



TARGETING THE AMERICAN WILL and Other Challenges for 4th-Generation Leadership

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*Everything changes;
nothing is extinguished....
What was before is left
behind; what never was
is now; and every passing
moment is renewed.*
—Ovid¹

*Portions of this article
were presented at the
“7th Annual Conference
on War and Media,”
The Center for the Study
of the Korean War,
Graceland University,
Independence, Missouri,
24 February 2006.*

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THE U.S. MILITARY is currently focused on deliberate transformation to meet the challenges of the contemporary operating environment (COE) and the requirements of future wars, but something might be lacking in the military’s rush toward transformation: true transformation is more than reorganization and reequipping; it is a process of creation in which things are made anew. The most important transformation the U.S. national security apparatus must make as it prepares for future conflict is not limited to organizational or technological change; it requires transforming the military culture to manage the complex tasks of counterinsurgency and to avoid endangering the most cherished American values.

On 6 February 2006, the Department of Defense (DOD) released the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)*, a document deeply rooted in the recognition that the United States is engaged in a “long war.”² *QDR 2006* validates and continues the trends evident in *QDR 2001*, the *Transformation Planning Guidance* of 2003, *Joint Vision 2020 (JV2020)*, and various other roadmaps and proclamations of transformation the country has produced during the past four years.³ These documents emphasize information dominance, intelligence gathering and synchronization, and capabilities-based planning while demanding the military transform into a smaller, more agile, network-enabled organization.

However, the nature of the operating environment facing U.S. forces today is not, and is not likely to be in the future, one we can best confront with technological enablers. Indeed, the fourth-generation threats we will face during the next decade will effectively negate our technological superiority in weapons systems, sensors, and even communications. Paradoxically, our current opponents are at once immune to many of our technological advantages while they themselves leverage the nature of the Information Age in their attempts to defeat us.

Defining the Threat Environment

Before describing what changes in our military culture are necessary to combat these threats, we need to define the threat environment itself. In doing so, an ethical dilemma posing a significant challenge to the military becomes evident. Pundits and defense professionals alike define the COE in myriad ways, yet all seem to agree that we have entered into a protracted struggle.

It's when we begin weighing the significance of the struggles against insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan that analyses about the COE really begin to vary. For instance, some consider these insurgencies to be separate from the War on Terror, while others consider them integral. Iraq, the Army's main effort for the foreseeable future, has been described by some as a warfighting anomaly, essentially a problem to be dealt with before we move on to more conventional threats. Unfortunately, this seems to be the prevailing opinion among those authoring the *QDR*. The technologically enabled force they envision is well suited to fight cold war threats and ill suited to combat insurgencies or conduct other stabilization and reconstruction missions.

In his excellent book, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century*, Colonel Thomas X. Hammes derided current transformation documents for this same failing: "If the smug tones of our professional journals and 'idea' papers, such as *JV2020*, 'Network-Centric Warfare,' and 'Transformation Planning Guidance,' are an accurate indication, we believe our systems exceed the capabilities of any opponent and will provide us with near-perfect understanding of the battlefield. This is despite the contrary evidence provided by [Al]-Qaeda, the Taliban, and other insurgents in Afghanistan and Iraq."²⁴

A telling indication that the anomaly theory of insurgency (or bureaucratic inertia) remains prevalent in the military is that the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) is still basing its core exercises on a largely conventional threat posed by a fictional nation possessing Soviet-era equipment and tactics. What Hammes and others recognize is that the insurgency in Iraq and the global insurgency embodied in Al-Qaeda are far from anomalous. Instead, these conflicts represent the evolution of warfare into what is termed fourth-generation warfare (4GW)—Information-Age insurgency—that is an extension and modification of the guerrilla tactics articulated by Mao Tse Tung and refined in Vietnam, Algeria, Afghanistan, the *Intifada*, and now in Iraq.

Defining 4GW

The tenets of fourth-generation warfare are—

- No conventional force can defeat a "hyper power," such as the United States, or a bloc of

Western nations in conventional combat, as amply demonstrated in Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, and the conventional phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

- An insurgent movement can defeat a superpower by defeating its political leadership.

- Depriving a superpower's leadership of public support can defeat it. The U.S. experience in Vietnam and the Soviets' struggle in Afghanistan demonstrate the importance of national will to the war efforts of any superpower.

Despite the wishful thinking of technophiles and others who wish to see the insurgency in Iraq as anomalous and thus be able to dismiss the insurgent nature of Al-Qaeda, current and future operating environments are going to be dominated by 4GW opponents. Even the quickest glance at a map of Africa reveals the tenuous hold that the concept of "nation-state" retains there and elsewhere. And, even if the "Chicoms" of red-scare fantasies were to suddenly engage the United States in warfare, one can almost guarantee that the war would take place largely within the 4GW paradigm.

One needs only to turn on a television or unfold a newspaper to see what 4GW looks like. It is information warfare. Because the primary objective for both sides of a fourth-generation conflict is to sway popular support, the main or decisive conflict becomes the information warfare campaign. David Galula explains the genesis of this in *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*: "The first basic need for an insurgent who aims at more than simply making trouble is an attractive cause, particularly in view of the risks involved and in view of the fact that the early supporters and the active supporters—not necessarily the same persons—have to be recruited by persuasion."²⁵

It is not news that an insurgent force simply cannot survive for long without popular support.

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The hearts-and-minds slogans of Vietnam at least nodded to our acquaintance with counterinsurgency theory, even if our actions often showed otherwise. Given this, popular support and national will become the center of gravity for any insurgent and counterinsurgent campaign. Separating the population from the insurgency becomes one of the main aims of the counterinsurgent. Galula explains: “The problem [for the counterinsurgent] is how to keep an area clear [of insurgents]. This can be achieved only with the support of the population. . . . The population, therefore, becomes the objective of the counterinsurgent, as it was for his enemy.”⁶

As insurgency has evolved, under the influence of global media, into 4GW, it has become clear that defeating the will of the American people can be just as or more important than gaining the support of a local population. When an external force is battling an insurgency, two popular wills come into play: the popular support of those in the nation grappling with insurgency (the Iraqis in OIF) and the popular support of those sending external forces (the publics of the United States, Britain, and other coalition forces). Hammes, updating Galula, writes, “Strategically, 4GW attempts to directly change the minds of enemy policy makers. [This is accomplished] through the superior use of all available networks to directly defeat the will of the enemy leadership, to convince them that their war aims are either unachievable or too costly. These networks will be employed to carry specific messages to our policy makers and those who can influence the policy makers.”⁷

By shifting the battle from terrain- or force-oriented objectives to one for public support and national will, the fourth-generation insurgent not only refuses to recognize the boundaries between nation-states, but also obliterates the boundaries between the tactical and strategic levels of warfare. Traditionally, warfare has been divided into three levels: the tactical (battle), the operational (campaign), and the strategic (war or national aims). Within this stratified paradigm, achieving multiple

tactical objectives would lead to operational success for the campaign, which itself would lead to the eventual strategic conclusion of the war.

In the current operating environment and in 4GW in general, the strategic level of war has come to dominate the tactical and operational levels as the three strata have collapsed into one another. Focusing on affecting the national will of his adversary, the insurgent is freed from some of the original necessities and constraints of Mao’s guerrilla model or the extension of those formulated by Galula. For example, the fourth-generation insurgent might not need to control even base areas (a Maoist tenet) if he can coordinate his strategic effort from dispersed locations. The insurgent’s secure base area can essentially recede into cyberspace as lone leaders direct decentralized operations around the world from isolated locations. The responsibilities and fetters that come with holding territory and having a population to care for can be delayed until the balance of forces or influence gives the insurgent freedom of movement. The fourth-generation insurgent has no pressing need to capture arms and material because, for the most part, he can operate with homemade weapons and devices or even none at all if he embraces the insurgent methods used by Gandhi or in Intifada I.

Inducing the counterinsurgent to use disproportionate force against unarmed or poorly armed freedom fighters can be a significant information operation coup for insurgents. The primary maxim that the fourth-generation insurgent lives by, and that we have been agonizingly slow to realize, is that almost all insurgent actions are strategic in scope. There are very few tactical targets in 4GW. Every action, every car bomb, and every statement is calculated to affect not just its physical target, but also the public will of the adversary.

Joining the Information Battle

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DOD

IED in Baghdad—a dozen killed, but millions potentially swayed.

improvised explosive device (IED) blast in Baghdad might be of little significance to the tactical situation—the bomb’s tactical target might escape unscathed or its effects, given the U.S. monopoly on tactical and operational power, could be negligible in the immediate context—but the intended strategic target, the international and U.S. audiences that will see the results on CNN, Fox News, and the front page of newspapers around the world, will certainly be affected.

The blast and its results will instantly become part of the statistics of the war, entering into the assessment and decision making processes of those who hear of it. Beyond the mere statistics, video of the event will almost instantly be accessible to various audiences with varying effects. The bombing might be shown on U.S. and allied news networks, prompting debate about whether the situation there is getting any better or about the rising costs of continuing the conflict. It might also be used on insurgent websites as a recruitment, how-to, or morale-boosting device. Insurgent websites and other Internet outlets regularly host videos of attacks on U.S. or Iraqi Government forces, often with soundtracks and heraldic devices superimposed on the image. That these bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings have relatively minor kinetic effect or tactical impact is irrelevant. Commanders in Iraq sometimes proudly affirm that the IED threat does not limit their freedom of movement, but the purpose of the IEDs is not to limit freedom of movement for tactical units, but to limit

political freedom of movement by coalition governments.

The IED and kidnapping campaigns in Iraq are major information operations (IO) with significant strategic impact. Their targets are quite clearly of strategic scope. Their audience includes Iraqi, American, and international publics. Of the tactics in Iraq, Hammes writes that the anti-coalition force’s “choice of targets showed a clear strategic concept of destroying American will by attacking U.S. forces, any government or [nongovernmental organization]

supporting the United States, and any Iraqis working for or believed to be collaborating with the United States.”⁸ However, the target of the attack does not actually matter in a tactical sense. What matters is that the attack happens and is publicized.

The United States and its coalition partners joined the information battle late, but are now fully engaged in the fray. The strategic battle for the American will is waged on the airwaves and through the networks that pervade the daily lives of our citizens. The information battlespace surrounds us. A typical exchange in this battle is the 2006 news event caused by a failed attack on a young medic in Iraq. The insurgents filmed the attack for use in their information campaign. By virtue of the attack’s failure, the film was recovered and the medic made the rounds of U.S. news outlets explaining how he was shot and then tended to the wounds of the person who shot him. The insurgents’ failed information operation became an opportunity to “counterfire” with evidence of their failure while providing a showcase of positive American values.

You are free to accept or reject the notion that future warfare is going to be dominated by information operations. However, the U.S. Government and military are beginning to look at the current conflict through just this lens. Speaking to the Council on Foreign Relations on 17 February 2006, then U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld expressed concern that America was “losing the media war to Al-Qaeda.” Rumsfeld said that some of the most critical battles were now in the “newsrooms” and

declared that government communications planning must be a “central component of every aspect of this struggle.”⁹ A recently declassified and released copy of the *Information Operations Roadmap* reflects DOD’s concern in this arena.¹⁰

Adjusting the Military for IO

The dominance of information operations in current and future conflicts poses unique and potentially troubling challenges for the U.S. defense establishment. This feature of 4GW most urgently requires adjustments within the military culture. To explain why this is so, one must examine the effects caused by the destratification inherent in information warfare.

The U.S. military currently employs artillery targeting language to discuss its information campaign. Terms in vogue include “nonlethal effects targeting” and “information fires and counterfires.” Information operations for a division or component command are often coordinated by the fires and effects coordination cell of a headquarters, an operation often led by artillery officers or other “targeteers.” The use of such language demonstrates more than that the pace of change is outstripping the military’s prodigious ability to create new jargon; these terms highlight an important aspect of the information war. As fires and counterfires are “shot” through the media, who is the primary target? Who is being “hit” by these digital rounds, and who is in the crossfire? If, as shown above, the primary object of the fourth-generation insurgent’s attack is the American national will, then the logical extension of the conflict requires that the U.S. populace be strategically targeted not only by insurgents but by U.S. counterfires. This poses not only an ethical challenge to the military profession, but also a real danger to America’s democratic institutions.

A telling illustration of the primacy of the information war and its reach from the tactical level to the strategic level is Major General John Batiste’s account of the 2004 battle for Samarra. According to Batiste, then commanding general of the 1st

Infantry Division, key to the division’s success was identifying four lines of operation (LOO): “governance, communications, economic development, and security.”¹¹ Note that only security is directly tied to traditional military roles. Indeed, the first three LOO clearly focus on gaining popular support for government forces; they indicate that the division saw popular support as the center of gravity in the counterinsurgency fight.

The communication LOO is of most interest here. Batiste writes, “Any spectacular enemy attack made headlines around the world. In our opinion, the international news media, including major U.S. television networks and print media, largely emphasized negative events, especially during the period leading up to the U.S. election. Of course, the enemy, using media representatives sympathetic to his cause, waged disinformation cam-

paigns to discredit the Iraqi Government and coalition forces. [This] called for a proactive, agile, and coordinated IO, psychological operations [PSYOP], and public affairs battle drill to correct inaccurate or incomplete reporting.”¹²

The key things to note in this quote are Batiste’s reference to U.S. media and his claim that the U.S. press exhibited negative bias in the run-up to political elections. Clearly, anti-Iraq forces would be targeting the U.S. and international publics with information campaigns alleging wrongdoing by U.S. forces. But at what point should commanders on the ground also target U.S. and international populations with a public affairs battle drill? Somewhere between correcting inaccurate reports and judging certain reports biased because of election-year politics, we could easily cross a line.

As Batiste elaborated on the action in Samarra, he clearly targeted both the Iraqi and the international press: “The key was never letting an inaccurate report go by without an attempt to correct it. . . Units throughout the division produced daily ‘drumbeats’—simple one-page English and Arabic summaries of good news stories—and distributed them to media outlets and higher headquarters.”¹³ While these reports were

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aimed primarily at a local audience, we know that Batiste also had the electorate at home in mind. He says so. In fact, a commander's public affairs officer exists to help supply (or target) the American audience with information about the current campaign.

Without question, Batiste and other U.S. military commanders are trying to get the truth (from their perspective) to the U.S. public, but a system that disseminates "command messages to the lowest level," uses "positive drumbeats" as a necessary weapon in the information war, and is concerned about media bias in an election year begins to edge into dangerous and uncharted territories. This might be a logical consequence of a war in which the primary objectives are local popular support and retention of public support at home, but it puts the military professional and the national political authority in danger of subverting the very democratic freedoms they have sworn to preserve. If, in an effort to win the Nation's wars, the military is forced to manipulate the public's knowledge of events—knowledge critical to informed participation in the democratic process—how is that same military assured that the political authority and aims of the war remain legitimate?

The Smith-Mundt Act of 1948, along with Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 68 ("International

Public Information") of 1999, clearly outlaws information operations or PSYOP targeting U.S. citizens.¹⁴ Traditionally we have been so sensitive about subjecting Americans to government-controlled media that even Voice of America transcripts are not readily accessible within the United States.¹⁵

PDD 68 establishes an International Public Information Core Group (IPICG) to "address problems identified during military missions in Kosovo and Haiti when no single U.S. agency was empowered to coordinate U.S. efforts to sell its policies and counteract bad press abroad."¹⁶ However, while stressing that the group should provide "information designed not to mislead foreign audiences" and that information "must be truthful," IPICG's charter expresses concern over foreign media reports being picked up by U.S. news media that would create a backwash of information into American information sources. The concern was such that the charter requires information efforts to be "coordinated, integrated, deconflicted, and synchronized to achieve a synergistic effect for strategic information activities."¹⁷

Both PDD 68 and the IPICG charter are cited in U.S. Army Field Manual 3-13, *Information Operations: Doctrine, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, as legal constraints prohibiting PSYOP

from targeting audiences within the United States.¹⁸ Clearly then, as the destratification of warfare and the activities of fourth-generation combatants push us toward aiming information operations counterfires or public affairs battle drills at U.S. and international communities, we should pause to consider consequences. While endeavoring to win the strategic information war, it could be all too easy to unintentionally cross these fine lines.

Informing the Populace

An unfettered media is a key part of the checks and balances of our democratic system. A democracy cannot function without an informed populace,



DOD

Embedded reporters photograph Marines of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable, as they enter their AAV7A1 Amphibian Assault Vehicle in An Najaf, Iraq, 26 August 2004.

and constraints on media or state ownership of media clearly impede the people's opportunities to make informed political decisions. Unfortunately, American military culture has often fostered an antagonistic relationship with the free press. At best, the military considers the press a tool or weapon used to get the sound-bite friendly command message out to its intended audiences. At worst, the press is an enemy.

In 2006, CGSC provided each class member the opportunity to participate in a mock media interview. This, along with media panels and classroom discussion, was meant to help future staff officers and commanders learn how to deal with the media. Too often, however, the media was represented as yet another enemy to contend with on the battlefield. Role-playing faculty intentionally caricatured the press as ignorant or extremely biased. Reporters were most often portrayed as being on the attack, rather than as being interested in getting a relevant, truthful story to the public. These are symptoms of and contributing factors to the continued tension between the press and the military. Part of the cause for this attitude is undoubtedly rooted in the military's increasing isolation from mainstream American culture. In a critique of the U.S. Army's performance in Iraq, British Army Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster noted this isolation as a cause of U.S. difficulties in combating the insurgency: "The U.S. Army's habits and customs, whilst in some respects very obviously products of American society, are also strikingly distinct. . . . U.S. Army Soldiers are not citizen soldiers: they are unquestionably American in origin, but equally unquestionably divorced from their roots."¹⁹

Indeed, the overwhelmingly conservative-Christian, conservative-Republican U.S. officer corps is having only a slightly more difficult time adapting to Middle Eastern Muslim culture than it is in dealing with a free press. In both cases, the problem is culture. While there is nothing inherently wrong with the predominant cultural biases of the officer corps or the military at large until such biases are taken to extremes, monolithic conformity of thought is crippling in any organization.²⁰ Dealing with diverse indigenous cultures and the press is necessary in order to prevail in current and future conflicts. Given the nature of de-stratified war and the decisive nature of IO, we cannot afford to leave the battle to an officer corps fettered by its own culture.

It is unfortunate that one of the officer corps' greatest ethical conundrums of current and future conflict should involve the media and politics, as both strike at critical vulnerabilities of its current culture. Batiste's concern about election-year bias reveals not only the political lens through which he views the press, but more tellingly, he seems to almost unconsciously assign political roles to the insurgents, the media, and his division. His tacit assumption that the press (and perhaps even the insurgents) would use negative war coverage to sway election-year politics in favor of one political party over another does not even seem to require discussion for his audience.

Batiste clearly knows that the majority of officers reading his article will share his worldview and assumptions. And, he is probably right. But that very polarization of the officer corps might prove a critical vulnerability while we are engaged in a strategic battle for the American will. The danger is not that nefarious officials in smoky rooms will plot psychological campaigns to sway public support one way or another or to mislead the American people. The danger is that well-meaning officers will almost unconsciously and unknowingly manipulate the American public as they counter enemy information operations without fully considering the third-order effects of such tampering.

Two factors make this particularly troubling. The first is the aforementioned and potentially blinding political, religious, and cultural conformity of the officer corps. The second is the just-don't-say-no attitude of that same corps. The officer corps is awash in type-A personalities. "Never bring up a problem without a solution," "the effective range of an excuse is zero meters," "can do," "hooah," and other military clichés typify this problem of positivism. From the foxhole to the Pentagon, the military engenders a can-do attitude, even when the right answer might be "we can but we shouldn't."

Saying "No"

More problematic are the times when the answer might honestly be no. While the U.S. military and particularly its officer ranks enshrine honor, integrity, and personal courage, there seems to be an unwritten prohibition against the words "no" or "we can't." This reluctance to assert the negative is exacerbated in a de-stratified information war, when

any negative news might potentially be viewed as a victory for the insurgents.

From the perspective of well-meaning officers, to win the strategic information war, the drumbeats of good news will simply have to outnumber the bad-news beats. These factors make the officer corps particularly susceptible to becoming almost unwitting participants in the political struggle for the American will, unintentionally crossing legal and ethical boundaries until they find themselves targeting not only the fourth-generation combatant, but the American people.

Prevailing in a fourth-generation, de-stratified information war while maintaining cherished democratic values will not be easy. Already evidence exists that the conflict might be eroding the very values we strive to protect. Debates are ongoing about domestic spying, the privacy implications of the “USA Patriot Act,” and the status of and due process for detainees at Guantanamo Bay.²¹ The reaction to recent criticisms by retired general officers—MG Batiste among them—is emblematic of the problem. While in uniform, general officers are constrained by traditions of decorum from criticizing civilian leaders. After they retire, if their expressed opinions conflict with current policy, they are derided as armchair generals or disparaged for having political motives. In such a dynamic, where does the duty of the military professional lie? Is sound military advice actually available to appointed civilian leaders if asserting the negative is so frowned on within military culture? Military professionals must have the opportunity to provide expertise in an unfettered manner to assure right action and success.

To prevail and yet retain the values we fight for, significant reforms in the national security organization and culture must occur. The first major reform should involve the reassertion of political authority over foreign policy. The militarization of U.S. foreign policy has contributed significantly to the success and promulgation of fourth-generation insurgency. Galula recognized this threat and temptation: “The number of reliable personnel needed [to quell the insurgency] is staggering. Usually, only the armed forces can provide them promptly. As a result, the counterinsurgent government is exposed to a dual temptation: to assign political, police, and other tasks to the armed forces [or] to let the military direct the entire process.”²²

This temptation notwithstanding, the missions associated with counterinsurgency are best led by diplomatic/political leaders, not by military officers. Clearly a diplomat or civilian political authority should be more capable of directing efforts of governance, economic development, and communication. Far from passing the buck on these types of operations, the defense establishment should shift resources to state and other non-defense agencies to increase their expeditionary capacity while growing a military force better suited and equipped to support non-defense efforts.

Growing a Force

Growing a force and particularly an officer corps capable of operating in a 4GW environment will be time-consuming, costly, and politically difficult to accomplish. The first requirement will be to increase the size of the military (and the other agencies previously mentioned). Counterinsurgency is not a technological task. It is a face-to-face, hand-to-hand, street-to-street process of gaining trust and building consensus while providing security. Technology allows us only to find and kill insurgents. Low-tech interaction between Soldiers and civilians allows us to end the insurgency itself. An increased force size would allow more dispersion throughout the affected country instead of concentrating forces on heavily protected and isolated forward operating bases, or FOBs, where Soldiers become “fobbits” who rarely interact with civilians and therefore have little to no effect on the struggle against the insurgency.

A strategy of engagement involves risk: it risks Soldiers’ lives as they mingle among the populace, and it risks that they will contribute to the enemy’s strategic information campaign by their actions, inactions, or even their deaths. The only way to mitigate this risk is by providing quality leadership and

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training. This goes beyond simple language training or IED-awareness drills. The force required in the 4GW world will need to have a culture distinctly different from that of the current Army.

To provide the quality force necessary to prevail in destratified conflict, we need to revise the concept of what it is to be a U.S. Soldier. I suggest the following primary reforms, which necessarily focus on the officer corps to lead change:

- *Deemphasize kinetic solutions.* The current warrior ethos would be a good place to begin to shift the U.S. Army's emphasis. The emphasis that the new "Soldier's Creed" places on kinetic force ("I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat") is completely out of step with current and future trends for combat. We probably will not need an army of close-combat Soldiers now or in the future. We have much greater need for Soldiers who are knowledgeable about non-kinetic solutions and are willing to apply them.

Changing our emphasis will not be as easy as simply changing a creed, however. The military must embrace a widened definition of warfare and redefine the role of the military in these diverse conflicts. For example, training a unit to assist U.S. Agency for International Development personnel as they attempt to shore up shaky Nigerian public institutions might be difficult, but it is something we are going to have to learn to do. Asserting that our mission is simply to "fight and win our Nation's wars" is no longer permissible when our definition of war is too narrow to be useful.

- *Produce empowered, diverse, and critically thinking leaders.* By building an army of such officers and Soldiers, we will be able to fight both fourth-generation information war and third-generation conventional war. The concern that focusing the military on fourth-generation warfare will cause it to lose its ability to defeat a conventional enemy is unfounded. The changes necessary to effectively combat destratified war will produce a more capable, more agile force better able to defeat any conventional threat. However, change must begin with the officer corps.

As mundane as it might seem, a shift in emphasis from a technical and/or scientific education to a broader liberal arts education would make a world of difference. The liberal arts background provides

officers with the critical-thinking skills necessary to adapt and overcome as necessity demands. For example, during CGSC wargaming we found that traditional methods that track action-counteraction-reaction in a linear manner, and the ensuing quantification of results, were inadequate, given the complexity and nuance of counterinsurgency. Indeed, the ability to read and articulate metrics of a more subjective and ambiguous nature (especially results of non-kinetic effects targeting a nonhostile population) is more akin to skills found in liberal arts majors than those of scientific bent. To paraphrase the motto of the U.S. Military Academy English Department, the ability to read texts with attention to context, subtext, and nuance often translates to an ability to read one's world. In addition, increased recruiting in these disciplines would attract a more diverse pool of applicants to augment those traditionally found in engineering or technical disciplines, perhaps bringing more diversity of thought to the officer corps.

- *Increase pre-commissioning demands and rethink the philosophy of professional military education.* On commissioning, each officer should have basic fluency in at least one language of interest as determined by DOD. The military should then provide opportunities for cultural immersion throughout the officer's career. A period of internship in business or interagency experiences with the government would also foster the skills needed in stability and reconstruction operations as well as help maintain the officer corps' integration into mainstream America.

Later, as captains and majors, many officers should serve in interagency positions to gain an appreciation of the interagency process and, again, to broaden their cultural exposure and prevent the continued isolation of the military culture. Currently, at the field-grade level, all officers are supposed to undertake intermediate-level education, formerly reserved for the top 50 percent of a given year group. Instead, with a larger force available to provide a larger float account (the Trainees, Transients, Holdees, and Students Account), the goal should be to provide every officer 18 months to 2 years of civilian graduate schooling, so each can obtain a master's degree. The subject of study should be relatively unrestricted and include disciplines such as international relations, history, politi-

cal science, philosophy, and literature. Not only will such experience sharpen officers' critical reasoning skills and return broadly educated leaders to the force, but time spent on a civilian campus will once again introduce them to the diversity of American thought and experience beyond the military.

- *Reintroduce rigor, challenge, and selectivity into officer careers.* Future operations will require officers of the highest quality. Reintroducing rigor, challenge, and selectivity into officer careers would be contrary to the current trend of removing discriminators such as senior-rater block checks from files and promoting more than 95 percent of applicants to the next rank. These practices do nothing but ensure that in five years we will have a sizeable batch of mediocre leaders at battalion and brigade level, moving up instead of out just when we will need quality leadership most.

Instead of attempting to retain all we can, we need to ensure that the officer career pattern once again becomes rigorous and competitive to combat the threats posed by a subtler, more intellectually challenging form of warfare. We might also need to look beyond traditional commissioning sources to find applicants suitable to conduct the missions we find ourselves doing in fourth-generation conflict.

- *Defeat the problem of positivism.* Transformation must be more of a bottom-up process. In the current environment of mandated transformation, junior leaders' valuable contributions are dissuaded by an atmosphere of top-down, criticism-adverse management. The problem of positivism impedes change and adaptation keyed to current situations. While many seem to see the disjunctions between transformation and the current operating environment, few young leaders can find venues for critiquing transformation without fearing negative career consequences. Arenas like officer advanced courses and CGSC should be opportunities for company and field grade officers to test, validate, invalidate, or refine current and emerging doctrine.

- *Unshackle officer assignments (and promotions) from branch constraints.* The branch structure should be less of an impediment to putting officers where they belong in the force. For instance, an armor officer identified as an excellent civil-military liaison should be able to work in that field without hurting his chances for promotion or having to clear substantial bureaucratic hurdles. Indeed, the counter-

Suggested Primary Reforms for Leading Change

- Deemphasize kinetic solutions.
- Produce empowered, diverse, and critical-thinking officers and Soldiers.
- Increase precommissioning demands and rethink the philosophy of primary military education.
- Reintroduce rigor, challenge, and selectivity to officer careers.
- Defeat the problem of positivism by encouraging bottom-up innovation.
- Unshackle officer assignments (and promotions) from branch constraints.

insurgency and fourth-generation fight requires us to quickly identify those best suited to the sometimes ambiguous nature of the conflict and put them where their skills are most needed. Traditional gates for promotion and even quotas by branch might need to be jettisoned as we restructure our force to meet the demands of fourth-generation warfare.

Allowing Truth to Prevail

If the battles of the next century are going to be waged primarily in the realm of ideas, with fighting over popular support and national will, we require an officer corps and military able to carefully navigate complex issues of ethical and strategic importance. If the enemy's main objective is to turn the American will by means of a strategic information campaign, the American defense establishment must be able to enter the fray fully cognizant of the ramifications and capable of avoiding harm to the very democratic institutions it has sworn to defend.

While trusting that the free marketplace of ideas will allow truth to prevail and an informed populace to make right decisions, we must resist the temptation to restrict the flow of information or to target the American public with overzealous public information campaigns. Poet John Milton, who lived through decades of insurgency and sectarian violence during the English Civil War, later served as Secretary of Foreign Tongues for the Rump Parliament, providing it with services that might well be thought of as

strategic communications and public diplomacy. Yet, protesting policies of the Long Parliament in 1643, he wrote movingly in “Areopagitica,” his famous tract against censorship, about the power of truth: “I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we

bring impurity much rather: that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary.”²³

The battle of ideas, of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong, of tolerance and absolutes, must be given free rein if we are to remain assured that we are executing the will of the American people. A renewed military and government that believes and practices this will be in no danger of losing in the information wars to come. **MR**

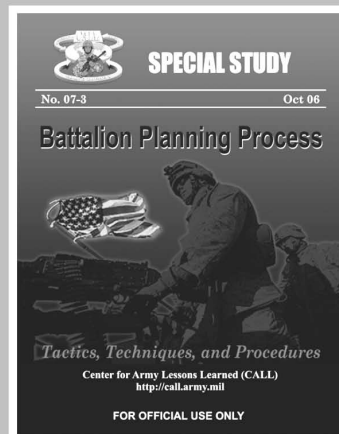
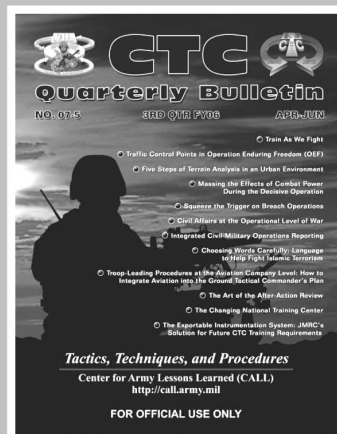
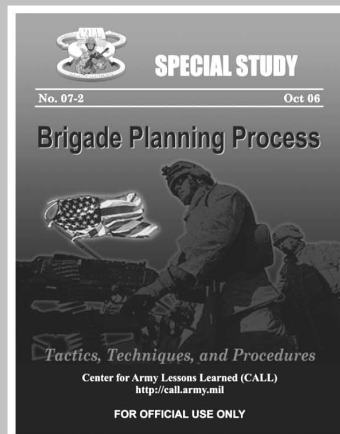
NOTES

1. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book XV, trans. A.D. Melville (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 167-83.
2. U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), *The Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 2006), v. “The long war” has been used in several documents and announcements, most recently in the preface to *QDR 2006*, signed by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. In fact, the first chapter of the *QDR* is titled “Fighting the Long War.”
3. DOD, *QDR* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2001); DOD, *Transformation Planning Guidance* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2003), online at <www.dod.mil/brac/docs/transformationplanningapr03.pdf>; DOD, *Joint Vision 2020 (JV2020)* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2000), online at <www.dtic.mil/jointvision/jvpub2.htm>.
4. Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and The Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith, 2004), 206.
5. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (St. Petersburg, FL: Hailer, 1964), 18.
6. *Ibid.*, 75.
7. Hammes, 208.
8. *Ibid.*, 175.
9. BBC News Online, “U.S. ‘losing media war to Al-Qaeda’” online at <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4725992.stm>>.
10. The National Security Archive, “Rumsfeld’s Roadmap to Propaganda,” online at <www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB177/>.
11. John R.S. Batiste and Paul R. Daniels, “The Fight for Samarra: Full-Spectrum Operations in Modern Warfare,” *Military Review* (May-June 2005): 15.
12. *Ibid.*, 16.
13. *Ibid.*, 17.
14. For more information about the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948, see Voice of America, online at <www.departments.dsu.edu/archive/voiceofamerica.htm>, accessed 13 December 2006. See also William Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 68: International Public Information, excerpt online at <www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd/pdd-68.htm>.
15. U.S. Congress, Title 22, Chapter 18, Subchapter IV, *U.S. Code 1461*, “United

- States Information and Exchange Programs,” online at <<http://lists.essential.org/1995/info-policy-notes/msg00135.html>>.
16. PDD 68.
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. U.S. Army Field Manual 3-13, *Information Operations: Doctrine, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures* (Washington, DC: GPO, November 2003).
 19. Nigel Aylwin-Foster, “Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations,” *Military Review* (November-December 2005): 10.
 20. Examples of the cultural bias and isolation of the officer corps abound. Some are relatively benign, such as officers referring to CNN as “the Communist News Network” in open-forum CGSC lectures, secure in their assumption that every other officer in the room will both affirm and disparage the network’s supposed liberal bias. That assumption presupposes a shared political affiliation among all officers. Other examples are less benign, such as the constant placement of Christian tracts (sometimes printed in Arabic) along the hallways frequented by International Fellows in academic buildings at CGSC. In another example, an organization called the Officer Christian Fellowship (OCF) thrives and actively recruits at service academies and professional military schools such as CGSC. This organization’s mission statement clearly indicates OCF’s intent to replace the leadership of the military with “Christian leadership” and to create “ambassadors for Christ in uniform.” Their website also warns against the dangers of “secularism” and “pluralism” in American society. This should give pause to those sworn to defend a constitution that establishes and protects our pluralistic, secular society and to those sending the military to promote and safeguard tolerant, secular, and pluralistic governments in the Muslim world and elsewhere (“Officer Christian Fellowship Strategy for 2002-2006,” <<http://ocf.gospelcom.net/pubs/strategy.php>>).
 21. The White House, “USA Patriot Act,” Washington, DC, 2001, <www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/patriotact/>.
 22. Galula, 88.
 23. John Milton, “Areopagitica,” *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Hughes (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1957), 728.

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