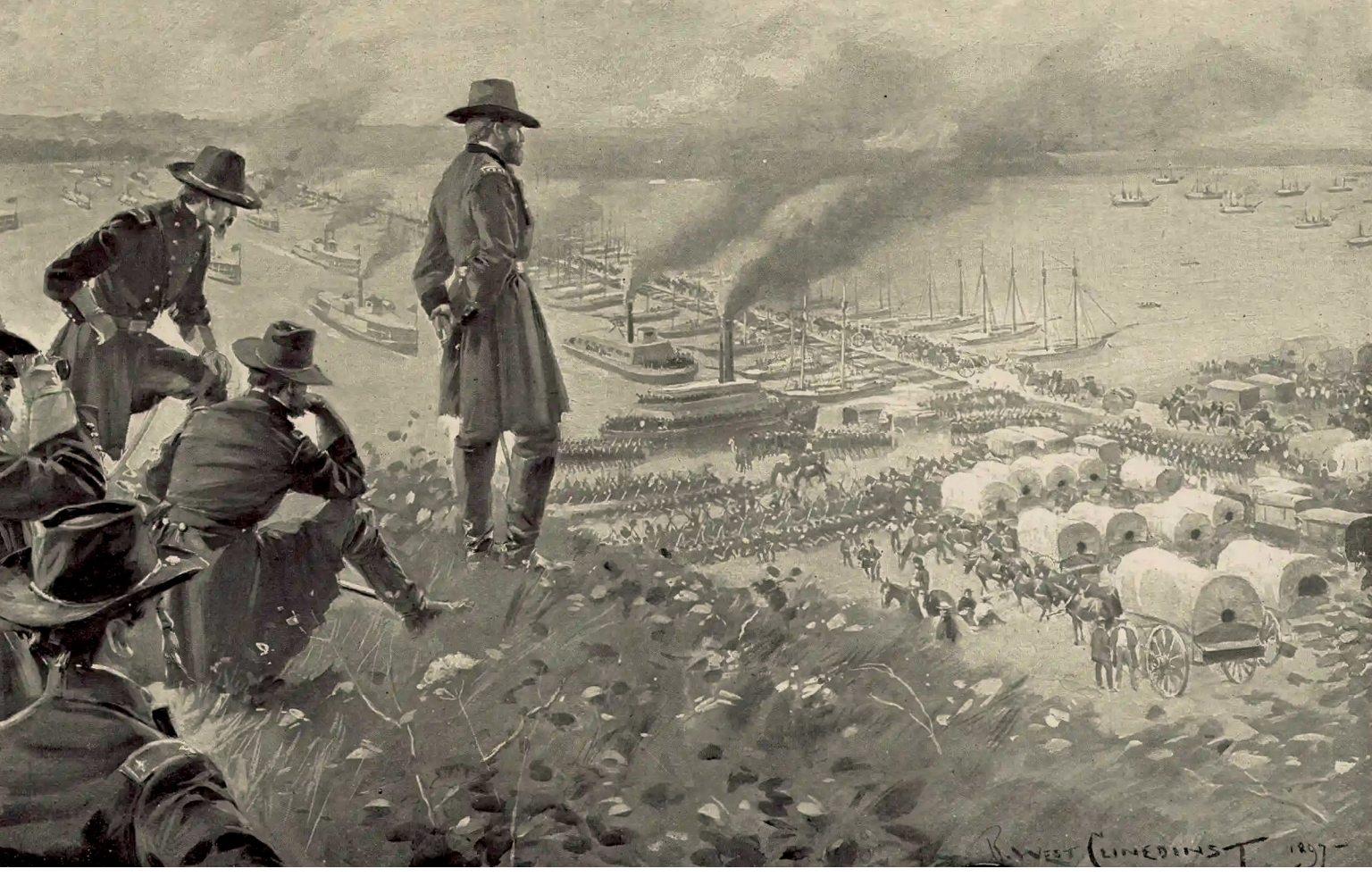

Gen. Ulysses Grant watches as the Army of the Potomac crosses the James River in Virginia in the spring of 1864. Grant, like Gens. Douglas MacArthur and George Washington, used principles of mobility, defensive maneuver, and deception in retreat to preserve combat power and regain the initiative. *Grant's Army Crossing the James River* by Benjamin West, 1897, halftone photomechanial print, 15 x 20 cm. (Image courtesy of the New York Public Library Digital Collections)

Rethinking Retreat

Retrograde Operations in the Indo-Pacific

Maj. Patrick Smith, U.S. Army

Hovering above the inky sheen of the surface, a grizzled figure paces on a sandy eminence beholding the scene below. Silhouetted against the shadowy pines, dark blue husks drift alongside the spans. Like infernal alligators, the iron-clad turrets abruptly spurt reddish-white smoke into the darkness. The faint clatter of wagons ambling across rickety planks mingle with hushed voices, and the steady beat and jangle of boots and baggage lurch toward the far bank. Sporadic glints of metal in moonlight glimmer like scales of a long, black serpent slinking across the pontoon bridge. The

Army of the Potomac was in motion. Back on the hill, a red cigar ember glares above the winding serpent, revealing the visage of Ulysses Grant. The movement is no small miracle, and the result has yet to bear fruit. To the west, Grant discerns men of Maj. Gen. Gouverneur Warren's corps milling about their earthen defenses, shielding the army's aquatic passage. To the north, flickering enemy campfires stretch like stars for miles. All was still. They had taken the bait. He puffed another sigh of smokey relief.

The word "retreat" is anathema to American military thinking.[1] Joint Publication 3-0, *Operations*, uses a tactical euphemism for the word—"retrograde"—only once. Marine Corps Publication 1, *Warfighting*, doesn't use it all. The spirit of the offensive has defined American military doctrine since 1945. Rightfully so. Relentless maneuver would prevail against ponderous, continental adversaries.[2] However, a new paradigm awaits us in the Pacific. Fading advantages in firepower, distributed forces, and the growing operational reach of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) require an expansion of operational thought. The joint force must consider methods of retrograde to shape advantages in time, space, and force. Withdrawals, delays, and retirements of joint forces are not without historical precedent. Gens. Douglas MacArthur, George Washington, and Ulysses Grant used principles of mobility, defensive maneuver, and deception in retreat to preserve combat power and regain the initiative. We can look to their example as beacons to chart an informed operational approach in the Indo-Pacific.

Why Retrograde? Theater Considerations

U.S. force posture in the western Pacific is fraught with challenges. The first is the tyranny of distance. Small constellations of U.S. elements—ashore and afloat—encircle the looming mass of mainland China. Operating on tenuous exterior lines, they are vulnerable to defeat in detail by a prodigious array of standoff munitions or blockade. American forward elements operate within the weapons engagement zones for strategic deterrence, but their tactical value evaporates "once the region becomes contested."[3] As one Marine officer confesses, "There is no combined joint theater sustainment plan designed to sustain forces inside the weapons engagement zone in a contested environment." Forward elements are too fragile to mutually support one another and too distant for rapid replenishment from theater sustainment hubs.

Second are coalition considerations. Regional partners can quickly about-face on support to U.S. forces, making presence in some locales untenable. States that nominally support American forces are not assembled into a unitary defense architecture with Article 5 contingencies. In its annual index of military strength, the Heritage Foundation cautions that "the complicated nature of intra-Asian relations means that the U.S. cannot count on support" from its erstwhile Pacific partners.[4] Recent polls even suggest that Association of Southeast Asian Nations states have grown more dynamic in a drift toward China.[5] Lukewarm political support also undermines partner "friend-shoring," whereby select nations ramp up surge capacity to offset the catch-up time for American industrial largesse.

This presents a third issue: industry and national will. At the nuts-and-bolts level, "factory to the front" pipelines have corroded with few well-oiled industry exceptions.[6] But even the "Big Five" defense contractors are better calibrated to providing boutique platforms than provisioning national-level war.[7] American patriotic fervor, too, has oxidized in recent years. The all-volunteer force remains the core of American might unless masses of eligible citizens are pressed into uniform.

There is simply no surge capacity for American forces on the fringes of the Pacific. Neither beans nor bullets nor replacements are primed for contingency. Nor will the PLA permit U.S. forces to methodically mass soldiers and materiel unmolested and seize the initiative through overwhelming offensive. Experts warn the PLA will conduct a rapid "surprise offensive" to prevent this eventuality.[8] Given this

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A jeep rolls off the ramp of a Coast Guard-manned landing craft onto a beach in the Philippines in 1945. Three weeks after the Luzon landings on Lingayen Gulf, American forces hit the beaches of Zambales with troops and equipment to seal off the vital Bataan Peninsula in the drive on Manila. Instead of stiff Japanese resistance, they were met by jubilant Filipinos. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Coast Guard via the National Archives)

range of factors, American forces must be prepared to conduct retrograde operations to preserve its limited combat power. MacArthur's stubborn defense of Bataan offers a salient case study that bears a striking resemblance to the contemporary operational environment.

Historical Case Studies of Retrograde Operations

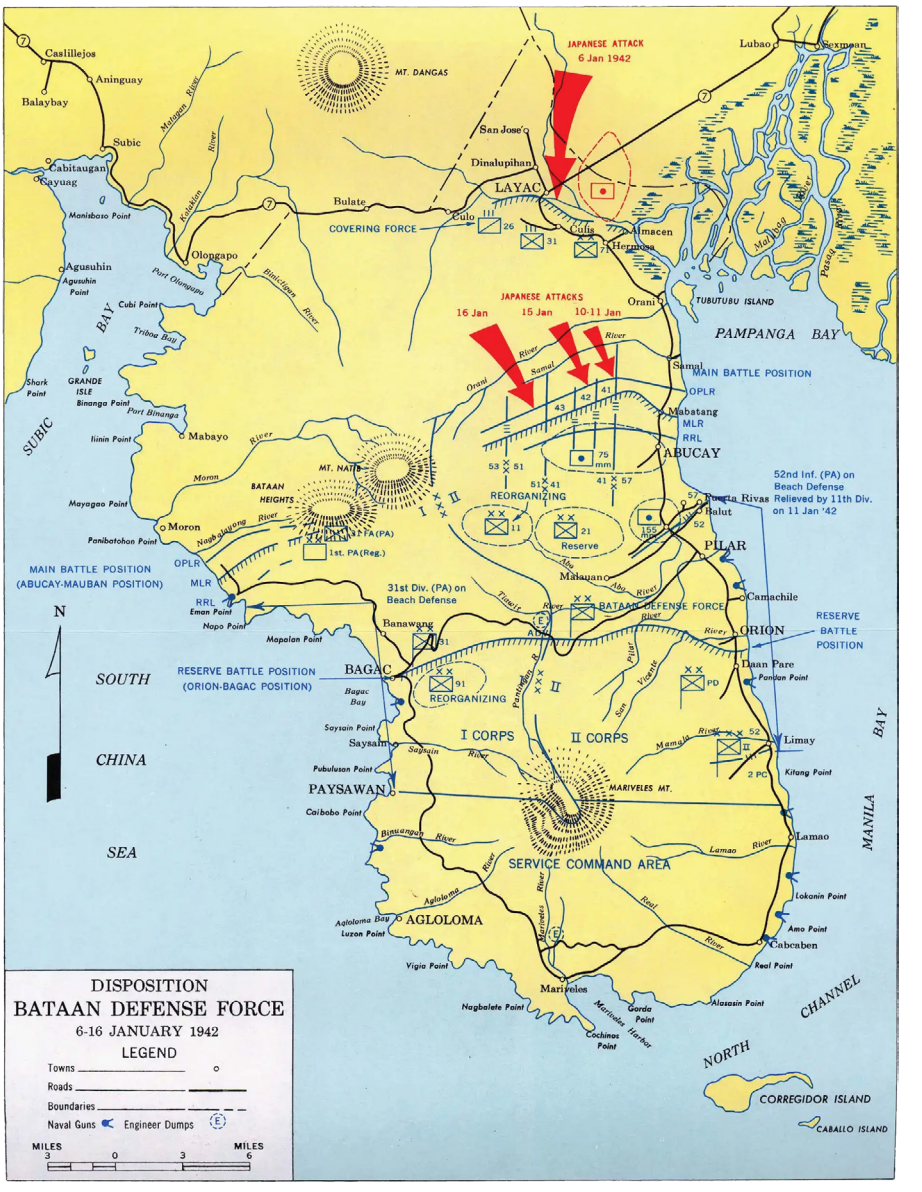
MacArthur's stand (method, delay; principle, defensive maneuver). The Joint Board's prewar "Rainbow" plans committed the United States to a "barrier" force posture in the event of war with Japan.[9] Garrisons in the Philippines, Malaya, Borneo, and the eastern Pacific would hold until the Navy—having obliterated the Japanese fleet en route—arrived to reinforce the defenders. Pacific strongpoints, akin to contemporary "stand-in forces," would then pivot to the offensive. These hopeful if not capricious war plans foundered in the face of rapid Japanese advances. Despite his aggressive instincts, MacArthur anticipated the rapid collapse of Allied bastions and prepared thorough defensive contingencies.[10] He reasoned that a tenacious fighting retreat would trade space for time and prevent Allied resistance from buckling under Japanese pressure. A "sacrificial delaying action" was designed "to assuage honor, promote public morale, and inflict some damage."[11]

The utility of the Philippines was converted from an offensive launch point to a swirling vortex, pulling in Japanese combat power, and stalling subsequent drives into the eastern Pacific. As a barb in the strategic fuel line with Borneo, moreover, the defenders would slow Japanese logistics "to impotency."[12] MacArthur termed his operational idea a "citadel type" delaying action involving three key elements.[13] Confident in deliverance by sea, he first secured a measure of sea control in Manila Bay by emplacing "mines and coast defense guns supported by the torpedo boats" in the narrow channel.[14] This would deny amphibious end runs on his eastern flank and secure an entry point for amphibious extraction.

Second was a layered defensive scheme. To offset the "widespread archipelago's vulnerability," MacArthur contracted battlefield geometry by massing his columns within the Bataan peninsula.[15] This simplified logistics

and command and control and amplified the volume of fire to be inflicted upon the attackers. Successive fallback positions within Bataan's narrowing corridor acted as a tactical funnel upon which the defenders could confidently rally. It also served to offset gaps from the quick subtraction of casualties and steady the nerves of his embattled troops. Fighting positions exploited the advantages of the Filipino landscape. Theorist Milan Vego explains that delaying actions are "particularly effective" within "heights, trails, and gorges," enabling "in-depth interlocking defensive positions."[16] Engagement areas were drawn behind booming rivers and across precipitous ridges, all within the dense jungle expanse. This reduced the scope of Japanese artillery, disrupted cohesion, and sapped the energy of the assailants before coming to grips with the defenders.

Third, MacArthur's layered defense was supported by prudent supply displacement. Recognizing the vulnerability to communications in retreat, bulk stocks were backhauled to a rear support area, protected behind the leeward Marivele ridges. As one of MacArthur's logistics officers recounted, "Ammunition had … been stored in the peninsula, together with certain defense reserves including 300,000 gallons of gasoline, lubricating oil, and greases, and about 3,000 tons of canned meats and fish."[17]

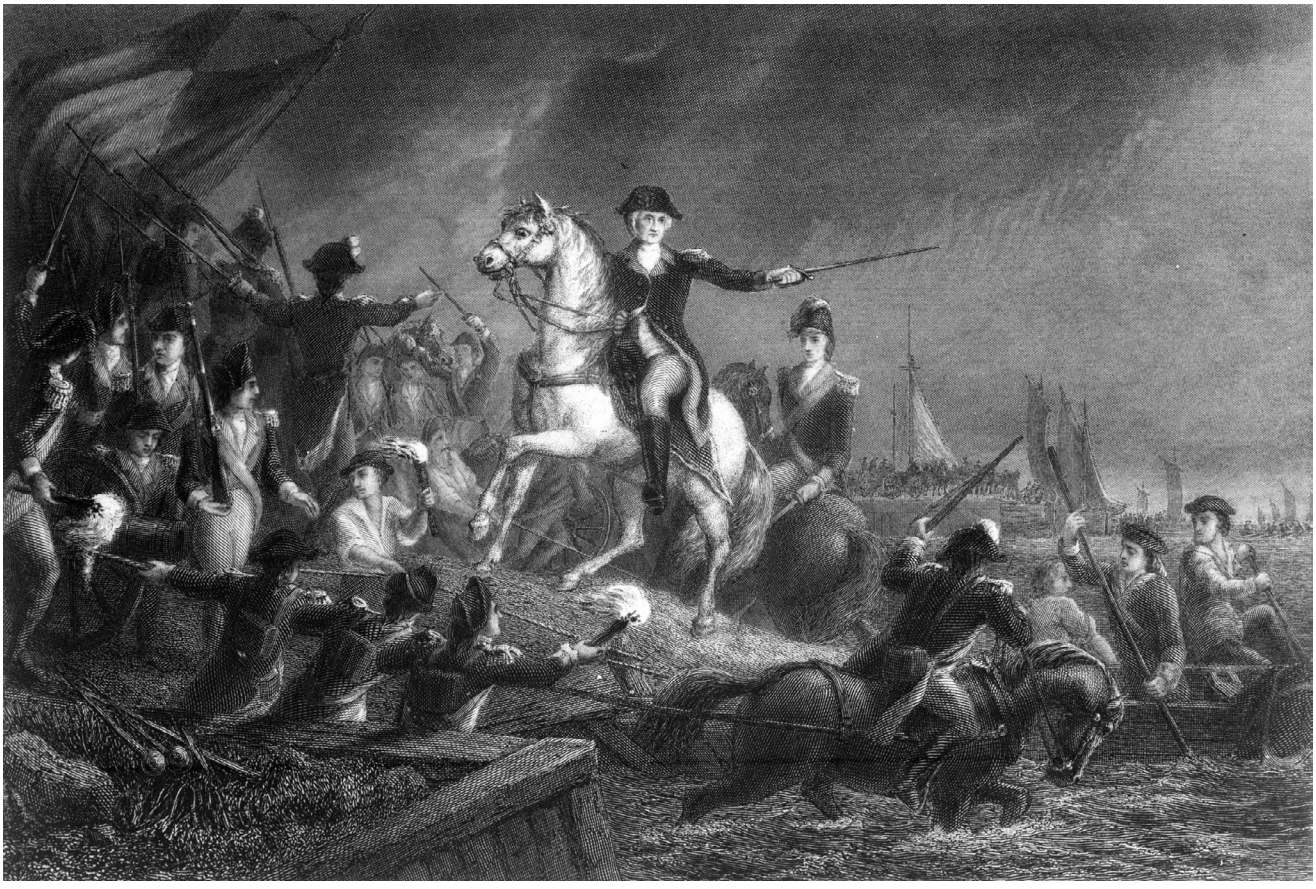


(Map from Office of the Chief Engineer, General Headquarters, Army Forces Pacific, *Engineers of the Southwest Pacific, 1941–1945: Engineers in Theater Operations. Reports of Operations (of the) United States Army Forces in the Far East, Southwest Pacific Area, Army Forces, Pacific*, vol. 1 [U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947])

Bataan Defense Force, 6–16 January 1942

As the defenders backpedaled, their supply lines contracted for faster responsiveness. This extended the army's logistical endurance, dragging the fifteen-mile retreat into a four-month slog. The delay had dramatic strategic effects. Tokyo's Pacific timetable halted in the ravines of MacArthur's Asiatic "Alamo." One staff officer insisted that the Battle of Bataan was one of the turning points of the war. Not only had it prevented Japan from adequately supplying Guadalcanal, but it also foiled an invasion of Australia.[18]

Unfortunately for the defenders, the vacancy of American mobility left them isolated on Bataan. MacArthur assumed that "some plan" could be "improvised to relieve or rescue the men stranded 7,000 miles across the Pacific."[19] However, strategic planners failed to prioritize sealift as the American Filipino



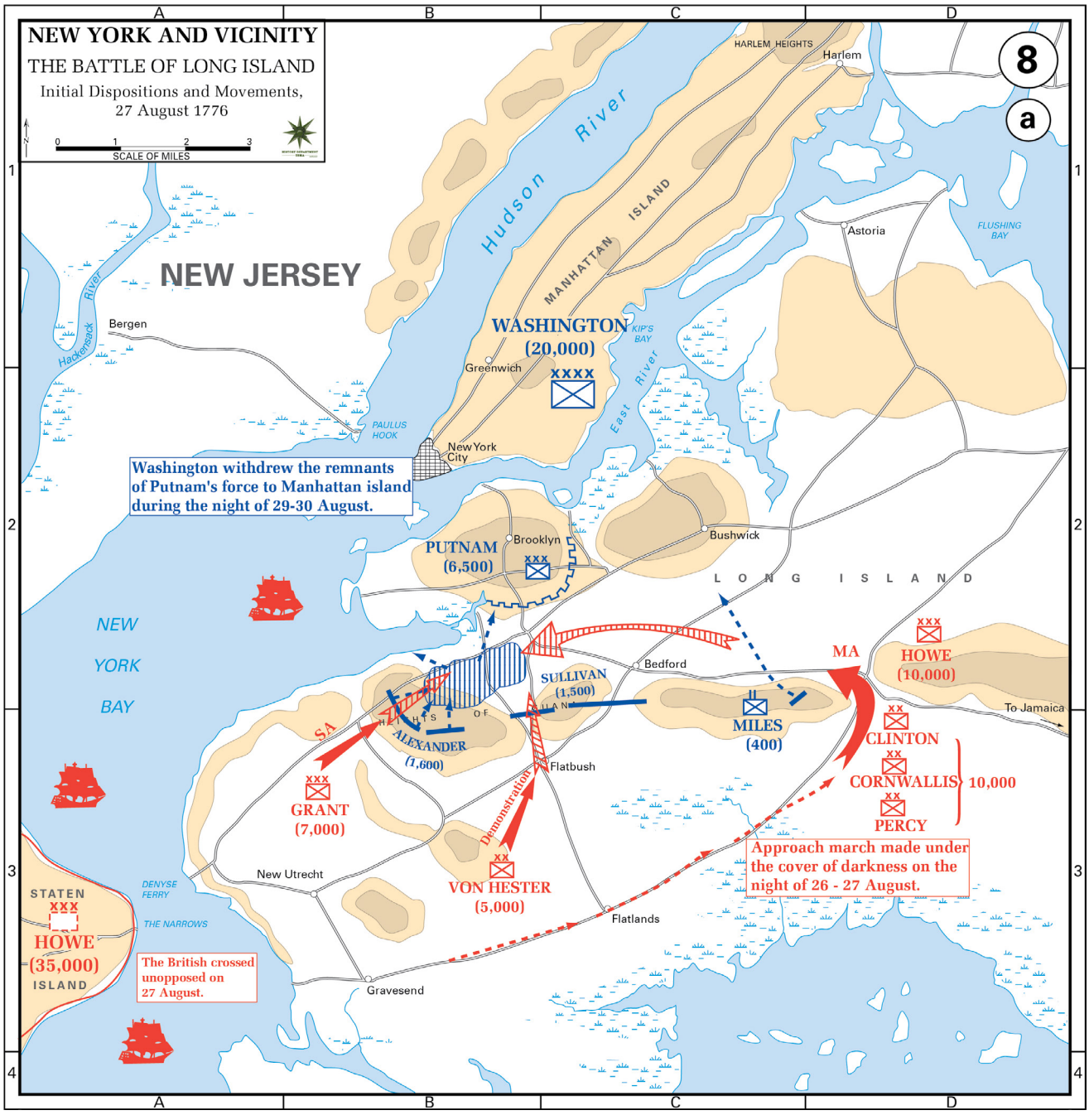
Gen. George Washington directs the retreat from Brooklyn Heights to New York, 30 August 1776, following the Battle of Long Island. Steel engraving by James Charles Armytage after a painting by Michael Angelo Wageman, circa 1860. (Image courtesy of the National Archives)

force grimly gave way. Inertia had seized American leadership in its response to a two-front war. Sealift was splintered between Alaska and Hawaii, husbanded in California, staged in Panama, or shifted toward the Atlantic. George Washington's continentals had nearly suffered a similar fate had it not been for timely mobility that saved America's first army.

Washington's [first] crossing (method, withdrawal; principle, mobility). In August 1776, the Continental Army found itself stretched across a cluster of islands in the lower Hudson Bay. Congress resolved to stall a *coup de main* of New York, and Washington dutifully took up the mantle of shielding the city wherever the blow would fall. While he preferred to wage a campaign along linear, European methods, he was receptive to the counsel of his subordinates who recognized the strategic imperative of preserving the army, even if that meant ignoble retreat. The continentals could not contend with Britain's superiority on land and spatial dominance of the harbor's yawning rivers. "Whoever commands the Sea must command the Town," Maj. Gen. Charles Lee had cautioned.[20] It was wiser to expand the topography of operations into New Jersey. With the advantage of strategic depth, Washington could prolong the conflict and even the odds for his wily infantry as the British lengthened their communications into the interior.

After a brief but sharp action on Long Island, Washington witnessed the wreckage of his army bolt for the safety of his command post perched above the East River. He promptly abandoned the folly of another stand and, heeding the advice of his staff, commenced a withdrawal. Vego defines mobility as the "ability to shift forces and dispositions in response to changing conditions."[21] As the British tightened the snare around the survivors hugging the western lip of Brooklyn, Washington directed the shift to save his scarecrow army from destruction.

Naval theorist Geoffrey Till cites the high degree of difficulty in executing an amphibious withdrawal, one



(Map from U.S. Military Academy, Digital History Center Atlases)

The Battle of Long Island, 27 August 1776

that requires "specialist skills and training."[22] Among Washington's motley ranks was a hard-bit regiment of Massachusetts fishermen. Commanded by Col. John Glover, "they were called infantry ... but they had the look of men of the sea. Their faces were grizzled from salt and their hands curled from oar and line."[23] Washington authorized Glover "to impress every kind of craft on either side of New York that had oars or sails, and to have them in the East River by dark."[24] Regiments of seagoing men from "Salem, Lynn, and Danvers, sailors all" were corralled to conduct the first amphibious withdrawal in American history.[25]

Within hours, the New Englanders stoically laded man, beast, and ordnance into craft of every

The Battle of Long Island, a National Guard Heritage Painting by artist Domenick D'Andrea, was created for the National Guard Bureau. The painting depicts the Delaware Regiment at the Battle of Long Island on 27 August 1776. (Painting courtesy of the U.S. National Guard Bureau)

The Battle of Long Island was the first major battle of the American Revolution to take place after the United States declared its independence on 4 July 1776. It was a victory for the British and the beginning of a successful British campaign that would initially give them control of the strategically important city of New York. Facing annihilation by a British army of approximately thirty-two thousand soldiers, Gen. George Washington's Continental Army conducted a tactical nighttime movement of his ten-thousand-man army along with their supplies on 29 August from defensive positions on Brooklyn Heights to defensive positions in Manhattan. This was accomplished without the loss of a single life. This retreat enabled the survival of the Continental Army, though it was later compelled to retreat still further from New Jersey into Pennsylvania during early stages of the conflict.

imaginable size. In complete darkness, the small fleet negotiated the choppy harbor currents, sequentially loading the panicky continental survivors. Lee had prescience about waterways and had the cunning to submerge chains of wooden obstacles across the mouth of the East River.[26] This contingency gave the continentals a degree of sea control for the riverine escape. As the sun dawned on 29 August, all nine thousand survivors of the Long Island fiasco were ferried to the relative safety of Manhattan. On the precipice of defeat, Washington's operational flexibility and deft employment of mobility preserved the fight for independence.

Not all retrograde operations are dynamic reversals in the face of enemy pressure. A retirement is "a form of retrograde operation in which one's force is not in contact with the enemy and moves away from the enemy by executing a tactical road march."[27] Ulysses Grant's movement to the James River offers a case study in which deception, mobility, and maneuver were orchestrated to reverse operational fortunes.

Grant's crossing of the James (method, retirement; principles—mobility, defensive maneuver, deception). In the spring of 1864, Grant, elevated to general in chief of Union armies, pitched camp with the Army of the Potomac. In the pine thickets of central Virginia, he sought to reverse the methodical approach typified in the East with a series of vicious frontal assaults against its perennial antagonist, the Army of Northern Virginia. But Grant's Overland Campaign was as bloody and indecisive as his those of his predecessors. Each attempt to dislodge Robert E. Lee cumulatively whittled at the physical and moral strength of the army. Mired in the swampy lowlands of Cold Harbor, the army was outrunning its communications and vulnerable to counterattack. To resupply, reinforce, and reorient its lines of operation, Grant contemplated an extraordinary movement. He would retire from Cold Harbor, cross the James River, and redeploy at the mouth of the Appomattox.

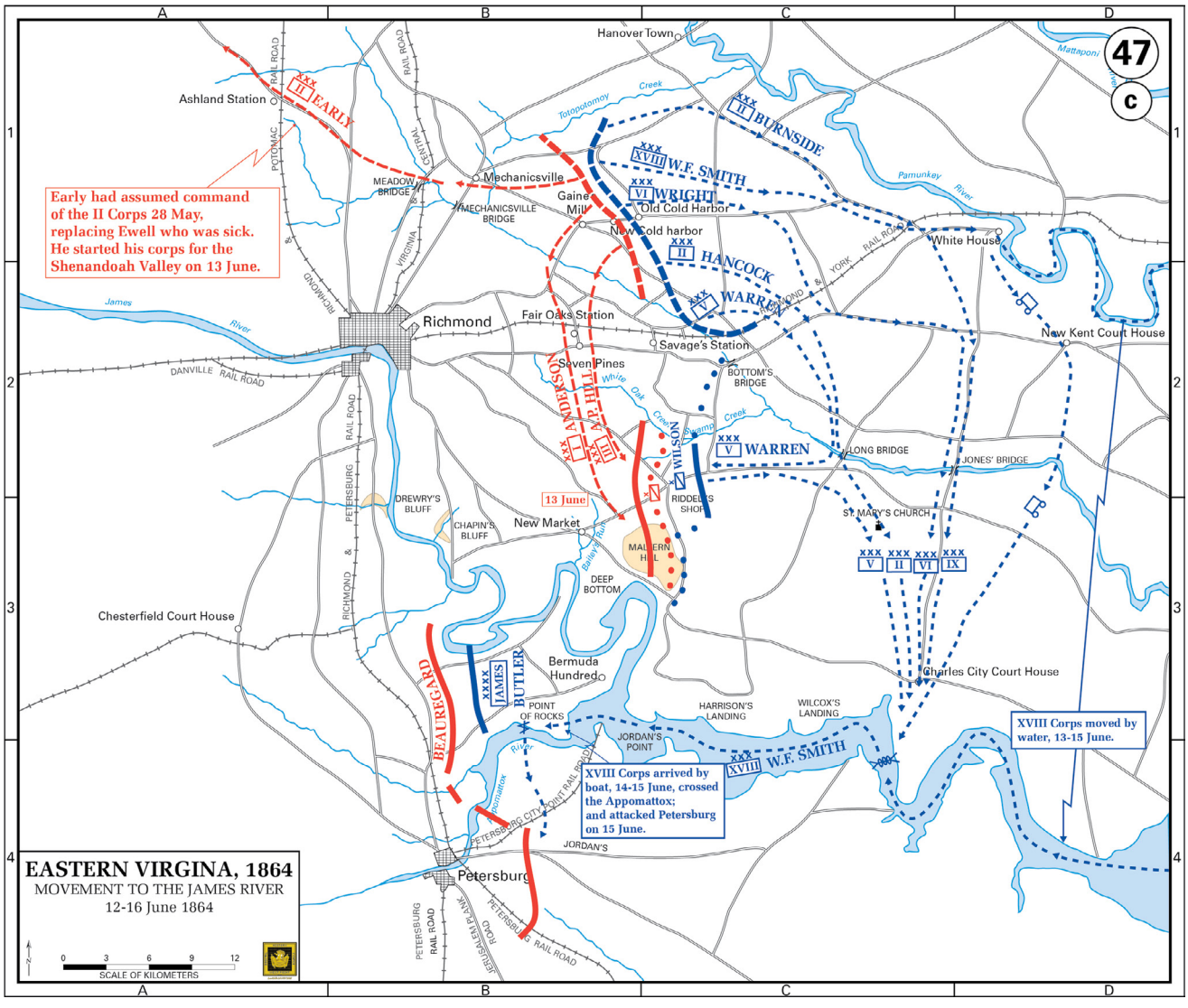
To prevent Lee from striking the blue host as it transited the river mid-career, Grant orchestrated an elaborate ruse of forces across the map. Vego describes deception as "a series of measures and actions aimed at misleading the enemy," the best are "sound [and] elaborate."[28] Grant directed the Army

Soldiers and civilians construct a pontoon bridge across the James River, Virginia, in the spring of 1864. Gen. Ulysses Grant's Army of the Potomac was able to cross unimpeded, preserving the force for subsequent operations. (Photo by James Gardner, courtesy of the Library of Congress)

of the Shenandoah—140 miles distant—to threaten Lynchburg, Lee's agricultural supply terminus. The Army of the James, intimating a lunge at the capital, demonstrated against Richmond, twenty-five miles to the south.[29] Mindful of his army's logistical frailty, Lee snapped at the bait in Lynchburg and sent an entire division to its relief. The rest of the Confederates marked time in the Richmond defenses. The ruse had worked.

Grant called upon the Union Navy and the 50th New York Regiment—an expert team of Army teamsters and engineers—to unload horses, wagons, and bridging to expedite the deliverance of his mud-caked army. The bridge detail speedily laid eleven-foot planks across 101 pontoon boats. "To anchor the bridge in the swift current, three schooners" from the Navy "were positioned abreast above the bridge and three below the bridge."[30] In seven hours, the teams completed the span. Meanwhile, a shrewd defensive scheme—both mobile and static—blunted any forays against the column. While one army corps screened the march, cavalry raids were launched north of Richmond to attract probing Confederate horsemen from discovering the retirement.[31] Rear Adm. Robert P. Lee cooperated with the army to secure the crossing sites. Adding to the weight of his hulking monitors, the Navy "[sank] four schooners, moored with chains fore and aft in the main channel, and one in the narrower channel in the river, toward Richmond, to prevent hostile gunboats from attempting to steam downstream."[32]

Four infantry corps, forty-nine artillery batteries, and thousands of supply wagons lumbered to the far bank without incident. Interservice mobility, elaborate deception, and a prudent defensive scheme preserved the Army's fragile morale, united it with adjacent forces, and restored lines of communication at City Point.[33] Grant's reputation was synonymous with unbridled aggression, but his retirement from Cold Harbor revealed a flexible military mind, one that was willing to depart from an inclination to



(Map from U.S. Military Academy, Digital History Center Atlases)

Movement to the James River, 12–16 June 1864

attack. American leaders, too, must embrace ideas antithetical to current doctrine.

Principles of Retrograde in the Indo-Pacific

Open and imaginative means, particularly regarding deception, should inform our operational approach in the Indo-Pacific. Military history is rich with examples of deception. And yet its study hasn't percolated up to doctrinal practice. This is due in part to the prevalence of Carl von Clausewitz in military education who spurns "sham action[s]" because of "considerable expenditure of time and effort."[34] The character of distributed maritime campaigns, however, differs from sharp, limited continental conflict. The inclusion of military deception in twenty-first-century operational art "is a natural evolution."[35]

One U.S. Army Forces Command planner maintains that "opportunities also grow from achieving surprise, indecision, and stagnation in opponents."[36] Similar to Grant's illusory movements to confuse Lee, feints, demonstrations, and advances within and outside of theater may freeze enemy actions to create time and space for movement of friendly forces. Supporting movements can threaten energy sources, chokepoints, or lightly defended borders; or they can be farcical

through a variety of information platforms.[37] An elaborate deception only serves to confound rigid Chinese decision-making. Larry Wortzel discerns that the PLA "employs a strict, top-down structure that does not allow for flexible interpretation."[38] If a regional command determines to strike a vulnerable American outpost, perceived threats from adjacent zones, commands, or distant theaters could throw a wrench into the inflexible cogs of PLA leadership, thereby "confusing, paralyzing, and disrupting [their] decisions and actions."[39]

Defensive operations, too, allow friendly forces to trade space for time, preserve combat power, and inflict costs upon the enemy. West Point Fellow Brandon Morgan highlights the need for inculcating defensive operations at the staff college level and engagement area development at the tactical. The hard-fought lessons of Bataan "using the surrounding terrain … fighting positions, emplacing wire obstacles, felling trees into abatis … against a determined" and numerous adversary needs to be institutionalized across tactical formations.[40] Consequently, fighting withdrawals and delays will be sharpened arrows in the quiver of operational leaders campaigning in the early stages of a Pacific fight.

In those precarious moments, the joint force should prudently select positions from which it can absorb repeated blows while degrading enemy means. Or else—like Washington's halting dash across Long Island—it will be torn apart piecemeal as it tries to extricate itself from the jaws of an attack. So too, should the joint force preserve its limited magazine depth to prevail in a protracted conflict. Like MacArthur's bulk supply movement, prepositioned stocks should be staged and secured in locations where they will be least vulnerable.

Ultimately, success in a maritime theater rests on mobile efficiency. Air Force Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost testified that American sealift must be prepared to negotiate contested environments and reestablish "access to our lines of communication."[41] Skills of this magnitude, though, have atrophied after decades steady-state operations. Glaring training shortfalls in crisis response, worsened by maintenance deficiencies, compromise U.S. capacity to conduct amphibious actions. The recent Gaza relief expedition is a case in point. Both Army and Navy elements lacked necessary training to secure beach zones, and vessels of both services struggled to establish the expeditionary architecture for the mission. The USNS *Bobo* suffered a fire in the engine room transiting the Mediterranean and returned to Jacksonville.[42] Meanwhile, Army vessel masters are "not taught maritime tactics," nor do they have adequate force protection.[43] "These boats have next to no security," an anonymous warrant officer confessed, adding, "If those boats don't have multiple mechanical failures—I mean 'dead in the water' mechanical failures—I will be shocked."[44]

In the spirit of John Glover's grizzled veterans and the 50th New York Engineer Regiment—forerunners of over-the-shore logistics—both services need to expand joint training beyond routine and permissive humanitarian aid. Sealift and accompanying naval forces should develop methods of securing maritime lodgments while achieving local sea control for extractions. Moreover, U.S. Transportation Command should look to expand common user sealift, analogous to Washington's timely acquisition for "used vessels from the commercial market … without restrictions" to augment maritime mobility.[45]

Counterargument

Stay and Fight It Out.

— Gen. Henry Slocum[46]

Some maintain that the joint force should never countenance backtracking in any corner of the Pacific. Gen. Charles Flynn invokes the Second World War to emphasize this point. The lesson from abandoning our Pacific strong points in 1941was paid for in blood during subsequent campaigns. "We do not want to give up any decisive terrain," he states, "because we will pay a heavy price to retake it."[47] To Flynn, the initial cost of absorbing opening salvos and pivoting to the offensive offsets the higher price of fighting your way back in. After all, China's operational design is intrinsically defensive. Its antiaccess/area denial arsenal is a static network "designed to defeat maritime and airpower," Flynn claims, not one calibrated to "find, fix, and finish."[48]

A widely distributed joint force, meanwhile, serves to confound the PLA with a targeting dilemma if it decides to switch to the offensive. Flynn's sentiments are reminiscent of retired Navy Capt. Wayne Hughes who advocates for "distributing force in an effort to make the enemy work so hard and take so long they cannot fire effectively first."[49] Deception remains an afterthought, as U.S. forces only gain from making their

presence known. Flynn maintains that the kaleidoscope of joint platforms across the harbors and airfields closest to the mainland creates "joint interior lines" for maximum operational reach.[50] A key component of this aspect are "stand-in forces": small ground elements occupying littoral fighting positions across the first and second island chains.

Marine Commandant Gen. David Berger echoes these views, adding that wide distribution enjoys the advantage of mass "without the vulnerabilities of concentration."[51] True to the maneuver school, Berger and Flynn view the mission of stand-in forces as singularly offensive. "As part of a joint campaign," when and if attacked, these elements will "squeeze them back to the Chinese homeland."[52] Forward ground elements maintain their positions at all costs to "build an enduring advantage."[53] Provisional to this design is the seizure and occupation of choke points and airfields that pave the way for theater naval and air forces to add their weight to the fight. Converging on the Western Pacific, American sealift is secured behind layers of ground, air, and naval forces drawing the mass of PLA fires. One can hardly argue with the results of this approach, especially when the outcome of simulated war games end in American victory. This is bolstered by recommendations from the U.S. House Select Committee on China to enhance "the United States' ability to strike attacking Chinese forces" first.[54]

Conclusion

Nevertheless, contemporary war games are limited in scope, fixated on a sharp, violent exchange with the objective of preventing a fait accompli of Taiwan. Congressional and think tank scenarios rarely consider a protracted struggle, and timelines are confined to the limits of American magazine depth. Even in victory, however, the joint force will be divested of operational endurance and freedom of action.

It is estimated that the Air Force will consume "the entire stockpile" of its long-range ordnance in ten days.[55] In the absence of resupply, bombers will have to brave the gauntlet of mainland air defenses to engage targets. At sea, multiple war-game iterations predict the destruction of two aircraft carriers, with several strike groups "fleeing east at flank speed to avoid destruction," an act not likely "to inspire much fighting spirit in the troops left behind."[56] The fulcrum of Pacific strategy, moreover—stand-in forces—are destined to live "a short, unhappy life."[57] Should the PLA shift to the offensive, they can overwhelm American ground elements with "swarm assault[s] consisting of a broad range of missiles and drones" or an amphibious assault.[58] Upon closer evaluation, some experts admit that the joint force "will need to be able to disperse and operate in a nimble and unpredictable manner to alternate locations."[59]

In view of these somber assessments, the United States needs to mitigate its offensive-minded vulnerabilities. Securing swift and responsive mobility must be integrated into operational ideas that provide an escape hatch for overmatched and isolated friendly forces. Deception operations will afford forward elements a measure of time and space to retire whereby they can resupply or reattack from advantage. Joint forces, meanwhile, should maintain the capacity to break contact with the enemy as competently as they are trained to attack it. Like MacArthur, Washington, and Grant, the joint force should temper an inclination for the offensive with concepts that complement warfighting potential and operational realities. ■

Notes

1. Timothy Heck and Walter Mills, "No Retreat! The Flaw in the US Military's Preparation for Large-Scale Combat Operations," Modern War Institute, 7 February 2023, https://mwi.westpoint.edu/no-retreat-the-flaw-in-the-us-militarys-preparation-for-large-scale-combat-operations/.

2. Joint Publication 3-0, *Operations* (U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], 2022); U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Publication 1, *Warfighting* (USMC, 1997); Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (U.S. GPO, 2022). FM 3-0 uses the term five times. Principles of the maneuver school are still integral to warfighting, especially as it pertains to Russia. However, China has emerged as the new pacing threat.

3. John Sattely and Jesse Johnson, "Sustaining Distributed Forces in a Conflict with China," War on the Rocks, 21 April 2023, https://warontherocks.com/2023/04/sustaining-distributed-forces-in-a-conflict-with-china/. Sattely is the commanding officer of Blount Island Command.

4. "Executive Summary of the 2024 Index of U.S. Military Strength," Heritage Foundation, 24 January 2024, https://www.heritage.org/military-strength/executive-summary.

5. Seth Robson, "Army's Top Pacific Leader Counters ASEAN Poll Showing Popular Support for China," *Stars and Stripes*, 3 April 2024, https://www.stripes.com/branches/army/2024-04-03/flynn-army-pacific-china-poll-13478240.html.

6. Cynthia Cook, *Reviving the Arsenal of Democracy: Steps for Surging Defense Industrial Capacity* (Center for Strategic and International Studies [CSIS], 14 March 2023), https://www.csis.org/analysis/reviving-arsenal-democracy-steps-surging-defense-industrial-capacity.

7. The Big Five military contractors are Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, Northrop Grumman, Boeing, and RTX.

8. Micah McCartney, "US Admiral Warns China Could Launch Surprise Attack From Military Drills," *Newsweek*, 26 February 2024, https://www.newsweek.com/us-admiral-warns-china-could-launch-surprise-attack-military-drills-1873205.

9. Edward S. Miller, *War Plan Orange: The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897–1945* (Naval Institute Press, 1991), 256. This defensive scheme envisioned the United States and associated powers. The revised plan, *Rainbow 5*, "accepted implicitly the loss of the Philippines, Wake, and Guam."

10. War Plan Orange, the most conservative war plan, was nonetheless the most operationally sound in December 1941.

11. Miller, *War Plan Orange*. MacArthur was committed to "keep the flag flying," as encouragement to Allied forces on their back heels. He would ultimately keep the flag flying from Australia, directed to abandon the Philippines from Washington, MacArthur and his small staff escaped the humiliation of surrender.

12. Ibid., 58.

13. Louis Morton, *The Fall of the Philippines* (Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, 1953), 156.

14. Mark Skinner Watson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, 1950), 431.

15. Ibid., 413. MacArthur showed operational flexibility. Originally, he was prepared to meet Japanese assaults at the beachhead. As the likelihood of timely rescue diminished, his subordinates, particularly Maj. Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright, convinced him of more prudent measures. MacArthur did this at considerable political risk when he abandoned Manila and declared it an open city. But the operational trade-off was promising. The flanks of the final defensive lines were anchored by the protected bay to the east and the South China Sea to the west.

16. Milan Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare: Theory and Practice*, 1st ed (Naval War College, 2009), IV-14. This also moderated risks to morale. Formidable fighting positions could offset the inclination to bolt in the face of Banzai charges.

17. Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, 160. A logistics officer recalled that "it would be impossible to withdraw the ammunition in time to save it, and by God, he [MacArthur] would crucify anyone who lost so much as one round."

18. Gavin Long, *MacArthur as Military Commander* (Batsford, 1969), 81–84. Seventy-five thousand Japanese troops were committed to the fight, of which a third became casualties.

19. Morton, *Fall of the Philippines*, 154.

20. Charles Lee, "To George Washington from Major General Charles Lee, 19 February 1776," Founders Online, accessed 1 November 2024, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-03-02-0242.

21. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare*, GL-11.

22. Geoffrey *Till, Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, 4th ed. (Routledge, 2018), 255.

23. Thomas J. Cutler, "John Glover and George Washington's Amphibious Regiment," *Naval History* 38, no. 2 (April 2024), https://www.usni.org/magazines/naval-history-magazine/2024/march/john-glover-and-george-washingtons-amphibious-regiment. Glover used his stealth and seamanship to raid British shipping months before. Now his chief needed those qualities more than ever. Glover's "Marbleheads" deftly wrapped oars in cloth to muffle the smack and spatter of rows hitting the choppy surf. Aided by a providential fog that descended upon the combatants, it was as if a soundproof curtain shrouded the movement.

24. J. Jay Myers, "George Washington: Defeated at the Battle of Long Island," HistoryNet, 12 June 2006, https://www.historynet.com/george-washington-defeated-at-the-battle-of-long-island/; Cutler, "John Glover and George Washington's Amphibious Regiment." A British officer immediately recognized the effect of the withdrawal: "To my inexpressible astonishment & concern the Rebel army have all escaped across the River … they will give us Trouble enough, and protract the War."

25. Ibid.

26. "Report on the Defense of New York, March, 1776," in [Charles Lee] *The Lee Papers*, 4 vols. (New York Historical Society, 1872–75, in *Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1871*), 1:354–6; Jim Davis, "New York City During the First Year of the Revolution," Varsity Tutors, accessed 1 November 2024, https://www.varsitytutors.com/earlyamerica/early-america-review/volume-7/new-york-city-during-the-revolution. Gen. Nathaniel Greene's efforts to salvage the army's most precious supply—gunpowder—was equally important. Powder was redistributed from stores in Manhattan and along the route of march in arsenals across New Jersey.

27. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare*, V-55.

28. Milan Vego, *Operational Warfare at Sea: Theory and Practice* (Routledge, 2017), 73.

29. Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant* (1885; repr., Da Capo Press, 2001), 446–58. Weeks before, Grant crowed to President Abraham Lincoln that he would "fight it out on this line if takes all summer." The quote splashed across Northern papers, heartening home front support. Lincoln rode the wave of martial bravado into the Republican convention, where in Baltimore, he was nominated for a second term. Grant's campaign culminated at Cold Harbor, 140 miles to the south. Of the 110,000 who stepped off into the Wilderness, fifty-five thousand were casualties after forty days of fighting. Veteran units that held the line at Gettysburg and Antietam refused to attack after the 3 June assault.

30. Gustave J. Person, "Crossing the James River, June 1864 '... the real crisis of the war,'" *Army Engineer Professional Bulletin* 39 (September-December 2009): 63, https://www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/11704. This was a joint exercise conducted by civilian teamsters, the Navy's North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, and the Army's 50th New York Engineer Regiment. The 50th New York Engineer Regiment were experts in pontoon bridging and conducted each of the Army of the Potomac's major (14) river crossings throughout the war.

31. Ulysses S. Grant's Report in United States War Department, "Cold Harbor, Va., June 3, 1864," *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 36, pt. 1 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1891), 87, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/

pt?id=coo.31924097311744&seq=3. Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren was tasked with leading the defensive scheme. This was a shrewd choice by Grant. Warren, known as "the hero of Little Round Top," was formerly chief engineer of the army, an expert in defensive warfare.

32. Person, "Crossing," 63.

33. John Y. Simon, ed., *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 11: June 1–August 15, 1864* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), 19. From City Point, the Army of the Potomac received forty-eight thousand reinforcements. City Point also accommodated provisioning and movement for the Army of the James and the Army's XVIII Corps. It became the largest active port in the world for the duration of the Petersburg campaign.

34. Michael G. Anderson, "The Case for Deception in Operational Success," *Military Strategy Magazine* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2022): 38–42, https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/the-case-for-deception-in-operational-success/. The limited wars that colored Carl von Clausewitz's vision did not account for the swift destruction of large-scale conflict in the Indo-Pacific.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. The entire gamut of information from social media platforms to deceptive signal communications.

38. Larry M. Wortzel, "The PLA and Mission Command: Is the Party Control System Too Rigid for Its Adaptation by China?," Land Warfare Paper 159 (Association of the U.S. Army, March 2024), https://www.ausa.org/publications/pla-and-mission-command-party-control-system-too-rigid-its-adaptation-china.

39. Anderson, "The Case for Deception."

40. Brandon Morgan, "Make Defensive Operations Great Again," Modern War Institute, 10 July 2018, https://mwi.westpoint.edu/make-defensive-operations-great/.

41. Jim Garamone, "TRANSCOM Commander Testifies on Top Readiness Concerns," Department of Defense News, 12 April 2024, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3740525/transcom-commander-testifies-on-top-readiness-concerns/.

42. Konstantin Toropin, "Navy Ship Slated to Help Build Gaza Aid Pier Forced to Return to Port a Experts Warn of Other Delays," Military.com, 17 April 2024, https://www.military.com/daily-news/2024/04/17/navy-ship-slated-help-build-gaza-aid-pier-forced-return-port-experts-warn-of-other-delays.html.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. Garamone, "TRANSCOM Commander Testifies on Top Readiness Concerns."

46. Stephen W. Sears, *Gettysburg* (Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 242. A celebrated quote from the 2 July council of war at Gettysburg. Only one of the voting corps commanders advocated an offensive—Gen. Henry Slocum—who tried to push Meade into launching an attack. It was a foolhardy idea given the shattered condition of the army and the natural advantages of maintaining a defensive attitude. He was overridden by his peers.

47. "Strategic Landpower Dialogue: A Conversation with General Charles Flynn," CSIS, 12 October 2023, https://www.csis.org/analysis/strategic-landpower-dialogue-conversation-general-charles-flynn.

48. Todd South, "Top Army General in the Pacific Warns of China's Military Threat," *Military Times*, 13 September 2023, https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2023/09/13/top-army-general-in-the-pacific-warns-of-chinas-military-threat/. Antiaccess/area denial (A2/AD) is an array of long-range land, air, and sea-based network of fires to prevent enemy intrusion into a given zone.

49. Wayne P. Hughes and Robert P. Girrier, *Fleet Tactics and Naval Operations*, 3rd ed. (Naval Institute Press, 2018), 296.

50. CSIS, "Strategic Landpower Dialogue."

51. Mark F. Cancian, "The Marine Corps' Radical Shift Toward China," CSIS, 25 March 2020, https://www.csis.org/analysis/marine-corps-radical-shift-toward-china.

52. Ibid.

53. CSIS, "Strategic Landpower Dialogue."

54. Mark Montgomery and Bradley Bowman, "Five Urgent Steps to Prevent American Defeat in the Pacific," *Defense News*, 12 June 2023, https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2023/06/12/five-urgent-steps-to-prevent-american-military-defeat-in-the-pacific/.

55. Robert Haddick, "Defeat China's Navy, Defeat China's War Plan," War on the Rocks, 21 September 2022, https://warontherocks.com/2022/09/defeat-chinas-navy-defeat-chinas-war-plan/.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Montgomery and Bowman, "Five Urgent Steps."

59. Ibid.

MR invites your attention to

Army Military Intelligence Is Getting It Right: Continuous Transformation and the Army Intelligence Data Platform (No. 25-791, March 2025)

Col. Christina A. Bembenek, U.S. Army; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Andrew M. Seamon, U.S. Army; Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jacob D. Holmes, U.S. Army; Paul G. Meinke; and Samuel D. Flaming

This paper details how Army military intelligence is transforming in contact through the use of the Army Intelligence Data Platform (AIDP), which is comprised of an innovative software package and cloud-based architecture. AIDP has greatly improved analysts' ability to ingest, analyze, and display intelligence data in order to create a common intelligence picture. Intelligence units in Europe and across the globe have utilized the platform in support of conflict with highly favorable results.

This paper can be found on the Center for Lessons Learned restricted website and requires Common Access Card access.

A statue of Gen. Walton Walker stands outside Eighth Army headquarters on U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys, South Korea. Walker was the second commanding general of Eighth Army and led Eighth Army at the beginning of the Korean War. (Photo by Sgt. John Stevens, U.S. Army; Eighth Army shoulder sleeve insignia courtesy of the U.S. Army)

An Experiment

Eighth Army Operational Effects Directorate

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Throughout history, military staff structures developed in response to the character of war. For the United States, staff structure derives its origin from the Napoleonic Continental System.[1] Now, as then, staffs support commanders in understanding the operational environment (OE), making decisions, and coordinating operations.[2] This manifests as codified positions responsible for functions like personnel, intelligence, operations, etc. During the mid-twentieth century, the U.S. military began to conceptualize the domains and dimensions of the OE.[3] The acknowledgment of the contemporary relevance of the civil dynamic and information considerations of war resulted in the current staff structure additions of information operations, cyberspace electromagnetic activities (CEMA), and civil affairs sections. However, these additions have stood as separate entities, identified as "nonlethal" opposite from the primarily destructive character of war. From experience in the contemporary Korean theater, this separation has primed staff and commanders to fundamentally separate lethal from nonlethal operations, creating a challenge as they seek to implement the Army's multidomain operations (MDO) operational concept. Recent solutions the Army has fielded to enable MDO include the multidomain task forces, Army space support teams, multidomain effects battalions, and theater information advantage detachments.[4] These are initial attempts to operationalize multidomain effects. However, *these do not solve the root problem*. The organization of staff inherently challenges the conceptualization and implementation of MDO.

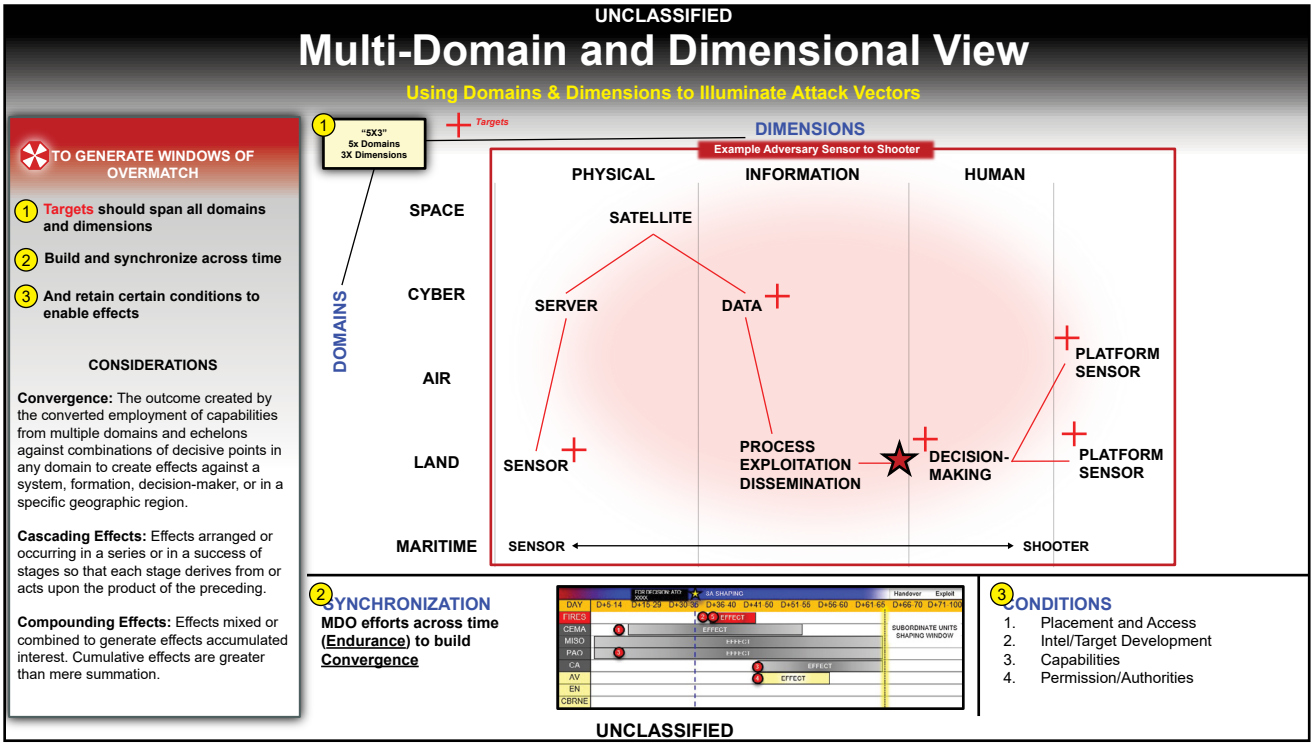
The staff problem has three components: people, structure, and processes. The *people* component consists of expertise, personalities, and inherent biases. The *structure* is the staff's organization for synergy. *Processes* are how people on staff interact. Eighth Army (8A) sought a solution to address all these by creating an operational Effects Directorate, combining its lethal and nonlethal sections under one director unified by the targeting process with a multidomain and multidimensional view.

Why the need for the G-3 Effects Directorate? Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, depicts the OE as intersecting all domains, hinting intuitively that future warfighting is becoming more and more interdisciplinary.[5] With multiple stovepipes of excellence and classification enclaves, the management of lines of effort and lines of operations across this interconnected network becomes impossible without a complementing shift in staff structure—ultimately, to enable the commander to make decisions. Further implied by this depiction is that effects are no longer linear but at times regressive and counterregressive. The management of effects into a holistic picture to enable decision-making requires a unified effects directorate.

Multidomain Operations in Korea

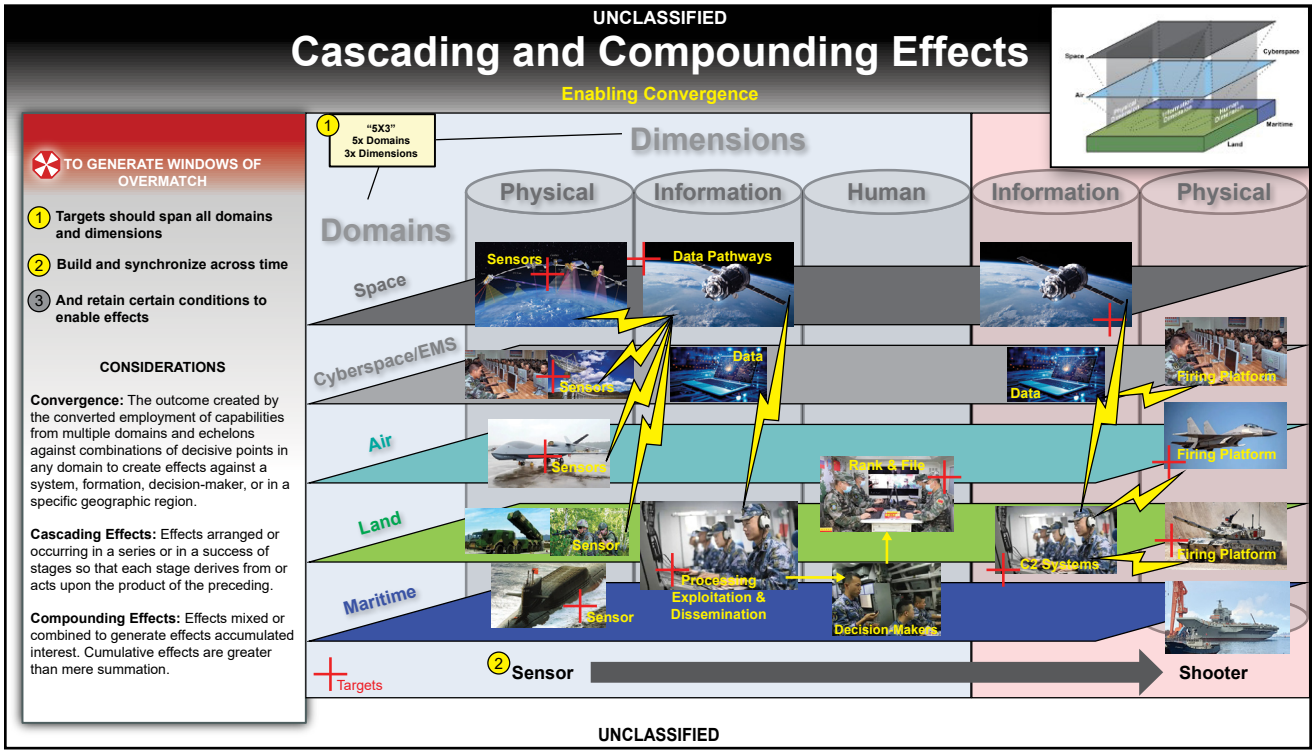
As 8A experimented with MDO in its biannual exercises, leaders began to understand that the five domains are not enough. The OE's three dimensions are necessary and equally important. To better understand and visualize the Korean theater's OE, 8A adopted the "5 x 3" view, a deeper understanding of the OE's five domains and three dimensions (see figure 1). "5 x 3" outlines the space, cyberspace, air, land, and maritime domains vertically, while horizontally intersecting with the physical, information and human dimensions in the OE. "5 x 3" is a realization that the five domains must fuse with the three dimensions to understand and view interconnectedness. 8A originally implemented the "5 x 3" to understand the OE; however, it also applied the view to better comprehend a target's exploitable vectors. The approach advanced staff processes, such as 8A's intelligence preparation of the operational environment and targeting, to move away from one-dimensional lethal and nonlethal "effects layering."

Using the 5 x 3 in targeting, for example, identifies targetable elements, information pathways, and vectors across the domains and dimensions against a target system, as indicated by the red cross hairs in figure 1. The "5 x 3" generates a unified target system analysis that focuses lethal and nonlethal activities into cohesion. Lethal and nonlethal actions against a target system contribute to the same ends. Applying the "5 x 3" approach is like using a modified combined obstacle overlay (MCOO) when planning the scheme of maneuver for an operation. In maneuver, the MCOO provides feasible axis of attack or maneuver; in parallel, the "5 x 3" provides lethal and nonlethal effects vectors, or *effects maneuver corridors*. Applying the MDO imperatives and tenets was revolutionary for multiple warfighting functions on the 8A staff, and it provided cohesion to the protection warfighting function's efforts.



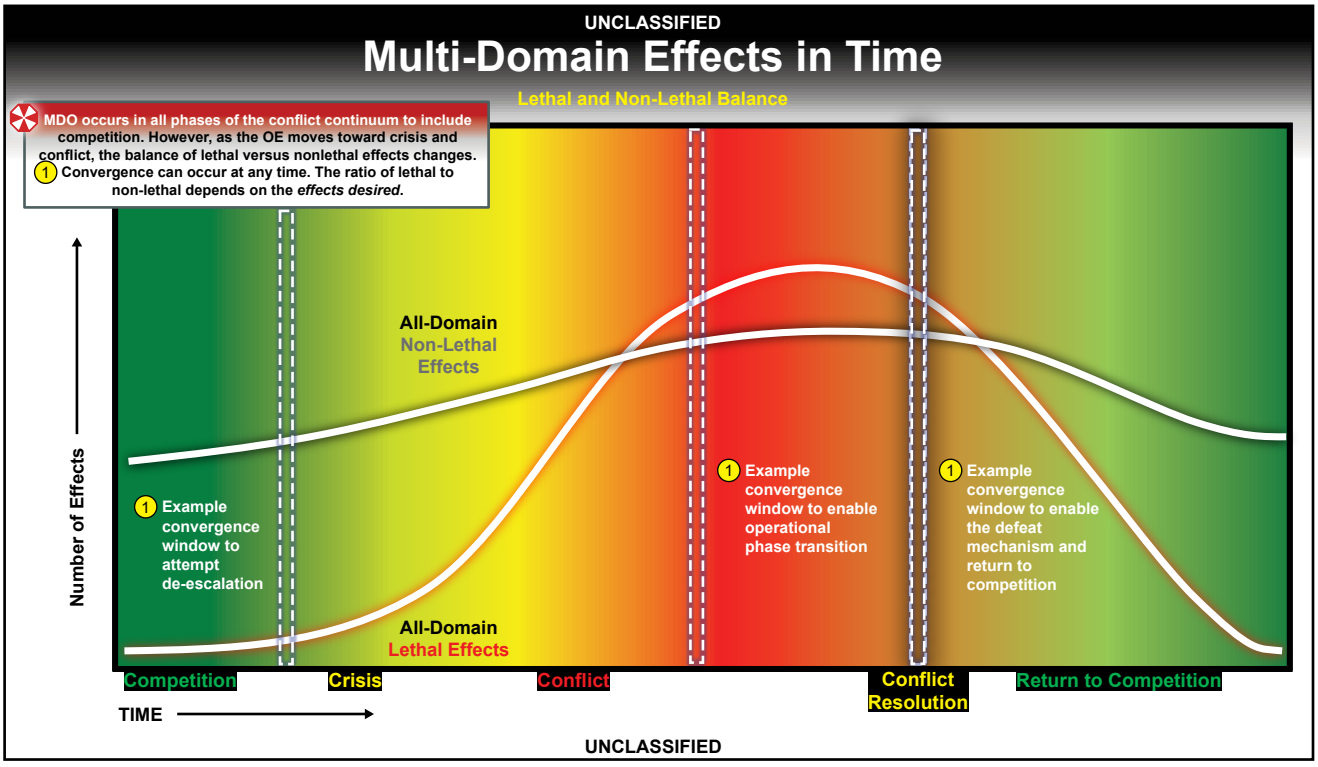
(Figure by Maj. Alistair Fider)

Figure 1. Multidomain and Dimensional View



(Figure by Maj. Alistair Fider)

Figure 2. Cascading and Compounding Effects



(Figure by Maj. Alistair Fider)

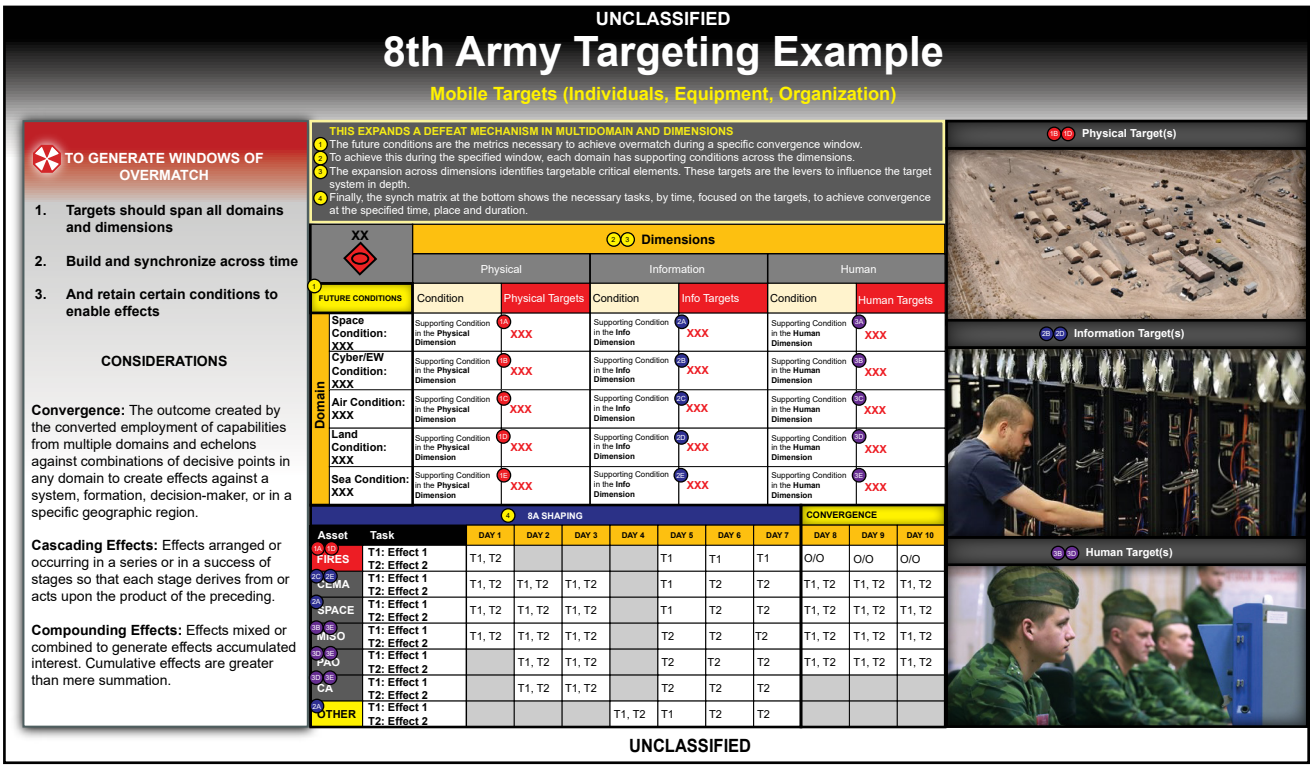
Figure 3. Multidomain Effects in Time

The next key concept that 8A has come to understand is the compounding and cascading of effects. FM 3-60, *Army Targeting*, defines convergence as "an outcome created by the concerted employment of capabilities from multiple domains and echelons against combinations of decisive points in any domain to create effects against a system, formation, decision maker, or in a specific geographic area."[6] However, 8A expanded this definition to include *compounding* and *cascading* effects. Compounding effects are the combination of several direct and/or indirect effects that produce greater outcomes. Cascading effects ripple through a target system, influencing other systems in depth. This typically occurs through nodes and links that are common and critical to related systems.

Referring to figure 2, starting from the first column (Physical), physical actions such as destruction or jamming of sensors affect the information dimension, specifically the data pathways. Affecting this data pathway then affects their processing, exploitation, and dissemination capability, which impacts the decision-maker's ability to make decisions, resulting in soldiers and units becoming vulnerable. This is the first-order effect, which has *compounded*. As we move to the right in figure 2, we see the second-order, or *cascading*, effects. Previously targeting their sensors and data pathways results in second-order effects against their command-and-control systems, which also affects the firing platforms. Understanding and mapping out this complexity is necessary, especially to ensure we have convergence at the critical time and place to enable the other MDO tenets and imperatives.

Another dimension of MDO within Korea is the idea of lethal and nonlethal effects over time. MDO is continuous, occurring in all phases of the conflict continuum. As the OE moves toward crisis and conflict, the balance of lethal versus nonlethal effects changes (see figure 3). Convergence does not tie to a specific ratio; rather the *desired effect at convergence* defines it.

In previous schools of thought and since the Goldwater-Nichols Act, joint targeting has focused on the lethal effects integration across services.[7] Nonkinetic effects associated with electronic warfare, cyber, and space have always stood separate.



(Figure by Maj. Alistair Fider)

Figure 4. 8th Army Targeting Example: Mobile Targets

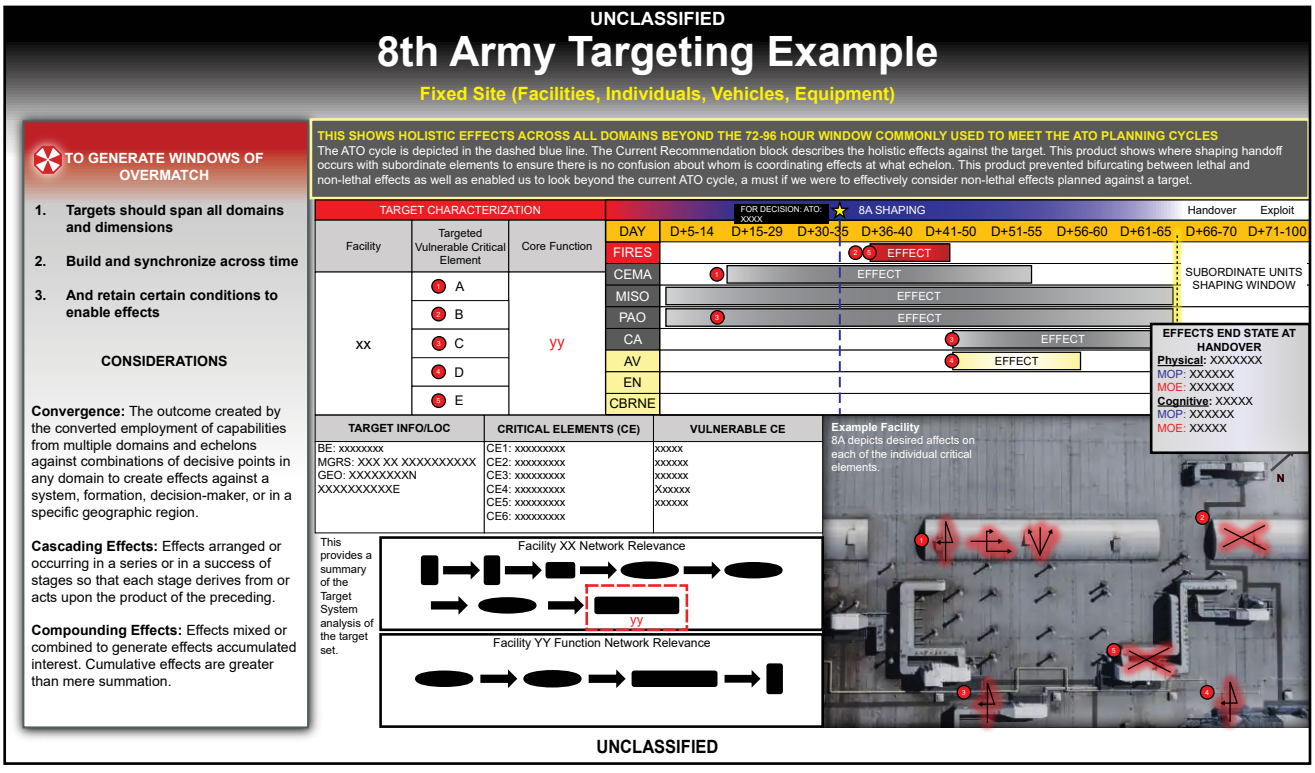
This can be seen in the air tasking order (ATO). The ATO is a framework that multiple combatant commands have used, to include the Korean theater, to synchronize the services' weapons systems against targets. However, the emphasis is on lethal effects, specifically directing the use of weapons such as the Army Tactical Missile System, the Joint Direct Attack Munitions, etc. MDO calls for the integration of all lethal and nonlethal effects, to include capabilities in the space and cyber domains, into a single into a *multidomain tasking order* that achieves an operational end state. This MDO tasking order could follow the seventy-two-hour ATO model, or it could be longer, considering the long lead time to generate placement, access, intelligence, and authorities.

In addition, integrating both lethal and nonlethal effects over an extended time can generate operational flexibility, considering the often-unpredictable outcomes of information warfare and psychological operations. Shaping effects in the information and human dimension are less precise but may generate supporting branch plans to achieve an end state without ever having to fire a shot. This can conserve lethal munitions and preserve magazine depth in wartime stocks, important when Class V needs during large-scale combat operations outpace the U.S. and allies' ability to replenish—especially in early phase of conflict before our Nation's industrial base can pivot.

Put into practice, the problem set in figure 4 shows the application of convergence and compounding/cascading effects against an example mobile target during conflict. Figure 5 shows the application toward fixed sites spanning the conflict continuum. Both these examples show the generation of a convergence window to enable tactical units' combined arms maneuver at a critical place and time.

Eighth Army's Necessary Staff Change

The above conceptual change exacerbated a deep-rooted staff problem. 8A's G-3 Fire Support Element, CEMA, and Information Advantage directorates planned in stovepipes, conflicting with one another. This magnified with the size and physical



(Figure by Maj. Alistair Fider)

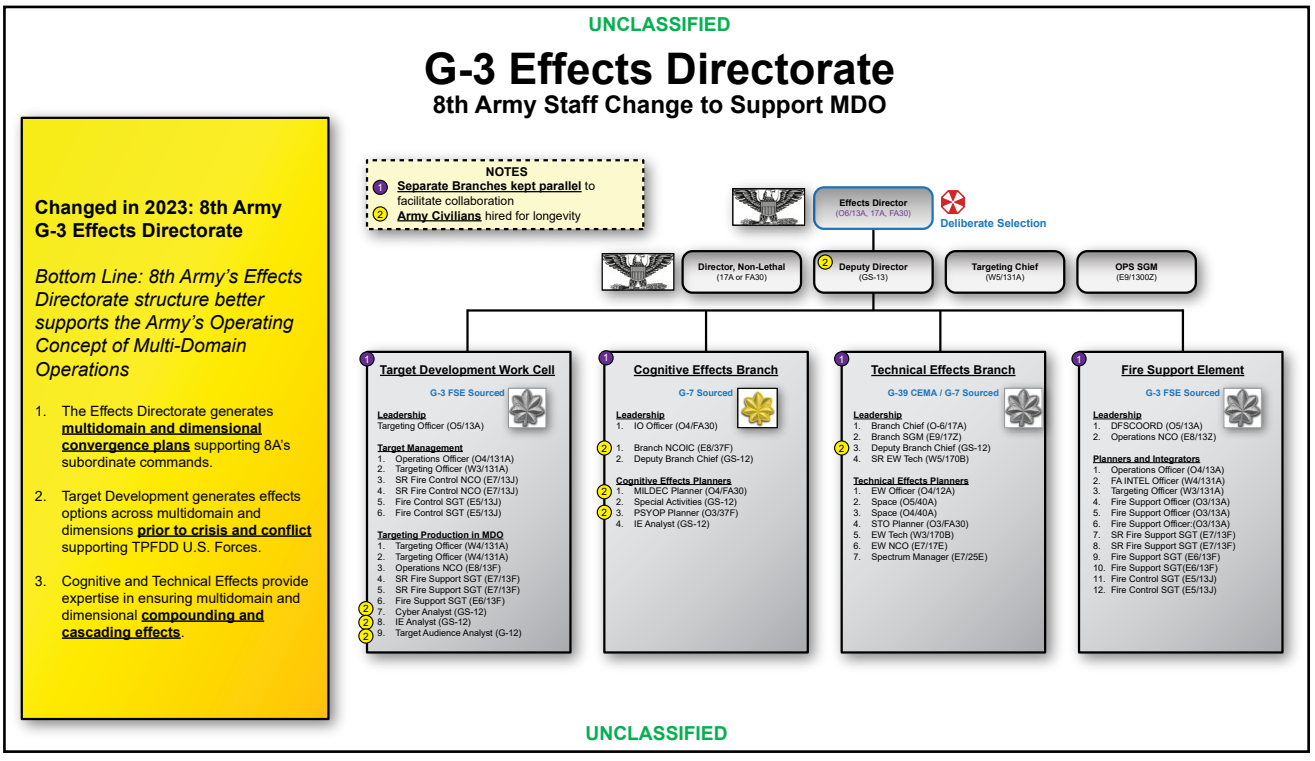
Figure 5. 8th Army Targeting Example: Fixed Site

design of 8A's headquarters, which encouraged "silos of excellence." To focus lethal and nonlethal effects into cohesion, 8A's chief of staff and G-3 directed the combination of its fire support, information advantage, and CEMA sections under one effects directorate, G-3 Effects. The intent of unifying was to induce synergized plans that nested within MDO, focus priority, and provide informed perspective, particularly in how to integrate nonlethal capabilities. Prior to this change, personalities, priorities, and perspectives generated staff friction, preventing both a unified approach to setting the theater in competition and setting conditions for subordinate echelons in crisis and conflict. To execute this change, 8A leadership directed an examination and change of necessary people, structure, and processes.

People and structure. As stated earlier, 8A leadership directed the combination of lethal and nonlethal staff sections. People and structure were 8A's biggest change. After multiple staffing sessions, the approved solution was achieved (depicted in figure 6). The G-3 Effects' director and deputy (both colonels) are opposing lethal and nonlethal experts, by design, balancing inherent lethal and nonlethal biases. Underneath are four parallel branches: Targeting, Cognitive, Technical, and Fire Support.

Targeting has become the engine to generate MDO plans, as a doctrinal integrating process and the bridge to the joint targeting cycle.[8] Targeting leverages and synchronizes the other branches to produce multi-domain and multidimensional targeting strategies. In addition to conducting target discovery, intermediate target development, advanced target development, and target maintenance, Targeting bridges strategies to 8A's larger plans, future operations, and current operations planning horizons. Finally Targeting nominates effects to Korea's Combined Forces Command's joint targeting cycle to integrate the other domains' effects. Targeting specifically enables the "5 x 3" by its unified lethal and nonlethal targeting strategies, which create exploitable relative physical, information, and human advantages in all domains that accrue over time.

The Cognitive Branch provides the holistic scope of information advantage to affect adversary decision-makers. The Cognitive Branch enables target



(Figure by Maj. Alistair Fider)

Figure 6. G-3 Effects Directorate

development through a human, or cognitive, lens. The critical function of the Cognitive Branch is coordinating with external agencies, both military and civilian, to coordinate the delivery of effects supporting the targeting strategy. These materialize as nonlethal concepts of operations, preapproved in competition to gain permissions and/or authorities to execute information operations and military information support operations when needed in crisis and conflict. Integrated within the targeting strategy, the Cognitive Branch enables the "5 x 3" with decision dominance, leveraging activities across the domains to affect the human dimension of the operating environment such as influencing changes in the behavior of specific groups or the decisions of adversary leaders.

Next, the Technical Branch enables target discovery, intermediate target development, and advanced target development within cyber, electronic warfare, and space. Like Cognitive, the Technical Branch liaises with external agencies, both military and civilian, to coordinate the delivery of effects originating from computer networks and the electromagnetic spectrum to produce effects across the dimensions of the operational environment. This also requires the production of nonlethal concepts of operation to gain permission and/or authorities to execute. Integrated within the targeting strategy, the Technical Branch enables the "5 x 3" by contributing to the overall objectives through computer and electromagnetic spectrum-based effects.

Lastly, the Fire Support branch ensures execution of planned targeting strategies developed by the other branches. This entails receiving approved plans earlier than seventy-two hours from execution, tracking and refining plans, and coordinating to ensure the commander's intent is being followed. As the low-density skills for certain effects lie in the other branches, Fire Support leverages members of the other branches to understand, adjust, and execute the targeting strategies. Should the 8A Combined Operations and Intelligence Center execute dynamic targeting, the Fire Support Branch is the lead branch in rapid planning, preparing, executing, and assessing.

G-3 Effects' fusion of experts has enabled lethal and nonlethal synchronization beyond simple layering of

assets and capabilities. This is important because of the long lead time in developing and obtaining certain nonlethal effects, as well as the understanding that lethal can support nonlethal. G-3 Effects optimizes effects against adversaries during competition, crisis, and conflict. This is separate from effects that support friendly operations.

Processes. As stated earlier, G-3 Effects uses Targeting as the central process to focus MDO effects, reflecting current doctrine.[9] This decision to use the targeting process came after focus groups and senior leader guidance. Targeting was seen as the most effective existing boards, bureaus, centers, cells, and working groups (B2C2WG) event that could unify warfighting functions and nest with higher and lower B2C2WG. Crucially, the targeting working group and boards have representatives from all 8A, and the targeting process provides a commander-approved, united *targeting guidance* that encompasses all effects.

In the deliberate horizon, supporting the targeting process, the Cognitive Branch leads the Effects Working Group (EWG), which encompasses both lethal and nonlethal effects, and the Technical Branch conducts its own working group. Both these meetings occur before and focus deeper than the Targeting Working Group (TWG), providing fidelity *addressing* the approved targeting guidance. The TWG then takes the focused outputs from these working groups and synthesizes them into feasible, acceptable, and suitable targeting strategies—the way to *accomplish* the targeting guidance.

Operationally, the EWG, the Tech Effects working group, and the TWG align in workflow. During contingency, 8A's EWG and Tech Effects Working Group focus five days in advance of execution. This part generates ideas, concepts, and initial joint target list and/or restricted target list nominations for *all* effects. The next day, the TWG synthesizes EWG and Tech Effects Working Group's outputs into targeting strategies, which gain 8A command concurrence or nonconcurrence at the targeting board on the same day, four days in advance. The output then feeds Korea's combined joint targeting cycle, which has also centralized effects in the targeting process, built around the ATO cycle. This nesting is the ways to deliver the desired effects. Assuming approval at the combined joint targeting board, further changes within seventy-two hours happen via the Battlefield Coordination Detachment in the dynamic window. In competition, these time horizons expand

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Maj. Alistair Fider, U.S. Army, is the battalion operations officer for 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at Fort Cavazos, Texas. Previously, he served as the targeting production officer in charge for Eighth U.S. Army, as a ground liaison officer for 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment and as a battery commander of Alpha Battery and of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery in Field Artillery Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment.

Maj. Avron Bloom, U.S. Army, is an information operation officer serving as the cognitive effects officer in charge for Eighth U.S. Army. He is a distinguished graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School with an MS in defense analysis, information strategy, and political warfare. He previously served as a combat advisor in Afghanistan, a forward aviation detachment officer in charge in Iraq, a company commander in the 193rd Infantry Brigade, and the communications and information technology officer for 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, and 204th Military Intelligence Battalion (Aerial Reconnaissance).

Chief Warrant Officer 4 DeJuan Roberts, U.S. Army, serves as a field artillery targeting technician for the Third Battlefield Coordination Detachment, Korea. He previously served as the senior targeting officer for Eighth U.S. Army and worked in Joint Task Force North.

Patriot missile systems belonging to 2nd Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 35th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, are positioned in a standby mode during the Freedom Shield training exercise in South Korea on 19 March 2023. The purpose of the training was to improve individual soldier capability and to maintain unit readiness. (Photo by Sgt. Josephus Tudtud, U.S. Army)

into monthly cycles, and the Battlefield Coordination Detachment plays a crucial role.

Remaining challenges. The implementation of the 8A G-3 Effects Directorate within Korea represents a successful first step within the global operational theaters. Our experience in this theater has revealed the deeply rooted tribal silos that are ingrained in military structure, doctrine, and thinking. This experimental but necessary change to operate in MDO, notably in a zero-sum staff change, has been effective, but surprisingly difficult to inculcate. Further, we cannot speculate whether this model could apply in other regions like U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command, and U.S. North Command.

Earlier, we mentioned the OE's interconnectedness and the needed interdisciplinary approach to achieve end states. However, potential friction occurs when two branches of the G-3 Effects Directorate require the same priority or resource dynamically. Often, interdependence generates optimized use of resources, but upon execution, deeper analysis reveals conflicting or dissonant effects. This increases the level of real-time coordination and communication between branches; however, it is hard to maintain if time is short, operational pressure is high, and people are spread thin.

Additionally, bringing multiple existing branches under one command-and-control structure can have conflicts when dynamic effects require decision authorities above the command. For example, cyber activities often reside at a national level, making execution unwieldy and inflexible. This challenge will need a solution outside the organization; however internally, 8A can optimize decision points with the commander for concurrence or nonconcurrence, efficient routing to the next higher command, and so forth. This was especially seen in various exercises conducted with Korean partners and integrating their national caveat effects with ours.

More systematically, how does G-3 Effects synchronize doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P) and ensure organizational endurance?

- *Personnel, materiel, and facilities.* The new task organization affects rating schemes, modified table

of organization and equipment, and workspace, considering integration between systems. 8A is drafting this into the next force design update.

- *Organization.* External interfaces often take additional explanations, as other organizations still bifurcate lethal and nonlethal workflows. This generates challenges in effects routing and request processes.
- *Doctrine.* How does 8A manage holistic effects against adversaries, friendly, and neutral? Effects currently focuses on adversaries but should complement civil and public affairs. Initial ideas are an engagements "targeting cycle" synchronized by the field army campaign plan.
- *Leadership and training.* How can HQDA produce the effects director's skill set? The directorate is dependent on its leader having a background in multiple lethal and nonlethal fields. This breadth of knowledge was critical; no surprise as the civilian sector sees the same trends.[10] Initial ideas are a twelve-month course that distills necessary knowledge.

Finally, what changes need to occur in other warfighting functions? 8A must continue to experiment via forums, tabletop exercises, and other exercises.

Conclusion

The creation of 8A's G-3 Effects Directorate represents an incremental step in MDO implementation. FM 3-0's OE is its driving charge, presenting a challenge to the force on how to integrate, plan, and dynamically adjust differing army stovepipes in a unified direction. Merging lethal and nonlethal staff sections under one directorate helps the synchronization and promotes synergy of strategies that have proven effective in isolation over the last two decades. However, effectiveness in isolation is less potent than effectiveness in unison toward an operational end state.

As this experiment continues, no doubt this staff change will emerge in other combatant commands' theaters. However, these staff changes will likely not be an exact carbon copy. The staff changes will need to reflect the uniqueness of their environments and also reflect the larger interconnectedness of the global OE. The common denominator will be the unification of lethal and nonlethal staff sections and the understanding of the domains and dimensions.

MDO transformation requires action, sensing, and responding.[11] Multidomain task forces and theater information advantage detachments are initial actions, but leaders at 8A have sensed that this is not far enough to implement MDO. Regarding Army warfighting functions, the G-3 Effects operational directorate will play one part in becoming MDO capable, but other warfighting functions will need to potentially transform likewise. 8A's current G-3 Effects Directorate is a response to MDO's challenge. The G-3 Effects Directorate is far from perfect but is a vital part of experimentation and iteration. ■

Notes

1. *Britannica*, "General Staff," accessed 5 February 2025, https://www.britannica.com/topic/general-staff.

2. Field Manual (FM) 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations* (U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], 2022), 2-1.

3. Marc Ambinder, "The Secret Pentagon Spy Ring," *Atlantic*, 20 May 2010, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2010/05/the-secret-pentagon-spy-ring/56956/.

4. Mark Pomerleau, "Army Considering Theater Information Advantage Detachments," Defense Scoop, 31 March 2023, https://defensescoop.com/2023/03/31/army-considering-theater-information-advantage-detachments/.

5. FM 3-0, *Operations* (U.S. GPO, 2022), 1-16–1-17.

6. FM 3-60, *Army Targeting* (U.S. GPO, 2023), 1-3.

7. The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act improved service cooperation, namely in providing a unified command. In joint targeting, this enabled a single command to leverage all the services effects in synchronization. See James R. Locher, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon* (Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 45.

8. FM 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations*, 1-39.

9. FM 3-0, *Operations*, 3-4.

10. David Epstein, *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World* (Riverhead Books, 2019), 171–90.

11. H. William Dettmer, *Systems Thinking and the Cynefin Framework: A Strategic Approach to Managing Complex Systems* (Goal Systems International, 2011), 8–21, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/578d0f8459c-c6877481865ef/t/57ec5284579fb363a5b9a18c/1475105417186/Systems-Thinking-and-the-Cynefin-Framework-Final.4.pdf.

A Syrian Free Army (SFA) officer meets with the platoon leader of 4th Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, during a coalition patrol of the deconfliction zone at a combat outpost near Al-Tanf, Syria, 23 December 2024. Coalition and SFA officers discussed civilian movements, potential malign actors in the area, and the state of the combat outpost. These type of engagements enable coalition and partner forces to maintain security and stability within the combined joint operations area. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Fred Brown, U.S. Army)

Security Force Assistance as a Tool of Strategic Competition

Maj. Erin Lemons, PhD, U.S. Army
Maj. Ben Jebb, U.S. Army

Security force assistance (SFA) is an indirect tool of competition that has often been used during periods of heightened strategic rivalry. When Athens launched the Sicilian Expedition to capture Syracuse during the Peloponnesian War, Sparta countered by dispatching Gen. Gylippus and a small contingent of Peloponnesian soldiers to train the Sicilian city-state's forces, who repulsed the Athenians.[1] In the wake of the Seven Years' War, France sent military aid to the American colonists to obliquely weaken its long-standing rival, Britain.[2] And during the Cold War, both the United States and the USSR eschewed direct confrontation in favor of proxy wars, which required substantial inflows of SFA by both sides.[3] Today, Washington and Beijing are adhering to this pattern by dangling SFA in front of prospective partners in a bid to vie for influence worldwide.[4]

The strategy of binding international partners to Washington through an intricate constellation of SFA programs will continue to remain a pillar of U.S. national security.[5] Accordingly, it is imperative to discern if SFA is a viable approach for furthering U.S. interests and what conditions make SFA programs successful. However, while many practitioners and scholars believe that states provide SFA to gain influence, this assumption is rarely systematically interrogated.[6] In fact, a review of recent SFA literature fails to provide strong evidence that SFA—and more specifically, U.S.-backed SFA—translates into foreign policy influence.[7] The mixed results are likely due to the fact that most analyses focus almost exclusively on U.S. SFA endeavors in a vacuum.[8] While scholars suggest that the United States should have more influence in country A where it trains twenty officers in comparison to country B where it only trains five officers, the reverse is often true. Knowing that an adversary trains thirty officers in country A and zero officers in country B would be helpful in better interpreting these results. This omission is particularly problematic because the United States often employs SFA to reduce the influence of its geopolitical rivals.[9]

A more nuanced understanding of SFA should contextualize the SFA process in a highly competitive environment between great power rivals. Drawing on new scholarship presented at a security seminar for scholars and practitioners, this article helps make sense of the complex web of factors that impact SFA's efficacy as a tool of competition. First, it delves into three main political goals associated with SFA: building partner capacity, enhancing international influence, and "spoiling" strategic adversaries' security designs. Second, it discusses the two broad ways that suppliers use SFA to gain influence in a recipient state, emphasizing principal-agent dynamics and socialization. Finally, it introduces a conceptual model that national decision-makers can use to align ways and means with ends.

SFA Goals in Strategic Competition

States provide SFA to recipient states for a myriad of reasons. Three significant political goals associated with SFA are building partner capacity, gaining influence in and over the recipient state, and spoiling strategic adversaries' abilities to accomplish their security-related goals. The ostensible goal for most U.S. SFA programs seems straightforward: to build the warfighting capacity of U.S. partners so they can address mutually shared security concerns.[10] SFA allows the United States to make cost effective investments in partners so they—and not Washington—can address security threats directly whenever and wherever they emerge.[11] Not only do allies and partners increase the sheer number of soldiers and firepower available to confront strategic threats, allies and partners also often possess key local knowledge and insights that Americans do not. Likewise, they can often take the fight to the enemy when the United States is constrained from taking direct action itself.

Building partner capacity is successful as long as the SFA provider has sufficient money to equip and train the recipient state and both the SFA provider and recipient are sufficiently aligned—not only at the strategic level but also in terms of their goals for SFA. Many historical cases of SFA show that strategic alignment between the United States and its partner is a necessary but insufficient condition for partner capacity building to succeed. Strategic alignment means that the United States and its partner share a common understanding of an acute strategic threat. Such threats include both foreign states and nonstate actors such as terrorist organizations. When the United States and a partner share a common adversary, SFA can be quite successful as the historical cases of Turkey in the 1950s, the mujahidin in Afghanistan in the 1980s, and present-day Ukraine highlight.[12] Nonetheless, despite sharing a common adversary, the United States endeavors to cultivate indigenous partner forces in

Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan were all met with varying degrees of failure.[13]

SFA failed in these cases because while the United States and its partners were aligned at the strategic level, their specific goals for SFA were not aligned. While the United States wanted to build the capacity of its partner forces, its partners did not. Regimes have to balance both internal and external threats. Internal threats are often more likely to lead to regime change than external aggression or mass uprisings.[14] Therefore, many countries—even those participating in SFA relationships—implement coup-proofing strategies to undermine their military's effectiveness and domestic influence. Due to coup concerns, South Vietnamese leaders sidelined U.S.-trained officers despite their military competence.[15] Indeed, SFA is particularly likely to fail to accomplish capacity building in cases where large numbers of U.S. forces are on the ground.[16] If the partner can rely on U.S. forces to defend against the external threat, the partner can focus exclusively on the internal threat. This threat prioritization incentivizes the partner to purposely weaken its military in direct contradiction to the U.S. goal of improving the military's effectiveness.

While building partner capacity is an inexact science that requires astute expertise at the operational and tactical levels, at a macro level, it is a relatively straightforward endeavor if both the SFA provider and recipient are aligned. The more complex task for the SFA provider, however, is using SFA as a tool to influence the recipient state to become more aligned with the former. Indeed, building partner capacity has no chance of success until the provider and recipient states are aligned. Therefore, SFA providers must often start with using SFA as a tool to influence.

States often provide SFA as a tool to gain influence in and over the recipient state.[17] Influence not only allows the provider to pursue successful partner-capacity building but also enables the SFA provider to secure other geopolitical benefits such as overflight, basing, port call rights, political support at the United Nations or other international institutions, access to natural resources and markets, etc. These political concessions are important to enable countries to build wealth and to stage and project power throughout the world.

The United States and other SFA providers sometimes prioritize political influence over building partner capacity even when the latter's goal is to increase its military strength and expertise. For example, the United States provided SFA to Ethiopia from the 1950s to the 1970s predominantly to maintain a communications base, overflight rights, and access to port facilities in Ethiopia, not to build their army's capacity. In fact, the United States wanted to provide the minimum SFA necessary to maintain its communication base and other Ethiopian concessions.[18] One could argue that the Canadian experience in Tanzania in the 1960s is another example of where the SFA provider had more conservative military-capacity-building goals than its partner. The United States and the United Kingdom encouraged Canada to provide SFA to Tanzania to reduce communist influence in the country. Canada, however, was hesitant to provide too much military equipment to the Tanzanians, despite the latter's repeated requests, for fear that it would be used by FRELIMO (*Frente de Libertação Moçambique*, or Mozambique Liberation Front) against Portugal, their NATO ally who was clinging on to its colonial possessions in Africa, especially Mozambique.[19] These examples highlight that while SFA can be used to gain

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Soldiers attached to Task Force Armadillo help Syrian Free Army soldiers deliver supplies to providers at the Shaam Clinic in Rukban, Syria, on 8 January 2025. During their visit to Rukban, the patrol met with clinic providers to receive a status update on the area and address local concerns. The coalition advises, assists, and supports partner forces to ensure the lasting defeat of the Islamic State and radical extremist ideologies. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Fred Brown, U.S. Army)

influence in a recipient state, rivalry between providers can make such influence more difficult to achieve exactly when it is most desired—during times of great power competition.

Sometimes a prospective recipient state's preferred SFA provider is a strategic adversary. When a strategic adversary exerts near monopolistic control over the recipient state's foreign policy decisions, using SFA to gain political influence in and over such a recipient state is unrealistic. However, an SFA provider can still play the role of "spoiler" in this case. For example, during the Kennedy administration, the 101st Airborne Division provided parachute training to Malian troops despite the fact that the Eastern Bloc, predominantly represented by Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, was Mali's preferred SFA provider at the time. The Malian soldiers were excited and impressed to receive this training that the Soviets would not provide them.[20] The 101st Airborne Division's SFA was certainly only one small factor that led to a souring in the Soviet-Mali relationship and Mali's realignment with the West. Nevertheless, such small-scale investments can make recipient states reevaluate their relationship with their primary SFA provider. At a minimum, by providing a recipient state a realistic outside option, the primary provider loses some leverage over its recipient state. For instance, after Washington cut nearly $5 million in arms sales to Bangkok following a 2014 coup, Beijing happily filled the vacuum with condition-free military assistance.[21] This move put the DOD on the defensive, adding stress to an already delicate situation in which the United States wanted to both support democratic ideals and maintain access to critical basing

infrastructure in Utapao. Given competition, the SFA provider simply cannot exact as many political concessions from the recipient state, and the recipient state gains the ability to make more independent foreign policy decisions. In short, even a small amount of SFA can undermine a strategic adversary's ability to keep a recipient in line—at least without a more substantial and expensive investment.

States that use SFA to "influence" or to "spoil" are both using SFA for the same purpose: to shift a state's alignment. The only difference is one's perspective. When a provider uses SFA to influence a recipient, the focus is on more closely aligning the recipient with itself. When a provider uses SFA to "spoil" a strategic competitor's strategy, the focus is on breaking a recipient state's alignment with one's competitor. As alignment is a prerequisite to successfully build partner capacity, the next section will focus primarily on how SFA providers rely on principal-agent dynamics and socialization to shift alignment. While we will primarily use the word "influence," providers can use these same tools to "spoil."

Tool of Influence: The Principal-Agent Model

The first way of conceiving of the problem is the principal-agent model. The SFA provider (principal) gives equipment, training, and advice to the partner (agent) but can never be sure that the partner will use this SFA in accordance with the provider's intentions.[22] The provider can use different methods to monitor what the partner is doing with the SFA and structure rewards and punishments in a way to incentivize the partner to use SFA in accordance with the provider's intentions.

In terms of monitoring, the placement and function of advisors is critically significant. Optimizing advisor missions requires considering command echelon and engagement type (e.g., training, advising, or accompanying). Notably, the United States is most adept at monitoring agent compliance when advisors are strategically stationed at pivotal information hubs such as when they are embedded within partner-force headquarters where information is centralized and disseminated.[23]

Regardless of monitoring opportunities, the United States is often unsuccessful at structuring rewards and punishments in a way to force partner compliance. For example, in the aftermath of 9/11, U.S. SFA still flowed to Pakistan despite Islamabad's tacit support for the Taliban. More recently, a parallel dynamic unfolded when the Biden administration tried to persuade Israel to exercise greater restraint in Gaza, notwithstanding the annual provision of approximately $3.8 billion in aid to Tel Aviv. Compliance can be very expensive for the partner due to domestic politics, coup risks, etc., and yet, at least a wealthy provider like the United States should be able to pay the price.[24] There are two main reasons why the provider may fail.

First, a provider's domestic politics may prevent it from providing its partner the necessary rewards or punishments. For example, diaspora politics could prevent the United States from sanctioning a noncompliant partner. In contrast, establishing human rights criteria—such as those reflected in the Leahy Law—could prevent the United States from providing the rewards necessary to enforce compliance on other issues.[25] Similarly, although Canadians initially saw the 1966 coup in Ghana as a success story for Western SFA in the face of Eastern Bloc competition, the Canadians later considered the reputational costs of being associated with coups to be too high.[26]

Second, a provider needs to have monopolistic control over at least part of the SFA market to have the leverage necessary to meaningfully threaten or to actually punish a partner for noncompliance. In a competitive market, the partner has the advantage because if a provider puts any political conditions on the SFA, the partner can obtain similar SFA from another provider that does not make SFA similarly contingent.

To achieve monopolistic control, providers need to consider the "goods" they are providing their partners. Some scholars argue that the United States should only provide commodity-style goods such as tactical-level training or 155 mm shells to aligned partners because these SFA markets are competitive and give the United States no leverage for influence. In contrast, sophisticated goods such as advanced weapons platforms and joint-level training enjoy less competitive markets.[27] Drilling down further, joint- or operational-level training is less competitive for certain military branches like the Air Force and Navy, which are more heavily dependent on advanced weapons platforms, whereas Army training and education—even at the operational and strategic levels—is more competitive.[28] Certainly, not every partner needs these sophisticated goods. Some argue that the United States should simply

not seek influence where there is no demand for these goods.[29] The counterpoint is that if the United States exits the SFA commodity market, this market in turn becomes less competitive for U.S. strategic adversaries. Therefore, the United States may benefit from remaining in the commodity market if only to prevent a strategic adversary from gaining monopolistic control over a partner.

While the United States and other major strategic competitors may be in search of a winner-take-all outcome, smaller providers use a strategy of differentiated goods to increase their likelihood of achieving influence while managing risks in the SFA "marketplace."[30] There are two strategies providers use in response to the competitive environment: they either embed themselves within the host nation's institutional processes or avoid long-term commitments and the associated risks by pursuing shorter-term activities with a lighter footprint. The former approach will likely lead to more trust and influence with large sunk costs, while the latter affords the provider more flexibility and entails less investment. In contemporary West Africa, France tends to adopt the former approach whereas Britain and Belgium tend to adopt the latter approach.[31]

Tool of Influence: The Socialization Approach

Whereas the principal-agent model takes a very economic approach to influencing partner behavior, others have suggested the socialization approach as an alternative. Whereas in the first approach, a provider cannot expect its partner to comply once the money stops, ideally socialization is a little more "sticky" and creates more longtime loyalty.

The general idea is that through military training and education and other personal contacts between the SFA provider's and recipient's military members, the recipient's military members develop personal relationships with the provider's military members, may be socialized into adopting their provider's worldview, and form a positive attachment to their provider. The recipient's military members subsequently rise to high-level positions within their state. From there, they have the desire and ability to align their state's foreign policy more closely with their SFA provider.[32]

There are three "pathways to failure" in the case of competing SFA providers.[33] First, the provision of alternate goods takes away from each provider's leverage and limits the provider's access to host-nation forces. Second, a rival provider can use a set of social strategies and messaging that explicitly challenges the other provider(s). Finally, these alternate material and ideational options create divisions within the recipient officer corps that lead to host-nation efforts to reinforce cohesion by removing one of the providers.

These dynamics are evident in the competition between Canadian and Chinese aid to Tanzania between 1965 and 1970. The Canadians believed that SFA could build personal rapport among Tanzanian officers and serve as a tool of social influence through which their beliefs and preferences could be shaped to align with the West. The Canadian's initial efforts to shape force planning and defense governance were implemented using an iterative process in which policies would be drafted by the Canadians, then sent to key Tanzanian defense leaders for review before adoption. This "incremental socialization" facilitated political buy-in by the Tanzanians and the Canadians faced little resistance. However, in 1967, Chinese SFA in the form of training and equipment such as tanks and artillery began to increase.[34]

Both the Chinese and Canadians encouraged resistance to the other in their training of the Tanzanians. For the Canadians, this meant emphasizing the poor quality of Chinese arms and equipment. For the Chinese, this meant discussions of "politics" and the distribution of Communist reading material. Ultimately, this resulted in divisions among the Tanzanian officer corps. In the end, Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere selected China over Canada as his country's primary SFA provider in order to reinforce his military's cohesion. Military relationships alone cannot secure strategic alignment; strategic alignment requires political support and a whole-of-government approach.[35]

Nevertheless, military leader preferences in recipient states can also give one provider an edge over another.[36] Evidence challenges the widely held assumption that officials who attend professional military education in a provider state have an equal likelihood of rising to positions of influence upon return to their sending countries.[37] Recipient states have a large amount of autonomy in choosing participants in the process through which foreign military officials are selected for educational exchange programs. Case studies of Ghana and Tanzania in the 1960s show

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Yagmur Saylak, Logistics Advisor Team 1610, 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade, teaches a group of Senegalese soldiers how to complete a vehicle inspection form on 5 March 2020 in Dakar, Senegal, during a class on preventative vehicle maintenance and vehicle recovery. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army)

that participants are more likely to rise to positions of authority if their state's leadership attended training provided by the same sponsor.[38]

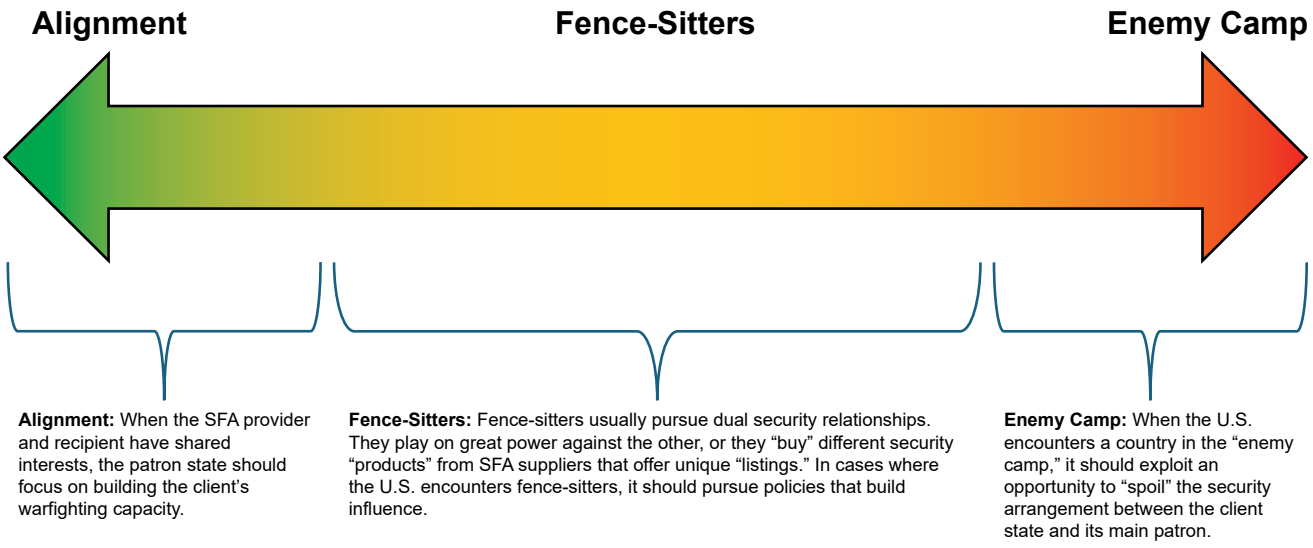
While these papers highlight some of the recipient state's dynamics that affect outcomes in a competitive socialization environment, more work also needs to consider how competing socialization experiences affect individual military leaders. Indeed, in a U.S. government-sponsored survey of U.S. international military students, over 80 percent said that they had also received military training and education from another provider.[39] Ugandan Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba Museveni, a graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and the U.S. Army Command and Staff College, tweeted his support for the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine.[40] Was this simply a failure of Western socialization? Or, did the military courses he attended in Egypt, China, Israel, and South Africa socialize him in a different direction?[41]

While academics often conceptualize the SFA relationship through a principal-agent model or socialization lens, in practice, providers can and probably do employ both approaches simultaneously. Nonetheless, it may be useful to consider the potential limitations of each approach in a particular context. For example, where domestic politics may limit the application of effective incentivization structures, a provider may need to rely more heavily on socialization to achieve its objectives.

What Does "Winning" Look Like?

Using SFA as a tool of indirect competition is undoubtedly a tricky endeavor. First, national security decision-makers must agree on the main goal of SFA given the particular recipient state: building partner capacity, gaining influence over the recipient state, or spoiling a strategic competitor's designs with respect to the recipient state. A recipient state's position on the alignment spectrum will largely dictate which goal is feasible.

On the far end of the spectrum (see the figure), where the provider and the recipient goals are in lockstep, we have *alignment*. At the other end of the spectrum, when the prospective recipient state is strongly aligned with



(Figure by authors)

Figure. Alignment Spectrum

one's competitor, the state inhabits the *enemy camp*. The vast space in between the two poles is comprised of nonaligned *fence-sitters*, who hedge against both providers. These recipient states either play one provider against the other, using the implicit threat of political realignment as bargaining leverage to extract more concessions or more freedom of action, or they participate in SFA relationships with both providers.

Alignment. In cases where the United States forms an SFA relationship with a state (or a nonstate actor) that shares Washington's strategic threat-perception and desire to build its military capacity, the United States should use SFA almost exclusively to build partner capacity. In these circumstances, the United States should transfer articles of equipment and military training that enable the recipient state to directly address the shared security concern. "Winning" comes down to the battlefield effectiveness of the recipient force. Are they damaging U.S. strategic adversaries more efficiently in terms of political and economic costs than the United States could without them? Certainly, if the United States desires a long-term, stable relationship with these types of recipient states and nonstate actors, it may use SFA to also maintain influence with subsequent generations of recipient leaders.

Fence-sitters. The case of fence-sitters presents a far more complex and realistic problem set, since it is rare to find instances where SFA providers and recipients have perfectly overlapping threat perceptions and goals for SFA. Dealing with fence-sitters requires an approach that focuses less on building partner capacity and more on influence building. This is because fence-sitters represent "battleground" states. The United States should employ SFA policies that are not necessarily optimized to increase a fence-sitter's military capacity but are instead aimed at garnering support and winning influence. "Winning" means maintaining and improving alignment with less resources than it costs strategic adversaries to do the same. One of the most vital lessons of the Cold War is that the United States should never be on the wrong side of the cost curve vis-à-vis strategic competition.[42] At the same time, the United States should be cognizant that fence-sitters will require the heaviest investment in tools of influence to remain competitive with strategic adversaries. If the United States withdraws from this competition, it will likely lose its expeditionary power projection advantage over its strategic adversaries.

Enemy campers. The last category, enemy campers, presents strategic opportunities for the United States. While these states may be unwilling to cozy up to Washington, the United States can nonetheless introduce uncertainty into the security relationship between the enemy camper and its preferred SFA provider. The

United States should focus on "getting its foot in the door" to act as a spoiler by using a variety of low-cost, low-commitment SFA options. SFA, along with other diplomatic and economic programs, puts pressure on Washington's adversary to invest more heavily in its recipient states or risk losing their alignment altogether. The United States should be aware that their strategic adversaries will apply the same tactics to disrupt the benefits that the United States derives from its SFA relationships.

Conclusion

Security assistance providers routinely use SFA not only to address shared local threats but also to frustrate their adversaries' strategic plans. This trend is particularly evident during periods of increased competition between great power rivals. While the security assistance enterprise is often rife with contradictions and misadventures, there are several key takeaways that policymakers should bear in mind when crafting SFA packages.

First, SFA providers must achieve a degree of influence over their recipient states before they can effectively build the latter's warfighting capacity. SFA providers and recipients rarely have perfectly aligned goals. Therefore, SFA programs should include tools of influence via the principal-agent model and socialization.

Second, practitioners should appreciate the utility of both the principal-agent model (i.e., carrots and sticks) and the socialization approach. Academics often take an either-or approach when examining SFA. Isolating variables is, after all, an important aspect of building models to glean theoretical insights; however, practitioners have no such luxury in the daily execution of security assistance. During an intense standoff between Manila and Washington over the status of the Visiting Forces Agreement in 2020, for example, the United States relied on a combination of transactional penalties as well as the U.S. military's decades-long relationship with the Armed Forces of the Philippines to maintain its presence in the country.[43]

Finally, understanding the SFA continuum is crucial to aligning ways and means with ends. Policymakers should regularly reevaluate recipient states and determine where they exist on the spectrum. When the United States provides assistance to countries that already share U.S. goals, it can focus almost exclusively on building partner capacity. However, when a prospective recipient is a fencer-sitter or in the enemy camp, then Washington should prioritize gaining influence. Doing so will allow the United States to maintain (or ideally enhance) political alignment in the case of the former and spoil the plans of a strategic competitor in the case of the latter. ■

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Awake Before the Sound of the Guns

Preparing Advisors for Conflict

Maj. Robert G. Rose, U.S. Army

On 25 June 1950, Capt. Joseph R Darrigo awakened to artillery fire in Kaesong. He was the lone American from the Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG) on the 38th parallel as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) initiated its assault on the Republic of Korea (ROK).[1] With an armored spearhead of Soviet-provided T-34 tanks, the DPRK achieved complete surprise against the ROK Army that was not deployed for battle.[2] It was the rainy season; an attack was unexpected. A third of Darrigo's partners and most other advisors were on leave. As he hurried to assist his partners in the 12th Infantry Regiment to mount a hasty defense, he probably wished for more time: more time to organize a defense, more time for his partners and fellow advisors to mobilize for the fight, more time to advise the ROK Army, and more time to prepare them to fight an enemy ready for large-scale combat operations.

"Perhaps the most important limitation imposed upon KMAG was that of time itself," concluded Robert Sawyer, a veteran of KMAG and author of the Army's historical study on it.[3] With more time, they might have produced an army that could have withstood the DPRK's onslaught or even deterred them entirely. Instead, KMAG was not prepared to fight. They did not even know if they should fight or withdraw to Japan.[4]

KMAG was not prepared for war. In war, and preparing for war, time is the ultimate commodity. As the U.S. Army employs advisors worldwide to deter conflict and, if necessary, prevail with our partners in combat, we must ensure that we are effectively using the time that we have. We must learn from KMAG how to employ advisors for war.

It is easy to be myopic about the role of advisors, to think advisors just advise. After all, it is in the name. Army Techniques Publication 3-96.1, *Security Force Assistance Brigade*, defines advising as "providing guidance, coaching, and counseling to a foreign counterpart to make their operations or activities more successful."[5] However, providing guidance becomes a lesser task in large-scale combat operations, particularly when paired with a peer partner force. The partner forces we would likely fight alongside in a conflict with Russia or China are highly competent with time-tested systems. There is little time for coaching them to develop new systems as T-72 tanks approach.

In conflict, advisors' true value comes from their ability to assess, liaise, and support. With these tasks, advisors coordinate between U.S. and partner forces to smooth over the frictions in coalition operations and achieve battlefield effectiveness. Advisors need to invest in the critical resource of time to effectively assess, liaise, and support. They need to deliberately prepare for these roles with their designated partner force.

However, advisors face a problem in preparing for conflict. Too often, they are seen primarily as a force for competition below armed conflict. In competition, advising predominates over other advisor tasks. Advisors become focused on building partner capacity, creating rapport, and hopefully influencing them to stay in the United States' orbit. Although those are worthy goals, we need to prioritize our limited number of advisors. Considering our poor record of using advisors to

Maj. Harry W. Hoffman, weapons advisor for the Infantry School assigned to the Korean Military Advisory Group, watches a South Korean soldier on 9 February 1952 during target practice on a known distance rifle range in the Republic of Korea. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army via the All Hands Collection at the Naval History and Heritage Command)

build capabilities and influence partners in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Niger, Mali, Chad, and elsewhere, we should recognize that advisors are not the optimal tool to politically influence a country to either reform or align with the United States.[6]

Advisors are often not preparing for conflict when they are employed as a competition force. In Europe, for example, the United States could deploy advisors to Albania to help advise them on capability development, but they would be useless if Russia attacked the Baltic. Advisors cannot suddenly arrive to a conflict and expect to provide value. They will just be a burden on the partner force. They need to have already invested time with the partners they will fight with so that they are not caught even more flatfooted than KMAG. Although KMAG was surprised, at least it was in the right country and already had invested time into its relationship with the ROK Army.

Assessment

To be effective, advisors need to have time with their partner force to have a deep understanding of them. T. E. Lawrence had spent years as an academic studying the Middle East, but he still was an outsider to the specific context of the revolt in the Hejaz. Even though he was supposed to be an expert, he recognized his limited understanding, explaining that "under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is."[7]

Those "odd conditions" are not just surface-level, outward displays of culture. Advisors need a deeper understanding. Advisors need to know their partner's strategic culture, theory of victory, economics, demography, and geography. They need to understand the military's personnel system, doctrine, and military-industrial base. They need to understand the logic of why a partner operates. This all takes time.

Frequently, the United States undervalues the time it takes for such understanding. It has been overconfident in the universality of its expertise and approach to war. As an example of the U.S. Army's historic lack of focus on understanding, it has put minimal investment in language training. In KMAG, hardly any advisors learned Korean. In a survey of 255 advisors in 1953, no respondent reported using Korean to communicate with their partner.[8] These trends repeated in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Today's advisors in security force assistance brigades (SFAB) do not undergo any language training. When working through interpreters or relying on partner forces that speak English, advisors miss nuance and cannot identify when issues are concealed.

Advisors are too valuable of an assessment tool to be missing such nuance. Advisors are the lone Americans with a hand on the pulse of a partner force. Without the ground-level understanding provided by advisors, senior decision-makers act in a void. In the latter years of the war in Afghanistan, without advisors at the local level, policymakers were ignorant of the Afghan army's will to fight. In Korea, by 1953, the U.S. Army recognized the importance of information provided by KMAG. KMAG advisors were tasked with a dual mission "to advise" and "to function as an information gathering and reporting agency."[9]

Whether due to lack of time, language, or understanding, at the war's onset, KMAG did not provide accurate reports. Its commander, Brig. Gen. William L. Roberts, claimed that "the South Koreans have the best damn army outside the United States!"[10] With advisors sending such assessments, *Time* reported on 5 June 1950, "Most observers now rate the 100,000-man South Korean army as the best of its size in Asia ... And no one now believes that the Russian-trained North Korean army could pull off a quick, successful invasion of the South without heavy reinforcements."[11] Twenty days later, that same North Korean army smashed through the ROK Army.

Such wrong assessments were made even though the ROK Army had no tanks, medium artillery, heavy mortars, antitank weapons, and combat aircraft, and it lacked spare parts with 35 percent of its vehicles unserviceable.[12] KMAG had emphasized developing internal security forces for Korea to defeat communist guerrillas.[13] Even though the ROK government was concerned about an invasion from the North and pushed to develop a force to deter a conventional invasion, the United States did not support providing heavy equipment to Korea.[14] KMAG influenced this decision by reporting that the Korean terrain did not lend itself to efficient tank operations.[15]

KMAG had not accurately assessed the threat. They had not prepared the Koreans to deal with enemy armor and "had talked endlessly about the insignificance and vulnerability of Soviet tanks."[16] Therefore, the Koreans did not have the tools to deal with armor. There was not a single antitank mine in Korea that could have blocked mountain roads.[17] In a crucial opening penetration at Uijongbu, forty tanks filed through the narrow valley. A regretful U.S. military advisor recalled, "If one antitank crew had been able to pick off the lead and rear tanks, the thirty-eight others would have been sitting ducks."[18] But advisors had not assessed that they needed that capability.

The tanks foiled repeated attempts by ROK commanders to reestablish a defense. KMAG had advised their Korean counterparts on a defense plan, but it was "hasty, ill-advised, and impossible."[19] They did not base the plan on an accurate assessment of

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Staff Sgt. Jacob DeMoss (*left*), Alpine Troop, 3rd Squadron, 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade, advises soldiers from Bulgaria's 1st Mechanized Battalion, 61st Mechanized Brigade, during training on urban operations in Marino Pole, Bulgaria. (Photo by Maj. Robert G. Rose, U.S. Army)

the capabilities of the newly created ROK commanders and staffs.

For a more contemporary example of shortfalls in assessments, I observed American-led training for a Ukrainian brigade that was not grounded in an accurate assessment of the brigade's capabilities or the Russian threat. Although the training was on the military decision-making process (MDMP), the trainers did not understand the Ukrainian planning process or the staff members familiarity with MDMP. The trainers did not know how the brigade would be employed, so they reverted to a standard program of instruction for an American brigade. Even though the Ukrainian brigade would soon be thrown into the defense, its staff trained on attacking against a single enemy battalion with a three-to-one superiority in all warfighting functions. In the scenario, the Ukrainians had to breach a single two-hundred-meter minefield. The scenario was not grounded in the reality of Russian capabilities, force densities, or defenses in depth. If advisors had time to assess the brigade, they could have optimized the brigade's training to properly prepare it to fight the Russians.

Advisors need to have accurate assessments from the tactical to strategic level. KMAG had been wrong in their assessment of the strategic situation, but ROK had been right in their appreciation of the threat from the North. The partner force's strategic assessments will often differ. They will also have different political objectives. Advisors must understand the potential friction that can come from these differences.

At National Training Center (NTC) Rotation 24-03, I experienced a realistic scenario of friction from differing political objectives. I was partnered with a division from the fictional country of Pirtuni in a scenario that simulated a Russian invasion of Poland. Like the Polish in 1939, our partner wanted to defend forward near their borders to prevent a fait accompli. They did not want the enemy occupying their land and then digging in, as Russia has done in Ukraine. However, 1st Armored Division (1AD), the U.S. Army unit fighting

alongside the Pirtunians, had expected them to withdraw toward 1AD to allow 1AD to destroy the enemy. Without advisors understanding this friction, 1AD would not have been in a position to affect the battle.

By investing time into assessing a partner, advisors will understand how a partner will fight based on political objectives, the enemy, the terrain, and preexisting war plans. For example, in Europe, advisors must understand how partner forces fit into NATO's operational plans. They need to know specifically what that partner force will need to be asked to do and how ready it will be to fight so that they do not end up like the ROK Army unprepared to face T-34s.

Support

While KMAG might have assessed the threat wrong, the advisors played a crucial role in supporting the beleaguered ROK Army with air support. A month into the war, the U.S. Air Force conducted seven thousand close support and interdiction airstrikes that slowed the North Korean rate of advance to two miles a day. This support provided critical time to form the Pusan perimeter and prevent a total DPRK victory. Gen. Matthew Ridgeway said that except for air power, "the war would have been over in 60 days with all Korea in Communist hands."[20]

In conflict, the access that advisors have to U.S. intelligence, joint fires, and logistics can make a decisive impact on the success of a partner force. In our recent counterinsurgency campaigns, advisors have sometimes had to withhold aid to force partners to build their own capabilities; in a desperate struggle of large-scale combat, winning the immediate fight takes priority over capability building. The moral hazard of doing for a partner what they need to do for themself becomes trivial.

During the retreat toward Pusan, KMAG advisors often dropped their advisory roles and became operational. They were integrated members of ROK staffs, not simply offering advice but assisting in planning and bringing in U.S. assets.[21]

To support a partner force, advisors need to understand what is available and how to employ it. They need to have invested time to develop connections across organizations to understand what they can call upon and who to influence to get that support. Sawyer reports that KMAG advisors had to "beg, borrow, and steal" from U.S. Eighth Army units to receive support.[22] With the way contemporary U.S. divisions and corps align assets in targeting cycles, it can be difficult for advisors to get support without fully understanding those units' processes. During the NTC rotation, when the enemy was breaking through the Pirtuni defense, we had reached a trigger to request 1AD to seal the point of penetration with a scatterable minefield. It took over three hours for the request to be approved, far too slow to have an impact on the battle. If we had more time to establish a common understanding of release criteria and processes for the U.S. division to support the Pirtunis, we could have support that was responsive enough to matter.

In addition to supporting partners, advisors need to invest time into understanding how to support themselves. In Afghanistan and Iraq, advisors could easily rely on U.S. logistics networks. They will not have that luxury in a future war. While in Korea, operating isolated from American units, KMAG advisors ate Korean food and borrowed clothing, gasoline, and tentage from the ROK.[23] Advisors will need to understand what partners can realistically provide and what acquisition and cross-servicing agreements are established to formalize such support. By understanding what partner forces can support, advisors will be able to tailor their equipment to endure a conflict even if it means using civilian vehicles and local purchases. Advisors need to ensure that they are a minimal burden on their partner forces.

Liaison

Advisors, through their liaison role, provide support to partner forces, share assessments, and achieve shared understanding across U.S. and partner forces. According to Army Techniques Publication 3-96.1, "Liaison is the contact or intercommunication maintained between elements of military forces and other agencies to ensure mutual understanding and unity of purpose and action."[24] To liaise, advisors need to understand the optimal placement of personnel and equipment to allow for effective communication. Providing an effective communication architecture between a partner and U.S. forces is a vital function of advisors.

On 28 June 1950, in the chaos of the retreat from Seoul, while three divisions and the KMAG headquarters were still north of the Han River, ROK Army engineers prematurely blew up the bridges across the

river. KMAG had to ford the river. Abandoning their equipment in the chaotic withdrawal, the one vehicle that Col. Sterling Wright, KMAG chief of staff, was determined to save was his radio truck. They were able to procure a raft for the truck. The truck allowed KMAG to maintain communications with its scattered advisors and with U.S. forces in Japan. Critically, just after crossing the river, the truck allowed KMAG to coordinate with the U.S. Air Force as their first sortie roared overhead to strafe the pursuing DPRK forces.[25]

In Suwon, twenty miles south of the Han River, Brig. Gen. John H. Church, the new KMAG commander, set up his headquarters. He flew in from Japan with orders from Gen. Douglas MacArthur to serve as his liaison with ROK Army.[26] Church suggested that the ROK chief of staff Gen. Chae Byong-duk move his headquarters into the same building. The combined headquarters established a common operational picture between ROK and U.S. forces and coordinated a coherent defense.[27]

Under their previous commander, Roberts, KMAG advisors had become accustomed to sharing workspace with their counterparts. KMAG did not have a separate headquarters building before the war.[28] He believed that without such intimacy, advisors would not be effective. Unfortunately, during recent wars, often for security considerations, U.S. units became habituated to barriers with partners. These barriers inhibit shared understanding through both a lack of physical presence and the psychological walls of suspicion. Advisors, particularly when dispersed in small teams or as individuals, as KMAG often operated, need to be comfortable working in partner headquarters. Advisors cannot expect to show up in the middle of a fight and grab a desk. They need to invest time to build rapport, establish workspaces, and ensure that advisors have the appropriate communication systems to provide added value.

At a basic level, advisors need to analyze where they need to place personnel with the appropriate expertise in both partner forces and U.S. headquarters. Advisors cannot assume that partner forces command posts mimic U.S. practices. Each partner will have different approaches to command and control that will impact advisor placement. In a 2023 *Military Review* article on experiences at NTC Rotation 23-04, Maj. Zachary Morris recommended a task organization for covering a partner battalion; however, that concept was optimized for that unique partner force.[29] Advisors need to develop standard operating procedures for their placement specific to their partner force. For example, partnering with the Bulgarian army, we learned that they employ main and alternate command posts, which have redundant functions across warfighting functions, unlike U.S. main and rear command posts that have specialized functions. We needed to balance our advisors between the command posts and cross-train them to cover all warfighting functions.

We also needed to ensure they had the correct communications equipment. SFAB teams have an impressive communications suite, but we need to tailor our capabilities to our partner and their operational environment. We need to be able to operate dispersed, at distance, and with appropriate bandwidth. However, we also need to minimize our electromagnetic signature to not reveal our partner's positions.

In Europe, our partners have learned from the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine to use stringent practices for electromagnetic concealment. To not give away positions with military-band tactical communications, they lay telephone lines for kilometers between units. They hard-wire command posts into their national network instead of relying on satellite communications. They expect to operate in the basements of nondescript buildings. Advisors need to conform to such methods.

During our NTC rotation, we initially planned to use tactical communications; however, Ghost Team coached us that the best practice for survivability was to "hide in plain sight" by using civilian bands. We used a combination of Starlink, masked connections to the cellphone network, and hardwiring to the physical network, to minimize our signature. This approach provided us with both better connectivity and far more concealment than units that used traditional military connectivity during the rotation. We integrated into our partner's command posts in urban areas.

In addition to integrating with partner forces, advisors need to liaise with U.S. units to coordinate efforts across a coalition. Those U.S. forces may or may not have a command relationship with the partner force, but advisors need to facilitate cooperation. Advisors need to understand U.S. units' systems and processes before being thrown into the friction of war. Tying into those systems takes time. At NTC, we worked over ten days to troubleshoot connectivity issues with 1AD.

Advisors from Alpine Troop, 3rd Squadron, 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade, assess Bulgaria's 3rd Mechanized Battalion, 61st Mechanized Brigade's rehearsals for an urban operation in Marino Pole, Bulgaria. (Photo by Maj. Robert G. Rose, U.S. Army)

It took time, but it revealed how important it is for advisors to establish that interoperability early. It also reinforced how difficult it would be for a partner force to communicate with a U.S. force without advisors. During Austere Challenge 24, an exercise rehearsing a defense of the Baltics, advisors from 4th SFAB proved essential in establishing digital communications between the Estonian 1st Division and U.S. V Corps.

Liaison reduces friction, such as at NTC when the Pirtunian and U.S. divisions both planned to use the same locations for command posts and artillery positions. Liaisons can also prevent catastrophes in coordination. During the Korean War at Wawon, the 2nd Infantry Division instructed the newly arrived Turkish brigade to guard their flank but did not establish a liaison with them to provide shared understanding. They did not realize the Koreans in front of them were withdrawing ROK units. They engaged those ROK units and reported a victory. They assumed they had prevailed but then were in no position to fight the main strength of the pursuing Chinese forces. The Chinese overran the surprised Turkish brigade.[30] Advisors coordinating between the forces of those three nations could have prevented that disaster.

Advising

Of course, advisors will still advise to assist partners in preparing for conflict. However, our likely partners will not be building a force from scratch as in Afghanistan or Iraq. They are competent militaries with tested techniques and proud traditions. To coach such militaries, advisors will need a deep understanding of how they can improve. We cannot assume our approaches are superior and just coach partners on them.

I felt strongly that I could assist the Bulgarian army on combined arms rehearsals (CAR). I had even produced a video for NTC on how to conduct CARs.[31]

Staff Sgt. Zachary Barber (*right*) from Alpine Troop, 3rd Squadron, 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade, advises mortarmen from Bulgaria's 3rd Mechanized Battalion, 61st Mechanized Brigade, during a live fire in Karlovo, Bulgaria. (Photo by Maj. Robert G. Rose, U.S. Army)

When at a division exercise, a Bulgarian brigade commander invited me to a battalion's rehearsal, I was excited for the opportunity to coach them. When I got to the "rehearsal," I saw a battalion commander and his subordinate commanders in a concealed observation post, each with a map, discussing their defense while pointing out their actions on the very terrain they would fight on. It was nothing like an American CAR, but it was very productive. They synchronized their plan while conducting a recon of the terrain they would defend.

I discussed possible issues with the rehearsal. What if they could not overwatch the terrain? What if they were passing through another unit in the offense? The Bulgarians admitted that they were valid points, but why build an American-style terrain model and gather people together for a theatrical production that enemy unmanned aircraft systems might observe?

The Bulgarian rehearsal would not work in the flat, wooded terrain of the Joint Readiness Training Center or in an offense across dozens of kilometers at NTC. However, the rehearsal would work in a defense of the rolling hills in the cleared farmlands of the Black Sea Coast. It was ideal for the context that they would have to fight in. To effectively advise, advisors need time to understand such context.

Advisors Need Clarity to Prepare for Conflict

All these tasks I described take time to prepare for. Advisors can only prepare for them if they know the specific partner and context in which they will fight. KMAG struggled in the opening days of the Korean War because it did not have a specified role in conflict that it could have prepared for. KMAG did not even know if it was supposed to fight in the event of war. A few months earlier, Secretary of State Dean Acheson had left Korea out of his description of a "defensive perimeter [that] runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus."[32] The Department of the Army had not specified KMAG's wartime mission, and the U.S. ambassador had provided no guidance.[33] It also had an unclear command relationship with MacArthur's Far East Command.[34] To effectively assess, support, and liaison, let alone advise, advisors need to have a clear mission for conflict and the time to prepare for it. They need to have a defined role in operational plans and a clear command relationship with U.S. forces in their theater.

There is a trade-off here. Advisors are often prioritized to countries to serve as a competition force to establish rapport, display American commitment, and build capabilities. For advisors to prepare for their role in conflict, they will have less time to work with such partners. There is a potential middle ground, with advisors still working in countries in the competitive space but having an enduring, episodic relationship with a partner force at the front lines of a possible conflict. For example, advisors could primarily work in North Macedonia but regularly interact with an Estonian brigade, so they are ready to integrate with them if Russia builds up forces in the Baltic.

Forward-positioned advisors can allow U.S. support and coordination with partner forces in the opening hours of a conflict, but only if provided the time to understand their partner force and threat beforehand. We cannot have another lone Capt. Joseph Darrigo without the time to assist our partners in stopping our enemies.

Given sufficient time, KMAG succeeded. Before the war, advisors had little familiarity with Korea. As the war progressed, advisors were recruited from soldiers with experience fighting in Korea.[35] They understood the context of the war and could effectively advise the ROK Army. By 1953, KMAG had assisted the ROK Army in growing to a six-hundred-thousand-man force that held two-thirds of the front line and took more than two-thirds of the total casualties.[36] Unfortunately, the Army did not retain the lessons learned from KMAG.

Why the Army Keeps Forgetting How to Advise

America has continued to struggle in advising because it does not invest time in advisors. The U.S. Army does not allow advisors to focus on a partner and its specific context. One KMAG advisor, explaining why advisors did not learn Korean stated that there was "no point in Americans learning Korean—we'll be in Timbuktu next year."[37] Advisors today face the same lack of incentive for a long-term commitment to understand a partner force. This shortsightedness comes from the U.S. Army's personnel system, which does not allow the career flexibility for advisors to fully understand a partner and prepare to fight with them in conflict.[38]

Advisors need a long-term commitment to a partner, as Lawrence spent years in Arabia before the Arab Revolt or Field Marshal Horatio Kitchener advised the Egyptian army for over a decade before they crushed the Mahdi in the Anglo-Sudan War.[39] In the U.S. Army, before the inflexible, centralized personnel system was emplaced after World War II, officers could spend years understanding a country.[40] Gen. John Pershing served four years in the Philippines building ties with local leaders and speaking with the Moros without needing an interpreter.[41] During the interwar period, Gen. Matthew Ridgeway spent years instructing Spanish at West Point and serving and advising in Latin America.[42] Unfortunately, the personnel system in place since the 1940s does not afford advisors such time to invest in partners; rather, it has caused underperformance.

Studies on Vietnam reported that "the system of short tours destroyed continuity in the U.S. advisor effort and ensured that it was dominated by amateurs."[43] Vietnamese commanders recommended that their U.S. advisors have two-year tours to have continuity and devotion to a unit.[44] A RAND survey of Vietnam advisors showed that just as in Korea, advisors did not have time to learn the language and establish true understanding. Its primary recommendation was intensive language training.[45]

Given limited time, advisors need a clear mission and need to prioritize their training time in understanding the partner and the context in which they will serve. Advisors currently spend too much of their time training generic tasks. Even their culminating training events are with make-believe partners like the Pirtunis. In a study of advisors, RAND reported that it was "almost impossible to find a complaint by any advisor ... who felt tactically, technically, or militarily unprepared for his duties ... however, almost to a man, advisors felt compelled to talk about the demanding challenges posed by language, cultural differences, and host-nation institutional barriers. It was in these areas—at the heart of an advisor's effectiveness—that most felt inadequately prepared."[46] If our personnel system will not allow us to invest the time to create effective advisors, we can at least focus their limited training time on understanding their particular partner force.

Now is the time to invest in advisor's understanding of their specific problem set. Now is the time for them to become experts on their partners and their context. Now they need to know their role—now, and not when enemy artillery is waking us up. ■

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A U.S. Army soldier surveys a small village near Forward Operating Base Salerno in Afghanistan on 3 February 2012. (Photo by Spc. Ken Scar, U.S. Army)

Integrating EMDR Therapy and New Technologies to Enhance Combat Resilience

Dr. Chrysanthi Lioupi

In modern military operations, psychological resilience has become essential to mission accomplishment and service members' well-being. Combat environments subject military personnel to extreme stress and trauma, which can result in long-term psychological repercussions including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Military personnel are exposed to unique challenges that can significantly impact their mental health. While combat, dangerous missions, and severe training incidents are well-known contributors, veterans experience PTSD at a slightly higher rate than civilians, approximately 7 percent versus 6 percent in the overall population.[1] The prevalence is higher among female veterans, with 13 percent affected versus 6 percent of their male counterparts.[2] The likelihood of developing PTSD varies across different service eras, with the highest rates seen in veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, where nearly 29 percent experienced PTSD at some point in their lives.[3]

PTSD can arise from combat experiences that involve life-threatening situations, either to oneself or others, such as witnessing someone being injured by bullets or shrapnel, facing the enemy at close quarters, encountering corpses, inhaling toxic gases, being at risk of death, feeling powerless to alter living conditions, or seeing destruction like ruined buildings and machinery.[4] Acts such as physically killing an enemy can also contribute to the onset of PTSD.[5] Such traumatic experiences, when accumulated over time, can significantly increase the likelihood of PTSD in veterans, intensifying the psychological burden of military service.

The mental health of military veterans, especially concerning PTSD, remains a persistent issue. Not all military personnel exposed to trauma will develop PTSD. For instance, having high resilience may make it easier to tolerate the negative feelings associated with trauma exposure and to respond adaptively after being exposed to it, both of which may improve psychological health.[6] Veterans benefit from prevention and therapy that foster resilience, a strong sense of purpose in life, and close relationships with others.[7] While combat-related trauma is a primary contributor to PTSD among veterans, other significant factors also come into play.[8] These include premilitary experiences such as childhood adversity and socioeconomic challenges, which can increase vulnerability to PTSD.

The impact of factors like early-life difficulties, social class, and trauma before military service can intensify PTSD symptoms or even be pivotal in their development. Timothy Carroll et al., for instance, discovered that over 80 percent of veterans who had served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars reported having at least one adverse traumatic event in their childhood.[9] Additionally, around 40 percent of those surveyed had endured four or more traumatic events throughout their lives.[10] Addressing these early-life adversities is crucial in the treatment and support of veterans coping with mental health challenges because such early traumas may contribute to increased vulnerability to PTSD. Repeated exposure to these combat-related stressors can heighten the sensitivity to future trauma or weaken coping mechanisms. Individuals who have already faced traumatic events may have an increased vulnerability to PTSD when exposed to additional stress, as previous traumas can leave lasting impacts on their mental health.[11] This highlights the complexity of PTSD nature and the importance of understanding the diverse experiences that contribute to PTSD to provide more tailored and effective mental health support for active military personnel and veterans.

The Growing Role of EMDR Therapy in Military Mental Health Care

As the landscape of mental health interventions for military personnel continues to evolve, a growing number of active-duty military personnel and veterans are being treated for trauma-related disorders with eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy. The need for efficient, easily accessible, and scientifically supported treatments is critical, given the nature of war and the psychological effects of combat. Initially developed to address PTSD, EMDR has emerged as a valuable therapeutic approach within military mental health care.[12]

EMDR is based on the adaptive information processing model, which suggests that the brain can heal by reprocessing maladaptively stored traumatic memories. When memories are improperly processed, they remain raw, unprocessed, and disconnected from adaptive information, leading to problematic reactions. A PTSD sufferer's exaggerated startle reaction, for instance, in response to a firework that might sound like a gun, could serve as an example.[13] EMDR helps

A U.S. Army soldier in a moment of reflection embodies resilience amid the mental toll of service. (Photo by RDNE Stock Project via Pexels)

reprocess such memories by focusing on the distressing event, associated negative beliefs, and physical sensations, allowing for the formation of new neural connections. This integration helps reduce symptoms like intrusive thoughts and exaggerated responses by linking the traumatic memory with healthier, adaptive material. In EMDR, unresolved trauma memories are considered the root of PTSD and related mental health issues. The therapy employs structured techniques, including bilateral stimulation, which involves stimuli (visual, auditory, or tactile) occurring in a rhythmic left-right pattern. This engages the brain's natural adaptive information processing system, facilitating the resolution of traumatic memories and emotions. This process leads to an adaptive outcome and alleviation of PTSD and other symptoms.[14]

The effectiveness of EMDR in treating PTSD is well-documented in existing research.[15] Studies have consistently demonstrated that EMDR can help reduce the intensity of trauma symptoms in veterans who have combat-related PTSD. For example, a randomized controlled trial by John Carlson et al. showed that EMDR led to significant symptom reduction in veterans with long-standing PTSD, outperforming other interventions.[16] Similarly, a meta-analysis by Ying-Ren Chen et al. emphasized the consistent efficacy of EMDR in comparison with other trauma-focused treatments, reinforcing its suitability for military personnel.[17] Other research has also constantly identified that EMDR therapy provides similar or better treatment outcomes than conventional therapies.[18]

One of EMDR's most notable military advantages is its relatively short treatment duration. EMDR therapy in military personnel has been shown to yield significant improvements in combat-related stress disorder within a few sessions.[19] This makes it a crucial therapy for military personnel, who often have limited time for long-term treatment and may need rapid, effective interventions on the battlefield before redeployment or upon their return home. Furthermore, EMDR therapy's neurobiological foundation supports its suitability for military trauma. Research shows that EMDR stimulates bilateral brain activity, helping to integrate

traumatic memories with nontraumatic experiences and allowing for emotional processing and memory reconsolidation.[20] For soldiers who often experience disjointed or fragmented memories due to the high-stress nature of combat, this aspect of EMDR can be particularly beneficial. It facilitates the desensitization of distressing memories, transforming them into manageable, coherent narratives that no longer trigger overwhelming emotional responses.

Moreover, EMDR therapy aligns well with the practical demands of military field environments. While its traditional format involves eight structured phases, some adapted versions like the recent traumatic event protocol (R-TEP) allow for condensed sessions focusing specifically on distressing combat memories.[21] Such early EMDR interventions also recognize that recent traumatic memories differ from older ones as they may be fragmented and not yet fully consolidated. This adaptability is crucial in military settings where soldiers might not have the luxury of regular access to mental health care. In situations where traditional therapeutic environments are unavailable, EMDR can be modified to fit the needs of soldiers in operational environments or during debriefing periods. R-TEP is a structured approach for early intervention that integrates elements from previous EMDR protocols.[22] R-TEP targets traumatic events over an extended period, known as the "trauma episode," which spans from just before the trauma began to the present. It is used for life-changing events with ongoing effects, viewed as part of a trauma continuum. In R-TEP, the individual focuses on disturbing memory fragments or points of disturbance, processing each with EMDR techniques until the distress is significantly reduced. Instead of treating the traumatic event as a single memory, it can be broken down into distinct moments that serve as individual targets for treatment.[23]

Elan Shapiro and Brurit Laub demonstrated in a randomized controlled experiment that R-TEP was successful in lowering PTSD symptomatology among seventeen survivors of a hostile attack in their community throughout a two-day therapy.[24] Similarly, past research has yielded fruitful results. EMDR R-TEP was implemented to treat survivors following terrorist bombings.[25] Three 120-minute sessions effectively addressed two to three traumatic targets, with the positive outcomes maintained at a six-month follow-up.[26] In addition, two randomized controlled trials conducted with Syrian refugees found that EMDR R-TEP significantly reduces PTSD and depressive symptoms.[27]

Research by Matthew Wesson and Matthew Gould highlighted how modified EMDR protocols could be successfully applied in military environments, suggesting its potential as a field-deployable therapeutic option.[28] Their case study described using the EMDR R-TEP with a twenty-seven-year-old active-duty UK soldier experiencing acute stress after treating a land mine casualty. Conducted two weeks post-trauma, the intervention included four daily sessions, leading to a significant reduction in adverse symptomatology that allowed the soldier to promptly return to frontline duties with the results sustained at the eighteen-month follow-up.

Another EMDR protocol, the group traumatic episode protocol (G-TEP), is an EMDR approach tailored for groups who have encountered similar or distinct traumatic experiences. It applies to both recent traumatic incidents (e.g., Derek Farrell et al.) and ongoing significant life events that may not be recent, such as the situations faced by refugees.[29] A fundamental aspect of G-TEP is that individuals are not required to share any specifics about their traumatic experiences. Referred to as "blind to therapist," this technique has various benefits in EMDR therapy.[30] Memories of trauma that arouse feelings of shame, survivor guilt, moral harm, or anxieties about blame and stigma could be the justification for keeping information private.

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In military settings, this approach can be particularly beneficial for soldiers who have experienced combat-related trauma. By allowing service members to participate in therapeutic sessions without detailing their experiences, G-TEP can foster a sense of safety and trust within the group. This nondisclosure can help reduce the potential for shame or judgment, promoting participant openness and connection. Furthermore, addressing moral injury—whether tied to personal core values or external factors like betrayal—can facilitate healing and resilience. By focusing on shared experiences and collective recovery, soldiers can build a supportive community that enhances their emotional strength and coping strategies, ultimately promoting resilience in the face of ongoing challenges.

However, despite promising clinical experiences and preliminary controlled studies, researchers indicate that significant gaps remain in the evidence supporting EMDR as an early intervention.[31] They underline that, above all, future studies should follow the strictest guidelines for clinical methodology, with a particular focus on determining whether EMDR early intervention could prevent PTSD from developing and improve people's resilience.[32] This suggestion is in line with the need for further development in military mental health treatment, where EMDR is still underutilized despite its demonstrated advantages. A dearth of qualified EMDR therapists in the military and concerns about its efficiency compared to more traditional methods could be factored into this insufficient use. However, as military psychology advances, it may be possible to greatly enhance the results for troops who have experienced trauma connected to battle by incorporating EMDR into conventional military mental health services.

In this context, the World Health Organization has widely recommended EMDR as a frontline treatment for PTSD, highlighting its evidence-based success across various populations, including veterans.[33] EMDR therapy has also been recommended for treating PTSD by several organizations, including the U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense, the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, and the National Institute for Healthcare Excellence.[34] As military forces increasingly seek scientifically validated methods to enhance soldiers' mental health, the expanding body of evidence supports EMDR as a compelling option for incorporation into military mental health services.[35]

Another area of concern is that although evidence-based therapies such as EMDR and other related exposure treatments have shown considerable success in treating PTSD, a subset of patients consistently fails to respond, even after multiple therapeutic interventions.[36] This condition, referred to as treatment-resistant PTSD, remains poorly understood, with limited research specifically focused on these individuals.[37] As a result, there is an urgent need for innovative treatment approaches, especially in the military, where personnel are more susceptible to combat-related stress disorders ramifications.

Breaking Barriers: How Tech-Enhanced EMDR Therapy Is Supporting Resilience and Healing in Military Personnel

Recent advances in technology like virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), and wearable devices seem to have opened new possibilities for enhancing the reach and effectiveness of EMDR therapy, making it more accessible and adaptable to the unique challenges of combat. Virtual reality exposure therapy (VRET), for instance, has gained considerable attention as a means of enhancing traditional trauma treatments by immersing patients in controlled, simulated environments that replicate combat scenarios.[38] VRET offers a solution to the challenge many individuals encounter when trying to recall traumatic memories, potentially enhancing therapeutic participation vividly. It also overcomes the issue of selecting suitable stimuli for gradual exposure. With VRET, the primary limitation lies in the software's capabilities, which can be customized to create virtual settings tailored to the specific needs of each participant.[39]

When combined with EMDR, VR allows for a more targeted reprocessing of traumatic memories that are directly tied to combat experiences. A recent randomized controlled trial by Marieke van Gelderen et al. demonstrated the effectiveness of combining VRET and EMDR in reducing PTSD symptoms in veterans with a history of four unsuccessful treatments, and multimodular motion-assisted memory desensitization and reconsolidation (3MDR) has emerged as a promising candidate to address this challenge.[40]

A digital illustration of the 3MDR setup. The hardware includes a dual-belt treadmill, a 180° projection on three screens by three projectors, and a surround sound system. The software consists of a purpose-built virtual environment to walk in, personalized for each patient with images and music selected by patients. Participants wear a harness while on the treadmill for safety. The therapist stands alongside the veteran while a junior psychologist operates hardware and software. (Figure from Marieke J. van Gelderen et al., "Perceived Treatment Processes and Effects of Interactive Motion-Assisted Exposure Therapy for Veterans with Treatment-Resistant Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Mixed Methods Study," *European Journal of Psychotraumatology* 11, no. 1 [2020])

3MDR is highly regarded for its effectiveness in treating PTSD.[41] It promotes memory retrieval, patient engagement, and focused attention by incorporating multisensory inputs like personalized images and music, which heighten emotional involvement and therapist guidance to facilitate the processing of traumatic memories.[42] Research indicates that physical movement during 3MDR, as patients navigate toward self-selected trauma-related images in a virtual environment, supports fear extinction more effectively than sitting.[43] This approach contrasts with the avoidance response common in PTSD, encouraging an approach-oriented reaction and fostering divergent thinking.[44] The 3MDR protocol includes projecting tunnels and patient-chosen images associated with their trauma, integrated into the treatment software.[45] Chelsea Jones et al. showed that 3MDR helped military veterans who were not responding to PTSD treatment.[46] Emily Tang et al. also highlighted positive effects on emotional regulation through cognitive-motor stimulation, narrative involvement, divergent thinking, and reprocessing traumatic memories.[47]

Robert McLay et al. studied eighty-one active-duty service members with PTSD.[48] They found significant PTSD symptomatology reductions after twelve weeks of 3MDR therapy, though results were similar to a control group that viewed moving images on a screen.[49] Jonathan Bisson et al. and Gelderen et al. applied a similar protocol with forty-two veterans selecting trauma-related images. Both studies show notable PTSD reduction in the 3MDR groups compared to wait-list and nontrauma treatment controls.[50] In addition, a 2022 randomized controlled trial has highlighted the significant clinical improvement in PTSD symptoms among military service members, with or without mild traumatic brain injury, following 3MDR treatment.[51] Participants showed strong engagement with the 3MDR approach, which contrasts with historically high dropout rates (20–50

percent) in PTSD treatment trials due to trauma avoidance. The unique features of 3MDR, including using a virtual environment, treadmill walking, eye movement tasks, and personalized music and images, likely contributed to its appeal and effectiveness.[52]

Finally, a recent review conducted in 2024 highlighted why 3MDR is effective in the treatment of PTSD in military populations.[53] It also addressed significantly improved moral injury and emotion regulation, sleep quality, and access to trauma-related memories. Researchers highlighted that the effectiveness of 3MDR related initially to physical movement during therapy sessions, which activates neural circuits associated with memory and emotion, aiding in the desensitization and reconsolidation of traumatic experiences.[54] The immersive nature of "walking into memories" enhances trauma processing, organization, and integration, while the therapist's role is crucial in supporting patients to confront trauma and reduce avoidance.[55] This can be particularly beneficial for military personnel, who often deal with vivid memories tied to physical actions and environments.

Additionally, the simultaneous exposure to trauma-related cues within a controlled setting allows for safe reexperiencing and restructuring of maladaptive memory patterns. The combination of these elements not only addresses the psychological aspects of PTSD but also engages physiological processes, potentially leading to improved symptom management and overall psychological resilience.[56] Concerns about accessibility for veterans with physical disabilities suggest adaptations like modified treadmills, while AI applications could mitigate cost-effectiveness challenges. Health economic evaluations are necessary to determine whether 3MDR's benefits justify the expenses, especially if the therapy is to be expanded beyond its current niche for treatment-resistant PTSD.[57]

In addition, AI is increasingly used in diagnosing and treating PTSD by analyzing data from soldiers recounting devastating experiences in combat.[58] To identify predictive trends in intonation, speed, and word frequency, AI applications passively observe and analyze patterns of speech, facial expressions, and body motions using natural language processing algorithms.[59] Additionally, cameras capture physical activity and eye movements to assess emotional states. Post-diagnosis, wearable devices continuously collect data such as sleep quality and behavior through GPS monitoring and analyze smartphone interactions like keystroke speed. AI-driven diagnostic tools use deep learning and supervised machine learning to refine PTSD diagnoses and suggest personalized therapies, offering real-time assessments and potential suicide risk notifications to therapists.[60]

AI-driven platforms are also transforming how EMDR is delivered. AI can analyze data from EMDR sessions, tailoring therapy to an individual's emotional and physiological responses. Recent research has shown that AI-supported EMDR therapy can increase the precision of interventions and enhance treatment outcomes. For instance, researchers created an actuator-based EMDR virtual system that has been developed by incorporating the system. The system could operate independently with an AI chatbot, video, haptic, and audio actuators.[61] The results showed how well the EMDR virtual assistant reduced anxiety, discomfort, and unpleasant feelings and thoughts in participants with past traumatic memories. Although the absence of a therapist raises many ethical concerns and needs to be further addressed, such integration of AI enables real-time monitoring of a soldier's emotional state, tailoring EMDR interventions to their specific needs. These tools and innovations can be combined with real-time therapists' assistance and could be especially beneficial in high-pressure combat situations where immediate psychological support is necessary and critical to maintaining mental resilience.[62]

Empowering Minds: Transforming Trauma Recovery for Soldiers Through Innovative Therapeutic Strategies

As military operations become more complex and stress-inducing, it is crucial to continue exploring innovative technologies that enhance the effectiveness of therapies like EMDR. By doing so, we can ensure that soldiers have the psychological tools to remain resilient in modern combat challenges. Advanced treatments such as 3MDR, which combine immersive virtual environments with motion and personalized stimuli, have demonstrated significant promise in engaging patients and fostering emotional processing. Additionally, integrating AI into diagnostic and therapeutic platforms

The 3MDR therapy for military veterans shares many of the principles and methods used in existing therapies but extends these using virtual reality techniques including adding in a veteran's choice of music and photographs and walking on a treadmill. (Screenshot from Cardiff and Vale University Health Board via YouTube)

provides real-time analysis and adaptation, potentially revolutionizing mental health care for military personnel in both field and clinical settings. Future research should focus on refining these technologies and developing new approaches that address the unique demands of military trauma, ensuring that treatments remain accessible, adaptable, and effective in various operational environments. The combination of EMDR with cutting-edge tech can pave the way for more resilient soldiers, reducing the long-term psychological burden of combat.

Future interventions for the battlefield may integrate EMDR-assisted technologies to deliver immediate mental health support to active-duty soldiers experiencing trauma in real-time combat situations, ultimately reducing the risk of developing PTSD and fostering overall psychological resilience. These interventions could include a portable VR setup that equips mental health professionals with rugged VR headsets for ease of transport and setup in various battlefield environments. The VR system would feature an extensive library of immersive environments tailored to the unique traumatic experiences of military personnel, such as combat engagements, ambush situations, or emergency evacuation scenarios.

Following a traumatic event, soldiers could participate in a therapy session led by a trained mental health professional. During these sessions, the therapist would guide soldiers through EMDR therapy. At the same time, they interact with the relevant VR scenarios, providing a controlled yet realistic context for safe exposure and trauma processing. To further enhance the therapeutic experience, the intervention would incorporate AI-powered monitoring and adaptive features using wearable devices to continuously track soldiers' physiological responses, including heart rate and galvanic skin response. AI algorithms would analyze this data in real time to provide therapists with insights into the soldier's emotional state, enabling them to adjust the intensity of the exposure or modify the therapeutic approach to suit the individual's needs.

These interventions could also utilize EMDR protocols specifically designed for military personnel and tailored to their needs. For recent acute traumas, protocols such as the R-TEP could be applied to address distressing experiences soon after they occur, helping to prevent the consolidation of trauma into long-term psychological disorders. For collective trauma

experienced by groups of soldiers, the G-TEP could be used to facilitate a shared therapeutic process that helps normalize reactions to trauma, foster group cohesion, and build resilience. By adapting these protocols to the unique demands of military service, therapy can be made more effective and relevant for soldiers who must continue to operate in high-stress environments.

Autonomous EMDR systems represent a significant advancement in mental health support for military personnel, particularly in high-stress environments where access to mental health professionals may be limited. These systems can facilitate semiautonomous therapeutic interventions, combining AI-driven technology with the critical oversight of a human therapist. In this model, the therapist remains an integral component of the process. At the same time, the AI manages various aspects of the therapy session—pacing, monitoring physiological responses, and creating virtual environments for exposure. They conduct initial assessments to determine the soldier's suitability for AI-assisted therapy, provide guidance and oversight during sessions, and tailor interventions to meet individual needs. This collaboration ensures that soldiers receive immediate support for processing trauma soon after exposure, which can help prevent the development of more severe psychological conditions. However, ethical considerations must be prioritized in implementing autonomous EMDR, including patient safety, confidentiality, and maintaining the essential human element in therapy. By blending advanced technology with personalized care, semiautonomous EMDR holds the potential to revolutionize mental health support for military personnel, making it more accessible and effective in addressing the complexities of trauma.

Alongside the therapy, soldiers could access integrated support resources, including mindfulness exercises, grounding techniques, and coping strategies through a companion mobile app. This app can also facilitate peer support by connecting soldiers with others who have undergone similar experiences, fostering a sense of community and reducing isolation. To implement this intervention, therapists will be trained to use VR and AI technologies effectively, emphasizing the unique challenges of providing mental health support in combat situations.

A future pilot program could be launched within a specific unit or deployment, collecting data on the intervention's effectiveness and gathering feedback from soldiers and therapists to refine the approach. Collaboration with military leadership will be crucial to integrate this intervention into existing mental health support structures, ensuring it complements other resources and support available to soldiers. Continuous evaluation and improvement will be established through a feedback loop to assess the effectiveness of the intervention, making adjustments based on soldier and therapist experiences to enhance its impact. By leveraging cutting-edge technology, this intervention may facilitate effective trauma processing in real-time, reducing the risk of PTSD and promoting resilience among active-duty personnel. Integrating such an innovative approach into military mental health care can ultimately enhance the well-being of service members and support their ongoing mission readiness. ■

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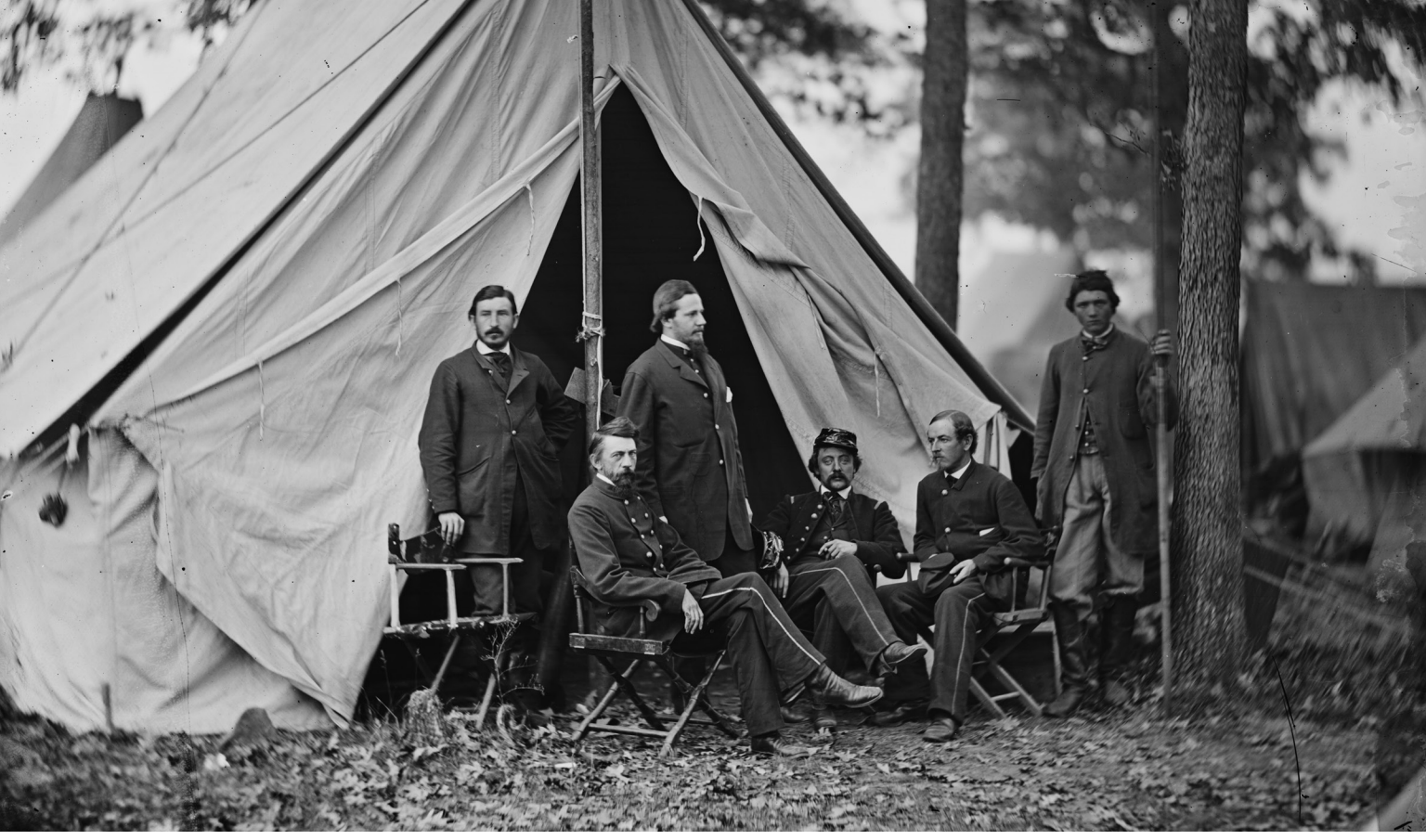

Maj. (Dr.) Jonathan Letterman (*seated left*) with the medical staff of the Army of the Potomac in November 1862 at an encampment in Warrenton, Virginia. Letterman is credited as the originator of the modern methods for battlefield medical management. (Photo by Alexander Gardner, courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)

Major Jonathan Letterman Revisited

Anticipating Casualty Evacuation Needs in Large-Scale Combat Operations

Col. James Nicholson, U.S. Army
Tyler Fox

Baltic region, five years from today. *Exhausted from combat, soldiers stood in shock as reports of a chemical attack on the wet-gap crossing reached the division's rear command post. Subsequent medical evacuation requests supplanted denial with dread. First two hundred, then three hundred, and finally over six hundred patients. Already overwhelmed by three thousand wounded from the previous days, this event broke the rear command post's ability to react. Enemy air defenses made helicopter evacuation impossible. Congestion plagued ground routes as weather and fleeing civilians slowed traffic. Long-range artillery, deep reconnaissance units, and unmanned aircraft systems exploited the fragile supply network, while electronic warfare and cyberattacks complicated communication and navigation. Confounding it all, the division surgeon was unable to action patient movement. Poor rear command post integration compelled individual units to circumvent the division staff altogether, moving patients however they could without coordination or control. Culminating prior to the objective, the division transitioned to a hasty defense against an unremitting and unremorseful enemy. The surgeon felt powerless.*

The U.S. Army faced catastrophe 162 years ago. Unchanged, it will face it again. Since Antietam, the prompt evacuation of wounded American soldiers remains an enduring expectation. With the U.S. transition from counterinsurgency to large-scale combat operations (LSCO), the Army must relearn the challenges of mass casualty movement. Analysis of recent Warfighter exercises (WFX) provides valuable context for medical personnel, staff officers, and maneuver commanders in this regard. Further contextualizing WFX data within the Army's history reveals the scale of the casualty evacuation problem, the capacity required to meet it, and the methods needed to action it. Failing to implement change today based on this understanding will inevitably result in future disaster against a peer opponent. Should this occur, the cost in lives will erode the popular support necessary for democratic societies to unite against an existential threat, resulting in dire consequences for the Nation.

Letterman's Dilemma

Maj. (Dr.) Jonathan Letterman became the command surgeon of the Union's Army of the Potomac following its failure to seize Richmond in the summer of 1862. Letterman found himself with the responsibility of rebuilding the fighting strength of a 105,000-strong army that had recently suffered 15 percent casualties.[1] Complicating matters, 29 percent of the remaining soldiers were unable to fight due to illness.[2] As rain, fatigue, and privation attrited the force, Letterman noted the burgeoning "prevalence of malarial fevers of a typhoid type, diarrhea, and scurvy."[3]

Gen. Robert E. Lee maintained pressure as he chased the Union army across Northern Virginia in July 1862. From 15 August onward, Lee delivered repeated blows against Maj. Gen. John Pope's Army of Virginia, culminating in the Second Battle of Manassas from 29 to 30 August.[4] Afterward, three thousand Union casualties remained on the field at Manassas where they had fallen three days prior.[5] Numerous civilian teamsters hired by the Army Quartermaster Corps to serve as ambulances fled the battle.[6] The situation was severe enough for Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to organize a relief, but upon losing their cavalry escort, many of the impressed wagons turned back. Those that did arrive often refused to aid to the wounded, stole provisions, or looted the pockets of the casualties.[7] Union forces now found themselves defending Washington, D.C., after enduring 14,500 casualties in less than two months.[8] With Lee's army poised to invade Maryland, Letterman found himself forced to impose change with an existential threat lying just outside the beleaguered Nation's capital.

A French physician provided the precedent for Letterman's initiatives. A surgeon of Napoleon Bonaparte, Dr. Dominique Jean-Larrey developed the concept of the *ambulance volantes* ("flying ambulance") in 1792.[9] Light, horse-drawn carriages with two wheels, the flying ambulance included a rectangular

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Wagons of the 57th New York's ambulance corps remove wounded from the field after the Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862. (Photo courtesy of the AMEDD Center of History and Heritage)

enclosure with padded litters upon a spring suspension for improved patient comfort.[10] Sufficiently fast and nimble, they markedly improved evacuation times. With accompanying surgeons on board, these *ambulance volantes* would maintain contact with the engaged troops to offer prompt aid and subsequent evacuation, thus minimizing the window between injury and treatment.[11] Letterman, understanding the benefits of rapid evacuation, outlined a similar system of dedicated wagons with stretcher-bearers as a cohesive Ambulance Corps within the Army of the Potomac.[12]

Letterman's ambulance efforts proved timely, as 17 September 1862 marked a tragic, bloody event in American history. At Antietam, Union casualties under Gen. George McClellan *for that single day* totaled 12,350 out of the eighty-seven thousand-strong force (14.2 percent).[13] Furthermore, when including all soldiers killed or wounded that day, approximately two thousand men fell per hour for twelve continuous hours.[14] Fortunately, the Army of the Potomac received two hundred new ambulances a mere five days prior, which cleared the Union right wing by two o'clock in the afternoon and the left wing that evening—a stark contrast to the Second Battle for Manassas.[15] Letterman's holistic grasp of the challenge also secured prompt movement to distant, established, civilian hospitals. By coordinating with the delivery of incoming rail supplies, the Ambulance Corps transferred wounded to freshly emptied boxcars for transport to hospitals in Baltimore and Washington, D.C.[16]

The subsequent Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862 distinguished the Letterman plan by demonstrating "ambulances guided and governed with perfect control … the wounded being brought without delay or confusion."[17] This dramatic improvement secured passage of the Ambulance Corps Act of 11 March 1864, which extended Letterman's initiatives across the entire Union army. Allocating one ambulance per 150 Union soldiers, this act defined American casualty evacuation through World War I.[18]

The Casualty Problem Forecast

In the traditions of Letterman, understanding the operational context is crucial for upholding the first principle of Army health service support, conformity, which sets the conditions for facilitating medical evacuation.[19] Casualty generation in WFXs is apocalyptic

Table 1. Warfighter Casualty Generation

Warfighter Exercise	Warfighter Casualties: Killed in Action	Return to Duty	Wounded in Action (WIA) (Evac)	Total WIA	Participating Divisions
21-1	22,861	7,885	18,398	26,283	4
21-2	17,789	8,429	19,668	28,097	3
21-3	15,455	7,860	18,339	26,199	3
21-4	25,456	13,983	32,627	46,610	3
21-5	20,182	13,584	31,695	45,279	2
22-1	9,407	5,713	13,330	19,043	2
22-4	13,699	4,966	11,588	16,554	2
22-5	14,158	10,071	23,498	33,569	3
23-2	11,039	9,801	22,869	32,670	2
23-4	30,973	12,008	28,019	40,027	3
23-5	12,510	10,893	25,416	36,309	2
Total Mean	17,594	9,563	22,313	31,876	3
Mean Per Division	6,673	3,627	8,464	12,091	
Mean Per Division Per Day	667	363	846	1,209	

(Table by Col. James Nicholson)

compared to Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) levels. However, LSCO represents an existential threat to national survival. Victory is mandatory, and the tolerance for casualties must be reframed given the consequences of failure.

U.S. European Command has the freshest and largest sample of WFX data from which to evaluate LSCO demands. In assessing U.S. European Command-oriented WFXs, the average casualty generation of a division-sized element during a ten-day exercise is 1,876 per day for both killed and wounded in action (see table 1). Removing killed in action and soldiers returned-to-duty within the division, 846 soldiers require evacuation daily. Considering this projected casualty volume, it is prudent to search for solutions by grounding ourselves in how the U.S. Army managed similar situations during previous conflicts.

The Evolution Prior to World War II

After the Civil War, Letterman's Ambulance Corps essentially dissolved only to reemerge as the U.S. Army Ambulance Service in 1917. The Army Medical Department responded promptly to wartime demand, as a 1916 congressional authorization permitted the purchase of ambulances without competitive bidding.[20] By 1917, Army Surgeon General William Gorgas chose the General Motors model 16AA ambulance as the exclusive model, with 2,308 ambulances delivered by 15 November 1917.[21] Ambulance sections supporting infantry divisions were located within organizations known as sanitary trains, which included four ambulance companies.[22] These ambulance companies included three motorized ambulance companies, each with twelve ambulances, and one animal-drawn company, also with twelve ambulances, which was retained to navigate rough terrain unsuitable for motor transport.[23] To support the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), 6,875 motor ambulances ultimately served in Europe during World War I, assisting in the evacuation of 214,467 casualties.[24]

Early motorized ambulances had significant limitations. Capt. Arlington Lecklider of the 168th Ambulance Company, 42nd Infantry Division, noted that "the methods of evacuation of [the] wounded in 1918 were those of our Civil War of 1865—using litter bearers from trenches to the immediate rear, then

Table 2. Historic 1st Infantry Division MEDEVAC Capacity

1st Infantry Division Organic Ambulance Assets

	World War I	World War II	Current
Ground Ambulance (Total)	48[a]	30[b]	107[c]
Litter patients per ambulance	4	4	4
Air Ambulance	-	-	15
Litter patients per ambulance	-	-	6
Total Soldiers (Approximate)	28,000	15,000	13,500
Ambulance Capacity: Soldier Ratio	1:146	1:125	1:26

[a] Per George Thompson, "Battlefield Medicine: Ambulance Section"; twelve horse-drawn and twenty-six motorized
[b] Per Lt. Col. John Ficicchy Jr., *Annual Report of Medical Department Activities, 1944: Division Surgeon, 1st U.S. Infantry Division*
[c] Current authorized strength

(Table by Col. James Nicholson)

mule-drawn ambulances to the collecting-station."[25] Animal-drawn ambulances were still useful due to their ability to navigate poor terrain, but, as with the 42nd Infantry Division, sodden ground and roads impassable from mines meant that casualties were periodically carried on the backs of comrades.[26]

World War I foreshadowed two cardinal shifts in ambulance service later fulfilled in World War II: the infusion of motorized service at the lowest level and the centralization of control. On the surface, this may appear a contradiction. However, with improved evacuation speed providing the wounded faster treatment, a firm hand was required to bring efficiency from increasingly dispersed ambulance detachments. With aerial attacks and long-range artillery posing threats to both evacuees and medical corpsman, appropriately placing ambulances at locations that facilitated responsiveness and protection proved crucial.[27] In 1918, the III Corps surgeon demonstrated this through direct responsibility of patient evacuation from subordinate divisions during the Meuse-Argonne campaign.[28] Similarly, five days before the armistice, the AEF chief surgeon created an ambulance pool to ensure oversight and efficient use of all available vehicles.[29] This medical supervision highlighted the increasingly technical nature of warfare that necessitated effective command and control.

Post-World War II

Following World War II, evolutionary pressure to maximize speed and efficiency did not remain isolated on the ground. Korea saw earnest use of helicopters for evacuation, which rapidly accelerated during Vietnam. At the peak of operations in southeast Asia, fifteen medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) units were deployed to South Vietnam.[30] In total, Vietnam MEDEVAC units executed 496,573 missions moving over 900,000 patients but at the cost of 199 airframes and 470 pilots wounded or killed.[31] Similar units permitted the Golden Hour evacuation standard during GWOT. The helicopter's eminence came from wars where small units were decisive. The scale of combat—intense but limited in breadth at any given time—allowed the attention of this platform. More importantly, so did an enemy incapable of robust air defense. Developments pernicious to the helicopter took place after both the Vietnam War and GWOT.

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War changed U.S. Army perceptions following years of counterinsurgency fighting in Vietnam. The lethality of modern battlefields, particularly from modern surface-to-air and antitank guided missiles, forced a reassessment of fighting the Warsaw Pact in Western Europe. The resulting AirLand Battle doctrine embraced seizing the initiative to impose American will upon the enemy during high-intensity combat. By acknowledging the risks of the modern battlefield from improved enemy sensors, weapons of mass destruction, and tenuous supply lines, AirLand Battle stipulated that success depended on maintaining initiative, agility, depth, and synchronization of Army combat forces.[32]

Post-GWOT, the Army finds itself at an inflection point—a renaissance of large-scale combat operations against a peer opponent. These operations are predicted

Built in 1917, the White Motor Corporation's ambulance could transport four litter patients, a driver, and a corpsman at a speed of twenty miles per hour. This was one of the two types of ambulances, the other by General Motors, most commonly used by the U.S. Army during World War I. (Photo courtesy of the Surgeon General's Office, Washington, D.C., via the National Archives)

to be far more expansive and destructive than recent conflicts, with concordant heavy casualties.[33] Similar to AirLand Battle, the Army of 2030 will seek to adhere to the tenants of agility, convergence, endurance, and depth to defeat enemy forces to gain a position of relative advantage.[34]

LSCO and World War II Comparisons

Using a current active-duty infantry division as an example, fully decompressing the WFX average of 846 daily casualties per division would require every ambulance the 1st Infantry Division (1ID) possesses (see table 2). Utilizing every ground and air ambulance, 1.6 "turns" are required to fully decompress the number of wounded-in-action patients that require Role 3 treatment. Evacuating all casualties requires 2.3 "turns." This presents a daunting task even in the best circumstances. It assumes perfect efficiency with every platform capable of duty. Not only will electronic warfare compromise both communications and navigation, but integrated air defense systems, in conjunction with long-range precision fires, will also counter U.S. advantages and impose risk to the force. Similarly, the rate of casualty flow will not occur linearly, and the allocation of resources like ground ambulances cannot be shifted across subordinate organizations without incurring concordant risk. Thus, a tenuous balance between responsiveness and protection will remain as true in future LSCO as it did for the AEF in 1918.

Lt. Col. John Ficicchy faced this problem before: hundreds of casualties, artillery observation, and limited maneuver. He also faced them with even fewer resources than the contemporary 1ID. As the 1ID division surgeon throughout 1944, Ficicchy planned medical support for D-Day, the fighting in the Marigny Breakthrough, and across northern France. But in the Hürtgen Forest and follow-on operations east of the Roer River, he found life akin to that of Lecklider in World War I; a foreshadow of the brutal contest that future LSCO also holds.

Ficicchy's experience told him the forest would swallow more men than the sword. Weather, terrain, and road conditions conspired against the mobility of

Wounded soldiers are transferred from a Dodge WC-54 ambulance to a Vultee L-5 plane in Luzon, Philippine Islands, in 1945 during World War II. The soldiers were flown to a nearby hospital for treatment. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Air Force via the National Archives)

the field ambulance. He reported, "Litter carries were very difficult and averaged two-thousand yards."[35] "Enemy artillery and mortar fire which create bursts in the forest caused a large number of casualties among these litter bearers."[36] To keep up with their attrition, both due to casualties and physical exhaustion, 240 men were needed to maintain eighty litter bears at any given time.[37] Where feasible, the division established forward "Jeep" collection points to begin casualty movement toward Role 2 facilities, the collecting stations of the regimental combat teams. In a single day, 501 casualties required evacuation through the viscera of this evacuation system.[38]

These numbers are not aberrations. They're reality, and they validate Warfighter simulations data. The mean of daily division evacuations is 60 percent of the statistic noted in table 1. This appears reasonable given the state of the Wehrmacht in late 1944 and into 1945, accounting for the lethality of modern weapons systems and acknowledging the effects of chemical attacks, which are frequent injects during a Warfighter exercise. Historically, when the 1ID faced a chemical attack in Meuse-Argonne, it recorded 1,700 casualties at various division triage locations with "400 or so" additional wounded referred to higher echelon hospitals on 4 October 1918 alone.[39]

Historical precedent demands large numbers of vehicles to cope with casualty volume and platform attrition. Episodes of excessive casualties also require nonmedical transportation be pressed into service. Acknowledging the distinction between ambulance movement and nonmedical transport is necessary for understanding the patient evacuation dilemma in LSCO. Doctrinally, battlefield ambulance service is synonymous with MEDEVAC, which Field Manual (FM) 4-02, *Army Health System*, defines as "the timely and effective movement of wounded, injured, or ill to and between medical treatment facilities on dedicated and properly marked platforms with en route care provided by medical personnel."[40] This is not to be confused with casualty evacuation (CASEVAC), which is the movement of casualties aboard nonmedical vehicles or aircraft without en route medical care.[41] CASEVAC is what the 1ID leaned on to evacuate the walking wounded, not only from across the division's organic medical assets, but all the way through to hospital-level care. When excessive casualties required absorption, CASEVAC provided the elasticity to

Army personnel with the 86th Combat Support Hospital carry a patient from an HH-60 Black Hawk air ambulance to a waiting ambulance on 5 April 2003 for ground transportation to a hospital at a forward-deployed location in southern Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Shane Cuomo, U.S. Air Force)

supplement ambulance MEDEVAC by servicing patients at minimal risk of succumbing to their injuries, thus prioritizing the specialized ambulances and crews for more severe cases.

The challenges faced by the 1ID's eastward drive into Germany illustrate two aspects that are the LSCO norm: the scale of tragedy and measures to mitigate the subsequent human suffering. Much of Ficicchy's experience, and that of other division surgeons, was a fulfillment of what began in World War I—reacting to the crisis at hand through motorized evacuation down to the lowest level with centralized ambulance authority.

The regimental commander wielded singular authority over everything within the area of operations. Through the regimental surgeon, the commander dictated the placement of the collecting station and the ten supporting Dodge WC-54 ambulances. After servicing the battalions, five remained to cycle all the regiment's casualties from the collecting station to division. This exchange was the point of friction tactically and congestion medically. Ficicchy felt that two additional ambulances per regiment—an increase in six across the division—would provide more freedom to respond to terrain and tactical situations. A collecting station full is a collecting station unable to attack with its regiment.[42]

Ficicchy's request was stunning in modesty. The addition of twenty-four litters under the weight of hundreds of casualties is seemingly futile. Yet it was these twenty-four litters that Ficicchy felt could make the difference. Had he the current resources of the 1ID, he may not have known what to do with all the capacity—it's more than ten times his request. The new M997A3 ambulance (HH-60 helicopters aside) is overwhelming in ability when held to the WC-54 that Ficicchy knew. It boasts air conditioning, the ability to carry advanced medical equipment, and over one hundred additional horsepower. What would this capability have meant to 1ID leaders in 1944? The essential aspect that matters—the primal aspect—is the one unchanged: they, just like the model 16AA that preceded them, each carry four litters.

Matching the World War II success of the 1ID is not a matter of the instrument, nor is it a matter of wanting capacity. The twenty-four litters Ficicchy wished for were not important for their numbers alone but for

Medical Requirements Tracker					
	Air Tasking Order (ATO)	AA	★ AB	AC	AD
Wounded-in-Action Casualty Estimate		500	1,000	750	500
Primary					
	Air MEDEVAC (HH60 x15) 6 patients per aircraft; 90 total per lift	180	0	270	180
Alternate					
	Ground MEDEVAC (M997 x20) 4 patients per vehicle; 80 total per lift	160	240	160	160
Contingency					
	Air CASEVAC (CH47 x4) 8 patients per aircraft; 32 total per lift	64	0	64	64
Emergency					
	Ground CASEVAC (M1093 x8) 8 patients per vehicle; 64 total per lift	128	128	128	128
Capability Gap (Patient Movement)		-32	632	128	-32
Class VIIIa Requirements (57lb per Role 1/2 admission)		28,500	57,000	42,750	28,500
Class VIIIb Requirements (3 units per WIA)		1,500	3,000	2,250	1,500

Weather Effects

★ Wet-Gap Crossing

ATO Day	Requirement	Recommended Mode	FRAGO Tasked	Movement Table
AB	632 litter patients	40x M1093 with 8 litter patients each; two turns to move 640 patients	Approved	Listed
AC	128 litter patients	4x CH47 with 8 litter patients each; two turns to move 64 patients	Pending	Pending
		6x M1093 with 8 litter patients each; two turns to move 96 patients	Pending	Pending

(Figure by Col. James Nicholson)

Figure 1. Medical Requirements Example Tracker

refining the practical matters of effective employment. Trained human capital, empowered with authority, is the difference. Mirroring the hands-on efforts of Letterman, the application of Army Health System principles of conformity, proximity, flexibility, mobility, continuity, and control will not occur by accident.[43] Akin to the increased lethality that drove AirLand Battle, the medical staff of operational and tactical headquarters engaged in future LSCO will need to effectively exploit every opportunity to maximize casualty movement. Because American forces will operate from a position of disadvantage, specifically due to extended lines of communication complicating sustainment efforts, it will be necessary to synchronize multiple domains to create and exploit relative advantages as they appear, a concept known as convergence.[44] Thus, detailed planning is required to integrate joint capabilities that enable freedom of action and mission accomplishment, particularly in regard to building unity of effort for patient movement.[45]

WFXs display how MEDEVAC capacity is insufficient during convergence windows to fully decompress a division's medical facilities, affecting the tempo of combat operations. When this occurs, not only do Role 1 and 2 facilities remain overwhelmed, thus increasing the died-of-wounds rates, but the supported combat elements are constrained in their ability to maneuver, which in turn enables enemy targeting. Given these considerations and the inevitable attrition of ambulance assets, the utilization of CASEVAC platforms to take advantage of every opportunity is essential.

However, command surgeons will be forced to compete for limited assets with multiple uses to facilitate efficient patient movement. Assets such as light medium tactical vehicles, heavy expanded mobility tactical trucks, CH-47F Chinook helicopters, C-130J tactical cargo aircraft, and Army logistics support vessels enable sustainment efforts across the joint force and can be configured for CASEVAC roles per

Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 4-02.13, *Casualty Evacuation*. Because of the insatiable demand for these assets on the battlefield, command surgeons must effectively communicate requirements and risk to leaders. As often occurs in a WFX, medical staff ineffectively shape the casualty planning estimate into projected requirements. When this occurs, the "so what" is lost for senior leaders. With staff integration failure, organizations cannot forecast capabilities against requirements within the context of the operational plan. In doing so, the concordant risk that must be assumed by senior leaders for when requirements can or cannot be met is not communicated. A technique to forecast requirements and ensuring alignment against the operational plan could be similar to what is shown in figure 1.

From a staff planning perspective, utilizing CASEVAC platforms for patient movement harkens to the same dilemma facing Maj. Letterman; because these assets are not under the dedicated control of medical authorities, they are constantly tasked to move other critical items. Requirements, such as rations (class I), fuel (class III), ammunition (class V), repair parts (class IX), and replacement personnel all require vehicular support during combat sustainment. In addition, the demand for these resources is anticipated through running estimates from various staff elements. This requires in-depth coordination between the command surgeon team and the broader staff to ensure casualty backhaul requirements are appropriately anticipated and captured via the necessary air, transportation, and joint movement requests.

With sustainment planning aligning to the organization's planning horizon (72–96 hours out for divisions and 96–120 hours out for corps), forecasting casualty evacuation requirements is mandatory for proper resource allocation against all the division's requirements. This includes not only the casualty evacuation needs but also the allocation of resources for human remains backhaul and forward replacement movement. Capturing a holistic picture of the total personnel contribution to the organization's overall combat power is vital to achieving the commander's intent. When properly executed, synchronized staff effort enables shared understanding, efficiency, and appropriate risk assessment for commanders. When poorly executed, organizations face a sudden realization that the unit is off plan and off time. This process, which is obvious in explanation but inherently challenging in warfighting execution, can be conceptualized as shown in figure 2. This figure emphasizes how quickly the personnel aspect of combat power can be attrited to the equivalent of a battalion formation, the largest element a division can organically regenerate without external assistance.

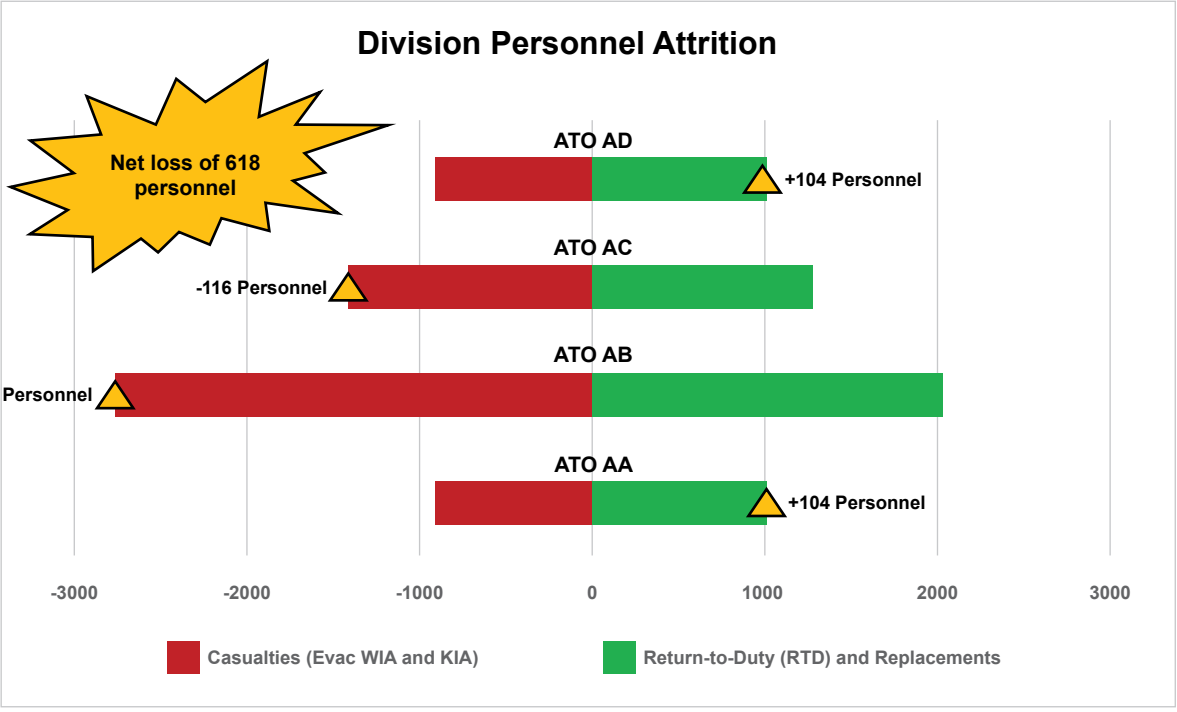
Recommendations

Should the Nation call upon the Army to fight a peer opponent by 2030, the following actions would contribute to conserving the fighting strength and maintaining combat power during decisive action. These recommendations must be viewed within the construct of balancing sufficient platform capacity against the need to disperse those platforms so as to mitigate the effects that indirect fires and unmanned aircraft systems can impose as demonstrated in the Donbas, Nagorno-Karabakh, and the Levant.

In seeking to balance the demands of evacuation capacity against dispersion, it is necessary to implement a system that promotes unity of effort to ensure efficient resource application (see figure 3). Failure to assure sufficient dispersion will result in the direct attrition of ambulances and crews; conversely, the failure to provide sufficient evacuation capacity will result in the inevitable patient backlog at echelons of care that are easily overwhelmed due to their limited resources. Of note, these recommendations are independent of future material solutions such as autonomous evacuation vehicles, as the appropriate application and management of an evacuation system will remain platform agnostic. Fortunately, the U.S. Army today can implement change without the direct existential threat facing Letterman, and these changes can be applied promptly to prepare for challenges today independent of the Army's broader 2030 and 2040 timelines.

Doctrine

FM 4-02 highlights the many responsibilities of command surgeons. Despite this, there are no authorities granted to these individuals at division or corps level that enables the execution of the MEDEVAC or CASEVAC mission on behalf of commanders. Indirectly, ATP 4-02.2, *Medical Evacuation*, does note that medical mission authority begins at the theater level in the generation of medical policies and medical



(Figure by Col. James Nicholson)

Figure 2. Personnel Combat Power Attrition

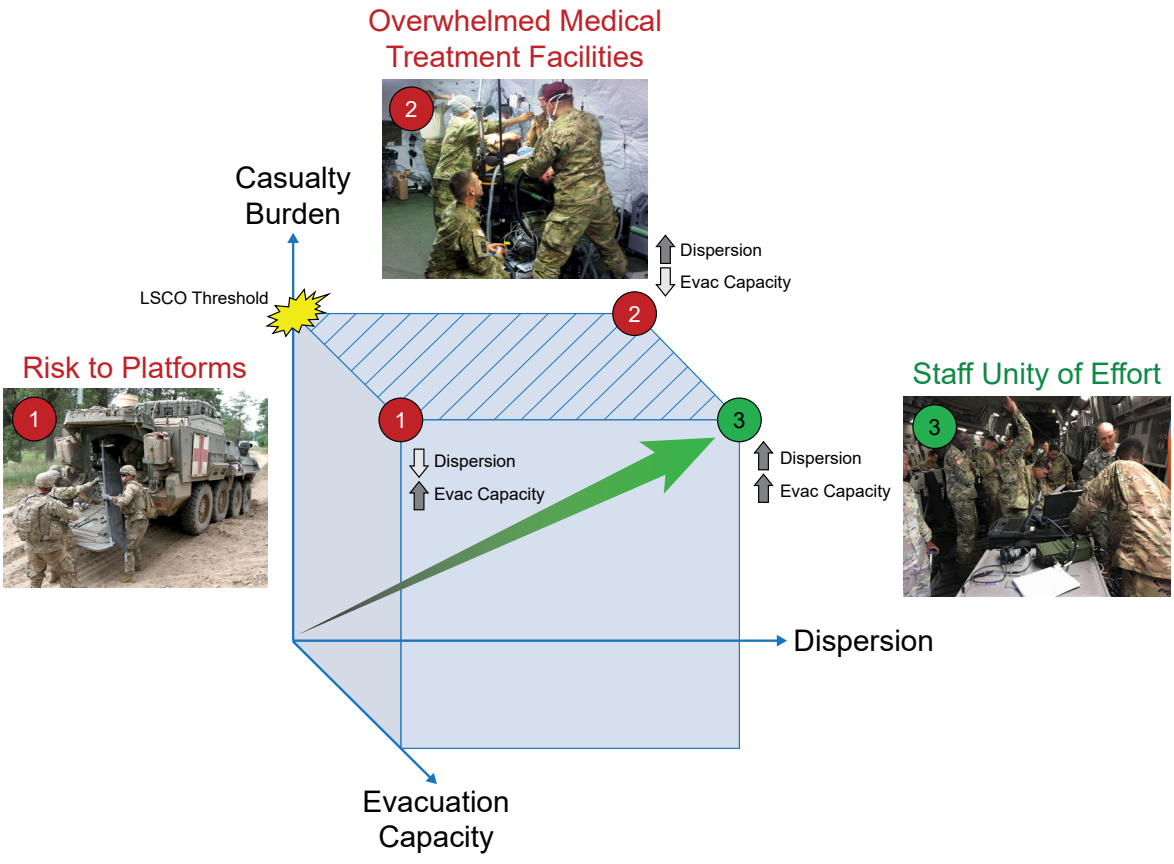
rules of engagement, and medical mission authority is then accomplished via validation of the nine-line MEDEVAC request.[46]

While historical examples illustrate success in facilitating large-volume patient evacuation through the sheer force of will, the lack of clear command and support relationships generates friction between the operational headquarters and the supporting medical element. With the varied array of echelons above brigade (EAB) medical assets in support, there are frequent disconnects in first defining, and then appropriately aligning, relationships across organizations to achieve maximum efficiency. This is a critical factor, as the patient movement branch within the medical brigade S-3 section is responsible for twenty-four-hour regulated patient movement within the designated area of operations, but command surgeons designate MEDEVAC policies and procedures.[47]

Without doctrine to offer recommendations on how patient evacuation authorities should be allocated, the nightmare scenario from the introductory Baltic vignette will not remain hyperbole. Quite simply, when a division receives EAB ambulances, Role 2s, and even Role 3s, who do they work for? From Ficicchy's experience in World War II, medical assets at the division level were attached to the maneuver element with only administrative control retained by the supporting medical battalion.[48] This relationship facilitated the maneuver of the clearing stations to the advancing forward lines. Because clearing companies comprised two platoons, one would be established while the other could act as a mobile reserve to establish at a more forward location. In doing so, patient care remained uninterrupted as health service support capacity could be leapfrogged in a manner consistent with local tactical considerations.[49] Ideally, the pending publication of ATPs 4-02.91, *Division and Brigade AHS* [Army Health System] *Operations*; 4-02.92, *Corps AHS Operations*; and 4-02.93, *Theater AHS Operations*, will address deficiencies in command and support relationship guidance.

Organization

Joint Publication 4-02, *Joint Health Services*, defines medical regulating as "the actions and coordination necessary to arrange for the movement of patients through the roles of care and to match patients with an



(Figure by Col. James Nicholson)

Figure 3. Balancing Dispersion Against Evacuation Capacity

MTF [medical treatment facility] that has the necessary HSS [health service support] capabilities and available bed space."[50] To execute the medical regulating mission from point-of-injury to Role 2 or higher, joint doctrine states that the responsible headquarters should form a patient evacuation coordination cell (PECC).[51] However, Army doctrine fails to identify or specify the PECC mission. Although ATP 4-02.2, *Medical Evacuation*, endorses the requirement for a medical mission authority, no entity within FM 4-0, *Army Health System*, is expressly designated for establishing a PECC.

Previous Army doctrine, notably FM 8-10-3, *Division Medical Operations Center Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, included the division medical operations center within the supporting division support command (DSC).[52] The DSC was expressly tasked with coordinating support across general and direct support medical units, as well as units under tactical or operational control of the division, an important note to consider given the aforementioned doctrinal gaps.[53] Likewise, the DSC role included directing patient evacuation from division to corps-level treatment facilities under the guidance of the medical regulating officer.[54] Dissolving the DSC removed the tether between supply and demand. The division, on the demand side, tasks and moves the wounded by ambulance. Unaware of where to move them, wounded could be sent to an overflowing hospital. No staff arrangement links the supporting medical command and its allocated bed space—the supply of care—to the demands of the division. Appropriate delegation of personnel to facilitate the PECC mission down to division level from supporting medical brigades would enhance shared understanding of the operational plan through synchronization of EAB medical resources. Therefore, the PECC represents a critical GWOT lesson that must be institutionalized and updated for the LSCO fight to assure efficient MEDEVAC utilization for both rotary-wing and wheeled platforms.

The prolonged care augmentation detachment (PCAD) is a new medical unit of action slated to begin operational fielding in fiscal year 2025. This organization is designed to provide prolonged care and en route critical care through five prolonged care sections, each consisting of twelve personnel organized as three 4-person squads.[55] Limited in number, with one active-duty PCAD and two Army reserve PCADs templated, the precise manner in how to integrate PCAD capability down to a brigade combat team Role 2 during LSCO remains untested. Given that the PCAD does not have any organic bed capacity to supplement the Role 2, it is presumed that the prolonged care sections will be best utilized in augmenting CASEVAC platforms to maximize patient movement capacity during convergence windows that permit movement back to Role 3 care in the division rear area and beyond. An ATP that provides recommendations on methods for how PCADs will enable the supported tactical element is required.

Training

The medical planner's tool kit is the casualty estimation tool of record.[56] At present, an Army Medical Department officer can complete basic officer leader course, captains career course, and intermediate level education and still lack access to, let alone proficiency with, the medical planner's tool kit as it is not within any professional military education program of instruction. Given this fact, command surgeon staffs are often unable to generate independent planning and running estimates to augment G-1 staff efforts. This greatly complicates staff dynamics by making the command surgeon dependent of G-1 inputs and thus, the G-1 a single point of failure for casualty estimation and subsequent MEDEVAC/CASEVAC requirements analysis. Although appendix D of ATP 4-02.55, *Army Health System Support Planning*, outlines the method for manual casualty estimation, the inability to generate sufficient experience either in professional military education or during duty assignments fails to generate the requisite talent necessary for medical officers to succeed in operational staff billets.

Leadership

Because there are no established exercises to stress the leadership and staff of EAB medical organizations, there is no way to effectively validate the support that these organizations will be required to deliver to operational forces at the corps and division levels, particularly for support to intra- and intertheater patient movement. Ensuring that medical brigades and multifunctional medical battalions are allocated to upcoming WFXs as training audiences during the Forces Command Army Synchronization and Resourcing Conference will set conditions for enduring relationships between Forces Command units and EAB medical commands. This proposed course of action is dependent, however, on generating a sufficient pool of experienced observer-coach/trainers to advise the EAB medical commands as no such sourcing readily exists to provide the requisite subject-matter expertise.

Without sufficient opportunities to challenge the leadership of medical organizations with the patient volumes experienced in LSCO, the Army has no ability to effectively understand what standards for patient evacuation can be anticipated. Ficicchy reported that "the average evacuation interval from the time a casualty is picked up to the time he arrives at the clearing station is one hour."[57] However, it has been lamented that in this post-GWOT period, this "Golden Hour" for patient movement from the point of injury to life-saving treatment, is dead. The Golden Hour will indeed be dead if Army leaders kill it before the fight begins. The U.S. Army must ultimately meet the standards it holds leaders accountable to, which was as true in 1944 as it will be in the future. LSCO battlefields will continue to be won or lost through the human dimension, and the American soldier must continue to expect the commitment forged by Letterman; that he or she will have every effort made to ensure their safe and prompt movement out of harm's way. ■

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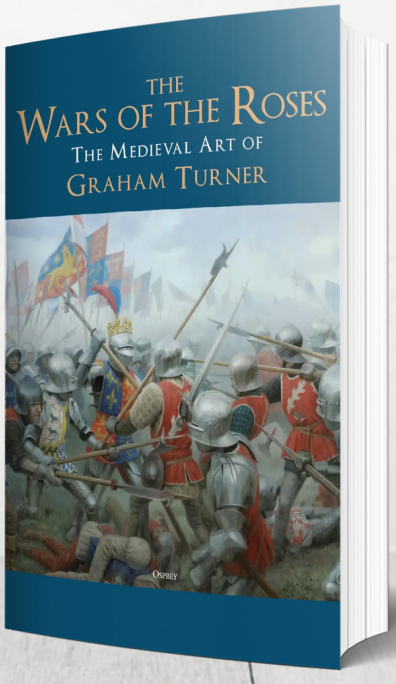
The Wars of the Roses

The Medieval Art of Graham Turner

Graham Turner, Osprey Publishing, 2024, 288 pages



Allyson McNitt, PhD

The Wars of the Roses, or the Civil Wars by which it was known at the time, took place in England in the mid-fifteenth century (1455–1485).[1] As a series of civil wars fought over control of the English throne, the Wars of the Roses was one of the most dramatic and turbulent time periods in English history. Supporters of two rival cadet branches of the royal House of Plantagenet, Lancaster (red rose) and York (white rose), who both claimed legitimacy to the throne vis-à-vis the sons of Edward III, fought the wars, which eventually resulted in the extinction of the last male line of the House of Lancaster.[2] The (probable) murder of King Henry VI in 1471 in the Tower of London paved the way for the Tudor family to inherit the Lancastrian claim to the throne; once Henry Tudor married Elizabeth of York, both houses' claims to the throne were united, resolving the tumultuous series of battles.[3]

Author and illustrator Graham Turner conducts a visual symphony of historical detail and stunning imagery in his book *The Wars of the Roses: The Medieval Art of Graham Turner*. With nineteen chapters that begin with Henry V's formidable legacy and end with the ascendancy of Henry VII of the House of Tudor, each chapter contains titles that summarize the chapter's contents. In addition to the rich textual detail that paints verbal images of the important events in these wars, there is a chorus of photographs, images, and over 120 original paintings that highlight battles, places, and key individuals.

There is standard back matter such as a bibliography, endnotes, and an index, but the added sweetener is a unique "painting diary," which catalogues the necessary steps required to paint the dynamic illustrations featured in this substantial book. Turner contends that the time spent on each painting "depends on many factors, not least size, medium and complexity, and then there are the countless hours spent on research and observation: people, landscapes, skies, buildings, all things that can be observed around us and which are crucial to creating a convincing image of a real past."[4] The painting diary is only a few pages out of the book, but it is packed with information and useful "drafts" of one of the paintings so readers get a sense of the time and effort it takes to compose just one of these images. The painting diary is arranged in alphabetical "stages" from A to L, and Turner carefully comments on each stage.

In addition to the insightful details contained in the painting diary, the index is exceptionally effective. It is arranged alphabetically by keyword, and the page numbers listed in bold refer to the illustrations. The bibliography is organized into alphabetical primary and alphabetical secondary source categories, which makes for smooth searching among all the sources. There are numerical endnotes for every chapter, and the numbers start over with each chapter. There is diversity among the sources, which demonstrates that it is as textually well researched as it is thoroughly illustrated. Unfortunately, there is no index specific to the paintings, photos, or other images, but there are thorough cutlines that accompany each image, adding a rich context that boosts the visual, illuminating the text.

Complementing the book's usual front matter of a preface and introduction is a chronology that condenses the bulk of the book's key events into a manageable, visual format. Readers can follow along the contextual time frame from 1422 to 1487 with little difficulty, as the chronology is organized and easy to interpret.

For Turner, *The Wars of the Roses* is the "culmination of more than a quarter of a century's research and painting."[5] And during that twenty-five years there have been "discoveries that have added to and altered our collective knowledge and interpretation of the past," as Turner's own knowledge and understanding (of the subject) continued to grow and evolve.[6] But as richly detailed as his accounts of the battles and events are, the paintings are the focus of the book's intrigue.

Turner approaches the story of the wars with a chronological arc, beginning with the death of King Henry V and ending with Henry VII's victory at the Battle of Stoke. Despite the more gruesome aspects of war politely described in the text, the paintings are not particularly bloody. His images are gritty without gratuitous bloodshed, and they depict not only scenes of struggle, of desperation, of loneliness or loss but also of chivalry, persistence, courage, and victory. Turner seems to go to great pains to avoid glamorizing war, but some paintings evoke a sense of woeful despair, while others shine with the aggression of battle. With a muted palette of natural, earthy colors, the paintings tell the story of the wars as readers move through each chapter; the paintings give faces and life to textual details. Relevant quotes from some of the primary sources used to trace the battles are presented in the original Middle English and often accompany the paintings and other images: "And on Ester day in the mornynge, the xiiij of Apryl, ryght erly, eche of them came uppone othere; and ther was suche a grete myste, that nether of them myght see othere perfitely."[7]

To enjoy this book, an appreciation for the Middle Ages is required, but knowledge of the history is not. Turner ensures that even the layman will have the opportunity to learn something new about the Middle Ages. Those familiar with medieval warfare will enjoy the smaller details contained in the text, and those less familiar with the history will appreciate the straightforward and precise way that Turner delivers the narrative. Turner's prose is polished yet conversational. For example, in chapter 11, Turner says, "We don't know when Edward and Elizabeth [Woodville] met, or why he chose her as his queen. It could well have been a romantic and impulsive love-match, but another theory that subsequently gained favour was that marrying her was the only way she would give in to his advances."[8] He follows his speculation with a passage from the fifteenth-century chronicle, *Gregory's Chronicle*, about how men marveled at Edward's renown prowess with women; such marvel might have contributed to the boundaries Elizabeth established with Edward.[9] At any rate, Turner's prose is smooth and informative, and contains enough details about medieval intrigue to keep the reader reading.

The Wars of the Roses occupies the same literary space as countless other tomes and essays on the subject, but what makes this book stand out is that each painting is uniquely crafted to tell a small part of a much longer, tumultuous, historical narrative. Its greatest strength is the craftsmanship of the illustrations, which communicates that Turner doesn't really need words to tell a detailed story. Unfortunately, there is a lack of index specific to the paintings, which would be useful, especially to a student of art.

The Wars of the Roses gives faces to the vague

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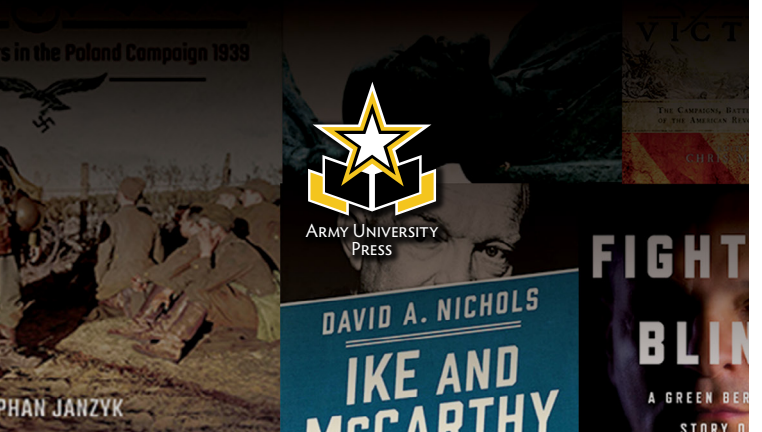

conceptions of historical figures that have trickled down over the years. Additionally, it depicts the Lancasters' and Yorks' losses and victories in a meaningful and robust way; the illustrations are their own story, even if they work in tandem with the text.

The twenty-five years Turner took putting this book together was not in vain; the book delivers a medieval historical experience that will not easily be forgotten. Even though I am a medievalist by education, I was still able to learn a great deal about the dynamics of power that cloaked the Wars. To the dismay of some academics, there is no argumentative thesis, so there is no contribution to the "they say/I say" discussion so prevalent in academic essays. But the comprehensive history of the Wars of the Roses is remarkable and is well worth the read. Any student of history or military strategy could read this book, understand (or analyze) why battles were won and lost, and apply lessons learned to contemporary issues. ■

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Write for *Military Review*
Suggested Themes and Topics for 2025

- Compare Russia's revanchist justifications for seizure of terrain in Ukraine and Central Europe to Nazi Germany's justifications used to seize territory in Eastern Europe in the lead up to World War II. Assess current and historical case studies of the international community's attempts to prevent war by appeasement (e.g., Chamberlain in Munich).
- Compare and contrast Imperial Japanese justifications and actions used for seizure of terrain leading up to World War II to current claims asserted by Communist China for justifying seizure of terrain also claimed by its neighbors. These nations include Russia, Japan, India, Vietnam, and the Philippines. How are the Chinese planning for multidimensional global campaigns to support territorial expansion and territorial influence?
- From a U.S. military perspective, what are the greatest security threats to the United States? How specifically is the United States preparing to mitigate those threats employing the elements on national power?
- Using case studies, discuss evidence of employment of irregular warfare (IW) using instruments short of large-scale military violence to achieve strategic objectives. Is there evidence that states as well as nonstate actors are conducting IW against the United States? Discuss evidence of cooperation among state or nonstate actors in such efforts.
- The United States and the Americas—assess the emerging actors, roles and relationships in North, South, and Central America. Is Mexico our friend or foe, or disinterested neighbor? Is Mexico a staging ground for malevolent actors conducting IW against the United States?
- Do China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela have "Achilles' heels"? What are their centers of gravity? If each has one, how can it best be attacked/exploited?
- What do China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela view as the United States' "Achilles' heel," or center of gravity? How specifically are they attacking it?
- What is the current role of the U.S. Armed Forces in Africa? Far East? Middle East? What should it be?

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Soldiers assigned to 4th Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, scan their sectors of fire during a live-fire exercise on 23 March 2025 at the 7th Army Training Command's Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany. The 2nd Cavalry Regiment provides V Corps, America's forward-deployed corps, with combat-credible forces capable of rapid deployment throughout the European theater to defend the NATO alliance. (Photo by Sgt. Cody Nelson, U.S. Army)

Left: John Trumbull's 1819 painting, *Declaration of Independence*, depicts the five-man drafting committee of the Declaration of Independence presenting their work to the Congress. It does not represent a real ceremony; the characters portrayed were never in the same room at the same time. (Painting courtesy of Architect of the Capitol)

Background: Scans of the original 1775 resolution authorizing the creation of the Continental Army, which changed the course of the war for American independence and the history of the world. (Photos courtesy of the National Archives)

of the whole to take into consideration the ways & means of raising [illegible]
also the State of America. —
adjourned till to morrow at 9 o'Clock —

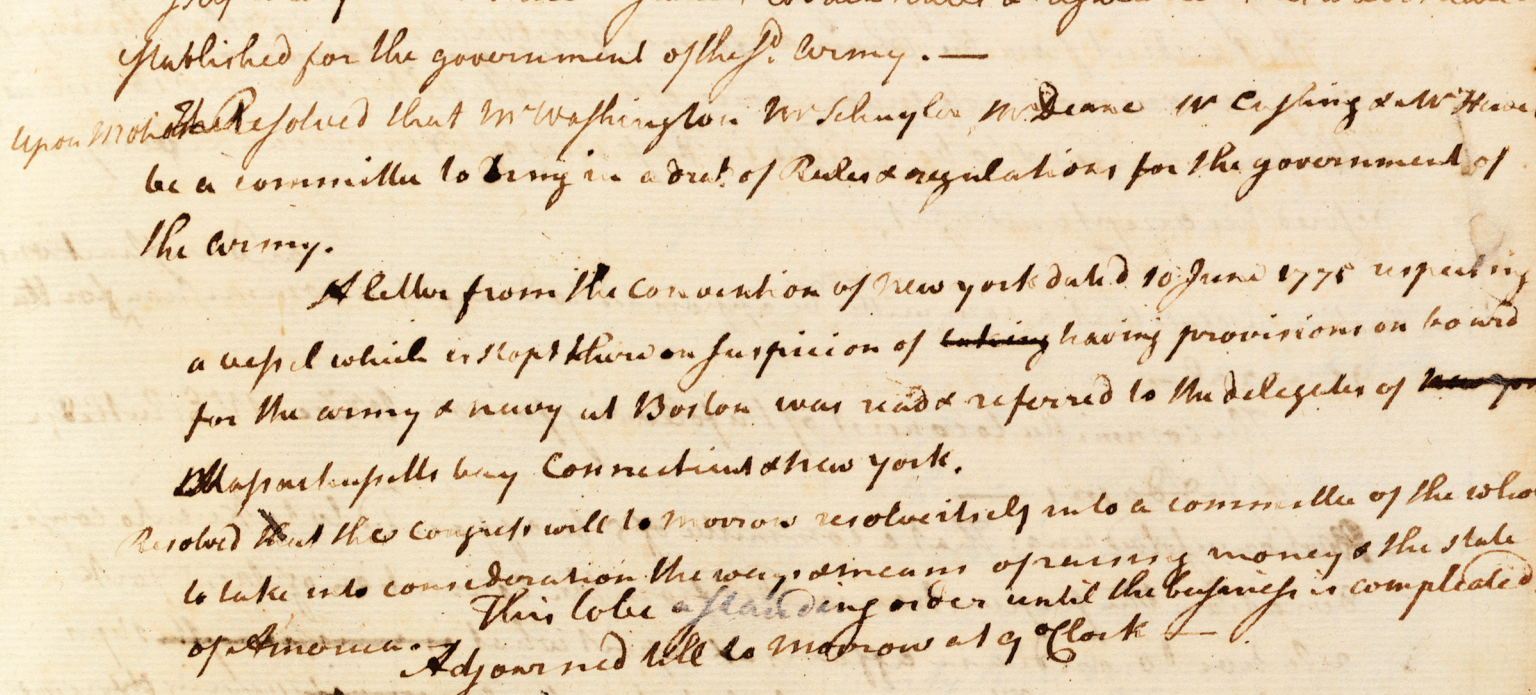
Wednesday June 14. 1775

The Congress met & agreeable to the order of the day Resolved itself into a committee of the whole to take into consideration &c —
after some time spent therein Mr President resumed the chair & Mr Ward reported that [illegible] having not yet come to a conclusion they desired him to move for leave to sit again, & at the same time they desired him to report some resolutions which they had come into. The resolutions being read were adopted as follows

Resolved, That six companies of expert rifle men be immediately raised in Pensylvania (see Resolve 13. below)
two in Maryland & two in Virginia, that each company as soon as compleate
shall march & join the army near Boston to be there employed as light infantry
under the command of the chief Officer in that army,

That the pay of the Officers & privates be as follows
a Capt.n @ 20 Dollars p month a Lieutenant @ 13⅓ Dollars
a Serjeant @ 8 Dollars corporal @ 7⅔ Dollars, Drummer or 7⅔ Doll
privates @ 6⅔ Dollars to find their own arms & cloaths —

— That each company consist of a captain three Lieutenants four
Serjeants, four corporals a drummer or [illegible] & sixty eight privates
That the form of the enlistment be [illegible] in the following words
"I have this day voluntarily inlisted myself as a Soldier in the



The Birth of the U.S. Army

Wednesday, June 14, 1775

The Congress met and agreeable to the order of the day, resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to take into consideration. After some time spent thereon, the president resumed the chair, and Mr. [Samuel] Ward reported, that not having yet come to a conclusion they desired him to move for leave to sit again. At the same time they desired him to report some resolutions which they had come into.

The resolutions being read, were adopted as follows:

Resolved, That six companies of expert rifflemen, be immediately raised in Pensylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia; that each company consist of a captain, three lieutenants, four serjeants, four corporals, a drummer or trumpeter, and sixty-eight privates.

That each company, as soon as compleated, shall march and join the army near Boston, to be there employed as light infantry, under the command of the chief Officer in that army.

That the pay of the Officers and privates be as follows, viz. a captain @ 20 dollars per month; a lieutenant @ 13 1/3 dollars; a serjeant @ 8 dollars; a corporal @ 7 1/3 dollars; drummer or [trumpeter] @ 7 1/3 doll.; privates @ 6 2/3 dollars; to find their own arms and cloathes.

That the form of the enlistment be in the following words:

> I have, this day, voluntarily enlisted myself, as a soldier, in the American continental army, for one year, unless sooner discharged: And I do bind myself to conform, in all instances, to such rules and regulations, as are, or shall be, established for the government of the said Army.

Upon motion, *Resolved*, That Mr. [George] Washington, Mr. [Philip] Schuyler, Mr. [Silas] Deane, Mr. [Thomas] Cushing, and Mr. [Joseph] Hewes be a committee to bring in a dra't of Rules and regulations for the government of the army.

A letter from the convention of New York, dated 10 June, 1775, respecting a vessel which is stopt there, on suspicion of having provisions on board for the army and navy at Boston, was read and referred to the delegates of Massachusetts bay, Connecticut, and New York.

Resolved, That the Congress will, to Morrow, resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to take into consideration the ways and means of raising money, and the state of America. This to be a standing order, until the business is compleated.

Adjourned till to Morrow at 9 o'Clock.